

Laughing At His Promises

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[0 : 00] Good morning. We this morning continue in the book of Genesis. We've made our way to chapter 18 this morning.! What you've seen from chapter 12 until now is you've seen God show up in the life of Abraham many times.

And we'll look at some of those this morning. But we have to remember to take this as a package. This whole 12 through 18 and even following, we see in the life of Abraham a life of faith. And we see God interjecting promises to Abraham and to his people. And so this morning as we open chapter 18, if you were able, I would ask in honor of God's word, would you stand as we read this passage in chapter 18 going down through verse 15 this morning?

Verse 1. And the Lord appeared to him by the oaks at Mamre. And he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him.

When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth and said, Oh, Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant.

[1 : 26] Let a little water be brought and wash your feet and rest yourselves under the tree while I bring a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourselves.

And after that, you may pass on. Since you have come to your servant. So they said, do as you have said. And Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, Quick, three seeds of fine flour, knead it and make cakes.

And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf tender and good and gave it to the young men who prepared it quickly. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them.

And he stood by them under the tree while they ate. They said to him, where is Sarah, your wife? And he said, she is in the tent. The Lord said, I will surely return to you about this time next year. And Sarah, your wife, shall have a son. And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. Now, Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years.

[2 : 39] The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, after I'm worn out and my Lord is old, shall I have pleasure? The Lord said to Abraham, why did Sarah laugh and say, shall I indeed bear a child now that I'm old?

Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time, I will return to you about this time next year. And Sarah shall have a son. But Sarah denied it, saying, I did not laugh.

For she was afraid. He said, no, but you did laugh. Let's pray. Father, this morning we ask that you would empower your word. God, we desire to be changed people because of your word.

So God, would you allow our minds to understand what you have for us this morning in your word. And I pray in your name. Amen. And y'all can have a seat. Amen. So this morning, we're going to look at two responses to the promises of God.

Two responses to the promises of God. And we see a different response in the life of Abraham than we do in the life of Sarah.

[3 : 54] That's what we'll see this morning. As we look at verse 1, we see this. The Lord appeared to him. And so it begs the question, who is him? Well, we know as we read through it, it's Abraham.

But this links us to the previous passage. So we have to look at the truths in both of these. As a matter of fact, we have to go back all the way to the end of chapter 11, the first of chapter 12, when Abraham came on the scene as we are working our way through the gospel.

What I want you to see is that God has spoken to Abraham several times through these almost 25 years. So this morning, he is 99 years old.

But in chapter 12, if we look at chapter 12, he was 75 years old. So doing the math, roughly 25 years, God has spoken to him many times.

And I want to look back at those times just briefly. We want to look at what God said. Because what we find is that every time God comes and speaks to Abraham, he always rehearses his promise.

[5 : 09] He tells him again his promise. We see those promises spoken by the Lord multiple times to Abraham. And we want to look at Abraham's response to those promises.

So what are the promises? Well, in chapter 12, verse 1, the Lord said to Abraham, doesn't it make you wonder how is it that Abraham could hear?

And what form did God take when he spoke to him? You know, the scriptures don't tell us. So it's not for us to try to interpret what that form might have been. But we do see that the Lord spoke to Abraham and he said, go.

Go. And we will look at where he told him to go. We've probably already heard that through the scriptures here in the life of his father. But here it says, I want you to see three blessings that God says, or three promises that God gives to Abraham in this short passage.

Here it says, he says this, I will make you of you a great nation. I will build a nation through you. He also says, I will bless you.

[6 : 18] Now, these are promises from God to Abraham. He also says, in you, all the families of the earth will be blessed. In you, Abraham. And what was the response of Abraham here?

Well, we can look at verse four. And it's immediate obedience. Immediate obedience. God says, go. And what did he do? In verse four, it says, so Abraham went.

Think about this in the life of Abraham. And we'll get into a little more of this. Did he know where he was going? Did he know what he'd find? Did he know the type of people he'd run into?

Did he know if he'd be safe? Did he know if he'd have food? A lot of question marks. But he did not let those questions stop him from obedience. We look at verse seven of chapter 12.

