

Genesis 18:16-19

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[0 : 00] So when Nathan texted me this morning and wondered if I had an old sermon I could dust off. I immediately thought of one that might be appropriate for today.

So if you'll turn with me to Genesis chapter 18, we'll look at a few verses there. Genesis 18 and I'll be reading from verse 16 to 19.

Then the men set out from there and they looked down towards Sodom. And Abraham went with them to set them on their way.

The Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation.

And all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him. For I have chosen him that he may command his children and his household after him.

[1 : 16] To keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice. So that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.

Father, thank you for your word. For its relevance over the years. And for the way your spirit uses it today to teach us.

To change us. To encourage and comfort us. And we pray that you would do that today. In Jesus name.

Amen. One of the common stereotypes of fathers is that they are passive and uninterested men who are not that involved in the lives of their children.

Stereotypes are typically exaggerations. But there is usually an element of truth in them. Consider this glimpse of a husband and father and see if you know him.

[2 : 28] Mom and dad were watching TV when mom said I'm tired and it's getting late and I think I'll go to bed. She went to the kitchen to make sandwiches for the next day's lunches.

Rinsed out the popcorn bowls. Took meat out of the freezer for supper the following evening. Checked the cereal box levels. Filled the sugar container. Put spoons and bowls on the table. And started the coffee pot for brewing the next morning.

She then put some wet clothes in the dryer. Put a load of clothes in the wash. Ironed a shirt and secured a loose button. She picked up the newspaper strewn on the floor.

Picked up game pieces left on the table. And put a telephone book back into the drawer. She watered the plants. Telephone book. This is an old story. Emptied the water basket.

Hung up a towel to dry. She yawned and stretched and headed for the bathroom. She stopped by the desk and wrote a note to the teacher. Counted out some cash for the field trip. And pulled a textbook out from hiding under the chair.

[3 : 33] She signed a birthday card to a friend. Addressed and stamped the envelope. And wrote a quick note for the grocery store. She put both near her purse.

Mom then creamed her face. Put on moisturizer. Brushed and flossed her teeth. And trimmed her nails. Rubby called. I thought you were going to bed. I'm on my way. She said. She put some water into the dog's dish.

And put the cat outside. Made sure the doors were locked. She looked on each of the kids. And turned out a bedside lamp. Hung up a shirt. Threw some dirty socks in the hamper. And had a brief conversation with one still up.

Doing homework. In her room she set an alarm. Laid out clothing for the next day. Straightened up the shoe rack. She added three things to her list of things to do for tomorrow. At that time the hubby turned off the TV.

Announced to no one in particular. I'm going to bed. And he did. This would probably have been a better illustration for Mother's Day.

[4 : 34] But I realize it's not so flattering. But I think even though we can laugh at ourselves. There's a more serious note involved.

This isn't just illustrative of a stereotypical personality difference between men and women. And that we often observe. But it's a fundamental spiritual crisis.

Men have lost their sense of moral and spiritual responsibility. The problem isn't a minor one. Is it? Many in our day are addressing it. We are aware of the various men's movements that have arisen in the last generation. Or recent decades. And what most of these voices are saying is that reform is necessary.

And it needs to begin with fathers at home. Genesis 18-19 is one of the key scriptural insights for such a contention.

[5 : 42] It illustrates God's way of accomplishing his plan. Through his relationship with a father. Abraham. It indicates in general that God will accomplish his plans.

Through the faithful involvement of those he chooses. And his choices are often simply natural choices.

I believe we can conclude from this passage. That you who are fathers here today have a crucial role. As well.

In God's plan. From this passage. I would like to consider two truths. That can be applied to. Our need. For reform. First of all.

Look at the initial. Phrase. In verse. 19. Verse 19.

[6 : 42] For I. Have chosen. Him. Here our attention is drawn to. God's choice of one man. At one particular time.

Named Abraham. And he mentions this choice. Of Abraham. In the context. Of Abraham's role. In the broader gospel. Gospel. In gospel history.

If you think about the context for a moment. The Lord. Himself. Along with two. Angels. Came to visit Abraham. To announce to him.

