Good morning. Happy New Year. Are you excited for the new year? Anxious? Hopeful? Before we go any further, I want to remind you of something: God is good, and God is faithful. And God keeps His word. And because we can trust Him, we stand upon His word, positioned on the promises He makes. In our reading in Genesis, God promises Abram—later Abraham--that He will make him a great nation. Now Abram is seventy-five years old when he receives this promise; he has no children. Though he is not a young man, Abram believes and obeys (Genesis 12:4). He bases his trust upon the word of God, not on his own, human understanding. He believes God’s promise: He will, if God says it is so, father a great nation; he will have his name made great; he will be a blessed and will be a blessing. By Abram’s example, we should take God at His word.

 Did you know that there are 7487 promises of God to humans recorded in scripture? Now sometimes, those promises are specific to people and circumstances, but while those promises—like this one to Abram—are not specific to us, we can see how each of them is *for* us. In the promises recounted in the bible, we can see how God meets needs and works in the lives of His children. The Lord’s promises are expressions of His love and care. They are promises upon which we can stand! How can we have complete trust in them? Because God’s character stands behind them. Believers must believe the Lord their God and stand on these promises, receive them, and appropriate them. As Paul tells us, “13 For this reason, take up the full armor of God so that you may be able to stand your ground on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand” (Ephesians 6:13). Behind the promises is an omnipotent, unfailing, faithful God. God’s power, authority, and character totally support the promises He makes.

 In response, we, therefore, need to “hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for He who promised is faithful” (Hebrews 10:23). Listen, family. God’s promises are the believer’s inheritance today. Each believer has a choice: To believe the enemy’s lies or to believe the promises of God as our inheritance—provision, preservation, forgiveness, the Holy Spirit for guidance—all expressions of His overarching, unending love. Assured of His faithfulness and love, we find and experience peace in trusting, in establishing and sustaining intimacy with our God. That’s the position for the believer. Ministry and standing on Go’s promises flow from a place of intimacy with God. That’s how Abraham can trust and walk in obedience to his God. That’s how he could trust God with Isaac at Mount Moriah where he tells his servants, “You two stay[b] here with the donkey while the boy and I go up there. We will worship and then return to you” (\*Genesis 22:5). Abraham trusts God to provide: He and Isaac will return from the worship.: God is Jehovah-Jireh, “The Lord my provider.”

 Listen, Family. God makes promises based on His perfect knowledge. In the fulfillment of those promises, He honors Himself. In His promises of salvation, of peace, of assurance. And the believer positions himself within those promises as a follower of Christ. Family, Abraham was not perfect. Read his story. The wonderful news is that we don’t have to be perfect either for God to love us and to give to us His promises. But we must trust Him as our personal savior; with that trust, we claim His promises as our own. We must walk in intimacy and trust, and we can because of His love. There is nothing we can do to earn or deserve His love or the promises that flow from it. But it is our responsibility to simply believe and to depend upon Him to fulfill them:

20 For every one of God’s promises are “Yes” in him; therefore, also through him the “Amen” is spoken, to the glory we give to God. 21 But it is God who establishes us together with you in Christ and who anointed us, 22 who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a down payment.

 2 Corinthians 20-22

To His glory, God keeps His promises.

So, let me ask again: Where are you in walking with God? Are you walking intimately? Have you strayed away? Are you leading a surrendered and devoted life to our God? Or are you treating God like a spare tire—taking Him out to support you temporarily but returning to your will directing your life when all seems to go well? Are you standing on the promises of God or just sitting on the premises?

Let Paul’s admonition to the church at Rome remind us of our God’s faithfulness:

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how we should pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with inexpressible groanings. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes on behalf of the saints according to God’s will. 28 And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose, 29 because those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified.

31 What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

--Romans 8:26-31

Our victory is in Christ. Our identity, our affirmation, as heirs to the Kingdom are found in Him. We need only do as the letter of James suggests:

8 Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and make your hearts pure, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn, and weep. Turn your laughter into mourning and your joy into despair. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you. -- James 4:8-10

God encourages and invites renewed intimacy. Position yourself in His promises!

Passages in support of this sermon:

Numbers 23:19

God is not a man, that he should lie,

nor a human being, that he should change his mind.

Has he said, and will he not do it?

Or has he spoken, and will he not make it happen?

Genesis 12:1-**7**

12 Now the Lord said to Abram,

“Go out from your country, your relatives, and your father’s household

to the land that I will show you.

2 Then I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you,

and I will make your name great,

so that you will exemplify divine blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you,

but the one who treats you lightly I must curse,

so that all the families of the earth may receive blessing through you.”

4 So Abram left, just as the Lord had told him to do, and Lot went with him. (Now Abram was 75 years old when he departed from Haran.) 5 And Abram took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they left for the land of Canaan. They entered the land of Canaan.

6 Abram traveled through the land as far as the oak tree of Moreh at Shechem. (At that time the Canaanites were in the land.) 7 The Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” So, Abram built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.