

About four years ago I sat in a room with about 10 men. Good men. A few preachers and elders. We had a conversation about evangelism. Not so much tactics like handing out cards or welcoming visitors – but more along the lines of: how do you study with people so as to lead them to the Truth?

A couple of men talked about “The Big Picture” presentation. It is a slide show that demonstrates God’s plan for man from the beginning and culminates in a study of Romans 6 and the need for faith, baptism and faithfulness. It is a great tool. We actually a link to it on the welcome page of our website.

The asked me, and I told them about “The Gospel Message” material. Also linked on our web page, and always available on our back table, it’s a short four lesson study designed to help us see Christ’s authority, God’s right to be obeyed, and how we can enter into a relationship with Christ through baptism. It also discusses why we worship like we do and how to get acquainted with the Bible.

But I was most excited to hear one particular man speak. He has never been a preacher. He is a shepherd at a local church. He has been in poor health for a few years. And yet he continues to lead to Christ more people each year than probably all of us combined. He was asked: what do you study with people. He smiled. And then he slowly held up 3 Fingers. He said this is it. Show people what God has done. Show them what it mean for what God is doing and will do. And people will be baptized into Christ’s Body.

-- THE 3 PROMISES TO ABRAHAM – (**Genesis 12:1-3**) -- Now, you’d have to know the way I process. I didn’t want to hear more or see his material... yet... and still have not... I wanted to go home, open my Bible to Genesis 12 and figure out what makes it such a powerful place to start! He’s Right!

- 1) *If you are not a Christian – see what God has designed and you will want to become one today.*
- 2) *If you are already a Christian – remember you are apart of something amazing and long standing.*
- 3) *If you know someone who needs the truth – show them the God who fulfills promises and blesses all.*

Genesis 12:1-3,7 -- Do you see the 3 things God said that directed the course of 4,000 years of history, even up to and beyond this very place and moment today?

12:2,3 – “I will make you a great nation” - God can Built A Mighty Nation

- Do you remember how many people left that land that day? (**v5** – 3 and their servants)
- 100+ years later, fulfillment seemed slow and maybe non-existent – (**70 – 46:26-27**)
- Next 300 years – under seemingly impossible circumstances, GOD BUILT – (**Ex. 1:6,9,20** – Many)
- After the Exodus, they were to reflect on this – (**Deut. 26:5**) – In fact, they were millions!
- And not just many, but BLESSED and POWERFUL.
 - They plundered the Egyptians on their way out.
 - They wandered in the wilderness for sin, but after that were victorious in battle after battle
- Impossible? Not with God. God can take a FEW FAITHFUL and BUILD A MIGHTY NATION!
- As beautiful as that story is and as much faith as it builds in our God and the need to serve Him, it is but a SHADOW of the true substance: God’s Grander Plan – **I Peter 2:9-10**
 - We are the Mighty Nation under a Triumphant King. **Matthew 16:16-18**
 - Started with **one Man**, God in flesh. Then **12** men. Then **70**. Then **3,000**.
 - Now, 2,000 years and half a world away.... God’s greatest promise is fulfilled in YOU
- If I were evangelizing to a lost soul I would ask
 - **Do you want to be a part of that?** The mustard seen now has leaves and branches.
- To my saved brethren I ask
 - **Do you appreciate what He has welcomed you into?** Is anything in life this important?

12:7 – “To your descendant I will give this land” - God can Deliver a Promised Land

- God continued to promise Canaan to subsequent generations
 - Isaac (**26:1-3**); Jacob (**28:13**); Passed to Joseph (**48:4**)
- But it required PATIENCE... hundred of years passed in Egypt

- After their deliverance, the promise was closer than ever! (**Numbers 10:39; 13:1-2**)
- But as you recall, because of their sin and lack of faith, many died in the wilderness
- But the PROMISE DID NOT DIE! (though it was fulfilled 500 years after it was made)
 - **Joshua 21:43-45** – The Faithful enter the Land!
- *While the keeping of that land was conditional, the promise was absolute for those who believed in what God has said and obeyed Him fully.*
- As enticing as a fertile land of flowing milk and honey sounds and is worth waiting for and fighting for... God has promised a future land of flowing mercy and holiness in the heavens for those who do so now!
 - **Hebrews 4:3-9** – Ultimate fulfillment: Sabbath Rest in Heaven!
 - A place, the Bible describes, with Jesus forever. A place for faithful souls to worship their God forever without fear of sin, death or fatigue.
 - *The goal of all life. The end of all good things.*
- **4:1** – Live in fear that you might miss this, for it requires, just like Canaan:
 - FAITH IN GOD; OBEDIENCE TO HIS WAY; A FIGHT to take possession of it.
 - **4:11** – Many never saw that land and died in the wilderness...
- If I were evangelizing to a lost person, I would turn to passages about penitence and baptism
 - DO YOU WANT TO GO THERE? Will you do whatever it takes to find Him in eternity?
- To my saved brethren I ask
 - WILL YOU FIGHT THE GIANTS AND ALL DOUBTS TO MAKE SURE YOU DON'T MISS IT?

None of this sounds easy nor should it. The trials they faced in Egypt (becoming a great nation). And the battles they fought to enter Canaan (against many mighty foes) was hard. And the choices we must make to be in THE CHURCH. And the sacrifices we must make to get TO HEAVEN are very challenging indeed.

But that is why the 3rd promise so important, valuable, and becomes the greatest of them all!

12:2-3 – “And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed” *God can Save a Sin-Burdened Soul*

- This promise was never fulfilled in the Old Testament. There was no type or shadow that could measure up to it. *Through Abraham's seed the ONE would come. The One and Only who could bring blessings, forgiveness and favor to all mankind!*
 - **Gen 22:18** – We see it wasn't just concerning Abraham, but through His line.
 - And God stuck with this plan through some tough times
 - When Israel grumbled and complained, He kept the line going
 - When the Kingdom divided and Kings sinned against Him, He kept it going
 - When it looked like Other Nations, world Powers would wipe them out...
 - **Galatians 3:8** – A salvation that goes beyond a certain nation or a certain time
 - But that would be for a certain people: FAITHFUL like Abraham (**3:9**)
- **Galatians 3:16, 22-26** – CHRIST! He is from the line of David, from the line of Judah, from the line of Jacob, from the line of Abraham. He is the SEED that brought LIFE TO ALL MEN
 - All of worship, our life, our present and future are about Him. Because all worship, all life, past, present and eternal future have always been about HIM!
- **Galatians 3:26-29** – Let's read this and then 2 final questions
 - *As an evangelist to a lost soul I must ask*
 - Will you see God's great plan fulfilled in your life by being clothed with Christ and becoming an heir to the promise – through belief, repentance of sin, and baptism?
 - *To my saved brethren I ask*
 - You know what God promised and how perfectly and lovingly He has fulfilled His words, built the Church, promised Heaven and send His Son to get you there... DO YOU BELONG TO CHRIST? Not, “have you been baptized” but have you given yourself, your body, your spirit, your all ... TO HIM?