

Abraham has grown to know the Lord so well that when he comes in person he welcomes him, prepares a meal for him, serves him. And is open to be re-affirmed in the promise. Next year you'll be holding your boy, yes at one hundred. And next year that's what Abraham and Sarah were doing; for the Lord lived true to himself and was faithful.

What amazing intimacy God grew between himself and Abraham. They walked together, Abraham sharing in God's story.

Of course that's Jesus call on our lives; to trust the one we know. To take him at his word, not because it seems logical but because we know we can trust this guy. We know his story; he always does what he

says. In Jesus we start with an intimate relationship, which we have the joy of sharing, that other people might come to know and live in this intimate relationship.

Let us pray. Jesus open our hearts and minds to your intimate call on our lives. We invite you to send the Spirit to walk with us daily, leading us into life with you. We want to be part of your story. We want to know you more intimately; taking you at your word, living true to who we are in you as you always live

true to yourself. Jesus come that we might share the joy of life shared intimately with you, that we might join in your laughter of life. Jesus lead us this week to share you, to share this intimate relationship we have with another person, that they too might come to know you, and your passion for them. Amen.

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

18 June 2017

ABRAHAM: EXAMPLE OF FAITH

Genesis 18:1-15



Over the next few weeks I'd like to visit some of the Old Testament stories, looking at how these people walked with God through life. These stories are of real people, just like us, living real lives, just like us. These stories are recorded that we too might walk intimately with God, sharing with him in his story.

Today we heard part of Abraham's story. We're well into the story at this point. The story starts with God calling Abram; his name meant exalted father. God says, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others... All the families on earth will

be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:1-3) Wow, what a promise. Abram takes God at his word and goes. Abram trusts the promise. This suggests to me that there must have been some close relationship between Abram and God. That also comes through because we have the word 'LORD' used as the one who called Abram. The word God is generic, used by everyone, but 'LORD' is a personal name given by God.

As I was thinking about today's sermon I was also reading an article on 'Discipleship and Intimacy with God', where I ran across this quote. It began with; 'We err'. This caught my attention because the place where Abram had come from was 'Ur'. Abram didn't err, but trusted, joining God in his walk. I read; "We err if we train people

for ministry without bringing them into intimacy with God first."

Who thinks God began by building intimacy with Abram?

Abram's life is built on intimacy with God; it is a life of trust, taking the Lord at his word. Abram obviously heard the Lord's call; that's intimacy, that's a conversational relationship. God begins with intimacy.

When we are called, it isn't by a stranger. I know his name; Jesus. I know more than his name, I know him, I know his personality. That's why we did the series 'Beautiful Outlaw' which focused on knowing Jesus more intimately. Knowing his personality, so that we might grow closer to him personally. Jesus is God's first step of intimacy as he calls us

to walk with him, trusting him in his story of life.

We're not called to follow a stranger; but Jesus, the one who has come in person. Taking on our very flesh and blood; our brother. Jesus, the one who has loved us to death; his death on the cross. Jesus will never deny his brothers and sisters but lives and dies with us, for us, that we might live and die with him, in him.

God invites us to leave 'Ur'. So when asked; 'Who is God?' I don't go, 'Err, I'm not sure, don't really know'. God in Jesus invites us to leave 'Ur' for we do know him, personally. We know his story. We know his name. We know his personality. In Jesus we know him, we talk with him. Jesus has sent the person of the Spirit that we now walk with him through out life. We're not strangers; but family, intimately connected. Blood relations.

God's call on our life begins with intimacy, for that is where he seeks to live it out; up close and personal, in a bond of love, trusting him because we know him.

Did you notice that when Jesus called the twelve apostles it was by name; he knew each of them personally and

Intimacy with God First

they had each come into a personal relationship with him. Jesus begins with intimacy.

I don't pray just to 'God' I pray to my Father who is in heaven; my Abba, Dad. We are invited into intimacy; sharing life together in a bond of love, a bond where Father has genuine affection for you, where Father delights in his children.

Like Abram we begin with a promise to trust;

a promise from the God we know. Our life is now built on this relationship. Our life is now lived out from this intimacy, just like Abram.

We too are invited to take God at his word; Jesus. To hear and then out of trust, act. We know God's word personally; Jesus. We too begin with intimacy; the intimacy of a loving relationship, based on Jesus sharing himself personally with us.

Of course Abram's life wasn't all smooth sailing; but the God who called him and revealed himself to Abram never left him. And as they walked through life together, in all it's ups and downs, their relationship grew and matured.

In the reading for today Abram has already had his name changed to Abraham; which means father of multitudes. He's into his nineties, and so is his wife Sarah, without any children. What do you

think keeps Abraham going? What do you think keeps Abraham trusting the promise? Could it be because he knows intimately the person who gave the promise?

Abraham could have worshipped the 'God' of science and concluded it all rubbish. Ninety year olds don't have children. The 'God' of science, the 'God' of reason would rule this out; it hasn't been documented, it can't be real, according to what we can do this is ridiculous.

I think Sarah in the story today might have been listening to the 'God's' of science and reason. What was her response to the declaration that, 'this time next year you'll have a baby'? Sarah laughed.

I don't think Sarah laughed in a mocking manner, but our society today certainly does. We're laughed at for trusting Jesus, in a very mocking manner.

We're mocked by the believers of the 'God's' of science and reason.

I love the fact that God has the last laugh. Isaac; which means he laughs, is born. And there are millions upon millions of people alive today because of that!

Good New God isn't mocking but seeking to

What did Abraham do?

save people. Seeking to embrace them in his intimate loving relationship. God's joy is found in sharing his life with people, that they too live intimately with him as part of his story.

And that's what Jesus sends his disciples out to do; to introduce him to people that they might trust him personally, intimately, knowing him for who he is. Discipleship always begins with intimacy, for that's where it is lived out, in

an intimate, personal walk with Jesus.

That's the 'Kingdom of God', not a place as much as a relationship. An intimate, personal relationship which Jesus has come for us to share with in and through him, personally.

When I looked at the story of Abraham, it struck me that he didn't go off and do anything great; he didn't build a hospital or start a school. He didn't liberate thousands of slaves, or change the economic system of his day to be more just for all. When you look at the Abraham story what do you see him doing?

He lives up close and personal with the God who called him. He walks with the Lord. Walks with him through the land of Canaan. And the Lord walks with him when he goes astray and grows greater intimacy through those excursions.