

# Thanks? For This?

## **A Great Promise:**

Genesis 12:2-3

## **A Big Problem:**

Genesis 12:10

## **A Bad Plan:**

Genesis 12:11-20

## **A Few Things to Think About:**

- Cutting corners affects **others**.
- Don't judge your **spirituality** by your **situation**.
- God's plan will get done **with or without us**.
- God's promises are **promises from God**.
- Sometimes **looking back** is the best way **to see God**.

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of November 25, 2012

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## QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged you or confused you?

## MY STORY

1. Mike mentioned that cutting corners will often affect those around us. Can you think of a time when lying, cheating, taking a short cut, or not thinking something through affected you or someone you know?

2. Just like with Abram, lying still happens all the time in our society. What lies do you think are more accepted or even bragged about in society today?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. It can be discouraging when we feel like we're being obedient to God and then a "famine" occurs in life and we're tempted to go to whatever is "Egypt" to us. What encouragement can be taken from the following verses in terms of avoiding going to our "Egypt" during a "famine"?

### John 8:12

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." [NIV]

### Galatians 5:1

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. [NIV]

### Galatians 5:13

You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. [NIV]

### 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! [13] No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. [NIV]

Which of these verses could be most encouraging to you when facing a famine?

2. As we saw in this weekend's sermon, and in much of Genesis, there are still challenges even for those following God's plans. For so many of us, being challenged, stretched or experiencing hardship can feel like we're not close to God or like we've done something wrong. The reality is that our life as Christians will often be more challenging than what we were taught or brought up to believe. How does 1 Peter 4:12-19 bring perspective on what God tells us our Christian life will look like versus what we may have been taught or brought up believing?

### **1 Peter 4:12-19**

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. [13] But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. [14] If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. [15] If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. [16] However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. [17] For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? [18] And,

"If it is hard for the righteous to be saved,  
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?"

[19] So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good. [NIV]

While 1 Peter 4 can be a bit sobering, what balance does Matthew 11:28-30 bring to the previous passage?

### **Matthew 11:28-30**

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. [29] Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. [30] For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." [NIV]

3. The story of Abram reminds us that a half-truth is still a whole lie. What do the following verses tell us about the effects or consequences of compromise when it comes to telling the truth?

### **Proverbs 19:9**

A false witness will not go unpunished,  
and he who pours out lies will perish. [NIV]

### **Proverbs 26:18-19**

Like a madman shooting

firebrands or deadly arrows  
[19] is a man who deceives his neighbor  
and says, "I was only joking!" [NIV]

### **Proverbs 26:24-26**

A malicious man disguises himself with his lips,  
but in his heart he harbors deceit.  
[25] Though his speech is charming, do not believe him,  
for seven abominations fill his heart.  
[26] His malice may be concealed by deception,  
but his wickedness will be exposed in the assembly. [NIV]

Despite the fact that lying has major consequences, we all are prone to fall into it at different times. Can you think of any reasons why people continue telling half-truths despite the consequences?

### **TAKING IT HOME**

Mike mentioned we often see God working in our life more clearly when looking in the rear view mirror. Looking back on this year, can you think of any victories or challenges in which you saw God showing up?

We saw that cutting corners will not only affect us but others too. Are there any corners you're cutting or areas of your life that you feel you may be getting too close to the edge and want to give God more control of?

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Prayer Requests:

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