

# God's Friend

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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 want and open them to Genesis chapter 18.

Genesis chapter 18. Para que la hermana sepa cuantos hablan espanol. Si hablas espanol, levante la mano. Si hablas espanol, párate. Si hablas espanol, párate.

Solo para que entiendas que hay algunos que hablan espanol. Thank you very much. I just told our friend visiting, I said, if anybody speak Spanish, stand up. That way she'd know there was a couple that speak Spanish around here.

Two or three. That's pretty good, amen? And by the way, the other part of the story Mark told about the guy's wife being taken, she cost \$775.14.

I believe it was \$775 or \$776.14. And that's 7,000 rand. I'm just getting emails this afternoon.

[ 1 : 01 ] And another one, the pastor's wife, is going to cost 20,000 rand. So she's almost three times as much. And the reason is she has more education and more preparation.

And so she's worth more. And I said, well, you know, I'd feel real bad if I was sitting around talking to another preacher and said, hey, what'd you pay for your wife? And I said, some of us shop at Walmart.

Anyway, I just thought, that does not do with my message. I just thought that had to be the funniest. That's about the funniest afternoon I spent in a while. Kevin and I were writing back.

Anyway, what'd you pay for your wife? 7,000 rand. Oh, you got a deal. All right. Oh, Lord, I need to sit down. Let's sing another song.

Our God is greater. Okay. Missions is the most exciting thing you can ever be involved in. All right. Genesis chapter. This is a wild chapter.

[ 1 : 57 ] You know, Abraham is called the friend of God. God. People, in fact, when they talk to God, we're going to read three verses in a minute. They just look at God and say, I'm talking about your friend. And that's not said about anybody else in the Bible.

So I think this is probably the chapter where he kind of gains that reputation. And I'd like to be that guy. So I'd like to look at some of the things that take place in Genesis 18. And I know that I can never be Abraham.

I don't even dream of being that. But I do want a sweet, personal, friendship, close relationship with the great God of heaven. Don't you? So while we look at a story, while we see what happened, why don't we see how that could apply in our lives?

I'm going to kind of go through Genesis 18. And I'm going to kind of put some emphasis in places that you might want to underline. I don't have time to go over every word. So I hope you'll really pay attention tonight.

But look at this. Genesis 18. 1. The Lord appeared unto him. It was the Lord that appeared to him in the plains of Mamre. And he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day. And he looked up his eyes.

[ 2 : 59 ] And he looked. And lo, three men stood by him. And when he saw, he ran to meet them from the tent door. And he bowed himself down toward the ground. And he said, My Lord, if I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away.

I pray thee from thy servant. Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched. And wash your feet. And rest yourselves under the tree. And I'll get you some bread. I'll fetch you a morsel of bread. And I'll comfort you in your hearts.

And comfort you in your hearts. After that, you shall pass on. For therefore are you come to your servant. And they said, So do as thou hast said. That is Jason Richel's story right there.

He's sitting in the door. Somebody comes by. And he runs. And he gets them some meat. And he's serving them. I just, two or three things. I don't know when he figures out he's the Lord. We'll get to the real preaching in a minute.

I don't know when he figures out he's the Lord. But he's an old man now. And he has tons of servants. And he could easily send anybody else to get the food. He could easily send anybody else to do all the work.

[ 4 : 00 ] But he doesn't do that. He jumps up. He runs. He bows down. And he said, Man, what a privilege you'd come by. And I'm not sure he knows he's the Lord yet. He may. It says he calls him my Lord in verse 3.

And it's got a capital L. So maybe he's figured it out by there. But in verse 2 he saw. And I don't know if he knew yet. And he ran. And he bowed. Go down if you would now to verse 6.

Abraham hastened unto the tent unto Sarah. And he said, Sarah, make ready quickly three measures of fine meal. Knead it. And make cakes upon the hearth.

And Abraham ran unto the herd. And he fetched a calf tender and good. And he gave it unto a young man. And he hasted to dress it. And he took butter and milk and the calf which he had dressed.

And he set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree as they did eat. That's another foreign culture for you. He's standing there while they eat. He's got it all fixed. And he's standing beside them while they eat.

[ 4 : 58 ] And he's run. And he's asked his wife. His wife's an old lady. They're very wealthy. They got 318 guys born at the house. Remember that. I mean, he could easily say, hey, go kill a calf.

Hey, get back here. Go tell your wife. I said, fix some food. But that's not what he does. He has his own wife do it. And they said unto him, where's Sarah thy wife? And he said, behold, in the tent.

And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life. And lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age.

And it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. And so Sarah laughed within herself saying, after I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure?

