

Get Ready!

Hearing God’s Call on Your Life

By: Seth Ross



Text

Genesis 12

Key Quest Verse

“By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going” (Hebrews 11:8, NIV).

“And without faith it is impossible to please God . . .” (Hebrews 11:6, NIV).

Bible Background

The story of God calling Abram took place before there was any organized system of religion. There was no church, no Scripture, no Law, no rules, rituals or regulations . . . just a relationship with God, the Creator, and people worshiped Him in various ways (sacrifices, etc). But, worship flowed out of a response of love rather than obligation to a religious code. It was during this time that God calls Abram.

God asked Abram to respond in obedience to something that seemed to have no reason or logic behind it. But, because of God’s goodness and the relationship between them, Abram chose to trust God and follow His instructions without knowing what the end result might be. As a result, God blessed him mightily. In Romans 4, Paul even refers to Abram (Abraham) as the “father of us all” through faith, and it’s by his faith that God’s promises are transferred to us. Responding appropriately in faith is an important part of our Christian walk, so it’s necessary to look to Abraham as our model.

Get Ready!**Lesson Quest**

What I want my students to:

Know: God can be trusted in all areas of life and with every decision we make.

Feel: Uniquely chosen by God for the life we're living.

Do: Place an ever-growing trust in God in life's decisions.

Leader's Devotion

It's hard for us to watch our students make decisions that are self-destructive, in opposition to their faith, and that do more relational damage than good. It's almost as if their faith has nothing to do with their daily lives. So, that's the trick . . . to help them integrate the idea of 'faith' into daily decisions, so that their Christian faith is relevant to them.

I've come to believe this is often true, because they (like us) buy into Satan's original lie. Way back in the garden, Satan said to Adam and Eve, "You won't die! In fact, if you eat the fruit you'll be like God." In other words, he told them that God was holding out on them, preventing them from having the BEST in life, that He was keeping things from them. "If you just disobey, it'll get better; you'll have more. If you stick with God, at the end of your life, you'll look back with regret."

Today the lie continues for both students AND adults . . . "If I wait until marriage for sex, I might miss out on something" . . . "if I tithe, I won't have enough to get all I want" . . . "if I run my business how God wants me to, I won't make as much and I'll miss out" . . . "if I wait for the right person to marry, I miss out."

And, so we don't trust God, we step out on our own and get beat up, "relationshipped" up, scarred up and then we wonder why life carries so much pain. Yet, we continue to hold areas of our lives back from God. But, if we can learn to trust Him to truly believe He has our BEST interest at heart, then we can come to trust Him more easily.

Get Set!

Option A**TRUST/BETRAYAL**

Materials: Paper, pen or pencil

Procedure: Ask students to write on a piece of paper the name of someone who has betrayed their trust in the past, and then write specifically what they did to betray that trust. Then, also ask them to write the name of someone they completely trust and what they do to instill that trust in them. Have them fold the paper and put it in their pocket. Ask them if they treat these people differently, if they act differently around them, or if they feel differently.

Point out that the level of trust that exists in a relationship significantly affects our behavior in that relationship. The same is true in our relationship with God.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Option B**THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO . . .**

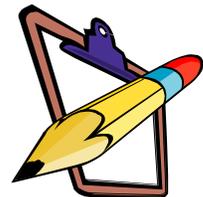
Materials: Paper, pen or pencil

Procedure: Pass around to your youth group sheets of paper or cards with these words printed at the top:

THE GOSPEL according to_____.

Have students fill in their names and write their versions of the story of Abraham. They should include their own beliefs about faith as well as any doubts they may have. They can be as lengthy as they want.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY



Get Set!**Bible Story**

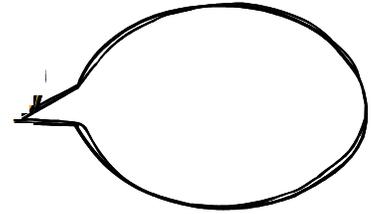
Teacher Tip: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

Genesis 12:1-9 (Contemporary English Version)

“The Lord said to Abram: Leave your country, your family, and your relatives and go to the land that I will show you. [2] I will bless you and make your descendants into a great nation. You will become famous and be a blessing to others. [3] I will bless anyone who blesses you, but I will put a curse on anyone who puts a curse on you. Everyone on earth will be blessed because of you.

[4-5] Abram was seventy-five years old when the Lord told him to leave the city of Haran. He obeyed and left with his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all the possessions and slaves they had gotten while in Haran. When they came to the land of Canaan, [5] [6] Abram went as far as the sacred tree of Moreh in a place called Shechem. The Canaanites were still living in the land at that time, [7] but the Lord appeared to Abram and promised, “I will give this land to your family forever.” Abram then built an altar there for the Lord.

[8] Abram traveled to the hill country east of Bethel and camped between Bethel and Ai, where he built another altar and worshiped the Lord. [9] Later, Abram started out toward the Southern Desert.”

Go!**God Says****GAME****Materials:** None**Quest Connection**

It's difficult to obey somebody's instructions if they don't make sense to us. We like to know our answers or reasons up front before committing to some action. God sometimes wants our obedience before our understanding.

