

Pastoral REFLECTIONS

October 23, 2022

Anchor Your Mind

In a sermon on the Holy Spirit, a very popular preacher in his day, Charles Spurgeon, confessed the following: "I hope that Divine Grace manages my will, because I am afraid my imagination is not.. Those with a fair share of imagination know what a difficult thing it is to control. You cannot restrain it.... My imagination has taken me down to the vilest kennels and sewers of the earth. It has given me dreadful thoughts, that while I could not avoid them, I was thoroughly horrified by them. These thoughts will come, and when I feel I'm in the holiest frame, the most devoted to God, and the most earnest in prayer, it often happens that this is the very time when the plague breaks out the worst." Christ put it this way; "For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man unclean." (Mark 7:21-23; NIV) We seek to address in this series not whether we will have these thoughts, but how we overcome them.

"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It penetrates even to divide the soul and spirit, joints, and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." (Heb 4:12-13; NIV) It must all begin with a commitment to obey the Lord's will because this is what is going to anchor our minds (Daniel 1:8). When our minds have been anchored, the truth of God's Word ignites the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This reminds us f that the Spirit is the way (John 14:26), and helps to make God's Word clear (John 16:13). When we accept what the scripture teaches and apply it, the transforming work of the Holy Spirit empowers us to keep walking in it (Philippians 2:12-13) so that we understand it even more (Ephesians 3:16-21). As we understand it more deeply, our convictions grow (John 16:7-11; Galatians 5:24), so we become spiritually directed to walk in the Spirit and not the flesh (Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:12-17). At this point, Christ lives through us (Galatians 2:20).

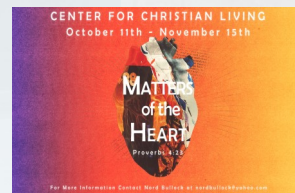
What is the difference between Peter and Paul? Peter allowed fear to control his decisions, whereas Paul was guided by faith (Romans 8:37-39; before Peter could ever start walking with Christ, Christ told him not to fear; Luke 5:10). Paul's faith weakened his desire to trust in himself and strengthened his desire to depend on the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 12:7-12). So, it is the strength of the Holy Spirit that made Paul strong. The Spirit's renewing work f in his mind was Paul's strength (Romans 12:2; Philippians 2:13). We need the Spirit's strength.



UPCOMING Events



UMT LEGACY YOUTH EVANGELISM TRAINING TODAY AFTER SECOND SERVICE 12-2:30 P.M.
Calling all youth 5th thru 12th grade. There will be an Evangelism Training on Sunday, October 23rd after 2nd service 12:30-2pm held in the choir room. During Harvest Fest, youth will be sharing the gospel with the community. For more information, contact **Jordan Washington** at legacyyouth@lwfellowshipchurch.org or **Natividad Smith** at nds_smith@yahoo.com



Center for Christian Living Matters of the Heart Oct. 11th – Nov. 15th
CFCL is back for the fall with "Matters of the Heart" This is a collaboration of Christian education classes from the Men ministry, Women ministry, Marriage ministry and the Young Adult ministry. For more information visit the CFCL website at www.lwfellowshipchurch.org/center-christian-living Or contact **Nord Bullock** at nordbullock@yahoo.com



HARVEST FEST—CHURCH PICNIC—OCT. 30TH ONE SUNDAY SERVICE—9:30 A.M. HARVEST FEST—12:00. P.M. – 2:30 P.M.
Join us at Living Word Fellowship Church on Oct. 30th from 12:00 P.M. – 2:30 P.M. for our Harvest Fest, Church Picnic and Deacon Family Fellowship! Enjoy food, fun, games, bouncers, rock climbing, candy, fellowship and more! For More information contact Sylvia Edwards or Rashaud Hudson.



