

Abernathy

Habits

Genesis 12:1-9

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- * What did you hear?
- * What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- * What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

*So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. **Genesis 12:4-5***

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

By establishing habits, rather than making plans, we can best position ourselves to hear the call of God. These habits are built around our core values of solitude, community, and service. ***Instead of making plans for 2021, how have you been able to shift your mindset to that of positioning yourself instead? From last week's focus on solitude, what changes are you making this year to practice the presence of God in your life?***

As we see in our scripture passage, even though God's call comes individually to Abram, he discerns and embarks on it not alone, but with Sarai, Lot, and others along the way. Our culture encourages the idea of extreme individualism, though this viewpoint is supported nowhere biblically. We simply do not have the capacity to discern and carry out the call of God on our own. Community in the biblical sense means that **honesty** and **accountability** are both present. ***Where are you most known and with whom can you be the most truthful? Where can you best share your goals, hopes, dreams, and struggles? Who can you count on to stand beside you, ask tough questions, and help you discern your direction?***

Genuine community requires us to hand over a certain amount of authority to others in our lives. It is appropriate that we celebrate the life and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. as we focus on community. Not only was he a civil rights leader, but first and foremost a Baptist preacher. It's important to note that his dream, forged from the word of God, was not carried out by him single-handedly. He was part of a community that encouraged and supported his dream; namely, Ralph David Abernathy was the friend who walked most closely alongside him and without whom no decision was made. We may be able to articulate our own dreams, but we need the presence of community to help us carry them out. ***Do you need to hand over more authority to others in your life? What steps can you take to improve your habits of community this year, so that you won't miss what God might have in store for you?***

A prayer of Martin Luther King, Jr.

God, we thank you for your church, founded upon your Word, that challenges us to do more than sing and pray, but go out and work as though the very answer to our prayers depended on us and not upon you. Help us to realize that humanity was created to shine like the stars and live on through all eternity. Keep us, we pray, in perfect peace. Help us to walk together, pray together, sing together, and live together until that day when all God's children -- Black, White, Red, Brown and Yellow -- will rejoice in one common band of humanity in the reign of our Lord and of our God, we pray. Amen.