

# Genesis/The Epic Faith of Abraham/Chapter 14

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## MAIN POINT

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The epic faith of Abram in God led to God blessing him with victory and through Abram's response the blessing remaining untarnished



## INTRODUCTION

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As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**ICE BREAKER QUESTION: If you could make one impossibility possible, what would it be? Why?**

As children we imagined taking flight like Superman. We had daydreams of visiting the far away worlds we read about in books. We dreamed of the impossible, and this is a practice that follows us into adulthood. Although, as adults, dreams may look a little different. Against impossible odds we dream of seeing people rescued from their circumstances, we dream of seeing relationships reconciled, we dream of seeing the world turned around. As we saw in this passage God was able to do the impossible with the epic faith of Abraham and He has the ability to rule and overrule the circumstances of life. His dreams are far greater than our own, and the limitations of what's possible have no hold on Him. Just as big of a victory was Abraham having the epic faith that led to the defeat of the foreign kings was his discernment in being able to see where the true blessing came from in the victor and then properly giving credit to God.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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- 1. What insight, lesson, or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? How was your experience with the Life Tool's this past week?**
- 2. Have you ever found yourself in a situation like Lot where you felt defeated and hopeless and then God used someone in your life to pull you out of that situation? How has that impacted your faith?**

Lot's continual bad choices led him to being around bad company and being in the wrong place at the wrong time. These foreign kings have conquered everyone in that region and now have taken captive Lot and his whole family. All his possessions were gone, and he was now on the path to becoming a slave to this foreign nation. Kent Hughes illustrated well Lot's situation and what he was going through:

“Lot and everything he possessed was carted off to who knows where. Turkey? Read between the lines. Lot had seen agonizing deaths and rapes., the traditional wake of ancient victory. Perhaps he had lost children and loved ones. Perhaps a daughter was now the prize of some Hittite. As he trudged across the Transjordan toward Canaan’s borders, all his hopes were dead”

There are many of us who have experienced some tragic or life altering event similar to Lot and have felt hopeless and/or defeated. Ask the group to think about how God worked in that situation through others and how that impacted their faith.

### **3. What was so significant about Abram’s decision to pursue and rescue Lot?**

Abram could have chosen to not do anything. Lot was the one who made the bad decision and besides if he would get involved then more people would most likely get hurt. He was also going to be endangering himself who was supposed to be the Father of the great nation. As we compared last week, Abram was acting in a very selfless way and was ultimately acting like Christ in this way. Kent Hughes stated this idea well below:

“As Abram was to Lot, so Christ is to us. Jesus did not sit idly by in Heaven waiting for us to deserve redemption. Neither was our redemption painless. Christ left glories of heaven to come after us”

Abram set another great example for us on how to have this epic faith in God and how we can be Christ towards others.

#### **1 John 3:16-18 (NIV)**

<sup>16</sup> This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. <sup>17</sup> If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? <sup>18</sup> Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

### **4. What areas in your life do you need to trust God to do the impossible? Why are you having trouble trusting God in those areas?**

In Abram’s situation, going up against these foreign kings to rescue to his nephew, must have felt impossible. Yet we see Abram continue to trust in God’s promise to where he is willing to sacrifice his own life and make a courageous step. Abraham only had a few hundred men with which to rescue Lot, but God had the final say over the outcome of the mission. Abraham’s advantage was not in his numbers or the physical prowess of his warriors.

## **John 15:12-14 (NIV)**

<sup>12</sup> My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. <sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command.

Encourage the group to think of areas in their own life that they are having trouble trusting God to do something big. Ask them to discuss what is holding them back from trusting in God.

### **5. Why did Abraham refuse to make a deal with the king of Sodom? Do you think it may have been tempting to make the deal with the king? Why?**

In verse 21 the king of Sodom appeared to be offering Abraham a hefty nest egg for his offspring, but Abraham made an oath with the Most High God that he would not accept anything from Sodom. God gave victory to Abraham over Lot's captors and surely God would continue to bless Abraham, ultimately providing him and his descendants with more than could be counted. Abram did not want the king of Sodom to take any credit or be able to use any of the spoils from the victory as a way to use Abram later on. Abram was keeping all of the victory and glory with God.

