

Honoring God for His Work in Your Life

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Date: 14 April 2013

[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. Take your Bible and turn with me, if you would, to Genesis chapter 14. And while you're turning to Genesis chapter 14, let me remind you of what's going on.

Abraham has been called out. In Genesis chapter 11, Abraham got called out. And Abraham has left with it, and he's taken Lot with him, his nephew. And he is on the way to a land.

He doesn't know where he's going. He doesn't know what's going to happen. We see him worshipping God. He gets a great big promise from God, big things God's going to do with him. He builds altars to God, and then a famine comes.

And when a famine comes, he gets scared, and he runs to Egypt. And when he runs to Egypt, he does things he's very embarrassed about, obviously. It's very out of character for him.

He's not living up to who he is in Christ. And he doesn't live up to who he is, who he ought to be. And he says things and does things that he shouldn't do. But he comes out of Egypt. We saw that in Genesis 13.

[1 : 02] He's come out of Egypt. But when he came out of Egypt, he and Lot were both rich guys. And Lot chose to separate. Abraham said, separate yourself. Go, whichever way you go, I'll go the other way.

And Lot looked and said, I'd like to go towards Sodom and Gomorrah. Even though it was a wicked place in the eyes of the Lord, Lot decided to go towards Sodom and Gomorrah. And so now Lot lives.

Now Lot lives in Sodom and Gomorrah. And I'm going to read you the story here in Genesis chapter 14. But let me just kind of give you the review. Lot's living in Sodom and Gomorrah.

You know, that's the place where we get the word Sodomite. That's a city of homosexuality. It's a city of gross sin. And that's where Lot lives. Abraham still lives in the plains outside the cities.

The feudal kings, these city kings, are fighting. And some of them have conquered others and made them serve them. And then they finally rebelled and said, we're not going to serve you anymore.

[1 : 59] And so the big shots came after them. Five kings. And they took over the other four kings and Sodom and Gomorrah. And their colleagues, they lose the battle.

Peers are not even prepared for war. When they get attacked, they don't even know where the slime pits are on their own land. It's like these guys must have sat around town drinking Cokes and eating french fries or something all the time instead of getting out and knowing what they were about.

The main emphasis in the story you're about to read is that God uses Abraham or Abram to rescue Lot. Abram publicly acknowledges he knows that God is the one that brings about the victory in his life.

So if you've got your Bible, turn to Genesis 14. We're going to skip all the names I can't pronounce anyway. And you can read all them by yourself. So I get you one of those audio things where you can listen to it and get them all pronounced right.

And I'm going to start reading, if you would, in verse 12. In verse 12. The Bible said, And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom and his goods and departed.

[3 : 02] That's a big mistake. They went and messed with Abram's nephew. They took Abram, took him, and took all of his stuff, and they left. Verse 13. And there came one that had escaped and told Abram, the Hebrew, for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre, the Amorite, brother of Eschol and the brother of Aner.

And these were confederate with Abram. When Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants. Trained servants.

Born in his own house. 318. And pursued them unto Dan. Boy, this is a fantastic picture of a strong local church in my mind.

I know that it's not talking about a church. I know that. But old Abram has people born in his house. He has 318 of them. He has trained them how to do war. We'll look at these guys in a minute. Verse 15.

He divided himself against them. Against him. He had his servants by night and smote them and pursued them unto Hovah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought again all the goods and also brought again his brother Lot and his goods.

[4 : 07] And the women also and the people. And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedol, Laomer, whatever that guy's name is. Brother Ched. And King Ched and of the kings that were with him at the valley of Sheveth, which is the king's dale.

And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine. And he was a priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth.

And blessed be the Most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons and take the goods to thyself.

And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth. I will not take from a thread to a shoestring, a shoelatchet, that I will not take anything that's thine.

So you'll never say, I have made Abram rich. Save only that. The only exception will be that which the young men have eaten and the portion of the men which went with me. Aner, Eschel, and Mamre, let them have their portion.

[5 : 14] Father, I pray now that you would take this passage of scripture, help it come alive to us. Help us to understand some great lessons here. And I pray, dear God, that you would teach us and draw us stronger and closer to you.

