

The questions below are designed to be used by Saylorville Church Cell Groups as they meet during the week following the Sunday morning message at Saylorville. The intent is not for groups to answer every question, but for leaders to use the questions as a guide as they tailor the discussion to the unique needs of their group. The Sunday message and these questions can be found each week at [www.saylorvillechurch.com/sermons](http://www.saylorvillechurch.com/sermons).

**CONNECT WITH YOUR GROUP (10-15 MINUTES)**

- On a scale of 1-10, how afraid are you of the following?
  - Spiders, the dark, public speaking, heights, clowns, tight spaces, teaching a teenager to drive.

**APPLY THE BIBLE (45-60 MINUTES)****Intro:**

- **Read** Genesis 15:1-6 together. In the message on Sunday, Pastor gave us **three facts that fight fear**.
- What is your **one thing** from Sunday? What stuck out to you about what you heard (a new idea, an application, an illustration, a challenge, a question, or a new way of thinking)?

**#1 - The Promise of God's Presence (vs. 1 - "I am")**

- A. Abram was afraid because he was 100 years old and didn't yet have an heir. Talk about a time in your life when it seemed that God was withholding something you wanted.
- B. The phrase, "Fear not" is the most common command in the Bible - mentioned 365 times. When you are genuinely afraid about something, what is your first response?
- C. Why do you think God reminds us to "fear not" so many times?
- D. This week, how can the promise of God's presence take the place of your fears?

**#2 - The Promise of God's Protection (vs. 1 - "I am your shield")**

- A. Maybe you're the only Christ-follower in your family, or you don't know of any other believers at work, in your school, or on your street. Have you ever felt like you were standing alone for the gospel?
- B. Martin Luther said, "One with God is a majority." Do you believe that's true? Why or why not?
- C. Sometimes God uses other people to protect us from sin. How has this Cell Group, or other Christ-followers, helped protect you?

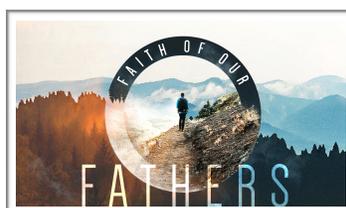
**#3 - The Promise of God's Provision (vs. 4 - "Your very own son shall be your heir")**

- A. The covenant that God made with Abram (vs 7-21) wasn't dependent on Abram at all. Are there areas in your life where you feel like you need to "help God out" because you don't completely trust Him?
- B. Read **Romans 4:18-21** - According to the Apostle Paul, why was Abram's faith counted to him as righteousness? Did Abram have to do anything to earn good standing with God?
- C. How does this idea compare to **Ephesians 2:8-9**?
- D. Are you "resting your whole weight" on God, or is your faith in something/someone else?

**PRAY WITH EACH OTHER (5-15 MINUTES)**

- God promised Abram that his family would number more than the dust of the earth and the stars in the sky. As a group, praise God for the specific, and innumerable, blessings He has given you.
- Ask God to give you faith in the areas you need to believe in Him this week.

***We're not saved by promises we make to God. We are saved by believing promises made by God.***



## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTARY FOR GENESIS 15:1-6**

While Abram had believed in God, here his faith is more clearly defined and focused. Here his faith is in the promise of God to provide the blessing of a son, and blessings through Him. It is at this point that God chose to announce that Abram's faith was a saving faith.

Notice three things about this faith of Abram:

(1) First of all, it was a personal faith. By this I mean that Abram believed in the Lord. He did not merely believe about God, but in Him. Herein is the distinction between many professing Christians and those who are possessing Christians—genuinely reborn by faith in the person of Christ.

(2) Second, Abram's faith was a propositional faith. While Abram believed in the person of God, his faith was based upon the promises of God. Many believe in the god of their own definition. Abram believed in the God of revelation. The covenant God made here with Abram (verses 12ff) gave Abram specific propositions on which to base his faith and his practice.

(3) Abram's faith was also a practical faith. By this I mean that Abram's belief was one that necessitated action. Clearly, Abram's works did not initiate his salvation, but they did demonstrate it (cf. James 2:14ff.). Also, Abram's faith was related to a very practical and sensed need—the need for a son. God does not ask us to believe in the abstract, but in the everyday matters of life.

When Moses says that Abram's faith was reckoned for righteousness it does not mean that Abram's faith was, in some fashion, exchanged for righteousness. Abram's faith, like ours today, was not something which he conjured up by mental or spiritual effort. Faith itself is a gift (Ephesians 2:8-9). His faith was in the coming child and in his offspring, one of whom would be the Messiah. It was because Abram looked to the One God would provide for righteousness that God declared him to be righteous. Technically speaking, salvation (and faith) are a gift, but righteousness comes through the legal process of imputation. Abram was legally declared righteous by God because he trusted in Him Who was righteous. The righteousness of Christ, imputed to Abram because of his God-given faith, saved him.

God's way of saving men is not new. It has not changed from Old Testament times to New. Always, God has saved men by grace, through faith. There is no other way. While Abram was saved by faith in the One Who would come, we are saved by faith in this One Who has come. That is the only difference.

***<https://bible.org/seriespage/16-focal-point-abram-s-faith-genesis-151-21>***