

Series: Walking by Faith #1
The Call of Abraham
Genesis 12: 1-9

As believers we often speak of faith. Most are aware of the value of genuine faith, but we often find it difficult to practice faith. I was reminded of the lyrics to the popular song – *God on the Mountain*. “*We talk of faith when we’re up on the mountain, but talk comes so easy when life’s at its best.*” In reality, we rarely live by faith during the mountain top experiences of life. When life is easy, and all is going well, we tend to rely upon ourselves and our own abilities. Faith lives in anticipation and expectation rather than reacting to current circumstances or relying on experiences of the past. [Heb.11:1 – Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.](#)

However, we all know that life is never a continual mountain top experience. We all are forced to walk in the valley as well. We all face situations that are beyond our ability to control. Sooner or later we will find ourselves in a situation where faith is essential. In fact, you may encounter a situation where faith is all you have. It is beneficial for every believer to exercise their faith and learn to walk according to faith.

Over the next few weeks I want to preach a series entitled: *Walking by Faith*. The Bible is filled with those who walked by faith, leaving us a gracious example to follow. I hope to examine the lives of three individuals in the Old Testament, and three individuals in the New Testament. When faith is mentioned, Abraham often comes to mind. Today I want to examine the [aspects](#) of Abraham’s faith as we consider: [The Call of Abraham](#).

I. The Reception of the Call (1-3) – Here we discover the details surrounding the call Abraham received. (I am aware that God had not changed his name from Abram to Abraham at this point, but I will likely refer to him as Abraham out of familiarity.) Notice:

A. The Context (1a) – [Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house...](#) As God called Abraham, he was asked to leave his homeland, the place he had lived his entire life. He was asked to leave his family, and depart from his father’s house. In essence Abraham was asked to leave everything he knew and loved behind to follow God. Abraham was expected to leave his comfort zone in order to follow the Lord.

- In a very small way I can identify with how Abraham might have felt, but I can at least get back home within an hour’s drive. God may not ask you to leave your hometown or separate you from your family, but I am certain He will lead you beyond your area of comfort as you follow Him.

Regardless of our geographic location, we must all learn to walk by faith as we follow the Lord. Likely you will experience separation from some friends and loved ones as you make God the priority in your life.

B. The Conditions (1) – Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. We find that God gave Abraham no specific details about the trip. In essence God said, “Don’t worry about a thing; just follow Me. When we get where we are going, I will let you know.” Can you imagine how Abraham must have felt at this moment? He was clearly a man of faith, but I am certain he wondered where they might go. He would not know it when he saw it, and he had received no description or information about the trip. He just had to walk by faith until God revealed the final destination.

- Most of us would be very hesitant with such a proposal. We like to know the details. We want to know where we are going, how long it will take to get there, what kind of accommodations we will have when we arrive, what we are going to eat, and on and on we could go. Eventually God will ask us to step out in faith and follow Him. That will be the call – Follow me. There will be no additional information. In that moment, if we choose to follow, we will have to walk by faith!

C. The Comfort (2-3) – And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ^[3] And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. While Abraham didn’t receive specific details about the trip, he was promised great blessing for his obedience. Such a promise would have been incomprehensible at this moment, but Abraham believed God and trusted His word.

- That is an unchanging aspect of faith. While we can’t see the path we will travel tomorrow, or know exactly what our future will hold, we can trust the Lord. While I don’t know what I will experience in life, I do know the Lord will be there with me. I can’t begin to imagine my eternal home in heaven, but it is promised and being prepared for me. I can’t predict the day the Lord will call for me, but I am secure in Him. He saved me by His grace, reconciled me to God, and granted me eternal life. That offers great comfort when facing uncertainties in life.

II. The Response to the Call (4-6) – Here we discover Abraham’s response to the call to follow God. Consider:

A. His Departure (4) – So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. We don’t have any details

about the move; all we know is Abraham departed. He responded to the call of God and followed Him. It is interesting to note that Abraham was seventy five years old when he began this walk of faith. He had no idea where he was going, or when he would arrive, but he stepped out in faith!

- That is a simple truth, and yet it is very profound. I am convinced some present today have heard from the Lord. He has given the call to follow Him. That may be all you have at this moment, and the Lord is expecting you to follow by faith. Many times the details aren't revealed until we respond in obedience. We must exercise our faith and follow the Lord in order to really discover His desire for our lives. (This also puts to rest the argument of age or ability. It is never too late to follow the Lord. He desires each of us to follow Him, regardless of our age.)