That he was going to have. A son. What an amazing entourage. For. A birth announcement. Amen. After eating with Abraham.

And informing him. About the son. Through Sarah. The trio. Headed towards Sodom. And the Lord. Seemed to be talking to himself.

[7 : 44] When he asked. Shall I hide from Abraham. What I'm about to do. Since. Abraham. Will surely become a great. And mighty nation. And in him. All the nations of the earth.

Will be blessed. Christ. Then God proceeds. To explain to Abraham. About the great evil. He was investigating. At Sodom. And Gomorrah.

And how he would deal with them. Contrary to popular belief. God is very interested. In the affairs. Of this world.

God is actively. Involved. God. And I think. God's involvement. And God's choices. The things God. Does.

Anytime. He does anything. Reveals. A great deal. About him. About who he is. About what he's like. God.

[8 : 42] Is our father. The scripture tells us. And his choices. His plans. His decisions. His words. His actions. Communicate. What a real father.

Is like. Fathers plan. Fathers choose. Fathers are involved. With their children. Fathers are interested. In their children's. Moral and spiritual.

Well-being. Being created. In God's image. We men. Must. Measure ourselves. As fathers. By God himself. A Greek. Orthodox. Scholar. Sees.

The crisis. As well. And he. Wrote. Several. Books. On the topic. But. In speaking of God.

[9 : 37] The father. He says. When we look. At the father. We do not see. A passive. Uninterested. Father. Who refuses.

To be involved. Not at all. We see. One who loves. One whose. Affection. Publicly. Bursts. From heaven.

Upon his son. Declaring. You. Are my beloved son. In whom. I am well pleased. Christ. I think.

It's interesting. That God. Chose Abraham. Gave him that name. But his name. In its. Essence. Both. Before and after. The name change.

Means father. And. Abraham. Means father. Of a multitude. His choice. Here. In Genesis. Is made.

[10:30] In the context. Of his role. As a father. Now. Notice. Next. That. God's choice. Of Abraham. Was. For a very specific. Purpose.

Verse 19. Continues. For I have chosen him. That. He may command. His children. And household. After him. To keep the way. Of the Lord. By doing. Righteousness. And justice. I think. One truth. We can glean.

From God's choice. Of Abraham. Is that. A father's. Primary. Responsibility. In God's plan. Is to oversee. The moral.

And spiritual. Development. Of his children. That's what God. Points. Out here. About Abraham. Almost. Saying.

[11:24] That the reason. Why he's. Where he is. In God's plan. Is because of this. Is. Not sure. That's. We can derive. That completely.

But. That's. Seems to be. An implication here. And the passage. Shows us. What a father does. He oversees. The development.

Of his children. And his household. A father. Doesn't just. Make babies. He doesn't. Just bring. Home. Money. To feed them. He's involved.

In his household. Spiritual development. He doesn't. Hand over. The responsibility. To the state. Or. Or to. The church. Or to his wife.

These might. Have a role. An important one. But. The responsibility. Belongs. To him. The word. He chooses.

[12:19] Here. To designate. That is. That he may. Command. In the Hebrew. It's simply. To give charge. To command. And to order. It's an. It's a word. That. Indicates.

Authority. And. Paternal. Authority. Implied. By this word. Is. Good. And. God. Ordained. Authority. I know.

Today. That is. A hot. Topic. Because. Authority. In the minds. Of many. And truly. So. Is abusive. But.

Authority. Is. Only. Abusive. When. It's. Mixed. With. Self. Interest. Just. Like. Drinking. And. Driving. Don't. Mix. Neither.

Do. Authority. And. Self. Serving. They. Just. Don't. Amit. They. Don't. Mix. God. Never. Intended. That. Kind. Of. Thing. But. Authority. Itself.

[13:13] The. Way. God. Designed. It. Doesn't. Mean. Abuse. At. All. There. Is. A. Godly. Way. To. Lead. And.

It's. A. Mixture. Of. Influence. And. Example. And. Discipline. I. Believe. God. Wants. Fathers. To. Exercise. Exercise. Authority. In. Spiritual. Matters.

