

Man of God

E.T.S.

Genesis 18 hinges on the testimony God gave of His knowledge of Abraham found in verse 19.

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Abraham's example furnishes us with the characteristics of a man of God.

OBJ.

For the Christ Follower: Allow Abraham's example to both encourage and challenge you. Do not be intimidated by it; rather, be inspired by it.

For the Christ Seeker: Recognize that Jesus answers your need. Do not turn from Him; turn to Him through faith.

Introduction

As we open our Bibles to Genesis 18 today, I want to speak to you on the subject of a *Man of God*.

What does it mean to be a man of God?

That's a question I have asked and been asked many times. I have been asked for resource recommendations that will show people what it means to be a man of God. When I served as a youth pastor, young men and parents asked me the question. Thoughts have been published in many forms seeking to answer the question.

So, what does it mean to be a man of God?

Your Bibles are open to Genesis 18. Follow along as I read verses 17-19.

Bible

(17) And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; (18) Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? (19) For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

Genesis 18:17-19 - KJV

Introduction

Did you notice who is speaking about Abraham, as well as the testimony that was given?

God is speaking.

What a testimony for God to give about a man!

There's something unfortunate about it though.

What's unfortunate about it is that we are intimidated by it, rather than inspired by it. We read that God knew Abraham would raise his children to know God and His way. It intimidates us because we tend to sensationalize the accounts of people in God's Word...

Not once, but twice the Bible refers to Abraham as "the friend of God."

Let's think about Abraham for a moment.

He grew up in Ur, among a heathen people. Joshua 24:2 indicates that Abraham's family worshiped idols.

God called him. Abraham, by faith, left his land and family to go as God directed him.

God gave him a promise about a family that would become a great nation. Abraham believed God, but impatiently forced the issue by sleeping with his wife's servant - an acceptable form of forced sexual relations not approved by God.

On two occasions he left the land God led him to and lied about he and his wife's relationship, putting his wife at risk for the sake of self-preservation.

In an act of great faith, he journeyed to a place God showed him where he willingly laid his son on an altar to sacrifice him to God.

Why do I share his history with you?

To remind you that Abraham, like every other person in the Bible and history, was a man. He had ups. He had downs.

Yet, he exemplifies a man of God.

What sets him and others who could be identified as men of God apart?

Genesis 18 furnishes us with some qualities Abraham had, but before we look at them, let's concisely define a man of God. A man of God is one who in recognition of his great need characteristically depends on and seeks out God.

A man of God, like any man, has ups and downs. He has successes and failures. In contrast to those who are not men of God, he recognizes his great need. He knows his brokenness. He understands his utter insufficiency. In recognition of these things, he faithfully looks to and seeks God knowing that he needs Him.

Abraham exemplifies this kind of man. Several characteristics of Genesis 18 reveal this. Notice that...

1...A Man of God Submits Himself to God (v. 2)

Explanation

The chapter opens with the LORD appearing to Abraham. This is none other than Jesus Christ Who appears and reveals Himself to Abraham. I believe this because the Bible tells us plainly

that no man has seen God the Father (see John 1:18; 1 Timothy 6:16), and that God the Son declares Him (see John 1:18). This was not simply an angel for the text identifies this person over and over again as the LORD, Jehovah, Yahweh.

I believe Abraham immediately recognized Who this was. He had appeared to Abraham twice before recorded in Genesis 12:7 and 17:1. Whether Jesus had the same appearance each time or not we do not know, but it is evident that Abraham recognized Him. From where he was sitting at the door of his tent, Abraham ran, bowed himself, and addressed Him as *my Lord*. He used the title *Adonai*, used 438 times in the Old Testament only ever as a proper name for God. He knew Who came to visit him.

How did he respond to his heavenly visitor?

The Scripture says that he “bowed himself toward the ground.”

Abraham demonstrated a heart of humility and an act of submission recognizing that he was before his superior.

Genesis 12:1 represents God’s call and command, while Genesis 12:4 represents Abraham’s submission.