My Lord being old also, I'm an old lady and I married an old man. You think I'm going to have a baby? And the Lord said unto Abraham, wherefore did Sarah laugh saying, shall I of surety bear a child which am old?

[ 5 : 57 ] And she laughed within herself and said in verse 12 and in verse 13, he knew what she said. Verse 14, is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed, I will return unto thee according to the time of life.

And Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied saying, hey, I didn't laugh. She was afraid. And he said, nay, you did laugh. Verse 16, the men rose up from thence and looked towards Sodom.

And Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. And the Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do? I don't know where you are in this chapter, but I don't know what you're looking here.

I mean, look here. God, God's just, he's showing us himself. And he's, we've seen Abraham running and serving. And we've seen him promising Abraham he's going to have a kid. And then God's talking maybe with his two angels.

I think the two angels are with him. This is the Lord Jesus. This is called a pre-incarnate, a pre-body present of existence of Christ. He's there showing himself. And he's talking and he says, you know, Abraham's my buddy.

[ 6 : 57 ] And I'm fixing to kill Sodom and Gomorrah. Do I hold that kind of stuff back on Abraham? I mean, I wouldn't tell everybody, but, you know, Abraham's my buddy. He's my friend. Do I tell him?

So look at this. Shall I hide that from Abraham? Verse 18. Wild stuff. Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation. And all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.

That's another great verse. I've preached about two months here. Look at that. Abraham hadn't had one kid yet. Not one kid. But in verse 18, God says, it's coming.

It's happening. He's not only going to have a kid. He's going to have a great nation. I'm God. I can see what's going to happen. Verse 19. He says, I even know the way he's going to raise his kids. There's no record to prove this yet.

He hadn't got a kid of his own yet. Verse 19. I know him. I know him. And he will command his children after his and his household after him. And they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice.

[ 7 : 52 ] That the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he's spoken of him. He says, I know him. Well, I like that. Don't you like to look at that? I know him. I know him. I know him. Verse 20. The Lord said, because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which has come unto me.

And if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence and went toward Sodom. But Abram stood yet before the Lord. I don't know if you get this.

We got God. We got divinity. We got creator. We got Abraham knows now for sure who he is. But we got a friendship.

We got an intimacy. We got a relationship. And Abraham now knows what's going to happen. And Abraham says, could I get a minute of your time before you go on down to Sodom and Gomorrah?

We could chew the fat a second. I'd like to talk to you a minute. Is that all right? Look at it. I just want to say that. Verse 23. Abraham drew near and he said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous or the wicked?

[ 9 : 03 ] God, you ain't going to kill good people with bad, are you? Peradventure, what if there are 50 righteous within the city? Wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for 50 righteous that are therein?

That be far from thee. God, I know you're not like that to do that. You wouldn't slay the righteous with the wicked and that the righteous should be as the wicked. That's not like you.

That's not like you. I know you. And then he says, I know the God of the earth is going to do right. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? And by the way, he's not getting smart.

This is an old man who jumped up and ran and bowed and fed and took care of. So he's not being sacrilegious. He's not being chummy, chummy or buddy, buddy.

He's just making a statement. I know, God. God, I know you're not going to do that, are you? Now, go on. Look at verse 26. The Lord said, and if I find in Sodom 50 righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

[ 10 : 03 ] If there's just 50 righteous people, I won't even kill anybody there. And Abram said, behold, now I've taken upon me to speak. Now that we're talking, God, and I know I'm nothing but dust and ashes in verse 27.

Peradventure, what if I'm five off? What if there's not 50 there, but there's only 45? You wouldn't destroy all of them just because I miscounted. There's only 45, would you? And he said, well, if I find 45, I won't destroy it.

Verse 29. And he spake unto him yet again and said, peradventure. Hey, by the way, Lord, well, now we've got it down to 45. I just wonder what if there's only 40? And he said, well, I won't destroy it for 40.

Verse 30 says, well, Lord, I don't want you to get upset while we're talking here and kind of arguing about the price on this here deal. But what if there's only 30? And he said, well, I want it for 30. He said, well, Lord, verse 31.

You know, I started talking to you and I brought up my petition and I just want to bring it up to you and talk to you. And so how about if we only got 20? He said, all right, I won't destroy it. Verse 20. And he says in verse 32, he said, Lord, don't get angry.

[ 11 : 04 ] But let me say one more thing. I got one more thing I'd like to bring up here, Lord. What if there's only 10? And the Lord said, I will not destroy it for 10's sake. And the Lord went his way as soon as he left communion with Abraham and Abraham returned unto his place.

That's a wild chapter. We're going to kind of go through it just a minute. I want to learn what I want to learn to be a guy. I want the Lord to work in me what he did in Abraham.

