# A Downpayment of Future Inheritance

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Date: 18 October 2026

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[0:00] Lord, we ask you one more time, God, to help us as we turn to this word in Genesis 22, Lord.

! God, we thank you that your New Testament apostles give us such rich insights into the Old Testament. God, we pray that you'd give us insight now by your Spirit, for your glory, for the growth of this church, for the saving of the lost.
We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, good morning, church. My name is Mike. I'm one of the pastors here at Shoreline. And kind of as I was just praying, if you want some of the best commentary on the Old Testament, turn to the New Testament.
We've read Hebrews a couple times at least as we've walked through Genesis, and we are very helped when looking at Hebrews. But we are in Genesis. We are still in Genesis chapter 22.
So feel free to turn there in your Bibles this morning. You know, I was not this category of college student, but I've known some, and maybe you were in this category, and you're very blessed if so.
[1:05] I've known some whose parents promised to pay their whole college tuition. And to help affirm that promise, they would give them like a small portion of that up front.

You know, they wanted their kids to do well. They wanted to help them financially through college. And so this little down payment was an assurance of the fact that they were going to help cover the costs in the end.
And not, now that this wouldn't have worked for some of you, but not having the whole amount up front would hopefully motivate them to work hard, right, to do the best that they could.
And so in today's sermon text in Genesis, we actually see a very similar dynamic at play with Abraham and with his offspring. And then we're going to see at the end of the sermon how that same dynamic is at play today in the lives of the saints.
And so again, please turn in your Bibles to Genesis chapter 22, verses, verse 20, and we'll be going through the end of chapter 23 today. The title of today's sermon is a down payment of future inheritance.
[2:10] A down payment of future inheritance. And here's the main point. It's really simple today, okay? Like Abraham, we have a down payment guaranteeing our future inheritance.

Like Abraham, we have a down payment guaranteeing our future inheritance. And hopefully we'll unpack that a little bit today. Well, believe it or not, but we are soon approaching the end of the Abraham narrative in Genesis.
And we're almost actually to the halfway point of the book of Genesis. Now, if you've been with us, we've been journeying along with Abraham since chapter 12, when God called him out of his home country, out of his family to go to Mesopotamia.
So to leave his pagan life behind and follow Yahweh the Lord and to go to the land of Canaan. And we saw that God gave Abraham these lofty promises, really three categories.
Land, blessing, and seed or offspring. And then it's kind of high level to kind of like orient us here. Genesis 12 through 15 largely pertained to the land promise.
[3:12] And it culminated in that strange ancient ritual ceremony in which God passed between the animal halves. And he confirmed his unconditional commitment to fulfill the promises. And then we shifted.

And Genesis 16 through 22 was really about the seed promise. And it culminated not in Isaac's birth itself, but in last week's text, in which God gave that perplexing call to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. And then God, he intervened at just the right moment. He provided a substitute provision. And then God swore in the covenant with an oath. And so now we enter a few chapters of transition.

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So really from 2220 to 2518, the baton is being passed, as it were, from Abraham down to Isaac. And this transition is signaled by, get excited for this, a genealogy.
Yeah. So here we go, church. We are diving into yet one more genealogy. It's just a small portion of today's text. It's not the whole thing. Don't worry. And so we're going to walk through the narrative together and seek to understand it and then really save most of our application for at the end.
[4:22] Here's the first thing as we walk through the narrative. Abraham hears of Nahor's descendants. Now let me read this. You can put the text on the screen. Let me read this. So here we go.

Genesis 22 verse 20. Now after these things, it was told to Abraham, Behold, Milcah also has born children to your brother Nahor. Uz, his firstborn. Buzz, his brother.
Anyone have twin boys? Great couple names right there. Chemuel, the father of Aram, Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaf, and Bethuel. And then it says Bethuel was fathered Rebekah.
These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. Moreover, his concubine, whose name was Ruma, Orteba, Gahem, Tehash, and Mekah. Now this is the sixth genealogy we've seen in Genesis.
And I've got good news for you. There's four more to come as we walk through Genesis. Now it's really easy for our eyes to glaze over as we read these difficult to pronounce names. And I don't know whether I pronounce them correctly or not.
[5:20] I don't think anyone really does, to be honest. But as I said the last time we came to a genealogy, and when we come to obscure passages in the Bible, I was talking to a brother who right now is going through the tabernacle specifications.