Procedure: Give each student a different verbal instruction that they will think is unusual. Examples: Stand with one foot on the ground and one in the chair; sit Indian-style on the floor; hold your right arm above your head and snap your fingers. As they hold their positions discuss a time in their lives they had been instructed to do something that didn't make any sense at the time. Continue for about 10 minutes. This can become a very funny discussion as students fall over, get tired of holding a position or feel embarrassed doing something that seems strange.

Ask everyone to be seated and discuss these questions:

1. **What did you think of the instructions that were given to you when you came in?**
2. **Why did you obey the instructions? Why didn't you?**
3. **What effect did others have on your decision of whether or not to obey the instructions?**
4. **In what ways do we struggle with the directions God gives us?**

Close

End the activity with a short prayer asking God to give wisdom in applying the principle of "obedience first" to our daily lives.

Go!**Define Trust****BRAINSTORMING**

Materials: 3x5 cards, pencils or pens

Quest Connection

Our perception of life is created by the words and language we use every day. Is it a “used car” or is it “previously owned?” Depending on the words you use, you feel differently about the same vehicle. So, is trust something risky? Or, is it something safe and desirable? The words we use to talk about trust reveal what we think about it. Let’s try it . . .

Procedure: Divide youth into pairs and give each pair a 3x5 card and a pencil or pen. Instruct them to write a definition for the word “trust” without using a dictionary. After several minutes, call for volunteers to read aloud their definitions. Ask a volunteer to read **Genesis 12:1-7** aloud. Lead youth to listen for the instructions that God gave Abraham and the promises that He made to him, and write them on the back of the card. The Scripture may need to be read aloud more than once. After the Scripture is read, lead youth to call out the instructions and promises they heard.

Discuss these questions:

1. **What was Abraham’s response to God’s call to leave his country?**
2. **How did trust play a part in Abraham’s decision?**
3. **Why do you think God chose Abraham?**

Close

End the activity with a short prayer asking God to help us find safety in trusting Him . . . ask God to hold us close enough that we feel we want to trust Him.

Go!**Obstacles of Faith****GROUP WORK**

Materials: Paper and markers

Quest Connection

It's hard enough to trust people we know and see every day. Parents get divorced, friends lie to us or tell our secrets, brothers and sisters take our things, politicians take advantage of people, etc. Imagine trying to fully trust someone you've never even seen. That's what Abraham was able to do when he trusted God.

Procedure: Arrange youth into small groups/teams. Give each team one sheet of paper and a marker. Direct teams to list the obstacles that Abraham faced in Genesis 12. After 5 minutes, call each team to read their list aloud. Attach each of the papers to the wall. Lead the group to discuss obstacles that youth face today that keep them from trusting God completely. Have a volunteer write these obstacles on a separate sheet of paper and hang on the wall. Discuss any similarities between the lists.

Discuss the following question:

What can happen when we listen to our peers rather than God and godly leaders? Call for volunteers to share their responses. Lead youth to discuss the importance of following God and godly leaders.

Close

End the activity with a short prayer asking God to help us overcome the emotional obstacles we face when we try to trust Him.

Go!**Stepping Out in Faith****VIDEO**

Materials: TV/VCR, movie “Indiana Jones & the Last Crusade”

Quest Connection

How far are you willing to step out in faith? Sometimes it seems crazy, but the payoff is well worth it.

Procedure: Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford) and his father, Dr. Jones (Sean Connery), are reunited as they embark on a quest in search of the Holy Grail, Jesus’ cup from the Last Supper. It has been Dr. Jones’ lifelong ambition to possess this legendary relic. They reach its hiding place, only to discover that actually getting to the Grail will be no easy task.

This Clip: (just under 7 minutes), Start 1:47:59. “The Grail is mine, and you’re going to get it for me.”

Stop 1:52:19. “I knew you’d come. My strength has left me.”

Shot and injured by Nazis who also desire the Grail, Dr. Jones’ survival depends on Indy reaching the Grail first. (Legend claims that drinking from the Grail brings eternal life.) To get to the Grail, Indy must pass three tests: he must become a penitent man (a humble man who kneels before God), he must follow the Word of God, and he must take a step of faith. He passes the first two tests, but with time running out, Indy must summon all his courage, step out in faith and cross an impossibly wide ravine. On the opposite side lies the Grail.

Other Scriptures: Luke 8:43-48; Matthew 14:25-31

Questions:

1. If you were facing impossible odds and circumstances, could you step out in faith and totally trust God? Have you ever had to?
2. What were some of the fears Indy had when he looked across that ravine?
3. What are some situations that have caused you to fear and to doubt God? When? Why?
4. Compare and contrast the steps of faith the bleeding woman (in Luke 8) and Peter (in Matthew 14) took. What motivated them? What was Jesus’ reaction? What was the outcome? What did each of them learn from his experience?
5. The woman and Peter both demonstrated courage and faith. Name some other people from the Bible who sowed faith and trust in God.
6. Are you in any situation that requires you to take a step of faith and totally trust God? Is there anything that’s stopping you?

