



## DISCUSSION GUIDE

Faith is Found – Part 2  
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Sunday Oct 14, 2018

**Main Idea** – The most significant things a believer can do is pray for, have concern for, and help someone else. Every day God will provide opportunities for you to be used by Him. Sometimes, those opportunities seem inconvenient. Like Abraham, “great” people of God respond to the opportunities.

### Faith and good works go hand-in-hand

- Faith is active. People who have faith do not sit around, but are continually using that faith.
- **James 2: 14-18 – What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. (NKJV)**
- Jesus is evaluating us – watching who among his followers are doing what He told them to do.
- **Matthew 7: 21-23 – Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ (NKJV)**
- **Luke 6: 46-49 – “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say? Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.” (NKJV)**
- The good works done by believers are like fruit. They draw people to Jesus.

## Look for opportunities

- **Galatians 6: 9-10 – And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. (NKJV)**
- There are many opportunities for each of us – and our local churches – to do good.
- We don't always know when opportunities will come, or in what form they will come.
- God chooses the opportunities. We don't always get to pick them.
- No one is able to do everything by himself or herself. The Bible tells us not to grow weary doing good. One reason we gather together in local church groups is so none of us will grow weary; as a group great things will be done.

## The difference between great and good

- Abraham and Lot are two significant men in the Old Testament. However, the Bible seems to regard Abraham more highly than Lot.
- **Genesis 12: 1-3 - God told Abram: “Leave your country, your family, and your father’s home for a land I will show you. I’ll make you a great nation and bless you. I’ll make you famous; you’ll be a blessing. I’ll bless those who bless you; those who curse you I’ll curse. All the families of the Earth will be blessed through you.” (Message)**
- **2 Peter 2: 6-8 – God decreed destruction for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. A mound of ashes was all that was left – grim warning to anyone bent on an ungodly life. But that good man Lot, driven nearly out of his mind by the sexual filth and perversity, was rescued. (Message)**

## Abraham obeyed God by faith, even when the task seemed too big

- **Hebrews 11: 8-10 – By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (NKJV)**
- Abraham understood God's promise, but had no idea how it possibly would come to be. Nevertheless, he trusted God would provide the way to make it happen.
- Most believers experience the same thing. They know God has given them great promises and tasks, but can't see how it all will be accomplished. Mark Batterson described it this way: “Faith is walking out on a limb and cutting it off

and then watching the tree fall.”

- The things God has given us to do will often seem too big for us. That is a normal reaction to a promise – or a task – from God. In such times pray for peace, not comfort.

### **Abraham responded to opportunities to bless others even when it was uncomfortable**

- To seal the covenant between God and Abraham, God instructed Abraham and all the males under him to be circumcised.
- **Genesis 17: 10-11 – This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.**
- This procedure surely was painful for Abraham. Nevertheless, very soon afterward – in **Genesis 18** – Abraham gladly hosted three angels outside his tent.
- He also interceded for the citizens of Sodom (**Genesis 18: 22-33**).
- In **Genesis 19** the angels visited Lot in Sodom. Lot’s primary concern was for himself and his own family.

### **What this means for us today**

- Even when it was uncomfortable – and the task seemed too difficult – Abraham responded by being concerned for others, not himself.
- God is your Father. He knows your needs and has promised to take care of you. **Matthew 6: 31-34 – “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.**
- When you pray, pray for someone else. Like Abraham, have your first concerns be for the needs of others.
- That is the difference between a great believer and a good believer.

## **Reflective Questions for Faith is Found – Part 2**

1. The Bible tells us to be observant for opportunities to help others. The Bible also gives examples where God - not the humans in the stories - provided those opportunities. Why is it important to be

obedient to the opportunities God provides, and not to make up our own? (Use Galatians 6: 9-10 above to answer.)

2. Why does God often provide opportunities to help others at times when it is inconvenient for us?
3. From what the Bible tells us about Abraham and Lot in this message, identify the reasons Abraham is more highly regarded.
4. Can you give an example of someone you know who helped others even when it was inconvenient?
5. Why did Pastor Stephen say we should pray for peace, not comfort?

