

Genesis 12 - 20 Community Group Discussion

Opening Question: What is one teacher who did the most for you?

Tell them: This week Pastor Andy Hale took us through a 30,000-foot view of the verses on Abraham that we have been studying with Pastor Michael. He asked the overarching question, “What does this teach us about God?”

Ask them: *What was the most notable thing you remember from the sermon?*

Tell them: As we read scripture, we are constantly asking the question, “What does this teach us about God? And what does it teach us about humanity? Pastor Andy answered those questions with three points:

1. God is a promise maker - **Tell them:** Pastor Andy said, “God is compelled by himself to make the promises He makes. Nothing in Abraham prompted God to make them.” **Ask them:** *What is it in God that prompts Him to make these promises? (His love, His mercy, His plan to send a Savior)*

Tell them: Many of us mistakenly think that God demands **we** make promises to **Him**, but God reverses that notion and comes to Abraham, and to us, and says “**I’ll** make the promises. I’m a God who gives. I already have everything. I don’t need anything from you.” We cannot offer anything to God except what He gives to us. Pastor Andy said, “God comes to Abraham when he is faithful *and* when he doubts. Regardless of how well you do, God still makes the same promises. It doesn’t depend on something in humanity but in God.” **Ask them:** *Have you ever felt like you had to do something for God, to help him, or to help yourself, etc.?*

Ask them: *What promises of God do you cling to the most?*

Tell them: Pastor Andy paraphrased C.S. Lewis beautifully, but here is his full quote: “Every faculty you have, your power of thinking or of moving your limbs from moment to moment, is given you by God. If you devoted every moment of your whole life exclusively to His service you could not give Him anything that was not in a sense his own already ... It is like a small child going to its father and saying, 'Daddy, give me sixpence to buy you a birthday present.' It is all very nice and proper, but only an idiot would

think that the father is sixpence to the good on the transaction.” **Ask them:** *What do you think of this idea?*

Ask them: *Do you feel like you allow your faith in God’s faithfulness to be enough?*

2. God makes promises only He can keep. **Ask them:** *Why did Andy say it was important that God picked Abraham and Sarah to be the founding parents of a nation?* **Tell them:** Pastor Andy said, “God makes the type of promises that if this happens you will know God is the One who did it.” What do you need for a nation? A whole lot of land and a whole lot of people. What would man do to form a nation? Find a big family and secure some land, but God picks an infertile couple with no land and He makes the promise of turning them into a nation. **Ask them:** *Do you have a testimony of something only God could have done in your life that goes against human ingenuity?*
3. God is perfectly faithful... even when we have imperfect faith.

Tell them: Pastor Andy showed us how repeatedly from genesis 12 – 21 we see Abraham wavering between faithfulness and unfaithfulness.

Ask them: *Why does our faith in God’s protection waiver? What ways do we act when we fear?* **Ask them:** *Do you ever feel like you have to protect yourself? How can God’s relationship with Abraham inform your fear in the future?*

Tell them: Abraham and Sarah’s unfaithfulness proved that the promises of God depend on God. If they depended on man, we could say that our faith was the source of God’s protection, provision and the like, but Abraham and Sarah prove that God’s faithfulness was the source of their faith.

Pastor Andy said it like this: “The pressure is not on you to get things right. God is working on your heart. He keeps reminding you of His promises in order to change your heart. His plans do not depend on your heart, they depend on His heart. God is constant in His promises, even when we are inconsistent in our faith.” **Ask them:** *In what ways has God been reminding you of his promises over the past week?*

APPLICATION: **Tell them:** Next, Pastor Andy gave us some application points:

1. **We all leak faith. Ask them:** *Does anyone remember what he meant by that? (Our faith is constantly leaking. It must be refilled. Each day more of our faith leaks out. If we go a week without faith, being filled up, we leak some more. You cannot plug all the holes. The answer is not to stop leaking it's to keep getting filled up. Ask them:* What did God give us that helps us to be constantly filled up? (His Word, the body of Christ, prayer, etc.
2. **Leaking faith is good news for failures. Tell them:** Pastor Andy said that our leaking faith is good news for failures. **Ask them:** *Why is that true?* (Scripture shows that Abe's actions didn't affect God's faithfulness, and the same is true for us. We all leak, therefore we all will fail. Romans 3:10-12 confirms this: *"There is no one righteous, not even one, there is no one who understands, there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, together they have become worthless; there is no one who shows kindness, not even one."* (Romans 3:10–12, NET) **Ask them:** *How is this idea a comfort to us?*
3. **Jesus is perfect, you don't have to be. Ask them:** *Have you ever been paralyzed by your need to be perfect in your faith?* **Tell them:** Pastor Andy said, "There is a freedom in knowing God's promises are His work." **Ask them:** *Why is there freedom in that?* (Even when you mess up, He is still faithful.)

Ask them: *So, what was the best takeaway from this week? In what ways can you lean into the promises of God rather than relying on yourself?*

Tweetable and Memorable Quotes by Pastor Andy Hale

1. We cannot offer anything to God except what He gives to us.
2. God is constant in His promises, even when we are inconsistent in our faith.
3. There is a freedom in knowing God's promises are His work.
4. We all leak faith. The answer is not to plug up the holes but to keep getting filled up.