Close

End the activity with a short prayer asking God to help us step out in faith at the appropriate times, trusting Him to keep us from falling.

Go!**Trusting Always****VIDEO**

Materials: TV/VCR, movie “The Karate Kid”

Quest Connection

Do you trust God even when life doesn’t make sense?

Procedure: Daniel (Ralph Macchio) find life in California very different from New Jersey, and is having a hard time making new friends. The kids don’t like his accent, and they don’t like outsiders. Daniel tries to stay out of trouble, but several kids from a karate school eventually corner him and beat him up. He seeks help from an elderly gardener named Mr. Miyagi (Pat Morita), wanting to learn karate not for self-discipline, but for self-defense. As his lessons progress, Daniel learns that there is much more to karate than physical skill.

This Clip (just over 3 minutes), start 1:15:03. Mr. Miyagi says, “Daniel – son. Come here!”

Stop 1:18:08. After they bow, Mr. Miyagi says to Daniel, “Come back tomorrow.”

Mr. Miyagi has agreed to teach Daniel karate; however, after several days of hard work, Daniel is frustrated and storms off. Mr. Miyagi calls him back and explains why he made Daniel paint the fence, wax the car and sand the floors. In doing seemingly menial tasks, Daniel had actually been learning the basic movements and foundations of karate. Daniel is appropriately humbled and ready to study. Mr. Miyagi begins his first lesson, stressing that respect must go both ways between student and teacher.

Other Scriptures: Luke 6:46-49; Proverbs 3:5-6

Questions:

1. Why was Daniel so upset with Mr. Miyagi?
2. How do you think Daniel felt at the end of his lesson? What changed his attitude?
3. What were some of the character traits of Mr. Miyagi that made him a good teacher? What made Jesus a great teacher?
4. What foundation is your life based on? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this foundation?
5. Do you trust God with your life even though you may not understand everything He asks? When has this frustrated you? What benefit came from this trust?

Close

End the activity with a short prayer asking God to give us the courage to trust Him, regardless of the circumstances around us.

Go!**Chosen By God****OBJECT LESSON**

Materials: Assortment of odd objects such as: a can opener, squirt bottle, empty box, can of soda, Popsicle sticks, a light bulb. Bring an appropriate number of items to match the number of students you will be teaching

Quest Connection

We all have choices to make every day. Some relate to school, friends, family and sometimes they affect our faith

Procedure: Place the items you collected on a table. Have each student choose one item and then sit down. After all the kids have chosen, ask the following questions:

1. Why did you choose your item?
2. What are two things that set your object apart from everyone else's?
3. How is your object useful?

Have a student reread Genesis 12:1-8.

1. How do you think Abram felt, knowing that God had chosen him for something special?
2. How are we like Abram?
3. What might God want to use you for?

Have each person tell two unique, positive things about the person to his or her left.

Close

End the activity with a short prayer thanking God for choosing each of us to partner with Him in the redemption of the world.

Taking a Faith Inventory

Instructions: It can be helpful to clarify and evaluate our faith by taking inventory. Next to each statement is a continuum with 1 = Total Unbelief and 10 = Total Belief. Read each statement and decide how much or how little you believe it, and circle the appropriate number.

1. I believe God exists	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. God loves me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. I love God	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. Jesus is God's Son	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5. God forgives my sin	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6. God hears me when I pray	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7. God answers my prayers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8. There will be a resurrection of the dead	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9. The Bible is totally true	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10. I do what the Bible says to do	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Belief Through Pictures

Instructions: Think of all the pictures you've seen depicting Jesus hanging on the walls of churches or people's houses. They show things like Jesus calming the storm, or Jesus feeding the multitudes, Jesus in the garden, Jesus on the cross, Jesus resurrected or whatever you've seen.

Draw which picture you've seen that means the most to you OR create one you've never seen, but one that you think represents best what Jesus means in your life. Draw your picture in the space below.

Building a Life of Faith

Instructions: Faith has many different aspects. People can exhibit faith in different ways, through different actions. Below is a word bank that supplies answers for the blanks below. Consider each Bible passage and discuss which word would best fill the open blank. Then, discuss whether the statement you've completed is true. If it is, what would it look like if you lived according to that statement?

Word Bank

Persist	Trust	Believe
Thank God	Obey	Give

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

FAITH IS . . .

1. EVEN IF I DON'T SEE IT, I STILL _____
Hebrews 11:1

2. EVEN IF I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT, I STILL _____
Hebrews 11:7 Hebrews 11:8

3. EVEN WHEN I DON'T HAVE IT, I STILL _____
Hebrews 11:4 2 Corinthians 8:2-3 2 Corinthians 9:6, 8

4. EVEN WHEN I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT, I STILL _____
Hebrews 11:27

5. EVEN BEFORE I RECEIVE IT, I STILL _____
Hebrews 11:30 Mark 11:24

6. EVEN IF I DON'T GET IT, I STILL _____
Hebrews 11:39-40