God. Want. God. Wants. You. Fathers. And. You. Budding. Fathers. To. Understand.

Spiritual. Authority. And. Exercise. It. In. Your. Homes. God. Wants. You. Fathers. To. Use. Influence. Example. And. Discipline. To. Oversee.

The. Spiritual. Development. Of. Your. Own. I. Think. It's. The. Neglect. Of. This. Responsibility. That. Defines. Our. Crisis. Today. In.

[14:12] An. Essay. Called. Where. Is. Dad. A. Call. For. Fathers. With. Spirit. Of. Elijah. By. The. Same. Author. I. Mentioned. Previously. Weldon. Hardenbrook.

He. Wrote. I. Humbly. But. Firmly. Submit. That. The. Soul. Of. Our. Nation. Is. In. A. Crisis. Large. Part. Because. American. Men. Have. From.

Ignorance. Or. For. Various. And. Sometimes. Even. Subconscious. Reasons. Abandoned. Their. God. Given. Role. Of. Fatherhood. They. Have. Discarded. The. Notion. Of. Being. Responsible. For. The. Physical. And. Spiritual. Well. Being. Of. Those. Around. Them. A. Series. Of. Historical. Events. Beginning. With. The. Industrial. Revolution. Traversing.

The. Search. For. American. Independence. And. The. Second. Great. Awakening. And. Culminating. In. Victorian. Has. Had. The. Net. Result. Of. Dis. Establishing.

[15:05] American. Men. From. The. True. Role. Of. Fatherhood. And. Moral. Leadership. In. Our. Land. The. American. Male. At. One. Time. The. Ever. Present. Guide. Of. The. Close. Knit. Colonial. Family.

Left. His. Family. For. The. Factory. And. The. Materialistic. Lure. That. The. Industrial. Revolution. Brought. Well.

If. This. Is. So. What. Is. This. Responsibility. What. Is. Moral. And. Spiritual. Development. That. Fathers. Should. Be. In.

In. It. Seen. In. The. Phrase. To. Keep. The. Way. Of. The. Lord. By. Doing. Righteousness. And. Justice. This.

Is. An. Important. Theme. In. The. Scriptures. Right. Relationship. Right. Relationships. With. Others. Spiritual. Development.

[15:59] Begins. By. Seeing. The. Importance. Of. Getting. Along. With. Other. People. This. Getting. Along. Is. Encapsulated. In. The. Golden. Rule.

Do. Unto. Others. The. Height. The. Peak. Of. Jesus. His. Own. Teaching. Was. Do. Unto. Others. What. You.

Would. Have. Them. Do. To. You. It's. Relational. God. Is. Interested. In. Our. Relationships. With. Other. People. God.

Wants. To. Be. Evolved. And. Have. A. Word. And. Have. A. Say. In. How. We. Treat. Each. Other. And.

That's. The. Essence. Of. Righteousness. And. Justice. It. Is. God. Not. The. World. That. Defines.

[16:51] Righteousness. And. Justice. And. A. Chosen. Father. Works. To. Instill. The. Values. Of. Righteousness. In. His. Children. For.

A. Father. To. Teach. His. Own. To. Stand. Up. For. Himself. Seems. Noble. And. Right. But. God. Teaches. Us. To. Turn. The. Other. Cheek. The.

Philosophy. Of. Some. Don't. Start. A. Fight. But. Finish. It. Have. Any. Of. You. Heard. That. Before. Or. Walk. Away. From. It. Both. Extremes.

Fall. Short. Of. True. Righteousness. Jesus. Taught. Do. Good. To. Those. Who. Persecute. You. To. Do. Well. For. Yourself. Or.

To. Seek. To. Serve. Others. Reflects. Two. Major. Contrasting. World. Views. And. Jesus. Himself.

[17:45] Saw. His. Purpose. In. Life. As. A. Son. To. Serve. Others. That's. How. He. Saw. Himself. That's.

