

Jesus in Genesis 15: Abraham

Intro: Some "Firsts" are so special they stick in your mind forever!

- First time I saw my wife....Didn't even know her name...Beautiful woman I had to get to know!
- First Date...Dinner and a movie...and that has been going on for almost 40 years!
- First kiss...waited 3-4 weeks...Felt so strongly about her I wanted a spiritual and emotional connection FIRST

Genesis Ch 15 is THAT kind of special...you see some things in this chapter for the first time in the bible Formative
It is one of if not THE most significant Chapter of the entire bible

Some "Firsts" that lay the foundation for some of God's most important communication to mankind.

First time: Vision; Fear Not/Don't be Afraid; Lord God;

There are a LOT of Firsts in Gen 15. Two in Particular That I want us to look at today...Systemic in God's Relationship w Us

Genesis 15:1-6 pg 10 Romans 4: pg 798 Hebrews 11:

1. The "Word of the Lord Came" to Abram. 15:1

Word: *Message of Jehovah*

Came: *Emphatic (shone like a beacon)*

What we are talking about are the communications of God to the heart and the spirit of man. It is those times when you "KNOW" that God is speaking to you...Not usually an audible voice, but the communication of Spirit to Spirit

There are many today that will tell you, "God doesn't speak to people anymore in that way. He only speaks through the bible. And, While I understand that when we feel like God is communicating to us directly, always be open to error...

Circumstance; Personal Agenda; Outside Influence; Coincidence

Jesus said: *John 10:27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.*

- How Does God "Speak/Come" to us today?
 - >Bible reading: Reading...some of the words "jump" off page...you know, God is speaking Amos last week!
 - >Prayer Distinct impression within...Spirit to Spirit
Very clear direction....do this...don't do that...Say this
 - >Sermon Just like the speaker is one on one with you...Speaks to your situation...Following you!
I pray; Book, Each Week; Over preparation; For Church...God give me words
I don't know WHO...but often I will know "Someone NEEDS this topic
People come to me all the time and say...That was JUST for me! Following me around?
No, that is God
 - >Worship Music registers in your heart and spirit...you sense God calling you to respond
Many times Bill and I will prepare independently...Songs are perfect!
When we are worshipping, God speaks to my heart...words become personal...
 - >Invitation: Something registered with you, and now you feel God calling: Heart...Spirit...Draw
Felt called to be public about my faith...and called to ministry...
- Two possible Responses:
 - >Resist: Psalm 95; Heb 3X "Today if you hear his voice do not harden your hearts"
 - >Respond: 1Sa 3:10 *The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."*

Today, at end of service, we will have an invitation...Always the same...Opportunity for you to RESPOND!

4. Faith Counted As Righteousness. Vs 6

This is the single most important element of salvation theology in the entire bible.

I am not overstating it to say EVERYTHING in Salvation Theology is built on this concept...CIRCLE IT IN BIBLE!

God is righteous and holy...demands holiness and righteousness to be in fellowship with Him

What do light and darkness have in common? Nothing....

The justice and holiness of God demand satisfaction, nothing less than perfection will ever be sufficient

Yet, man will never measure up! Regardless of how hard we try, we can never meet God's standard.

Always perfect, all the time! There is no way for us to meet that standard...we will never measure up.

No matter what we do, how we try...we fall short...

And since we could not find a way to God...God made a way to us!

Faith...is Counted as Righteousness.

Faith: Lit = *“He stayed himself upon the Lord; Rested, Trusted, Stood, Staggered not, Fully persuaded*
 There is a key difference here: Faith is not just assent/agreement Intellectual
 The kind of faith we are talking about here is Fidelity of life to the intellectual principle
 Abram Disregarded the natural impossibility, and BELIEVED and ACTED and LIVED on God’s word
 Abram trusted that what God promised, He was able to perform! Never wavered, God’s Word = Fact
 To be morally certain, steadfast and sure.
 God spoke it...and THAT word was certain...Everything was laid to rest in Abram’s heart and mind
 The Eternal Creator, Self Existent One; The All Powerful Sovereign Lord...
 That is also...Jehovah...The Personal God...that knows us and can be known...
HE SPOKE...and ABRAHAM BELIEVED HIM
 Vs 1-5: What can you give me? How can you help me? I and Sarah are old..Past Ability

God SPOKE to him...And ABRAM BELIEVED...and began to live based on that belief
 Took Action: *Where natural understanding offers no hope or ground of expectation..Abram Believed
 He believed...and He kept believing...Took Action, built his life on God’s word Despite*

Counted: Lit = To be reckoned, or counted, to be valued as, to be computed as, to be imputed to
 Abram believed, in faith trusted God, and God counted that as Righteousness!
 To be remembered and made public as a matter of public record
 To be charged/imputed/added to your account
 ILLUS: History of American Diplomacy, Timothy Dalzell

One thing is credited as another...By the graciousness of God!

Righteousness: Lit = Right standing with God...Rightness, moral virtue, Justice
 God saw Abram’s faith...and counted that to Abram as righteousness
 God saw that Abram BELIEVED him...and LIVED w/o compromise based on that belief
 And God said, THAT is what I am looking for...and I will CREDIT that as Righteousness

How does that work?

- Rom 4:1-8, 18-25 Pg 797 (Abram believed God could revitalize his “dead” body...) We are same!
- Heb 11:11-12; 17-19 Pg 852 (Abram believed God would honor his word; Raise Isaac from Dead)

Faith Takes God at His word:

- Believes what God says
- Lives how God directs
- Holds onto what God promises
- Refuses to surrender to what it sees or hears that is different
- Stands on what God offers
- Trusts God

CONCL:

When did you last hear God?

Have you found the courage to truly trust Him...and what He has told you to do?

Do you believe that HE has the right to do all that He desires...and directs....fulfill every promise?

Have you put your faith in Him...and Him alone....

- Accept Him as Savior
- Follow Him in baptism
- Walk in obedience to his direction
- Serve in ministry he calls you to

That’s what we mean by being in relationship with Him...you trust Him to do all that He promises...

To act the way he says he will act

To provide, protect...to be there for you regardless of what comes your way

Have you heard Him call to you today?

It’s that still small voice within...Where you KNOW He is speaking...

Whatever it is...you have a choice to make...

Resist?

Respond?