And it says, the Lord appeared to Abraham and said this, I will give you this land. What land? It's the promised land. It's the land of Canaan. And God promised that he would give the land to Abraham and his descendants.

[7 : 25] If we look at chapter 13, verse 14, we see again, the Lord said to Abraham, for all the land that you see, I will give it to you and to your offspring forever.

I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring can also be counted. You hear the promise? I will make of you a great nation.

This land will be yours forever. Chapter 15, he says this, the Lord came to Abraham in a vision. Different in this case.

And he said, fear not, Abraham, I am your shield. Wow. What a promise. I am your shield.

You do not need to fear. Yeah, I hesitate here because isn't this pertinent for you and I? Do we live that way?

[8 : 25] Is Abraham able to live that way, this life without fear? What an amazing promise that he's given Abraham here.

He goes on to say this, but he said, when there's a discussion here about him not having any offspring.

So God, I hear your promise. And yet, right now, I don't have a son. I don't have a male heir. I don't have a way to see this thing come into pass. He's honest.

And he said, what about Eliezer? This is a Damascan that's a part of my household. Right now, he's the one that would receive the, he would be next in line, if you will.

And he takes him outside and he says, look toward the heaven. Just look up. He says, can you number the stars?

[9 : 26] If you're able to number, if you're able, can you number them if you're able to number them? Then he said, so shall your offspring be. And look, listen to the response of Abraham.

He believed the Lord. He believed him. And he counted it to him. That is, God counted it to him as righteousness. We see multiple times throughout these chapters as we're reading in the life of Abraham.

His response is a response of belief, of faith. Again, God said in chapter 15, to your offspring, I will give this land.

And we see it in verse 13 where he spoke to him and said that. Chapter 17, the Lord appeared to Abraham.

So you see, he spoke to him. He met him in a dream. And now he appeared to him. We don't know what form that took. But chapter 17 says, the Lord appeared to Abraham.

[10:28] And what did he say? Verse 8, I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojourning, the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession.

And I will be not only your God, but their God. You hear the promises? I will do this. I will do this.

And what do you see in the life of Abraham? You see a man that's responding with belief. And we see again, or we see this promise in the middle part of chapter 17, verse 15.

God said to Abraham, I will give you a son by Sarah. Here is a very specific promise. I will give you a son by Sarah.

Abraham, in verse 17, fell on his face and laughed. Sarah is not the only one that laughed here.

Abraham laughed too. Because why?

[11:30] In his human mind, he said, wait a minute. God, I know you hadn't forgotten. And surely you know that I'm almost 100 years old. And Sarah is almost 90 years old.

And how in the world is she going to have a baby? How is she going to get pregnant? And so he at least is willing to ask a question that he doesn't understand.

Does it mean that he doesn't have faith? That it means that he doesn't trust? It just means that he's honest. He's sharing his heart. But I want you to see this in verse 22. When he finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

And what did Abraham do? So God said, I'm going to give you a covenant in reference to this, a covenant of circumcision that Jonathan preached on last week. And what was the response of Abraham?

He laughed when he thought about the possibility, the impossibility of having a son through Sarah.

And God said, I'm going to give you a covenant. God left.

[12:29] And what did he do? He immediately did exactly what God said. He immediately went. Look at verse 23, if you're looking here. He circumcised the flesh of the foreskin that very day.

His quick response of obedience was because of his faith and his belief in God. And now chapter 18. The Lord appeared to him, this time in a different form.

It's just so interesting as we look through the scriptures to see how God reveals himself, how God shows himself to people along the way in the Old Testament years.

And so we look here as he set at the door. So I want to try to get us into the picture of what's happening here. Can you picture Abraham's in a foreign land and through a process, Lot went one way and Abraham went another way.

And he's among a people group that has this area that he went to. And there's this area where there's trees on high hills. And it's shady. And it's a hot country. Extremely hot country.

[13:35] And so it was traditional that during the hottest part of the day, they would not be in the fields working. They would come in for lunch and rest and shade. And so here he is sitting in the door of his tent.

