

God's word for us this morning is all about trust. Unfortunately, many of us have learned to be very careful when it comes to trust. I for one don't trust stairs... they're always up to something. I don't trust trees either, they're just *too* shady. But it's not only me who has these kind of trust issues, some people in the Bible did also. Take Jonah for example. He didn't trust the ocean: There was just something very fishy about it.

But seriously, Isaac Watts, a man wrote several of the hymns in our hymnal including "Joy to the World" and "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross", once said, "Learning to trust is one of life's most difficult tasks." We see from all three of our Bible readings how important trust is when it comes to our relationship with God. The Lord calls us to trust in Him *wholeheartedly*. God said it. That settles it. We are to believe it!

Today's Old Testament reading gives us a story of how one man did just *that*. It is the *astounding* story of how Abram placed His trust in God despite everything that would have told him otherwise. Abram literally dropped everything, walked away from the only life he ever knew, and put his entire future in God's hands. *Amazing!*

Through experience, though, we don't give away our trust easily; it generally has to be earned. And if someone has said or done something to make us lose our trust in them, then it's hard for them to earn that back. Being careful about whom we trust is a defense mechanism we develop that keeps us from being disappointed, or even hurt.

This morning as we look at the call of Abram to trust God's promises, we'll see that God calls *us too* to have faith in Him; really to jump into His arms and *trust Him* that everything is going to be all right. Right away in the first verse of our text, the Lord asks Abram to take a *huge* leap of faith, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land that I will show you." What would be going through your mind if the Lord had given *you* the command to break away from everything you've ever known, not having a clue what anything would be like tomorrow or any day after that: Leave the country...the only place where you'd ever lived. The only place where you had protection. The only place on earth where you *weren't* considered an

outsider. Leave it all! Leave your people...leave behind the ones you've grown up with, whom you lived next to, leave all the people you trusted as respectable people with whom to do business. And leave your father's household. Make a break from the strongest human bonds there are- **family**. Then the Lord makes it even more difficult: "Go to the land I will show you." This would be like your boss calling you into his office one morning and saying, "Pack up all the belongings; pull your kids out of school. We're relocating you. I'll tell you where you're going when you get there." How many of you think your family would go for **that**?

How in the world did God motivate Abram to take such a huge leap of faith? It couldn't have been easy for him, and yet Abram fully trusted God as the Lord gives him no less than **seven** guarantees of incredible things that will happen when Abram places his trust in the Lord. Let's count them: 1. "I will make you into a great nation." 2. "I will bless you." 3. "I will make your name great." 4. "You will be a blessing." 5. "I will bless those who bless you." 6. "Whoever curses you I will curse." 7. "All peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

In your life today, God calls **you** to make a great leap of faith as well. He motivates you with the exact same thing that motivated Abraham: His **promises**. But so often there's a part of us that doesn't want to settle for a **promise**, we want something we can **see** and experience **now**. How easily we forget that a promise from God is more certain than anything else! But our sinful nature is suspicious of God. God tells us to work and witness for Him, but we say, "That's too hard, I don't have time, or I'll do that later." God told Abram to travel hundreds of miles, by foot or by camel, under the hot Middle-Eastern sun, carrying with him all his belongings, but when God asks us to hop into our climate-controlled cars to drive a few minutes in order to come to church where He promises to forgive us our sins, strengthen our faith, and to bless us, the lazy sinful nature yawns and says, "No thanks, I'm too tired; I need some 'me time,' some 'family time'". I don't have **any** time to hear God's Word for my life or be there to support my fellow believers."

God could motivate us to be more faithful Christians with harsh, terrible threats, but instead, He chooses to emphasize His promises to us.

God would have you and I look at the final promise He made to Abram, “All peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” It’s incredible to think about, yet it’s true: Everything good in your life is a direct result of **this** promise to Abram. Abram’s offspring, through whom the whole world would be blessed is the Christ.

Jesus trusted God the Father when He was told to make the long journey from His comfortable and powerful existence in heaven and instead travel up Mt. Calvary. Jesus trusted that all that hardship He endured would bring about blessing for His people. Jesus had no doubt that His work of salvation would benefit your life and mine. Now, because of His death on the cross, the guilt of your sins has been removed from you. Now, you have a truly noble reason for living on this earth: You don’t have to live just for yourself anymore, now you can live for God, for your fellow believers, and for the people God wants to bring into His kingdom. Now, you need have no fear that “when you die that that’s the end. There’s nothing more.” Do you have measurable evidence of these things? No, but you have something better. You have God’s own **Word**. God said it. That settles it. We are to believe it! Yes, it’s a matter of trust.

Now, of course it’s easy to trust God when things are going great, the family’s healthy, the bills are paid, there’s money in the bank, you just got a big raise, and now it’s time for a vacation. But life isn’t always like that, is it? No, life is filled with setbacks. We’re not given very many days on this earth where we don’t have some big problem to deal with: a job problem, a money problem, a health problem, a family problem, a relationship problem, and worst of all, a sin and death problem. We’ve got a lot of problems, don’t we? And if that’s all we had, these setbacks, we’d probably throw our arms up and yell, “What’s the use?” and give up.

But we have more, much more. We followers of Christ have God’s promise to be with us always: “Never will I leave you and never will I forsake you (Heb. 13:5)”. Best of all we have the promise found in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

As for Abraham, God calls on **you** to take a huge leap of faith. He asks that you entrust your eternal future to His Son. He calls on you to hand

over the reins of your earthly life to Jesus. He asks you to cast all your worries and cares on Him, so you don't have to deal with them. Difficult? definitely, but not impossible. Not impossible when you have a God who gives you so many sure and certain promises. What's more you have a Lord who works with you through your setbacks. So, jump with Abram into God's arms. This is definitely a matter of trust, and when you put your trust in Him, you will not be disappointed! Amen.