

From Faith to Faith

Granbury Street Church of Christ

Assumption and Deception

D. J. Stucky

Making assumptions is not a good practice. Frequently, our assumptions get us in to more trouble than they prevent. We make plans based on those assumptions. However, when those assumptions are wrong, everything that was built on them comes crashing down. This can be especially true when we make assumptions of a person's character like Abraham did in Genesis 20:1-17.

Abraham is a man characterized by faith. That does not mean that he was perfect. After the problems that their deception caused in Egypt (Gen. 12:10-20), Abraham again asked Sarah to tell everyone that she was his sister. Abimelech, believing her to be a single woman, took her for his own. Before he could do anything wrong, God came to Abimelech in a dream, warning him of the situation and commanding him to restore Sarah to her husband (Gen. 20:1-7). Abimelech called Abraham and Sarah and confronted them about their deception. Abraham explained his reason for the deception, and Abimelech obeyed the command of God (20:8-16). Abraham prayed to God on behalf of Abimelech, and the curse that God had placed on Abimelech and his house was removed (20:17 cf. Gen. 12:17).

Abraham tried to justify his deception on a technicality, because Sarah was indeed his sister (Gen. 20:12). This did not make it right. It does not matter whether we are telling a blatant lie or omitting part of the truth so that people will get a false impression, if we are trying to deceive others for our own benefit, that is sin (Rev. 21:8). In this instance, Abraham lacked the faith to trust that God would protect him. He feared that he would be killed so that other men could take his wife, but God had already promised that he and Sarah would have a son (Gen. 18:10). This would have been a difficult task if Abraham was dead. God had already protected him in Egypt, and Abraham should have trusted God to do the same in Gerar. Furthermore, Abraham made the decision to lie because of the assumptions he made about Abimelech. Abraham was sure that the people would have no regard for God (Gen. 20:11), yet in this account, Abimelech responds to Him swiftly and obediently (Gen 20:6-7, 14). Our job is to take the gospel to all men (Matt. 28:18-20). We cannot predetermine who is going to obey and who is not. Sometimes, like the case with Abraham here, our first impression can be dead wrong. Making decisions based on those false assumptions will lead us to a place we do not want to go. We must all strive to be more straightforward and more discerning so that all men may hear the good news of Jesus Christ.

Shepherds

Sid Carruth
Jeff Day
Kenneth Helm
Clark Lehtinen
Tim Norman

Deacons

Gary Barger
Ryan Cowan
Vince Grinnell
Justin Hewlett
Bill Hughes
Russ Jones

Minister

Kevin Rhodes

Associate

D. J. Stucky

Sunday

Bible Study
9:00 am

AM Worship
10:00 am

PM Worship
5:00 pm

Wednesday

Ladies Class
10:00 am

Bible Study
7:00 pm

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Sheep for the Slaughter

Kevin W. Rhodes

Every once in a while you go through a period of time when you are afraid to ask what might happen next because of how much bad news you have received. Not that long ago, it seemed like members of the congregation were passing away at an unprecedented rate. The heartache and sorrow this brings can lead to despair rather quickly. At other times, serious illness and injury step in, so much so that attendance seems to drop in chunks and the work to care for others increases dramatically. Then there are those times when every stressful thing that can happen seems to happen almost simultaneously. The car needs new tires. The house needs a new air conditioner. The children need braces. And insurance rates just went up. Regardless of which one of these scenarios—or all of them—describe some aspect of your life, it can seem like you have a target on your back. However, God's people must also endure the challenges presented by Satan's relentless pressure in pursuit of their souls (1 Pet. 5:8). It can be hard to express the frustration and difficulty that all these things can create in life.

In Psalm 44 the sons of Korah wrote from this very perspective, expressing dismay because they found themselves in great difficulty without understanding why. The psalm begins by recounting the many times that God had delivered Israel from difficulty and secured victory over a mighty foe (Psa. 44:1-7). In fact, this history formed the foundation of national pride (Psa. 44:8). However, the sons of Korah found that they did not enjoy this same kind of experience, suffering shame and dishonor among the nations instead of victory and honor (Psa. 44:9-17). What makes their case more disconcerting is that they remained true to God through it

all (Psa. 44:21). However, even then, this did not assure them of victory in the field or deliverance from their foes. Instead, they bemoaned, "Yet for Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter" (Psa. 44:22). The psalm closes with a poignant cry asking for an explanation.

