

From Worship to Worry!

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

All right, take your Bibles, if you would, and go with me to Genesis chapter 12. Genesis chapter 12, and I'm excited to get to share with you this chapter of the Bible tonight. And before we look at the chapter, I'd just like to speak to you just a second about Sunday, if I could, and ask your prayers and ask you to work.

You know, the guys have gotten out, several people in the church have given out 10,000 invitations. But that won't bring very many people, to be honest with you. My brother called today, we were talking a little bit, and I said they gave out 10,000 invitations.

He said, what do you expect? I said, a few visitors, because, you know, people don't respond. That many won't respond, probably, but they'll respond much more if you invite your personal friends.

Easter is the big day. It's the day people go to church. Easter and Christmas, that's the two days they go to church in a year. And so this is your most fruitful opportunity to say, I invite you to come to our church and hear, or worship with us, or study the Bible, or worship Jesus, or whatever.

[1 : 20] I challenge you to invite people. I challenge you to get a track and put it in their hands and say, I'd love to have you in my Sunday school class. If you can get them in and get them connected and get them involved in what's going on.

I was very excited to get the letter from Chuck this afternoon with ideas about Sunday. I'm excited because that meant somebody was thinking about Sunday. And I know those that gave out 10,000 pieces of literature, you were thinking about Sunday, obviously.

Chuck was writing that. Peyton has got ideas. I just want to challenge you. We need to be here early. It could be a harvest day. We need to be here early. Make sure everything looks as good as possible.

You need to be praying. You know, I feel an enormous pressure every time I preach to you. I was just in Bolivia. I don't ever feel the pressure in other countries that I feel here.

I don't even feel the pressure in other churches that I feel here. This is the place I think God put me to work. And so I am very concerned that I would preach and do well for the honor and the glory of the Lord Jesus.

[2 : 23] So I'd ask you to pray for me. I'd ask you to pray for Ed, that he would lead the singing in such a way, the specials, every part of it. Down to the way people meet folks outside in the parking lot or anywhere else.

I would like to request that you would be very careful about where you park. I don't say a lot about that. But if you would park a little further away, it might help. So, you know, leave a spot for them.

In fact, as you know, you could even stand out in a parking lot and point them to your parking place. And those of you who park along the front there, you know, you could move and point them to that parking place.

Because people that pull up, if they see it's full, they may just drive away. It'd be better that they know that there's a place they can park. And they park the easier spot. So maybe you could find a place.

Now, I park down below and some of the guys park there. And the other day, Andrew Pearson, just to be rude, tried to park where I could get my car out. He really didn't. We're finding out every day how funny a guy he is.

[3 : 20] But anyway, because I think his brother or something, I'm not sure that it was at his house. But anyway, I just ask you Sunday to really work at trying to be overly prayerful and begging God to do a work that God would give us a harvest of souls for his honor and for his glory.

And I think you should take it very seriously about what's going on. Then Sunday night, we're going to do something that I hope will be interesting to you. And I hope that you'll look forward to it. I hope you'll be here.

We're at Sunday night. We're going to talk about Yoke Fellows. And there are now 19 missionaries that are members of our church. And I need 19 families that would sign up to link each one with a different missionary.

I'll explain that to you Sunday night. Two or three people have already said that whenever we get around to doing this, that they already know who they want. But Sunday night, I'm going to talk to you about it, explain to you how it works. And Trent already has material fixed up to put in your hands.

So we'll explain what goes on about being a Yoke Fellow and working together with a missionary. So that'll happen, Lord willing, on Sunday night. And if you could spread that around among our church people, you can be a blessing.

[4 : 26] We have to be as strong here as we are around the world. So really, I want to get about five or six families working with each of the missionaries. So if we get that, we'd have to have like 100 families to send out 19 families.

That'd be a good deal. Amen? We ought to be stronger here than we are anywhere else. The light that shines the farthest shines the brightest at home. Some old preacher said that. I don't even remember who it was.

