Following In The Steps Of Abraham

Intro: We have described Abraham as “the father of the faithful,” while the Bible describes him as “the father of all them that believe” in Rom. 4:11 “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which be had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:” Thus, we need to have an unwavering faith even as Abraham possessed.

Notice the call Abram received from God recorded in Gen. 12:1-2 “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.” God commanded Abram to do three things that would require great faith. Let us consider each of these.

I. Abraham Was To Leave Something

A. Leave his homeland and kindred.
   1. Terah (Abram’s father) led his family from Ur of the Chaldees to go to Canaan.
      a. They delayed their journey at Haran.
      b. Gen. 11:31-32 “And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there. 32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.”
   2. While at Haran, Terah died.
      a. Perhaps this involved the providence of God.
         (1) Terah worshiped and served other gods.
         (2) Jos. 24:2 “And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.”
      b. If he had continued to live and worship idols, it could have hindered Abraham in serving Jehovah; 1 The. 1:9 “For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.”
   B. We must forsake whatever would hinder us in living a faithful Christian life.
      1. We must come out and be separate from the world:
         a. 2 Cor. 6:14, 17 “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?... 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,”
         b. Rev. 18:4 “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”
      2. Our affections must not be with the world:
         a. Jam. 4:4 “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”
         b. 1 John 2:15-17 “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”
         c. Col. 3:1-3 “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”
d. Mat. 22:37 “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”

3. Jesus taught to forsake everything, even family:
   a. Luke 14:33 “So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”
   b. Including family:
      (1) Mat. 10:37 “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”
      (2) Luke 14:26 “If any man come to me, and hate not [means to love less] his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.”
   c. Mat. 6:24 “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

4. We must stop sinning; put off that old man:
   a. Eph. 4:22-24 “That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts: 23And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”
   b. Eph. 4:29-31 “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:”
   c. Col. 3:5-9 “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: 6For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: 7In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. 8But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. 9Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;”

II. ABRAHAM WAS TO ENTER SOMETHING

A. He was to go unto a land God would show him.
   1. Gen. 12:4-5 “So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. 5And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.”
   2. Heb. 11:8-10 “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 8By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 9For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

B. Every accountable person must enter into the spiritual kingdom to be delivered from his sins.
   1. This spiritual kingdom is known as:
      a. The kingdom of God; Mar. 1:14-15 “Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.”
      b. The kingdom of heaven; Mat. 3:2 “And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
      c. The kingdom of Christ; Eph. 5:5 “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”
2. We enter that spiritual kingdom by the new birth
   a. John 3:3, 5 “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.... 3Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

b. How is one born again?
   (1) Spirit
      a) 1 Cor. 4:15 “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”
      b) Jam. 1:18 “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”
      c) 1 Pet. 1:22-23 “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: 23Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”
      d) The Spirit’s words are what gives life; John 6:63 “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

   (2) Water
      a) Involves baptism in water for the remission of one's sins.
      b) In baptism the element is water:
         (i) John 3:23 “And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.”
         (ii) Acts 8:36, 38-39 “And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?... 38And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”
      c) Baptism is for salvation or the remission of sins:
         (i) Mark 16:16 “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
         (ii) Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
         (iii) Acts 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

3. The kingdom is the church:
   a. Rev. 1:4, 9 “John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;... 9I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

b. One must do the will of the Father to enter into the kingdom; Mat. 7:21 “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”

c. The will of the Father is expressed by Jesus:
   (1) Mat. 28:19-20 “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
Mark 16:16 “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

Luke 24:46-47 “And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

This is the same process as the new birth process.

d. This is the same process that places one into the church.

Acts 2:38, 40-41, 47 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.... 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.... 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

1 Cor. 12:13 “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

The body is the church:

(a) Col. 1:18 “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

(b) Preeminence takes us back to the idea of Jesus being the king over his kingdom.

4. In that kingdom, we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins; Col. 1:13-14 “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: “In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:”

III. ABRAHAM WAS TO BECOME SOMETHING

A. Abraham was to become a blessing to all nations:

1. Gen. 12:2-3 “And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

2. Thus, he became the father of the faithful; Rom. 4:11 “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:”

B. God not only wants us to do something; He wants us to become something.

1. We are to become children of God

a. Gal. 3:26-27 “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

b. Being His children, we partake of His nature

(1) 2 Pet. 1:3-4 “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

(2) When we embrace what the Spirit teaches; 2 Cor. 3:18 “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

(3) There is a new creation taking place that is after the image of God.

(a) Eph. 4:24 “And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”
2 Cor. 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Col. 3:10 “And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.”

2. We learn God’s nature or character and become such ourselves.
   a. Holy; 1 Pet. 1:15-16 “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”
   b. Pure; 1 John 3:3 “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”
   c. Love; 1 John 4:8 “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”
   d. Forgiving; Eph. 4:32 “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

3. We add the Christian graces to our lives;
   a. 2 Pet. 1:5-8 “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
   b. This is how we become partakers of God’s nature; 2 Pet. 1:4 “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

4. Add the fruit of the Spirit so we walk according to God; Gal. 5:22-25 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 23And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. 24If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

5. In becoming what He wants us to be, we will be a good example before others.
   a. 1 Tim. 4:12 “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
   b. Mat. 5:13-16 “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Conclusion: If we are to follow in the steps of the father of the faithful, Abraham, then we must leave behind everything that prevents us from living the Christian life, we must enter that spiritual kingdom of Christ, and we must become what God wants us to become. In doing so, we will be a blessing to both ourselves and to our fellowman.