And God, help us to get involved in eternal things and do what you'd have us do. And I'll give you praise for all in Jesus' name. Amen. First thing that happens in the story is a lot gets caught up in the middle of a war.

But five kings fighting against four kings. Verse 4, chapter 14 and verse 4, they had served. Twelve years they served. And the thirteenth year they rebelled. And there were four kings, verse 9, fighting against five kings.

And there have always been wars and there always will be wars. There will always be one group of people taking advantage of another group of people. And sometimes God's people get caught in the middle of circumstances beyond their control.

Sometimes God's people get taught in the middle. In verse 12 it said, Lot had gone where he thought he would be safe and successful.

[6 : 18] But it didn't turn out that way. Lot had gone where he thought he'd be safe and successful. When Abram said to him, Lot, you pick. You take anywhere you want to go. And I'll let you have that and I'll just go the other direction.

Lot looked over and said, Man, that's the well-watered plain. Looks like it could be the garden of the Lord himself. And hey, by the way, it reminds me of Egypt. Boy, it looks good. Looks like success. Looks like prosperity.

Looks like things are going well there. I think I'll go there, Abram. You take the desert. You take the rough spots. I'll take the nice-looking place and I'll go in that direction. And our security is never found outside the Lord.

If I could stop and preach a whole message, I would right here. It's amazing how I think that money will protect me. It's amazing how I think that if I have a certain amount of money in the bank, I can pay for doctors.

I can pay for everything I need. And somehow, I think money becomes a wall of security. That's really the thinking of Lot, isn't it? Old Lot thought, If I could go to Sodom and Gomorrah area, if I could head that way to the well-watered plains, I'd have a city to protect me.

[7 : 22] I'd have city walls. I'd have friends in the city. I would have success. I could do business. I could buy and sell and trade. And I could do something with my life. And I'm headed down there to get that.

You think riches will protect you. You think the city will protect you. You think you're smart enough to protect yourself. But Mr. Lot will lose everything. The city fell.

Lot lost everything. Chapter 14, verse 10, The veil of Siddam was full of slime pits. And the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and fell there. And they that remained fled to the mountains.

And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their victuals, all their food. And they went their way. Just stop. Here's message number one for us out of a great story.

Oh, Abram doesn't get all the riches. Abram doesn't set his eyes on the money. Abram doesn't set his eyes on personal security. Abram doesn't set his eyes on that. Abram sets his eyes on God.

[8 : 20] I want to serve God. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things of the attitude. Abram says, hey, you take anything you want. And by the way, you remember what happened? As soon as Lot was gone, God came down and said, hey, Lot took his stuff.

But Abram, I'm taking care of you, buddy. Abram, you can count on it. I'm going to take care of you. I'm going to give you a lot of kids and I'm going to give you this land. I'm going to take care of you. There's a big lesson for you tonight. Your job and your education and your retirement plan and all the security you build and all the alarms you put on your house and everything else you do to protect yourself won't do for you what trust in Jesus would do for you, what staying in the will of God would do for you, what you think you could do for yourself, you're unable to do.

And now Lot has been taken captive. I just want you to, you got to get the picture. They grabbed Lot and they grabbed Lot's family. They grabbed Lot's kids and they took everything he had and they stole it and they left.

Second thing that happens in the story is old Abram. Still a man of God, still a warrior. And in verse 13, somebody escaped and they sold Abram. They said, Hey Abram, guess what?

They came and they took Lot. Though Lot had walked away from Abram, though Lot had taken advantage of Abram, he was still willing to love him and to rescue him.

[9 : 39] That's a good lesson right there. We could stop and preach on that one and walk, couldn't we? You know, as independent Baptists and as Christians sometimes we're like, that guy messed up. I'm not helping him anymore. That guy chose his own path.

The guy took the wrong path. The guy did the wrong thing. I don't have anything to do with him. But Abram says, Lot did wrong. Lot did. Kind of shaft him. He did kind of mistreat him. He did kind of take advantage of it.

