

## ABRAHAM: "ANSWERING THE CALL"

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You know, it is generally considered that the seven greatest men in the Bible include Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, John the Baptist, the Apostle Peter and the Apostle Paul. Of all these great men, perhaps the one who has made the most significant contribution to the understanding of our faith has been this man Abraham. In fact, we call him the father of the faithful.

The truth is that without Abraham there would have been no nation for Moses to lead. Without Abraham there would have been no covenant for David to confirm. Without Abraham there would have been no message for John the Baptist to preach. Without Abraham there would have been no Pentecost for Peter to proclaim. Without Abraham there would have been no church for Paul to take to the Gentiles.

This is the reason that the Bible gives such great place of prominence to Abraham because he answered the call and he lived out and modeled for all of his posterity and all of us the life of faith. This is what Paul the Apostle was talking about in the book of Galatians 3:6 when it tells us that Abraham believed God. But before that it takes two words that are very important. Paul says, consider Abraham. He believed God. And it was credited to him as righteousness. In verse 8 it tells us that the scriptures had before told that God would justify to the Gentiles through faith. And it was revealed ahead of time to Abraham. And in verse 9 it tells us that all of us who live the life of faith therefore, are blessed with Abraham because he is the man of faith.

This is what the book of Hebrews is getting at in Hebrews 11:8 when it gives to us a portrait of this faith of Abraham's. Because every aspect of his life. Every decision of his life. Every developmental part of his life revolved around this understanding of living his life by faith. He was called to faith. Just as we are called to faith. By faith, Abraham obeyed the will of God. By faith Abraham journeyed to the promised land. By faith Abraham lived as alien in a strange country. By faith Abraham claimed the promised land. By faith Abraham looked for a city which had foundations. Whose architect and

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builder was God. By faith Abraham was the father of Isaac through a miracle of birth to Sarah. By faith Abraham was willing to offer Isaac as his son as an offering to the Lord. By faith God spared Isaac. And by faith, figuritively, Isaac was raised from the dead.. And by Faith Isaac became the heir of the covenant.

Now, when we understand all of that then we begin to see that we are to model after the life of Abraham. And we're to learn to live our lives by those two words, by faith. So we say in affect if we are blessed with Abraham, if we share in the covenant of Abraham. If we are apart of that which God did in Abraham's life then we learn to live by faith.

By faith we obey God's call. By faith we are headed for the promised land. By faith we live as aliens in a strange country. By faith we claim the promised land. By faith we look for acity which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. By faith we set our minds on things above. By faith- we set our hearts on things above. By faith we cricify the flesh. By faith we learn to live in the spirit. By faith we defeat the devil. By faith we cause the demons to flee. By faith we claim courage to meet every circumstance of life. By faith we confess victory for every negative force. By faith we rise up with the power that is in us and we say to the world, that he that is in us is greater than he that is in the world because we have learned to live the life of faith even as Abraham....amen...amen..and amen...well, Praise the Lord.....Praise the Lord.....Magnify his name...

When we really analyze that that sounds like a big order. How do I live that life of faith. How to I come that hearing that call. There's not a person here today who has not been touched by the call of God. How then do we respond to that call. Well, you say you can talk about Abraham. He was a great man. You can talk about Abraham. Look what he accomplished. But I'm not Abraham. You don't know what it's like where I live. You don't work where I work. Youd on't put up with my wife or my husband. You don't have the kind of children that I have. You're not going through by hassle.

So many of us find ourselves in the place of saying, nothing ever goes right for me. Have you ever said that to anyone in your house. Have you ever sat down at the dinner table and heard one of your children say, nothing is

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every going right.

It kind of reminds me of the young man who went to work for the florist. One of his first responsibilities was to send a floral arrangement to a business that was relocating. They were having their last day of business at the old location, moving to the new location. So he was to make a floral arrangement on that floral arrangement he was to have a banner. And on that banner there was to be a message to the this floral, to this business. And the message said, good luck in your new location. One of the other floral arrangements he was to make was to go to a funeral home for a funeral. He was to put this floral arrangement together in a special way and it had a banner with a message too. And that message said, with deepest sympathy, -in your hour of grief. IN HIS desire to do things well nothing went right. He sent the wrong floral arrangement to the wrong place. And the floral arrangement came to the business that was relocating. The message said, with sympathy, in your hour of grief. When the floral arrangement came to the funeral home to the funeral it said, good luck in your new location....lauther.....

