

Unshakable Faith Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Is there anything you were particularly afraid of as a child? Explain.
2. What is something that made you laugh this week?

Read the following passage: Romans 4:18-25.

When God called Abraham, Abraham knew almost nothing about God. Many of Abraham's relatives were named after deities associated with the moon. The gods Abraham worshiped were far from reliable. They were fallible, emotional, and dependent on human beings. With that kind of background, Abraham's growing faith in the one true God was remarkable. It's no surprise that Paul and others hold him up as such an important example. Even so, the Genesis narratives demonstrate just how human Abraham's faith was. He made mistakes. He felt afraid. He wrestled with disillusionment. Abraham's example reminds us that an unshakable faith depends on an unshakable God.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. When Abraham went to Egypt to escape a famine in Canaan, he devised a plan that was likely motivated by fear (Genesis 12:10-13). Fear is a normal part of life (and, in some circumstances, can save our lives!). But when we're led by fear, we can also make some really bad decisions. What are some ways fear can lead us to make unwise or unhelpful decisions? Do you see fear affecting you in any negative ways in this season? Explain. What's the difference between using the appropriate information to make good decisions and living out of fear?
2. After Abraham returned to Canaan, he went back to the place he had first built an altar and called on the name of the Lord (Genesis 13:1-4). How can worship help us overcome fear? Are you finding ways to spend time worshiping God? If so, what does that look like for you?
3. Read Genesis 15:1-6. Abraham's response to the Lord suggests he was disillusioned. What causes disillusionment in our lives? What can we do when we feel disillusioned?
4. Why do you think Genesis 15:6 became such an important verse for early Christian leaders like the apostle Paul? Explain some of the ways Paul unpacks this verse in Romans 4.
5. Abraham and Sarah tried to secure a son through Sarah's Egyptian maidservant, Hagar. But this was not the way God intended to produce a male heir for Abraham and Sarah. In this case, and more generally, "How?" is often just as important as

“What?”. Why is this so? What are some areas in your life in which you have discovered (or are discovering) that “How” is as important as “What?”

6. Abraham’s mind began to fill with questions when God informed him that Sodom, the place where his nephew Lot lived, was going to be judged. When you think about God, the Christian faith, or life in general, do you find that you have a lot of questions? Have these questions hindered your faith in Jesus? Explain. What areas tend to cause the greatest difficulty for you? What can we do to live in faith even when we have unanswered questions?
7. God instructed Abraham to offer his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice. It’s hard to know exactly how Abraham processed this command. As God makes clear repeatedly in the Old Testament Scriptures, he hates child sacrifice. But this episode with Abraham becomes a profound picture of Jesus, the Son of God, offering himself for our sins. What is the significance of Jesus’ crucifixion? Does the crucifixion give you hope? Explain.
8. What is one thing you can do to grow in faith this week?

Pray