Old Lot said, Old Lot said, Hey, I'll take the well-watered plains and you take what's left over. And if I'd have been Abram, I think I might have wanted to say something like this. You picked, now you deal with the consequences.

You pick, and you deal with the consequences. But Abram says, I'll be there, buddy. I'm coming to get you. I hope our church is that kind of church. Abram was prepared to fight and risk it all.

In verse 14, the Bible said, When Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, that's a good term. It's a brother. It's really his nephew. But he said his brother. I still feel something there with him.

[10 : 35] He armed his trained servants born in his house, 318, and he pursued them under Dan. Abram and his friends and those trained in Abram's house went to war against four kings that had been able to defeat five or five kings that had been able to defeat four.

I'm not sure if I got that straight. He goes, they fight all these kings, all these armies. Here comes Abram with his, he's got three buddies going with him. He's got 318 guys born in his own house.

And he says, I don't care. I'm going after him. There's some great lessons here about doing the work of God. It wasn't the number in the army that went with Abram to fight the battle.

It wasn't the number that went in the army to fight the battle. They had several kings against him and obviously they would have had more people. For this battle to have been won, Abram had to have trained, I guess I want to stop and remind you of this.

By the end of this chapter, Abram's going to say, I know God did this in my life. He's going to say, I know God did this in my life. And Sodom and Gomorrah's king will come out and the priest Melchizedek will come out and Abram will say, I know good and well who won this victory in my life.

[11 : 43] It wasn't how smart I am. It wasn't where I studied in school. It wasn't how well I trained my soldiers. God delivered me. You ought to never forget that. That is honestly the picture of grace in your life.

It is that God's doing the work. It is so easy for you to think you have a good home and a good marriage because you're such a good guy. It is so easy to think your business goes well because you're so smart.

It is so easy for you to think that you have success because you're so smart. It is really not the truth. It is the God of heaven who wins the battles in our life. Another big lesson here is there are 318 guys that have been born in his house.

318. There are 318 that have been trained. There were 318 that were loyal. There were 318 that were able to travel and fight over great distances. What if Vision Baptist Church and what if you would get a hold of the philosophy that happens in this verse here.

This is not what the original text is about. It is about Abraham going out and winning but it is still there. That is what if we as a church would commit to disciple and train men to do the work of God. I am not sure everybody in the church is involved in discipleship as they ought to be.

[12 : 58] But the wonderful story is that when Lot's captured they come tell Abram and Abram's like I got trained men. I know my men. I trust my men. They were born in my house.

I alarm my men and don't worry Lot we're coming. What if a church got a hold of the philosophy that we could see people born again in our church. What if we got a hold of the philosophy that we could train men up to be leaders and strong spiritual leaders and what if we prepared them to risk their life for the cause of our king.

What if what if this church took on itself the goal of training all these men and sending them out. What would happen if God would allow us to see so many saved and born here in our house.

What would happen if we were willing to risk all that for others that don't deserve our help. I can only imagine Abraham could have easily thought to himself Lot made his bed let him lie in it.

Lot messed up let him figure it out. Same attitude we could have and maybe even sometimes creeps into our church. We don't really need to worry about the Indians anyway. They got their own God and they got their own religion.

[14 : 04] They don't deserve our help. We don't need to worry about the Chinese people. They got their own God and they got their own religions and they got their own beliefs. They got their own philosophies. They're communists after all. We don't have to worry about them. If I go fight those other kings I'm not going to lose all my men.

They already killed a whole bunch of kings. They already took a whole bunch of property. I'd rather sit back and relax and take care of me. I'll tell you what kills churches in America.

We're too protective. We're worried about our children not getting messed up. We're worried about building big walls around our houses and big walls around our church and we're worried about protecting ourselves when our commander-in-chief said go.

And our commander-in-chief said you go tell people. You go risk your life. It changes things. Young people don't want to be members of a church anymore. You know why? There's no life anymore. There's no life to being fat and lazy and sitting in recliners.

There's no life to sitting around and watching TV all the time. Real life would be like when you've been trained to be a warrior like the 318 men. I can tell you this when Abraham walked out and said hey boys you know all that training you had?