When you go through the Levitical law, anytime we approach any text in Scripture, we ought to do so with faith and with expectancy. Why is that? Because every word in the Bible is the divine breathed out word of God.
And so I just want to encourage you, church, when you approach the text anywhere, you should be asking questions like, what is this here for? Why did the Holy Spirit of God decide to include this in his canon of Scripture?
What does it teach me about God? What does it teach me about humanity? What does it teach me about redemption through Christ? So those are the kinds of questions we should be asking of any text, whether it's some obscure civil law in Leviticus, or the gospel accounts in the New Testament.
And I just want to say, when you come hungry to God's word, you will get filled up. God's word is bread for the soul. And you might be like, I don't believe you about this thing here, but I'm not just trying to excite you for a genealogy here.
[6:36] I'm saying that mainly because, brothers and sisters, I want you to love the word of God. I want you to love all of the word of God, and I want you to daily seek nourishment from it.

That is from Christ, as you read and meditate upon the word. So let's ask the question, why is this genealogy here? Now, we've talked about some things, you know, as we've covered genealogies before, and there's really two kinds that we've seen.
There's linear, which traces just the line from one man, you know, down to another. And then there's segmented, which is more like a family tree. So here's this other segmented genealogy, which is establishing family connections.
Now, you know, the scholars like to explore each specific name and talk about what they mean and where that person's settled and who their descendants might be, and that's fine. But I think at a higher level, this is here for two main reasons.
Okay, and here's what I think. I think first it's here for comparison, and second for foreshadowing. And part of why I think that is this first phrase. Now, after these things, it was told to Abraham.
[7:41] Genealogy, right? So this is a genealogy, but unlike all the ones we've seen before, it's presented in narrative form. This is something told to Abraham. And so I think Moses wants us to consider this from the perspective of Abraham.

So he's getting this report about his brother's family, and so that comes, the first thing is I think it's here for comparison. Did anyone happen to count the number of names in this genealogy?
Now, verse 23 says these eight, so that's easy. And then there's four more. So kids, what's eight plus four? Twelve! Nice work. Nahor has 12 sons.
And I want to ask, can anyone think of any other time the number 12 shows up in the book of Genesis? Anybody? Jacob has 12 sons who become the 12 tribes of Israel.

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We also see that Ishmael is promised 12 sons who become princes, so that happens. The number 12 is a significant number. Abraham's brother, so let's consider this. Abraham's brother already has 12 sons.
[8:44] How many sons does Abraham currently have? He has two. One is sent away, Ishmael. So really he has one. He has the one child of promise, Isaac. His brother has 12 sons already.

Who's received the promise that God just swore with an oath that he would become a great nation and multitudes of people will come from him like sand that's on the seashore? Who received that one? Abraham.
But right now he has one son, and his brother Nahor already is multiplied into 12. Do you see the tension that's here? I just want to ask, what does this teach Abraham and us about God's timing? God's providence? What conflicted emotions might Abraham be feeling as he hears about this good report about his brother? Right? Maybe some doubts are arising again.
Now we're not told this, okay? But maybe some doubts are arising again. Maybe this is a fresh opportunity for Abraham to silence those doubts and to remember what God has done for him and what God has spoken to him, for him to cling again to those promises.
[9:49] So I think there's some comparison here, especially in light of the last chapter, we saw the one child that God said to sacrifice and God preserved him. Second, foreshadowing. Now in the middle of this genealogy, we see Bethuel fathered Rebekah.

Bethuel fathered Rebekah. She's the one woman that's mentioned in the genealogy. Why is Rebekah mentioned here in the genealogy? She's going to marry Isaac, right?
In order for this promise to actually be fulfilled, there has to be a family line of descent. Isaac needs a wife to bear children, to keep tracing this line.
And so here, Moses inserts this foreshadowing, right? And not only will God use Rebekah from this line, but also Leah and Rachel are going to come from this very line, a few chapters down the road. And so it's interesting because we see Abraham is the one of promise. He is the elect of God. He is the channel of redemption and blessing to the world. But God has a role to play for his distant family who's not part of the elect line.
[10:58] God has a role to play. He's going to use them to work out his purposes. And now as I was just sitting and reflecting on this genealogy, I couldn't help but hear the words of Habakkuk 2.3.

