

PARENTS' PAGE LESSON 2: God Builds a Nation

Timeless Truth: *What sin changes, faith overcomes.*

Bible Basis: Genesis 12–35

Key Verse: [God said,] "I will give you all of the land that you see. I will give it to you and your children after you forever. I will make your children like the dust of the earth." -Genesis 13:15–16, NIV

Resource: *The Story: Teen Edition, The Story for Kids/Children/Little Ones: Chapter 2*

Parent Tips:

Use the Table Talk questions to start a discussion around the dinner table during the week. The Living Faith activity is designed to help your child understand the importance of listening to God's voice even when he can't see the next step. The Extra Mile idea will help you drive home the concept of authentic faith.

Get the Point:

Abraham trusted and obeyed God. I can trust and obey him, too. God often encourages movement to follow His will. We have to be willing to make sacrifices to follow God.

Table Talk

Younger Ones

- How do you see God working in your life? (Could be finding something that was lost, feeling better after being sick, answered prayer.)
- What are some of the ways God worked in Abraham's life? (Giving him land, children, etc.)
- Would you have had the faith Abraham displayed by moving to a place you knew nothing about?
- Why is it so hard to move or adjust to new things? What does God do to help you feel better when things change? (Give you new friends, love of a family, etc.)

Older Ones

- According to Genesis 18:12, Sarah laughed when she overheard that she would have a baby, because she was so old. What would you do if you believed God was leading you to do something and people laughed?
- Have you ever read something in the Bible and thought, *That's impossible!* Is anything impossible for God?
- How does our faith play a role in God's "impossible" plans for our life?
- After Abraham passed God's test, did God give Abraham "descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand" (Genesis 22:17) right away?
- What can you learn from Abraham about waiting for God's plan to come true?
- Why is it so hard to wait?

Living Faith

Gather your family outside or in the living room. For this activity you'll need something to mark boundaries and items to set up an obstacle course. You can use pillows, empty 2-liter plastic bottles, stuffed animals, baseball bats, etc. Break family members into pairs. If there's an odd number, have one person rotate in. Explain that one member from each team will stand on one side of the obstacle course wearing a bandana so he can't see anything. The other team members will stand on the other side and call out verbal directions to guide her partner. Only verbal directions, such as "Two small steps forward," "One step left" or "Lift your foot really high and take a big step" are allowed. All teams go through the obstacle course at the same time, so it can sound pretty chaotic. If the blindfolded person steps on an obstacle, knocks one down (you can lean two bats together to create a teepee) or goes outside the boundary, then he has to be guided back to the beginning and start again. Take turns being blindfolded and giving directions, and always rearrange the obstacle course once a person has made it through.

When you decide to stop playing, ask these questions:

- What was the hardest part about being blindfolded? (Couldn't see; hard to hear directions from teammate because of all the noise.) Explain that the blindfolded person had to totally trust the directions to stay safe and make it to the destination.
- Do you think Abraham may have felt the same way when God called him to go to Canaan?
- Is it harder to obey when you can see the destination or when you're walking blind?
- How does faith help you trust God in your life, even when you can't see the next step?
- What was the hardest part of giving directions? (Had to shout; had to put yourself in other person's shoes to guide left or right.)
- Does God ever mess up in the directions He gives us?
- Because we can always trust God, what should we do when we hear His leading?

Extra Mile

For added emphasis about living out a real faith, bring your family around a computer and do a search for "Stained Glass Masquerade video." Then click on the YouTube video from Casting Crowns that's three minutes and 54 seconds long. You can also search for the songs lyrics if you want to read along.

After watching the video, ask:

- What do you think the song means by "happy plastic people"?
- According to the song, is it OK to fail?
- How should the church treat people who fail?

Explain that the Bible is filled with people who fail and didn't have the faith to fully trust God. But God forgives and gives us a second chance. He doesn't want us to be plastic and pretend everything's OK when it isn't. We need to be real with God and each other. When we have faith in God, His love can help us live authentically as the person He's created us to be.