

Genesis 14 — Success

January 10, 2016

If you are new, thank you for joining us at CrossWinds for worship. Today is an especially good day with JD's baptism. His baptism reminds us that God is not locked in the Bible but he is alive, active and transforming lives today. Even today he can change your life by repenting of your sin and trusting in Jesus' death on the cross to forgive your sin and change your life. I believe he will do that in your life even yet this morning as we look at the Word of God.

We are studying our way through the book of Genesis. The first 10 chapters of the book introduced us to big picture items. We learned how God created the world. We found out what went wrong with the world when Satan, sin and death entered the world.

After chapter 10, the book of Genesis turned a corner. The focus of the book moved from big picture items to how God was going to fix everything. God's plan unfolds through the rest of the Bible, but it began with God calling one person. His name was Abram. God called him out of a pagan background in the city of Ur and moved him to the Promised Land. In our recent studies of Abram's life we walked with him and saw his mistakes, doubts and sin. The good news is that even when Abram was unfaithful to God, God was always faithful to him. As Abram experienced God's faithfulness in spite of his foolishness, his faith and trust in God began to grow. There is a great parallel between Abram and ourselves. Like Abram our walk with God is filled with our unfaithfulness to God as we walk into sin again and again. God stays faithful to us when we are

unfaithful to him. When our grip on God falters, his grip on us doesn't. That causes us to love and trust him more.

Last week, in Genesis 13, we saw Abram and Lot split ways because they had too much stuff. Lot left Abram and went to live next to Sodom outside of the Promised Land. While Lot thought it was a pretty cool place to live because it looked like paradise, it was a wicked place to live that experienced repeated judgments of God for its sin. Lot living in Sodom was like playing a game of chicken in traffic. You may win for a while but you will eventually get hit. Today, Lot gets hit by a massive truck.

Before we study, let me just warn you. When I start reading this text, it will sound incredibly boring. Stick with me. After I explain it, you will find this exciting. Once you understand this it reads like an action-packed movie.

Success is a harder test than prosperity.

In the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, these kings made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). And all these joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. Genesis 14:1–4 (ESV)

The big picture is you have four kings that were going to fight against five kings.

Who were these four kings?



- **Amraphel king of Sinar** came from modern day Iraq. This is the first war recorded in the Bible. Trouble always starts in Iraq. Nothing has changed in 4,000 years.
- **Arioch king of Ellasar** came from modern day Syria.
- **Chedorlaomer king of Elam** came from Iran.
- **Tidal king of Goiims** came from modern day Turkey.

What we have is an ancient version of ISIS. The name of their coalition was ISIT. There are a bunch of bad guys working together to be really bad guys.

The Jordan Valley, where Lot lived, was a nice place. Last week we saw it described as paradise on earth similar to the Garden of Eden. These kings of huge nasty nations were getting tribute/extortion money from this small, rich area. When you stop paying your extortion money to big kingdoms like this, things are going to get ugly.

Who were the five kings of the Jordan Valley that were sick and tired of extortion? I won't take the time to go through all of them but we will look at two.

In the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, people were given names that fit their character. It is similar to the way parents choose baby names today. You want to give your child a name that means something. For instance, if you name your son Ryker, that means strength. If you name your daughter Aziel, that means God is my power. Yes, I looked up the meaning of those baby names on the Internet. In that day, people chose names or were given names that meant something. The names given to these kings were not too complimentary. Check this out:

- The King of Sodom was named Bera. Bera means evil. How would you like your parents to name you evil? I told you Sodom was a bad city. Some people that think they are tough say evil is their middle name. Bera said evil was his first name! This was one bad dude!
- The king of Gomorrah was named Birsha. Birsha is Hebrew for wicked. I told you, these cities were really dark places. Their kings were named Mr. Evil and Mr. Wicked.

In Genesis 19, we learn that Lot had a little bed 'n' breakfast ministry. He tried to rescue visitors to the city of Sodom by inviting them to sleep at his house instead of the city square. Why did he run this ministry? If you slept in the city square you were homosexually gang-raped during the night. That was standard practice in Sodom and Gomorrah. These were dark cities run by Mr. Evil and Mr. Wicked.

