

# SERMON NOTES:

## WESTERN MEADOWS BAPTIST CHURCH SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

GENESIS | Abraham: The Man of Faith

# WEEK 11

## ABRAHAM AND ABIMELECH (Genesis 20)

## OPENING THOUGHT

From a cursed, pagan to the epitome of a faithful believer: that is the heart of Abraham's story. His willingness to trust God and obey His commands is a testament of how every Christian should live. His readiness to intercede in prayer for sinners stands as an example of how we should pray. Even Lot's rescue last week from the destruction of Sodom was attributed to God remembering Abraham.

But this is not to say that Abraham is without his sins, and today, we see one of Abraham's sins repeated. In a previous journey to Egypt, Abraham passed off his wife, Sarah, as his sister in order to avoid being killed, so that the king could take her. Of course, this resulted in the king buying Sarah from Abraham as a side note, (selling your wife to another man is always frowned upon). However, we now read of Abraham doing the same thing again with another king named Abimelech.

Throughout this odd story, two great lessons stand out. First, even though Abraham sort of led Abimelech into sin, the king was quick to repent of his sin. Rightfully, he expressed his frustration to Abraham, but he was still quick to accept responsibility for his own actions. Second, the faithful providence of God toward Abraham is astounding. The sovereign hand of God keeps Abimelech from a great sin against Abraham and Sarah and governs the wombs of Abimelech's wife and servants.

## SUGGESTED VERSES FOR MEMORIZATION & MEDITATION

- Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know that you have done this in the integrity of your heart, and it was I who kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not let you touch her. (Genesis 20:6)
- Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children. (Genesis 20:17)
- And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (Colossians 1:17)

### READ VERSES 1-2 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

1. As Abraham journeys into Gerar, he tells people once again that Sarah is his sister. Because of this, the king of Gerar, Abimelech, takes Sarah to be one of his wives. This is the second time now that Abraham has given away his wife in order to save his own skin, revealing his lack of faith in God's protection. How might times of our lack of faith similarly lead to sinful actions?

### READ VERSES 3-7 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

2. Abimelech responds to the LORD's warning by claiming that he would have never taken Sarah if Abraham had told him the truth. God then responds by assuring Abimelech that He knew of the king's integrity, so He kept Abimelech from sinning. What does this show us about the providence of God?

### READ VERSES 8-13 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

3. Understandably, Abimelech wishes to know why Abraham lied to him about Sarah being his sister. Abraham then explains that his deception was not technically a lie because Sarah is, indeed, his half-sister. Did Abraham give a sufficient excuse for why he deceived Abimelech? Is there ever a sufficient reason behind why we sin?

### READ VERSES 14-18 AND DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING

4. Though God knew of Abimelech's integrity, He still warns him that he must return Sarah to Abraham or be killed. Abimelech responds by obeying the LORD's commands. How is this a picture of repentance?
5. After Abimelech returns Sarah to Abraham, Abraham prays to God for Abimelech and his people. The LORD then heals the wombs of all the women. How is this a testament to God's faithfulness and graciousness toward Abraham? What does this show us about the importance of prayer?

### ACTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Consider Abimelech's quick repentance, even though Abraham caused him to sin, and consider your own tendency toward repentance. Ask the LORD for a heart that is quick to repent, even under difficult circumstances.
- Notice the faithful providence of God in caring for Abraham even when he sinned. Recall times when God has been similarly faithful with you and thank Him.