They felt as if they existed just to suffer. And this is why Paul quoted it in Romans 8:36 at the close of a passage explaining that, yes indeed, mankind's very nature is designed to suffer. The writer of Hebrews, however, is the one that explains why: for the suffering of death and the deliverance that ultimately makes victory possible (Heb. 2:5-18). However, both in this psalm and in Paul's conclusion in Romans, there is a reminder of why we can and should persevere. The first is found in the determination expressed by the sons of Korah and the second in the assurance offered by the apostle Paul. This life is indeed fraught with difficulty, filled with heartache, and characterized by suffering. But no matter how much Satan works to fill our lives with sorrow, to cause our bodies pain, and to create hardship in life itself, there is absolutely nothing he can do to separate us from God's love. The nature of this life requires that we prepare ourselves to endure and persevere faithfully to the very end, but through it all—and especially at that end—God's love is there for us. We will all face challenges throughout our lives—and not just small ones. But God offers assurance that despite the necessity of this in the nature of life, He is still with us and will deliver us beyond this life. Suffering is real in this life, but hope is real in the next. It is this perspective that will get us through, and keeping ever focused on the example of Jesus provides the way.



News and Notes

Prayer request...

- Mike Harding has been having trouble with vertigo for the last three weeks.
- Casey Lehtinen's blood work Monday indicated that the current chemo regimen is not working and a relapse has occurred. He will have another bone marrow aspiration to confirm this. Casey went on Tuesday to the Southwest Medical Center Bone Marrow unit in Dallas to begin work-up on a bone marrow transplant. No visitors at this time.
- Kidron Lehtinen will have an MRI around February 1st in Houston to check on the cyst on his spine.
- Charles Melton had another shot in his back.
- Johnnye Parrish is having problems with a sinus infection and vertigo.
- Darla Stubblefield pulled a stitch on the inside of her incision. She started over with her therapy.
- John Dickison, preacher for the Gorman church of Christ, had a major heart attack and is in a medically induced coma.
- Bob Stapleton, the Director of the Brown Trail School of Preaching, is having tests run.

Sympathy

Our sympathy is extended to the family of Guy Parnell who was a cousin to both Janice Redden and Marilyn Birchfield. The funeral was Monday.

Please note...

- Doug and Pam Jones will host a monthly dinner party for couples to celebrate wedding anniversaries. This month's anniversary dinner will be Thursday, January 26th, at 6:30 p.m. If you have a January anniversary please contact the Jones for details.
- January 29th will be our next 5th Sunday. We will have our regular morning services, lunch in the annex, and 1:00 afternoon service led by the young men.

Centurion of Scripture Challenge 2017 (NKJV)

John 5:28-29

Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

1 Peter 3:15

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.

Those who Serve

Lords' Supper: 1/22

Front South

Justin Hewlett
Kenneth Helm
Jim Hudgins

Front North

Jeff Day
Kyle Day
Bill Hughes

Back South

Doug Jones
Clark Lehtinen
Dennis Lane

Back North

Doug Kilcrease
James Hunt
James Henslee

Leading prayers:

Sunday AM

Vince Grinnell

Doug Jones

Sunday PM

Gary Barger

Bill Cashion

Wednesday PM

Clint Owens

Announcements:

Sunday AM-PM:

Clark Lehtinen

Wednesday

Gavin McGilvray

Song leaders:

Sunday AM

Jeff Day

Sunday PM

Jeff Day

Wednesday PM

Rob Stidolph

Foyer Personnel:

Sunday & Wednesday

Wayne Gentry

Collection Counting

Justin Hewlett / Wayne Gentry



Sermons for Sunday

AM

The Salvation of Faith
Hebrews 11:7

PM

Conscientious Leaders
Nehemiah 10:1-39

Calendar of Events



1/29

5th Sunday

2/11

Caring for the Incarcerated

5/14-17

Gospel Meeting with Mike Bonner

9/15-17

Marriage Seminar with
John and Carla Moore



Our Records

Bible Class 108

AM Worship..... 169

PM Worship 103

Wednesday Bible Class N/A

Contribution\$7,633

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