

Sermon Discussion - 21 May 2023

Read Genesis 12:1-9

Getting Started *Sharing from personal experience*

Imagine you have grown up in the same village, town, or city, got a job in that same place, and started a family there. It isn't the perfect life, but you feel like you could live in that place the rest of your life. Suddenly, God intervenes in your life with an irresistible and growing conviction that you're called to do a greater work somewhere else. When your family asks you what the work is and where you're going, all you can tell them is that you don't know. You only know that you're supposed to uproot and begin driving in the one direction you've never been before. Only then will God give you more specifics.

How certain would you be that your conviction is God's voice? Do you think he would really tell you to do something so disruptive and inconvenient? What would you say about the lack of specifics?

Observation *Discovering the context*

In Genesis 3, God exiled Adam and Eve from Eden, multiplied the pain of childbirth, cursed the ground so that it would produce food only through hard labour, and subjected human beings to death.

- How do God's promises to Abram in (Gen. 12:1-3) begin to address the components of the curse in a positive way?
- How do the promises to Abram begin to foreshadow redemption?

Interpretation *Discovering the meaning*

1. The people destroyed in the Flood were noted in (Gen. 6:4) as "men of renown" (lit. "men of a name"). The people of Babel were destroyed for trying to make a name for themselves (Gen. 11:4). According to God's promise in (Gen. 12:2), how was Abram going to be different?
2. When God spoke to Abram, He was clear about what he was supposed to leave, but God was a bit vague about where Abram was supposed to go. Why do you think God didn't tell Abram up front where he would be going?
3. In our culture, how would you describe someone who is trying to make a name for themselves? What are they like? What do they do?

4. In what places did Abram build altars? What was the significance of building altars at each spot?
5. Our spiritual pilgrimage can be charted by the altars we build. If your life were charted by altars of worshipful obedience, where on your journey would we find them? What are some significant steps of faith-filled obedience and worship that you have taken along the way?

Application *Putting knowledge into practice*

- Do you rely on God to make your name great, or are you striving to make a name for yourself? What evidences in your life exemplify your answer?
- How would total reliance on God for steps of faith affect your current decisions and priorities?
- Try memorising Genesis 12:2.
And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.
- How has God blessed you and answered prayer this week?