

## **Abraham: Life of Faith**

### Week 9 – Genesis 18:16-32

***IMPORTANT LEADER NOTE: Please reserve the final 15 minutes of your study for the Prayer Exercise at the bottom of study. You do not need to get to all the questions.***

#### ***Ice Breaker Question:***

Have you ever had a surprisingly deep conversation with a child (can be your own)? Share this with the group.

#### ***Going Deeper from Sunday***

##### **Sermon Synopsis**

In the second half Genesis 18, the Lord decides to tell Abraham about his plans to judge Sodom. Abraham asks the Lord a series of questions in an attempt to convince the Lord to spare Sodom (but it is probably in order to spare Lot, his nephew). He negotiates with God based on what he knows about God's character with regard to judging rightly and not wanting the righteous to be harmed along with the wicked.

##### **Key Application**

God also invites us to be involved with him in things he is doing in the world. Its an incredible thing that God not only wants us to pray, but allows our prayers to impact what he does.

##### **Follow-up Questions**

Notice that the Lord "broke the third wall" with Abraham and said "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?" (v. 17) (think: when the camera crew in *The Office* takes a character out of the scene and interviews them). What do we learn from this about God's relationship with Abraham? Try to imagine different reasons why God might invite Abraham into a discussion (prayer) about what he plans to do?

Abraham is called the friend of God. In the same way, Jesus calls us friends. In John 15:15, Jesus said, "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you." In the same way Abraham learned about "his master's business" from God, so Jesus claims that he has made all he has learned from the father known to *us*! How does Jesus do this? How can we be involved in how God works out his plans today?

Look closely at Abraham's 'prayer dialogue' with God. What arguments does he employ to convince God to spare Sodom? (Key answer: Abraham does what we see other biblical characters doing elsewhere in Scripture: namely, reminding God of what he is like, and asking him to be consistent with that character.)

How might we employ a similar technique in our prayers? For example: take Hebrews 4:16: "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." How might this verse help lead us as we pray?

### **Prayer Exercise**

Talk to one another about specific things you want to pray for as a group. It could be individual needs or it could be a bigger more general matter like division in our nation around the results of the election.

Before you pray, spend some time talking about the characteristics and/or promises of God that would apply to each prayer request. Then when you pray as a group begin by praying back to God his promises and characteristics, before you bring the very specific requests before him. (i.e. if someone has a health need, you might begin by acknowledging and thanking God that he gave us life, cares about us, knows all things, can do all things etc.)