There are few things we should notice.

Nothing is new under the sun. We have kings over people groups banding together to form alliances in the ancient world, just like they do in our modern world. It is no different than the United States of America having 50 states agreeing to work together to form a greater nation or having countries agreeing to work together to form NATO. This is the way you protected yourself then and the way we protect ourselves now. You formed alliances to make yourself bigger. The biggest alliance with the most guys is the winner. There is nothing new under the sun.

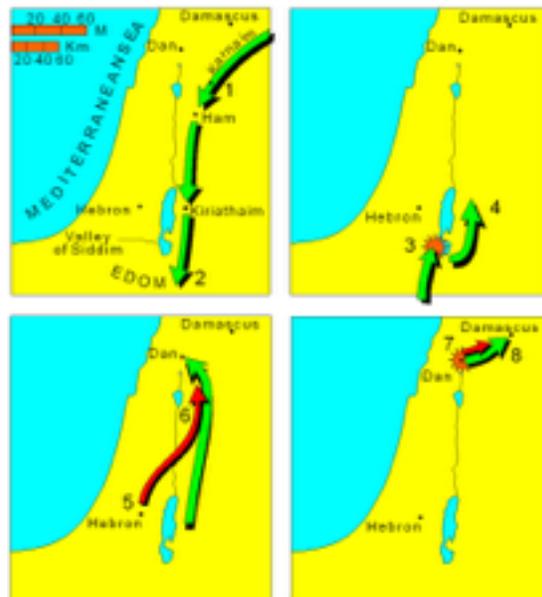
This was not going to be a fair fight. The four kings from Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey were much larger and more powerful than the five smaller mini-kings in the small but rich Jordan Valley. On paper, this was going to be ugly.

Here comes the script to the action movie.

In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, and the Hornites in their hill country of Seir as far as El-paran on the border of the wilderness. Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh) and defeated all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who were dwelling in Hazazon-tamar. Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out, and they joined battle in the Valley of Siddim with Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goiim, Amraphel king of Shiner, and Arioch king of Ellasar, four kings against five. Now the Valley of Siddim was full of bitumen pits, and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into them, and the rest fled to the hill country. So the enemy took all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. Genesis 14:5–11 (ESV)

Like you, all these names blew by me until I looked at what they did on a map. What we have is a first-rate military strategy.

First, these big studs come in from the north heading south. On the first pass, they wiped out kingdoms surrounding the Jordan Valley that could come to the aid of the kings in the Jordan Valley. As they went south, they were traveling on a trade route known as the king's highway. It was the



international trade route. They mopped up, destroyed and plundered city after

city as they went south. They went a long way past the rebellious cities in the Jordan Valley, much farther than our little graphic shows, before they looped back. Then they had a huge buffer zone around them where everybody was wiped out. All that was left were the kings in the Jordan Valley. They had no help from the outside because everybody around them for miles was decimated.

The names of some of the kingdoms they knocked out were significant. They knocked out the Rephaites, who were like Anakim. According to Deuteronomy 2:11, they were known for their huge stature. They were literally a race of people all built like Hulk Hogan. If you knocked out these giants, everything else was easy. They also knocked out the Emites, who were also known for their giant stature. Their name in Hebrew literally means *terror*. When you knock out the giants and the people whose name is *terror*, life is good. All that was left were the kings in the Jordan Valley.

The battle took place on the southern end of the Dead Sea. Size-wise it was like five sewer rats taking on four elephants. It didn't go well. They were crushed by this much larger and more powerful coalition.

The Bible gives us a description of how the battle unfolded. There were tar pits in the land. As they were getting destroyed, defeated soldiers ended up in the tar pits. I don't know if it was because of their incompetence that they fell in or they jumped in because they preferred a slow death in tar to the point of their enemies swords and the torture that followed. I don't know. It wasn't pretty. Dying in a tar pit was a long and painful way to go. Not everyone died in the tar pits. Some escaped to the mountains on the sides of the valley. From there they

watched as all their stuff was taken, their wives stripped bare and their daughters were raped and treated like prostitutes. They were powerless to do anything.