[15 : 06] Come on we're going to put it in action. They jumped up and said about time I'm ready to swing a sword. They wanted to go do something. Our church ought to train up young people like wow man. We ought to be training up people to get them to go around the world and carry the gospel.

What if we're willing to risk it all to help others that don't deserve our help? What if we go without seeking to get anything in return? I love it that when he comes back the king of Sodom walks out and says hey hey you just take give me my people you have all the goods.

And Abraham said I don't need a thing from you buddy. You can have all your beans back. You can have all your sheep. You can have everything. I lift my hand to my God and I said I wouldn't take a thread off of you big boy.

Not a shoe latch and nothing because you'll never say you made me rich. I serve the God of heaven. Can I just tell you that sending 318 people to war and not getting any rewards kind of counterproductive?

Can I say to you that as a missionary church it's a counterproductive thing. Being a missionary church unless you understand eternity is a counterproductive thing. If you want to consider what goes on in our church here's exactly what goes on in our church.

[16 : 16] We give like wild men to help other people we don't even know. I ask you today to give an offer to help a guy named Jorge. You're like Jorge who? And where does he live? And can he talk English?

And is he a good guy? Well John Pearson knows him. So what? Let John help him. And then we take up offerings all the time. Every week we take up offerings to send missionaries. It's a counterproductive thing.

It's not what normal people would do. But it is what people would do if they knew what our king wanted. Our king wants the gospel preached around the world. Our king wants his name magnified and lifted up.

And Abram didn't do it for anything he would get out of it. Verse 16. Abram. God gave Abram the victory and Abram knows it. In verse 16. Chapter 14 and verse 16.

And he brought back all the goods. Also brought back his brother Lot his goods and the women also and the people. He brings them back and he knows God gave him the victory.

[17 : 11] That's the third thing I want you to see. Go with me to verse 20. He knows it's God that won the victory. Can I just remind you that it's not your good friendly acts that get people to come to our church or stay here.

Can I remind you it's not your great offerings that are getting the gospel message around the world. Can I remind you it's definitely not my preaching or reading Psalm 40 over and over that gets the church going or God doing something here.

It's the great God of heaven. All of the praise and all the honor and all the glory go to him. And that's what happens in chapter 14 and verse 20. And blessed be the most high God which had delivered thine enemies into thy hand and he gave him tithes of all.

You see there's two things going on in the story. First off Melchizedek says hey Abraham God bless you buddy. You won that battle because God was with you. You might think Abraham was like hey buddy it's me and my 318 guys that's what got the job done.

But he wouldn't have tithed. He wouldn't have given a tithe to him if that had been the case. He was saying Melchizedek you are right and you're a priest of the most high God and I'm going to honor you with a portion of what was given here to say to you and to say to the God who did this that I know who won the victory in my life.

[18 : 28] Abraham sees Melchizedek and gives him tithes of all. The gift was recognizing that God had really been the one who gave great success and victory and not himself and what he had done.

It's easy when we win victories and have success to forget who's given us the victory. Look back over your life and be sure you do not presumptuously take credit for things that God's doing in your life.

I'd like to stop you and remind you of something here tonight. The very fact that I'm standing here breathing as God having been merciful to me. The fact that I have health and mental ability to be able to still stand up and preach and teach the word of God is God being good to me.

The fact that I have a wonderful wife is God being good to me. The fact that I have any income to give an offering out of is God being good to me.

The fact that I was able to go to college and graduate from college is God being good to me. I guess maybe it's driven very close to home in my personal life. God. When I was eight years old and my sister was six and my brother was three and my little sister was two, everybody in the family got measles and we were all sick at the same time.

[19 : 48] And every one of us, my sister who is mentally challenged or retarded or whatever the correct, political correct term is today, she was a completely normal girl.

But during those days something happened and she got a high fever of like 108 and it stayed there for hours and hours and doctors couldn't get it down. She was in a coma for 10 days and when she came out of it, she was never the same.

Two years separate me from her. It was just God's mercy. That's me standing here today married and my sister's in a nursing home today. God's been good to me. And you can easily sit there so pompous and proud and really believe you made yourself.

You don't know what I had to go through to go to school. You don't know what it took me to where I work hard for everything I got. I pull myself up by my own bootstraps. I'm a hard working man. Yeah, you can say that all you want.

But Abram knew this. I did have 318 men trained in my house. That's all the mercy of God. I did have men I could arm, but that's all the mercy of God. I did win the battle. It was all the mercy of God. You're a Christian. You ought to be wanting to say thank you, Jesus, for everything you've done in my life.

[20 : 53] Thank you for bringing me to where I am. One of the reasons you worship is that you're recognizing that it's God that has made you and not yourself. One of the reasons you worship is that you're recognizing that God made you and not yourself.

Sometimes I question sometimes the lack of passion and the lack of excitement that goes on in our church. And I really think it could be this. You're a smart group of people. And you're so smart you think you're smart enough without God.

And you're so smart and you've got so much money and you drive such nice cars. You can easily sit back and say, hey, I really don't need God. Poor people need God. And poor people need God.

Poor dumb people need God a lot. But I'm a rich, smart guy, so I don't need him so much. But you are really, really a pompous, arrogant, proud jerk.

You're ungrateful. You ought to realize it is the God of glory that made you if you're a born again believer. That's why you honor God. Oh, check out the story.

[21 : 55] I love the story. Abraham comes back and Sodom's king. He looks at him and says, hey, I'm glad you got back and I'm glad you brought all my people.

You can keep all my money and keep all my sheep and keep all my camels and keep all my goats. Keep all the horses you got. Keep all the food you got. Keep all the silver you got. Keep everything else you got. Just give me my people back.

Well, Abraham could have just looked at him and said, no, you're wrong, punk. Today I keep all the people and all the stuff and I keep you because I'm the winner. You're the loser and I get everything. He could have done that. But he looked at him and said, I'm not keeping anything of yours.

And the king's like, man, you're a great guy. You're a great warrior. And Abraham, I ain't a great warrior. Melchizedek, I'd like to give an offering. Melchizedek, I'd like to stop right now and say, everybody, stop. I want to recognize that God gave me what I have.

Hey, listen to me. When we pass an offering plate here, do you know what it is? It's recognition time. You ready for that? It's recognition time. It's time to pull out your wallet and say, I didn't earn this.

[22 : 59] By grace and mercy, God gave me what I have. I want to honor God and say, God, I want to give you a portion of what you gave me because I know I didn't earn it. It's yours. That's what happened when I talked to old Melchizedek.

His attitude to old Melchizedek is, you're right, God did do this. You're right, God did bless me. And you're right. And by the way, hey, I was going to give them guys all their stuff.

Cut out 10% of it first. Let's give it to God. And then we'll give them what's left. You don't deserve none if I'm going to give God something. I don't really believe this is necessarily saying a tithe because that's what he did. He tithed.

And that's before the law. And I think that's a good place for you to start. But just let me tell you this. Every one of us need to learn something. Some of you haven't learned to give yet. Some of you haven't learned to give. Do you know when you don't give what you're saying is it's my money?

I made it. I own it. It belongs to me and I'll do what I want with it. And if you have that attitude and you have that spirit, you either are not saved or you do not know what the Bible teaches about everything you have.

[23 : 59] You don't own anything. You don't own the air you breathe. You don't own the clothes you have on your back. You don't own the car you'll drive home in. You don't own the house you have.

Let one tornado come through. Let's see if God can take that house. Why don't you drive up to Calhoun and see? He took the top out of a water tank. Out of the very top. The water tank is still standing there.

He just took the lid off and threw it. He can do anything he wants to. He's God. You need to get a hold of something here. We honor God. That's what's going on. Oh, Abram's going to say, God, I know it's you.

How do you honor God with your money? Do you separate the first part for him or do you believe in what's left over? It's always been a shocking thing to me how God gets the crumbs.

It's like I'll eat and if there's any crumbs, you know how when you eat, you got you eat something, some crumbs and some morsels, they fall on the table and you kind of embarrassedly move those off.

