

Trusting God Takes a Lifetime | Abraham #3

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Abraham trusted God and left everything for a new homeland. But his faith in God was far from perfect. He faltered and doubted along the way. Even though God is perfectly trustworthy, faith takes time to develop – as we continue to trust in him.

God's Story Takes Time to Unfold

God's promises to Abraham didn't materialize right away. God didn't tell him just how events would play out. So Abraham's faith wavered. God promised that he would become the father of a great nation ([Genesis 12:2](#)), but some time later, Abraham didn't even have children. In response, God gave new assurances.

Genesis 15:2-4 *Abram replied, "O Sovereign Lord, what good are all your blessings when I don't even have a son?... 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."*

The road to God's purposes will involve delays, obstacles, and tests. It's easy to doubt what God will do. His plans usually become more clear over time, but along the way, God welcomes honest questions.

[\[Related: What Is the Story of the Old Testament?\]](#)

God Secures Your Place in His Story

Abraham's relationship with God came at God's initiative. God sought him first. God started the conversation. Not only that, God also secures his promises. God promised Abraham that his descendants would own the land where Abraham lived as a foreigner. But again, Abraham wasn't convinced.

Genesis 15:8 *O Sovereign Lord, how can I be sure that I will actually possess it?*

In response, God bound himself to his promises through a covenant. Covenants were common in the ancient world. A covenant was like a treaty, ensuring faithfulness between two parties. Both parties pledged to fulfill certain conditions. As God moved from promise to covenant, it was like reinforcing a handshake agreement with a written contract.

Genesis 15:18 *So the Lord made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt to the great Euphrates River..."*

Unlike most covenants, God's agreement with Abraham was unilateral. God placed no conditions on Abraham. God pledged his faithfulness, but did not ask Abraham to pledge anything in return. In fact, during the ratification ceremony, God put Abraham into a deep sleep ([Genesis 15:12](#)). It's like God signed the contract for both sides.

Likewise, God secures our place in his story through his unilateral action toward us in Christ. Jesus established a

new covenant between us and God. Like Abraham's, this was initiated entirely by God. It is based only on what God does for us, not on what we do.

Your Part in the Story Is to Keep Trusting God

In his highest moment, Abraham responded to God's promises with faith. As a result, God considered Abraham to be a righteous man.

Genesis 15:6 *And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.*

Abraham's faith became a model for a relationship with God. Likewise, we also find our place in God's story by faith in his promises.

Galatians 3:7,9 *The real children of Abraham, then, are those who put their faith in God... So all who put their faith in Christ share the same blessing Abraham received because of his faith.*

The blessings of Jesus's new covenant include forgiveness of our sins, a reconciled relationship with God, membership in God's family, and more. Like Abraham, we receive these blessings, not by obedience or worthiness, but by trusting in God's action for us – through Jesus's death and resurrection.

Having entered God's story by trusting in Jesus, we continue in a growing journey of faith through all the twists and turns of life. In tough times you might be tempted to give up on God. But remember, it can take a lifetime to develop deep faith. As you keep trusting in God's faithfulness, your faith will continue to grow.

[\[Related: How Abraham's Covenant Includes Us\]](#)

Discussion Questions:

1. Watch the video together or invite someone to summarize the topic.
2. Think of your birthdays as a child. What is the gift you most dramatically hoped to get? What happened?
3. Tell us about a time when circumstances in your life raised doubts about God.
4. During times like that, have you seen your faith grow, falter, or both? Explain.
5. Read [Genesis 15:6](#). Why do you think God so highly values faith in his people?
6. Read [Genesis 15:7-8](#). What did God promise Abraham?
7. How can you tell the difference between a genuine promise of God versus something you just expect God to do for you? Why does this matter to our faith?
8. Read [Genesis 15:18](#). What is a covenant? What made God's covenant with Abraham unique?
9. Read [Hebrews 9:14-15](#). What does this say about the new covenant Jesus ratified between God and people?
10. How is Jesus' new covenant like God's covenant with Abraham?
11. Read [Philippians 1:6](#). How does this apply to the issues that challenge our faith in God?
12. Write a personal action step based on this conversation.