These huge powerful armies of the four-nation coalition took semi-truck loads of plunder from these super-rich cities. They also took the women, children and remaining men captive to be their slaves. This was a bad day. This was the day ISIS rolled into town and what sick blood-thirsty men like that do is not something you want to see. Here is where this bloody war intersects our story.

They also took Lot, the son of Abram's brother, who was dwelling in Sodom, and his possessions, and went their way. Genesis 14:12 (ESV)

The reason for recording this whole thing was because Abram's knucklehead nephew Lot lived in Sodom. Last week he was living near Sodom. Then he was living in Sodom. His family and stuff were part of the plunder. Now it gets exciting.

Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and of Aner. These were allies of Abram. When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, 318 of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. And he divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and defeated them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus. Then he brought back all the possessions, and also brought back his kinsman Lot with his possessions, and the women and the people. Genesis 14:13–16 (ESV)

Abram was minding his business and tending sheep while the four nation coalition was ripping destruction up and down the king's highway making it look like a scene from the movie Apocalypse. One of the POWs from Sodom escaped and ran to Abram (*panting*). "They got Lot! They have your nephew. He is in chains. His wife and daughters are humiliated. Everybody lost. Everything is destroyed. They conquered our city."

How would you respond?

Most of us would say, "I warned Lot not to live there but he made his choices and now he has to live with the consequences." That was not Abram. He said, "You touched my family. I don't care if Lot is a knucklehead. He is family. You mess with Lot, you are messing with me." In that moment Abram spun the baseball cap on his head so the bill was facing backward. He went into fight mode. Abram turned into the original Braveheart. He was William Wallace. I don't think he painted his face blue, but if he did, it would have been appropriate. Heads were gonna roll.

The first thing we find is he gathered his trained men. He had 318 of them. This is impressive. God has prospered Abram. He now has his own personal army. How would you like to have your own personal army? It would shorten the checkout line in Wal-Mart when you have 318 guys that look like they came out of a weight lifting magazine all walking around in body armor carrying automatic weapons. Trust me. People will get out of your way. These guys were not mall cops. The Hebrew implies they were a highly trained fighting force. He unsheathed them like taking a sword out of the holster. Can you hear the ring of the metal? If Abram had a personal army of 318 men as his home security system, I am wondering how much of an estate Abram owned.

In addition, he was in an alliance with his neighbors Mamre, Eshcol and Aner. They were Amorites and their family members were also attacked by this coalition of kings. They agreed to ride with Abram. What we have was Abram with his personal army of special ops soldiers, along with his yahoo neighbors, going to take on the undefeated military coalition of Iran, Syria, Iraq, and Turkey

(ISIT). Their strength was obvious because they already decimated every kingdom in the Trans-Jordan Valley. Are you getting a picture of the odds?

Before we go any further, let me make a few observations.

Abram worked with people that didn't know God. Abram was going to war with his neighbors at his side. These guys did not love God. They did not worship god. They were riding with Abram because they loved Abram and because Abram loved them. Abram had a good relationship with his neighbors who were far from God. Some of us just want to hang out with Christians and we only do business with Christians. The problem is that locks us in a box. We need relationships with our neighbors and help from our neighbors, not just from Christians. When Abram needed help he went to his neighbors. I picture these guys as having big beards and big bellies. They drove trucks with lift kits, monster tires and gun racks. These were the guys you needed when you were going to war. Killing things was their specialty. They spent every weekend in a deer blind instead of church. They didn't come from a church choir. They were the guys who drink beer and kill things. They were the ones you wanted with you when you went to war. Abram had good relationships with his community.

Abram, his small army and his yahoo neighbors set out to chase down the bad guys. They went to Hobah, which was about a 120-mile trip. If it was me, I think the road trip on a camel would kill me before the war. Abram and his posse were pretty fired up. They traveled the distance. They saw this huge army. They created a plan. They waited until nightfall. They surprise attacked from multiple directions. The enemy was thrown into panic. The enemy ran while Abram, his

private army and his yahoo neighbors chased them for another 60 miles out of town.

