

Living with God as Our Shield and Reward

Jerry Cisar — January 10, 2016

Text: Genesis 13–16

Introduction

- A. What does it mean to be in the world, but not of it?

- B. Different stories that shape views of mission to our city.
 - i. Lot fleeing

 - ii. Jonah's reluctance

 - iii. Jesus' mission to Jerusalem

Abram models what it means to live by faith in a world of sight, how to live righteously in a world of wickedness, and how God engages us in our fears as we do so.

I. Faith that Resolves Strife (Genesis 13)

- A. The Test of Prosperity (13:1-9)

- B. Lot Lifted Up His Eyes (13:10-13)

- C. The Lord lifted up Abram's eyes. (13:14-16)

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Have either of these two stories (Lot and family fleeing, Jonah's disgruntled obedience) shaped your view of how Christians are to engage the world? If so, how?
- How do Jesus' engagement of Jerusalem, and Abram's engagement in Canaan, provide a clearer and better way of thinking about engaging the culture around us?
- How does it affect you to think that Abram in chapter 14 seems like a fearless, selfless man of faith and in chapter 15 needs God reassurance and has to renew his faith in the promise?
- Can you think of times in your life that you need assurance that God is your shield, your defender? Or times that you have passed on this world's reward and have chosen God as your reward?
- Why do you think that having an heir was such a significant issue for Abram and his faith?
- How do Abram's actions and relationships in Genesis 13–15 instruct you to live in the world but not of it?
- Have you ever battled with questions such as, "If I do as Christ and pour myself out on behalf of others, who is going to watch out for me?" How does God interaction with Abram in Genesis 15 speak to those kinds of questions?

- i. Genesis 12:3
- ii. Revelation 7:9

C. Abram's selflessness in victory. (14:17-24)

II. Faith in a World Gone Mad (Genesis 14)

A. A War Story (14:1-13a)

- i. The source of the conflict

- ii. The brevity of the conflict

- iii. Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions

B. Abram's Response (14:13b-16)

- i. Abram's covenant partners

- ii. Abram's response is immediate

- iii. Abram responds without *reservation*, *self-protection*, or *self-consideration*.

III. Faith in the Quiet Place (Genesis 15)

A. Genesis 15 occurs on the heels of the seemingly fearless victory and selfless concern of Abram in 14.

- i. *Do not be afraid... I am your shield, your very great reward.*

- ii. Before God, Abram begins to sound a little more human.

B. *"What reward are you going to give me Lord?"*

C. God specifies the promise.

D. Abram asks, "How can I know?"