And he looks up. And what does he see? I want to make this point about this word appeared. You know, you would have thought that he would have seen these guys walking all along the way and walking up the hill and coming to the trees.

The word of God doesn't share that. The word of God shares that they appeared. I don't want to make too much of it. But they appeared in what form? There's three men, I want to put in quotation marks, three men that were standing in front of him.

And what was the response of Abraham? Did you all catch it? Twice it says he ran. And also he acted quickly.

We see in these first eight verses. But if you'll look at this, he ran from the tent to meet them. And what was his response to these men?

[14:43] He bowed himself down to the earth. These must not have been ordinary men. Matter of fact, as we work through this passage, we'll see these weren't ordinary men at all.

You know, there's a lot of beliefs about who these three might have been. There's some that believe they're just three men. Three men and he's showing common hospitality to them.

But there's others that say, no, no, these three men, they are just, this is, the reason there's three is this just is three manifestations of God before Abraham.

Others would say that one of them is God and two of them are angels. You know, there's varying opinions about this. And I can't say one way or the other which one is real.

I would lean toward it's Jehovah God and two angels with him because of chapter 19. It talks about two angels going down to Sodom. But whatever the case is, we see his response as a response that indicates that he saw them as holy men.

[15:47] And he sees them as not just ordinary men because he bows down and he calls himself your servant. I don't think that's just a kindness.

I think that's literal. He sees himself as a servant of the one in front of him. You know, it makes me wonder if there is a recognition of his holiness because he's encountered God multiple times previously.

And here he is encountering him again. And how did Abraham respond to the presence of these three? Well, the word here indicates that he bowed himself and he ran to them.

He didn't walk to them. He didn't idly walk up to them. He ran to them out of respect. And probably as I see it, he didn't want them to go. He's like, man, I don't want this to end.

I want to enjoy the presence of one that is holy of Jehovah God, I believe. And what did he say? He said, would you please, would you please just stay? Let me show you courtesy.

[16:51] Let me bring water that I might wash your feet. You know, there was dusty roads in those lands. It was common courtesy when someone would enter your house or your place that you would wash their feet, clean their feet.

And so common courtesy would be that. But in addition, he went to his wife and said, quick, can you please grab this flour and make some cakes out of this flour? He runs to the herd.

He grabs the choicest animal that he could and he brings it back and he has a guy prepare the animal. And he brings out curds and milk.

You know what I see? I see him giving the best of the best that he has for these three. He's doing as quickly as he can, showing hospitality, but also showing honor.

He sees who they are. He desires to honor them in any way he can. He desires to serve these men in any way he can.

[17:50] He desires to be a servant of God. I wonder what Sarah was thinking.

So if we can picture this, Abraham is in the opening of the tent. Sarah, we learn in verse 6 that Sarah was in the tent.

He went into the tent to ask her to help. She's in the tent. He's at the door of the tent. He runs out to these men. He comes back quickly and says, I need your help. Can you please prepare this?

He runs to the herd. He comes. Sarah, all along, is like, who are these guys? Why are you rushing around like this? What's up? And she's doing what he asked him to do as one who desires to honor her husband.

She prepares it. And then as he takes all this out to them, she stays in the tent. But her ear is listening to the conversation out there.

[18:53] And what is the conversation? It's conversation between the three, specifically between Jehovah God, I believe, and Abraham.

And what is the question that he asked? Isn't it interesting that Jehovah asked a question about Sarah? Sarah, if these were ordinary men, how would they know that his wife is Sarah?

So he asked, where is Sarah, your wife? And he responded, she's in the tent. What a strange question, right? The Lord said, he said it in such a way that Sarah would have probably picked up her name as she's in the tent.

And she would have tuned her ear a little better to listen. Wait a minute. What are they talking about? I heard my name. What's going on out there? And says, I will surely return to you about this time next year.

And Sarah, your wife, will have a son. Now, listen, did Jehovah need to tell Abraham that? If we go back just a few verses in chapter 17, verse 19, Sarah, your wife, shall bear you a son.

[20:09] He's already told Adam, I mean Abraham. He's already told Abraham. Why does he need to show up again to tell Abraham the very same thing? Personally, I don't think it's for Abraham. Personally, I think they came by for Sarah's sake.

And I'll make that point as we look at the response of Sarah to these promises. Do you believe that Sarah would have heard about these encounters that Abraham was having?

Do you think that Abraham would go, you won't believe it. You won't believe what just happened, chapter 12. He just appeared to me. He spoke to me. God spoke to me.

And he told me these amazing, crazy, crazy things. Do you know what he's telling me? He's telling me he's going to make a nation out of us. He's saying the descendants are going to be numerous. He's saying this whole land one day is going to be ours.

Yeah, I don't know why he's doing that. I don't have any idea. But look what he's doing. Do you think that Sarah would have known about these promises, that he would have shared them?

[21 : 16] Of course he would have. It's his bride. Do you think that Sarah would have recognized that all the men in camp got circumcised? Believe me, they aren't going anywhere fast, okay?

And she would have known about that. She would have seen it. And she would have asked questions. What's going on? Why are y'all doing this? Here's why we're doing it. Because God met with me and he said, you're going to have a son.

Now, understand this is a 25-year window. And we've already looked at previously that Sarah is challenged. She's struggling. She's barren.

And she's in the tent listening to this thing. And she hears this promise from God. And what does she do? She, the text tells us she's, the way of women has ceased with Sarah.

What does that mean? The way of women has ceased. In other words, childbearing years are gone. She's past childbearing age. There's no possibility that her body can bear child.

[22 : 25] It goes on to say something very interesting. Is that, talking about that likely from a physical standpoint in their marriage, they're past that time frame too.

Because we see in this passage that, how did she respond to this promise? How did she respond to the hearing of what this one was saying out there? Here's what she did.

She laughed. Sarah laughed. So can you imagine, she's been under this weight for all these years. What weight? Well, let me share a little bit about Sarah right quick.

What we can glean from the scriptures. You know, Sarah was beautiful, right? Beautiful to look at. So she got a lot of things going for her. She's married to a man of God.

She's got a lot of things going for her. But she's barren. She's barren. What is it like for a woman to be barren? Now, we might know about in our day and time, what was it like for a woman in those days to be barren?

[23 : 27] You know, she's never tasted of motherhood ever. She's 99 years old and she's watched other people and servants and people that are in their relatives and such.

They've given birth. She's never tasted what it's like to be a mom. She's not able to produce an heir for her husband. There's no male heir for a husband.

The name is going to disappear. The name of Abraham because she wasn't able to produce it. Now, she used her own crafty creativity to try to say, hey, let me help God.

I know God said that to you. We just need to help him out. Here, take my servant and let her produce one. Well, what happened with that? Then she's ridiculed. She's got her servant come, look, I produce.

And it's almost as if she's closer to Abraham now than you are. So the pain that she likely feels, you know, even though the passage is not in Isaiah 54 is a passage that says, Sing, O barren one who did not bear.

[24 : 42] Though it's not talking about Sarah, it is talking about barrenness. And what does barrenness look like? Well, just a few choice words I'll take out of here.

To you who has not been in labor, the desolate one. This feeling desolate. Fear not, you will not be ashamed. There's a shame. There's a shame.

When others look and you haven't been able to bear a child. The reproach. The grieved in spirit. It's a beautiful picture in Isaiah 54 of what it looks like to be barren.

It's not beautiful to be barren. Don't get me wrong. But it reveals this emotion you can't run from.

And surely there's this pain, this ever-present pain for her to the point where she's probably gotten cynical.

I know he said that. I know he said it. But there ain't no way in the world. Does he not understand how old I am? Does he not understand? Listen, we're not even physical anymore. And my body couldn't do it if I had to do it.

[25 : 47] But she laughs, but she doesn't laugh out loud. Do you catch that? She laughed to herself. Have you ever done that? Did you hear that?

I just laughed at myself. The issue is you laugh to yourself. Nobody else hears it. She laughed to herself saying in her mind, after I'm worn out.

In other words, my body is absolutely worn out. And my Lord is old. Shall I have pleasure? The Lord said to Abraham, notice the Lord didn't speak yet to Sarah.

So the Lord shared the promise. Sarah's in the tent listening. She hears that. She chuckles to herself and says, that guy, who is that guy out there? Who does he think he is? How does he even know I'm his wife?

And what's he claiming all these things for? Who is this guy? And then the Lord said to Abraham, why did Sarah laugh and say, shall I indeed bear a child now that I'm old?

[26 : 48] Do you think Sarah heard that? Oh, yeah. And she's like, what? What? What? She's looking around. How did he know I just laughed at this?

How did he know what I was thinking? You know what? That moment, Sarah realized something about this one. This one, one of the three that was out there, she recognized something.

This is not an ordinary guy. There's no way that an ordinary guy can, number one, know I'm his wife, and number two, heard me laugh. Nobody could hear me laugh. Nobody can understand what I just thought in my head.

And what I just thought in my head, you just spoke right back to me. And this must be God. This must be God. And God says this, is anything too hard for the Lord?

Mind you, he's speaking to Abraham. At the appointed time, I will return to you about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.

[27 : 57] How do you think Sarah responded to that statement? Why did he make the statement again? Do you understand what's going on here?

He tells Abraham, I will surely return next year. About this time, your wife will have a son. He says it again. At the appointed time, I will return. About this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son. He's repeating himself.

Why? You know why? Here's what I think. I think we see here a tenderness. From God. That is amazing. I think he cares for Sarah so much.

That he would appear for her sake. I don't think he came back to tell Abraham again what he had promised him. I think he came by for Sarah's sake.

Why? Why? Because Sarah is struggling to believe. She wants to believe. She wants to have faith. But she just can't embrace it.

[29 : 06] Why? Let me ask this question. When your life is full of emotions. When you can't see away.

When there's no explanation and it looks absolutely impossible. Do you find in your life that you're believing all the promises of God? Or do you identify with Sarah?

Sarah? Sarah in her mind with her equation says that it's not possible so I can't believe. And you know what God says?

God says this. Is anything too hard for the Lord? Do you understand who I am? Do you understand that I'm the sovereign maker of all things?

Do you understand that I'm the one who gives birth? Do you understand that I'm the one that does things that are supernatural? Things that are beyond nature?

[30 : 08] Things that you can't understand? Things that you've never seen? Things that you've never imagined? I am able. You know what's beautiful about this?

Is the passage we read earlier in Hebrews 11. I want you to hear what is said about Sarah in the hall of faith.

We can clearly see that at 99, I mean excuse me, at let's see, 100, 90, almost 90 years old. She did not believe. She did not have faith. But Hebrews 11 declares that something changed in her life.

You know what changed? I think that event, this is my personal, I'm reading in the white spaces between the words in Scripture. I'm inferring, I believe by the tenderness of God in this interaction that took place by the Oaks at Mamre, it's gentleness in the way he treated her, Sarah, that she that day believed.

It says, by faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age. Listen to this.

[31 : 23] She considered him faithful who promised. When did that happen? Because what I just read, Are you out of your mind?

I'm old. I'm paraphrasing. But it says something close to that. But Hebrews 11 says, She considered him faithful who had promised.

And you're fast. Thank you.

Are you touched by the tenor of God? You know, it's my guess that all of us struggle with this. Raise your hand if you believe in all the promises of God. Raise your hand. You believe in everyone with no struggles. You know what?

[32 : 53] I find myself to be a whole lot like Sarah. And I wonder if you do too. Let me just remind you of some New Testament promises that God has given to you and me.

And let me just ask you if you step into all of those. Let me ask you if you respond to the promises of God that I'm going to share with you right now.

If you always respond with faith. Or do you find yourself doubting? Do you find yourself laughing saying there's no way? Surely he wouldn't say that.

Surely he hadn't promised that. How do you respond to his promise? Listen, God says that I will give you eternal life. Do you believe it? Christian, do you believe that that's absolutely true?

That he's going to give you by what Christ has done in your behalf. That is, he's died on the cross paying the penalty of our sin in our place in order that we're going to have eternal life.

