

The Gospel Project



DailyLife
Five Oaks Church

Week 9: November 5–11, 2016

Day 1

November 7



Pray | Pray your faith will be strong enough to wait for God's promises.

CAMPAIGN PROMISES FROM presidential candidates often seem impractical at best, insincere at worst, usually forgotten, and left only as broken disappointments to the people they were supposed to help. The Internet is filled with fact-checking about how truthful the candidates are being about, well, pretty much everything!

How incredible that God, in his usual fashion, turns the world and its patterns and expectations inside out. When God makes a promise, you can check the facts; he is able to do that which he has promised and so much more. So far as his record goes, he has already delivered on, or will deliver on in the future, everything he has ever promised in the Bible. Based on his fulfilled promises, he is trustworthy. Put your faith in the only one in whom there never will be disappointment. Jesus alone is the one true King.



Read | Genesis 3:15; 12:1-3



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

All descendants of Adam and Eve have a true enemy with whom we are at war. In truth, by listening to Satan and choosing sin over obedience to God, we also chose war with God as well. Why is it important to know who our true enemy is? Only God will offer you terms of surrender that lead to peace and forgiveness.

God mandated that mankind fill the earth. There was Adam and Eve, then God's reboot with Noah, and now, through Abraham's descendants, he plans to make a great nation and bless all families of the earth. There is a new, or at least more obvious, layer in the last. God is willing to bless Abraham and, through him, the whole world. When you consider being "blessed," are your tendencies toward the physical, such as good health, wealth, and being well known? Or are they toward the spiritual? Are the two mutually exclusive or inclusive in God's plan?

Consider what you know about why God chose Abraham, his qualifications, skills, and influence. What hope do you find that God chose him and that he chooses you?

Day 2

November 8



Pray / Pray for patience to give God time to do as he promises.

PERHAPS YOU'VE HAD one of those situations in your life where you know God will take care of “that” particular situation. Your faith is even strengthened, based on his past proven reliability. There is only one problem: you are your own worst enemy, and instead of patiently waiting on the Lord, you are looking for all the possible ways you can put the pieces in just the right places so that all God has to do is pull it off for you—but only if you can't get it figured out on your own while you're waiting for him to act. Perhaps your thought is that it would of course be better for everyone if God would just get it resolved already.

As you read today's passage, think back to what Abraham and Sarah tried to deliver for God, in their own way, on his promise of an heir.



Read / Genesis 25:19–26



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

Every family needs one thing to survive: babies. No children, no future. For the second time in as many generations, Abraham's family seems to be having baby problems, and God's promise seems unattainable, again. How is Isaac's choice in dealing with the issue different from (better than) his father Abraham's very human solution in previous chapters of Genesis?

Does the fact that God uses flawed people, younger brothers, and some of the least expected people to accomplish his plans bring you encouragement and free you to do what he wants you to do in your life (for his kingdom and glory)?

Ponder: If your faith remains untested, is it really faith at all?

Day 3

November 9



Pray / Thank God that he is a God of the unworthy and undeserving.

NO MATTER THE DREAM, goal, or promise you are holding on to, there will be setbacks along the way. Sometimes it is easy to get discouraged, disappointed, and even disenchanted in the waiting. Remember, Isaac is only the second generation of God's promise to Abraham to bless and multiply his family. We've already had to deal with two generations of fertility issues in creating heirs, and here we are in Genesis 26, verse 1, in the midst of a second famine. If only God were more like us, he may have revoked his promise when Abraham and Sarah started their love triangle. Even with the barrenness issue being resolved by God, Isaac certainly could have said, "No, really. Thank you, God, but I think we'll go back to how it used to be once famine number two had set in."

Yet in the midst of things going south, as it were, God appears to Isaac to re-assure him of the promise and instruct him in what to do. Isaac, like Abraham, listened.