Now, sometimes we find ourselves in that kind of a situation. Nothing ever seems to go right. And you talk about living a life of faith. Oft times we find ourselves THERE'S NO HOPE. Abraham was a man of hope. We know that, in the book of Galatians we hear it said, that Abraham was the father of the faithful by his hope. And so many of us, run out of hope today. I spend much of my time through the week talking to people on the phone. Talking to people eye ball to eye ball. Dealing with people in groups who've given up. They've lost hope. The great tool of the devil today is to get us to give up hope. He wants us, to make us feel like there's no hope for the future.

Kinda like the two avid golfers that had been playing golf together for these many years. Came down where they were getting elderly in their lives and developing some heart problems and one of them had a severe heart attack. He was about ready to die. And his good friend said, I don't want to be premature but should die I want you to do me a favor. When you get to heaven I want you to find out if there are any golf courses there. I'm not sure if I want to go to heaven if there aren't any golf courses. Would you come back some way and tell me just what's in heaven, if there are golf courses there. And his friend agreed that if possibly could he would do that. Died. About

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three months later his friend who was still living was asleep one evening and all of a sudden his friend who had died appeared to him. Said, John, you asked me to come back. So I made arrangements to come back. And I want to tell you there's good news and bad news about those golf courses. Said, the good news is there's some fine golf courses in heaven. The greatest golf courses you've ever seen. The most beautiful, lush greens you could ever think about. You make some of the most fantastic shots you could dream about. Said, that's the good news. He said, but now the bad news is you've got a tee off time next Tuesday.....laughter.....Now that's the good news and the bad news... laughter.....

What about this man Abraham?.....laughter.....would you, would you. That's called a delayed reaction. Would you help that man, and explain that to him please.

What about this man Abraham? Do we look at him just a man who was perfect. Or did Abraham have his problems too. You know, if there's anything that I want to leave with you when I ever stop being your pastor in the millennium or wherever that might be....laughter....Is that fact that this is a human book. Now when we talk about these people we're not talking about someone unobtainable. What I've found out is that so many people make God word plastic. And they surround it with such halos. They spend such times polishing those halos. That the books never comes alive in their hearts.

But when you read verses ten through 20 you find out that Abraham had his problems too. There was a famine in the land and Abraham took his family and he went down to Eden so they would be able to eat. And when he got down there he got scared. Abraham the father of the faithful was filled with doubt. And he knew that Egypt was at the zenith of its power and he knew that the Pharaoh and the kings and the princes and all the leaders of Egypt they had a yen. And they had a pension for samitic women. He knew that Sarah was very beautiful and he was afraid that they would do to him what they'd been known to do with others and that would be to kill him to be able to get his wife. Or put him in prison to be able to get his wife. Or to steal his wife from him. And so he talked Sarah into deceiving herself as his sister. And to manipulate her and used her to save his own hide.

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And here's this great man the father of the faithful who is able to do all of these things. Who goes down into Egypt and dobt and in deceit. The two great tools of the devil doubt and deceit. And Abraham had fear in his heart. Abraham had worry in his heart. Abraham had anxiety in his heart. Abraham was going through everything that you go through and I go through. And when he got under duress he found himself not willing to really trust God.

And doubt and deciet are the number one, the two of the greatest problems that we have. When we begin to doubt then we begin to get into deceit. And I learned some times from that particular aspect of Abraham's life. First of all, what I find out is that we're all going to be tested.—We're all going to go through trials. We're going to have those problems. We're going to have those walls. We're going to hav those diffiulties. We're going to have those setbacks. I'd like to tell you that life was always going to be SMOOTH AND YOU'D never go through a problem or you'd never have negative. But you know better than that. We're all going to be tested.

The second THINK I learned from that is that we're all tempted to do our own thing. When we get under the test we don't use the resources of God too often. We make our own decisions. We make our own plans. And we use our own resources. Abrham completly forgot the call of God. He forgot what God had done for him. When he got ready to go down to Egypt he made his own plans. He figured out his own way. He devised his own methodolgy. And the result of that it left him in, in a state being destitue.

