

Father's Day Service

Father's Day 2021 "God Doesn't Waste Anything"

ICEBREAKER |

Do you enjoy leftovers? Or would you rather just toss them and start from scratch?

INTRODUCTION |

Some of us hate the thought of warming up leftovers. The rest of us love the idea of never wasting a single bite of a meal. With God, nothing is ever wasted. We learned today that the things we would rather just toss and forget about are the things that He can use to make something great of us. So while we think of ways to be better fathers, celebrate our own great fathers, or worship our own Heavenly Father, let's also look at father in the Bible. God never let a single thing go to waste when it came to Abram. And when it comes to us, it's still true.

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Abram was known as a great father in the Bible. He was not only the father of the Jewish religion, he was celebrated as the father of faith for all of us! Looking at his story tells us two things about our own lives. First of all, **God Doesn't Waste Our Past.**

Abram may be remembered for the future he provided for his children. But he didn't have the greatest of beginnings. Take a look at the following passage:

The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you.

Genesis 12:1 (NLT)

You might think that leaving your family and going on your own might have been difficult. But Abram had some shares of difficulties in his family. Let's back up and read about a few of them.

Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot. But Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, the land of his birth, while his father, Terah, was still living. Meanwhile, Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai ... But Sarai was unable to become pregnant and had no children. One day Terah took his son Abram, his daughter-in-law Sarai (his son Abram's wife), and his grandson Lot (his son Haran's child) and moved away from Ur of the Chaldeans. He was headed for the land of Canaan, but they stopped at Haran and settled there. Terah lived for 205 years and died while still in Haran.

Genesis 11:27-32 (NLT)

His brother, died too soon. His father, heartbroken. His wife, unable to have children. His family, thousands of miles away from home. And God asked him to keep going. There was enough hardship in his life to account for multiple lifetimes. But Abram knew that only one thing mattered, the Word of the Lord.

Have you ever felt like you're facing an uphill battle? That the deck was stacked against you? What was one thing that kept you going in that time?

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When Abram heard God's word, he did two things. First, he obeyed. He could have questioned God's direction or flat out refused. Instead, he turned his face towards God's promises.

So Abram departed as the Lord had instructed.

Genesis 12:4 (NLT)

Next, he believed. It's one thing to just follow God's commands. It's another to trust that His way is right.

Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith.

Genesis 15:6 (NLT)

If you follow the trajectory of his life, you can't skip a beat. He went from towering heights to sickening lows. But he also always kept moving forward. He might have wanted to scrub out parts of his past, but it was Abram's past that brought him to a place of faith.

There are things in our past we'd rather just forget. It may be a sin we've asked forgiveness for or a mistake that still lingers. What are some ways that your past regrets have brought you to a stronger faith in God? (Example, a layoff that led to miraculous supply, a broken relationship that you realized was toxic)

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God doesn't waste our past, but also **God Doesn't Waste Our Weaknesses**. Abram had plenty of those as well. One of them was relying on his own strength and wisdom.

In Genesis 12, Abram and his young family face a famine. They have to move out of the area for a while and go down to Egypt. Abram is afraid that Pharaoh will see his beautiful wife, Sarai, and claim her as his own. So he tells her to lie for him, say that she's his sister. But it backfires. Pharaoh takes her anyway, and God nearly has him and the whole country wiped out!

It's a strange story, for sure. But it's also a lesson to never think our ways are better than God's ways. We should never try to get out in front of God. There's a difference between believing *what* God can do and trusting in *how* God chooses to do it.

Has there ever been a time when you royally messed up even with the best intentions in mind? What could you have done differently to save yourself some heartache?

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There's an old saying that God works in mysterious ways. One of those ways is that He works in our weaknesses. Instead of them being a hindrance to God's plans, they often show us just how God intends to deliver on His promises.

My mind and my body may grow weak, but God is my strength; He is all I ever need.
Psalm 73:26 (GNT)

God will always show up when we humble ourselves and place His interests and plans ahead of our own. In fact, when we have come to the end of ourselves is when He can truly be seen in power.

Think about it. If your greatest success cannot secure God's promises, then your greatest failure, your biggest weakness, your scariest past obstacle cannot keep you from it either.

**What is one way that God has shown up in your weakness to be strength?
(Example, you were afraid to talk to someone about Jesus but the Holy Spirit gave you the words to say)**

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

God never gives up on you! Whenever you feel like you're just leftovers, know that God has something great in store. And nothing will stand in His way. You might be trying to hide it, but He knows it and He's not concerned.

- What from your past are you trying to hide, thinking it will keep you from God's best?
- What kind of weakness are you trying to hide, thinking it will stop you from God's plan?

This week, will you commit to hand them over to God?

ADDITIONAL ACTION STEPS (Optional):

- Do at least one (1) SOAP Devotions this week
- Share with your group one of your SOAP Devotions from this past week
- Invite a friend to join our small group next week as we begin our new series, “Did God Really Say That?”

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Father God, we are so grateful that You have chosen us to be Your children. No matter what is in our past that has hurt us and no matter what is in our present that has weakened us, we know that our future is secure because of what You have done and who You are!

SCRIPTURES FOR S.O.A.P.

Day 1: *We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation.*

Romans 5:3-4 (NLT)

Day 2: *“Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith.” The real children of Abraham, then, are those who put their faith in God.*

Galatians 3:6-7 (NLT)

Day 3: *“My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.” So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NLT)

Day 4: *I don’t look back, I lengthen my stride, and I run straight toward the goal to win the prize that God’s heavenly call offers in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 3:13-14 (GWT)

Day 5: *Jesus understands every weakness of ours, because He was tempted in every way that we are. But He did not sin!*

Hebrews 4:15 (CEV)