Read / Genesis 26:1-6



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

Nowhere do we read that Abraham and Isaac listened and obeyed to the full letter of God's expectations. Rather, God continues to bless them in spite of their imperfect lifestyles, decision-making skills, and tendencies to lie when it suits them. What reasons do you think cause people, even believers in Christ, to tend to think that their actions and shortcomings somehow will negate God's promises to them?

You are either optimistically pessimistic about life or pessimistically optimistic about it. It does not really matter where you are on that fictitious spectrum. What does matter is how it affects your reaction to the things life throws at you. Determine if you see detours, hardships, and unplanned circumstances as opportunities or disappointments. Does God remind you of your unworthiness and his grace in keeping his promises to you? Or, are they simply more reasons why things are just not going to work out? Which view do you think God wants you to take, and what things can you do to get there?

Day 4

November 10



Pray / Pray that you will be truthful just as God is truthful.

YESTERDAY'S INTRODUCTION POINTED OUT that God could have revoked his promises. Although technically true because he is God, it was a covenantal promise in which God said he'd uphold the covenant regardless of Abraham's performance. Scripture is clear that in God there is no falsehood. God represents things as they really are. Everything He says can be trusted because God guarantees the truth of everything He tells us. Telling the truth is one way we can bear the image of God, whose Son is "the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6).

Paul is unique in that his knowledge was not gained from being physically present during Jesus' ministry. Instead, his wisdom came from studying under the leading religious leaders of the time. Perhaps more importantly, he miraculously received knowledge through Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The result: he ceased being the persecutor and became the apostle Paul through God's amazing grace.



Read / Titus 1:1–3; Hebrews 6:13–20



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

Paul had such depth of insight into God because he was trained and prepared by God. His authority came from his knowledge and training but primarily because of the authority and credibility of the one whom he was representing: God. What are some reasons it is important that we serve and worship a God who never lies?

The opposite of something that is true is something that is a lie. The whole of the Bible is a history of the consequences from mankind's believing that God, who created it all, was holding out on us and does not really understand what's best for us, but instead, somehow we do. Make no mistake: God's truth and the devil's lies are opposites but definitely not equals. How can you ensure that you are consistently speaking God's truth in a world that fluently speaks the devil's lies?

Has there ever been a time when your actions, or specifically, your untruthfulness, may have kept someone either from coming to faith or damaged their faith?

Day 5

November 11



Pray / Pray that you look forward to spending eternity with God.

IN THE CURRENT age of technological and mechanical wonders, it's easy to get caught up in all the features and miss the obvious fundamentals. Take automobiles, for example. They come with navigation systems, entertainment systems, can communicate with and through our smartphones, and even call for help automatically when we get into an accident. They come with smart temperature sensors, automatic lights and wipers, autobraking, self-driving abilities, rear and 360-degree cameras and radar, power everything, and night vision. It may be easy to forget that we are getting a vehicle also capable of providing us transportation.

Is it possible that we are doing the same to God, seeing him for his benefits of eternal life in heaven, such as no more sickness or sadness, and forgetting that it is his very presence that lights the new heaven and earth, and that is what we are to desire most?



Read / Genesis 28:10–22



Reflect | Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

The third generation of God's promise to Abraham has his grandson, a master deceiver, on the run. What happens next is incredible. Instead of a troubled night of sleep prompted by Jacob's guilty conscience, God himself shows up in Jacob's dream. Angels move between heaven and earth, and God speaks, reminding Jacob of his promise to Abraham and Isaac. What happens next that shows change in Jacob?

God speaks in different ways to each of us. Think about the ways you have seen or heard from him in your life. Was your response like Jacob's, where your life takes a 180-degree turn to align with God's plan?

Consider Jacob's statement, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it" and Paul's words in Acts 17:24–25. Where should you expect God?

Portions of this study were adapted from The Gospel Project Chronological: The Story Begins, Vol. 1, Adult Personal Study Guide ESV (Nashville, TN: LifeWay Christian Resources, 2015). Used by permission.

Unless indicated otherwise, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved.