My wife calls me at some of the most inconvenient times…

When I’m brushing my teeth or in the kitchen which is next the laundry room…

When she calls it sounds like…

I’ve asked her before to wait until I’m in a better place before she calls…

Today we’re going to look at one of the most important calls in Biblical history. The call of Abram (father).

Eventually God gave him a new name Abraham (Father of a multitude).

He was the one that God called to build a nation of faithful/obedient believers called Israel.

Bible tells us that Abram was living with his father, Terah, until his father’s death at the ripe old age of 205.

Terah had not been a Godly example for his son.

Joshua 24:2 tells us that he was an idolator, he worshipped other gods.

Terah’s passing was a pivotal point in Abram’s life.

God knew this was the right time to call Abram to move forward and grow his faith in Yahweh, Elohim, the self-existent, Sovereign God and Creator of the Universe…

Perhaps many of us can look back on our lives and see significant events that God has used to move us forward and grow us closer to Him.

Let’s turn in our Bibles this morning to Genesis 12:1-9

1. Abram’s call from God V1 - “The Lord said to Abram.”

Notice that it was God who reached out and initiated contact with Abram.

From creation to redemption, God calls everyone.

Jesus confirmed this John 6:44 – “no one can come to God unless He draws/calls them.”

2 Peter 3:9 – God is not willing that any would perish, but that all would come to repentance.

When I look back on my life, I see God calling someone who was focused on building their own Kingdom. Living for their career, family and possessions.

But I can definitely see where I intentionally ignored God’s call many times… I was too busy serving other gods…

But I praise God that for His unconditional love, mercy, grace and forgiveness, and the Hoy Spirit (Hound of Heaven) who never stops calling...

1. What did God call Abram to do?

”Go” “Depart” “Leave”

Leave what?

* + Your country
	+ Your people
	+ Your Father’s household
	+ The trap of things familiar, comfort and possessions

When God calls, does He leave people where He finds them? Not usually… At some point there is usually a “going” or “departing”.

Each of us who are serving God here today, have heard God’s call, we left where we were… the familiar/comfortable…

And God is doing miraculous things here at New Beginnings!

He is calling more and more folks here to come to faith in Him, grow by faith in Him, and faithfully build His Kingdom with us.

Do you suppose it was easy for Abram to leave? It is never easy to leave the people, places and things that we love and are familiar with.

Why? Because the things we can see are a natural source of significance & security for us.

It’s our kingdom… where we’re important and we feel safe.

Which is exactly why God called Abram to Go!

Who here likes change?

I’ve spoken to a couple of people this week who have said; “I do not like change.”

Change is a difficult thing for us… when we have to face the possibility of having to change where we live, work or go to school…

I remember when my mom dropped me off for my first day of Kindergarten at Ben Franklin elementary in Elgin, IL.

I cried something fierce! My mom (Godly woman that she is), said something like – “suck it up buttercup!” We’re not running a princess camp!

Then after I did a year of hard time there, I had to change schools again!

I was sent to Channing Elementary for 1st, and part of 2nd grade…

* Then I had to change again, doing the rest of my time at Coleman elementary.
* Then more change… on to Junior High, High School & college.
* Then more change… career, marriage, family…

With all of the change we deal with, one might think we should be experts at it by now…

That it would become more natural for us to move from the “known” to the “unknown”!

By trusting God and leaving all that Abram had known in pursuit of the “unknown”, Abram would learn the valuable lesson that God was teaching him… To find his security & significance in God alone.

Are you allowing God to teach you that lesson?

If not, it could be that the roots of your security & significance may be so tightly wrapped around the people, places & things in your life that you are ignoring God’s call… which also creates a sterile faith that you control.

Sometimes the place that God calls us to leave isn’t a physical location, but a HIGH place of worship in our mind, that gives us a false sense of security & significance.

* Pride
* Superiority complex. Believing you are superior to others.
* Needing to control everything.
* Thinking more highly of yourself than you ought to.
1. What did God promise Abram (not if, but) when he left? V2-3
* I will make you a great nation!
* I will bless you and make you famous!
* You will be a blessing to others!
* I will bless those who bless you & curse those who curse you!
* ALL families on the earth will be blessed through you!

