

A GODLY FATHER SEEKING THE WAY OF THE LORD!

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June 22, 2014

“For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him..”

Genesis 18:19

I would like to speak this morning on: **A Godly Father Seeking the WAY of the LORD!** This is a tremendous passage in the midst of turmoil. God had just told Abraham and Sara that they would have a son in their old age and that He was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. In the midst of all this we are given insight into to the heart of God’s man for that time, namely Abraham. We are also shown the special relationship that existed between Abraham and God. Oh to God that from this example we who are fathers would seek to emulate that same relationship with God.

What a blessed spiritual privilege that as Christian Fathers we can a special relationship with God and then to convey and communicate this to your posterity. What a unique and special privilege along with the utmost responsibility we have as fathers in this dark and present evil world. What a tremendous blessing that we do not want to miss.

Again, in verse 9-15 Abraham is told that in their old age they will have a son and in verses 16-21 Abraham is also told that because Sodom and Gomorrah sin was great and grievous, He was going to destroy both cities.

In the midst of all this I want you to notice Abraham’s heart:

- One of the things we see about his heart is found in verse 22 it says, *“And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but **Abraham stood yet before the LORD.**”* Abraham intervened in behalf of those in Sodom and Gomorrah. Who do you stand for? I hope you stand in gap for those lost around you, your immediate family, your relatives, your co-workers, your neighbors. This is exactly what Abraham was doing, he was concern for souls as a matter of fact notice the question Abraham asks God in verse 23, *“And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?”* Did you notice what it said at the beginning of the verse *“And Abraham drew near...”* when was the also fathers you drew near to God? Now, of course Abraham was not questioning the justice or holiness of God, but pleading that if there were any righteous people in those cities that God would spare them. He starts at 50 and goes all the way down to 10 and sad to say there were not even 10

righteous people in two cities to withhold God's judgment.

- He also asks God in verse 25 a famous question that is quoted a lot in defense of the righteous indignation of our Holy God. *"That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: **Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?**"* Shall not the JUDGE of all the earth do right? Absolutely, unequivocally YES!
- See also how he approaches a HOLY GOD, not declaring any righteousness of his own, but acknowledging that he is but dust before God, verse 27, *"And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, **which am but dust and ashes.**"*

It is in the midst of all this that we are given a glimpse of the character, conviction and commitment of this GODLY man and GODLY father before God, that GOD HIMSELF, not Abraham, but God says this about Abraham in verse 19, *"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."* What a testimony before God, what would God say about you? What would He say about me? I know what He says about Abraham, but what would He say about us? What a blessing, *"FOR I KNOW HIM..."*

In God's description of Abraham we are reminded that in the book of Genesis, God's original plan for each father was utterly and completely dependent upon that father's communion with God. Now on the other side of the coin we must also understand that there is not one father who is capable of fulfilling this God-designed role apart from the grace, power and wisdom of God. But God has not left us alone He has given us His word and Holy Spirit to guide and instruct us on how to be godly fathers. The sad thing is when a father seeks to establish his autonomy from God, that is; his independence and isolate himself from God, that father will not succeed in fulfilling his God given role. Man left to him-self will raise children according to the wisdom of his own heart that has been affected by secular humanism.

Abraham was a different man who was totally dependent upon God, the Lord saved him in chapter 15 and so now he seeks to raise his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

What we see Genesis 18:19 is God's approval of Abraham's in seeking to raise his children in a godly way amidst the wicked and perversion that was in the world. Let us read verse 19 again, *"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."* I would like to share 3 things from this text:

- I. **A Godly Identification with Your Father.**
- II. **A Godly Involvement with Your Family.**
- III. **A Godly Investment with Your Future.**

