

Faith Overcoming Fear

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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. Take your Bible, if you would, and open it to the book of Genesis, chapter 15. Genesis, chapter 15.

And we're in an exciting passage of Scripture. If you don't come on Sunday night, you're missing out on what the Word of God says. I was going to say what the God's Word says. I guess that'll work, too.

What the Word of God says about things that are happening in the Old Testament. So tonight, you'll get a Sunday night sampling on a Sunday morning. And I'll talk to you today about Abraham.

And if you've been keeping up with us and you've been attending and know what's happening, Abraham has just had a major experience in Genesis, chapter 14. In Genesis, chapter 14, and these couple of chapters before, Lot has been captured.

The kings have come and attacked other kings. Lot and all of his family has been taken captive. Abraham has 318 guys. He trained at his house. He goes out and captures Lot, defeats those kings, captures Lot, and comes back.

[1 : 04] And in the last part of chapter 14, this most amazing declaration of faith and trust in God. He sees Melchizedek, a man of God, and the man of God says, You know it was God that did the work in you.

You know it was God that won the battle for you. You know it was God that did that. And Abraham says, I sure do. And I want to give a tithe of everything that we have captured. I want to give a tithe of that.

And then there was the king of Sodom. And he said, Hey, just give me my people back and you can have all the money. And Abraham said, I have raised my hand to the God of heaven that I will not take anything from you.

I won't take a thread. I won't take a shoe latchet. I won't take anything from you. I trust God. And so he's on this great big mountaintop. And some of you might have been there before.

When you're on a mountaintop spiritually, well, you know God's doing great things in your life. And the very next step will be, man, I am scared to death. I thought I was trusting God.

[2 : 02] And I'm kind of on this roller coaster, trusting and really excited about God. We're kind of in the valley. And that's basically where you find him in Genesis chapter 15. Now, I'm going to kind of scan read it with you because I'll go over most of the verses during the morning.

So read with me, if you would, in Genesis 15. I'll let you keep up with where I am. You can mark some things. It starts off saying, After these things. So after the capture of Lot and bringing him back, after the fighting with the kings, after making the great promise, the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision saying, Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.

Underline that. Fear not, I am thy shield. God said, Abraham, you have just spoken great words of thank you and praise and honor to me. And I just want you to know, I got you covered.

First time in the Bible it says, fear not. Circle that. First fear not in the Bible. He says, hey, I got you covered. So Abraham in verse 2, it was a great man of faith, says this wild thing. He says, well, now that you mentioned how you got me covered, I ain't got a kid yet.

And you told me I was going to have a whole bunch of children and it don't seem to be working out. So underline in verse 2, he says, and Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me? Hey, God, what you going to give me?

[3 : 18] You're going to be my exceeding great reward. But what are you going to give me? See, and I go childless. He said, I tell you what, God, would you let me use my steward, Eliezer of Damascus? Let me count him as my son.

And Abraham said, behold to me, thou has given no see. God, you have not given me a child. And so could we just kind of make an agreement here that since you don't seem to be able to come through, we'll count Eliezer.

He was born in my house and I'd like to count him as my child. And in verse 4, the Lord said, no way. I told you I was going to do big stuff and somebody will come out of your own bowels. You will personally be their literal physical dad and they shall be your heir.

And then he said, go outside and look around in verse 5. He said, look around and count the stars. Can you number them? Can you name them? That's how many people you've got. That's how many children you're going to have. And in verse 6, it says that he believed in the Lord and he counted it to him for righteousness.

That is a verse you need to put stars by and draw arrows to. That's a fantastic verse. It's a verse that's going to run through your whole Bible. That truth. He believed the Lord and it was counted to him.

[4 : 26] God counted it to him for righteousness. Verse 7. And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought you out. I love that. Abraham, you're doubting me, but I am the God that called you out of the land of the Chaldees.

I'm the God that brought you out of the early Chaldees. I'm the guy that brought you out of Canaan. I'm the guy that's doing the work in your life. And so a lot even goes, or Abraham goes, well, how do I know I'm going to get what you claim I'm going to get?

Look at verse 8. How do you know, how do I know I'm going to get, I get to inherit what you claim I'm going to inherit? And so then God tells it, if you keep reading the story, it's a wild story. He said, go get you a heifer that's three years old and get you a goat and a ram and a turtle dove and a young pigeon and split them in half.