[24 : 53] You kind of when nobody's watching you sweep them off on the floor. If you're at your house, you don't do that. You got to put them in your hand, put them back on the plate when you get through. That's about what we want to give to God. We want to say, God, I'll honor you, but here's what I'll give you.

I'll give you the crumbs, the crumbs that fall from my table. Is God first in your spending? Do you think that if you give him 10%, you're free to do with the rest what you want or seek to honor him with it all?

Can I just listen? Here's another bad thing. We think somebody told you that tithing gave you the right to own 90%. Somebody gave you the idea, God gets 10% and I get 90%.

No, God gets 100%. And anything you keep, you're keeping it by his mercy. There's not one place in the Bible where God's a hitman comes by and says, you give me my cut this week.

I get 10%. You can leave the rest of it, but if you don't, I'll break your leg. That's not in the Bible. Actually, what happens is he comes by and you go, God, I thank you for giving me every dime. I got you on it all.

[25 : 56] God, I'd like to give you an offering just to say, I love you. Please don't. Man, tithe, that's the most messed up junk in your head. You got the idea. A man told me, he said, I'm great.

I'm generous to God. He said, well, my tithe works out to \$32.84 since I rounded up to \$33. I'm generous. I always give more than a tithe.

Like he thought that God was up there with some accounting. But he's not worried about your pennies. His streets made out of gold. He's worried about your attitude. He's worried about your heart. He's worried about how you love him and believe in him.

Do you participate in missions giving? Do you try to use all that you have to further his kingdom and his causes? I just read this week. And for those of you who follow me on Twitter, you probably saw something come out.

I was actually Twittering from David's account and retweeting from my account because the book I was reading on how his Twitter account got hooked up to my account. But he went, it's how it worked. John Wesley said, man, Methodists were so spiritual till they got money.

[27 : 00] He said, the more money they got, the less spiritual they became. I'd have to say that's true. Our Lord said it's harder for a rich man to get to heaven.

And it is for a camel to get through the eye of a needle. Do you use all you had to further his kingdom and his causes? Have you made sure that your money is not your goal?

That money is not your purpose, your aim and your fulfillment somewhere along the way, you know, see Abram, Abram's going to, man, he teaches such a great truth here. Abram walks over to the king of Sodom and said, I don't need your money.

I don't need your money, big boy. Even though I earned your money, I don't need your money. I lifted my hand to the God of heaven that I wouldn't take a string off of you, buddy. And then he says, I'll tithe on it, but I won't take any of it.

He was a saying, I know it all came from God. I know it all came from God. And somewhere along the way, our philosophy is if God loves you, makes you rich.

[28 : 08] If God loves you, makes you be able to eat shrimp and lobster every day of your life. If God loves you, makes you drive really fancy cars. And you know, God might let you have that. And that's not like he wouldn't let you have it.

But I just said, that's never our goal. Hey, it's God or mammon. You cannot serve God in money. You can't serve God in worldly things.

And Abraham said, God, God, I don't need your, I was a king of Sodom. I don't need your junk. I got the God of heaven. Genesis 15, the God of heaven is going to walk out and say, I heard you, Abraham, and I will be your shield, your protector, your rewarder.

I will exceedingly bless you, Abraham. You know what he was saying to him? You chose the right thing. And so many of us let money eat us alive. So many of us let money eat us alive.

Do you have money or does the money have you? And let me just tell you, money regularly gets me. See, you won't be honest, but I will.

[29 : 13] Money regularly gets me. I get a little of it, buddy. I start getting stingy. When you ain't got none, you know, and you ain't won the lottery, you're willing to give the lottery. God, if you'd let me win a hundred million dollars, I'd give you 50 million in a heartbeat.

I got a hundred dollars. I'll keep my 50. Amen. We got money gets us, man. It owns us. It owns us. Abram was determined that lost men in the world would never say they made him a success.

Look, if you would, at chapter 14 and verse 22, Abram said unto the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor. That means the owner.

That means the guy who has the title deed, the possessor of heaven and earth. He said, King of Sodom, you think you own your town and you think you own those people, but I lift my hand to the great God that owns it all from the heaven all the way down to the earth.