It was very true. So I hope that you'll help and you'll be here for that. Okay, let's turn in our Bibles to Genesis chapter 12. And I'm about to read a whole chapter with you. Let me just tell you a few things before I read the chapter.

Quote unquote theologians. And I say quote unquote theologians because theology is the study of doctrine of God. You know, people that believe in God, people that study the Bible and people that know these things, they often doubt Genesis 1 through 11 because there's been no archaeological proof, they say, that those chapters ever happened.

They start believing the Bible a little bit, somewhat, not much, but a little bit starting in Genesis 12. They don't really believe it there either, but they definitely don't believe it Genesis 1 through 11. I believe it starting in Genesis 1.1.

[5 : 36] I really believe it starting in Genesis 1.0. I mean, right before it ever gets started, I'm still already believing and I believe it all the way through. But starting in Genesis chapter 12, this is a whole new era.

This is God's going to give the promise again. You heard about that Sunday. He's given the promise again about his son coming. So you're going to hear about Jesus coming because he's going to come through the line of Abraham.

He's starting a nation of people and he's going to show us through the Old Testament how he worked with a group of people that are the bride of the Lord God himself. They're the wife of God.

That's why often you hear the word adultery when he talks about spiritual things and he calls Israel an adulteress and all of that sort of stuff. That's why the book of Hosea was written, which we've already preached through. We're going to talk about Israel being adulteress because she's married to God.

And in the New Testament, we get around to us being the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. So this is a big chapter. This is a big chapter. Then there's some very practical things that come straight to your life. In this chapter, the man of God will go from a high mountain peak of worship all the way down to worry.

[6 : 39] This will be from worry to worship. You know that you could easily be coming to church here. You could be studying the Bible and praying. You could be magnifying God with your lips.

And in just a short turn of events, could be on the opposite of the fence filled with fear. And that's what happens to Abraham. And I want to help you that that wouldn't happen in our lives.

Read with me, if you would, Genesis chapter 12, verse 1. Now the Lord said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.

And I will make of thee a great nation. And I will bless thee, and make thy name great. And thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless him that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee.

And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And just for parentheses here, verse 3. He'll bless and curse those according to how they treat Israel.

[7 : 36] I still believe that is true for today. Verse 4. So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken unto him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was 75 years old when he departed out of Haran.

And Abram took Sarah, his wife, and Lot, his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran. And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan.

On the land of Canaan they came. And Abram passed through the land under the place of Sikkim, under the plain of Moir. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the Lord appeared unto Abram and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.

And there built he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. And he removed from thence on a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west and I on the east.

And there he built an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south. And there was a famine in the land. And Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there.

[8 : 38] For the famine was grievous in the land. And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarah his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon.

It's a real nice thing to say to your wife, You're kind of good looking, you're easy on the eyes, you're fair, you're kind of cute. Therefore it will come to pass, an Egyptian shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife, and they will kill me.

But they'll save you alive. Say, I pray thee, that you're my sister, that it may be well with me for what you do, for your sake. And my soul shall live because of thee.

And it came to pass, and when Abram was coming to Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman, that she was very fair. They gave her a higher rating than her husband did. The princes also of Pharaoh saw her and commended her before Pharaoh.

And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. And he entreated, that's an amazing thought to me, the guy let his wife be taken to another man's house. That's just amazing. And he entreated Abram well for her sake.

[9 : 41] And he had sheep and oxen and he asses and men servants and maid servants and she asses and camels. And the Lord plagued Pharaoh in his house with great plagues because of Sarah, Abram's wife.

And Pharaoh called Abram and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? Why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? Why saidst thou she's my sister? So I might have taken her to me to wife.

Now therefore behold thy wife, take her and get out of here. Go thy way. And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him. And they sent him away and his wife and all that he had. Father, I pray you'd work today and just help us as we go from worship not to go to worry, to go to work, not to go to worship, but to go from worship to worship and not to let fear get in our way and not to let problems hinder our walk with you.

And I'll give you praise and honor and glory for all that you do. In Jesus' precious name, amen. First thing you might write down is there's a promise for the world. Look at chapter 12, verse 1.