And lay them on the ground and spread on each side and leave a pathway down the middle of them. And he did that and he didn't kill the birds. And then the buzzards came down and tried to eat that and he scared the buzzards away.

And then all of a sudden, Abraham falls asleep. And in verse 13, he has a dream and he says, he said unto Abraham, know of a surety.

[5 : 30] You can be sure of one thing. Your seed will be a stranger in the land. And he goes on to tell him all that God's going to do in his life. He tells him how the children of Israel will go down to Egypt and they'll be there for 400 years.

He tells them they're going to come out rich. He says, you're going to live a long life and everything's going to go good. Verse 18, he says, and the Lord made a covenant with Abraham. And he said, I've given you this land.

This is a wild story today. But it's a story of the great power of your God. I'd like to ask you a question. How many of you have been up on the top of a mountain? Man, you're so sure of things and you're walking with God and you're enjoying the blessings.

And the gratefulness is coming out of your heart. The joy is coming out of your heart. And you're just excited. And you've stood up and said, I love Jesus. I love God. He's taking that stand. And then a little while later, you're kind of like Elijah and you're hiding under a juniper tree.

And you're kind of crying and you're wondering if God's really going to take care of you. You ever been there? How many have ever been there? Say amen if you have. But I can trust God. Everything's going good. But all of a sudden, things aren't going good. So we're going to talk about how faith can overcome fear in Abraham's life.

[6 : 32] How faith can overcome fear in Abraham's life. Let's bow for a word of prayer and ask God to work. Father, I pray that you would teach us this morning. And I pray you would grow us. And I pray, God, that you'd help us to trust you.

That you will fulfill your promises. That you will do your word. And I'll give you great glory and honor and praise for what you do. In Jesus' name, amen. You know, Abraham wants to see God work in his life. But he begins to doubt him.

He just had a great faith moment. And now his faith comes crashing down. And he asks God if he's really ever going to do anything with him. And then the story is that God is going to come through.

And he just tells Abraham, sit down and watch. I'm God. And I'm going to take care of things. So if you want to write down a few little notes to help you go through the passage. Number one, look at the promise of God.

The promise of God. God responds to Abraham's statement with a great promise in Genesis 15. He says, fear not, Abraham. I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.

[7 : 33] After these things, talking about the conquering of the four kings. The returning of the goods and the people. The declaration of faith that Abraham knew it was God that had won the victory. He did not need anything a pagan king could give him.

After that great moment. After Abraham raises his hand and makes that statement. He's all of a sudden talking to God. And God says, listen, you can trust me. I will be your protector.

And the four kings can't get you. And your enemies can't get you. And you don't need an alliance with the world. I'll take care of you. I will be your shield. And your exceeding great reward. You don't need the money that Sodom could have offered you.

Abraham makes a big promise. God makes a bigger promise to Abraham. Kind of like Abraham might be just a little bit scared. Might be just a little bit worried about what could happen. Will those kings retaliate?

Will things happen? Did you know that God understands your fear? You know, you're worried right now. You're worried maybe about a health issue. Or you're worried about a financial issue. Or a family issue.

[8 : 32] Or an emotional issue. And you're worried about things. And you know you've had great moments of faith. But right now you're kind of in a valley. Did you know that Abraham is going to go through a valley here? But in the middle of this valley, Abraham is going to believe God.

And you can believe God in the middle of what's going on in your life. He knows you're worried about protecting yourself. He knows you're worried about providing. But he is able. Trust him.

And this verse here is the first time you're going to see. Chapter 15, verse 1. The first fear not. That's going to come out in your Bible all the time. God's going to say, hey, don't worry. Don't fear. You don't have to be afraid. Fear is not of the Lord.

Fear is not of the Lord. You don't have to be afraid. If you spend all your time looking at yourself, you're going to get discouraged. But if you look to God in faith, you'll be encouraged. Remember to keep your priorities right.

In chapter 14, at the end of it, you know what he said? He said, hey, I have lifted my hand. And I promise you, God, I'll follow you. I promise you, God, I respect you.

[9 : 32] I won't take anything from Sodom. I will give an offering to say I trust God. And all of a sudden there's some fear. I want you to write down two verses. Matthew 6, 33. That's your verse in the New Testament.

