

## Life Group and Personal Questions

1. Our trust and understanding of who God is as the object of our faith can either diminish or heighten the sometimes paralyzing effect of doubt. How might the following verses help build your confidence in God in the midst of doubt?

Psalm 25:8

Psalm 89:11

Psalm 145:9-10

James 1:17

2. One of the reasons we may doubt the strength or power of our faith is the ongoing battle we all have at times in dealing with our own sin. What insight does Paul give us in Romans 7:18-21 of how our struggle, doubt and faith can co-exist?

How does Romans 8:1 help us deal with this struggle?

3. It's often during times of hardship and challenge that we are most often tempted to doubt God's plan and his care for us. But the Bible teaches that hardships can play an important role in developing our faith. How do the following passages help us understand hardship's role and the attitude God wants us to have toward it?

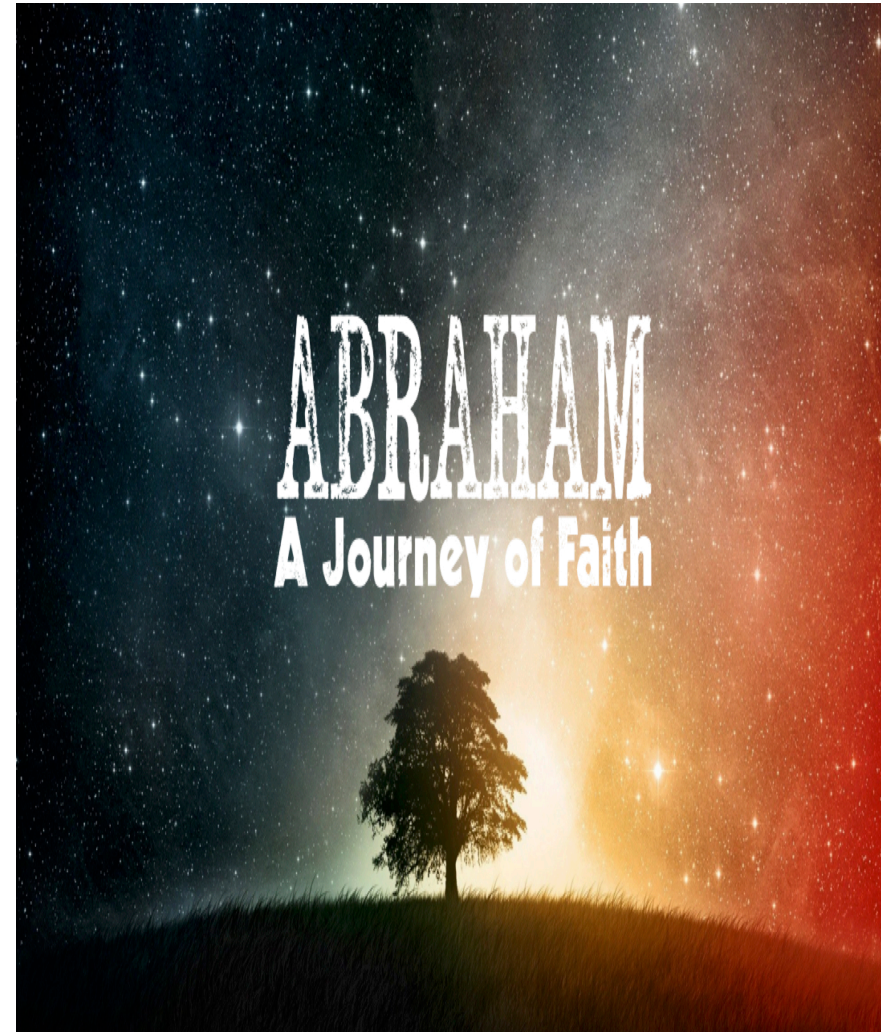
Romans 5:3-5

James 1:2-4

Romans 8:28-30

What is most challenging for you in accepting what these passages say about hardship?

In what ways can the truths in these passages be helpful to you in handling difficult times in your life?



Sunday October 12, 2014  
Abraham: Genesis 15:1-21  
***God's Encouragement on the Journey***

## God's Encouragement on the Journey of Faith

**STARTING WELL** does not always assure **FINISHING WELL**

Faith must be strengthened while we live "**IN BETWEEN.**"

God chooses to encourage Moses through a **CONVERSATION**

<sup>1</sup>*After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward."* (Genesis 15:1, NIV)

Abraham had a fear of natural retribution

This caused him to doubt two things: **HIMSELF & GOD**

We often have an **UNFULFILLED PROMISE** that puts us in doubt.

<sup>2</sup> *But Abram said, "Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?"* <sup>3</sup> *And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."* (Genesis 15:2-3, NIV)

When our faith meets doubt, God brings **ENCOURAGEMENT**

<sup>4</sup> *Then the word of the Lord came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir."* <sup>5</sup> *He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."* <sup>6</sup> *Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.* <sup>7</sup> *He also said to him, "I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it."* (Genesis 15:4-7, NIV)

<sup>22</sup> *This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness."*  
(Romans 4:18-25, NIV)

God secures His promises to us with a **ONE SIDED COVENANT**

<sup>17</sup> *When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces.* <sup>18</sup> *On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram...*  
(Genesis 15:8-19, NIV)

## Five Take-Aways from God's friendship with Abram

1. God calms our fears and understands our questions.
2. A delay is not a cancellation.
3. God loves it when we believe Him.
4. Even when it's dark, we can see the light.
5. Our future is as clear to God as our past is clear to us.