

Called Out

Sunday, March 19, 2017

Many of us, when we think about Abraham, think about God's promise to him that He would make a great nation out of him. We also think about Abraham offering Isaac on Mt. Moriah. Abraham knew God would keep His promises to him and make a great nation for God's purpose. I'd like to take us back to a time when Abraham (then called Abram) was first called of God, first received a promise from God and when he was first told how to live for God. These first three things also apply to us today.

Let's look at the first thing now. God first called Abram (Abraham) out of a pagan society, in the land of Ur of the Chaldeans. There were no writings of God's Word, no corporate temples to worship God, no example of faith in God, but Abram knew God! And because Abram knew God, he was called out from amongst his people and was chosen for God's work. Turn to

(Genesis 12:1)

"Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you.

The calling of Abram to come out of his country and the promise that God would make a great nation out of him, is not unlike what God has told us.

First, God also has called us out of a pagan society, to be a holy nation.

Look at **(1 Peter 2:9)**

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

The word "special" or "peculiar", depending on your translation means in Greek "a purchased possession or in the Latin "an act or thing". In other words, a distinction of people who are saved. Abram was called out by God to follow Him. Abram would face challenging questions probably like: Why are you leaving your people? And You say you're following God? Sound familiar?

To follow Christ comes at a price. Jesus wants to be first over all people and things in your life.

Look at these two verses in **(Mark 10: 29 - 30)**

29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, 30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.

Abram left everything to follow God and his name was changed to Abraham meaning, "father of many nations". Not only was he the father of the Hebrew nation, Israel, but he also was an example of one putting his faith in God, as countless old and new testament saints have done.

Abram did not have a full comprehension of what God was going to accomplish through him. It took faith for Abram to follow God, not knowing where He would take him, just as we don't know where God will lead us, nor do we know the extent of what He will do through our faithfulness to Him. There will be ridicule and persecution for following God, that's why God promised Abram protection in **(Genesis 15:1)**.

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."

And our protection is in the strength of the Lord.

(Ephesians 6:10)

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

So, how do we maintain our relationship with God and His power in our lives? Look at what God told Abraham in **(Genesis 17:1)**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless.

Walk continually in the presence and the favor of God, keeping yourself blameless, and clean in God's eyes.

(I Peter 1:16)

because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

Have godly integrity.

God initiated His call on Abram. Let's look at how God initiates His call on our lives. Turn to **(John 6:44)**

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

The Holy Spirit works internally in our hearts, drawing or literally dragging us to the knowledge of the saving grace of Christ and His purpose for our lives.

Will we have faith like Abraham, believing God, standing bold in His power and protection, living our lives completely for Him? _____