

## **Walking by Faith Small Group Guide**

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

1. Are you a person who likes to take charge or do you prefer to wait and see what happens naturally?
2. How has your faith inspired a decision you have made in the past week?

**Read the following passage:** Genesis 15:1-21

Abram's story began with a dramatic encounter with God. God told Abram, "I want you to leave everything—your country, your people, your father's house—and go to the land I will show you. And I'm going to bless you. I'm going to make you a great nation. Your name is going to be great." After this encounter, Abram obeyed God and left. And, almost immediately, things began to go sideways. By the time we get to Genesis 15, Abram is struggling. He knows that God has given him great promises, but it seems like nothing is happening. Perhaps you can relate. So often in life getting to where we want to go is much harder and takes much longer than we expect. Walking by faith is a fight. Abram's example shows us how to persevere. We need to talk to God. We need to get clarity around our role and God's role. And we need to go to the places of encouragement. In the end, God's faithfulness to his covenant with us will bring the victory.

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

1. Do you have any important goals in your life right now? Are you encountering significant obstacles in your attempt to reach any of these goals? Explain.
2. Are you intentionally creating time and space to connect with God? Explain.
3. Read 2 Corinthians 12:6-10. When we face difficulties, our natural tendency is to ask God to take them away, rather than to ask him what he is trying to teach us through them. Paul pleaded his case with God, and eventually made peace with God's response, even though it wasn't the response he had hoped for. Are there any areas in your life that feel like "a thorn in your flesh" that you wish God would just take away? What do you think the Lord might be trying to teach you through these circumstances?
4. How do you process disappointment with God when you don't get the outcome you hoped for?
5. In your relationships, how do you resolve misunderstandings and process disappointments? What do you do when the person you're disappointed in is you? Why is trusting God important when it comes to improving our relationships with

God and with others?

6. Read Genesis 16:1-3. Sarah tried to take control of her childlessness in a way God did not approve of. Have you ever done something similar? Explain. How do we recognize when our attempts to take control are unhealthy?
7. What are some areas in which you might fall into the trap of waiting for God to do something that he has actually called you to do? Is it okay to take a step even without a specific revelation from God that he wants us to take that step? Explain.
8. Read Romans 4:13-15 and Galatians 3:17-18. How do these passages relate to Genesis 15:6 and the fact that only God passed between the sacrificed animals?
9. How might reflecting on the cross strengthen our faith?

**Pray**