

Title: God Builds a Nation

Text: Genesis 12:1-5

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Place: Decatur Church of God

Picture with me this unique situation.

God chooses to speak with you. Really, to you! And He tells you to pack up your things and load your car. You are about to go on a long journey.

Of course, your first thought is, where? Where is it that God wants to take you? What is the destination? What do I need to pack? How long will we be gone?

Then God says to you "Don't worry about that. Pack up because you are going to leave your family. Where I take you, you are to make your home."

Are you kidding me? Leave my family? For how long? I have some security here. My home is here. My life is here.

### **Genesis 12:1-5**

*The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.*

*[2] "I will make you into a great nation  
and I will bless you;*

*I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.*

*[3] I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you."*

*[4] So Abram left, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran. [5] He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.*

What is your vision? What do you hope to accomplish in life? What are your life goals?

\* The American Dream: To have a steady job that pays well for the work we are willing to perform. We want our own home, maybe even the picket fence. We would like to own a couple of vehicles, maybe a car and a truck. Many desire a faithful spouse who is good-looking, smart, and able to bring in the bucks. We want kids, not too many but a couple. Well-behaved kids, who can do everything well and will be our source of pride.

We want to attend a good church. We don't want them to require too much from us. Give us good music, a twenty-minute sermon and lots of friendly people. And that's not all. We want a government with a leader who agrees with us on all subjects and a country that provides us with liberty, opportunity, and the assurance of success.

Once you have your direction chosen, you must begin to train or acquire the tools to enable yourself to accomplish the dream. You might need to learn a trade, or go off to school to prepare for a vocation.

Unless we are a model, most of us will not fulfill our vision with only our good looks. True, some of you have a better chance than others.

My point...simple or complex, we want something from life. Happiness is often seen as the result of our ability to attain our dreams.

Will you allow me to challenge your thinking today? Could it be that our greatest joy might come not from my dreams and goals but instead might be the result of accomplishing God's will in our lives?

***Ephes. 2:10***

*For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

## I. Notice the example with Abram.

- A. He was directed to...
  - a. Leave his country
  - b. Leave his people
  - c. Leave his father's household
  - d. Go to the land God will show him
  
- B. He was being asked to demonstrate a blind faith.
  - a. No Biblical example to follow.
  - b. This request came to a man in a culture of multiple gods.
  
- C. But then notice what the results were to become.
  - a. *I will make you into a great nation*
  - b. *I will bless you*
  - c. *I will make your name great*
  - d. *You will be a blessing.*
  - e. *I will bless those who bless you*
  - f. *Whoever curses you I will curse;*
  - g. *All peoples on earth will be blessed through you*

\* What do you think? Did it work?

Abram became the Father of the Jews and the Arabs.

Though they both have had their ups and downs, no one can deny their greatness.

Abram's personal possessions increased and he became well known throughout the region. Because of his great faith, the world has experienced the blessing and presence of Christ today.

Those who reject this Christ often find themselves experiencing difficulties and troubles, and if not, they will eventually.

Without Jesus Christ we are eternally cursed. With Him we, all the people on the earth, are truly blessed.

\* In late 2012 seventy-five year old Marion Shurtleff purchased a Bible in a used book store near her home in San Clemente,

California. After making her purchase and returning home, she discovered a couple of folded pages tucked in the middle of the Bible.

The contents of the yellowed notebook sheets contained a child's handwriting that looked familiar. To her amazement, Shurtleff discovered her name at the top of the first page. When she looked closer she realized that she was actually reading a four-page essay she had written as a ten-year-old to earn a merit badge for the Girls Scouts in Covington, Kentucky—more than 2,000 miles from where she had just purchased the Bible.

By her own account, Shurtleff was deeply moved. "I opened the Bible and there was my name," Shurtleff said in a phone interview from her home. "I recognized my handwriting. I was shaking, literally. I was crying."

Although it remains a mystery how the essay ended up in a Bible in a used bookstore half way across the country, one thing is certain. When we look deeply into God's Word we see evidences of our lives, too. In the pages of Scripture we see individuals just like us—people who pursue faith and hope in God, people who also battle depression, doubt, lust, and pride. As we read the biblical stories about Abraham, Ruth, David, Mary, and Peter we also recognize our own life story.

## II. So, what do I do with this?

- A. I need to open my ears to the call of God?
  - a. I can't respond in obedience if I'm not listening to his call.
  - b. Ignorance might be our excuse unless we are ignoring Him in hopes of covering our spiritual avoidance.
- B. I must not allow my family to become my excuse for blocking out the word and will of God.
- C. Scripture tells me that I must go.

### ***Matthew 28:19-20***

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

*[20] and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

**\* Brief interview with Pastors Sandy, KC and Jamie.**

1. What was it like to leave family as ministers of the Kingdom?
2. If you had it to do over again, would you do it again?

**Church family:**

Where is God leading you today? Are you willing to trust Him?