

Title: By Faith: Family & Families of the Earth // **Scripture:** Hebrews 11:8 // Genesis 11:27–12:3

ARRIVAL / SOCIAL TIME *15-20 minutes*

Spend the first 15 minutes or so of your time together catching up and socializing with one another. Also find time to catch up together on how the assignments from last week turned out.

SERMON REVIEW *5-10 minutes*

To what extent have you trusted God in the key moments of your life? In your daily routines? In the tragedies and crises you have faced? In your successes and triumphs? Hebrews 11:8–12 gives us the story Abraham and Sarah's faith. And, in spite of the times when their faith clearly wavered, the evaluation we find of them in Hebrews is gracious and generous, revealing a God whose heart is not just for one family but for all the families of the earth.

This week, we looked at these stories and saw that faith has far more to do with the God who calls us than our ability to respond—and that is good news. God speaks to us through his mighty Word. He invites us to trust him as we leave our places of comfort and familiarity, so that we can both receive his abundant blessing and also release that blessing to others around us.

What we learned through the story of Abraham and Sarah is that life has many high points and low points. But God, in his faithfulness, overcomes our faithlessness as He multiplies his blessings for our own good and for the good of the nations around us. God covenants with us by revealing his character so that we can know him, by drawing near to us so we can actively communicate with him, and by redeeming our failures and futures to connect us to the hope of his blessing. As we take this journey of faith in God, we join with Abraham and Sarah to bless the nations.

THE MAIN THOUGHT *keep this in mind as you facilitate discussion*

The word and call is an invitation to journey with God into covenant blessing for ourselves and for others.

SEE IT – Questions *10-15 minutes*

Picture (What is the story saying?): How did Abraham and Sarah approach life in Mesopotamia? How did that differ from the Egyptian viewpoint? What was the basis of Abraham and Sarah's decision to go? What were the three key aspects of their response to God's call? What were some of Abraham and Sarah's ups and downs? How did God treat them in the end?

Mirror (Where am I in the story?): How are you regularly seeking the word and call of God in your life? As you think of your own story, what are some things God has invited you to leave, receive, and/or release? What are some ways that God has shown his faithfulness and unfailing love in your ups and downs? What can you do to maintain faithful seasons in your life?

Window (How does the story change how I see those around me?): Where is God inviting your community into renewal? Who is God inviting you to come alongside this week—in your neighborhood/workplace, your next generation, and among the people of other nations around you? How can you specifically be an encouragement and blessing in their journey of faith this week?

BE IT – Practice *10-15 minutes*

Change UP // Exercise *5 minutes*

Read Hebrews 11:8–12 and Genesis 12:1–3 out loud together. Name the promises that God committed to bless Abraham and Sarah with. Spend a few minutes in prayer thanking God for and receiving his covenant promises.

Change IN // Group Activity *5 minutes*

Go around the group and have each person name one thing that God is inviting you to leave, receive, and release in your own life. After each person shares, encourage them with promises from God's Word that correspond to each idea. Have a group member commit to follow up directly with them at least one time during the coming week.

Change OUT // Life Application Assignment *5 minutes*

Take some time to identify where God is moving in your community/workplace, next generation, and/or the nations around you. Identify at least one concrete action your group can specifically do this week to help those individuals see God's character, hear God's communication, or connect to God's blessing during the coming week.

CLOSING PRAYER *5 minutes*

Take a few minutes to gather any prayer requests and pray for each other to SEE IT and BE IT this week.