He owns it all. Possessor of heaven and earth. Verse 23, that I might not, that I will not take from a thread to a shoe latch. I will not take anything that's yours. I won't take anything. It's yours.

[30 : 11] So you'll never say I made Abram rich. The world will aggro arrogantly take credit for anything that happens in your life. It's because of the school you went to, the company you work with, how smart you are.

They will find a way to say it was them or even you. It'll be your education, your contacts, your abilities, anything to make sure God doesn't get any glory.

That's what they want. Anything to make sure God doesn't get any glory. This was a tremendous declaration of faith by Abram. It cried in the face of all that Abram believed God.

Can you just picture it that day? I wish I could make a movie for you. There's all these kings standing there. They all been whipped, been through the slime pit, been hiding in the mountains and they come down and here comes Abram.

I don't know if he's riding or walking, probably on some old horse comes riding up and that king comes up and says, Hey man, glad to see you. Abram, I sure hope you give me my stuff, my people, you can keep the stuff. And Abram says, I don't need your stuff, buddy.

[31 : 11] Hey, for everybody to know here, I have lift my hand to the great God of heaven that owns the heavens and owns the earth. I wouldn't take a shoe latch from you. Hey, by the way, Melchizedek, I know you came representing the God of heaven.

Don't even know who you are. You ain't got no daddy. You ain't got no mama. We don't know anything about you, but you're the priest, the high God. And I will give to you an offering. That's what happened. Some big lessons you can take away.

You're going to get caught in the middle of conflicts that aren't of your making. You cannot control your life. You cannot decide where you'll, you cannot protect yourself. Some of us wouldn't go to the mission field because we're afraid if we went to the mission field, something might go wrong.

I'll give you a hint. Something goes wrong right here. It's not where you are that keeps you safe. Second thing, sometimes you seek your comfort and security without considering God.

And that might put you in the middle of conflict. You know, I don't know if you ever thought of this, but Abraham wasn't in conflict. Lot was in the secure place. Lot was in the rich place. And Lot got caught in conflict.

[32 : 10] Abraham was out there still in the, in the wilderness, Abraham, Abraham was out there in the plains and he didn't get caught in it. Maybe you're seeking your own security is going to get you in more trouble than you think. There's some great discipleship lessons to be learned here.

I want to see people born in our house. This one. I want to see them born again. I want us to train them to be as strong as they possibly can be. I would call on every man in this room to get involved in discipleship.

If you are not currently discipling somebody, you need to go to John Pearson and say, I confess my sin. Please forgive me, father. Absolve me from my sin. Don't I'm teasing, but you really ought to go and say, I'm going to get involved in this.

Train me and teach me where I can teach somebody. Hey, don't you hide out in your house and suck your thumb and wonder why God's kingdom isn't going forward. Start training some people. We want to teach them to be loyal to their leader.

Jesus King. Jesus want to train them to be ready to step out of their comfort zone and go fight for the Lord. Jesus. We want to teach them to not be judgmental and vindictive, but to love even their brothers that make big mistakes.

[33 : 11] We need to learn to recognize how the world wants to take all the credit for what God's doing. You need to stop just a second. It's not Wall Street that makes you rich. It's not that you got the right broker.

It helps you pick the right stock. It's not that you got a good job. And I know, I know you live in America and everything's always gone good here.

Never been 10 years when things were always down. Stock market always comes back. I know all that junk. I mean, you ought to live somewhere else in the world. You ought to be in Argentina and have all your money in the bank and have dollars in the bank and know you're protected and have the president walk out one day and say, your account's frozen.

You ain't never getting it. You ought to be in Ida, keep a Peru and leave a Peru. You ought to be in Peru. And when the government just walks out and says, I'll take it, you ought to be in Venezuela where Chavez walks down the street and says, just take over that business today and that one and that one and that one.

The government owns them and the guys that own them, they're out. They're gone. They're penniless today. You say that couldn't happen in America. You better get a seatbelt. It could happen in America. But he can't take what I got and he can't take what you got.

[34 : 14] We're a child of a king of kings and the Lord of Lords and we have lift our hand and said, God, you're number one in my life. My money's yours. My life's yours. And my talent's yours.