LWCA IS NOW ENROLLING—\$85 PER WEEK BEFORE/AFTER CARE—\$35-\$55 PER WEEK
The Living Word Christian Academy is having a Fall Special of \$85 per week for the full day program ages 18 months—4 years old. Before and After School Care ages 5-12 years-old, \$55 per week and only \$35 per week for either Before or After care. Transportation is included from select schools. For more information, call **(713) 686-5538** or register at www.lwcacademy.org



WOMEN'S POWER HEALTH SELF-CARE EVENT SAT. NOV. 5TH AT 9:00 A.M.
Ladies Join Us for the Women of Grace Ministry Women's Power Health Self-Care Event Sat. Nov. 5th 9 a.m. in Legacy Sanctuary! Ladies, we take care of our homes, families, children, but we often put ourselves last. Join us for this Self-Care event and Put yourself first! Register on the events page of our website or for more information, please contact Eleanor Wilson at wilsone_ewilson@yahoo.com



ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Visitor's Welcome

Worship In Giving

Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses

Special Music

"Mapped Out"

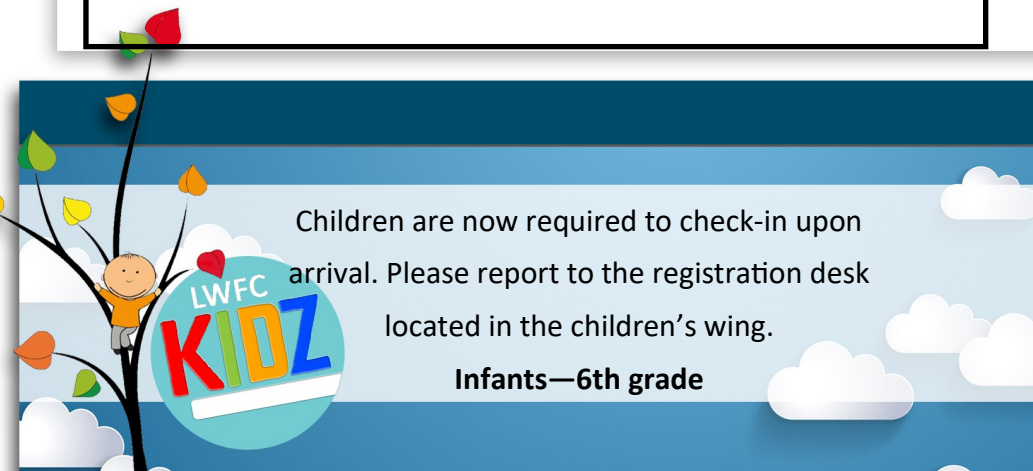
Genesis 12:11-13 Genesis 20

Click on the "Resources" tab and click "Sermon Notes"

Call to Discipleship

Please remain seated at this time

Benediction



Mapped Out
Genesis 12:11-13 Genesis 20

I. The Provision vs. 1-3

- a. Go forth
 - i. Most commentators have regarded this divine imperative as a test of faith: Abram is to give up all he holds dearest for an unknown land promised by God.
 - ii. Abram cut the strongest family bond by leaving his father’s domain, which provided his own household’s socio-economic viability. He trusted the veracity of God’s promised generosity and received more than he would have had he remained in Haran.
- b. I will
 - i. Show
 - 1. The commitment rests with the Lord to “show” the patriarch the land that awaits him. In relating the promises of vv. 2–3, God is the initiator and consummator. Abram is dependent on the Lord to achieve the promises; he only has the divine word to rely on. Abram is the passive recipient of the divine will. His status in the arrangement between the two parties is illustrated when the covenant is formally ratified (15:8–15). Abram is a witness to the covenant ceremony, not a participant (15:17);
 - ii. Make you a Great Nation
 - 1. Make - proscribed action
 - 2. Nation
 - a. These verses are of fundamental importance for the theology of Genesis, for they serve to bind together the primeval history and the later patriarchal history and look beyond it to the subsequent history of the nation.
 - iii. Bless
 - 1. Within these verses the promise of blessing is central: five times the verb or the noun derived from בֵּרַךְ “bless” is used. The root בֵּרַךְ occurs more frequently in Genesis than in any other part of the OT: 88 times in Genesis as against 310 times elsewhere. God’s blessing is manifested most obviously in human prosperity and well-being; long life, wealth, peace, good harvests, and children are the items that figure most frequently in lists of blessings such as 24:35–36; Lev 26:4–13; Deut. 28:3–15. What modern secular man calls “luck” or “success” the OT calls “blessing,” for it insists that God alone is the source of all good fortune
 - 2. But the blessing so bountifully promised is preceded by a word of command, “Leave ...” (v. 1a). His answer to the command is not by word but by deed: “So Abram left” (v. 4a). Emboldened by his faith in the sure word of the Lord, the patriarch embarked on the divine scheme. Abram’s obedience is described in vv. 4–9 by the itinerary of his travels in Canaan.
 - iv. Your Name Great
 - 1. Behind the fourfold promise of nationhood, a great name, divine protection, and mediatorship of blessing, E. Ruprecht (29 [1979] 445–64) has plausibly detected echoes of royal ideology. What Abram is here promised was the hope of many an oriental monarch (cf. 2 Sam 7:9; Ps 72:17).
 - v. Bless Those who Bless You
 - vi. Curse those who Curse You
- c. You will
 - i. Be a blessing

