

SERMON NOTES

From *In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley*



The Walk of Faith

KEY PASSAGE: Genesis 12:1-8

► SUMMARY

We have two options in the Christian life—to walk either by faith or by sight.

Walking by sight means we must have all the facts and see how God’s plan for our lives will unfold before we step out in obedience. If the outcome is secure, we’ll proceed. But walking by faith requires that we trust the Lord and His will for us, even if it’s risky, unknown, or difficult. God wants us to depend on Him, trusting Him to direct our steps one at a time so we can reach the destination He’s planned for us.

► SERMON POINTS

Abraham (originally called Abram) was a man who walked by faith, and his story is recorded in 14 chapters of the Bible. He was chosen by the Lord to be the recipient of amazing promises and become the father of the Jewish race. This may seem like an unlikely choice because Abraham came from a pagan society and may have been an idol worshipper. However, we must realize that God’s choices are based on His great wisdom and may not always make sense from our perspective.

Requirements for Walking by Faith

What God did in Abraham’s life is to some degree what He wants to do in all our lives. And as we see how Abraham responded in Genesis 12:1-8, we discover how we too can walk by faith rather than by sight.

■ **Listen to God.** “Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your

father’s house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (vv. 1-3).

After not having spoken to anyone for hundreds of years, God came to Abraham with a message that included instructions and promises, some of which may have seemed unbelievable to Abraham. It sounded like God was going to use him to change the world, yet despite the incredible nature of this message, Abraham listened.

We too must learn to listen to the Lord if we are going to walk with Him by faith. As Christians, our goal is to follow Jesus, and that requires knowing what He wants us to do. Instead of planning our days and rushing off to achieve our agendas, we should take some time each morning to seek the Lord’s guidance through His Word and prayer. This doesn’t mean we can’t make plans, but we should always present them to God and ask what He would have for us that day. If we don’t listen to the Lord, we won’t follow Him, and as a result, we’ll make wrong decisions that may turn out to be costly or painful. God speaks to us internally through the Holy Spirit and His Word, guiding us in our walk with Christ.

■ **Trust God.** Abraham trusted God, even though the command to leave home must have been difficult to obey, the destination was unknown, and the promises may have seemed unbelievable. The proof of Abraham’s faith is seen in the fact that he followed God’s instructions. He was 75 years old when he left Haran

(v. 4), yet he was still willing to undertake the journey. Furthermore, the trip was long and dangerous, but Abraham believed God would fulfill His promises and bring him to the land He'd chosen.

Like Abraham, we don't always know where the Lord is leading us, and if we doubt Him, we may argue or come up with reasons why His plan will not work. In essence, we are saying to Him that we don't think He will do what He's said. It's easy to follow God when everything seems logical and no risk is involved, but when He leads us in an unexpected direction and doesn't explain what awaits us, our doubts may stop us from obeying. But if we don't walk by faith, we'll miss all that He's planned for our lives. One way we can measure our spiritual growth is by how readily we trust the Lord and follow through with obedience.

- **Obey the Lord.** “So Abram went forth as the LORD had spoken to him. . . Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of Canaan” (vv. 4-5). Having listened to and trusted God, Abraham took the first step of obedience and traveled to the land He'd promised to show him.

Obedience is a major theme in the Bible because it's so important that we learn to do what God says. Most of what we're experiencing in life right now is the result of either our obedience or disobedience. If we've trusted the Lord and followed Him faithfully, we are becoming the person He wants us to be and fulfilling His will for our lives.

- **Worship God.** “The LORD appeared to Abram and said, ‘To your descendants I will give this land.’ So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him. Then

he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent . . . and there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD” (v. 7).

After arriving in Canaan, Abraham stopped to worship and thank the Lord, who had protected him on his journey and had now promised to give his descendants this land. God had been faithful to bring him this far and could be counted upon to fulfill all the rest of the promises He'd made to Abraham.

Worship is the response we too should have when we discover how faithful God is. Each time we step out in obedience and see how He works in our lives, we have reason to praise and thank Him for all He's done. The walk of faith is one of listening, trusting, obeying, and worshipping God, and the end result is life at its best—not without problems and struggles—but a life lived in the will of God.

► RESPONSE

- As you examine your life, do you find yourself more prone to walk by faith or by sight? When you walk by sight, where is your focus? In contrast, where is it when you walk by faith?
- Have you ever obeyed the Lord even though you weren't sure of the outcome? What happened? How did that experience affect your trust in God in the future?

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