I want to be that kind of guy. I want to be the kind of guy that God says, hey, I fix I do something. I got to tell Austin. We're buddies. I got to tell Austin. I got to I got to I got to deal with Austin about that.

We're friends. I want to be the kind of guy that can say, hey, God, I already know we're the good friends and just like to bring something up if I could. Just like to bring something up if I could. How about you? Would you do this?

Would you hear my prayer? Would you answer my prayer? So there's several great things here. I hope you'll enjoy the chapter. Let's have a word of prayer. Father, work in our lives right now. Make the scripture come alive. God, let them love your book tonight.

[ 12 : 03 ] Let them love your stories. Let them love you. Let them be excited about what a wonderful God you are. God, let us all hunger to be like you'd have us to be. And I'll give you praise in Jesus name. Amen.

Abraham's the only person in the Bible who's called God's friend. Let me give you three verses. Are you ready? You can just look them up. They'll flash them up here for you. I'm sure. Second Chronicles chapter 20 and verse seven. Second Chronicles chapter 20 and verse seven.

Art not thou our God who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel and gave us it to the seed of Abraham thy friend forever. Abraham thy friend forever.

Isaiah chapter 41 and verse eight. But thou Israel art my servant Jacob whom I've chosen the seed of Abraham. I love this. The other time it was them talking to God and said we know he's your friend.

But this time he says but thou art Israel. God's talking. He said you're Israel. Thou art my servant Jacob whom I've chosen the seed of my friend. The seed of my buddy Abraham.

[ 13 : 02 ] That's pretty strong. Pretty obvious. God saying yep he's my friend. James chapter 2 and verse 23. And the scripture was fulfilled which says Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness and he was called the friend of God.

So I'll write that down somewhere. I'll title it. Title that little thing. That's the friend of God. Let's look at something. Let's look at some things that maybe built that friendship. First of all let me just start off and say it's always the work of God.

It's always his grace. The friendship starts on his side because I was not his friend and I wasn't seeking him and I wasn't wanting him and he showed me I was sinful and he showed me I was wicked and he showed me I needed him and I accepted his free offer of grace and a gift to me.

So I'm not presuming to tell you you can win his friendship that way but I am saying to you that we are born again believers. I believe you're a born again believer and we can work on this relationship. The first thing is he was serving God.

The friend was serving God. Genesis chapter 18 verse 1. The Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre and he sat in a tent door in the heat of the day.

[ 14 : 08 ] Oftentimes when people go to South America and other places they kind of make fun of Spanish people because they often take a siesta. But if you ever lived where they live and it was as hot where they live if you had to live in the heat they had to live in and you didn't have air conditioning you'd probably be taking a siesta too.

I mean when it's 120 degrees outside and you can get up early and get your work done. You know my daddy used to say let's don't burn the sunlight. Let's get up early in the morning and get the work done before the heat of the day comes. We worked early in the morning.

We took a break in the middle of the time. We didn't call it siesta. It's not because they're lazy. It's just because it's hot. Now here's a guy living out there in the Middle East. And you know that's a pretty warm place.

And he's living out there and he's rich and he's powerful and he's a king. In a sense he's a king. All these people following him. All these servants. And he's sitting in the tent door. A little hot inside the tent.

Needs to be outside in the shade. And he's sitting outside in the shade. And you know the wind's blowing and he's just kind of waiting for things to cool down. Before he goes up and does whatever else he's going to do. And here comes the Lord.

[ 15 : 08 ] And two of his friends walking by. And he jumps up. And he goes to work. And he serves him. In verse 2 he saw. And he ran. And he bowed. Let me just show you. First thing is this.

You know. Did you know. You'll go to almost any length for your friend. If you really love somebody. You'll put some effort in it. If you're really excited about somebody.

Care about them. You'll meet their need. We were talking this afternoon about what to do about the pastor and his wife. And I said. I said. Well you know. For my family.

There's not much I wouldn't spend to take care of them. And so. If my preacher boy needs some help to get his wife back. I'll be taking care of that. I mean. That's my family. And Abraham jumps up. And he runs. And he serves.

And I want you to know. When we serve God. Somewhere along the way. In the United States of America. We've developed the philosophy. That church is for sitting down. We have turned Christianity into a bleacher service.

[16:08] Come watch Austin serve. Come watch the three or four people that were singing a while ago. Come watch Ed. Let's enjoy Ed. It's Thursday night at the movie theater.

I mean. Excuse me. And that's what we would call it. We say. It's Thursday night to go down and watch the show they put on at Vision. That ought never be the way it is. And a friend of God's jumping up. Easily Abraham could have said.