But the third thing I find out about this is that when those things happen to us and we begin to see what takes place. First of all, we know that what this did, it grieved the heart of God. We know secondly, it weakened Abraham's faith. It had to weaken Sarah's faith. It had to be a very poor example for Lot. It was even an affliction to the Pharoah because when God saw what Abraham had done he brough an affliction to the Pharaoah. And the Paraoah figured it out. The Pharaoah said, hey, come and take your wife and get out of here. Because he saw what God had been doing to him.

It was during this time THAT ABRAHAM picked up hargar. And we've been paying the price for Haygar evern since. If you want to see some of the problem in the world and know some of the difficulties in the world, you read Genesis

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16 and analyze verses 11 and 12. Haygar is a part of the problem we're suffering today. It's costing us money. It's costing us time. It's costing us effort. It's bringing about the destiny of the future. When you're really ready Genes 16 you'll get an understanding of a lot of the problems going on in the world and it started right now with Abraham's doubt and Abraham's deceit. On top of that, latter can you think about the model that that had to be for Issac.

But what I learned about that is that God is going to fulfill his plan regardless of our decisions. And if Abraham hadn't shaped he would have put Abraham to the side because God had a plan. But because he knew and saw Abraham shapping up he said, my plan is this Abraham. You're going through the pruning and you're going through the planning and you're going through the plowing. And you're learning what it means to develop faith. And as a result of that I'm going to make you a great nation. I'm going to make you a blessing. I'm going to make your name great. You're going to be a blessing to many people. Those whom you have blessed WILL be blessed and those whom you've cursed will be cursed. And above all of that all the families in the earth are going to be blessed because of you. And the bottom line is this. God's going to do his work in spite of who we are or what we do...amen...amen..and amen.....Well, Hallelujah...Hallelujah....Well, praise Him in this place....Praise Him in this place....Praise him in this place.....

And we've got a choice to measure up and live by faith. And we've got a choice to live by his power. And we've got a choice to let him work in our lives or we can get caught in the doubt and the deceit of this world. But what God is really saying to you and what God is really saying to me is the same covenant I gave to Abraham I'M giving to you. The same blessing I'VE GIVEN TO abraham I've given to you. And what I've done in the progeny, progeny of Abraham I'm doing in you as the heirs of my promise. And I'm raising you up.

And if you want to ask me today what God is really saying to the church today. He's telling us to forget the glamor days. He's telling us to forget the tinsel days. He's telling us to forget the, the kind of days of celebration that have brought us out of the sacredness of God and he's telling us to go back

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to a new celebration. And that celebration is the celebration of discipleship before him where that we'll deny ourselves, take up our crosses and follow him so his will can be done in our lives...amen..amenand amen.....Hallelujah... Well, Praise the Lord in this place...Magnify him.....Hallelujah...

I think God's tired of the godiness. I think God's tired of the tinsel. I think God's tired of the fads. I think God's tired of the mundane things that we give to his name. He wants one thing. He wants you and he wants me. And total commitment to him...amen...amen and amen.....Well, Hallelujah.....

Well, how do I get to all of that? And that brings us to Abraham in chapter 12. First of all we have to see that Abraham denied himself. When you look at verse one it says the Lord had said to Abram, leave your country, you people. Your father's household. And go to the Land I will show you.

The first thing he tells us is to leave all. Look at verse 4. So Abraham left as the Lord had told him. And Lot went with him. Now the whole point is that he was willing to do everything he had to do to answer that call. And the first step was to deny yourself Abraham. Leave everything. Now that wasn't easy for Abraham to do. That wasn't easy for him to make that step. He lived in Erucaldes. One of the greatest cities of the kown worlds. And city that was way a head of it's time. Covered about 4 square miles. About 300,000 inhabitants. A city known for being ahead of it's time. And it's educatiion. It was a city known for it's mathematics. KNown for it's agriculture. KNown for it's astrongomy and science. KNown for it's engraving. They developed clay tablets. And the they wrote on those clay tablets the history of who they were. That's why archiologists have been able to reconstruct what the Eucales was like. Paved streets. Using the matierals of of their day. Intricate plumbing systems. Beautiful homes. IT WAS A MODERN city of that day. But it was also a very paganistic city. It was polytheistic in it's worship. It was heathenistic and paganistic. They worship the moon god was one of their main gods. A god call Nanna. It was a time of immorality. It was a time of licensous. It was a time of sin. It was a time of idolatry. And that probably premeadted even to Abraham's home. SO it was almost paradoxical in this home of the farmer in those rich lands all around Eucales. As you know that it was located