It's just like this verse in the Old Testament. It's seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. And all these things will be added to you. You know what happened there? In chapter 14, he says, God, you're first.

God, I don't need the money the world can offer me. I don't need the protection the world can offer me. I look to you. I trust you. I magnify you. And God comes out in Genesis 15, 1. It says, and I'm adding to you.

I'm going to be your great reward. I'm going to be your great protector. And Philippians chapter 4, 19, chapter 4, verse 9, he says, but my God shall supply all your need according to his riches and glory.

That's a passage of scripture about giving. It's about missionary giving. It's about your sacrifice and to get the gospel around the world, to help the gospel go around the world. And Paul says, you can mark one thing down.

[10 : 30] When you put God first in your finances, you can mark this down. He said, my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches and glory. God's going to take care of you.

Abraham, you raised your hand in chapter 14. In chapter 15, verse 1, Abraham, God is going to take care of you. I have some questions for you this morning. Bring it down to your life.

Have you decided to honor God even when it might cost you to do so? You see, Abraham could have gotten rich off of the king of Sodom and Gomorrah, the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham could have got rich off those other kings.

Abraham could have taken what the world had to offer him. One of the biggest sacrifices and risk you take is to honor God with your money. Look at this, wait a second. I really want you to look. Chapter 14 ended with Abraham giving a tithe.

Chapter 14 ended with Abraham saying, you are God. I recognize Melchizedek as a messenger from God. And I want to give to recognize that it's God that doesn't work in my life.

[11 : 27] You know how you could easily put the biggest God you might have in your life, little G God. You know how you could put him down? You could say to him, you don't rule my life. God does. And I will use my money for his honor and his glory.

I will seek first God's kingdom. I will use my money for the honor and the glory of God. So many of us and the man, the more money we've got and the better we live. It's the stingier we get with the things of God.

But Abraham had a big paycheck and he said, I recognize God. That's a way you can risk yourself. Another great risk is allowing God to do with your children whatever he wants.

Are you trying to save them from missionary work? Are you trying to make sure that they have a great and successful future? You know, it's a really sad thing that some of us all of a sudden are like, hey, I raised my hand and said, I love God, but I got to take care of my family.

I can't trust God to do that. And so all of a sudden we make every step we can to protect ourselves. Have you boldly and publicly declared your faith in Jesus when it might have cost you?

[12 : 29] It's amazing how quick we are to sing a song and raise our hand in church. It's amazing how quickly we are to make a statement in a Sunday school class. And it's amazing how bashful and shy we get to mention Jesus when anybody that counts is anywhere nearby.

Could you say amen right there? Tell the truth. I mean, but I mean, mom's a word and 007 secret agent. Christian's the word when you're not at church. Abraham raised his hand publicly.

Have you stepped out where only God could take care of you and really need to hear him say that he's your provider and protector? The majority of us have never stepped out of our comfort zone. The majority of us have never said, I'll step out where only God could take care of me.

But Abraham did. In the end of chapter 14, when he raised his hand and said, I lift my, I have lift my hand to God that I will not take one thing from you. I will not try to get your money.

I will trust the God of heaven. And when he did that, that was a foolish move to make. But what a glorious promise he got. Chapter 15 and verse 1. If you could just hear God, he lays down to sleep that night.

[13 : 34] Maybe he was a tad fitful. Maybe he was a tad nervous as he went to sleep. But in his dream, the Holy Spirit said to him, Abraham, buddy, I heard what you said. And I know you put me first. And I know you said you love me more than you love money.

And I know you said you love me more than you love things. And Abraham, here's what I got for you. I will be your protector. And I will be your exceeding great reward. I'll take care of you. What a wonderful promise.

But here come the doubts. Second thing you can write down. Here come the doubts rushing in. He's been on a mountain top of faith. He's dreamed a dream. And God's answered and told him that. But in verse 2, man, look how scared he is.

In verse 2, he just quickly rushes back to being selfish. Man, how quickly I run to protect Austin. How quickly I run to worry about me. In chapter 15 in verse 2, he said, he said, Abram said, Lord God, well, what are you going to give me?

What you going to give me? Don't you see I'm going childless? Don't you see I don't have a child? Verse 3, you've given me no seed. You haven't come through for me. Are you like that?