I got deacons that can take care of that. Easily Abraham could have said. I got 318 servants that can take care of that. Whatsoever you do. Do it hardly. As to the Lord.

Colossians 3. 23. And not unto men. Knowing that of the Lord you shall receive the reward of the inheritance. For you serve the Lord Christ. He gets water. He washes their feet. He tells them to rest.

He's a very rich man. He's used to being served. But he gets up to serve. I can promise you this. When Abraham comes in and wants a taco. He doesn't run to the herd and get a calf.

[17:06] When Abraham comes in and wants some butter. And he wants his feet washed. He doesn't run and go get it. Abraham walks in and does it like this. Hey. I'll kill that calf. Bring it over here. Fix it for me. I'll be sitting here in the recliner with the TV on.

Fan blowing. Bring it on. When did y'all get it done? That's what he does normally. But not when the Lord shows up. Because he's going to serve. He's a rich man. He bows and he runs. By the way. You don't run in there and get your 80 or 90 year old wife.

And say. Hey somebody just showed up. Fix them a special meal. Here's what you do. You run in the back. Go. Hey servants. Servants. Fix the meal. No you don't even do that. You call somebody. Run in the back. Tell them servant girls to get that fixed. That's not what he does.

He said. The Lord showed up here. I'm going to go out and talk to him. I'm going to get my wife doing it. Me and the wife. Me and the missus. We're going to do this one. Servants y'all can just watch. I can just imagine. I don't know if you can see it. I can just imagine.

The servant's like. What's going on? He don't ever get off his rocking chair. He don't ever kill a calf. He don't ever go get one. And Abraham's like. You just sit down.

[18:01] My friend's here. I'm going to do this one. I'm taking care of this one. And he picks out a calf. He runs up to him in chapter 18. In verse 3. And he says. And my Lord.

If I found favor in thy sight. Pass not away. I pray thee. If I found grace. If you're happy with me. If you're pleased with me. Please let me serve you. And then he stands there while they eat.

That's not how it works. That's not how it works. Rich people sit together. While servants feed them. Rich people eat. While lower class people watch them eat.

But then Abraham kind of knows who the other guy is. Doesn't he? And Abraham says. Lord sit down with your angels there. Bring it somewhere.

Here. You need some more butter. Would you like a little salt with that? Can I get you some more? Can I get you some more milk? I've kept it cool in the creek down there. Let me get it for you. He's loving him. Abraham got very personally involved.

[18:57] Even in the heat of the day. Even though he was wealthy. We should consider how involved we get in serving others. Especially serving God and worshipping. The person that has arrived is the Lord.

It's a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus. You see Jesus will be born. The Christ will be born in Bethlehem. But he has always existed.

And that's something you all need to know. So Jesus, God didn't, Jesus didn't come along after 4,000 years and born of Mary. And Mary's not the mother of God.

That couldn't be possible because your mother gets here before you do. How many of you got here for your mother? How many of you were born before your mother was? Hold your hand if I'd like to meet you. You know, none of you were born before your mother.

So there's no mother of Jesus. He has no beginning. He has no end. And he's always been. And he doesn't show up in physical form until the book of Matthew. That's the first time we're going to say it. But he shows up in these appearances.

[ 19 : 52 ] And it's the Lord. Capital L. By the way, the Father's invisible. So it's not the Father. That's a whole other message. Whole other lesson. Had Abraham not had the custom of practicing hospitality, he might have missed the blessing.

Surely when he knew who it was, he got more excited. Are you living a life of service to God and others? You never know who you might be entertaining. Hebrews chapter 13, verse 1.

The Bible says this. Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Now, my poor wife, I have kind of gotten over it.

I will be honest. I have kind of gotten over it. But my poor wife has put up every kind of drunk and bum and walker and hitchhiker in the world. I'd be riding down the road. Somebody would be hitchhiking.

I'd pull over and I'd say, jump in the car. I'd pull over. His name was Salvatore. He got in the car and I started witnessing to him. And he said, stop a car. Let me out. He said, you're just going to witness to me and I ain't getting saved.

[ 20 : 54 ] I done heard that from a bunch of you. And as soon as I don't get saved, you're going to put me out anyway. He said, just put me out now. I said, I ain't going to put you out if you don't get saved. If you don't get saved, that's your problem. That's my problem to tell you about Jesus.

He said, why don't you tell me what I need here? Tell me I got a job. Tell me you got a place for me to stay. I said, hey, you want to stay at my house tonight? He said, really? I said, yeah, you can stay. He stayed six weeks.

Gave him a job at the church. Paid him money. I took his clothes in the house. Took his bag in the house. It stunk so bad. He'd been living on the road. And Betty put them in the washroom. She washed all those clothes like four times.

