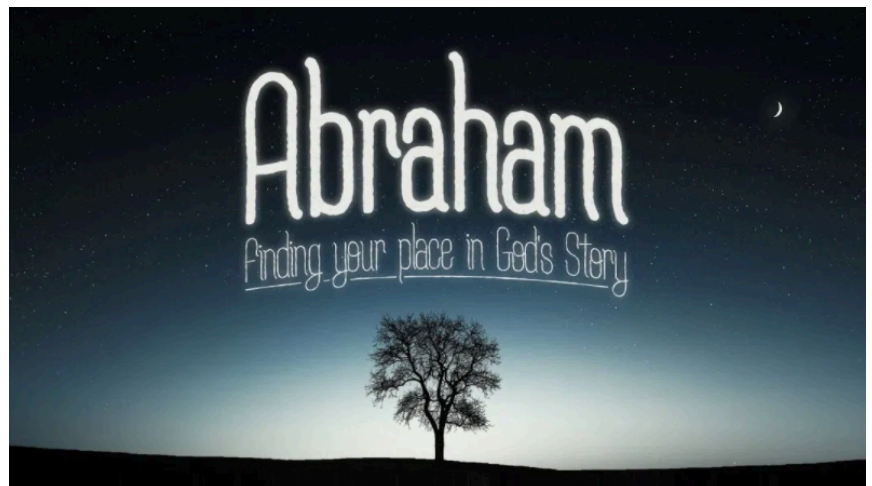


Abraham was not a perfect person.

He repeated the same mistakes again and again. At times he gave into fears and compromise and failed to trust God. Yet Abraham's life is an example of how God chooses imperfect people for great purposes, and transforms ordinary lives in unimaginable ways.



Abraham also holds a special significance for Christians as the *starting point* of the faith community that was called out and created by God. This calling signified a *new beginning* for creation. In a fallen world inundated with chaos and uncertainty, the people of God were to be a light to the world. By their very existence they were to communicate God's plan to repair the damage done by his fallen creation. This faith community was not to be an exclusive group, but a vessel through which God would display his glory, love and redeeming purposes. They were blessed to be a blessing.

"The call to Abraham has to do not simply with the forming of Israel but with the reforming of creation, the transforming of the nations". Walter Brueggemann, Interpretation commentary on Genesis, p.105.

As the local Church at Mitford and Hebron we too have the opportunity to make a new beginning. The experiences and perspective of being Church in the months of building closure invite us to a new starting point. To sharpen our understanding of God's purpose and priorities for us in this new season, to find *our* place in God's story, we look to the story of Abraham.

What does it mean to have faith in uncertainty? To trust the promises of God in the face of life's longevity and disappointments? To be, in our place and time, the community God has created to bring blessing to his world?

Through the 9-part series of talks, reading plan and home study, we will explore these questions and more. As we reflect on the story of Abraham and Sarah, may God bless us, challenge us, grow us in faith and trust, and pour his love for people into our hearts.

Mitford and Hebron, July 2020

Abraham

Finding your place in God's story

Talks for Sunday Worship September - November 2020

1. **A New Beginning** Gen 11.26-12.1 **13 September**
Creation gone awry. The call of God: personal, purposeful and transformational.
2. **Blessed to be a blessing** Gen 12.1-3 **20 September**
God's three-part promise to Abram.
3. **Call charges** Gen 12.1, 4-9 **27 September**
The costs and risks of being faithful.
4. **Fear, Lies and Failure** Gen 12.10 -20 (cf. Gen 20.1-18) **4 October**
Abram succumbs to anxiety and fear. But with God failure isn't fatal.
5. **Questioning the promise** Gen 15.1-18 **18 October**
Do doubts and questioning God necessarily mean lack of faith?
6. **Forcing the issue** 16.1-16 **25 October**
Abraham and Sarah take matters into their own hands and attempt to fulfil God's promise their way.
7. **Promise Sealed** 17.1-22 **1 November**
God's covenant with Abraham.
8. **Signed, sealed, delivered** 21.1-21 **15 November**
Two promises fulfilled - the birth of Isaac and the protection of Ishmael.
9. **Father, Son and Sacrifice** 22.1-19 **22 November**
The ultimate test. Trusting God with what we love most.

Bibliography

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Wiersbe, Warren. *BE OBEDIENT - Abraham: Learning the Secret of Living by Faith*
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