



GENESIS
Grace from the Beginning

17/18 March 2018
Vol. 40, No. 10

Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?

Genesis 18:1-15

English Services
(8 & 10:30 a.m., & 5:30 p.m.)

Prelude
Call to Worship
Worship through Praise
Worship through Fellowship
Worship through Giving
Testimony
Scripture Reading
Worship in the Word
Pastor Larry Pabiona
Benediction

Filipino Service
(3 n.h.)

Paghahanda
Tawag sa Pagsamba
Pagsamba sa Pag-awit
Pagkilala sa mga Bisita
Pagsamba sa Pagbibigay
Patotoo
Pagbasa ng Salita ng Diyos
Pakikinig sa Salita ng Diyos
Pastor Dags Miguel
Pangwakas na Panalangin
at Basbas

See inset inside for the **Traditional Service (Sat., 6 p.m.)** program.



Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?

Today's Message (17/18 March 2018) /
Genesis 18:1-15

GOD IS FAITHFUL
AND ALWAYS
KEEPS HIS WORD
TO US. WHEN WE
THINK HE HAS
FORGOTTEN, OR
ACTS TOO SLOWLY,
HE REMINDS US IN
HIS SPECIAL WAY
THAT HE ALWAYS
KEEPS HIS WORD.

Nowadays, some Christians think that God is too invisible to be fully trusted, or our problems just too big for an unseen Deity to handle. This helps us appreciate what Abraham, and now Sarah, were up against. Until this time, God had been molding Abraham, but Sarah, the “Princess of many nations” now needed special handling. Perhaps 25 years of childlessness had grown within her a cynicism for what could be, because of what had never been. If you’ve ever felt that way, then you can appreciate what Sarah was going through.

But now God would teach her, and will teach us today, this wonderful reality: the All-Powerful God faithfully keeps His promises despite knowing our tendency to faithlessness. See how our passage shows not just the warm heart of Abraham and the wavering heart of Sarah, but above all, the unwavering faithfulness of our God:

1. GOD APPEARS TO ABRAHAM, WHO TREATS HIM HOSPITABLY DESPITE NOT KNOWING HIS IDENTITY (VV. 1-8)

- Out of nowhere, three strangers appear to Abraham, who treats them with exemplary hospitality.
- Two implications for us today:
 1. God is faithful and will do whatever it takes to make His will clear to us. God wears a human disguise, and is obviously pleased with the warmth of the man He had been molding.
 2. All of us can do the ministry of hospitality. When we are kind to our oikos, they will be more open to our invitations. When we are kind to total strangers, like Abraham was, it may open a window to speak about Christ.

Traditional Service

(Saturday, 6 p.m.)

Prelude

Call to Worship

Worship through Praise

Worship through Giving

Worship in Music

Doxology

Worship through Fellowship

Scripture Reading

Preparatory Hymn

Worship in the Word

Pastor Larry Pabiona

Response Hymn

Benediction



Is Anything Too Hard for the Lord?

Today's Message (17/18 March 2018) /
Genesis 18:1-15

This kindness also speaks well of how the Spirit changes us to be blessings (*Romans 12:13*).

Hospitality also gives us opportunities to bless more than human beings. As Hebrews 13:2 encourages, “Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.” Abraham was able to bless God Himself!

2. GOD REITERATES HIS PROMISE TO ABRAHAM THAT SARAH WILL HAVE A SON VERY SOON (VV. 9-10)

- The promise is very specific: *‘about this time next year... Sarah your wife will have a son.’*
- God is faithful and always keeps His Word to us. When we think He has forgotten, or acts too slowly, He reminds us in His special way that He always keeps His Word.

3. SARAH RESPONDS WITH UNBELIEF AND IS REBUKED AND INSTRUCTED BY GOD (VV. 11-15)

- Up to this point, God had been dealing with Abraham directly. But this time the visit and conversation are for Sarah. But Sarah laughs, and God exposes her unbelief (*vv. 11-13*).
- God now used this as a teaching moment for Sarah and us today: He confirms His character and promise—“Is anything too hard for the Lord?”—and Sarah is both rebuked and taught (*vv. 14-15*). God knows our hearts and if needed, will reveal it to us.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Holy Father, spare us from a cynicism that sometimes comes when we've been beaten down too hard, or too often, or too long. Keep us, O God, from the short-sightedness that comes when our eyes are filled with tears—whether those of regret or pain. Instead, help us to realize that you are God of the impossible, that if you can only do what is possible, or realistic, or scientifically provable, then you are far less than God. But you are indeed God, the only true God, God above all the false gods of earth.

So Father, in the best times of life, help us see your loving hand behind the blessings. In the worst times of life, gently lead us by that same loving hand through the darkest valleys. And when all our strength or faith is gone, and we waver like Sarah of old, carry us in those hands, until we are instructed and emboldened to rise again from where we have fallen, and walk again with the renewed faith of children who realize they are eternally loved. Through Jesus and His finished work at Calvary we pray. Amen ■

As we mobilize our church to be more intentional in our participation in the Mission of God, we have developed the *Oikos: Each One Reach One* training and material.