And we mentioned this in a recent sermon. Habakkuk 2.3, if it seems slow, God says to the prophet Habakkuk, wait for it. If it seems slow, wait for it.
But let me read some more of the context. Habakkuk 2.2, And the Lord answered me, write the vision, make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time.
It hastens to the end, it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it. It will surely come, it will not delay. Behold, his soul is puffed up, it is not upright within.
He's talking about the enemies of Israel, probably Babylon. But the righteous shall live by his faith. If it seems slow, wait for it. The righteous shall live by faith.
[11:59] And church, we know that God is beyond a shadow of a doubt, advancing his purposes. He's advancing his promises. He is advancing his redemptive plan for humanity, for the church of Jesus Christ, for all of creation.

And he's doing it according to his providential timing, which so often seems slow to us. But faith says, God, your timing seems awfully slow to me.
Faith is willing to admit where our hearts are at. It says things like, God, your timing seems awfully slow, but I trust you. I know that you're at work. I see your hand at work.
I'm looking for the ways that your hand is moving. And do you know what? Even when I can't see your hand at work right now, I still trust that it is. Faith prays to the Lord. God, open up my eyes to see the reality of your involvement in this world.
Right here, right now, in my heart, in my life, in my family, in this church. And the things going on in the nation, and the things going on in the world, help me see your providential hand and your timing.
[13:09] Now, this is the kind of faith, and we're gonna talk about this more later, but this is the kind of faith that I think Abraham needed as he would have heard this report about his brother's 12 sons compared to his one son of promise, Isaac.

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Now, we're gonna move from this genealogy to another confusing and very far removed from us situation involving a negotiation at the city gates.
And so, the next thing that we see is that Abraham acquires a burial plot. Now, remember, this is all transitioning us to the next generation, to Isaac, but we read, look with me in Genesis 23, verse 1. Let's stop there.
First, Sarah's prominence as the matriarch of Israel is seen here. She's the only woman whose age at death is recorded in Scripture. Now, Abraham, of course, he's weeping over the loss of his beloved lifelong friend and partner.
[14:21] Consider this. She's 127. They may well have celebrated 100 years of marriage together. And you just think about that. Brittany and I are about to hit 12, right? And even the oldest in this room is not even close to 100.

So, they've been friends for 100 years. That's crazy. And so, rightly, Abraham is grieving over her loss. But what's interesting is, Moses does not linger on that at all, right?
That's not why Moses writes this story. Because he just moves on. And seeing this helps us understand, what's the point of this story? Well, let's look at the emphasis Moses is giving this. Look at verse 3. And Abraham rose up from before his dead and said to the Hittites, I am a sojourner and foreigner among you.
Give me property among you for a burying place that I may bury my dead out of my sight. I have a few things I want you to notice here. First, he doesn't use Sarah's name. He says, my dead.
Eight times we're going to see in the passage to follow, Sarah is going to be referred to as his, my, or your dead. And it's sort of removing the personal nature of what's going on.
[15:24] It's expressing the urgency of Abraham's need for a burial site. So, that's one thing to note. Second, who are these Hittites? Some of your translations might say sons of Heth.

Well, we learned, we saw these, we saw Heth back in Genesis 10. We saw that he is a son of Canaan. And if you remember, Canaan was the one who was cursed by Noah in Genesis 9.
And then a few chapters later, in chapter 15, when God performs the covenant ceremony, he promises to Abraham that the land of all of these ites, he lists all these different ites, right?
This land will belong to you. Well, the Hittites are among that list in Genesis 15. They are part of this, they own the land that God has promised to give to Abraham's offspring. I mean, in C-Vac in verse 2, Moses gives a hint, in the land of Canaan, remember, the land of Canaan is Abraham's offspring's land.
But here the Hittites are, one of these pagan nations, that God will eventually move away from this land. Third, here's another thing just to notice here. Abraham opens up the negotiation with, I am a sojourner and foreigner among you.
[16:37] He's keenly aware, and we are reminded, that though he's been promised this land of Canaan, he's still a nomad living in tents.