This was a huge victory that on paper should not happen. As we learned, when God is involved, it doesn't matter the opposition or the odds against you. It will work out.

Here are a couple points of application.

Abram had a plan. Abram did not just ride up to this huge army, hold his hands in the air like Moses, and expect them to part like the Red Sea. He had a coalition. He had trained men. He had a surprise attack strategy under cover of darkness. He used his intelligence. He thought things through. Too many of us think trusting God means we don't have a plan. Abram showed us that trusting God means we do have a plan but the only way the plan can work is if God shows up to make it happen. God wants us to use our intelligence. He wants us to make wise decisions. He wants us to do the hard work that goes along with success, but then go forward in faith and trust the outcome to him.

It is like playing basketball. Maybe you are asking God in prayer to make you a great basketball player. That is good. Ask God in prayer, then go to practice, have a plan and work hard. They usually go together. That is the way God answers your prayer.

Christians can go to war. Is there such thing as just war? Yes. There is a time when war is not just allowed but it is required. Here are a bunch of people taken into slavery. Lot and his family were taken as captives of war to be used as slaves and prostitutes. Something needs to be done.

Sometimes the only way to stop the bad guys is to go in there and take them out so they stop doing evil and terrorizing others. They are like a cavity in your tooth. You can try and ignore it. You can pray it goes away. Eventually you realize the answer to your prayers is to grab a pair of pliers and have the dentist pull it from your mouth. It isn't pleasant and it isn't fun but it is the only way to get rid of the rot in your mouth that is causing pain in your entire body. Abram was not a bloodthirsty guy. He was a man riding to the rescue of his family. Negotiations were not an option with these guys. They are like ISIS.

In the Bible the state is given the task of keeping order in society and punishing criminal behavior so criminals don't overrun the world. This is true of our local police, our state police, our national guard and our military. The police and military have the God-given authority and responsibility to keep justice so we don't end up getting killed by a coalition nut guys like ISIS and getting carried into slavery, like Lot did.

Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. Romans 13:2 (ESV)

...for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. Romans 13:4 (ESV)

Some of you will point to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount where Jesus said to turn the other cheek and not take revenge. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus was talking about personal ethics. He was not negating the need for the police or the military. The police and the military are appointed by God for our good. If you do wrong, be afraid.

In the New Testament Jesus and the early Christians never told Roman soldiers, or men like Cornelius, or other Roman military leaders to leave the military after coming to Jesus. They had the honorable and necessary job of protecting people from evil.

The test of success. Put yourself in Abram's shoes. He started with a small family. Then he grew to have his own army. His army and yahoo neighbors just destroyed the four-nation confederacy that decimated the Trans-Jordan Valley. Abram was an instant celebrity. He was on the cover of every newspaper and magazine. He was a huge hero. He was facing the test of success. Success and fame is hard to handle.

How do I handle success?

After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything. And the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself." But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted my hand to the Lord, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me. Let Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share." Genesis 14:17–24 (ESV)

The word got out over Abram's amazing victory. Abram was returning with all the plunder and the captives that the armies of Iran, Syria, Iraq, and Turkey (ISIT) took. This was truckloads of stuff. This was enough for everybody in his army to have the contents of an entire Wal-Mart for themselves. Can you think of how easy it would be to become self-inflated and egotistical in this moment? As

he pulled into town, two kings came out to meet him. Let's start with the good guy first.

Let Success Make God Bigger — Melchizedek

Who was this guy? His name meant king of righteousness. He was king of Salem. Psalm 76:2 tells us, that is short for Jerusalem. This guy is the king and priest of Jerusalem. He came to see Abram and put out a spread of wine and bread. That is shorthand for saying he threw Abram and company a banquet to welcome the returning conquerors. While his hands were full of gifts, his lips were full of praise. Apparently this guy was also worshipping God most high. This is the first time we see Abram meet a fellow worshipper of God. Right away Mel knew this great victory was not because Abram had a foolproof plan. It was not because Abram had the best 318 men in his private army. It was not because Abram was so smart. The victory was a gift from God. Mel let Abram's success be transformed into worship of God. Abram was the same way. When he faced success, along with Mel, it drove both of them to worship and thank God for his goodness, his grace and his deliverance.