[14 : 39] It's almost like you come to church on Sunday and you give a good offering. And you honor God. And you even testify and witness somewhere. And you make a statement. And you step over and you say, God, you see what I did? Come on. It's your turn.

I did something. Your turn. Come through for me. What you doing for me now, God? And that's what old Abraham said. He can see that he's getting old and still has no child. These are the facts.

He can see. These are circumstances. He can look and easily see that he has no child and he's getting old. Abraham's concerned that God isn't fulfilling his word. He's not keeping his promise.

Abraham wants to help God out. A basic lesson in the school of faith is that God's will must be fulfilled in God's way and in God's time. It's an amazing story.

Abraham says, God, you know, here I am. Man, I've taken a stand for you. And you've told me how much you love me. And you told me how you're going to work in my life. And God, I love you. You did call me out of the Urachaldeans.

[15 : 35] God, you did do a work in my life. But, you know, you're not really coming through too good. And I'm getting old. And I don't have a child yet. And so I was wondering, let me help you out here, God.

We could use Eliezer, my servant. He was born in my house. And I can adopt him. And I can call him my son. And that will take care of it. Let me help you, God. But God doesn't need your help to accomplish his purposes.

We need to learn to trust God. And wait on him to do his will. God lets Abram know that when he answers prayer, it will be with real power. It's a big lesson.

I'll bring it to you in just a second. Look in verse 5. God says, Abram, buddy, I said I'll give you a child. Did I say I'd give you a child? Step outside your tent.

Look up in the sky. Look at the stars. Count the stars. Number the stars. Name the stars. Let me just tell you, Abram, you can't even see all the stars. I know how many are up there, but that's how many kids you're going to have. You're going to have more children than you can count.

[16 : 33] Look up and quit looking down. Quit looking at yourself and realize that I have the power that makes things happen. I have a question for you. How do you deal with your doubts? How do you deal with your doubts?

Do you express them to God and allow him to work in your life and prove himself? Do you look to his promises and count them as more real than the circumstances where you live? Do you try to answer your own prayers without waiting on God?

Would you listen to the word of God? Now, let's just be real transparent with you this morning. I have a real problem with this verse. I mean, this is, it's a nail Austin verse.

Because I'm always thinking, God, you got big stuff you want to do with your church. And God, I got a plan and I can figure it out and I can finagle it. That's a Tennessee hillbilly word. I can finagle it. I can make it work.

I can make it happen. And I'm always trying to say, God, hey, use Eleazar. God, use Eleazar. God, we need a building. I got a plan. God, we need. And I'm always trying to do that when the God of heaven is looking down and saying, look, man, I'm in charge.

[17 : 35] It's my church and I'll build my church and I'll do the work of God in my life. I think maybe you deal with that problem when you'd like to admit it. I think that somewhere along the way you read the promises of God and you believe the promises of God.

But when you step outside the church, you're like, I know those are the promises. And I know that's sweet. And I know we talk about it on Sunday, but this is Monday. And I got to make it happen. That's not the story here.

The story is that Abram will believe God. That takes you down to verse 6. Look at verse 6. Man, this is like a trumpet sound in the middle of chapter 15. And Abram, and he believed in the Lord.

And he counted it to him for righteousness. He believed the Lord. Do you know how you got saved? You got saved by believing. You got saved by trusting.

You got saved by believing that you would sin against the holy God. You got saved by believing that cross song you just sung. You got saved by saying, I can't. So many Christians do exactly like Abraham.

[18 : 38] We come to God or Christians or lost people, religious people. We come to God and say, God, I want to be saved. I want to be a new person. I'll turn over a new leaf and I'll change the way I act. And I'll put some things into practice in my life.

And I'll do something. But in chapter 15 and verse 7, God says, Abram, buddy. I think you forgot who called you out of the Urachaldees.

It started with me. It didn't start with you. And I will take care of things. So believe me. So believe me. It is God who saved us. How many of you know that? Say amen. Hey, it is God that is taking care of you.

Do you know that? Say amen. I don't have to live in fear tonight. When I go home, I don't have to live in fear. Things can go wrong and life can fall apart. But I have a God who is bigger than every circumstance in my life. And Abraham believed God.

