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February 9 & 10, 2019
Week 5: The First New Covenant

INTRODUCTION:

ALL OF HISTORY IS REALLY _____

GENESIS 12:1-3...

THREE THINGS WE DISCOVER:

1. God's Grace is _____

"I WILL make you into a great nation and I WILL bless you; I WILL make your name great..."

See also Genesis 15...

2. God's Grace is _____

"...and YOU WILL BE a blessing."

Literally "In order that you may be a blessing." (Kaiser, Mission in the Old Testament, 2000 Baker Books, p. 18)

3. God's Grace is _____

"I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and ALL PEOPLES on earth will be blessed through you."

* Not universally accepted, but universally available to every race, tribe, tongue and nation of the world!

THE BIG IDEA:

Romans 5:8 – "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." God has always loved you and will never stop loving you. He desires to rescue you from the devastating penalty and destructive power of sin. But you must come to Him on His terms as Abram did: by FAITH ALONE.

SMALL GROUP Q'S

PERSONAL LIFE:

1. In our weekly journey through the Bible so far, is there a particular display of God's grace that has impacted you more so than the others? If so, please share about why this is the case...
2. In what way(s) are you learning to rest more deeply in God's love as a result of our journey so far? How is learning to live the Christian life from a place of inner rest producing tangible fruit in your life? Explain...

PONDERINGS:

3. Obviously, God chose to bless the line of Abram, Isaac and Jacob in a special way. In what way(s) – if any – does God's Genesis 12:2 promise to “bless” and “curse” apply to humanity today? Explain your views about this...
4. Why do you think it is important to understand the Jewish foundation of your faith? Try to be specific in your answer(s).
5. Why do you think the Jews have historically undergone such a high level of persecution?
6. What are your thoughts about the unconditional covenant God made in Genesis 15 when He walked alone between the slain animals? How does this parallel or point us to the New Covenant?
7. Read the entire chapter of Romans 4 as a group and discuss the following thoughts and questions....
 - Why is it significant that Abraham was declared “righteous” before the Law of Circumcision was ever given (v. 9-11)?
 - In what sense is Abraham “the father of all who believe” (v.11)?
 - This chapter tells us that Abraham “did not waver in unbelief” regarding God's promises (v. 20). Yet, there were clearly times when Abraham failed to trust God along the way. What does this tell us about the nature of grace?
 - Paul masterfully uses Abraham's life to show us the difference between a wage and a free gift. Yet, so many of us are still tempted to serve God from a mind set of “debt repayment.” Why do we often struggle with this?

PROMPTINGS:

8. What is the difference between “following rules” and “bearing fruit”? Close in prayer – asking God to help you live in freedom from the debt-repayment mind set and to trust that resting in His power is the only source you need to thrive in life...