And I'm going to really be brief on this because you went over it Sunday night, but I want you to look at chapter 12 and verse 2. And he said, thou shalt be a blessing. He said, thou shalt be a blessing.

[10 : 52] And then if you'll look in verse 3, he said, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Abram was blessed to be a blessing. Now please look this way a second.

Prosperity gospel has kind of taught us that God's going to make us rich. God's going to give us cars and houses and lands. God's going to give us wives and children. And he's going to just do all these wonderful things for us. But it's kind of like what happens with Abraham here.

Abraham can read in verse 2. I will make of thee a great nation. I will bless thee. And I'll make you famous. I'll make your name great. And he could stop the sentence right there and be like, wow. Man, God is doing big stuff for me.

But all the blessing came with a responsibility. You're going to be a blessing. We are blessed the same way by the Lord God. I'm saved.

How many of you have been born again? Say amen. I'm on my way to heaven. I've known the gospel all of my life. I have a copy of the word of God. I have the, I'm a member of the church of God.

[11 : 50] I have financial resources way above and beyond almost anybody in the world. So do you, by the way. If you live in America, you are an extremely rich person. I know you compare yourself to Bill Gates and don't feel like you're doing that good.

But why don't you compare yourself to Burkina Faso? And you'll find out you're doing real good compared to other people around the world. I have spiritual resources that they have no idea of.

And we are blessed tonight to be a blessing. We are blessed to be a blessing. And I would just like you to write this little question down somewhere and think about this little idea right here.

And I'd just like to ask you, does the responsibility of your blessing ever occur to you? Does the responsibility of your blessing ever occur to you? Do you ever step back and say, boy, he has made me have things.

He has protected my health. He has given me money. He's made me be somebody. He has blessed me in so many ways. Do you ever think about the responsibility that came with all those blessings?

[12 : 54] When I travel around the world and I drive by some little hut in Burkina Faso or in Bolivia, I get out into some poor area of the town and there's some guy living there. He'll probably never get out of town.

He'll probably never go to another state in his own country. He'll probably never get to another country. At best, he'll live a pretty hungry life. He'll have some children and he'll die.

And I have been so blessed. I have heard the gospel all my life. I've got a copy of the word of God. I'm in a great church. I'm with other great Christians. Have I ever thought about the responsibility that came with my blessings?

Do you ever wonder how you should manage and handle the blessings the Lord's given you? I'd just like to stop and I could have preached a whole message on it, but I won't. But you know, sometimes I think we look at this prosperity gospel and we're just a half a step away from them and their churches are wicked.

I mean, it's just a wicked idea that God ought to make me rich. But then they could easily claim, well, Abraham was made rich, but Abraham was made rich not to get, but to give. Abraham was made rich not to be blessed, but to be a blessing.

[14 : 00] And you have been made rich. You have been made rich. You have been blessed. You have been blessed. God said, I'll use you, Abraham, and you will be a blessing. And they were.

They blessed us by giving us the Bible, the church, and the Lord Jesus. And there's another promise coming. And that is that Jesus is coming. There it is. Chapter 12, verse 3.

Just like Genesis 3, verse 15. When he said, he said the seed of the woman would stomp the head of that stake, the seed of the serpent, and it would bruise his heel.

That's exactly what's going on. And here we got another promise. Jesus is coming. Now, how will you deal with the great knowledge of this truth? How will it affect your everyday life?

Could I just stop? You know, I wish somehow I could get into your heart. And I'd like to ask you, you ever think about how blessed you are? You ever think about how rich you are? You ever think about how you've lived this long?

[14 : 57] You got your children and got your wife and got your car. You got the clothes on your back. You're healthy. You got a job. You've been saved. You're on your way to heaven. You ever think about all that God has poured into you?

God's been good to you. And you ought to stop and say, boy, God's been good to me. And with God's goodness comes great responsibility. And with Abraham, God gave him great things.

And the next thing he does is worship God. He makes a place of worship. Look, if you would, in verse 7. Genesis chapter 12 and verse 7. The Lord appeared unto Abram.

And he said, unto thy seed will I give this land. And there builded he an altar unto the Lord. I wish you'd underline in your Bible. He got the promise. He obeyed God and stepped out and left the land.

And he's passing through. He's passing through all this area. And he's on the way to a place he doesn't know where he's going. And on the way there. And by the way, that's all you're doing, by the way. You do know you're not living here.

[15 : 54] I don't think we got that straight. We don't live here. And much as Philip and Lori are selling everything and moving out. And their house is full of stuff that doesn't belong to them anymore. That's pretty much where we all live if we're honest.

This world's not my home. I'm just passing through. But that leads Abraham to step over and to worship. Worship. And worship started when he realizes how good God's been to him.

You know, if you could stop and think, boy, God's been good to me. If you could stop and think, I don't deserve to be alive. If you could stop and think, I don't deserve all the things that's happened to me. There was a man in our church and out of keeping that came to me one time.

And he made the comment, every time Americans come down here, they give their testimony. And I hear it when they say it. They say, I was born in a Christian home. And this man made the comment, my son that's about to be born will be able to say that.

Every time I've heard that, I've wished my child could say it. He said, they'll say, those Americans will say, my mama was a Christian. My daddy was a Christian. And I come from a Christian home. That was my testimony.

[16 : 56] And now his son can have that. Now look at this. In verse 7, the Lord appeared unto Abraham. You need to underline that and mark that. You see, salvation starts when God shows up.

Salvation starts when the Lord appears. If you will, Titus chapter 2 verse 11. You ought to make a mark of that. In the corner, in the margin of your Bible, chapter 12 and verse 7. Put Titus 2 verse 11 right there beside it.

Because for the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. That's the way we get saved.

It's the Lord that shows up. It's God himself making himself clear to Abraham. Abraham, that's what happened with me. That's what happened with you. God gave great promises to Abraham. He told Abraham, I'm going to do all these things in your life.

And you are going to be a blessing. You are going to be a blessing. By the way, we have a wonderful promise. And I just wish you'd almost memorize this.

[17 : 52] 1 Timothy chapter 2 verses 3 and 4. We looked at that last night in Mableton. Look at 1 Timothy chapter 2 verses 3 and 4 with me. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.

Who will have all men to be saved. And to come unto the knowledge of the truth. Now just a couple of things. I wish if you got your Bible open there. Which you probably don't because you got a screen. But I wish you'd look at it.

It says God our Savior. Not just Jesus. God the Father. God the Son. God the Holy Spirit. The entire Godhead. Our Savior. And it says there is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.

Who wants all men to be saved. And to come to the knowledge of the truth. That's a clear promise for us all. God wants us all to be saved. God is blessing us by saving us from ourselves.

Just like he saved Abram. You know Abram probably felt like when before the Lord showed up. He probably felt like things were going pretty good. He was in the home of a religious man. An idol worshiper.

[18 : 54] His dad who had another God. He was in. He was probably not that poor. Probably not that bad off. If you remember when he leaves. He takes a whole bunch of junk with him. He's got family members he takes with him.

He wasn't that bad off. He needed saved. And you know we need saved. Not so much. We don't understand. We need to be saved from ourselves. Biggest problem I got is Austin in my life.

Abraham responded to the promise. In Genesis chapter 12 and verse 4. Look what happened. Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him. And Lot went with him. Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him.

Well we could stop there couldn't we? You come to church all the time. And one of the biggest fears I have. Is a fear I share with every preacher I talk to. As I work in my own life.

I try to remember this. And that is you can get so accustomed to the things of God. That you don't respond to the things of God. You can know all about it in your head. And not know about it in your heart. It won't affect your actions.

[19 : 51] Sometimes we think. I think we believe man. I just want to fill my head up. And I want to know a whole bunch of stuff about God. But I don't want to put any of it into practice. But Abraham had to step out. And he did.