It probably was tempting for Abram because he was the one who went out to fight, not the king of Sodom so why wouldn't he get to be the one to keep all the spoils? Abram was more concerned about God getting the glory and he was not trusting in the things of this world.

Allen Ross stated this temptation well in his commentary:

"In this narrative the more subtle threat came after the success in the conflict and was an offer that would confuse worldly benefits and divine blessing. In many ways, the tension that Abram faced with the king of Sodom was far more critical than the battle, for the reputation of the Lord was at stake. The people of God may win spiritual struggles, but in the limelight of their success they may give always all the glory to some pagan pretender who would be delighted to rob God of the credit for spiritual success"

We might also have been in a situation like Abram's and faced with this same conflict.

**Have you ever mistaken a gift from this world as a blessing from God?**

### **6. Have you ever had a time in your life when you said "no" to something good in order to say "yes" to something better?**

Maybe a situation like this happened recently in some of the lives of people in your group. Saying no so we can say yes to what God has for us is always better. We see this principle all through scripture and some example verses are below:

**Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)**

<sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
<sup>6</sup> in all your ways submit to him,  
and he will make your paths straight.<sup>[a]</sup>

**Luke 22:41-43 (NIV)**

<sup>41</sup> He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup> "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." <sup>43</sup> An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.

**7. How do we recognize when certain blessings are from God?**

The blessings of God are untarnished. They don't come in the form of going against what God commands in his word or taking away God's glory. We see that in this passage with how Abram responded. Allen Ross stated this well:

"Abram knew the wicked nature of the people of Sodom and the man over them, and he discerned that his motive might be dangerous to the reputation for God's program in the future. He wanted this man to have no occasion to claim the responsibility for the blessing. A discernment of the nature and motive of those who give or offer to give is basic"

As Ross stated we have to look at the nature and motive of how we are being blessed and that will help us determine if it is from God.

Encourage your group to think how they have responded typically in the past to blessings:

**How do we typically respond to God's blessings? How should we respond?**

**8. Similar to how God gave Abram a physical victory, how does God also give us a spiritual one today?**

God can give you spiritual victories every day when we choose to live for Him. When we keep in mind that the source of all of our victories and blessings is God, then we are able to fight in the spiritual warfare rightly.

Challenge the group to think through their own life today how God working through their faith to bring about physical and spiritual victories.

## Conclusion

The church will vanquish the kingdom of Satan (Matt. 16:18), but this does not mean we will be free from setbacks along the way (Acts 8:1–3; 12:1–5). Still, we know we will be liberated from suffering when Jesus returns (Rev. 19:11–21). Until then, we have a responsibility to wage war through serving others, prayer, evangelism, and ministries of mercy. The people of God must, for their credit's sake, take heed of doing anything that looks wicked or mercenary, or that savors of covetousness and self-seeking." Appearances can be deceiving. We must take care not to accept gifts given under false pretenses or which might bring reproach to Christ. Be wise when it comes to accepting presents and do not give gifts in order to exercise control over others.

## PRAYER

Pray for God to give us the courage and faith in Him to take action in situations that seem impossible. Pray for discernment in recognizing the blessings from God and how to respond so as to give God the proper glory.



## FURTHER STUDY

### **Proverbs 21:31 (NIV)**

<sup>31</sup>The horse is made ready for the day of battle,  
but victory rests with the LORD.

### **Matthew 10:16 (NIV)**

<sup>16</sup>"I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.





"Temptation will often hit you during times of blessing and spiritual victory."

**Greg Laurie**

"The difference between the blessed person and the ungodly person is that the blessed person walks according to the course of heaven and not according to the course of this world."

**R.C. Sproul**

### **Additional Resources**

Devotionals-

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/abram-rescues-lot/>

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/king-sodom/>

Articles –

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/priestly-nation/>

Sermon-

<https://www.tvresources.net/resource-library/sermons/madness/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTUedX5peDE&t=1742s>