

Reflecting God's Character

Key Scriptures: Genesis 21:22-34

²² And it came to pass at that time that Abimelech and Phichol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, "God is with you in all that you do." ²³ "Now therefore, swear to me by God that you will not deal falsely with me, with my offspring, or with my posterity; but that according to the kindness that I have done to you, you will do to me and to the land in which you have dwelt." ²⁴ And Abraham said, "I will swear." . . . ²⁷ and the two of them made a covenant.

Isaiah 40:31 But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew (Lit. "exchange") their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

2 Corinthians 12:9 "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

Acts 2:46-47 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

1 Peter 2:12, 15 Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles, so that when they slander you as evildoers, they will observe your good works and will glorify God on the day he visits. . . . ¹⁵ For it is God's will that you silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Key Point: God-dependence transforms us from the inside out, producing a life marked by integrity, honesty, and humility.

TALK IT OVER

Start talking: Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- Do you tend to trust people easily? What qualities in a person influence you to trust them quickly?

Reflect, Think, & Share: Read through the key scriptures and share any observations or questions with the group.

- Why do you think Abimelech wanted to make a covenant with Abraham?
- How would you explain the difference between a rule-based Christian life and a God-dependent life in your own words? How does Matthew 5:16 and 1 Peter 2:12 & 15 play into this?
- In Isaiah 40:31, the word "renew" in Hebrew is normally translated as "exchange. What do you think it means to "exchange" our strength for God's strength? What does that look like practically?
- The sermon listed two components that impact our influence with non-Christians. 1. **Integrity** - doing the right thing, the right way, for the right reason; and 2. responding in **humility and honesty** when we get it wrong. Which of these is hardest for you, and why?
- Can you think of a time when you did the right thing, but in the wrong way or with the wrong motive? What did you learn from that?
- Why do you think our **motives** matter so much to God (Matthew 6:1-6)?
- What specific qualities or behaviors in the early church (Acts 2:46-47) made their faith attractive to others? In what ways can we follow their example?

Start doing: The more we depend on God, the more we reflect His character to a world that is far from God. What is one specific step you can take this week to grow in living a more God-dependent, authentic faith?

Prayer: Do you have any specific decisions or areas of life where you could use prayer from others asking God to guide you? If you feel comfortable, share these issues with your study group so that they can pray with you and for you.

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