

1. We have been studying the life of Abraham
 - a. It is the picture of the Christian life & growing in faith & knowledge
2. Abraham committed the same sin over again b/c of lack of faith
3. He was learning to trust God, but it does take time & communion w/ God
 - a. Time, by itself, doesn't help someone mature in Christ
 - b. It is interesting that Scripture makes it clear that dwelling on God's Word & being filled w/ the Holy Spirit produce the same fruit
 - i. They go together

01. The Word of God dwelling in you

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

¹⁷ Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

02. Communing w/ the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 5:18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,

¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;

²⁰ always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

- c. Christ spoke of this to His disciples

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

John 15:26 "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *that is* the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me,

John 16:13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

¹⁴ "He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose *it* to you.

¹⁵ "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose *it* to you.

- d. Every believer in the Church age can know Scripture b/c of the Holy Spirit

1 John 2:20 (ESV) But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.

- e. So, Abraham is learning to trust God

Genesis 21:1 Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised.

V.2 So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him.

1. "Sarah...bore a son...at the appointed time of which God had spoken"

- a. It happened just like God said it would!
 - i. The sovereignty of God leaps off the pages of Scripture
- b. He is all powerful
 - i. He is before all things & He created everything that exist
 01. Nothing exist that He didn't create
 - ii. He is holding everything together right now

Colossians 1:17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

- iii. No one or nothing has ever thwarted His plan
- iv. He controls the universe
- v. He controls the comings & goings of men
- vi. He set your birth – where you live –you're parents – when you will die
- vii. Someone will say, "What about sin?"
- viii. God doesn't make anyone sin – He can't be tempted & doesn't tempt men

- ix. By His own sovereign will He allows men to sin
- x. But He even controls sin
- xi. There is no better example of that than Sennacherib (king of Assyria)
- xii. A portion of Israel's history includes Sennacherib
- xiii. But there is considerable Assyrian history written on official clay prisms
- xiv. Here is a portion of Sennacherib's own writings:

"As for Hezekiah the Jew, who did not submit to my yoke, forty-six of his strong walled cities, as well as the small cities in their neighborhood, which were without number—by constructing a rampart out of trampled earth and by bringing up battering rams, by the attack of infantry, by tunnels, breaches and *the use of axes*, I besieged and took: 200,150 men, young *and* old, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen and sheep without number I brought out from them, I counted as spoil. *Hezekiah* himself I shut up like a caged bird in Jerusalem, his royal city; the walls I fortified against him, *and* whosoever came out of the gates of the city, I turned back. His cities, which I had plundered, I divided...Hezekiah himself was overwhelmed by the fear of the brightness of my lordship...With thirty talents of gold *and* eight hundred talents of silver, precious stones...to Nineveh, the city of my lordship, I caused to be brought after me; and he sent his ambassadors to give tribute and to pay homage." (sic)
- xv. All this is true & took place at Lachish in 2 Kings 18:14.
- xvi. In the British Museum there is a wall relief from his palace at Nineveh that depicts this event.
- xvii. Sennacherib is represented seated upon a throne receiving men bearing presents. In front of the king's head are these words: "Sennacherib, the king of the world, the king of Assyria, sat on his throne, and the spoil of the city of Lachish marched before him." With the words, given above, of tribute and embassies of homage Sennacherib concluded his account of his campaigns to the west. (Merrill Unger)

xviii. Do you know why this concludes his written story? Because God is sovereign – even over sin

2 Kings 19:1 And when King Hezekiah heard *it*, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth and entered the house of the LORD.

V.5 So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah.
⁶ Isaiah said to them, "Thus you shall say to your master, 'Thus says the LORD, "Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me.

V.20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah saying, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Because you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard *you*.'

V.22 'Whom have you reproached and blasphemed? And against whom have you raised *your* voice, And haughtily lifted up your eyes? Against the Holy One of Israel!

²³ 'Through your messengers you have reproached the Lord, And you have said, "With my many chariots I came up to the heights of the mountains, To the remotest parts of Lebanon; And I cut down its tall cedars *and* its choice cypresses. And I entered its farthest lodging place, its thickest forest.

²⁴ "I dug *wells* and drank foreign waters, And with the sole of my feet I dried up All the rivers of Egypt."

²⁵ 'Have you not heard? Long ago I did it; From ancient times I planned it. Now I have brought it to pass, That you should turn fortified cities into ruinous heaps.

²⁶ 'Therefore their inhabitants were short of strength, They were dismayed and put to shame; They were as the vegetation of the field and as the green herb, As grass on the housetops is scorched before it is grown up.

²⁷ 'But I know your sitting down, And your going out and your coming in, And your raging against Me.

²⁸ 'Because of your raging against Me, And because

your arrogance has come up to My ears, Therefore I will put My hook in your nose, And My bridle in your lips, And I will turn you back by the way which you came.

V.32 'Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, "He will not come to this city or shoot an arrow there; and he will not come before it with a shield or throw up a siege ramp against it.

³³ "By the way that he came, by the same he will return, and he shall not come to this city," declares the LORD.

V.35 Then it happened that night that the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead.

³⁶ So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned home, and lived at Nineveh.

c. Man thinks he is in control

i. Poem "Invictus" is wrong!

"...It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul."

ii. One second after death the lost man will know he has no control – he can't even say what he wants to say

01. HE will say what he is made to say

Philippians 2:10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

d. He knows everything

i. Everything about everything He knows

ii. Nothing is new – never surprised – never caught off guard – He will never learn anything

iii. He knows the thoughts of all men

- iv. He knows your complete history
- v. He knows everything in your life now
- vi. He knows your tomorrow
- vii. When everything is over – He knows what will look like
- viii. He is outside of time

- e. He is everywhere
 - i. There isn't anywhere you can go to leave His presence
 - ii. Nothing is outside His reach
 - iii. He is in total control of all that goes on everywhere
 - iv. He knows everything – about everywhere

- f. If He wasn't in control of everything – there wouldn't be any continuity
- g. How foolish it must have seemed to Abraham to make his own son when God said He would do it!
- h. Abraham got it! He really began to trust that God was God
 - i. Do you get it?
 - ii. Does the news scare you? Relax, God is in control!

V.3 Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac.

V.4 Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him.

V.5 Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.

V.6 Sarah said, "God has made laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me."

V.7 And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

V.8 The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.

V.9 Now Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, mocking.

V.10 Therefore she said to Abraham, "Drive out this maid and her son, for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac."

V.11 *The matter distressed Abraham greatly* because of his son.

1. "The matter distressed Abraham greatly"
 - a. "Distressed" – 2 words in Hebrew – "very wrong/evil"

- b. Sin always causes pain
 - i. Isaac is 2 to 3 years old
 - ii. Ishmael is 16 or 17 years old
 - iii. Abraham has been loving on that boy for a long time
 - iv. Ishmael is as much his son as Isaac is
 - v. When you do things your way – it always causes heartache
- c. This is probably the most painful thing that ever happened to Abraham
 - i. Abraham wouldn't / couldn't do what Sarah said V.12

V.12 But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named.

1. "But God said..."Do not be distressed...whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her"
 - a. Abraham has learned to trust God & he will do what is really hard

1. Sin always brings pain
 - a. If you are a believer & not living for Christ – you are not happy
 - b. You can draw a line in the sand & start over

2. If you are not a believer – turn to Christ
 - a. You won't be giving up freedom you will be finding it!

John 8:36 "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.