Last Sunday, March 11, we officially launched the material and held our first training at the New Fellowship Hall. We praise God for around 200 people who attended, desiring to share the gospel to their circles of influences. Many also committed to train others in using the material.

Oikos, as mentioned in the training is the GCF disciple-making movement. We are training individuals in our church to reach one and teach one to become followers of Jesus Christ. The key emphasis in this movement is that in our own little way we hope to share what the Lord is doing by reaching out to our *oikos*—our personal communities from home, work, school, or friends.

In the material, we highlight the following topics: prayer, relating, inviting, sharing, and discipling. These topics, as mentioned in the training, are various aspects of the journey in witnessing to our *oikos*. The cards given in the training can help the individual to reflect and review how he

or she can be a better witness to his or her friends in various moments of the *oikos* journey.



The training will continue to be offered to our church in a variety of venues. There will be a training today, March 18, and on March 25, both at 12:00pm to 2:30pm. We will also start to offer the trainings to our Growth Groups and Clusters, led by our pastors, elders, deacons, and Growth Group leaders. Please do let us know if you and your Growth Group are interested to do the Oikos Training by contacting us through 0917 532 7794.

Please continuously pray for this as we attempt to make a small contribution to the Mission of God to redeem His creation. Hopefully, as we move forward, the material will continuously be improved and be used better by many who desire to share the love of God to their neighbor ■

Ablaze Devotional

Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" - Luke 9:35 (NRSV)

Continuing on the journey of faith allows us to see new things about God and our life with Him. Countless moments of grace become real in our lives as we walk in His guidance and love. It is in these moments that we are overwhelmed with awe and wonder. But there are also moments in the journey where we would rather stay where we are than take another step.

We see such instance in the lives of Jesus' first disciples. They have been with Jesus for quite some time. They have witnessed and even participated in countless miracles. They heard several parables and teachings about the kingdom of God, but still, they expected something other than what Jesus came to do. It seems that they had a different definition of what the kingdom of God looks like.

On the mountain where Jesus showed His glory, Peter exclaimed with great wonder and awe that it is good to stay where they are. With the prophets of old on Jesus' left and right sides, it was such a sight to behold and preserve. This might be what the kingdom of God looks like. A cloud covered them, hearing but a voice saying that they must listen.

There is much more to the mountain experience. They had to come down and continue on the works of healing the sick and telling the good news to the lost. The mission of Christ pointed to a different experience. He did show His glory eventually, on a mount, but this time with convicted robbers on His side, nailed on a cross. But because of His resurrection, both wonder and awe took a different turn. The journey of faith calls us to the kingdom by reaching out to our neighbors as we carry our cross, just as Christ did ■

GCF PRAYER GATHERINGS AT THE CHAPEL:
The GCF Hour of Prayer
Tuesdays, 6-7 a.m.
Midweek Prayer Service
Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.

Ministry Opportunities + Other Announcements



OIKOS TRAINING FOR ALL

Learn to reach out to your own community
 March 25 (Sun.), after the 10:30 a.m. service
 Venue to be announced | Snacks will be served
 Contact Noli at 0917 625 0244 to pre-register



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

March 30: Good Friday Service at 3:00 p.m.
March 31 (Sat.): Concert of Prayer at 5:00 p.m.
March 31 (Sat.): Traditional Service at 6:00 p.m.
April 1: Special Resurrection Sunday Services at 10 a.m. & 5 p.m. (*two services only*)



BIBLICAL PORTRAIT OF MARRIAGE I

Learn about the roles and responsibilities of husbands, wives, and of the couple
 April 7, 14, & 21 (Sat.) 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
 at the Fellowship Hall | **Last day of reg.: March 25**
 Contact Dana at 0917 532 7741 to register



LOVING GOD CONFERENCE

With Pastor Edmund and Ann Chan
 May 11-12 (Fri. & Sat.) here at GCF
 Tickets are available today (800.00 & 400.00)
 at the ministry information booth

STEWARDSHIP REPORT:

March 2018

	March Budget	Received, Mar. 1-14
General	8,156,063	3,846,041
Missions	927,000	450,052
	Jan. - Mar. Budget	Received, Jan. - Mar.
General	28,952,111	18,025,341
Missions	2,781,000	2,128,187

Flower Ministry

The flowers this week are given with praise and thanksgiving to God for His blessings by the Basilad family and the Messiah College.

Please call 632 1354 to 56 for inquiries on how to participate in this ministry.



Reaching out to our oikos with love and respect

by Pastor Gelo Tuanqui

There was a time I believed the saying that the hardest people to reach out were the in-laws. But God's grace and His sovereignty proved me wrong.

Even before Nikki, my wife, and I started planning our wedding, her father already requested a Catholic ceremony. I struggled so much with that; but consulting with one of our pastors, I was challenged with this question: "How could we win her parents to Christ if we wouldn't honor their request?"