The. Relationship. He. Envisioned. Of. Himself. In. His. Mission. Was. To. Serve. Others. Mark. 10. 45. The. Son. Of. Man. Did. Not.

Come. To. Be. Served. But. To. Serve. How. Do. We. Respond. To. The. Evil. Around. Us. Especially.

In. Relationship. To. Our. Children. Do. We. Do. We. Throw. Them. To. The. Lions. You. know. Just. Throw. Them. Out. And. Let. Them. Get. Tough. Do.

We. Completely. Isolate. Them. We. Can. Only. Do. That. So. Long. Or. Do. We. Intentionally. Train.

[18:38] Them. How. To. Respond. And. That's. Difficult. Because. It. Requires. An. Example. It. Requires. Determination.

And. Time. And. Help. But. I. Believe. We. Must. Do. It. Because. It's. The. The. Father. This. Kind. Of. Spiritual. Oversight. Is. God's. Way. Of. Accomplishing. The. Gospel. He. Chose. To.

Recreate. He. Chose. To. Redeem. And. He. Chose. The. Method. Through.

Which. He. Would. Accomplish. His. Plan. And. That. Method. Was. Through. The. Influence. Through. The. Participation. Of.

Faithful. People. Now. The. Importance. Of. This. Method. Is. The. Second. Truth. That. Is. Implied. In. The. Last. Part. Of. The. Verse. Let's. Look. There. Again. In.

[19:31] Order. That. The. Lord. May. Bring. Upon. Abraham. What. He. Has. Spoken. Or. What. He.

Has. Promised. Him. I. Think. This. Is. A. Great. Paradox. In. The. Scriptures. God. Generally. Accomplishes.

His. Sovereign. Plans. Involving. Us. In. Conjunction. With. Our. Faith. If.

We're. Faithful. To. The. Gospel. We. Have. To. Say. God. Is. Sovereign. God. Does. What. He.

Wants. God. And. Not. We. Are. The. Ones. Who. Accomplish. What. Needs. To. Be. Done. If.

Any. Of. Us. Depends. Upon. Ourselves. To. Change. Ourselves. Or. To. Do. God's. Work. We're.

Way. Out. Of. Line. Because. We. Cannot. Do. The. Real. Work. Of. God. Because.

[20:22] It's. Not. Our. Ability. To. Do. It. We. Couldn't. Even. If. We. Were. Close! And.

That. Means. Here. That. The. Spiritual. Oversight. Of. Abraham. Is. The. Way. Through. Which.

God. Will. Accomplish. His. Redemptive. Purposes. With. Israel. And.

With. The. World. I. Don't. Think. We. Should. Overlook. An. Important. Element. Of. This.

Truth. What. God. Had. Promised. To. Accomplish. Through. Abraham. Was. To. Make. Him. A. Great. And. Mighty. Nation. But.

Also. That. In. Him. All. The. Nations. Would. Be. Blessed. When. The. Apostle. Paul. Looked. Back. At. This. Passage. And. Understood. What.

[21 : 27] Was. Being. Implied. At. Least. Where. That. Here. At. This. Verse. And. Then. Earlier. Where. God. Actually. Told. Abraham. That. Galatians.

Three. Eight. Do. you. See. What's. Being. Said. Here. God's. Choice. Of. Abraham. Was. A. Determination. To. Make. Him.

A. Certain. Way. So. That. The. World. Would. Be. Blessed. By. The. Coming. Of. Jesus. Abraham's. Faithfulness. As. A.

Father. Enabled. God. To. Bring. The. Promised. Son. And. Messiah. Now.

I. Understand. Again. This. Is. One. Passage. To. One. Man. In. One. Historical. Moment. About.

[22 : 26] A. Very. Significant. Perhaps. The. Most. Significant. Event. In. All. Of. History. The. Coming. Of. Christ. And. His. Crucifixion. On. Our. Behalf. That. The. World. Would. Be.

Blessed. I. Understand. That. But. I. Believe. That. That. Truth. Is. Not. Some.

Major. Deviance. From. What. God. Does. I. Believe. That. That. Truth. Applies.