Tonight in your Life Group you will look at Melchizedek on a deeper level. Who was Melchizedek? Why did he pop on the scene and out of the scene in Genesis 14? We never hear from him again. He was the first priest in the Bible. The Levitical priestly line didn't start for another eight generations. What does Melchizedek teach us about Jesus? Was he a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus? These are all questions you will look at this week in Life Group, which is why you need to be in one.

Look what Abram did to Mel. He gave his tenth of everything. Why did Abram do this? This was the first time Abram met somebody else worshipping and following the true God of the universe. Melchizedek was not just a fellow worshipper of God, he was a priest of God. It was the first time he had a chance to worship God by giving to God through a representative of God, a priest. This tithe to Melchizedek is Abram worshipping God and thanking God for the victory with his money.

This is the first time we see a tithe show up in the Bible. A tithe is not a tax. It is an act of worship.

Many people find Abram's tithe to Melchizedek foundational to all Christian giving. If this the pattern for us today? Should all Christians simply give 10 percent of their income in worship to God? Let's see if Abram's tithe is a pattern all of us should follow.

Abram's tithe was a one time gift of booty, not a regular gift of income. It is a pattern of regular giving. When we get to the Levitical law we find the Jews gave a lot more than just 10 percent. They gave multiple tithes in the Old Testament law totaling almost 30 percent. In the nation of Israel their tithes were not just their offerings, it also paid their taxes to run the state. We can't use the tithes of ancient Israel as a flawless template for us to follow.

When we come to the New Testament, it doesn't talk about tithes. It talks about generous, joyful, sacrificial and proportionate giving. 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 guides us on how much we give.

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided

in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:6–8 (ESV)

We should give a percentage of our income that we give sacrificially and joyfully. That may be 2 percent or 20 percent. It depends what God is laying on your heart. Our giving is also a barometer on our gratefulness to God. If you love God, you give to God. If you don't love God, the offering plate remains empty.

Paul added, don't worry. Giving is also a test of your faith. Many times you will feel you won't have enough to God. God says, "Trust me. I will provide everything you need so you can give." Don't worry. Nobody has died because they put too much in the offering plate. You are in a three-dimensional world. God will make sure he provides for your needs.

Personally, I see a tithe as more of the floor to our giving rather than a ceiling. The tithe in Genesis 14 is not the guide for all Christian giving. It is a place to start.

Don't Let Success Make Me Bigger — Bera, King of Sodom.

The king of Sodom, Bera — the king of evil — also comes out to greet Abram. Instead of throwing him a hero's welcome, he brought nothing. Instead of blessing Abram, thanking him and giving God the credit, he didn't say anything. He just reminded Abram that most of the plunder originally belonged to him.

What were you thinking evil king? You had no rights. You lost your stuff. Your army was dying in tar pits. You were naked and getting drug behind the

southern end of a horse until Abram saved you. You were not in a position to play “Let’s make a deal.”

I love Abram’s response to this wicked greedy king. Abram said, “I have lifted my hand.” That means he took an oath. He promised God, even before he went to war, that he wouldn’t keep all the stuff. Abram said he didn’t want anyone to say that the reason he was rich was because he kept Bera’s stuff. “I don’t want you going around to your friends pointing out your stuff in my house. You can keep all your stuff. The reason I went to war was to get Lot, not to get rich. God will take care of providing all I need.” Abram was not letting success make him bigger, he was letting success make God bigger. Here are some practical points of application.

Make a decision on how to handle temptation before you face it. I love the way Abram thought about this. He made a vow not to keep the stuff before he went to war so when he was faced with the temptation to keep the stuff after war, he already knew how to respond. You see, in the moment of temptation, it is much harder to make the right decision. You make the right decision before you face temptation not when you are facing temptation.