And he obeyed God as much as he knew. And he went out just like he was told to. And in verse 8 he worshipped God. In verse 8 he worshipped God. And if I could take just a second to talk to you about worship.

Worship. Just a second to talk to you about worship. That I think you see in chapter 8. 12 in verse 8. Maybe you might make a note of this. Did you notice worship is never about us?

Boy this is another confusing thing in our day and time. Worship is not about us. He said he built an altar unto the Lord. And he called upon the name of the Lord. And that's all in verse 8.

It was unto the Lord. Unto the Lord. And the name of the Lord. Unto the Lord. And I wish you'd underline unto the Lord in your Bible. And we should think about this. We don't come to church. See when. Now listen to this.

[20 : 47] You ready? When most people say the word worship. They have no concept of the offering. When they say I was in the worship service. They don't really mean the offering time. That's just what they charge you to come.

And they certainly don't mean the preaching time. Because the preaching time is not worship. The worship is the singing. It's the emotions. It's the getting excited. It's the goosebumps you get.

Because they can sing well. Or they can play well. Or they make a lot of noise when they're doing it. But worship was never about us. Was never about us.

And in this first place. We're really coming across worship like this. Where it's just talked about as bluntly. Worship was about the Lord. Worship was about the Lord. It was about him.

It was for him. Worship was a response to him. As he speaks to us and blesses us and promises us. I challenge you to consider to think about worship.

[21 : 45] Worship. Do you know that the blunt truth is probably we'd be better off if all we did was have the Bible reading and preaching. So you'd know what real worship is.

Real worship is knowing about Jesus. Real worship is learning what his Bible says. Real worship is leaving out of here to go put it into practice. Real worship is about obedience. Real worship is about sacrifice.

Probably one of the biggest things that we do on a Sunday morning. That's worship is giving an offering. It's when we come to him and say hey I'm here to give an offering. I'd like to remind you in this passage.

Scripture builds an altar in two places. Here's some little ideas about the altar. First off it was a regular part of his life. That's because I see he did it twice right here in one chapter.

He's got a regular part. Second thing you ought to think about is that worship cost. Worship cost. Built an altar. If we're going to have an altar built. We need a training center student to get that done.

[22 : 44] Because we need a comfortable place to put our holy rear in. And we just need to watch. We don't want to sweat. We don't want to do anything. We don't want to build an altar.

We don't come to church to do that. But he built an altar. Second thing I'd like you to think about is that worship took time. You know if you're going to build an altar.

You're going to build an altar. You're going to bring an animal to sacrifice on the altar. You're going to spend time there. It took time. And can I just say this. Worship shows how important you think God is.

Worship shows how important you think God is. But we live in a day of multitasking. You know you can. If you're a part of vision. You don't even have to come to the services. We put it online for you. And you can wash dishes while you work.

You can wash and worship at the same time. You can do your exercise and work and worship at the same time. You don't need to sit around time and say no God's important enough that I'll just stop a minute.

[23 : 39] And I'll build a place for him to worship him. No need for that. But hearing this story about Abraham. Abraham's traveling. He's got all those people. He says hey stop. Hey stop. Get me the stuff.

We're going to build an altar. Give me the stuff. We're going to build an altar. And we're going to worship. And they stop. And they build an altar. And they worship. They leave there. Go to the next place. By the way their altar didn't come with wheels.

And it wasn't on a trailer being pulled behind a jeep. They got to the next place. And Abraham said time to worship. Everybody get to work. Let's build an altar. Let's build an altar. It was a part of that.

Worship's not about your emotions. Or your feelings. Or singing. Or music. That's not what worship's about. That's not what worship's about. There may be singing in worship. But probably the honest truth is.

The biggest mistake we make. By the way 150 years ago. 200 years ago in England. In the United States. There was great big arguments about music. Just like there is today in our churches.

[24 : 34] But the different argument then was this. Do we allow any singing at all? Do we allow congregationals? One of the great preachers in Europe said.