II. The Journey vs. 4-9

- a. Went Forth
 - i. Took His Wife and Lot
 - ii. Possessions Accumulated
 - 1. The call of Abram is related in vv 1–3, while vv 4–9 tell of his obedience. More precisely, v 1 is answered in v 4, “Abram went as the Lord had told him.” The divine speech consists of a command “Go ... to the country ... “followed by a series of promises (vv 2–3)
- b. Set Out
 - i. Passed Through
- c. The Lord Appeared
 - i. Showed
 - 1. I will give you this Land
- d. Journeyed On 8-9

III. Abram’s Plan vs. 10-13

- a. Famine
 - i. Settle in Egypt

III. Abram’s Plan vs. 10-13 continued

1. It is striking that Abram is said to have gone to “settle in” Egypt, to be an immigrant there. To live as an immigrant (גֵּר) suggests the intention of long-term settlement, which is somewhat alien to Abram’s wandering lifestyle. It also comes as quite a surprise to hear that Abram is ready to settle in Egypt so soon after he has been promised “this land”
 2. “To live there for a while” translates the term gûr, meaning “sojourn,” which usually describes a temporary residence.
- b. I know
 - i. Sarai Wife
 - ii. Beautiful
 - 1. Fearing that the woman’s beauty might become a source of danger to himself as the husband, the man resorts to the subterfuge of passing himself off as the woman’s brother.
 - c. Will Kill me
 - i. Let You Live
 - 1. Escaping the danger of famine in Canaan, Abram fears that in Egypt he will run another sort of risk. As an immigrant there he would lack the support and protection afforded by the wider family network.
 - d. Sister
 - i. I will live on YOUR account
 - 1. It was the Lord who saved Sarai from the plight in which her husband’s cleverness had landed her (v 17), and Abram’s silence in the face of Pharaoh’s remonstrations shows that the author did not approve of his conduct. This is confirmed by comparing this tale with the similar ones in Gen 20 and 26.
 - 2. When reading the incident together with Abram’s later confession to Abimelech (20:11–13), we discover the full rationale and the premeditated plan of the deception. Abram fears two things: (1) Sarai’s beauty will draw the attention of powerful men (12:11–12), and (2) since these men do not abide by the ethic of Abram’s God, they will murder him and take her for a wife (20:11). By a ruse Sarai presented herself as his sister (12:13) and, accordingly, acknowledged Abram as “my brother” (20:13). The genius of the ruse was its half-truth. Abram could claim the truth—“she really is my sister” (20:12)—since they had the same father, and at the same time he avoids reference to her as wife (12:12). But the folly of Abram’s plan was its consequences. Although he would save his life, he jeopardized his future by placing at risk Sarai, the mother of the promised son. Moreover, others suffered because of the deception, bringing guilt on themselves unknowingly (12:17–18; 20:9; 26:10).

PRAYER REQUESTS

Grieving: Maryland Flax & family, Krystal and Kenneth Dabney & family, Dorcus Blackmon & family, the family of André Waldrup, and Terry and Deidre McCoy & family.

Health and Healing: Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Barbara Gordon, Eric White, Ella James, Pat Crawford, Lisa Roberts, Birdie Williams, Jon Heard, Lakessia Davis, Rutha Patrick, the Tillis family, Betty Goode, Latifah Brown, Tanisha Collins, Eric Prichett, Rufus Hadnot, Pat James, Donald Edwards, Grace Edwards, Kevin Carey, and Lori Lee.