[33 : 55] Do you believe that? Do you ever doubt your salvation? No longer do I doubt my salvation. Praise be to God that I'm absolutely convinced.

I see something in me that wasn't in me before. I see a changed guy. I see changed desires in me. I know for sure that I'm going to be in heaven.

I know for sure that I'm going to inherit eternal life. Do I respond to that in faith? Yes, I do. And I'm hoping all of us do. Because that's the declaration of John 4. It's eternal life.

How about this? Do you believe that for you there's a future? Do you believe that he will return? Do you believe that he's going to take you home? Do you believe he's going to take you to glory?

Do you believe for sure? Do you believe Jesus is coming back again? Do you believe? Absolutely. I 100% believe. You know, it's been a while. A couple of generations ago, probably a bunch of generations ago, I said, oh, he's coming this week.

[34 : 55] He's coming next month. He's coming next year. He's coming in my lifetime. He ain't come yet. Why do you believe he's coming? What gives you so much confidence to think he's coming again?

The word of God declares it. The word of God declares it. There's a promise been made by God. Do you believe it? I believe it. Absolutely believe it. Let me ask you this one.

He says he'll never leave you or forsake you in Hebrews. Do you believe it? If you've ever been in a tight pinch and you wonder where in the world is God? God, where are you when I need you, man? Don't you see what condition I'm in? Don't you see my circumstances? Don't you understand? I don't have a dime and I've got these people climbing down my back. I've got to pay this and pay that.

Where are you? Have you ever struggled with that? I'll never leave you or forsake you. Have you ever been in a place where you're all alone and you don't sense the presence of God anywhere, anywhere?

[35 : 57] Have you ever been there? Most of us have. Do we believe the promise of God, I'll never leave you or forsake you? I believe it. I believe it because that's what he's declared.

He said, he's promised I'll never leave you or forsake you. How about this one? There remains a rest for your soul. I will give you rest for your soul.

Do you believe it? Do you believe there's coming a day when you're going to have absolute full rest? I believe it. If we read the end of Revelation, you can't read that and not believe that.

It's talking about the most amazing new heavens and new earth. We'll see him face to face. No more tears. No more crying. Amazing. Do I believe that's real? He promised it.

I believe it. Now, let me talk to you about one that's the most difficult, I think, or at least one of the ones that's the most challenging. I'm going to talk about it in Matthew 6. I'm going to read a passage, and I think this is probably one of the places that the rubber meets the road the most for us when we talk about the promises of God.

[37 : 03] That in reality, we want to believe, but we struggle to believe. And this hits us on a regular basis. Listen to it. Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life.

All right. Let me ask the question again. Do you all believe the promises of God? Do you believe the promise you're about to hear in this passage? He says, in response to the promise, don't be anxious.

You know what? In essence, why are you worried about anything? Why do you entertain anxiety in your life? Why do you worry at all? Because what I'm about to tell you is the promise that you can take to the bank.

But I'm telling you, for most of us, we struggle with this. Do not be anxious about your life, what you'll eat or what you'll drink or about your body, what you'll put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?

Look at the birds. Let me ask the question. How many times have you all seen the birds plant and then care for their garden?

[38 : 08] And then when it's ready, go and reap a harvest? He's making the point here. The birds, I feed them. They neither sow nor reap nor gather in barns.

And yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not more valuable than them? And which of you, by being anxious, can add a single hour to your lifespan? What benefit is there, right?

And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. Yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them. But if God so clothed the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown in the oven, will he not much more clothe you? You hear what he's saying? They get clothed and they don't even last long.

God is gracious enough to clothe the flowers with this incredible beauty. And yet you go around trying to make this happen on your own. You worry yourself to death because you don't believe in my promises.

[39 : 06] You don't believe what I've told you. He goes on to say, therefore, don't be anxious, saying, what are we going to eat? What are we going to drink? What are we going to wear? For nonbelievers, seek after those things.

And your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Do you grasp the beauty of this? He's sovereign. He knows. He's omniscient. He knows everything. He's omnipotent.