When you come to church here. When you walk in. I will say open your Bibles. And when you leave. It will be when I close mine. There will be no singing. There will be nothing else. Charles Haddon Spurgeon. Wouldn't allow a choir to sing.

And he hated even the thought of a specialist. Because if somebody's going to sing a special. They're just doing it to call attention to themselves. So they would sing psalms. But they're only going to keep it. And yet today worship is about.

A guy came over to our house this week. To work on the internet. He comes in the house. And he tells us about the church. He goes. He said. Man you can feel the music. It just shakes that whole big building. And that's about worship.

That's really not what worship was. How important is worship in your life? What evidences are there in you. That show the world. How important you see worship in God. What evidences are there.

[25 : 32] That show the world. How important you see worship in God. What is your attitude towards worship? Can I just. You know. I just. I'm going to say some things. This might be just a little chocante.

That means tough. Rough. In your face. But are you ready for this? You wouldn't miss work with that headache. That you miss church with. That you wouldn't use the same excuse for your work.

That you would for your worship. Worship. All your kid has to do is have a bead of sweat on their forehead. And you're ready to say. Hey. We can't worship today. On the work day we can. But that work's a different thing.

That work's important. And God understands. The boss doesn't. Well he does. He really does. You know. You don't have to. But you. Do you not realize. Part of worship is the sacrifice. Part of worship is the building the altar.

Part of worship is the time. You set apart. Worship is so important. But doesn't mean you'll not have problems and temptations. I want to take you now to verse 10. Amazing.

[26 : 33] This man has just gotten great promises from God. And he's had a place to worship built now. Two times. And he's been worshiping God. And you would think that a guy who has got great promises from God.

And is building places to worship. Wouldn't fall and mess up in his life. But in verse 10. His problems lead to worldliness. His problems lead to worldliness.

Look in verse 10. Genesis chapter 12 verse 10. There's a famine in the land. And it was grievous. There was a famine in the land.

And it was a big bad famine. It was a big bad famine. The famine causes Abram to travel down to Egypt. Egypt is a picture of sin in the Bible.

You might mark that somewhere in your Bible. Almost anytime you're going to see Egypt. You're always going to know we're talking about sin. And slavery. And bondage. And being lost. And not knowing God.

[27 : 29] And being without Christ. But Abram goes running down to Egypt. To save his life. But will come close to losing his wife. He runs to Egypt to save his life.

But he comes close to losing his wife. Fear causes Abram to do something very foolish. Buddy if you touch a man's pocket book. If you touch a man's pocket book.

You will soon find out what he's made of. And Abram there's a famine. You know he's got a lot of animals. He's got a lot of people that work for him.

He's come out of there with Lot. And he's got his wife. But he's got all of his stuff. He's got to have a lot of people carrying his stuff. Go back up and read the chapter. And he comes out there. And there's a famine. And he immediately.

He immediately begins to think. I've got to get down there. So he does some very foolish things. He starts thinking about himself. He gets his eyes off the person he was worshipping. He gets his eyes off the person who made great promises to him.

[28 : 26] And he does something that goes very much against his basic godly nature. That he now has because he's a man of God. He is going to do some things. That he will be extremely embarrassed about.

I believe if Abraham would come and sit in his auditorium tonight with us. He'd say. Guys that was not my best moment. That's not a moment I really wish was being brought up. But God wrote it down so you'd all see it.

So you'd all wake up and realize that when you let famine. And you let fear. And you let financial troubles get in your face. You'll do things you ought not do. He begins to take advantage.

Remember what he does? They're on the way to Egypt. And he looks at his wife. And he says. Baby you are a pretty good looking lady. And he said. You know you're my half sister. And so honey. Here's what I'd like to ask you to do.

And let's just tell them that you're my sister. That way they'll rape you. And they won't hurt me. They'll take you. And put you over in Pharaoh's house. And whatever's going to happen.

[29 : 19] But they're not going to mistreat me. And he flirts with that sin so much. That it appears that Pharaoh is sending him more sheep. And more cows. And more servants. And Pharaoh's like. Hey I like your wife.