I'd like to take a long time here. I wish you, I just, at least one thing you've got to notice. We've seen this in Romans. Look at verse 6. He believed in the Lord. And he, God, counted it to him for righteousness.

[19 : 37] I need you to look this way just a second. Listen to this. Abram didn't get circumcised to make God save him. Abram didn't give an offering to make God save him.

Abram wasn't a good, obedient man to make God save him. Could you repeat with me what he did? All I need you to say with me is this. He believed in the Lord. Could you say that with me?

He believed in the Lord. Say it again. He what? Wait a minute, wait a minute. Are you telling me it's not when he raised his hand and said, I'll give a tenth of my money? Are you saying it's not when he swore he'd love God?

Are you saying it's not when he did any of these other things? What did he do? Talk to me. And he believed in the Lord. And then look what it says. And he, who? God, said, I'll write that down for righteousness.

On May the 6th, 1962, a little boy said, I'll believe what you did on the cross of Calvary. And I'll trust that Jesus died and carried my sins and paid my sin debt and was buried and rose again.

[20 : 36] Verse 7 probably seems like a minor verse to you. But God says, Abram, don't you forget it was me that came to you. Don't you forget it was me that came to you.

Some of us almost got the idea that we're coming up to God and saying, hey, God, get it together. Save me. But it was he. But God committed his love to us and that while we were, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

The Bible says we love him because he. Okay, you remember that. Abram believed God and he believed the promises that God would bless the world through his seed. It was God that brought Abram out of worship.

It was God that would take Abram forward. The most central verse in the Bible. We believe God and God counts it to us. For righteousness.

It's not his faith. Not his tithe. It's his faith. Not his obedience. It's his faith. Abram wasn't righteous. He was counted righteous. It was God declaring an earthenworthy man righteous.

[21 : 37] Now we're to this wild story. It's a wild story. It's one of the stories that I read in the Bible. I'm like, what in the world is going on? First thing happens is Abram's like, I need protection.

And God says, I am your protector and your reward. And then Abram says, I need a child. And God says, hey, I'll be the one that brings you a child. And then he says, well, what about all the land you promised to give me? You're going to give me the land. And how do I know I'll get what you said you'd give me?

And then so God gives us this wild story. It's kind of, there's a parallel to it in Jeremiah chapter 34, verse 18. And it says, I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant and have not performed the words of the covenant, which they have made before me when they cut the calf in two, when they cut and split the calf and pass between the parts are of.

And so this is a cutting covenant. You might write that down somewhere. Abram wants to know if he can be sure that God is going to give him the land and the inheritance he's been promised.

Look at verse eight, Genesis 15, eight, and Lord God said, where? And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? Now God, how do I know I'm going to get what you claim I'm going to get?

[22 : 44] God, how do I know I'm going to get what you? Hey God, how do I know I'm going to go to heaven when I die? God, how do I know for sure that you'll keep your end of the bargain? So God tells Abram, you go get this covenant ready.

You go get me a calf and you get the heifer and you get the ram and you split them in half. There's a heifer and a she goat and a ram. You split them in half and you divide them apart and set up a rate of them. And the covenant was that these two guys were going to walk between.

If I'm making a promise to Jeff here, I'd say, Jeff, let's split these animals and you and I'll walk through it. And by the way, if you don't keep your word, I hope what happened to these animals happens to you. And if I don't keep my word, I hope what happens to these animals happens to me.

We're promising on penalty of death, on being split in half, that we'll keep our word. It was a ritual. It was a promise. It was the way they said, I put my hand on the Bible and say, I swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

So help me God. So God said, hey, let's, I heard Adam, Abram, you want to know how I'm going to do it? Split the animals. Split the animals. The animals are sacrificed. The bodies are divided. The covenant people are going to walk between the animals.

[23 : 45] They're both going to say, I give my word. I deserve that faith. But guess what happens in verse 11 and 12? Abram goes to sleep. A deep sleep calls on him in a horror of great darkness.

He killed the animals. He laid them on the ground. He drove the buzzards away, but he fell asleep. And here's a beautiful lesson for you. Here's a beautiful lesson for you. God made a promise to Abram and Abram was asleep when he made the promise.

It wasn't a, I promise if you and you promise if I, it was a, I promise and you're asleep. Could you get that? It was a, I promise and you're taking a nap.

