

Abraham: Life of Faith

Week 3 – Genesis 14

Leaders' Notes

DON'T MISS THIS TIP:

You will notice that there are questions related to the Genesis passage on Abraham, followed by a passage from another part of the Bible related to the theme for the week. Please feel free to spend more or less time in the study focusing on the sermon passage or the new passage or split your time equally, depending on your group. The main purpose of the Bible studies is to dig deeper into God's Word, and apply what we are learning to our lives.

Ice Breaker Question:

Can you think about a time when you experienced or witnessed an unusual act of generosity?

Going Deeper from Sunday

Sermon Synopsis

Powerful eastern kings swept through the land, plundering the cities of the Jordan, because those cities had rebelled and ceased to be subject to them (i.e. give them money). Abram's nephew Lot was taken captive along with the other spoils from the city of Sodom. Abram and his allies pursued them and rescued Lot, acquiring many goods and possessions in the process. On his return, Abram was met by the King of Sodom and Melchizedek, the king of Salem. Melchizedek (also called a priest) blessed Abram and blessed God most high who gave him the victory. Abram responded by giving him a tenth (a tithe) of his spoils from the battle. Abram then refused the King of Sodom's offer to keep the rest of the spoils (which were rightfully Abraham's anyway) so as not to appear to become indebted to him.

Key Application

The king of Sodom tempted Abram to take credit for his great victory by giving him the sense that he earned a reward from him. Melchizedek reminded Abraham of where the victory and his spoils came from. We need to see everything that we have as a blessing from God and that everything ultimately belongs to God. We must resist the voices (like the King of Sodom's) that would tempt us to take credit and ownership for the blessings we have.

Follow-up Questions

Read over Genesis 14 again (perhaps start in v. 4). Are there any reflections or questions you had from Sunday's Sermon?

Read again Abraham's interaction with Melchizedek (vv. 14:18-20).

- Can you see any connections between his blessing over Abraham and God's blessing on him in Genesis 12:1-3, 7?
- How is God's promise to bless those who bless Abram and curse those who curse him fulfilled in Genesis 14? (Think of the eastern kings invading land and also the Amorites in v. 13, 24)
- What does Abram's gift of a tenth of the spoils (a tithe) tell us about his view of who Melchizedek is or represents for him?

The King of Sodom tempted Abraham to take credit for the spoils he gathered in his victory.

- Why would Abraham be tempted to take credit? (Think about why you might take credit for your successes)
- How did Melchizedek serve as God's reminder to Abraham in the midst of this temptation?
- What does the temptation of the King of Sodom look like in our lives? (i.e. When do we like to take credit for what you have?)
 - Are there ways you sense God reminding you of where your spoils/successes come from when those temptations come?

Question for Reflection

What types of things or circumstances enable you or prevent you from being generous with what God has gifted you with?

Mining the Scriptures

1 Tim 6:6-10, 17-19

These verses contain many nuggets of truth and principles about how we are to think about money. In your group, list as many of these "truisms" as you can.

- Which truisms strike you the most? Why?
- In 6:19, Paul wants those who are wealthy to be generous so that "they may take hold of the life that is truly life." By contrast, what would *life that is NOT truly life* look like? What is the "truly life" Paul is talking about?
- Paul's statement: "For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it" reminds us that all we have comes from God. How could a biblical understanding of generosity stem from this conviction?

Application questions

What are some truths you need to be reminding yourself about this week when it comes to your use of money?

Close in prayer

Spend some time praying for each other.