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at the PERSIAN GULF in Mesdfoana. And the Euphrates river went down on the one side of the Eudaldes. And it was a very rich fertile land. THE most fertile land in all of the world. EVEN today.

Now when you begin to see all of that and understand that it was a big, bit deal for Abraham to leave. But Abraham listened to the call of God. Some how or other I believe that Jesus Christ is coming by. And I believe that what he's saying to us today, will you follow me. Will you be my disciple. Will you really leave all to follow me.

When you look at Luke 5:27,28 he had just healed in that chapter the paralytic man. He told him to take up his bed and to follow him. And then when you begin to see that after that he saw Levy as he was coming out of one of the towns around GALILEE. And he was sitting there at his money chaning tables. AND HE SAID to Levy or Matthew. Follow me. Two little words.

And the Bible tells us in verse 28 that Matthew did what. He got up and left everything that he had and followed him. And you remember Luke 14:26 and we hear Christ say, if any one comes to me. And he will not hate his father and his mother and his brothers and his sisters. His wife and his children and even his own life also. Then he's not worthy or he cannot be my disciple.

Matthew 16:24

If any man will come unto me let him deny himself. TAKE up up his cross and let him follow me.

And do you remember Mark 10:28 when Peter said to Christ

Lord, we've left everything to follow you.

And the very first step in answering the call, the call of God is that you've got to be willing to leave all. But what do you mean when you talking about leave all. Do I give up all that I've accumulated. Do I give up my stocks and my bonds, my houses and my lands. You know, we're so things oriented. And we're so materialistic. Everytime we hear God call us we think that we're going to have to give up something material. And we're so tied to our material things. It's very difficult. But God

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could care less about our material things. We've spent a life time talking about material possessions. And God's not even into that kind of a bag. What God wants is your mind. He wants your head. Paul the Apostle had a total, a hold of that a long time before we have ever gotten in to.

When you look at Tomans 8:13. He says, if you're going to live by your evil nature. If you're going to live by your flesh. You're going to die. But if you by your spirit you put to death the misdeeds of your body then you're going to surely live. What the Lord really wants is your mind. He wants your head. You see the big game today is not the game of things. It's not the game of your accumulation. The game is your attitude. What God wants is your attitude. He wants you to get out of the wilderness and start living in the the promise land. He wants you to leave those old attitudes. He wants you to leave those old beliefs. He wants you to leave those old values. He wants you to leave those old tapes. He wants you to leave those old habit patterns. He wants you to leave those old responses. He wants you to put that old terrible nature of yours behind you. He wants you to get rid of that personality that causes so much problem in your home. And causes so much problem in your group. And casues you so much problem that's made you to be isolated and disconnected and keeps you in hassle and keeps you in problem all the time.

When you really want to know what it means to leave the old country and to leave the old wilderness you've got to go to Cols. 3 and in verse five here's what I want you to do. I want you to put to death everything that belongs to your evil nature. I want you to get rid of sexual immorality. And I want you to get ride of impurity. And I want you to get rid of lust. And I want you to get rid of your evil desires. And I want you to get rid of grief, of greed which is idolatry.

And in verse 8 he says, I want you to get rid of and put off your anger and your rage and your malice and your slander and the evil speaking out of your mouth. I want you to leave that country. I want you to leave that wilderness. I want you to leave that old life. And I want you to walk in the promise land. And in verse 12 of Colassians 3 it says, I want you to put on a new garment. A new garment of praise. I want you to leave the old

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wineskins. I want you to put on new wineskins. I want you to put on compassion and gentleness and kindness and goodness and patience. I want you to bear with one another. And forgive one another. And above all put on love that binds them all together in Jesus name...amen..amen and amen.....clapping.. Well, Hallelujah....That's what I want out of your. ...Hallelujah...Praise the Lord in this building. Magnify the Lord in this place....Hallelujah be to his name.....amen..