There's only one of us is going to walk down between the two animals. Only one of us is going to make a promise here. God says, while he's asleep, he says, hey, Abram, I've given you the land, buddy. And I'll just go ahead and tell you the future.

Your kids are going to go down to Egypt and they're going to be a stranger there. And they're going to be serving and afflicted for 400 years. And then I'm going to bring them out and I'm going to make them rich because I'm a big God and I'm going to do it. It's a one-sided promise.

[24 : 49] It's a one-sided promise. It was God that promised to do that. Abram never makes the trip down between the animals. Abram never makes the trip down through the animals. Write this down.

It was a covenant of grace. It was a one-sided covenant. It was God saying, you are asleep and I make my promise. And that's what happens with us. It's the Lord who made the covenant.

It's the Lord who makes the promise. It's no conditions on us. Our salvation is not man dependent. It's God dependent. Our salvation is not what I do. It's what he did. That's why you don't have to walk out of here saying, I hope I don't lose my salvation.

You can't lose it. You didn't win it. You didn't earn it. You didn't pay for it. You don't keep it. God made it. God earned it. God gave it to you. And God keeps it. He said, go to sleep, Abraham.

You're pretty useless on this deal anyway. It's not up to you. It's not you keeping it up. It's me. And he walks down between them. And there's a great horror of great darkness falls on him.

[25 : 45] God promised Abram what he would do. And he said, why don't you just wait and see what I do? You want to know if you're going to go to heaven when you die? Here's a good answer for you.

He walked between the animals and he made the promise. He swore by himself because he couldn't swear by anybody greater. We swear on the Bible. You could swear by the temple.

You could swear by the throne. You could swear by the heavens. But who does God swear by? There's nobody bigger. There's nobody else you could swear by. Now, Hebrews chapter 6 and verse 13, the Bible says, when God made promise to Abraham because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself.

God said, I ain't nobody bigger than me. So I'll just give you word. I'll give you my word. I'm God and I promise and I'm God. Ain't nobody bigger than me. I just promise it because I'm God. I don't lie. I can't lie. There were two symbols that went through there.

There was a smoking furnace and a burning lamp. Judgment that God does taking on our sins. A light to show us our path. A purifying furnace and a lamp. The promise to Abraham was one.

[26 : 44] Abram was one sided. It was grace. The only thing that will have to keep the only thing. The only the one that will have to keep his word is God. By the way, it was his son's body that was broken to keep his word.

It's a grace thing. You look this way just a second. I'm almost through. Watch this. Look at this. God's my protector and my great reward.

He's my he's going to take care of me. My exceeding great reward. God's going to take care of me. Hey, I'm worried about what I get out of this. God, I'm not sure you could keep your end of the bargain. Are you going to give me my children? Are you going to give me my land?

He says, go to sleep. Watch this. I'll give you a dream and I'll show you I'm a big God and I do it all. This morning, some of you might be wondering of what your end of the bargain is. I'm getting saved. It is this recognize you're a sinner.

Recognize you deserve to go to hell and recognize that Jesus paid your sin debt. Recognize that you're receiving a gift. Recognize it was God who made the promise. God's. Some of you are wondering, will I still be saved?

[27 : 41] What? What's it do? I do to keep my salvation. You do what you did to get your salvation to keep it. Nothing. You didn't do anything to get it. You don't do anything to keep it. It's God who keeps his salvation.

You're wrapped up in his hand and his hand wrapped up. Jesus hands wrapped up in God's hand and you're in the middle of it. It's God who saves us. Let me give you a couple of personal applications.

You know, you will always have feelings of fear. We're afraid. What's going to happen about my physical exam? When I go in and the doctor checks, is he going to find the cancer again?

What's going to happen about my job? I watch the economy and I'm worried about it. I don't know what's happening in the market. I don't know what's happening. It looks like we're in a great depression again. I don't know what's going to happen. I don't know what's going to happen in my family.

I'm worried about my wife. I don't know what's going to happen. Are we going to get, are we going to stay together? And you can really, even as a good Christian, have great fears. But your focus is not on you. It's on him.

[28 : 38] You're to focus on him and trust him. You ought to step out by faith and do something big. Do something that risks everything. Let me tell you something, Christians. You are missing out on it right now.

