

Genesis 18:16-33

12 February 2023

ICE BREAKER: Can you remember receiving a benefit or a break simply because of someone you knew?

LARGE GROUP QUESTIONS:

The Bible describes many persons who intercede, or stand in the gap before God, for the sake of others facing danger or the oncoming judgment of their sins. Despite the exceedingly wicked sins of the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham interceded before God to spare their coming judgment. Abraham pleaded for these corrupt cities because his wayward nephew Lot and his family, who lived in Sodom, were directly in harms way.

When the Lord informed Abraham of Sodom’s coming judgment, Abraham “**remained standing** before the Lord (22)”, being “**bold** as to speak to the Lord (31).” Abraham begged God to show mercy. He appealed to God’s righteousness saying, “Will not the Judge of all the earth do right? (25)” Abraham pleaded with God over and over to do the right thing.

In return, the Lord did not rebuke him. Rather, the Lord responded to every plea made by Abraham.

1. What stands out for you here about **the relationship of Abraham and the LORD**?

(Read verses 23-26) Abraham appealed to God to spare the destruction of Sodom because of the few “**righteous**” who still lived there. In verse 26 (and in every answer given to Abraham), the LORD replied, “I will **spare the whole place** for their sake.” God declared He would divert danger, delay judgment, and bring protection for whole cities who rebel against Him **for the sake of the righteous few** living within.

2. What strikes you about **the presence of God’s people**?

Genesis 15:6 defines what it means to be “**righteous**” before God, “**Abram believed the LORD**, and He credited it to him as righteousness.” Becoming righteous before Almighty God is primarily **about faith in Him**. It is defined by a **right relationship** with God, a covenant relationship of belief and trust, given by Him as a gift to us, not earned by our good deeds and behavior (Ephesians 2:8-9).

3. How does **God’s definition of righteousness** differ from others you have heard?

Becoming righteous before God, Abraham gave evidence to this newfound relationship of faith. When commanded by the LORD, Abraham immediately **obeyed** no matter the cost to himself or his loved ones. In Genesis 12:1, the LORD called Abram saying, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you.” Immediately “Abram left, as the LORD had told him.” (12:4)

As Hebrews 11:8-9 states, “**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.**” Becoming righteous and growing in righteousness always calls for faith. Living out a Godly life involves obedience where we **often** must leave the known and comfortable and **go to the unknown and fearful**.

4. In what ways has **following the LORD** become an **uncomfortable** and often **fearful** thing for you?

Cut along Dotted Line & use Notes as Book Marker

PRAYER GROUP TIME

(Make a list of people whom those, in your group, plan to witness Christ to this week.)