Now, Sarah dies at 127. That means Abraham's 137. That means he's been a nomad without a place to call his own for 62 years. 62 years.
All he owns right now in the land of Canaan is the well at Beersheba and the little tamarisk tree that he planted. He has nowhere to even bury his deceased wife. And so Abraham now, he approaches the Hittites seeking a burial plot.
Look at verse 5. The Hittites answered Abraham, Hear us, my lord. You are a prince of God among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will withhold from you his tomb to hinder you from burying your dead.
Abraham says, I'm a sojourner and foreigner. And they say, you're a prince of God among us. Now, this recalls Abimelech's words to Abraham just a few chapters earlier. Abimelech had said, God is with you in all that you do.
[17:42] These pagan nations, they're recognizing the blessing and favor and presence of God with Abraham. And so they offer him the choicest of our tombs. Now, this seems like a lavish display of generosity, doesn't it?

It seems so on the surface. But, and especially, we're very far removed from these ancient Near Eastern customs. This looks like they're being really generous. But I want to point out, there is some more going on here.
Now, let's consider this. Abraham is a sojourner and a foreigner. And what that means for him is that he is not entitled to buy or own land ordinarily.

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Like, he's got no rights among the Hittites. So when Abraham said, give me a property, he's talking about a property that he can purchase and own and becomes his possession.
And so while the Hittites are flattering Abraham by calling him a prince of God and my lord, they're actually unwilling to make him a property owner. So they're sort of like complimenting him and stiff-arming him at the same time.
[18:47] And so look at verse seven. Abraham rose and bowed to the Hittites, the people of the land, and he said to them, if you are willing that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me and entreat for me Ephraim, the son of Zohar, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he owns, it is at the end of his field.

For the full price, let him give it to me in your presence as property for a burying place. Now notice first, Abraham bows to the Hittites. Okay, this would be a customary thing.
This would show humility. This would show respect. He's been called by them the prince of God, but he's still showing deference and humility. This is him wisely operating in conformance with some of the customs of the day.
Now the second thing I want you to see though, he's now making this request more specific and more explicit, right? He already has a specific burial site in mind, the cave of Machpelah.
And he says here, for the full price, let him give it to me in your presence as property. So Abraham is, he's engaging in this wise, level-headed negotiation according to the customs of the day.
[19:52] And now verse 10, Ephraim was sitting among the Hittites and Ephraim the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the Hittites, of all who went in at the gate of his city, know my Lord, hear me.

I give you the field and I give you the cave that is in it and the sight of the sons of my people, I give it to you. Bury your dead. Now it says here that of all who went into the gate of his city, we learned in chapter 19, as we saw Lot sitting at the gates of Sodom, that in the ancient Near East, that would be a place where the elders of the land would gather.
This was the place that they would make decisions together. So it's sort of like the legal center of the city. So that's important, right? Because Moses is trying to help us understand that Abraham is after a legally binding piece of property to call his own.
Now it's hard to be certain of Ephraim's motives in what he's saying. Like is he really offering to give Abraham not only the cave but also the field?
Is he simply just maneuvering, like he's feigning generosity with the hopes that Abraham will agree to a higher price? We don't know. Whatever his motives, Abraham is not accepting.
[21:03] Right? Abraham, it's really interesting. Back in chapter 14, after Abraham had gone off on that nighttime raid and brought back the people that were taken away from Sodom, the king of Sodom said, hey, you can keep all the spoils.

And you know what Abraham said? This is chapter 14, verse 22 and 23. I have lifted my hand to the Lord God most high, possessor of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, king of Sodom, I have made Abram rich.
And I think very similarly here, he wants the Hittites, who God has promised to remove from the land, he wants them to have no leverage over him.
Right? No claim to what belongs to him. And so here comes round three of negotiations. Okay? Verse 12. Then Abraham bowed down before the people of the land and he said to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, but if you will hear me, I give the price of the field, accept it from me that I may bury my dead there.
Now, as one pastor that I heard noted, this whole negotiation sounds a lot like two friends arguing over who's going to pay for a check at a restaurant. Right? It's like, hey man, I've got this.
[22:18] No, no, no. I'm going to pay for the check. You got it last time, but I just got a raise. Okay? I'm going to get it. Okay? We were talking to you with Brittany's family and I was just saying, I used to debate that with my father-in-law all the time and I just succumbed and I've stopped.