I'm going to send you another couple of sheep. I like your wife. Here comes three more cows. I like your wife. He's taking advantage of sin. Doesn't sound like us does it? Doesn't sound like us does it?

He's taking advantage of sin. He's taking advantage of the fact that he's playing with it. How often do you let fear cause you to do what you shouldn't have done? How often do you let fear cause you to do what you shouldn't have done?

Two verses real quickly. If I could. 1 John 4 18 says. There is no fear in love. But perfect love casts out fear. Because fear hath torment.

He that feareth is not made perfect in love. I'll just tell you that I am a victim of fear often. So this is not a one-way message. I can tell you that today I found out I had the cancer.

[30 : 18] I had big fear issues. I'm supposed to be the preacher and the man of God. And all this great stuff about me. But it wasn't very true. And it wasn't very obvious. And it wasn't very apparent.

1 Timothy 1 7. God has not given us a spirit of fear. But a power and of love and a sound mind. Boy I can get scared over money. I can get scared over somebody messing with my reputation.

I can get scared over any of those things. Fear cripples us. Fear cripples us. And by the way fear doesn't come from God. Those verses made it clear it doesn't come from God.

And fear hinders us from stepping out by faith to do what God wants us to do. God told Abraham. You come out of your land and I'll take care of you. And I'll be doing all this stuff in your life.

All those great promises. Abraham has now forgotten them hasn't he? Abraham all of a sudden wakes up and says. Hey I got to get to Egypt. I had to go down there where the lost people are. Where the other God worshipers are.

[31 : 15] Because it don't look like things are working out for me. By the way fear causes us not to be givers. Abraham's a rich guy. Please don't forget who he is.

This is Genesis chapter 12. We just read verses where God promised to make him rich. We just read verses where he stepped out of his old land and brought all of his stuff with him. We just read verses. This guy's doing okay.

But he's afraid. In the middle of his fear. Abraham didn't realize that God was going to protect him all along. Just like you haven't realized and trusted. So many times I get caught up in junk.

And when the story's all over I'm like man I'm embarrassed. Let me tell you that story and leave out the part about my fear. Let me tell you that story and leave out the part about my foolishness.

Let me tell you that story and not mention to you that I forgot God was going to take care of me. Genesis chapter 12. He's going to do big stuff with Abraham buddy. Abraham you got it.

[32 : 11] I'm going to make a big nation out of you. I'm going to be a blessing to you. And you're going to be a blessing. And I'm going to do great things with you. Thank you God I'd like to worship you. Oh no God there's a famine in the land.

God you didn't know about that when you made me that promise. And things are really falling apart here. I'm headed to Egypt God. I'll check with you later. I'm on my way down to Egypt. He goes down to Egypt and he talks to his wife and says baby look I hate to say this.

But you know I'm not serving God right now. And you ain't that important. There's only one really important guy in this equation. That's me. Romans chapter 5 verse 7. We'll look at it on Sunday morning.

The Bible said some people might even die for a righteous guy. Abraham wouldn't even die for his wife. Abraham wasn't going to die for his wife. He was going to say hey baby let him take you and let things work out for me.

Let's work it out for me. But look what happens. Chapter 12 verse 17. And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues.

[33 : 16] And Pharaoh you know it doesn't tell the whole story. Who knows what all is going on in that story. Because God just kind of gives us an overview. But here's what he started out with a big promise. And now he's protecting him from wrong.

Protecting him from things going wrong in his life. He started out with a great promise. And he went and worshiped God. And problems came along. And he ran and did the wrong thing. And even when he's stupid. God was still good.

Boy he's been good to me when I've been stupid. He's been good to me when I've been stupid. And he goes down and he's good to him. The Lord plagued Pharaoh. And Pharaoh knew it. I don't know what God did. I don't know if an angel came and said Pharaoh you're an idiot.

And that's it. That's Abraham's wife. And I don't appreciate what's happening. I'm going to mess you up. It doesn't tell us a lot in this story. Later on you get other stories. And you know more details. But in this one all I know is this. Man the Lord plagued Pharaoh.

