



MESSAGE NOTES & SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

GOD CALLS US TO THINGS WE CANNOT YET SEE

Genesis 12:1-3

The Lord had said to Abram, "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. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

- ① God called Abraham (Abram at the time) to a life he could not yet see - to a path that was "unfinished." Have you given God a 'blank check' with your life? Do you allow Him to do with your life what He wishes to do? Or do you seek too much to 'chart your own path?'

- ② Where do you look in order to ensure that your path tomorrow will be ok? Family Friends? Money? Your career? Your talents and abilities? In what lies your security for the present and for the future?

- ③ What things prevent you from truly being able to follow where God leads? How so?

WEEK 1: UNFINISHED FOLLOWERS

GOD DOES NOT WANT GENEROSITY FROM US. HE WANTS IT FOR US

Colossians 1:3-14

We always pray for you, and we give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all of God’s people, which come from your confident hope of what God has reserved for you in heaven. You have had this expectation ever since you first heard the truth of the Good News. This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God’s wonderful grace.

You learned about the Good News from Epaphras, our beloved co-worker. He is Christ’s faithful servant, and he is helping us on your behalf. He has told us about the love for others that the Holy Spirit has given you. So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.

We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy, always thanking the Father. He has enabled you to share in the inheritance that belongs to his people, who live in the light. For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.

- 4 This step in faith for The Village is the largest thing we have ever done as a church. It is literally going to change our church, and it is a risk we are willing to take in light of God’s word and God’s leading. We believe that God’s work in us is unfinished and He is calling us to take our relationship with Him to a new level. What would it mean for your generosity if you had a full view in mind of what it looks like to truly follow God like Abraham did and like Paul did? What would giving generously in light of that actually mean?

5 Do you feel that you have already 'arrived' in the area of generosity, or do you still have room to grow?

6 What would it look like for your journey of generosity to inspire others in a way that honors God and draws more people to Him during this UNFINISHED season? In what ways do you need to change in regard to your generosity?

WEEK 2: UNFINISHED TRUST

MESSAGE NOTES:



SMALL GROUPS GUIDE TEACHING VIDEO

Play Video for Week 2 Unfinished Trust. Share reflections from the video. Then, take to prayer before you begin the rest of the lesson. Watch the video at thevillagechristianchurch.com/unfinished/.

OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Why is it difficult to trust people? Why do we have so many trust issues?
- 2 When was a time when you trusted someone, and it turned out for the positive?
- 3 What does it take in order for true trust to be present?

FURTHER DISCUSSION FROM SCRIPTURE

Read the following Scripture passage and discuss the questions as a group. You may want to have each group member journal their answer first in the provided space before discussing together, as a means of encouraging all to participate more deeply.

TRUSTING IN GOD MEANS NOT LOOKING ONLY AT OUR CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCE, BUT AT GOD'S PROMISES OF OUR FUTURE

Genesis 15:1-6

Some time later, the Lord spoke to Abram in a vision and said to him, "Do not be afraid, Abram, for I will protect you, and your reward will be great." But Abram replied, "O Sovereign Lord, what good are all your blessings when I don't even have a son? Since you've given me no children, Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in my household, will inherit all my wealth. You have given me no descendants of my own, so one of my servants will be my heir." Then the Lord said to him, "No, your servant will not be your heir, for you will have a son of your own who will be your heir." Then the Lord took Abram outside and said to him, "Look up into the sky and count the stars if you can. That's how many descendants you will have!" And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.

- 1 Abraham's wife was barren and thus could not conceive a child for many, many years. In fact, Abraham went through many trials with the Lord before God finally gave Abraham and his wife Sarah their own son (Genesis 21). In fact, Abraham was one hundred years old at this time...Imagine that! But God kept his promise and indeed Abraham and Sarah had their own son. Is there a circumstance in your life or in someone else's life in which God revealed himself in this type of way and made the seemingly impossible possible?

- 2 Or potentially you are still in a waiting and trusting mode about something God has promised to you through His Word. Is this your situation? Share if you are able.