If you are single, you make a vow of sexual purity and what you won’t do before the wedding night, before you are dating. If you are married, you make a vow of what you will not do with those of the opposite sex in the office before you meet somebody incredibly attractive at work. In business, you make a vow of integrity and truthfulness with customers even if it hurts before you have lots of success. You make decisions about how you will handle tempting situations

before you face them, so when you are tempted, you already know what to do. You just say, "I made a vow to the Lord." Just like Abram did. That is the way to prepare to handle temptation. Make the decision before you have to make the decision.

Don't impose your Christian convictions on others that don't know him. The other thing I noticed is that Abram didn't impose his convictions on his unbelieving neighbors that went to fight with him. He didn't say, "I gave 10 percent to Mel, you do the same." He didn't say, "I made a vow to give all the stuff back and keep nothing. You do the same." He didn't expect them to act like he did. Abram was following what God had told him to do. He didn't expect the pagans in the group to do the same. As Christians, we are notorious for doing this. We want everybody to act like us, and if they do, we are happy.

As Christians, we are not trying to make the world moral. We are trying to introduce people to Jesus. When people meet Jesus, give their lives to Jesus and walk with Jesus, their lives change because their hearts change. I love the fact that Abram doesn't expect them to act in the way he does.

What is the different between passive and active faith?

As we wrap up this chapter, let me contrast this chapter with the last one. Abram was a man of faith. What we find is there are two ways life works when it comes to living by faith.

Passive Faith - Genesis 12

Last week we saw Lot and Abram were too crowded in the Promised Land. They needed to divide the land up. Abram didn't get a lawyer. He didn't insist on his rights. He didn't try to get the best of the land. He simply trusted in

God's providence. Since God is in control, he knew it would be OK. In faith he gave Lot first pick of the land letting him have the opportunity to take the best of the land for him and his flocks knowing that somehow God would work things out. That is passive faith. Passive faith is praying about something and trusting it into God's hands. That is trust in providence and God's sovereignty. That is one way to live by faith.

Active Faith - Genesis 13

This week, when Lot was taken captive, Abram didn't shrug his shoulders and trust God would take care of setting Lot free. Abram exercised active faith. Abram relied on an alliance with his pagan neighbors. He called on his 318 special ops soldiers armed to the teeth. He rode 100 miles. He devised a surprise attack strategy from multiple angles by night.

Sometimes faith is expressed in passive trust in God. Sometimes faith is expressed actively by making a plan and then trusting God with the results. When should we use active faith and when should we use passive faith? There is no easy answer. It takes prayer. It takes listening to God and letting him prompt your spirit on what you should do.

I point this out because many of us don't realize that living by faith is both passive and active. Lots of people think living by faith means we just trust God and don't do anything. Wrong. Sometimes living by faith means you do a lot of hard work and planning and trust God with the results. There are others of us who only work hard and plan, as if we can't trust God with the future. We need to remember that sometimes faith means not controlling everything but trusting God will take care of us simply by the unfolding of his good plan in history. God works

both ways. Living by faith means we need to sense from God which kind of faith he is calling us to exercise in each situation.

Conclusion

Today we saw Abram went from prosperity to the savior of the Trans-Jordan Valley. His face was featured on the cover of every magazine and news story in the area. His success wasn't his failure because he used it as an opportunity to drive him to credit God for that success and even give generously from that success. When he had the opportunity to tarnish his success by keeping stuff that was legally his but wouldn't honor God's name, he turned away from lining his pockets and trusted God with his financial future.

This morning, as we studied this chapter, most of us found ourselves identifying with Abram. We see ourselves as the hero of the story. We see ourselves riding to the rescue. The truth is, we aren't Abram. Each of us is like a different character in the story. Each of us is like Lot. Like Lot, we walk too close to sin. Like Lot, we get caught in the consequences of sin. Like Lot, we are in desperate need of rescue, not rescue from a nasty coalition of nations like ISIS but rescue from the powers of Satan, sin and death that are behind all that evil.

The good news is that Abram's descendant did that. His name is Jesus. He came and died in our places for our sin. Jesus came to our rescue. Today, if we confess our sin and trust in Jesus' death on the cross to pay for those sins and bring us into a relationship with God, we will be born again and have a new life, just like we saw with JD this morning.



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