She stuck them in there with a stick. Washed them. Took them out. Suck them back in and washed them again. Ask her, I'm not making this up. I'd come home at night. I'd pull up at her. I'd say, would you just sit in the car just a minute? And I'd go in the house and say, baby, I got one of them angels unawares out there.

I said, I don't know who he is. But you never know. He asked me if I had a place for him to stay. I came home with church members that were drunk. I hope we don't have that problem here. And I came home. And I went to jail. Got him out of jail.

[ 21 : 52 ] Signed my house over to get him out of jail. Brought him back to the house. And I said, baby, we'll put him in the basement. We'll lock the basement door so you'll be safe tonight. And I'd take him back downstairs. She'd say, honey, sometimes you're crazy. I said, hey, you never know.

Could be an angel unaware. I know you don't believe that. But it happened with Abraham that day, didn't it? Abraham could have easily looked up and said, look at them three guys walking by. Ha ha! We eat inside the tent so you don't see us eat around here.

Amen, Jason. We're not going to share anything with you. Take it on down the road. They got a motel five miles down the road. That's not what Abraham said. He practiced some hospitality. Did you know hospitality is supposed to be a part of Christianity?

How about this? Romans chapter 12, verse 13. The Bible says, distributing to the necessity of saints. Given to hospitality. I mean, that means given to it. It means like I like it. I want it.

I do it. In 1 Peter chapter 4, verse 9, it says, use hospitality one to another and don't be gripping about it. Without grudging. Oh boy, they're here again.

[ 22 : 48 ] Put some more water in the soup. They showed up again. There's Austin out in the car. I see he's got somebody with him. 1 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 2, the men of God.

A bishop then must be blameless, a husband and wife, vigilant, sober of good behavior, given to hospitality. Titus 1.8, a lover, a lover of hospitality.

In Matthew chapter 25, you get the wildest stories. We don't believe any of this anymore, but it's still in the Bible. In Matthew chapter 25, Jesus was talking to some of them and he said, he said, you know, you took care of me when I was hungry and you gave me water when I was thirsty and you visited me when I was in jail.

Matthew chapter 25, verse 34 and following. In verse 35, he said, I was hungry. You gave me meat. I was thirsty. You gave me drink. I was a stranger and you took me in. I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison.

He came unto me and they said, Lord, we didn't know. I don't think we ever saw you in jail. I don't think we ever saw you. No, I don't believe so, Lord. I think I'd recognize you. And here's what he said. In as much, verse 40, in as much as you've done it unto one of the the least of these, my brethren, you've done it unto me.

[ 23 : 54 ] We all stop just a second and say, you know, Genesis 18, if nothing else is going on there, we ought to learn a little more about hospitality. We ought to learn a little bit more about you never know who the three guys are that just came by the house.

We don't know for sure who they are. Maybe we ought to do something. And it was a great practice found in third John chapter five or verses five through eight. He said, brother, what you do to the brethren and to strangers, they bear witness of your charity and you send them forth and you do it.

They're doing it for your namesake. Just stop there and just say, just say this serving God. You know, I would question, I would say to you that, man, we ought to be as excited about serving God as anybody could be about anything else.

I mean, it all, and I do, and I know you do. I was here the other day doing a marriage counseling thing and in came a family and they started cleaning bathrooms. I had no idea they did that.

I appreciate that. They weren't doing that for me. They were doing that for you. They were doing it for Jesus because nobody, none of us even knew they were doing it. So a grown man, his wife and kids came in here, take care of the church. They weren't doing that for me.

[ 24 : 59 ] They weren't doing that for you. But I'll tell you this. There ought to be a part of us that says, I'd like to run, get a calf. I'd like to run, get a calf. I'd like to run and get some butter and for you. And I'd like to get my guys to kill the calf.

And I'd like to wash your feet. And I'd like to do something. And we're doing that for others. And we're doing that for Jesus. And we're doing that for strangers. And we're doing it for him while he was in jail. And somewhere along the way, Christianity has kind of moved off to, you can sit in the bleachers.



Don't get involved. Don't get involved. Number two, the friend gets to see God go to work. In chapter 18 and verse 9, in chapter 18 and verse 9, the Bible says, and they said unto him, where's your wife?

Where's Sarah? And he said, she's in the tent. And he said, well, I'll tell you what, we're going to come back. And I'm going to come back. And then she's going to have a son. And Sarah heard it. And Sarah laughed. You know that. The time had finally come for God to do what he promised.

And here's a hard thing for us. Sometimes we get a little doubtful of our relationship with our father, with our friend, with our Lord, and with our Savior. I mean, he told us back here that he was going to do something big in our life.