WEEK 2: UNFINISHED TRUST

GOD CALLS US INTO PLACES WE CANNOT ARRIVE AT ON OUR OWN, SOMETIMES EVEN WITH A NEW NAME

Genesis 17:1-8

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am El-Shaddai—'God Almighty.' Serve me faithfully and live a blameless life. I will make a covenant with you, by which I will guarantee to give you countless descendants."

At this, Abram fell face down on the ground. Then God said to him, "This is my covenant with you: I will make you the father of a multitude of nations! What's more, I am changing your name. It will no longer be Abram. Instead, you will be called Abraham, for you will be the father of many nations. I will make you extremely fruitful. Your descendants will become many nations, and kings will be among them!

"I will confirm my covenant with you and your descendants after you, from generation to generation. This is the everlasting covenant: I will always be your God and the God of your descendants after you. And I will give the entire land of Canaan, where you now live as a foreigner, to you and your descendants. It will be their possession forever, and I will be their God."

3 Why do you think it was so important that God changed Abram's name?

4 Do you ever feel that you have been “named” by a situation of your past and that it limits your trust in God’s promises for your future? How might God be trying to “change your name” in how He is leading you forward and asking you to trust Him?

5 As you think about this Unfinished journey, and specifically the Unfinished commitment God is asking you to make, what barriers, situations, or “names” from your past are preventing you from trusting in God fully as you make this Unfinished commitment?

6 How can your Small Group be praying for you in this, that God would release this barrier from you and “give you a new name” as He leads you into this new path for your future?

WEEK 3: UNFINISHED PRIORITIES

MESSAGE NOTES:



SMALL GROUPS GUIDE TEACHING VIDEO

Play Video for Week 3 Unfinished Priorities. Share reflections from the video. Then, take to prayer before you begin the rest of the lesson. Watch the video at thevillagechristianchurch.com/unfinished/.

OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Describe a time God called you to do something that seemed crazy or impossible for you to do.
- 2 As God began to work through you to do the impossible, what did you find the most surprising?
- 3 How did this experience prepare you for the next time God calls you to do something impossible?

FURTHER DISCUSSION FROM SCRIPTURE

Read the following Scripture passage and discuss the questions as a group. You may want to have each group member journal their answer first in the provided space before discussing together, as a means of encouraging all to participate more deeply.

PRIORITIZING THE THINGS OF GOD REQUIRES SELFLESSNESS AND RELENTLESS COMMITMENT

Genesis 13:1-17

So Abram left Egypt and traveled north into the Negev, along with his wife and Lot and all that they owned. (Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold.) From the Negev, they continued traveling by stages toward Bethel, and they pitched their tents between Bethel and Ai, where they had camped before. 4 This was the same place where Abram had built the altar, and there he worshiped the Lord again.

Lot, who was traveling with Abram, had also become very wealthy with flocks of sheep and goats, herds of cattle, and many tents. But the land could not support both Abram and Lot with all their flocks and herds living so close together. So disputes broke out between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot. (At that time Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land.)

Finally Abram said to Lot, "Let's not allow this conflict to come between us or our herdsmen. After all, we are close relatives! The whole countryside is open to you. Take your choice of any section of the land you want, and we will separate. If you want the land to the left, then I'll take the land on the right. If you prefer the land on the right, then I'll go to the left."

Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of Zoar. The whole area was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the Lord or the beautiful land of Egypt. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) Lot chose for himself the whole Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle Abram. So Abram settled in the land of Canaan, and Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom and settled among the cities of the plain. But the people of this area were extremely wicked and constantly sinned against the Lord.

After Lot had gone, the Lord said to Abram, "Look as far as you can see in every direction—north and south, east and west. I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants as a permanent possession. And I will give you so many descendants that, like the dust of the earth, they cannot be counted! Go and walk through the land in every direction, for I am giving it to you."

WEEK 3: UNFINISHED PRIORITIES

1 Abraham clearly had different priorities than Lot in this situation. What were Abraham's priorities as outlined in this passage?