Nikki has been a Christian for some years before we got married, and we granted her parents' request to honor them. After our wedding, me and my wife were burdened to share the Gospel to them, but rejection and small instances of persecution were what we received in return. For example, they will call Nikki "Pastora" every time she shares the Gospel on social media.

But instead of arguing, we prayed and we lovingly and respectfully kept on sharing the Gospel. We did not give up. And the Lord answered through a breakthrough when my mother-in-law realized that she needs God when she suffered brokenness.

A few more months passed and the Lord continued to reveal His answer to our prayers. My mother-in-law called me to ask if she can join our Growth Group, and in time, we started a Bible study in their home. She publicly declared her faith in Christ when she was baptized a few months later. Also, my father in-law started to attend the weekly worship service.

Let us be reminded that Acts 16:31 is not just a statement. It is a promise from the Lord Jesus. But the question is, are you willing to reach out your oikos? ■

ON THE COVER: A terebinth tree in Israel (Wikimedia). Some English versions of the Bible translate *elonei mamrei* to "terebinths of Mamre," to refer to the tree where Abraham blessed God with his hospitality. Terebinth trees are abundant in Israel and Syria, though many appear stunted and shrubby because of overgrazing.

Join a DISCIPLE-MAKING GROUP

Pass by the GGEX (Growth Group Express)!

Sundays, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Room B124
Get a feel of what a Growth Group is like before you participate in one. Come and join us!

HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE Y-GROUPS

Sundays, 9:30-10:30 a.m.,
and 4:30-5:30 p.m.
At GCF (Youth Center, 6th flr.)

Life in Technicolor Support Group

for cancer patients
3rd Sundays, 12-3 p.m. at GCF
(Seniors' Room)

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

8 a.m.: Ages 1-3, B415; Ages 4-5, B410;
Age 6, B414; Age 7, B403; Age 8, B413,
Ages 9-10, B411; Ages 11-12, B409;
Transition Age 13, B406

10:30 a.m.: Ages 1-2, B412; Age 3, B415;
Age 4, B408; Age 5, B410; Age 6A, B402;
Age 6B, B403; Age 7, B401; Age 8, B413;
Age 9, B411; Age 10, B414; Age 11, B409;
Age 12, B405; Transition Age 13, B406

3 p.m.: Ages 1-5, B415; Ages 6-9, B402;
Ages 10-12, B403

5:30 p.m.: Ages 1-5, B415; Age 6, B402;
Ages 7-9, B401; Ages 10-12, B403;
Transition Age 13, B404

Nursery: 2nd flr. for nursing moms and babies aged one week to 11 months old

Yayas: 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., B404

Sunday School Parents' Class:
9:30 a.m., B406

If you are interested in joining any of the small groups above, fill out the tear-off form inside this bulletin, drop it in the offering bag or submit it to the Growth Group booth at the lobby. For more information, you can text or call us at 0917 532 7740.



Greenhills Christian Fellowship

Know Christ and Make Him Known

Ruby cor. Garnet Roads, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1605

Tel. Nos. 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80, 635 0082 to 83 | Fax No. 632 1357

Mobile No. 0920 961 2964, Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

E-mail: email@gcf.org.ph • Website: www.gcf.org.ph

How may we SERVE YOU BETTER?

Fill-out this tear off form and drop it in an offering bag/box or at the Ministry Information Booth. Please check all that is applicable:

- I am a first-time guest.
- I prayed to receive Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord today.
- I would like to know how to become a Christian.
- I am interested in becoming a member of this church.
- I want to join a Growth Group.**
(Specify age group: _____)
(Specify group composition: _____)
- I want to start a Growth Group.
- I want to host a Growth Group.

Please share with us some information about yourself:

Name: _____

Age: ____ Landline no.: _____

Mobile no.: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Year of membership: _____

Name of Growth Group (if you already have one): _____

*Today is **17/18 March 2018**, and I attended the 8 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 3:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. (Sat) (encircle the time).*

Write below *any* inquiry or prayer item that you want to ask or share.

For hospital or house visitation, dedication service, or funeral service requests, please call or text 0917 532 7794.

God's Way to Heaven

THE GOSPEL

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."
(1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God is holy and righteous: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty, the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:3). **He requires holiness of us as well:** "Be holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16).

THE TRUTH ABOUT MAN

Man is sinful: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).
Sin demands a penalty: "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRIST

Christ is the expression of God's love for us: "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). **Christ paid the penalty of our sins and died for sinners:** "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God" (1 Peter 3:18). **Through Christ, God offers man reconciliation:** "God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them" (2 Corinthians 5:18).

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

Believe and receive Jesus as Lord and Savior: "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

PRAYER: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. I believe that you died on the cross in my place, to save me from my sins, and I accept you as my Savior, and the Master of my life forever. Amen.*

Need someone to talk to?

Visit the Emmaus Road Counseling Center at the GCF Mezzanine floor or contact 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80 or 0917 532 7794 for inquiries.