

Bible Studies for Life: October 17

The Basis for Confidence • Genesis 12:1-8

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There are two ways to look at confidence. First, there is the confidence which relies upon self-sufficiency. Secondly, there is biblical confidence. It relies upon God and putting faith, trust, reliance, and belief in who He is and His promises. The Psalmist reminds us in Proverbs 3:26, “for the LORD will be your confidence” (ESV).

Today we begin a new six-week study entitled, Walking in Confidence. From the book of Genesis, we will look at the life of Abram (we will use Abraham and Sarah, see Gen. 17:5-6 for our lessons). As we study his life, we will see how God called him out of his comfort zone and taught him to depend upon His promises. We will watch as he learns to trust God.

God calls us to follow Him (Genesis 12:1-3). At the end of chapter 11, we see the lineage of Abraham and his marriage to Sarah. They leave Ur of the Chaldeans (a city known for the worship of Nannar, the moon-god) and move to Canaan, eventually settling in Haran.

It’s here that the Lord told Abraham to leave his country, his kindred, and his father’s house to go to a land God would show

him. Why did God call Abraham? In His love, He provided salvation for the world through the Jewish nation by sending his Son, Jesus. Abraham's life demonstrates to Believers what it means to walk by faith (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Obedient (Genesis 12-25): Learning the Secret of Living by Faith*).

God promised Abraham: "I will make of you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (vv. 2-3, NKJV).

The history of this promise has proved to be true. This calling is known as the Abrahamic Covenant. The covenant contains four elements: seed, land, a nation, and divine blessing/protection (see Acts 7:2).

We respond to God's call with obedience (Genesis 12:4-6). We are saved by faith and called to live by faith. Therefore, our lives should reflect our faith through our obedience.

The Lord gave Abraham the instructions, and now he had a choice to make – obey or disobey. At the age of 75, Abraham and his wife, age 65, departed. We don't read about a discussion between God and him or any questions he may have had.

However, do notice that he took his nephew Lot and the people he had acquired in Haran. What did God initially tell him? Here are few thoughts from Wiersbe. First, "Faith brings us out." Abraham and Sarah committed to obeying the Lord by faith as they moved out of their comfort zone.

Next, "Faith brings us in" (vv. 6-8). Hebrews 11:13 tells us they were "strangers and pilgrims" amid a pagan society. God promised Abraham an inheritance; it would come through tests and temptations, challenges and battles.

Thirdly, "Faith brings us on" (v.9). Here is where we can

learn a great lesson about faith. "If your feet are going, your faith is growing." Take a moment to look at the verbs found in verses four through nine: departed, went forth, passed through, removed, and journeyed. Literally, walking in confidence.

The journey Abraham took meant seeking the Lord and trusting God for each new challenge. The same is true for us. We don't know what the future holds, especially in the tumultuous times in which we live, but we are to seek and trust Jesus daily.

A relationship of trust leads to worship (Genesis 12:7-8). Abraham and his entourage have arrived at Shechem by the oak of Moreh. Here, "The Lord appeared" (v.7), suggesting a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ. Then, the Lord tells him, "I will give you this land."

Abraham walked by faith to an unknown area. Now, he stood on the soil. His first step of faith had become sight.

Here he built an altar to the Lord. "By this act, Abram made an open confession of his religion, established the worship of the true God, and declared his faith in God's promise. This was the first true place of worship ever erected in the Promised Land" (MacArthur Study Bible, page 34).

Next, Abraham moved to the hill country to the east of Bethel, pitched his tent, and built another altar. This time, notice it says here he "called on the name of the LORD." He prayed, and the Lord helped him.

Where does your confidence originate? Is it based upon self or faith in God?

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