



## The Godfather - Calling

### CONNECT

- Where are your roots? Do you have any noteworthy ancestors?
- What was the last major change you went through?
- Are you living in your true calling, getting there, or still searching?

If there are non-Christians in the group – don't worry if they don't understand true calling in the light of God's calling. They may define it as simply being in the right place or on the right track. That is totally okay at this point in the discussion. The goal here is primarily to get them engaged in the conversation and to begin to open up about their lives. This will put them in a place where God can minister to them.

### THOUGHT

Abraham played a significant role in the birthing of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—religions that claim 54% of the world's population. Christians and Jews consider Abraham the father of their respective faiths. His name was mentioned 312 times in the Bible. In this series we will discuss why it is that Abraham had such a significant role in world religions. We'll discover what makes his story so significant that we still talk about it and learn from it today. In this discussion we will look at Abraham's calling, covenant, and commitment. At the age of 75, God

commanded Abraham to GO and settle in a new land. He promised to give him a great name and make him distinguished in a new nation where he will be a blessing to others. God promises that Abraham will gain a new legacy that will continue for generations.

Both Jews and Christians consider Abraham the Father of their religions. Muslims see Abraham as the Father of the Arabs, through Ishmael, but not the Father of their Faith. He is considered the father of the prophets in Islam.

## WORD

*"<sup>1</sup>The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you."<sup>2</sup>"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup>I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."<sup>4</sup>So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran."*

**Genesis 12:1-4 (NIV)**

## 1. CALLING

*"<sup>27</sup>My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."*

**John 10:27 (NIV)**

*"<sup>11</sup>The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail."*

**Isaiah 58:11 (NIV)**

We see in Genesis 12:4 that when God called Abraham he obeyed and went. Although God didn't tell Abraham where he was going, He did promise to show him the way. Like Abraham, God calls all of us to follow Him and promises to lead us and to provide everything we will need. Have you sensed God calling you to follow Him? What are some of the ways that God leads us?

Don't worry if people are not too sure of whether or not God has called them or how God speaks to them or leads them. Just reassure them that according to scripture, all life comes from God and He has a plan and a purpose for every life created, but we must allow God to lead us into that purpose. The point to emphasize is that, according to scripture, God desires to lead us and is always calling to us. The key is to learn to discern God's voice and to listen to it. Answers about how God leads us may vary greatly from subjective thoughts, sensings, ideas, to more practical things like scripture, wise counsel, and common sense. The primary thing to emphasize is that God speaks to all of us and that following God's lead is the best way to be blessed. Whether they are old Christians, new Christians or non-Christians, our hope is that they God will stir in them a desire to hear His voice more clearly and to follow His lead.

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## 2. FAITH

*"<sup>8</sup>By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going."  
**Hebrews 11:8 (NIV)***

*"What does Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."  
**Romans 4:3 (NIV)***

*"<sup>17</sup>For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."  
**Romans 1:17 (NIV)***

This might be the best question to lead to sharing the Gospel. Be especially sensitive if you know there are non-Christians at the meeting. You might turn to John 3:16 (for God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever BELIEVES on Him should not perish) or Ephesians 2:8 (for by grace you have been saved through FAITH) or Rom 10:9-10 (if you declare with your mouth 'Jesus is Lord' and BELIEVE in your heart, you will be saved'). They can trust God for salvation!

Abraham is the father of all who believe because he chose to trust God on a journey of faith, not knowing where God was leading him. Anyone who wants to follow God will similarly be called to a journey of faith. How would you describe your journey of faith? Where is God asking you to trust Him?

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### 3. COMMITMENT

"The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you."

**Genesis 12:1 (NIV)**

<sup>17</sup>"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

**2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)**

This section is great for Christians and non-Christians alike. We all have things that hold us back, whether it's wrong desires, wrong relationships, addictions. Most will have some ways in which they have attempted to follow God. Their presence at your Connect Group is probably evidence of that. Most will have left some things behind as well. The challenge will be what steps they must take to continue to follow God, which will be addressed in the application questions.

When we commit to follow God, we embark on a journey of transformation into the person you were created to become. This process involves FOLLOWING God and LEAVING your past. How would you describe your journey of faith, following God and leaving your past behind?

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#### PERSONAL APPLICATION

- What step can you take this week to either better articulate your calling or take a further step toward fulfilling your call?
- Where is God asking you to trust Him? What step can you take in trusting God?
- Is there anything that you feel you may need to leave behind as you continue on your journey with God? What step can you take this week to leave the past behind?

#### PRAYER

- Thank God for the calling you. Ask Him to make His calling clearer to you and to continue leading you into it.
- Ask God where you need to trust Him in your life. Ask God to increase your faith, your ability to trust Him.
- Ask God to show you if there is anything in your life that you need to change or leave behind. Ask God to show you any actions, attitudes or beliefs that need to change in your life and for the courage and grace to be able to make those changes.

## NOTES

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