B. His Devotion (5) – [And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.](#) It is apparent that Abraham was fully surrendered and totally committed to following the Lord. He took his immediate family and all his belongings with him. This reveals that he had no plans to turn back on God. He wasn't planning on returning to Haran.

- Walking by faith requires total surrender. We cannot walk by faith and continue to depend on our past, possessions, or abilities. God may not ask you to uproot your life and move to a foreign land, but we must be willing to surrender all we have in order to follow Him. Anything less is not walking by faith at all. Faith isn't needed as long as we feel as if we are in control and have the ability to make all the decisions. Faith becomes apparent as we surrender our lives to Christ.

C. His Dependence (6) – [And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.](#) This is an interesting detail. Abraham left Haran to follow God, without knowing where they were going. He passed through the land and came to Sichem. He still hasn't heard anything new from the Lord, but he continues to walk by faith. There has been nothing to reveal how much further they will travel, or what they will face along the way. Abraham is genuinely walking by faith.

- Our human nature doesn't like it, but that is often how the Lord operates. There are times when He reveals specific details, and at other times all we have is the command to follow. It is easy to get discouraged and off course at times like this. There are times when we literally beg for a word from the Lord, and yet we hear silence. We must continue to walk by faith, trusting the Lord, and adhering to our last instruction. If the Lord hasn't given a clear word for a new direction, keep walking in the way He led you last.

III. The Reassurance in the Call (7-9) – In the closing verses, Abraham finds reassurance in his walk with the Lord. Consider:

A. The Promise (7a) – [And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.](#) We don't know how long they have traveled or exactly how far they have gone, but in His time, the Lord offers a word of encouragement. Their walk of faith had not ended, but God promised Abraham that his children would possess the land he now journeyed through.

- Just as the Lord reassured Abraham and strengthened his faith, we too have many precious promises that enable us to continue by faith. We are not home yet, but we must continue to follow the Lord. Abraham's descendants would benefit from his faith. We can leave a legacy of faith that will benefit our children and future generations.

B. The Praise (7-8) – [And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him. ^{\[8\]} And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, *having* Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.](#) Although still uncertain of where the Lord was leading, Abraham was faithful to offer praise and worship the Lord. He prayed unto the Lord as he journeyed in the way. He was dependent on the Lord and he wanted to enjoy close fellowship and be assured of continued guidance.

- It is easy to become discouraged when we are forced to walk by faith. There are times when it seems as if our prayers are unanswered. We may even feel alone in the journey, but that is no time to abandon our faith. Even when we can't see the hand of God, we must trust Him. Even when we are filled with fear and doubt, we must continue to praise the Lord and seek His guidance in prayer. Jesus continued to pray unto the Father in His dying moments on the cross. We must do all we can to maintain close fellowship as we walk by faith.

C. The Persistence (9) – [And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.](#) Again, Abraham doesn't have anything specific. He continues his journey toward the south. He is simply following the Lord, walking by faith. God hasn't offered any new direction, and Abraham is persistent in following the Lord until he receives a new word.

- This is where many of us struggle. We can maintain the faith for a while, but eventually we face discouragement and doubt. We find ourselves tempted to follow the path of our choosing or seek to work out a solution on our own. In those moments of despair, we must resist that temptation. As Abraham, we must be persistent in the faith and continue walking in the path God

has chosen for us. We can't see the way clear, but He sees it all. We can't change our circumstances, but He can move mountains. Keep walking by faith, following the Lord and trusting His word. His way is always best!

Conclusion: This has been a challenging study. Such a journey definitely required faith. Does it seem you are in the midst of an unknown journey today? Are you struggling to find direction and answers for the problems you face? Are you walking in the way God has led? If so, continue that path. Come to Him with your burdens and concerns. Share your heart and He will provide the help you need.

This passage illustrates salvation as well. Abraham was led from a place of sin and idolatry to a place of rest and provision in the Lord. He left the old life, influenced by sin, and walked by faith with the Lord. If you have yet to respond to the call of salvation in Christ, come to Him in faith and repentance. He stands ready to save you and grant you eternal life!