Abraham had a real relationship with God and it had a notable effect on his life demonstrated by his submission to God.

God is looking for a heart of humility and submission in us.

2...A Man of God Seeks God's Presence

(vv. 3, 22-23)

Illustration

Have you ever had that visitor to your home that you didn't even want to be there to begin with? Perhaps you had a guest that you wanted to host, but then they overstayed their welcome and you couldn't wait until they were gone.

How would you feel if God Himself came knocking on your door today?

Explanation

Abraham was sitting at the door of his tent in the middle of the day. As far as I know, he had no inclination that God would visit him that day. Suddenly he looked up and saw three figures.

Then, he recognized that one of the figures was none other than the almighty God.

How would you respond?

Abraham ran and fell before Him with a plea. Notice it in verse 3.

Bible

(3) And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

Genesis 18:3 - KJV

Explanation

Abraham wanted God to come and stay!

Later in the chapter, God and the two angels began to make their way toward Sodom. Look at the end of verse 22 and the first phrase of verse 23.

Bible

(22) And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD. (23) And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

Genesis 18:22-23 - KJV

Explanation

Abraham desired to remain in the presence of the LORD.

The Bible is full of invitations to seek God.

Bible

(13) And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. (14) And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

Jeremiah 29:13-14 - KJV

(8) Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

James 4:8 - KJV

(29) But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

Deuteronomy 4:29 - KJV

(14) If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14 - KJV

(17) I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

Proverbs 8:17 - KJV

(9) And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Luke 11:9 - KJV

Explanation

The man who seeks God will receive and see the power of God.

Bible

(17) Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:

Jeremiah 32:17 - KJV

Explanation

The man who seeks God better knows and understands God's plans.

Bible

(14) The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.

Psalms 25:14 - KJV

(32) For the froward is abomination to the LORD: but his secret is with the righteous.

Proverbs 3:32 - KJV

(19) Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

Daniel 2:19 - KJV

(9) But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. (10) But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the

deep things of God.

1 Corinthians 2:9-10 - KJV

Explanation

The man who seeks God experiences the joy of His presence.

The man who seeks God will know the mercy of God.

3...A Man of God Sacrifices for God (vv. 4-8)

Explanation

When Abraham recognized Who it was that came to visit him he demonstrated a heart of submission and seeking, but he also demonstrated a heart of sacrifice.

Abraham offered himself and his service to the Lord.

Abraham offered what he had to the Lord.

Abraham did not need to stop and think, nor did he delay.

Abraham did not give God the leftovers, but the best of himself and what he had.

God does not need some great sacrifice on our part, but a man who has a real relationship with

God that transforms his life will sacrifice himself and what he has to and for the Lord.

4...A Man of God Supplicates before God (vs. 23-33)

Explanation

Abraham, upon hearing God's plan for Sodom, offered supplication to the Lord on behalf of the people of Sodom.

A man of God is a man of intercession pleading with the Lord for himself, his family, his church, his nation, the lost, etc.

Illustration

Moses was a man who effectively supplicated before God.

Bible

(23) Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.

Psalm 106:23 - KJV

5...A Man of God is Sought out by God (v. 19)

Explanation

God chose Abraham to be the progenitor of the line that would produce the Messiah, not out of the blue, but because He sought out a man and knew that Abraham was the right choice. He knew Abraham would lead his family after God!

May I remind you that God knows all about you? My friend, God knows your life, situation, character, etc.

God sought out Abraham, and He is still seeking out men of God today.

Bible

(9) For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

2 Chronicles 16:9 - KJV

(30) And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

Ezekiel 22:30 - KJV

Conclusion

Perhaps the best verse in the Bible describing a man of God is Micah 6:8, especially the last phrase.

Bible

(8) He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Micah 6:8 - KJV

Conclusion

Remember, a man of God is one who in recognition of his great need characteristically depends on and seeks out God.

Every man here can be that kind of man.

For the Christ Follower: Allow Abraham's example to both encourage and challenge you. Do not be intimidated by it; rather, be inspired by it.

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