

Glorifying Christ in Our Earthly Business

Genesis 21:22-34

17-Nov-2019 · Hopewell ARP · Culleoka, TN

Main idea: When we know that God is with us in all that we do, we are enabled by grace in Christ to show by our conduct that God is with us in all that we do!

Introduction: A king with a spokesman recognizes the King's spokesman

1. Abimelech's recognition of Abraham's public character. What is it that causes Abimelech to say, "God is with you in all that you do?"
 - a. Abraham's God had had dealings with Abimelech. Your God has had dealings with everyone, even if they are not exposed to His Word! You may be a second form of testimony. What they really need is Him through His means—especially His Word. But there is a responsibility in bearing the name of Christ.
 - b. Abimelech had been healed through Abraham's prayer. Take opportunities to pray for people!
 - c. Abimelech had had time to observe Abraham's conduct. Probably heard about Isaac's birth, and more. From what he had seen, he had concluded that Abraham:
 - i. Feared God. "Swear to me by God."
 - ii. Kept his promises. Willingness to covenant.
 - iii. Dealt fairly. "According to the loyalty that you have been shown"
2. Abraham's maintenance of his own public character
 - a. Willingness to enter into relationships, but in a 1Cor 7:29-31 and Jer 29:4-14 manner. This was not a King-of-Sodom situation where there seemed to be something in it for Abraham. This was a question of willingness to interact with and be on good terms with his neighbors, the surrounding community, and the local civil government.
 - b. Emphasis on clarity, peace, and uprightness in his dealings. Since Abraham needs to continue defending his interests in the well, he wants this issue cleared up before entering into covenant, lest he be perceived as violating the spirit of their agreement and his public character be stained.
 - c. Willingness to "take a loss" for the sake of uprightness. For what was Abraham's by strict right, he was willing to offer sheep and oxen—and specifically the seven ewe lambs—in the covenant-cutting.
3. Faith as the foundation of Abraham's public character
 - a. His and his descendants' wellbeing didn't depend upon temporary Abimelech (we will see many different ones!), but upon the everlasting God. All men are like grass—do not fear them, and do not depend upon them!
 - b. God, who knows how to take care of the tamarisk tree and of all of His creatures, will take care especially of His servants. cf. Matt 6:19-34. Are you enabled, by a doctrine of God's good providence in all things, to seek first the kingdom? To avoid a heart that runs after storing up treasure on earth?
 - c. Ultimately, we know that Abraham's hope was in the promise of God, and especially in the Seed who had been promised—the Lord Jesus Christ.

Conclusion: Do you have this Christ-produced confidence? Is your great hope—materially, but especially spiritually—that God is with you for the sake of Christ? And when things go well with you—materially, but especially spiritually—is it your grateful/worshiping conclusion that God is with you?