[ 26 : 13 ] He told us he was. But it didn't happen. And we went on a little further. And we actually came up with some ideas to try to help him get it done. And he didn't accept my idea.

And I came up with another idea. And he didn't accept my idea. You know, Hagar and Abimelech. You know the story. You've been going through it. And finally, one day, I mean, it's too late. Sarah doesn't, she doesn't do what you've got to do to be able to have babies anymore.

She's not physically capable of having babies anymore. And all of a sudden, here he comes and he says, yep, next year she'll be having a baby. You see, God is going to show up. That's the story here.

He does show up. But he doesn't always show up on my timetable. He doesn't always show up when I'm expecting him to. And sometimes I get a bad attitude towards him. And so Abraham and Sarah, they can see the circumstances.

And it's evidence that God wasn't going to and he couldn't fulfill it. And Sarah can't avoid being doubtful. I mean, honestly, Sarah laughs at herself.

[ 27 : 12 ] Can I just say, I think I'd have laughed too. She held her laugh in. I believe I'd have probably laughed out loud. I mean, I'd have been like, wow, really? You're really going to do it?

She had heard that for years that she was going to get pregnant. She had tried to believe. She had tried to honor God at great sacrifice to herself. She had tried to be a good wife. It just seemed like too much.

Maybe God's not going to do it. Now, I'd just like to say real quickly that we're going to watch God work in our lives. Can I just tell you this? God often lets you go through deep valleys and run out of yourself and get to the end of yourself where you can't do stuff.

So that when it happens, you have to stand back and say, well, I already tried everything in my power. Nothing I tried worked and it had to be God that did that thing in my life. There was a guy named Joseph and he was 17 years of age and God told him big stuff he was going to do.

He was going to see all these people bowing down for him. The sun, the moon, the stars and the sheaves in the field. He knew all this stuff was going to happen. He was 17 years. It'll be 13 years before it happens. I can only imagine that night after they beat him up and throw him in the pit and they're walking away and they're all saying, ha ha, watch his dream come true now.

[ 28 : 22 ] I can only imagine when they get sold into slavery and no telling what happened to that boy on the way to being a slave at Potiphar's house, no telling what other prisoners did to him. But on the way he's over going over to their house, he might've began to wonder, maybe I dreamed that maybe it wasn't going to happen.

Maybe God's never going to do something big. And then when he got falsely accused and put in prison, maybe he thought it'll never happen. And maybe, and maybe when, when, when, when the, the, the, the, the friend forgot him in prison and he laid there two more years, he doubted, but God is.

Going to work right now, Abraham, he's here and she's going to have a baby. And Abraham is reminded of just how powerful God is. Look at verse 14. They laugh. And here's what Abraham, here's what the God says.

You really think anything's hard for me? We're only 18 chapters of this book, buddy. We're only 18 chapters into this book. You don't know what I did in chapters one, two, and three. I mean, one and two, I took care of building a whole earth in seven days.

You know that you realize I flooded a whole world, saved eight people. I mean, I'm pretty big. I'm pretty good at this stuff. You don't think I can do it. But God said, I can. And I'd just like to remind you that God can always be trusted.

[ 29 : 29 ] God can always be trusted. We make promises and we don't keep them. He makes promises and he keeps them. Even when we are faithless. You say, I don't believe that one.

Because Pentecostals told me if I don't believe he might not come through. How about this verse? Second Timothy chapter two, verse 13. Second Timothy chapter two, verse 13. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful.

He cannot deny himself. You may be laying in the bed with cancer about to die and you may begin to wonder and be afraid about your own salvation. Will God save me?

Did he really save me? Will I really get to him? And you might have some last minute doubts when you're scared. When you're facing that surgery, you're facing that problem or you're going through financial distress or whatever's happening to you.

And you might be thinking, I just don't know if I believe God enough for him to come through. And God will look down and say, it never did depend on how much you believe me, buddy. I keep my word when I give my word. Whether you believe or not, I keep my word.

[ 30 : 23 ] I don't give you some relaxing. Third thing that happens in the chapter. Look at Abraham's relationship with the Lord. I'm so amazed. Verse 17. Am I going to hide anything from Abraham?

Will I hide it from Abraham? I mean, I got some secrets and people don't know what I'm doing. But am I going to hide that from Abraham? God wanted to show Abraham what he was going to do. It's just, it's a funny story to me.

I mean, here's a puny little nobody Abraham, a human being and the great God almighty of the universe who with words builds a world. And he's getting ready to leave and there's Abraham.

And Abraham doesn't know what's going on. And he goes, see you later, Abraham. I just don't think I really want to go do that without telling my buddy.

Abraham, let me tell you what I'm fixing to do. What? A relationship. I mean, what? A relationship. I mean, you understand? I mean, he's fixing it.