Now that's the problem we're having today. The problem is in the head. The problem is not your house. The problem is not your business. The problem's not the pressure. It's how you handle it. You haven't left it. You haven't burnt the bridges. You haven't changed the role. You haven't changed the mindset.

And when you look at Abraham the first thing he says, you have to leave all. But the second thing you see about this man is that he tells us to stand fast. And he says you've got to make a decision. And that decision is to stand fast. You know you look at Chapter 22 you see something interesting in the life of Abraham. You know, here he was his wife Sarah, as beautiful as she was but she couldn't have any children. And God gives them a miracle. And out of that miracle comes Issac. Can you imagine the joy that they must have had when the Lord gave them Issac. The beauty of that must have been. YOU know there's not greater, there's not great miracle in all the world then the miracle of a birth. No greater miracle than the joy of a new baby. And then you take him home.....laughter....

You know, I remember when Mark was born. He was born in Alachua county Hospital in, in Gainesville, Florida. And you know when, when Paul Dana was born Carmelita got into the hospital and decided she didn't want to have this kid....laughter...and stayed there for three days. AND you know, I was , you can't imagine how haggard I was...laughter.....

And I know what you women are saying, yeah, but how was Carmelita. And Carmleia,,,d,afmd.a...I know what you're saying...laughter...I can hear you out there now. And I hear Carmelita, say, you don't know the half of it. You were off and in and out. YOU know, that was in the days before you had to go in there and go through it....laughter.....

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That's one part of the good ole days I like better....laughter...This deal about going in and going through it I, I don't find that anywhere in the Bible...laughter....clapping...I just don't believe it's there.....laughter...

But we finally got Paul Dana into the world. Then Mark came along and so we were better prepared this time. And we got in there and 20 minutes...laughter...I mean Mark was almost born in the car. Sometimes I think he was born in the car the way he acts....laughter...No I'll take that back....laughter...

But I'll never forget when he finally and it was late at night I was early in the morning, 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning the best I remember. So there wasn't a whole lot of people around and all of a sudden we heard this kid scream. I mean I could hear him for blocks it seemed like and I knew that had to be my kid...laughter...So when they wheeled him out. I never forget. The doctor came up to me and he said, well, you've got a boy and he's a walker. He's got a square head and a good set of lungs. ....laughter....

But you know, it had to be a great time for Abraham and Isaac and Sarah. The boy grows up and he's doing well and then the Lord comes to Abraham one day and says, Abraham, I've got a little test for you. We, we don't like God to vivify that way. I'd just as soon said, Lord, why don't you come back later. I want you to take your son Isaac, the one whom you love and I want you to take him up to Mt. Matia and I want you to sacrifice him to me. Can you imagine what that did to Abraham. Can you imagine the things that had to go through his heart.

I mean we read through this thing in Genesis 22 and it's just kinda like a lakr you know. It has an aura of unreality. It's just like this plastic man going through these robotic motions, just goes and takes his kid up there. And we don't see the emotion in it. Can you What Abraham, what am I going to tell Sarah. How am I going to explain this to her. How am I going to express to her what's going on here. I mean God, you've got to be kidding. I mean you gave us this child as a miracle. You've given us this child as the heir of the covenant. You've give us as a fulfillment of the promise. And now you want me to take my child, my son, the apple of my eye, the very heart

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This very miracle baby. And you want me to take this boy up on this mountain and sacrific him to you. Decision time. Stand fast time.

Abraham gets the donkey. Gets the wood, two servants and sets out. Issac's been there before. It's no big deal. He's gone with his father before. He's, he's not worrieda bout the situation. It's a good outing fo him. Two days, the thir day they see Mt. Maria. Abraham takes the fire. Takes the woods. Tells the servants, said, servants stay here. Now there's something about Abraham I've missed. In all the times I've read about him. The 100's of times I've been through that chapter. I've missed this. And Abraham and tells us servants, we'll be back. Said, you ~~ay~~ tay here we're goin to the mountain to worship the Lord. Well be back.

