

Altared

Scripture and Background Information for October 1-7.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

Abraham is known as one of the fathers of our faith, but his faith was not perfect. At moments, he believed in God wholeheartedly and was willing to be incredibly obedient to God while, in others, he let fear and selfishness drive his actions. In this series, we will study the life of Abraham, all the successes and failures, to see how we may relate to his relationship with God. Ultimately, we hope to learn how each of us can direct the devotion of our lives to God, so that we allow Him to determine the destination of our journeys.

Background for Genesis 15:1-11, 17-18:

In Genesis 15 Abram is concerned about the promises God made to him in Genesis 12. God promised that Abram's family would become a great nation in which he had many descendants. But how could that happen if Abram didn't have a child of his own? God also told Abram that the land he was living in would be his and his family's land forever. But how could Abram know that this would be their land forever? The Lord had been faithful to Abram up to this point. He had brought Abram to the land He had promised him, kept his family together (and therefore his lineage) even though Abram gave Sarai, his wife, away, and had even protected him through battles. Yet, Abram still found himself wondering if God's promises would fully come to fruition.

God didn't respond to Abram's questions with disdain, instead, He pointed to his own faithfulness. After showing Abram an image of what his descendants would be like Abram believed in the lord and he was granted righteousness. But He still had questions about possessing the land. To show that God would be faithful, he made a covenant with Abram. The Lord promised Abram the land and conditioned the covenant solely on His own faithfulness since He, symbolized by the oven and the torch, was the only one who walked between the sacrificed animals. Abram, even in his imperfection, couldn't mess up the promises of God. His only role was to simply trust in God's faithfulness to fulfil the promises He has made.

Insights and questions to engage with the text:

1. Why did God make this covenant with Abram even though He has already promised him the land? What is the significance of God's role in the covenant He makes with Abram?
2. In what areas/moments of your life have you seen God's faithfulness? In what areas/moments of your life have you found it hard to trust in God's faithfulness?
3. What could we do as a group to encourage each other to trust in God's faithfulness to us?

*Check back in with your groups about the rhythm of silence and solitude. Ask how their times in silence and solitude have been and what God has been showing them in those moments.