

Grace will lead you home

Sermon Text: Genesis 12:1-4a

12:1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.

12:2 I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

12:4a So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

OT Text: Psalm 121

121:1 I lift up my eyes to the hills-- from where will my help come?

121:2 My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

121:3 He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.

121:4 He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

121:5 The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand.

121:6 The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.

121:7 The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

121:8 The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

NT Text: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

4:1 What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh?

4:2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

4:3 For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness."

4:4 Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due.

4:5 But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

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Introduction

1. Home
 - a. Where is your home?
 - i. I was asked this question about a month ago
 - ii. From a German friend, who felt he didn't have a home
 - iii. How would you answer that?
 - iv. Have you found home?

Context

1. Long time ago, a man called Abram was told to leave his home.
 - a. But he wasn't told where to.
 - b. Before Abram knew where he was going, he had to leave what he knew
 - c. God tells Abram to leave three specific objects: his country, his homeland and his father's house
 - d. But God was not so specific about where Abram was going.
2. The only thing made clear was that
 - a. a 75-year old Abram,
 - b. married to Sarai,
 - c. who did not have any children,
 - d. An Abram that traveled most of his life, and now finally retired and settled down, thank you very much, had to pack his things and leave.
 - e. He was in his homeland, a town called Haran in modern day Turkey.
 - f. Destination unknown
3. Why?
 - a. Cause this God came out of nowhere, with a promise
 - b. Promises of blessing
 - c. A promise to make Abram a great nation. A great...nation
 - i. This expression here is very surprising in its old testament context.
 - ii. The word used in Hebrew is to describe a gentile nation in the world.
 - iii. So, We're not talking about the fact that God will give Abram a "large family", or a "great community", a "great village",
 - iv. The promise goes beyond Abram's lifetime, and is about a great nation.
 - v. The man is 75 years old with no children, settled and retired.
 - d. And God comes very much out of nowhere saying "I will bless you, I will make your name famous, you will be a blessing, I will bless those who bless you, and curse those who curse you."
 - e. 75-year old Abram heard about many gods in his life.
 - f. But I guess none of those gods approached him with such a promise
 - g. So he packed his things, not knowing the address, and accepted that promise

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Point 1

Transition: Which promise are you holding on to in your life? Do you have a promise to hold on to?

1. What keeps you going?
 - a. Did you plan everything out? Or like Abram, you just went for it.
 - b. Is the promise we hold on to, our work and salary. Did it fail us?
 - c. Is the promise we hold on to, given by the government. Did they deliver it?
 - d. Is the promise we hold on to, a hope for a better future, a new home. Did we get there?
2. Some of us moved to this country with a promise for a better life. A new home
 - a. Are we there yet?
3. All Abram has is a promise, nothing more.
 - a. 75-years of age and a promise to become famous
 - b. A barren wife, and a promise to become a great nation
 - c. Considered cursed by cultural norms, and a promise to be blessed
 - d. Sometimes our current reality is so far away from whatever we were promised or hoped for
4. Perhaps we feel that we don't even have a promise
5. Let me tell you that your life, independent from where you are right now, take part in Abram's promise
 - a. God promised Abram that he would be a blessing to all nations. Abram did not see that in his lifetime
 - b. But every time we eat that bread, we drink that wine, we are reminded of Abram's promise in our lives.
 - i. Grace has counted us in
 - ii. Grace told us our sins are forgiven
 - iii. Grace will lead us home
 - c. No matter if we're 75 or 25
 - d. No matter our background and our history
 - e. No matter our present situation. No matter how many times people told us we don't belong. No matter how many plans have failed
 - f. God's grace has included you in Abram's promise.
6. And so we get on our journey home.
7. We look up and all we see are high mountains in our lives. And like the Psalmist we ask where will our help come from? How will we get home
 - i. Our help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth
 1. He sends...
 2. That friend, who took the time to listen
 3. That partner, who stood by your side
 4. That person, who called when you were sick

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Point 2

Transition: Have you heard about the promise of grace?

1. Grace, chose a 75-year old Abram to be a blessing to the world
 - a. Grace is the transforming power that makes us pray out loud every Sunday “forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us”
 - i. Even though we sometimes do not really forgive those, who trespass against us
 - b. Grace is showing that smile to those, who need to feel welcome
 - c. Grace is having that friend listening to you in your darkest hour
 - d. Grace is posting that speech bubble about that person in need on the prayer wall
 - e. Grace is knowing that whatever we have done, we are forgiven
 - f. To every person, who was called different, grace will lead us home
 - g. To every person, who was called an outcast, grace will lead us home
 - h. To every thief on the cross, grace will lead us home
 - i. To every moment of weakness, grace will lead us home
 - j. Grace is our stabilizer, our anchor, strength and power
 - k. The concretization of every promise in the scriptures, from Abraham to the cross
 - l. Grace leads us to the cross, and beyond, a new mindset
2. A home where all things are made new.
 - a. Where the weak says I am strong,
 - b. where the barren says I am blessed,
 - c. where things are made right,
 - d. where tears are wiped away.
 - e. Where the truth sets us free
3. The situation is not easy, but we got grace for this, we’re coming home. One way or the other. We got grace for this.
 - a. Don't know how we'll get there
 - b. Don't know the address
 - c. There will be toils, snares and dangers
 - d. Things might not look right
 - e. But sisters and brothers we don't walk by sight, we walk home by faith

As I was asked where my home was, the answer I gave was “it is grace that has brought me here thus far, and I try to grasp the promise that grace will lead me home.”

1. Have you ever missed home?
4. Have you ever left home?
 - a. Had to cross the wilderness to get home
 - b. Pack your things in search for a home
 - c. Perhaps talk, eat and dress a certain way to be given a home
 - d. Dangers, toils and snares to build a new home
 - e. Sisters and brothers, when I see a comforting smile, grace is leading me home. When we support our community, grace is leading us home. When we comfort those in need, grace is leading us home. Hold on to that promise.