[ 31 : 19 ] He said, would I hide it from Abraham? Hey, I got to tell Abraham. I'm going to be doing big stuff with him. Might as well keep this relationship open. I'm going to be doing big stuff with him. He don't know how big he's going to be.

He's been waiting all this time thinking I ain't never going to give him a kid. But I'm going to give him a kid. I'm going to give him a kid. And hey, no, I'm going to give him a kid. He's going to have a big family. And not only that, he's going to be a great dad. He's going to be a great husband.

I know all that. I know he's going to do all that. And by the way, it wasn't any of that because Abraham was so good. Because Abraham hadn't done anything yet. He didn't even have a track record. In fact, if you don't look at his track record, it stunk.

Look at his track record. She ain't my wife. She's my sister. Y'all want to kill anybody? Kill her. That's his track record. I'd say you're a lousy husband. And he will command his family and his wife and his children to act.

No, he won't. He's a bum. Not until God gets a hold of him. Something pretty there. Something pretty there. God knew what he was going to do. And he knew it was going to be great and wonderful. He knew what kind of leader and dad and husband he was going to be.

[ 32 : 18 ] Verse 18, verse 19. God knew he was going to do great things in Abraham's life. And that leads us to the last thing in the chapter. Somewhere along the way, Abraham knows.

I found favor. Remember what he said when he first came by? The three of them were walking by? He runs out to them and he bows and all that stuff. But he said, if I found favor in your eyes, if you like me, if we can be friends, dear Betty, will you be my girlfriend?

Check yes or no. Austin. He runs up and he says, old man. I mean, he's probably hunched over. I don't know. He runs over. He says, hey, if we could be free. If I have found favor, I'd like you to come over to the house and I'll get you something to eat.

And you can comfort yourselves. I'll wash your feet. Y'all mind doing that? And the Lord said, I'll go. And Abraham's like, wow. He comes over and he's in there in his house. And the conversation's going on.

God's talking to him. And now we get down to his praying. You see, the praying's not based on him, but it ain't somebody. He is not walking up to God and saying, you listen to me. You hear? I didn't want to. That's not what's happening.

[ 33 : 25 ] That's the wrong kind of praying. It might be Pentecostal praying, but it ain't Bible praying. Well, he knew who God was. And he goes over an intercessory prayer. He had a great relationship with God.

He was close enough to God that God would reveal things to him. And the prayer wasn't like a last ditch effort or something that Abraham wasn't used to doing. I'm always alarmed that we spend all of our money with doctors before we ever talk to God.

I'm always alarmed that we do everything in our power before we ever ask God for anything. This isn't a normal life. Abraham's kind of used to praying. And this ain't something shocking.

I always find that exciting about when the angel comes and talks to Joseph and Mary and tells them that they're going to be a baby. And the truth of the matter is, any normal human being would have passed out and died right then.

But they were like, hey, we're used to talking to God. Come on, talk to me. Abraham had an open and fearless relationship with the God of heaven. Abraham was not in the middle of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah.

[ 34 : 26 ] And he gets a visit from God. You see, amazingly, I must remind you that I think you know, I think you know lots of saved men too.

We know that from 1 Peter. Just Lot vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. But when God wants to talk to a guy, he doesn't go to the guy down in the pit of sin messing around playing with the sin.

I'll just leave it at that. He didn't go down there. He didn't go to the guy that's all hung up and doing the dirty stuff. And was more interested in making money and having a nice house and taking care of himself and making himself popular.

He went out here to the guy that lives out on the plains with nothing to do but talk to God. You know, in town, life's a lot busier in town.

I mean, you got honky tonks you can go play in. You can go to the, we can go out to Ruby 2's. It's right here in a second. We can stay out to Applebee's for one o'clock. But man, when you're out in the country and you got any of that junk going on, you go to bed pretty early.

[ 35 : 28 ] Talk to God a little bit. And God comes and talks to Abraham. Abraham's not living in the world. He's not immersed in sin. He's not caught up in the world's way of doing things. God speaks to and guides those that take time to seek him and are trying to be separate from sin.

Can I just tell you, you don't keep a real close relationship with him when you do things he don't like. And I ain't picking anything. You figure it out. The truth of the matter is, you know what?

If I do certain things, my wife wouldn't like me. And I ain't even talking about dirty sins. I mean, you got, you know, if you're going to live together for a long time, you learn. She don't like this and she likes that and she don't like that.

And Abraham's like, I know what he likes. He's my buddy. I know what he likes. I want to live a holy life. Be holy for he is holy. So Abraham's prayer is to save Lot and his family. Abraham knows that God's going to destroy wicked people.

