

SERMON NOTES:

ABRAHAM INTERCEDES FOR SODOM (Genesis 18:16-33)

OPENING THOUGHT

Abraham’s walk of faith with the LORD has been a long and winding road. For twenty-four years now, God has promised Abraham that He would bless him with an offspring. Even though Abraham now had a biological son through Hagar, Sarah’s servant, God specified that the promised offspring would come through Sarah. During Abraham’s lunch with Jesus and two angels, we read last week that God promised that Sarah would give birth within a year. Sarah, being ninety years old, laughed at such a ridiculous idea, but God reminded her that nothing is too hard for Him.

The attention now turns away from Abraham’s offspring for the moment as the LORD prepares to judge the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Yet before God follows through with His plans, He opens up a dialogue with Abraham regarding His intention to destroy Sodom, which further displays God’s friendship with Abraham. Knowing that Lot lives in Sodom, Abraham begins to intercede before the LORD on behalf of the cities. The chapter ends with God agreeing that He will not destroy Sodom if ten righteous persons can be found living there.

The focal point of this text is Abraham’s intercession before God. Abraham knows that God is a just judge who will do what is right, so he requests that God will refrain from destroying Sodom for the sake of the righteous in the city. The problem, however, is that even if Abraham went down to one righteous person the city would still be judged. No one, not even Lot or Abraham, are righteous of their own merit. Yet we can rejoice in knowing that though we also deserve the judgment of Sodom, there is one righteous man for whose sake God has spared us His wrath: Jesus Christ!

SUGGESTED VERSES FOR MEMORIZATION & MEDITATION

- For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him. (Genesis 18:20)
- Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just? (Genesis 18:25)
- For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:5)

READ VERSES 16-18 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

1. God chose to reveal His plan for judging the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah to Abraham. What does this say about Abraham's relationship with God?

READ VERSE 19 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

2. The LORD declares that He chose Abraham in order that Abraham would instruct his children to follow God in righteousness and justice. How does this relate to raising children today? Who bears the responsibility of teaching children how to follow the LORD?

READ VERSES 20-21 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

3. God heard the outcry of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, meaning that God was not deaf to injustice being committed. Do you ever struggle with understanding why God allows injustice? What does Revelation 6:9-11 say about God's coming judgment?

READ VERSES 22-33 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

4. Abraham repeatedly speaks to God with both boldness and humility (i.e. verse 27). Do you pray similarly? Do we come to God, confident that we are His friends in Christ but also understanding the magnitude of His holiness?

5. Abraham intercedes for Sodom before God; likewise, intercessory prayer is when we plead to the LORD on others' behalf. Why is intercession the most helpful action that we can take for someone? How often do we intercede for others in prayer to God?
6. God is willing to spare Sodom for the sake of ten righteous persons. How is this similar to us being spared for the sake of Christ's righteousness?

ACTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Consider how you pray to God. Be aware of both our friendship with God through Christ and His holiness.
- Resolve to intentionally intercede in prayer for others. Pray for lost friends and family, for the sick and hurting, and for the church and its people.