And he plagued his family. And he was really hard on his family. And somehow Pharaoh figured it out. And Pharaoh called Abraham in. He said get in here. He said you didn't tell me she was your wife. You said she was your sister.

[34 : 15] And I could have easily made her my wife. Now what are you doing? Get out of here and take her with you. Take all your stuff with you. I read the end of that story.

And I think about Austin. And I think about how many times I know the great promises. And this is a room full of people that know the great promises. You know them as well as I do. Everybody in this room could preach it just as good as I can.

You know the great promises. You've been on the mountaintops when you worshipped God. You've been on the mountaintops when you sang the song. Assuming you gave the sacrificial offering. And you wouldn't miss church. And you was living for God like you never lived for him before in your life.

You felt the closest you ever felt. And then something goes wrong. A famine in the land. And when it does, it all falls apart. And you go do something stupid.

You know me, I can hide my stupidities like you do. You know. Because I don't know about anybody in this room doing anything stupid. But you do. You know about what you did. You know about some deals you took. You know about some thoughts you thought.

[35 : 11] You know about some words you said. You know about some fear that took over your life. You know about how you slept restless all night long. You know how you tossed and turned and worried. And was like, God, where are you?

And what are you doing? You know how you did that. And the story ends with God saying this. Abraham, I started this chapter off telling you I was going to do big stuff. And you knew it.

You wouldn't worship me. And the first little sign of trouble. You turn on me and you run the other way. What's going on with you, buddy? I'll take care of you. And God steps in.

And God takes care of him. God was dealing with him. Abraham had lied and convinced himself that he had no protection from God. He had to protect himself.

But God was going to protect him all along. I wonder how the story would have read if Abraham had been strong and brave and trusted God. Have you ever gotten into trouble because you were trying to protect yourself instead of trusting God to protect you?

[36 : 08] I have. I have made some of the biggest mistakes in my life when I was afraid. I've said some of the dumbest things. I've made some of the worst decisions.

I watch missionaries. Everybody, they come and they're so excited on deputation. They land on the field for you guys in this room. And everything's going great, man. God gave all your money. You traveled for two or three years.

And everybody in the world told you what a wonderful guy you were. Now you were God's gift. And you worship God. And you were telling everybody, man, I love Jesus. And in six months or eight months of language school.

And six months, eight months of heat or not having lights or not having water. And people not responding. And your wife being upset. And your kid getting sick. And something bad going on.

And all of a sudden you'll do things that will embarrass you. So here in Genesis 12, he says, hey, you don't have to do that. You know the end of the story. You know what's going to happen.

[37 : 02] I don't blame Abraham because I'm worse than Abraham. But here's what happened. Abraham's life has fallen slap apart. But I get to read the last of chapter 12 and I know this.

No, Sarah doesn't get hurt. No, Sarah doesn't get hurt. And his kids don't. His livestock doesn't get taken. And none of his servants get taken. And he leaves white like he came in.

Protected under the promise of the God who did stuff in his life. And so tonight I challenge you. Genesis chapter 12. Man, realize God's given great promises to all of us. He's blessed us in big ways.

So go worship him. But while you worship and remember what Jesus said. Watch and pray. Don't you just pray. You keep one eyeball open. You're supposed to pray like this.

You're not supposed to throw yourself on the ground like Gideon's men did. And throw their face in the water. You're supposed to get out on one knee and pick the water up to your mouth. So you can watch for the enemy. You're supposed to be watchful.

[38 : 02] Because you know that on the moment you're doing the best you've ever done. Fear lurks around the corner. There's a famine coming after you. You're going to mess up. But you don't have to.

Because he will protect you from wrong. And in the end. He will get the glory. Because he said he would. Father, I pray your name will be glorified. I pray you do a work. I pray you bless your people with your great book.

And I give you praise for all you do. You have been listening to Austin Gardner. Pastor of Vision Baptist Church. For contact information. Location.

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