I don't know if you notice this. He's not even trying to save the wicked. Because what he says in verse 25 is you wouldn't kill the good guys with the bad, would you? Now God, Lot, he lives down there.

[ 36 : 33 ] And my nephews are down there. And my daughter-in-law, my nephew-in-law, whatever you call nephews, whatever, female, my female nephews or whatever. They're down there. And I don't want them dying.

I'd like to talk to you about that. If you're going to blow up Sodom and Gomorrah, if you're going to drop an atomic bomb on it. I'd like to make sure you're not going to kill Lot and the family. I mean, that's my family down there. That's what he said.

You say he didn't say that. Verse 25, that's what he said. Abraham knows God's just. He knows that God will destroy the wicked. He didn't want to see Lot get hurt in the process. Could I quickly remind you that God doesn't have pleasure.

He finds no pleasure even in the death of the wicked. The Bible says that in Ezekiel 33, 11. For those of you who don't believe me.

Say unto them, as I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. But that the wicked turn from his way and live.

[ 37 : 31 ] Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways. For why will you die, O house of Israel? Look what a difference even a small amount of believers could have made in that city.

Wild part of the story. It's time to quit, but the wild part of the story. If there had been 50 righteous people in that city, God would have spared the whole city. He got it all the way down to 10.

And I'm pretty convinced of why he did that. I'm pretty sure why he got to 10. There was Lot and his wife. And he took two daughters out with him. And he had daughters-in-laws that were married to son-in-laws.

And that's at least two. That's at least, it's plural. So there was at least two daughters that were married. I don't know if they had any kids. So that's four. That's eight. Maybe he had three daughters and three son-in-laws. I don't know.

I'm pretty sure Abraham's sitting there going, God, while we're talking about 50. Sarah, add them up real quick. Let's find out how many he'd gotten in his family. Make sure we take care of the family. Or surely he got one more saved.

[ 38 : 26 ] Surely he invited somebody to worship with him on Saturday. Like the rest of us do. Surely he did. God, you wouldn't kill everybody with a 10 there. When it came down to it, there weren't even 10 in the city.

So here's a wild thought for you. You and I are to live holy and righteous lives. And 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, he that withholdeth, he that letteth, he that stops.

See, God's holding back his wrath. The power of the Holy Spirit's here working. He's working through people like us to keep his wrath from coming on this earth. But soon he will take us out of here and he will open the floodgates and the great tribulation is going to start.

I hope you realize you are to live in a community and make a difference. I hope you realize that they could have made a difference. Are we being salt and light? Are we influencing others for Christ and truth?

Are we living out our faith? Does our living in a city make a difference? In spiritual and eternal things. Do we make a difference? I'm going to kill that.

[ 39 : 32 ] Abraham, I'm going to just blast Sodom and Gomorrah. Just destroy them. They're out of here. God, if there's 10 good ones in there, would you lay off of Sodom and Gomorrah?

Yep, there's 10 good ones I will. And I'm afraid you and I have retreated into our tent too much. We don't want to tell anybody. We don't share a gospel track. We don't want to pray for a lost person.

We don't want to invite anybody to church. And we're like, we've got to live these holy lives. And that's why we stay with eight in our family instead of 10 and can't do much to stave off what could come. Let's go tell somebody about Jesus.

Abraham was his friend. And you've got to admit, that's a wild story. God comes. Abraham serves him. Abraham makes him a promise. Sarah laughs.

Abraham laughed the last chapter, but maybe a laughter of faith, but this one definitely wasn't. God says, I like you. I know you. And I'm not going to leave you alone. And you're going to do great things. I've got big plans for you, buddy.

[ 40 : 33 ] Going to do stuff. And Abraham says, and I love you and I know you. So I'm going to ask you to save Lot's family and kind of lay off of Sodom and Gomorrah, if you will. I want to be that kind of friend. I want to be one that can pray for other people.

I want to be one that can have a list and say, I really care enough to pray for some other people and call out their needs before God. I want to be a guy that can be salt and light in a community. I want to be a guy that can try to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I want to be a guy that can help get the gospel around the world. I want to be close enough to him that I'm not down in the middle of Sodom and Gomorrah when he's ready to destroy it. And he won't even come talk to me.

But he goes and talks to my uncle. I don't want to be that. I don't want to be Lot. I want to be Abraham. Where are you? Where are you living? You're not in Sodom, are you? You're not down at the Sin City, are you?

You're out there with the Lord, aren't you? Finding some time with him. Father in heaven, I love you. And I praise you and I magnify you. And I just pray that you'd work in our lives.

[ 41 : 30 ] I pray you'd let Genesis 18 come alive to us. Show us your power. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com) where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.