He's always generous and wants to pay. So we were just kind of laughing about that yesterday. But this is kind of what's going on here, this debating over who's going to pay for the check. Except we really see that it's more about property ownership than anything else.
Okay? So Abraham, he reiterates his willingness to pay the price now not only of the cave but of this field that Ephron has sort of thrown into the deal. And Ephron answered Abraham, verse 14, now 15, my lord, listen to me.

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A piece of land worth 400 shekels of silver, what is that between you and me? Bury your dead. Now this is funny because I always thought this was him being like, oh, just take it for free still. You know, I don't care about the price.
No, no, that's not what he's doing. He's naming the price in this veiled ancient Near Eastern way. 400 shekels of silver. Now, we can't really know how much money this was.
[23:25] It's like if a house is worth something in New London and in Stanford in 100 years, they might think we got ripped off and really the house price. Housing prices are just different. I don't know. It seems like though, based on other transactions we see in the Old Testament, this might have been a steep price.

But verse 16, whatever the price was, Abraham listened to Ephron and Abraham weighed out for Ephron the silver that he had named in the hearing of the Hittites, 400 shekels of silver according to the weights current among the merchants.
He's not seeking to negotiate the price here. He simply agrees and pays. Now maybe he's satisfied. He's like, I'm getting what I want, a price to purchase this field. And so in the closing verses, Moses emphasizes for us the legality of this transaction.
If you look at verse 17 to the end, so the field of Ephron and Machpelah, which was to the east of Mamre, the field with the cave that was in it and all the trees that were in the field, apparently those often got named in contracts in the ancient Near East, throughout its whole area was made over to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the Hittites.
It was deeded over to Abraham is what that means. Before all who went in at the gate of his city, again, in the legal center of the city, after this, and now we see a little bit touch of the personal nature again, Abraham buried Sarah, his wife, in the cave of the field of Machpelah, east of Mamre, that is Hebron, in the land of Canaan.
[24:49] But then back to the legality of it, the field and the cave that is in it were made over, deeded over to Abraham as property for a burying place by the Hittites.

So we come to the end of this strange story and we think, okay, why is this here? Hopefully you understand a little bit more now what's going on, but I got to come back to what is the point of this story?
Like, why did Moses include it in Genesis? Why did the Holy Spirit include it in Scripture? And so again, I want us to step back and think here. This property, okay, acquired by Abraham, apart from that well and Beersheba is the first piece of property in the land of Canaan that belongs to Him. Okay, God has promised all of the land. Remember when He said, look, northward, southward, eastward, westward, all of that land I give to you and your descendants forever. God's promised Him the whole land. And now He has this one piece of property and it's like a down payment on God's promise.
It's a down payment on the promise of God. And I want you to fast forward several hundred years think about Moses and the Israelites who are hearing this story from Him. That they're wandering the desert, still looking forward to the fulfillment of God's promises, right?
[26:08] They can look back on this story, they can see how God worked even through these seemingly mundane and human means. I mean, it's a negotiation in a city gate. God worked through that and they can take heart that this down payment is a sign that God is indeed going to fulfill His promise to give them the land of Canaan.

But friends, I want us to remember and we've talked about this several times in the Genesis, in the Abraham narrative, God's promise to Abraham was not ultimately about a strip of land in the Middle East.
Now this is where I want us to go back to Hebrews, which Josh read for us before. See, we're told in Hebrews 11.10 that Abraham was looking forward to the city that has foundations whose designer and builder is God.
Then after speaking of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Sarah, the author writes, these all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.
For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have an opportunity to return, but as it is, they desire a better country that is a heavenly one.
[27:29] Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city. The patriarchs desired a heavenly city.

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This is the next point, if you can put that on the screen, Dylan. The patriarchs desired a heavenly city. Hebrews helps us to understand, to look back and understand what's really going on.
And do you know what, brothers and sisters? It is the same heavenly city that we are seeking as strangers and exiles on the earth.
Church, this world is not our true and lasting home. It's not. We're here for a moment. We have a better home, a more permanent home in heaven, in the house of God.
You know, Jesus would tell his disciples, John chapter 14, in my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?
[28:27] And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself that where I am, you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going, Jesus said.