First of all: **I. A Godly Identification with Your Father.** By father here in our first point I mean God the Father, that is; the importance of a relationship with God, yea, the blessing and joy of an intimate relationship with God the Father. If we are to be **GODLY FATHERS** we must have a relationship with the **HEAVENLY FATHER!** If we are to lead our families it begins with God. Psalms 127:1 very clearly says, *“Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”* I think that at times few of us fully grasp the blessings of having an intimate relationship with our heavenly Father. No doubt that Abraham knew and appreciated that intimate relationship with God that’s why he drew near to God and he looked as his heavenly father with awe and reverence. What a blessed relationship between God and Abraham, oh to God that we may learn something of this. We are reminded that all those in Christ, that is; all those whom God has saved have God as their Father in Romans 8:15 we see this, *“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”* If we are a father this morning and if God is our Father, then it means that this type of relationship includes at least 3 things under our first point on A Godly Identification with Your Father:

- A. A Spiritual Determination:
- B. A Spiritual Discourse:
- C. A Spiritual Dedication:

A. A Spiritual Determination: In our chief text in verse 19 it clearly states that God says, *“**For I know him**, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.”* God specifically says, **“I KNOW HIM.”** In other words, again it means that God had a relationship with Abraham and Abraham had a relationship with God. WOW, that’s powerful! Does God KNOW you? I’m not asking if God knows about you, God knows everything, what I am asking, does God know you in a personal relationship through His beloved Son Jesus Christ? Have you come to Christ for salvation to enter that special relationship with God? If not, do it now! Abraham believed in the LORD and it was counted to him for righteousness and this is why He had a relationship with God and where God could say, **“For I KNOW him.”** It was a reciprocal relationship and this special relationship cause Abraham to have

A SPIRITUAL DETERMINATION in seeking those things which are from above, in other words, Abraham sought those things that were spiritual and sought to walk in a sanctified life. He had spiritual discernment for his walk which was the impetus of his spiritual determination to serve God in a way that was well pleasing to God. Turn quickly to Romans 4 and let us see something of his spiritual determination: let's read verse 11-13, "*And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, **but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham**, which he had being yet uncircumcised. 13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*" We are to be walking in the same steps of faith of our father Abraham, that is; by faith we are to walking in the same manner so that we can have spiritual discernment to govern our families and it all begins with a SPIRITUAL DETERMINATION which includes also:

B. A Spiritual Discourse: Back to Genesis in chapter 18:verses 19-23, "*For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. 20 And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; 21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. 22 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: **but Abraham stood yet before the LORD. 23 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?**" Now it follows suit that because Abraham had a spiritual discernment and a godly determination, that he would have a spiritual discourse with God, or if you wish a spiritual dialogue with God. In other words Abraham would talk and pray to God and I believe that because of this spiritual discourse between them gave Abraham the wisdom and strength to be an intercessor for Sodom and Gomorrah, so that he could stand in the gap. The application of this is that godly fathers have the privilege to being intercessors for his wife and children, along for his siblings, parents, relatives, friends and neighbors. Father's when was the last time you had a spiritual discourse or dialogue with God for your wife, children and so forth? Have you stood in gap for your family and others? May God grace you to stand in the gap for those around you! I have shared the following verse before and I want to share again, the Lord gave me this verse for my children when they were little and I prayed for them and still pray for them, Lam.2:19, "*Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches **pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children**, that faint for hunger in the top of every street.*" We need to be constantly be reminded of that spiritual privilege we have as a redeemed people is the blessing and opportunity of prayer of*

if you wish the blessing of spiritual discourse with God our FATHER! Now a Spiritual Discernment and spiritual discourse begins thirdly with:

C. A Spiritual Dedication: Again at verse 19 it says, "***For I know him**, that he will command his children and his household after him ...*" The word command in the Hebrew is '**Tasvah**' which means to charge or give commission and or to order. It is a serious injunction that Abraham may instruct and direct his own children and entire household in a solemn reminder to shun Sodom's wicked ways and to keep the WAY of the LORD or is you wish, the WAY of YAHWEH! Abraham does this by instructing his wife and children to walk in the WAY of GOD. Abraham, above all things was spiritually dedicated to make sure his family would hear about the Living and True God. It takes a special person to be spiritually dedicated to the things of God. What an awful responsibility before God and your family in seeking to be spiritually dedicated. You see a dedicated father is one who fears God and keeps His commandments. This takes great conviction and dedication, oh dear fathers we must be established and grounded in the faith, in trusting and believing our God. We are all commanded to fear God and keep His commandments, but it is a great responsibility for the FATHER to be spiritually dedicated to this! Eccl. 12:13 & 14, "*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. 14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*" Even Moses when rehearsing the Law in Deuteronomy said in 5:29, "*O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!*" If you want to be a dedicated father you must hone up to your responsibility before God. Parents you are RESPONSIBLE for raising your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, it is not the government's duty to do this, it is YOURS! Thus a dedicated father will see this accountability before God and will seek to have a close walk with God in order to have a spiritual dedication, a spiritual discourse in prayer and a spiritual dedication to fear God and to keep His commandments. This is what it means to have A Godly Identification with your FATHER! Secondly:

II. A Godly Involvement with Your Family: Abraham blessings extended beyond his relationship with the Lord as it permeated over to his family. Notice the last part of verse 18 here in Genesis 18: "*Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, **and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?***" The world would be blessed because of this godly man. Oh what a privilege, to be use of the Lord in such a manner. What a blessing to be used to impact the lives of others. Better yet fathers, what a special privilege to be used of God to impact your immediate family, God call us to have an impact on the world,

that is; to salt and light, but the biggest impact you can have fathers is the impact on your wife and on your children. It's one thing to have in impact on the world, but if you ignore your foremost duty of impacting your family first, I'm sorry to inform you that you are a hypocrite, because your greatest and lifelong impact should be on your family first and then the world! No doubt God used Abraham to do both, may God grace you to be involved in the lives of your children and family in 3 specific ways:

A. We Are to be Involved in Our Family by Our Spiritual Counsel: The word command again in verse 19 also carries the idea of ISSUING ORDERS. A godly father has that special privilege and blessing of counseling his children to follow the commands of the Word of God. How much more to be involve in your children lives than by teaching them God's word, having short devotions with your children. What a blessing of being given the charge of sharing the Word of God to our own POSTERITY and to the generation that follows. What an immense joy to be able to share the truth of God with your children. Dear Fathers, you only have on life to live, live it to God before you family. Not only do you only have one life to live, but your children will only be young once, so teach them and counsel them with GODLY advice and mold their character while they are yet young. Not only are we to be involved by our spiritual counsel but secondly:

B. We are to be Involved in Our Family by Our Spiritual Consecration. Again in verse 19 it says "*For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him ...*" The phrase, "...his household after him..." has the idea of leaving a testimony and spiritual legacy for our children to follow. In other words it's not only our counsel, that is; our words, but also our action, our consecration before God which is our CHARACTER! Remember our children will remember our walk more than our words, thus our walk both private and publicly is what really matters. We have again been given that special privilege by God to mold our children in the way of God, which includes the importance of walking in integrity before our wives and our children. You cannot just be a Christian at church and act like the devil at home, your children will see your hypocrisy. What a needful testimony must be set by us in holy consecration to God. Remember again not only must our speech be consecrated to God but also our steps. Again, children will remember not so much what we say, but what we do as one writer put it, "***What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say.***" One of the most blessed text that speaks of our character in in Psalm 27:4, "*One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.*" Do your children see this conviction and consecration in your heart that no matter what, my father, my

daddy was always at church, whether it was Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night you would always find my daddy at church? Can your children say that or you always find excuses to miss church? Your children will remember if you were faithful to God's house or not, and the sad thing is, that when you decide to be dedicated to church it might be too late, for the damage has already been done. You see one day you are going to want your children to be faithful to church and if they're not it points back to you. Yes, it is an awful responsibility to be a consecrated father. Thirdly:

C. We Are to be Involved in Our Family by our Spiritual Commitment. Let's look at verse 19 again, "*For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, **and they shall keep the way of the LORD**, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*" We are to be involved in our family until the end, our wives and our children must see our spiritual commitment so that they themselves will follow in our footsteps. This verse teaches us that we can invest our life to our children and wife without fear, knowing that in due time, the Lord will see to it that a harvest will be reaped for the glory of His NAME! In other words what we say and do will not end when the children leave the nest or when we die, it will continue. It will bear fruit, we might not see it, but I believe that God is faithful and He will see to it. I love that verse in Revelation 14:12 & 13, "*Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. 13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*" I believe that if we are faithful to God, He will be faithful to us, as what it says in the middle of the verse in 1 Sam.2:30, "...for them that honour me I will honour..." Dear fathers your commitment and loyalty to you family will continue to bear fruit long after we have departed from this world. Therefore we must persevere and continue until they leave the nest or until we die and thus we must be involved in our family regarding our counsel, consecration and commitment! Thirdly and lastly:

III. A Godly Investment with Your Future: What Abraham didn't realize is that, one day his relationship with God as his Father and his relationship with his family would pay spiritual dividends in the future. What a glorious spiritual investment in the bank of Heaven and what a spiritual investment Abraham gave to the generations to come, to his children and his children children's. Because of Abraham's walk in godly integrity it affected his future posterity. In fact you and I are recipients of the fruit of Abraham's spiritual investment and Lord willing we pray that one day our posterity can look back and thank God for our spiritual investment. Abraham's investment with his future was:

A. Assured by God's Promises: Verse 19 again says, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." That last phrase "...that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." This teaches us that the promises of God are yea and in HIM! God is as good as His Word. When we see the spiritual investment of our lives before God we can also rest knowing that the Lord will honor those that honor Him. 1 Thess.5:24, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Let's set our heart upon God's word and upon His promises and let us be assured of His promises as Abraham was in Romans 4:20 & 21, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform." Let us be assured by God's promises but also:

B. Assured by God's Presence. In verse 19 again it says, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Here God refers to Himself by the name LORD, that Jehovah or Yahweh, the Self-Existent One, the One who fills all things and sees all things and knows all things. Abraham knew that he was being watched over the One who is always there. Jehovah Shammah, THE LORD IS THERE! (Ezek.48:35) What a blessing to dwell with the Living and True God who knows us intimately, yet loves us still and who refuses to leave us. Gal.4:6-9, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. 8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. 9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God..." What a blessing to be known of God, remember God says about Abraham, "For I know him..." We can be assured of God's promise and presence and thirdly:

C. Assured by God Power. Verse 19 again says, "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." God says to clearly that He will bring upon Abraham these precious promises and blessings and only a GOD with OMNIPOTENT POWER can promise and fulfill this! We still serve the SAME God who is ABLE to do everything He has promise, even more. If God promise to bless Abraham's posterity, He can also bless our posterity! Again, only a God with such power can perform this! Isaiah 44:1-8, "Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: 2 Thus saith the LORD that made

*thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen. 3 For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: **I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:** 4 And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. 5 One shall say, I am the LORD'S; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the LORD, and surname himself by the name of Israel. 6 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God. 7 And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people? and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them shew unto them. 8 Fear ye not, neither be afraid: have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ye are even my witnesses. Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any.” Ps.102:24 -28, “I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations. 25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: 27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. 28 The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.” God is all powerful and God is also able to perform and fulfilled what He has promised! Eph.3:20, “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” What a blessing we can be assured of God’s promises, we can be assured of God’s presence and we can be assured of God’s power.*

In simple words our future is safe in the hand of our Great God. Oh dear father’s invest everything you have in your family, to your wives and your children, your church and be committed to God to be the FATHER He wants you to be. By FAITH, FATHER’S believe God that He will fulfill that which He has promised and that one day you will see this fruit for HIS GLORY!

CONC: Father’s live up to your God given responsibility before God and used the spiritual privileges and blessings that God had given you. Thank God for the privileges and blessing of being a FATHER! Let us use the blessings of our relationship with God as our FATHER and the blessing of our relationship to our own immediately family. Be a David and seek to be a man after God’s own heart. Be the man who will fulfill God design for FATHERS! Be intimate with God and be involved in investing spiritual dividends for your family. Invest your life for the future, these are your privileges, may God grace to be the Father’s He wants us to be.

Let us have the conviction of Joshua in Joshua in 24:15, “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: **but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.**”

Let’s PRAY and Let’s SING: