

**WHY NOT ABRAHAM**  
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It is hard to find heroes these days. If they existed in the past, small men whose lives suffer by comparison strive to rewrite history to remove them from our textbooks, Rather than raise themselves to the level of the noble; they besmirch and ridicule those who accomplish great things to bring them down, at least in their minds, to their own pathetic level of significance. In a world that does their best to destroy anything worth emulating, one record of history remains unchanged, protected by God Him self. His Word never changes, and in it are found men and women worthy of patterning our lives after. One of these gives us a good example to follow in regards to faith.

Abraham, the patriarch of Israel, is described as the father of the faithful. He is held up as a role model we are to copy in our faith in God. So what was so outstanding about this man and what can we learn from his life about faith?

God's call to Abraham and His promises to him are recorded in **Genesis 12:1-10**. Abraham lived in Ur, a polytheistic nation serving idols. But there was something different about Abraham. It was enough to prompt God to use him for a fresh start after mankind degenerated in a short twelve generations following the flood. There was nothing in Abraham's circumstances to warrant his selection. Outwardly, Abraham was a product of his times, but God looked at his heart, not his circumstances. He does the same for us. Never mistake that as justification to act as we wish, disobeying God, and claiming that regardless of how we look or act, God knows our hearts. What is in the heart always shows up on the outside in our appearance and behavior.

We have many promises of God to lean on, but Abram had none. There was no Bible yet, just a voice claiming to be God, upon which to stake the rest of his future. It is usually not wise to put all our eggs in one basket, unless that basket is God. The voice essentially told him, "Pack up, leave everything and everyone behind, start traveling, and eventually, I will tell you where you are to go." Abraham was promised he would begin a lineage that would culminate in the arrival of the Savior. Years, decades, and millennium passed before some of those promises were fulfilled.

One reason Abraham was chosen by God was his ability to lead his household by example. We now live in a society where anything goes, where people are marrying animals and supposed ministers are performing the ceremonies. It is more important than ever to lead our families in a life for God. Another reason he was chosen was simply because he was willing to be chosen. We do not choose God, contrary to popular teachings of "accepting" Christ. He chooses us, as evidenced by the words of Christ in **John 15:16**. We sometimes feel we are not good enough to stand in the presence of God or be called His own, but so what? Like Abraham, we must trust God enough to follow Him first and let Him change us into something good enough. We lean on God, acknowledge Him, and let Him direct our paths. That is what **Proverbs 3:6** instructs us to do. That is what Abraham did.

Sometimes, we downplay the promises of God in an attempt to preempt and prepare for assumed disappointment. God told Abraham that regardless of the fact he was old, his wife was old, and they were childless, a great multitude would come from Abraham's seed. Like Abraham, when the promise takes time to come to fruition, we begin looking for reasons to doubt. Was it really God who had been speaking? Did we do something to cause God to withdraw His promises, even though we are told in **Romans 11:29** that the gifts of God are without repentance? Like Abraham, we sometimes try to act on our own to bring about a fulfillment of God's promise. In doing so, we also take away the glory for His provision from God.

God made other promises to Abraham that apply to us as well. He said Abraham would be a blessing to everyone else if he would obey God. He said his name would become great. What a promise. What a fulfillment of that promise comes when by faith, we take on the name of Jesus in baptism. There is no other name as great as that one.

What characteristics of Abraham should we seek to duplicate if we desire to be called his sons? Or even if we just wish to be like him? We know he was obedient and it is a very good idea to obey God. Somewhere we got the idea that ignoring God's laws is better than having men attach the term "legalist" to us. God warns us not to fear men, but to rather fear the one who can cast our soul into Hell. We are told in **1**

**Samuel 15:22** that obedience is better even than sacrifice. We know Abraham trusted God, which certainly makes obedience easier. I guess believing God knows what He is talking about when He speaks to us, and trusting Him, is a pretty good definition of faith. **Romans 10:17** states this as well. We know this patriarch was courageous because when Lot was captured by an enemy, Abraham led his men in battle to free him. We need to be willing to fight for what we claim we hold dear, especially our families. Abraham was also not selfish about giving to God, but gave tithes willingly to Melchisedec, the priest king. Robbing God of what is due Him is poor preparation for asking God to bless us. We know Abraham was unselfish and preferred his brethren. He gave Lot the first choice of the land when it became necessary for them to separate. Finally, we know this father of the faithful was – faithful. Ultimately, to prove his trust in God, he agreed to sacrifice his son Isaac, the thing dearest to him in this world. **Genesis 22:5** indicates his faith that God’s promises would still be fulfilled and God would somehow restore his son back to life.

When everything around us seems to be crumbling, the life of Abraham can be a source of inspiration for us. If God ever made us any promises, like those found in scripture for instance, we can choose to doubt or follow a better example. We can walk in faith and pattern our choices after those of Abraham.