And Thomas was like, no, we don't. Lord, we don't know where you are going. How can we know the way? And Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
Church, Jesus is preparing it and he's the way to it. And how would Jesus become the way to this heavenly city that he is preparing?
How would he become the way? By becoming the substitute lamb on the cross to pay for our sins that we talked about last week. The greater Isaac giving himself up on the cross to atone for our sins so that we could have this true and lasting city.
And now, friends, for all those who repent of their sin, who believe in Jesus as their and the only Lord and Savior, that could be your lasting city as well. A place in the Father's house being prepared for you.
[29:37] And saints, that future inheritance that we have in Christ, we've been given a down payment of that inheritance. Did you know that?

The same language is used. Now, this is Paul in Ephesians chapter 1. I don't know what's going on with this thing here, but it's going to be okay. Paul in Ephesians 1, 13 and 14, he says, in him, you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him.
If you're a saint in Christ, this is your story. You heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. You believed in Jesus Christ. And then he says, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee.
That word means deposit. It means down payment. The guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory. The Holy Spirit, saints, is our down payment of this heavenly inheritance.
We have, you have, if you're in Christ, the third person of the Trinity, God, the Holy Spirit, the living God, as a first installment in your heart of this future inheritance to come.
[30:47] So I just want you to consider that as you experience the evidence of the Holy Spirit in your life, illuminating the word of God, bringing conviction of sin, helping you grow in holiness, bearing in you the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, and all the rest.

As you experience the Spirit's work in your life, uniting you to your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ and all the other ministries of the Holy Spirit, I want you to be reminded that the Spirit is your down payment of your future inheritance, which is kept in heaven for you for all of eternity.
Like Abraham, we have a down payment guaranteeing our future inheritance. But I want us to get a little more practical here as we draw to a close. Three application points that stem out of this.
The down payment guaranteeing our future inheritance enables us to do three things. And here's the first one. Wait in trust. And this sounds familiar because we've been talking a lot about waiting in the Abraham story because Abraham had to do a lot of waiting and so have all the saints for all of time.
They've had to wait. And this brings us back to that Habakkuk passage. If it seems slow, wait for it. If it seems slow, wait for it. The Abraham story and really the entire Bible, it instructs us that God's timing is often so much slower it seems than ours.
[32:14] But his timing is slow but it's sure. It's certain. It's guaranteed. And we're reminded that a day with the Lord is like a thousand years. A thousand years are like a day.

And so we look back at God's past proven faithfulness in the Genesis story, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, in church history, in our own lives. We look at the past faithfulness of God.
We look at our own lives and see the down payment of the Spirit doing all those things that I just talked about and more. And that gives us assurance of what's to come and helps us to wait right

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now in trust.
And this is especially true as we wait for the return of Christ. And we're going to talk about that a little bit more after this. But this is also true in all of our seasons of waiting. Where we have other seasons that we're all waiting for Jesus Christ, but we have lots of other seasons of waiting.
We're waiting, and we've talked about this in our time up here. Whether it's waiting for the light to turn green and you're running super late to an important meeting. It's a little season of waiting right there.
[33:19] And God is saying, can you trust me even in this? It could be waiting for more significant things. It could be waiting for healing. Physical healing. It could be waiting for a child's salvation.

There's so many seasons of waiting. And I'm not saying that God is promising these things to work out the way you want, but what I'm saying is, well, Mark Vrogop defines waiting as this in his book, Waiting Isn't a Waste. Waiting is living on what I know to be true about God when I don't know what's true about my life.
Waiting is living on what I know to be true about God when I don't know what's true about my life. When life feels confusing, when life feels out of control, all those seasons of waiting is because there's something that's now out of my control.
I can't control it anymore. I can't bring it into existence. I'm waiting. Waiting is living on what I know to be true about God even in that moment. And we can wait in trust because we know what's coming and we know what Christ has done and we know when our inheritance is coming and we have the Spirit as a down payment.
We are able to wait in those seasons, clinging to his word and promises. Wait in trust. Now here's the second thing. Work in hope. The down payment guaranteeing our future inheritance enables us to work in hope.
[34:37] Now really, this is part of how we wait in trust. And when I say this, I'm especially thinking now about Christ's return. We're waiting for the return of Jesus Christ.

