

St Stephen's | Home Group and Individual Study | The Mission of God

Week 5: God Calls: A Covenant People

Genesis 17:1-18; Colossians 2:6-15; Luke 22:14-20

Review

So far, we have heard how the world was good, but that humanity's turning away from God had left relationships between the creator and his world in tatters. God, though, took the initiative in calling Abraham to become 'a great nation' and a blessing to 'all peoples'... Stage 1 of his rescue plan thus begins. In Genesis 17, Abraham hears more from God about how he and his people will be 'set apart' for their special mission and be in covenant relationship with Him. Circumcision was the outward physical sign of this inward reality. In Jesus we are members of the new covenant and can experience circumcision of the heart by the Spirit. (Rom 2:29)

Study

1. Swedish bible study method

- Begin by praying, asking God to speak through his word. Read each of the Bible passages above. It might help to read them slowly aloud. While reading, be on the lookout for three things:



Something that 'shines' from the passage(s)—whatever impacts most, or draws attention.



Anything that is difficult to understand in the text, or a question you would like to ask the writer of the passage or the Lord.



Personal application for your life – what have I learned, what will I do about it?

2. Additional questions:

(i) How was Abraham to be 'set apart', physically and spiritually? Explore this in Genesis 17:1 and the remainder of the passage up to verse 14. Why was this part of God's plan?

(ii) In our side of the covenant, we are called to live in Jesus as Lord (Colossians 2:6-8). Consider the contemporary equivalents of the barriers described in v.8, and how we might overcome them. What are the consequences of living in Jesus as Lord?

(iii) Abraham, and through him, his people were to be 'set apart' or consecrated for God. Thinking of being personally 'set apart for God': a) what does that mean specifically to you? b) how does it feel? And c) are you ready?

(iv) How important is baptism as a sign of the new covenant? (Col 2:11-12)

Pray: That we might be ready to be set apart for God, and used in his mission. That God will help us over the obstacles to making him Lord of our lives. Use the Methodist covenant prayer below, pray it slowly:

I am no longer my own but yours. Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will; put me to doing,
put me to suffering; let me be employed for you,
or laid aside for you, exalted for you,
or brought low for you; let me be full,
let me be empty, let me have all things,
let me have nothing: I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal. And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours.

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Structure: Nine themes (acts), drawing from the flow of the biblical story but of ongoing relevance

Old Testament: (i) God Creates; (ii) God Calls; (iii) God Saves; (iv) God Reigns; (v) God Judges

New Testament: (vi) God Comes; (vii) God Loves; (viii) God Sends; (ix) God Completes

Danny Wignall, October 2010