He can do all things. He goes on to say, here's what I want you to focus on. Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness. Here's the promise. All these things will be added to you.

All these things will be added to you. Why do you worry? Now let me ask this. Any of y'all ever worried? I don't see a single hand. That means nobody ever worried. We got one.

I got two. I got three. I got a couple more up here. So we're up to five. Let me just say that don't you see that we likewise struggle to walk by faith?

[40 : 05] This hits all of us. Paul says it this way. Jumping to his perspective.

He said, don't be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

And the fill in the blank. Peace of God that passes all understanding shall do what? It'll guard your heart, your desires. It'll guard your mind, your thoughts.

The peace of God will be yours. You know what? God has promised to give you peace. Do you feel like daily on an ongoing basis you have continual peace?

Do you find that things stir your emotions very deeply because you can't figure out how to handle them? Do you find yourself worried about multiple things? You know what?

[41 : 05] You and I are just like Sarah, aren't we? We've heard the promises of God and yet how hard is it to get to the place where we walk by faith? How hard is it to get to the place where we walk by faith?

You know, that's the response of one who trusts in and believes in God. You know, I don't want to pass by the truth that God's saying here.

And I want you to see Christ in this passage. Have y'all seen it? Y'all do realize that the very child that God is promising is the line to the Messiah.

Do you know what the Messiah represents? The Messiah, all the messianic prophecies are all pointing to Christ. Christ is the fulfillment of the law. If Christ doesn't come, then there is no redemption.

There is no salvation. There is no new life. There is no person that's born again. Unless Christ is born.

[42 : 19] Unless the Messiah comes. And this was already spoken, is already promised by God. God is accomplishing His promises. All of His promises are pointing to the fulfillment in the Messiah that is Jesus.

Is anything too hard for the Lord? Sarah, is anything too hard for me? I told you there was going to be a son of the promise.

And that son of the promise from that son, the whole world is going to be touched. There is a King coming that's in your body right now, Sarah.

I'm going to cause you to get pregnant. You're going to have a son. And that son is going to ultimately give birth down the line to the Messiah. I will accomplish my plan.

And my plan goes through you. How powerful is that? Sarah, I'm able, I'm able, I'm able to send Christ through you to crush the head of the serpent like I promised way back early in Genesis at the beginning of all this.

[43 : 43] Let me ask this church. What is it going to take for us to get to the point where we walk by faith? What will it take for us to get to the point where we absolutely trust God in every way?

You know, that's what he graciously is doing for all of us. He is tenderly, gently leading us into a deeper, more trust-filled life as Christians.

God is patient. And you know, God's the one that sends some of these storms our way so he can get our attention to teach us what it means to trust in him. It's my hope that all of us will grow into maturity.

And that when we see the promises of God, we say, amen, praise be to you. And when we walk through the fire, we say, amen, praise be to you. And we say, I rejoice in you, God, my Savior. Though right now I might die, I still rejoice in you. Because I know this is you're absolutely in sovereign control of all things. I believe it with all my heart. God, you said you love me more than I can possibly imagine.

[44 : 52] And God, you're able to do all things according to your will. Nothing can get in the way. God, I trust all of those things and I trust you. Let's pray. Oh, God, would you do a work in us where we would believe you?

God, I confess it so many times. I've not understood of how you could possibly change things or fix things or work things or help me.

God, so many times I've doubted you. So many times I've doubted your promise. So many times I've walked in unbelief. So many times I've walked in fear. So many times I've stepped into anxiety and trying to fix things in my own strength and my own wisdom.

God, forgive me for that. And not just me, Father. I'm sure for all of us those times have happened, at least for most of us. And God, I pray that you would do a work in us that we would no longer doubt you, that we would believe you.

And we would come to the place like Sarah that she believed that you were able to do even supernatural things in her life. She was convinced of it. God, she embraced faith.

[46 : 10] And I ask that you would help us to embrace faith. And in like doing, we would be children of Abraham. Like Abraham, that we would embrace faith.

God, we need you to do it. We can't do it. We pray in your name. Amen. Amen. Amen.