Now, what does that tell you about Abraham. Now, notice this carefully. NOtice this carefully. Back in Genesis 12 as you will recall. Doubt and deciet. Abraham been being sifted. Abraham's being prepared. He's getting ready now for the final test. And the final test is are you really ready. This is he acid test. Are you really going to be the one to fulfill my plan. God's going to fulfill his plan. Are you going to be the one that's really going to do it. But you see a different kind of Abraham now.

Abraham tells his servants, we'll be back. Going up on the mountain, worship the Lord, sacrific myson. But we will be back. Now that problem that many of us have is we don't think we're going to ~~ver~~get back. God says' I've going to send you. God's ays, I'm going to see you through. But we don't believe it. It's time that we took God at this word. Because the one message is this, I will never leave you nor will I forsake you. And I'm going to see you through. I don't care what happens in your life. All things work together for good to those who love God...amen..amenand amen.. amen....Hallelujah..Halelujah..

Now, there's one thing that Abraham had to learn at Mt. Maria. And I've been there alot. Many of you have. Youlook at that great temple mount that's there now. So he goes there. Now Issac understands. He said, Father I see the fire. But were's the sacrifice. Now the first time wa have introduced into the Bible the understanding of Jehovah Jiraha. The Lord will provide. The Lord will provide Jehoavh Jiraha. And Abraham looks

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at his son and he says, Issac, Jehoahva Jirah the Lord will provide. Now Abraham is in dead earnest. This is a sincere man folks. He does something most of us would have a very great deal of difficulty in doing. He makes the altar. He puts the wood in place. Takes his son and ties him to the altar. Now we're not sure whether or not the whole levetical scene had come into play yet as it came under Moses later. But you know when you make a burnt offering to the Lord there are five, four or five things that have to be there.

First of all, it has to be a male lamb without blemish. Second of all, it has to be offered voluntarily and worshipfully by the person who is bringing it as an offering to the Lord. Third, it has to be killed in a certain kind of way. Fourth that blood has to be sprinkled over the altar. And fifth it has to be cut up into pieces, squashed and then burnt as the burnt offering before God.

And there's a lot of evidence that maybe that was already being done. It was already in the heart of Abraham when he was getting ready to go through all of that. But then he brings back his arm and he's ready to strike the fatal blow. And the angel of the Lord speaks to him as you know. And the voice of God comes to him in that manner. He says, spare your son. Now I know that you fear God. And that word fear means that you are committed to him. You're dedicated to him. You respect him. You're sold out to him. You've left all. You've decided you're going to stand fast. And I know that you're passing the test.

Isn't that what Christ was talking about in John 8:31 when he said to those Jews that believed in him. If you will keep my teachings then you are really my disciple. And cannot we get a hold of the fact that Abraham reaped the reward and not only his son being spared but in chapter 13 we know that he had great silver and gold and live stock had covered all the , southern part of Israel. And when you look at Genesis 23 we know that he was known as the prince of God among all the heathen, the Hittites, and the Canaanites and the Amorites, the Jebusites. They all look at him as a great prince of God because he was reaping that rich reward. And doesn't that come down to this. In Mark 10:28 he said, we've left all to follow you and the implication is now Lord, what are going to get. Christ said, not man who's left

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and mother and his brothers and sisters and his wife and his children and his fields will receive less than a hundred fold in this life and in the life to come, everlasting life. But there's a catch there. It's a catch of discipleship. In verse 31, and many who are first will be last and the last will be first.

And suddenly we see the concept of confident living living that says leave all, stand fast and reap reward. Deny, decide and get the direction. And isn't the problem that many of us go through everyday of our lives is the fact that we lose the direction and the direction is that we'll reap the reward if we have left all and we stand fast. Isn't the message that God gave to those church in REvelation it said when you get under duress AND THE WORST COMES TO WROST stand fast that no one takes your crown. And if you'll hold on to what I've commanded you I've going to save you from the trial that's going to come to test the old earth. BEcause you are mine. I brought you with a price. I've redeemed you. I'm not going to let you suffer more than you're able to bear. And when you get under the guns I'm going to give you a way of excape...amen..amen..and amen..claping.. Hallelujah...Taht's what I'm going to do for you...That's what I'm goin to do for you.