There are so many things that God could do in your life. But you hold your children close to you. You hold your money close to you. You hold your pride close to you. You hold your life close to you. You are saving your life.

And while you do that, you lose your life. And Abram risked it all. And God came down in a special way and said, Abram, I'm here, buddy. And I'm going to do big things. I would challenge you to read the story and say this.

I serve a big God that can do big things in me. If I were you and I wasn't already given, I'd become a giver. I'd give to tithe and offerings. I'd give to support missionaries.

I would honor God with my money because I would know that I need my money. I need my money. I don't want to give it. But I know God's being able to take care of it. If I were you, I'd step back and I'd say, I believe God enough and I'll witness about Jesus.

[29 : 36] And I'll mention him even if I might ruin a business deal. Maybe somebody won't think so good of me if I bring up Jesus. It's amazing how we divorce Jesus from our life, isn't it? We love Jesus on Sunday morning, Sunday night, and at this church on Thursday night.

Becomes Monday, we check him. It's like leaving your gun in the car. You can go to your factory and you can leave your carry pistol in the car, but you can't carry it into work.

And most of us check our salvation in the glove compartment. I think I'll go to Baltimore. Anytime you have great mountaintops of faith, you can expect temptation and discouragement.

You see, old Abram, man, he was on the top. Now he's like, God, are you even going to give me a child? And how do I know I'm going to get the land you promised me? And some of you will know this. You've watched yourself and you've experienced God do great things in your life.

And you've trusted him and you've stepped out and he's met your needs as you financially gave. And he's met your needs as you witnessed to somebody. And he's met your needs as you trusted God with your health issues or you trusted God with your family issues or you trusted God.

[30 : 41] And he's met your need. You were so high. But it wasn't long until it came crashing down. Nothing new there. It's part of growing in Christ. It happened to Abram. But by the end of the chapter, he says, I believe God.

Know that real faith is believing God. And without faith, it is impossible to please God. Know that God's promises are God dependent and not you dependent.

Realize that the real sacrifice in your relationship to God is what he has done. So many of us, it's like, boy, if you serve God, it's like you're required to sacrifice. Really? He gave his son.

He bore my sins on his body to save me. And nothing I've ever done even comes close to appearing similar to what God did for me.

When God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. When Jesus loved me so much that he went to a cross and died. But nothing is when he left the glories of God, seated at the right hand of God and didn't count it anything big to be called the son of God and was humbled himself to become a man.

[31 : 46] That was humbling yourself. And then he humbled himself to die. But he did just humble himself to die. He humbled himself to die. The death of a cross to save me. I've never sacrificed anything. I've never given anything.

I can't pay God back. It would be impossible to pay him back. He saved an eternity for me. And I might give him a tomorrow. But he saved an eternity for me. This morning, maybe you aren't risking things.

Christian life has lost a lot of its zing. It's lost a lot of its appeal because we're too settled in our comfort zone. We're too like, hey, I'm not raising my hand and risking anything. I'll take Solomon's money and still believe in God.

I'm not going to be a giver. I'm not going to witness. I'm not going to tell people. I'm not going to take a chance. I'm not going to say, hey, God, if you want me to die, I'll just die. But I want to do it the right way. We're not going to say that.

It's just going to be against us. Isn't it? Because we're too me focused and enough heat, not enough. He focused. We need to be focused on him and not on us. Can you say amen right there?

[32 : 45] So some of you today need to say, God, I have doubted you too much. I have thought of my side of this bargain too much. And I've considered my sacrifice too much. I've not looked enough at your sacrifice.

Some of you are not born again. If you die today, you don't know you'd go to heaven because you've honestly thought salvation was depending on your good works. And so you've been baptized. You've joined a bunch of churches.

You've done a whole bunch of junk. And you really think salvation is about what you've done. But it's not about you. It's about what Jesus did. And you should come to him and say, Lord, I ask forgiveness for my pride and my willfulness and my desire to do things on my own.

And I trust what you did on the cross. I challenge you today to be saved if you're not saved. To trust Jesus. I challenge you if you're a Christian to say, God, I'll trust you with tomorrow.

I'll trust you with this issue. I'll believe in you. I'll raise my hand that you are the great God of heaven. And I trust you. Why don't you trust him today? This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia.

[33 : 41] 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.