What do we do while we're waiting? We work in hope. Now this is what Abraham models for us in this chapter. Earlier, I mentioned how he obtained this first piece of property in the promised land through seemingly mundane and human means.
This negotiation at the city gates, this is how he gets the first piece of property in the land of Canaan. Now sometimes God works through miracles. The birth of Isaac was a divine miracle. 90-year-old baron Sarah bore Isaac Now Abraham is negotiating a piece of land. And you know what? When Israel was going to go take over that land, God worked very similarly.
Sometimes God gave them the land by saying, hey, you know what? You stand over there and bang some pots and blow trumpets and I'm going to let this army destroy each other. That's a miracle. And other times he said, go in and take the land.
[35:41] Right? Follow your military commanders and go take the land. And so similarly, sometimes God works through miracles and more ordinarily God works through means. And listen, in the age of the church, okay, we are saints post-gospel, after Christ's death, his resurrection, his ascension, the way that God is ordinarily working to bring about the fulfillment of his promises is through his people, through disciples of Jesus Christ, the ordinary efforts of the church.

Now, as we labor in dependence on the Spirit, as we labor with our God-given gifts and abilities in the ordinary spaces of life, God uses that and he takes that with his Spirit and brings about supernatural results.
That's how God works ordinarily. And I just want to mention this in two areas, okay? First, in the area of sanctification. God has promised, Romans 8, 29, that those whom he foreknew, he predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, right?
His will is our sanctification. And so the question is, does that mean that we just throw up our hands in the air and say, well, if God wants me to become more holy, then let him make me more holy. Like, I'm just going to sit here and do my thing and God's going to, like, zap me into holiness. Like, obviously that's not what the Bible teaches. Nobody believes that, right? Because God has given us the means of our sanctification, right? And we ourselves pursue actively the means.
[37:09] We make use of those means. He's told us that I will make you more like my Son through the Word. And so we pursue the Word, we meditate on the Word, and through the Word, by the Spirit, we're made into the image of Christ.

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He said, I'm going to do that through prayer. And so we get on our knees and we ask, right? We seek the Lord through prayer, and he conforms us slowly into the image of his Son. He says, I'm going to do that through the church, through your fellowship, through holding one another accountable, through encouraging one another, through gathering here.
So we do, we pursue the means of grace actively, and God uses that to make us into Christ-likeness. Evangelism. Okay, we've been promised.
Jesus promised the gospel will be proclaimed throughout the whole earth, and then the end will come. It's a promise of Christ. It's Matthew 24, 14.
We also believe that God has chosen the saints from before the foundation of the world, Ephesians 1, 4. So similarly, do we as the saints then just sit back, do our thing, watch some football, and God's just going to save people.
[38:19] He's just going to do it. He can. Do we just sit and wait for an outpouring of the Spirit? No, He's told us that I'm going to do this ordinarily. The way that I'm going to save the lost is through your church, through your gospel preaching.

You're bearing the good news of the gospel. You take that on the mountains, publish peace to the streets. You take that, the gospel, and I will use your heralding of the message to save the lost.
And so we are active in evangelism because we have the promises. We know that God is going to do what He's promised, and He's going to use us as the means. We're working in hope. We're working in hope, and the down payment that we have is enabling us to do that because we know the future.
We know what's coming. And just by way of analogy here, there's a lot of soccer players in the room this fall. If you were told, kids especially, if you were told that one day you're going to qualify for the U.S. national team in the World Cup, and you're going to lead your team to a World Cup victory, you'd be like, I don't think America is ever going to win a World Cup.
No. What if you were told that by someone very credible? That's going to happen. See, I think that if that were true, that you would be extra motivated to work hard and practice.
[39:36] You would stay the extra half hour and work on your ball handling skills. You would go after that 50-50 ball even harder because you know what's coming. You know the reward that's going to meet you in the end.