...and what were Lot's priorities?

2 There is a passage in Proverbs that states, "The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller." (Proverbs 11:24 MSG). How does this truth play out in this passage?

- 3 In order for Abraham to be the generous man he was in this situation, he had to stay committed to following the ways of God. Do you feel you are committed to following the ways of God in terms of generosity? In what ways are you weak, uncommitted, or wavering?

- 4 As you think about the priority of your generosity to building God's kingdom, do you feel you are committed to generosity above your other financial priorities? Another way to put this might be, does your level of spending control your level of giving, or does your level of giving control your level of spending? Be as honest as you possibly can.

WEEK 3: UNFINISHED PRIORITIES

OUR RESOURCES CAN HAVE A MULTIPLICATIVE EFFECT WHEN WE PRIORITIZE GOD'S PATH AND NOT OUR OWN

2 Corinthians 9:10-15

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

- 5 Paul, a New Testament parallel to Abraham in many ways, impresses upon the early church at Corinth - and upon US as the Church of today - the importance of giving in such a way that we believe God will 'increase our store of seed' and will 'enlarge the harvest of our righteousness.' But focus on verse 11: *You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion.* Why does God give resources to us? So that we can have more money for ourselves? So that we can feel more secure? So that we can impress others and feel significant?

The answer is NO! It's so that we can be generous on every occasion!

- 6 So let's do a little soul searching and ask ourselves a question:
If you were God, would you give more money?

- 7 See, we often say, "Well, if I had more resources, then I would give more."
But here's the thing: If you cannot be trusted with little, why do you think
God would trust you with much?

**REFLECT AND PRAY ON WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO TRULY
PRIORITIZE HIM AS IT RELATES TO OUR GENEROSITY IN
THIS UNFINISHED JOURNEY TOGETHER...**

WEEK 4: UNFINISHED SURRENDER

MESSAGE NOTES:



SMALL GROUPS GUIDE TEACHING VIDEO

Play Video for Week 4 Unfinished Surrender. Share reflections from the video. Then, take to prayer before you begin the rest of the lesson. Watch the video at thevillagechristianchurch.com/unfinished/.

OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ① Describe a time God called you to do something that seemed crazy or impossible for you to do.
- ② As God began to work through you to do the impossible, what did you find the most surprising?
- ③ How did this experience prepare you for the next time God calls you to do something impossible?

FURTHER DISCUSSION FROM SCRIPTURE

Read the following Scripture passage and discuss the questions as a group. You may want to have each group member journal their answer first in the provided space before discussing together, as a means of encouraging all to participate more deeply.

GOD ASKS US TO SURRENDER TO HIM...FULLY

Genesis 22:2-18

"Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you."

The next morning Abraham got up early. He saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, along with his son, Isaac. Then he chopped wood for a fire for a burnt offering and set out for the place God had told him about. On the third day of their journey, Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. "Stay here with the donkey," Abraham told the servants. "The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and then we will come right back."

So Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac's shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them walked on together, Isaac turned to Abraham and said, "Father?"

"Yes, my son?" Abraham replied.

"We have the fire and the wood," the boy said, "but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?"

"God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son," Abraham answered. And they both walked on together.

When they arrived at the place where God had told him to go, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied his son, Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. At that moment the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Yes," Abraham replied. "Here I am!"

"Don't lay a hand on the boy!" the angel said. "Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son."

Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son. Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means "the Lord will provide"). To this day, people still use that name as a proverb: "On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided."

WEEK 4: UNFINISHED SURRENDER

Then the angel of the Lord called again to Abraham from heaven. "This is what the Lord says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies. And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me."

- 1 Abraham has waited so long for a son, and now God asks him to be willing to sacrifice his son Isaac on the alter of the Lord. How would you expect Abraham to react? Why doesn't he object? What emotions are going through your head and your heart right now after reading this passage?

- 2 It is tempting for Abraham (or any of us) to believe that anything given to us by God is OURS, not His. How does this passage remind you of things in your own life that you maybe do not view as completely surrendered to God but still as "yours"?

