

# THE BEGINNING OF EVERYTHING: GENESIS 12:4-9 CSB

Date: Sunday June 25, 2017 Location: The Grove Church, Arma, KS

## Greeting

I want to welcome you all to the Grove. I hope our time together encourages you, strengthens your faith and gives you confidence in the Lord and what He has been doing, is doing and will continue to do because of his faithfulness. In response to the love God has shown us we implore you to engage with others. Share the Gospel. Talk about your faith. Demonstrate your faith. Brag about Jesus and the new life that comes through Him. This is all for His glory! We are for His glory!

## Setting up the Series

We are several weeks into our *The Beginning of Everything* series. Last week we looked at the beginning of God's covenant to bring mankind **back** into right relationship with Him through Abraham. We talked about Abraham having to leave **everything** in order to be obedient to God. **S: The beginning of everything starts with the end of something.** His family, farmland, inheritance, comfort, security... It all had to be left behind to begin this process of redemption for all of us. **You are NO different.** You will have to leave something to gain everything. Jesus has required no less. As his followers, we are marked by whether or not we **obey** him. 1 John 5:2 CSB **"This is how we know that we love God's children: when we love God and obey his commands."** Q: Do you love God? You do if you obey Him.

## Prayer

Let us be obedient in the face compromise. Preserve us by your mighty hand. Give boldness to the fearful and humility to the proud. Help us have a robust view of Jesus and the perfection that He brings. I pray all joy we experience would be found in Him forevermore and momentary pleasure would be incomparable in the purest light of Jesus. Make us children of your light. All God's people said, "Amen."

## Setting up the Sermon

Hebrews 11:8-10 CSB says, <sup>8</sup>By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed and set out for a place that he was going to receive as an inheritance. He went out, even though he did not know where he was going. <sup>9</sup>By faith he stayed as a foreigner in the land of promise, living in tents as did Isaac and Jacob, coheirs of the same promise. <sup>10</sup>For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God."

S: Last week we looked at the uncertainty that faced Abraham and the incredible faith it would take for him to set out at retirement age, to leave everything **in faith** to pursue the promise of God.

Matthew 13:44 CSB, <sup>44</sup>"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure, buried in a field, that a man found and reburied. Then in his joy he goes and sells everything he has and buys that field."

S: There is a mystery to being a Christian that should lead to people scratching their heads at what you do. i.e. "Why would he turn down the promotion?" "Why wouldn't you marry him/her?" "Why won't you buy \_\_\_\_\_?" "Why do you forgive him/her so many times \_\_\_\_\_?" A: You know what the **real** treasure is.

S: You know the importance of why you're here and what you need to do.

S: But **even in knowing** what you've been called to do and acting in faith there will still be this terrible sense within you to find a shortcut. The hard truth... The only way to where God has called you is the path God has established and there are no quick fixes or hacks.

S: Exercising faith can be hard. But the reward exceeds the costs. And people won't understand.

**Illus:** Working construction as a Christian. I was called queer, a homosexual, words I can't repeat here because I wouldn't look at a pornographic image. But here's the morale of the story: Jesus is better.

S: In all things **Jesus is better.** Q: Do we live like He is? Is there enough incriminating evidence?

## Sermon

READ Genesis 12:4-9 CSB, “<sup>4</sup> So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. <sup>5</sup> He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated, and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, <sup>6</sup> Abram passed through the land to the site of Shechem, at the oak of Moreh. (At that time the Canaanites were in the land.) <sup>7</sup> The Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the Lord who had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup> From there he moved on to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. He built an altar to the Lord there, and he called on the name of the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Then Abram journeyed by stages to the Negev.”

S: From the beginning of Abraham’s journey with God there was compromise.

In Genesis 12:1, “**The Lord said to Abraham: Go out from your land, your relatives, and your father’s house...**” But what is the first thing we see in verse 4? Abraham takes his nephew.

**Compromise and Missing the Mark:** Now, to some this might seem like a minor offense. But take a moment to think about what’s happening: God, the founder of all things, creator of universes unknown and powerful beyond description has given direction. Then, as it usually happens, man thinks he knows better and misses the mark. When you miss the mark by 100 feet or 1 inch did you miss? Absolutely! Some of you know I shot my neighbors car with an arrow last year. Did I miss my target? You’d better believe it! And I missed the one before it that was only a half inch from on center. A miss is a miss no matter the distance. So it is with our sin.

Why build an altar?

Because the Lord has done something great.

**“he called on the name of the Lord”**

**Romans 10:13 CSB, “For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”**

Q: What does it mean, “He called?” A: ἐπικαλέω or, “To make an appeal”

**Illus:** Killian falling into the pool and a cry that makes a father run.

i.e. There is a specific cry my son(s) will make when they are **truly** distressed.

**S: God answers the cry of the distressed!**

Q: Have you called on His name? There is no other name under heaven by which men can be saved! **Acts 4:12 CSB, “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved.”**

S: Abraham had **no other choice** but to call on **His Name**.

S: You’ll come to a place where all you have is His Name. It will be all that can get you through.

S: Faith can only happen by the power of **His Name**.

**S: Calling on God is the catalyst of compliant faith instead of compromising doubt.**

**Ephesians 2:8-9 CSB** “<sup>8</sup> For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God’s gift— <sup>9</sup> not from works, so that no one can boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.”

S: If you’ve called on God to save you from your sin, yourself and the punishment you deserve you have every reason to celebrate fully today. God has given you the most precious of gifts... faith in Him.

## Beeline

When God gave the call of salvation Jesus went from glory to filth, worship to mockery and splendor to being spit on. Why? To save us.

## Call to Action/Prayer

Don’t compromise what God has called you to do. Act in total obedience.