Ten years ago my phone rang at home and there was a frightened fifteen year old girl on the other end. Said, my name is Rachael. I'm a prostitute. And I'm fifteen years old. I've been in pornography since I waS (. I'm in this city as a white slave. She broke down and cried and said, I want out. The only reason I called you because you're the only name I know in this town. The reason I k know your name is that mother and I used to listen to your radio broadcast when I was at home as a child. I used to watch your telecast as a child. And I want out and they want let me out. I'm sick. I'm diseased. I'm addicted to drugs. Will you help me? And about that time the phone went click. And I heard nothing else from her. Practically every day of me life since that time I've prayed for a girl named Rachael somewhere. Ten years now. The other day my phone rang and there was a mature voice on the other end. And she said, are you Dr. Paul Walker. I said yes, obviously. And she said, do you remember a girl ten years ago by the name of RACHael. I had to think and they she told me about the circumstances and I remembered her immediatly. I said, I've been praying for you everyday for ten years. Where are you? Who are you? What are you

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doing? Your phone went dead I had no number. I had only one name. No way to track you down. What has happened? She said, you must have prayed heard. Because you know the miracle happened. Said, the man who was my pimp, to use the street language, who had caused me all the trouble. Who had hurt me and battered me and done all of those things. Said, I pled with him and pled with him to let me go and to let me get home. She lived up north in New York state. Said, finally, miraculously said, I'm going to do for you what I've never done to anyone else. Said, he miraculously bought me a plane ticket and sent me home. Said, I've gone home and then I began to read the Bible because I know that when I used to watch you on television and listen to your radio programs. You said, the Bible had the answers. Said, I've had to run for much of my life but then I stumbled into a little church. I found Jesus Christ as my Savior. I've left everything to follow him. He's given me a husband. . My husband is an elder in the church. I teach Sunday School class. I wanted to call you and tell you that it's different now. My life is changed. And I've found Christ as the Lord of my life. There's not other miracle in the world that matches that matches that miracle.... Hallelujah be to God.....Amen....amen....amen...Hallelujah...Praise the name of the Lord in this place.....Blessed be his wonderful name...

Leave your country Abraham. Go to the land I'm going to show you. And I'm going to give you a covenant. And that's what he says to you and me.

Shall we pray. ....

## Prayer for Personal and Corporate Sins

*The following is a list of personal and/or corporate sins for which we need to seek forgiveness:*

- Participating in a church split
- Adopting the ways of the world
- Allowing an ungodly person (or persons) to run off an innocent pastor
- Participating in a church split
- Adopting the ways of the world
- Allowing an ungodly person (or persons) to "run off" an innocent pastor or staff person—especially if your church has a pattern of doing so
- Choosing to do good things instead of the best things
- Coming into being as a church, group, or denomination in a wrong or sinful way, such as a split, envy, controversy, or pride
- Covering up sins of the past
- Defaulting on a debt where you borrowed and did not repay
- Disgracing God's name in the eyes of the community (for example, a leader or member experiences moral failure that became known in the community with no response by the church)
- Failing to care for the needs of members, families, or couples
- Failing to take a strong stand on God's standards for family and marriage and failing to support those needing help
- Forcing agreement or compromise on a decision with no unity of mind heart or spirit
- Isolating yourself from other believers, churches, denominations in your community or state—doing your own thing when they needed your help, encouragement, or leadership
- Lacking faith when confronted with a God-sized assignment and deciding not to attempt it because of your limited resources
- Leaving a field of ministry to take the easy road (like leaving the inner city for the suburbs rather than dealing with the problems of the people in the inner city)
- Making a wrong decision contrary to God's guidance
- Mistreating a pastor, staff member, or family member
- Permitting controversy, strife, or dissension practicing prejudice or discrimination (for example, against the poor, blacks, ethnic groups, or hippies)
- Refusing to follow God's commands related to church discipline of sinful members
- Refusing to go after the stray members who have become inactive
- Refusing to make adjustments to God because they "cost" too much
- Shifting control of the church from Christ as Head of the church to anyone else: pastor, elders, pastor's council, or power block in the church
- Tolerating evil in the congregation
- Trying to save your life rather than give it away in service and ministry
- Selfishly using resources for personal comforts and not responding to the needy or mission opportunities