3 What is preventing you from surrendering to God and His plan for your life, even though it seems UNFINISHED to you? What is preventing you from being fully surrendered to Him and trusting Him with faith beyond the horizon?

4 Do you believe God can and WILL do something IN you and THROUGH you during this Unfinished season? How do you think God is seeking to use you and your resources in such a way that brings glory to Him and shines light on His name, even when you may not know the specific path ahead? He is asking you to trust Him and surrender to Him. Will you?

WEEK 4: UNFINISHED SURRENDER

JESUS GAVE IT ALL FOR THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM

Hebrews 12:1-3

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God’s throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won’t become weary and give up.

- 5 To run the race with Christ means committing to it and not growing weary. Jesus gave His life for us because of the joy set before Him in heaven. When you think about your responses to that type of sacrifice and Jesus’ call upon our lives to run the race as we are “surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,” how does that influence how you are thinking about your Unfinished commitment and the impact it might have?

6 The fact that Jesus humbled Himself by succumbing to a human death and becoming the ultimate sacrifice for our sins demands a response from us. What will your response be?

7 Surrendering your life to Jesus is not just about agreeing to follow Him; it is about actually following Him, following His example and living as He did. If someone who didn't know you looked at your financial commitments, what would they say you are surrendered to? Would that statement be true about you? Or is there something that needs to be explained or modified as you think about this Unfinished season ahead?

WEEK 5: UNFINISHED BELIEF

MESSAGE NOTES:



SMALL GROUPS GUIDE

TEACHING VIDEO

Play Video for Week 5 Unfinished Belief. Share reflections from the video. Then, take to prayer before you begin the rest of the lesson. Watch the video at thevillagechristianchurch.com/unfinished/.

OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ① Describe a time God called you to do something that seemed crazy or impossible for you to do.
- ② As God began to work through you to do the impossible, what did you find the most surprising?
- ③ How did this experience prepare you for the next time God calls you to do something impossible?

FURTHER DISCUSSION FROM SCRIPTURE

Read the following Scripture passage and discuss the questions as a group. You may want to have each group member journal their answer first in the provided space before discussing together, as a means of encouraging all to participate more deeply.

BELIEVE BIG WITH A HUMBLE SPIRIT

Genesis 18:16-32

Then the men got up from their meal and looked out toward Sodom. As they left, Abraham went with them to send them on their way.

“Should I hide my plan from Abraham?” the Lord asked. “For Abraham will certainly become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him. I have singled him out so that he will direct his sons and their families to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just. Then I will do for Abraham all that I have promised.”

So the Lord told Abraham, “I have heard a great outcry from Sodom and Gomorrah, because their sin is so flagrant. I am going down to see if their actions are as wicked as I have heard. If not, I want to know.”

The other men turned and headed toward Sodom, but the Lord remained with Abraham. Abraham approached him and said, “Will you sweep away both the righteous and the wicked? Suppose you find fifty righteous people living there in the city—will you still sweep it away and not spare it for their sakes? Surely you wouldn’t do such a thing, destroying the righteous along with the wicked. Why, you would be treating the righteous and the wicked exactly the same! Surely you wouldn’t do that! Should not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?”

And the Lord replied, “If I find fifty righteous people in Sodom, I will spare the entire city for their sake.”

Then Abraham spoke again. “Since I have begun, let me speak further to my Lord, even though I am but dust and ashes. Suppose there are only forty-five righteous people rather than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?”

And the Lord said, “I will not destroy it if I find forty-five righteous people there.”

Then Abraham pressed his request further. “Suppose there are only forty?”

And the Lord replied, “I will not destroy it for the sake of the forty.”

“Please don’t be angry, my Lord,” Abraham pleaded. “Let me speak—suppose only thirty righteous people are found?”

And the Lord replied, “I will not destroy it if I find thirty.”