And saints, we know that Jesus is risen and that he's coming again to make all things new and swallow up death forever, and he's given us his Holy Spirit as a down payment, and so therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.
When you and I arrive at the presence of Christ and him who is seated on the throne, we're not going to look back at our time on earth and say, man, what a waste to have swallowed my pride, confessed my sin, and seek reconciliation with my spouse.
Like, that was a waste of time. To humble myself before a fellow church member that I offended, that wasn't a good use of time. We're not going to say, like, man, I wish I hadn't shared the gospel at work and then been ostracized for it.
When you're standing face to face with Jesus, you're not going to look back and think that that was a wasted effort. If only I had given less money to support the gospel work that's going on, all of our labors in this world for the glory of Christ will be worth it in the end.
[40:51] We have a deposit guaranteeing that future inheritance. Let us work in hope as we wait in trust. Here's the last thing. Walk as exiles. Again, another theme that we've seen multiple times in the book of Genesis.

We saw it in Noah. We see it in Abraham. These two men of faith, they exemplify what it means for us to live as strangers and exiles on the earth. Phrases that Peter takes on, the author of Hebrews takes on, applies it to the saints today.
Now, several months ago, I think we were in Genesis 6, I referenced J.D. Greer's book, Everyday Revolutionary, and he cites Tim Keller talking about three relationships you can have to a country that you're living in but you're not from.
So I'm going to revisit these because I think they're so helpful. Three relationships. If you're living in a country that you're not from, one, you can be the tourist. All right? And we've all been tourists at some point.
What does a tourist act like? You have no intention of staying. All right? You're there for self, not selfish necessarily, but generally, you're there for yourself. You're there for entertainment.

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[41:57] You're there to have a good time. And then you're going to leave. You're not going to leave any mark. You're not going to have any emotional ties to that place. That's a tourist, right? Maybe it's like at EB or the Navy. You know, not my job, not my problem, right?

That kind of mentality. So you have a little concern or compassion for the plight of those in the community. That's a tourist. Then there's the immigrant. Okay? So on the flip side, how does the immigrant behave?
Well, the immigrant comes in and they seek to assimilate as much as they possibly can into the culture. It's kind of like Lot in Sodom, right? Just assimilating, becoming like the culture.
And if we act like immigrants, we become overly preoccupied with the things of this world. Our houses, consuming all of our thoughts, all of our time, all of our money.
The world, if we behave as immigrants, the world can't tell the difference between us and them. My unbelieving family, my unbelieving friends, I'm just like them. But saints, we're called to live as exiles, not tourists, not immigrants, exiles.
[43:01] What does that mean? What does it mean to be in exile? Well, it means that we're here for a while, but this isn't our lasting home, right?

And this is very much like Israel in exile in Babylon. They thought, we're just going to be here for a couple years. And Jeremiah's like, no, actually, it's going to be more like 70 years. So put down roots.
Seek the welfare of the city to which you've come. That's what it's like. And so we seek, as the church of Jesus Christ, in exile here to do good to those around us, to invest in our community, to love the lost.
We seek to steward the things that God's entrusted us with, but we know it's only temporary, right? Our eternal home is secured by the blood of Jesus Christ in heaven, and that's where we're going.
And so it might mean that we look a little bit like our culture because we're trying to love our culture. We're living life here. We're going to look a little bit like our culture, but we're also going to look a lot not like our culture sometimes.
[44:03] And I love this analogy in the book Everyday Revolutionary. J.D. Greer refers a lot to Daniel in the lion's den because he says that when you live as an exile in the world, sometimes you're going to get thrown into the lion's den.

But guess what? The king is going to be hoping against hope that you're still alive in the morning. Why? Because you've done so much good and invested and you have the love of Christ and yet the world is opposed to us sometimes.
That's what it looks like to live as an exile and we do that because we have a deposit in us guaranteeing a future inheritance. So brothers and sisters, let us wait in trust.
Let us work in hope. Let us walk as exiles. We're seeking a city whose designer and builder is God. Let us pray right now. Heavenly Father, we thank you for this word, Lord.
God, sometimes it takes a little more work to understand what's going on in your word but it is always worth it. God, would you help us to see that just like Abraham, we too are promised things that are not yet here.
[45:13] They're already here in part. The fullness is coming but you've given us Christ and you've given us the spirit of Christ in us guaranteeing what's to come.

God, help us to live with that reality. This world in its present form is passing away. Help us to live like that. Not as tourists, not as immigrants.
God, help us to live as exiles. And God, we know it's going to be worth it in the end. We pray this all in Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to spend a few moments here partaking of the Lord.

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