

SERMON NOTES

When Change Changes People (Genesis 13 - 14) **Seasons of Change sermon series** **By Pastor David Hillis, 08.27.17**

BIG IDEA: God calls us to be countercultural and prioritize people over possessions, because relationships matter.

God promises to bless us as we prioritize people over possessions. (Genesis 13:8-9, 14-17; Luke 6:38)

Because Relationships Matter, We Prioritize Them By:

1. **Choosing to be a peacemaker.** (Genesis 13:8-9; Matthew 5:9; Romans 14:19; Hebrews 12:14) Blessed are the peacemakers, who go into hate, who stare it down with unconditional arms of love. They don't push people away, waiting for them to change, but instead embracing the hater, they show him or her that love conquers all.
2. **Choosing to be irrationally generous.** (Genesis 13:10-18; Luke 6:38; 1 Timothy 6:10) It's one thing to be generous; to give in a way that blesses someone. It's another thing to be irrationally generous; to be generous when we know it means we're going to do without.

In the end, we all come to realize that life is about relationships. When this life is over, we won't take a single possession with us that we fought so hard to get and hold onto. All we will take – is relationships – with God and with each other!

MY NEXT STEP: Do you ever prioritize possessions over people? **How might you better prioritize relationships (at Grace & elsewhere) so they can grow in the midst of changes in your life?**

QUESTIONS FOR MY TIME WITH GOD:

1. Read Genesis 13-14. In this passage, Abram is the picture of unselfishness and generosity, giving Lot the first pick of the land, and rescuing Lot from an invading army. This is set in contrast to Lot's selfish ambitions. How about you? Do you truly believe that God will provide for you? How does this impact how generous you are to others?
2. Review Genesis 13:8-13. When have you been captivated by the idea of something and made a choice that in hindsight was not wise? How did that experience allow you to see that things are not always as they seem? Can you recall moments you have resisted the allure of something because you felt that it was not a part of God's plan? What did you learn about God and about yourself from that situation?
3. Review Genesis 14:14-16. In this narrative Abram selflessly rescued Lot. When have you been able to help someone through the consequences of poor decisions? When has someone generously bailed you out of a poor choice? Is there anyone in your life that you are in a position to help? What is our responsibility to those who are facing the consequences of their poor decisions? How can we be generous without enabling them to continue to make poor decisions?
4. In the sermon we discovered that covetousness (an insatiable appetite for more things) leads to all kinds of evil. Take a look at Proverbs 15:27, 21:6, 22:16 and 28:8 and discover how these kind of change of the heart changes people. Can you find aspects of yourself in any of these verses?
5. Next week we will continue this series on change by looking at what to do when the change you are looking forward to — change perhaps that God has promised you — takes too long in coming to pass. Feel free to read ahead in Genesis 15-16, noticing how Abram and Sarai reacted when they felt they had waited long enough for God to fulfill his promise of a child.. How would you have acted in their situation? How is God wanting to teach you about waiting for change today? Share your discoveries with Pastor Dave in the comments of the "Hello" card online during the week at myGrace.church!

PRAYERS FOR MY TIME WITH GOD: Broken Families

Pray for the families at Grace, and in our community, who are living in brokenness and hurt. May God reveal His unconditional love to them and provide healing and hope for restoration.