WEEK 5: UNFINISHED BELIEF

Then Abraham said, "Since I have dared to speak to the Lord, let me continue -suppose there are only twenty?"

And the Lord replied, "Then I will not destroy it for the sake of the twenty."

Finally, Abraham said, "Lord, please don't be angry with me if I speak one more time. Suppose only ten are found there?"

And the Lord replied, "Then I will not destroy it for the sake of the ten."

- 1 The point of this story is relentless prayer for people who need to be navigated to God. Something to remember as we talk about this story is that Jesus came and the gospel story was fulfilled. He literally paid for the sins of the whole world - of every single woman and man - so that people in cities would not have to be destroyed as a result of sin. God uses this story to remind us that it is important for us to pray big, bold prayers, believing God will act in accordance with His Word. Are you a person of big belief in what God can do? Do you pray big, bold prayers?

- 2 This Unfinished journey is not about raising \$500,000. Any of us who still think that have missed the point, This Unfinished journey is about 100% of us going before God and determining what a big, bold, believing faith, a humble spirit, and a sacrificing heart looks like as it relates to our generosity. It is about 100% of us laying it on the line for God and holding nothing back. Is this what you're doing for Unfinished? Is this how you've been thinking about your giving and sacrifice? Are you going to believe big that God will use you to navigate unfinished people to Him in ways He has never done before in your life or mine? Reflect on this and share your heart, thoughts, nervousness, excitement, prayers with your group as it relates to this.

3 How can this Small Group be praying for you as you make your Unfinished commitment this upcoming weekend?

4 Big, bold, sacrificial prayers are what move mountains for God. Write out some of those big prayers of belief you have for The Village in the next two years. Write them out, and then pray with your group about each one in a bold fashion, believing God can and will fulfill these prayers in accordance with His Word. Write them out below:

WEEK 5: UNFINISHED BELIEF

COMMITMENT ALLOWS GOD TO DO IMMEASURABLY MORE THAN WE COULD ASK OR IMAGINE

Ephesians 3:14-19

When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

Allow this passage to be a final encouragement and inspiration as we seek to surrender to Him and His UNFINISHED path for us and to honor Him with our UNFINISHED commitments. All He is asking is that we boldly trust Him with faith beyond the horizon. He has provided promises to us, but He is asking us to respond. Will we? Will we honor Him with all that we have and all that we are? Will our commitment be something that causes us to say we are standing before Him with confidence, knowing that we have made a decision that causes us to rely only on Him, for Him to chart our path? His power will be at work within us, so long as we commit our lives to boldly trust in Him. Immeasurably more generosity. Immeasurably more commitment. Immeasurably more impact both in us and through us.

This is the UNFINISHED journey...

WEEK 5: UNFINISHED BELIEF

EXERCISE TO DO AT HOME PRIOR TO COMMITMENT WEEKEND

- 1 List the financial commitments you currently have - those that go beyond a one-time payment, but that have a time duration on them. Examples would be a home mortgage, a lease agreement, a car loan, a cellphone contract, your child's tuition for school, your own tuition for school, etc.

- 2 Now list the commitment you are planning to make for the Unfinished initiative. Where does it fall in the priority of these other commitments? Do you need to change or modify one or more of these other commitments to be able to fulfill your Unfinished commitment? What if you wanted to raise your Unfinished commitment? What would that require? Is there a financial commitment you currently have that appears to be prioritized above your ability to make a sacrificial commitment to help rescue and empower disciples for Jesus?

- 3 If someone who didn't know you looked at your financial commitments, what would they say you value?

- 4 Would that statement be true about you? Or is there something that needs to be explained or modified?

WEEK 5: UNFINISHED BELIEF

- 5 "Choose this day whom you will serve." (Joshua 24:15). Choose to make your giving to God the priority you want it to be. What will that mean for your Unfinished commitment?

- 6 If you keep this commitment over the next two years, what type of spiritual change will that cause in you?

- 7 How would you leverage this change to influence others such as your children, your co-workers, your friends, your family, others in your circles of influence?

ADDITIONAL NOTES