But none of that happens apart from Abram’s faith & obedience to God’s call…

Security, significance and the blessings of God are found when we sanctify (set ourselves apart) to become a 2 Corinthians 5:7 believer. Walking by “faith and not by sight”.

Notice that Abram didn’t say; “God, I’ll go if you show me how these promises will come to pass? No

Most of what God promised Abram wouldn’t occur until long after he passed away… So he never saw them… *Until he arrived in Heaven!*

Abram’s brain wouldn’t have been able to understand the complexity of all of the generations of people who would be blessed by following his example of faith & obedience.

He wouldn’t have been able to understand how GREAT God was going to make his name!

He never could have imagined that we would be talking about him in Camp Verde, AZ, in 2019!

Israel wouldn’t become a nation until 1948

So literally, God is still fulfilling His promise to Abram today!

ALL families of the earth will be blessed through you!

1. Abram’s commitment to God

How old was Abram when he committed himself to walking by faith/obeying God? V4 75

How important was Abram’s commitment? Just as important as Noah and reluctant Moses’…

How great would Israel be today if Abram would have been more committed to his country, his people, his possessions (his kingdom) than he was to God? Probably just as great, only God would have used another committed person to accomplish it.

1. How important is our commitment to God today?
* Who stands to benefit? Our country, our town, our people, God’s Kingdom.
* Who stands in the way? You do…
* What excuses do we make for not committing yourself to God and His Kingdom building work?

When one’s commitments are aimed at producing blessings for themselves.

It means they are blind to the bigger picture…

You will never know until you get to Heaven, the impact that your lifelong commitment to building God’s Kingdom has made until you get to Heaven.

According to the Wheaton College website…

* In 1855 Sunday School teacher Edward Kimball helped lead Dwight L. Moody to Christ;
* In 1918 Dwight L. Moody was preaching and J. Wilbur Chapman came to Christ.
* J. Wilbur Chapman was preaching and Billy Sunday got saved.
* Billy Sunday became a great evangelist and preacher who led a man named Mordecai Ham to Christ.
* In 1934 Mordecai Ham was preaching and gave an altar call, who came forward? Billy Graham

We have no idea how many millions, perhaps BILLIONS have come to faith in Christ thru Billy Graham’s ministry…

How many more teachers and preachers has God called as a result? And all because a Sunday School teacher named Edward Kimball led DL Moody to Christ almost a hundred years earlier!

Don’t loose heart Sunday School teacher… Galatians 6:9

Grow in your commitment to be faithful!

You have no idea how God will use you…

We live in such a “now” culture… If we can’t envision, or don’t see fruit from our ministry when we think we should… we “abandon ship”!

That may be why some (not all)Pastor’s hop from church to church…

Even Pastor’s need to learn the faith & patience of Abram…

1. Abram’s Communion with God.
* God had blessed Abram with people & possessions V5
* Hasn’t God also blessed us greatly in America as well?

Yet, many feel empty & dis-satisfied…

When we answer God’s call and get committed to building His Kingdom we share in His blessings and are satisfied…

Galatians 5:22-23 kicks in and love, joy, peace, patience, etc… overflow from our lives and spills all over everyone and everything!

* God promises you will be a blessing (present) to others!

Wouldn’t it be nice to be a blessing to others for once?

Some of us can be a real pain in the neck to our family, our spouse, our parents/children, our boss, teacher etc…

Here is the kicker… when we are a present to others, others become a present to us!! I will bless those who bless you

And curse those who curse you…

Where did Abram & family travel to? Canaan

Who was waiting there? V6 Canaanites!

Were they friendly?

Does God promise us no Canaanites when we arrive at the place He is calling us to?

What did God do upon their arrival? V7 He appeared to Abram (initiating contact again)

What did Abram do in response to God giving them the land? V7 Pitched a tent and built an altar!

What is the significance of that?

Tents are temporary altars are permanent.

Abram held loosely to the things of this world: A tent suggests he was ready to continue trusting & moving forward with God.

He held tightly to his relationship with God. It was a permanent, and substantial part of his life.

Everywhere Abram went, he built an altar…

 Have you answered God’s call?

 Have you committed yourself to building His Kingdom?

 Have you given yourself to become a blessing to others?

If you would like to we have an altar here for you, please come and talk to God as we sing.