Learn to recognize the world wants to take all the credit for what God's doing. Learn to stand up and say you love Jesus and you won't give credit to anybody but him. Worship God.

Honor him for what he's doing in your life. Realize that this tithe was meant as a way to recognize God and to honor him for working in his life. I would just love to say to you, man, when you cut off a chunk of your change and you say, I'm going to give this for the kingdom of God, I'm going to give us for the glory of God.

You are making a statement. You're making a statement to yourself. You're making a statement to God and you're making a statement to everybody that knows you. God's first. And if you, you know, I don't preach on money, but this is what it's about.

So, hey, I told you I preach what it's about in this chapter happens to be about it. Amen. You're sitting there saying praise God. We don't have to worry about this for a while. Probably. Honor God. Honor God.

[35 : 16] Worship him. Honor him for what he's doing in your life. We give God the first of all so we can say to ourselves, our family, to God, you're first.

God's first. I want my kids to know God's first. I want my wife to know God's first. I want my wife and my family and my church and everybody that knows me to know this. I want him to take the first bite.

I'll take another one after that. We give back to him knowing that all we have and all that we are comes from him. We give to God as a testimony to the world that we know it was God that made us and not we ourselves.

Your friends and family know what's important to you. Your checkbook reveals more about you than you realize. We could check out your cash accounts and your checkbook.

We'd find out what's important to you. Most of us think our money is for us. Never was. By the way, you put your money where your heart is.

[36 : 12] By the way, if you put your money where it ought to be, your heart will follow it. That's what Jesus said. You put your money where it ought to be and your heart will follow your money. You decide to give your support to something because you believe in it.

It's amazing to me how many people would give to a presidential candidate. Man, I believe he could save America. He couldn't save America if his life depended on it.

He ain't going to give it eight years if he got the best. Honestly, which one of them's ever turned this country around? I mean, just be honest. You say, well, Ronald Reagan was my man. He's dead. If he ain't dead, he's brain dead.

I mean, that's just it. You just remember this. No man saves this country. No party saves this country. I'm a libertarian. Good. Give you money. See what they can do.

They ain't doing much. There's one guy that does something. That's the God of heaven. Well, I know I'm not popular. I will run to my cubby hole and hide. Do you believe in the things of God and his purposes?

[37 : 10] Does it show? Does it show? It does show. You're here tonight. You are here tonight. And you're here all the time. And you're faithful. And I know you're givers. But man, just know this.

What a tremendous statement. Abraham pulls up on his horse. All those guys standing around him. Still in the saddle. And the king looks up and says, Hey, Abraham, keep all the stuff.

Keep all the camels and all the horses. You brought it all back. Keep it all. Keep all the gold and all the silver. Just give me my people. I'll try to rebuild my kingdom. Abraham looked at him and said, I didn't do nothing for you. I didn't go get this for you.

I didn't go get it for Lot. I did it for the Lord God of heaven. And I have lifted my hand that I will honor him. Melchizedek, here's an offering. Cut it out, boys.

Give it to him. 10% of the gold, 10% of the silver. Give it to him. Listen, that did not give him a right to do with the rest of it what he wanted to do. You just want to tell you, you made a big mistake when you think, I'll honor God with 10% and I'll do what I want with 90%.

[38 : 11] You are a steward of his money. You're a steward of his heir. You're a steward of everything. Everything you own doesn't belong to you.

It belongs to him. You should act like it. How many of you are mad? Say, man, I know this has not been my sweetest message, but I really think that's what the passage is about.

Man, let's get busy training some men. Guys, you need to go and say, I would get involved in discipleship and training others. Get trained or be training. You say, well, I just want to have time.

Maybe you ought to make time for things of God. It's amazing you've got time for Little League. Hmm. Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, golf, flying an airplane.

It don't matter. You always find out the time to do whatever it is you want to do. But you don't have time. For the things of God, wake up. Take your pulse. Check it out.

[39 : 11] Serve God. Father in heaven, I love you. Pray your name will be glorified. Pray you'd build us for your honor and I'll give you praise for it all. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia.

For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.