For. For. The. Transmission. Of. The. Gospel. From. One. Generation. To. The. Next. As. As. As. For. The. Strengthening. Of. The. Church. This. Is. God's. Intent. This.

Is. How. God's. Understanding. Of. What. Fatherhood. Is. He. Is. The. Father. And. He. Created. Fathers. For. A. Particular. Purpose.

[23 : 19] And. I. Believe. God. Is. Failures. With.

All. Our. Inconsistencies. With. I. Mean. Humanness. Levels. Us. All. And.

It's. Not. Really. Skill. That. God. Is. Looking. For. It's. Simply. Understanding. What. He. Made. You. To. Be. And. Submitting. To. To. To. Do.

That. To. Accomplish. It. Through. You. Some. Have. Devoted. Some. Have. Not. A. Development. Sixty. Years. I.

Had. Forty. Years. Here. So. That. Must. Mean. I. Actually. Wrote. This. Twenty. Years. Ago. But.

[24 : 11] In. The. Sixties. There. Was. A. Great. Exodus. From. Government. Schools. As. A. Result. Of. The. Budding. Youth. Rebellion. That. Was. Going. On. In. Those. Days. And.

Yes. I. Was. A. Kid. During. That. Time. But. That. Exodus. Resulted. In. A. A. Strong. Modern. Christian.

School. Movement. And. Then. In. The. Seventies. Many. Recognized. That. This. Wasn't. Enough. It. Wasn't. Enough. Just. To. Remove.

Their. Children. Many. Christians. To. Remove. Their. Children. From. Government. Schools. But. They. Must. Teach. Them. To. Think. Differently. Because. There. Was. A. Prevalence.

Of. Of. A. Philosophy. Of. Education. That. Was. Going. Around. Even. In. Christian. Schools. That. Deemphasized. The. Rules. Of. Parents. And. And. Perpetuated. A.

[25 : 04] A. Similar. Age. Segregated. One. Size. Fits. All. Classroom. Model. Developed. By. John. Dewey. And. What. Resulted. Was. A. Generation. Of. Youth. Who. Frankly. Rejected.

The. Influence. Of. Their. Parents. And. Peer. Dependency. And. Even. In. Christian. School. Movement. The. Movement. Was. Was. Not. Breaking. Free. From. That. Attitude. I.

Remember. As. A. Junior. High. Student. In. 1973. 72. We. Had. A. Friend. Who. Got. Caught. Smoking. In.

The. Bushes. On. The. Playground. And. Next. Thing. We. Knew. He. Was. Expelled. And. And. His. Parents. Sent. Him. To.

Christian. School. That's. That's. What. We. Understood. I. Wasn't. A. Believer. At. The. Time. So. For. Us. Oh. You. Don't. Want. To. Get. Sent. To. Christian. School. That's. Where. Bad. People. Go. But.

[26 : 04] Then. In. The. Eighties. We. Mean. That. There. Weren't. People. Homeschooling. Before. That. It. Just. Something. Happened.

And. A. lot. Of. People. Just. Began. To. Homeschool. Their. Children. But. What. Was. Particular. About. This. Movement. It.

Was. That. It. Was. Primarily. Mother. Led. And. They. Were. In. The. Discipleship. Of. Their. Children. At. Home. And. It. Was. A. An. Amazing.

Movement. So. Much. So. That. In. The. Nineties. The. Fathers. Begin. To. See. The. Results. Of. This. And. They. Begin. To. Take. Notice. And. They. So. So. Men. To. Get. In. In. In. So. Men. Began. To. Take. A. Renewed. Interest. In. Their. Families. In. Discipleship. At. Home. And. Family. Through.

[27 : 04] Attack. And. Through. Moral. Failure. But. Also. Through. The. Stabilizing. And. Elimination. Of. Some. Of. The. Extremes. And. And.

So. On. But. The. Return. Of. The. Fathers. To. The. Responsibility. A. Spiritual. Leader. In. The. Home. Is. Still. Going. On. And. There. A. A. Lot. Of. Different. Context. In. Which. That. Is. Taking. Place. But. I. Believe. That. Genesis. 18. Verses. 16. Through. 19. Teaches. Us. Is. That. God. Will. Accomplish. His. Plans. Through. The. Faithful. Involvement.

Of. Those. He. Chooses. For. A. Father. This. Means. That. You. Have. A. Crucial. Role. In. The. Plan. In. Summary. God. Is. A. Father.

Who. And. God. Generally.

[27 : 56] Accomplishes. His. Plan. In. Conjunction. With. Human. Faithfulness. And. Even. Frailty. The.

Gospel. Has. Always. Been. About. God. His. Plan. Glorious. End. As. Well. As. The. Amazing. Process. God's. Ability. To.

Accomplish. That. Plan. And. The. Distinct. Roles. Of. Father. And. Son. And. Spirit. To. Carry. Out. That. Plan.

But. It's. Also. Been. About. God's. Use. Of. Fallen. Humans. In. The. Process. That. Includes. The. Basic. Roles. Of. Life. Motherhood. Fatherhood.

It. Takes. Faith. To. Be. An. Effective. Parent. Because. Really. Raising. Children. And.

[28 : 52] Changing. Them. Is. God's. Work. Where. Are. You. In. The. Process. Of. This. Today. Perhaps. You. Think. You. Really. Aren't. Interested.

In. This. I. Would. Just. Encourage. You.

You. Don't. You. Don't. Aren't. Involved. In. This. Process. You. You. Because. You. Don't. Know. How. To. Well. That's. An. Honest. Humble. Response. And. I. Would. Just.

Encourage. You. To. Make. Every. Effort. To. Learn. How. Or. Perhaps. You're. Doing. It. But. You. Don't. Think. You're. Doing. It. Very. Well. That's.

Many. Of. Us. And. Yeah. We. Must. Continue. Or. Perhaps. You're. One. Of. Those. That. Is. Doing. As.

[29 : 51] My. Children. Can. Tell. You. That. I. Still. Need. Help. Maybe. You're. Not. A. Father. But. One. Day. You. Might. Be.

One. I. Think. It's. Important. Time. To. Think. About. That. Role. Ahead. Of. The. Wedding. Day. Or. The. Surprise. After. Nine.

Month. Or. A. Little. Bit. Longer. Prepare. yourself. Perhaps. You. Never. Will. Be. But. There's. There's. Simply. A. Recognition. Here. Of. God's. Way. Of. Doing. Things. And. I. Think. We. Can. All. Support. What. God. Does. I.

Know. That. God. Doesn't. Do. The. Same. Thing. With. Anybody. Or. With. Everybody. There. There. Are. Prophets. That. God. Has. Used. In. The. Scriptures. Who. Never.

[30 : 43] Had. Any. Children. And. That's. God's. Plan. For. Them. And. For. Many. And. Yet. I.

Don't. Think. You. Would. Argue. With. Me. But. There. Are. Normative. Ways. In. Which. God. Works. And. Think. This. Is. A. Major. One. And. The. Reason. Why. It's. Had. Such. An. Impact. Today. Is. Because.

It. Is. God's. Way. Of. Doing. Things. Skill. Like. I. said. Before. Is. Not. Necessary. But. Availability. Is. What. God. Seeks. If. I. Were. To. Ask. You. How. You. Carried. Out. Your. Responsibility. Or. Let's. Let's. Say. God. Asked. You. What.

Would. You. Say. I. Told. Them. Lord. But. They. Didn't. Listen. To. Me. I. Don't. Think. That'll. Get. You. Off. The. Hook. A.

[31 : 38] Father. Makes. Sure. That. It. Gets. Done. Let's. Determine. To. Help. One. Another. In. This. Great. Task. Of. Building. Stable.

Individuals. Strong. Families. And. Effective. Church. Let's. Determine. As. Fathers. To.

Be. Christ. Centered. Bible. Bible. Saturated. Humble. Seeking.

Men. Who. Know. That. You. Need. God's. Help. And. I. Believe. God. Will. Continue. To. Do. What. He. Does. Best. Let's.

Pray.