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Genesis 12:1

Then the Lord told Abram, "Leave your country, your relatives, and your father's house, and go to the land that I will show you."

The story of the call of Abram (Abraham as he would come to be known) is a wonderful example of what it means to both love and trust God. To love and trust God results in faith; faith that God is the answer to our questions about life and the purpose of life. Faith flows out of our desire to be deeply and intimately connected to God. The faith of Abraham would ultimately lead to the formation of a chosen people who would lead countless people to faith in the one true living God. Not only would the Jewish (Hebrew) people learn to live in a special relationship with God, they would in the end be linked to the coming of Jesus the Messiah, who would bring salvation to all people by grace through faith.

How many of us could at the ripe old age of 75, much less much younger, leave our homes, families, and accumulated wealth behind to go to a place whose destination we are not even sure of. It sounds crazy perhaps, but this is exactly what Abram was willing to do when called by God to do that. Abram trusted God. He knew that God had not only created him, He had provided for him because He loved him as His very own child. Abram's relationship with God was much more than an intellectual acceptance of God's existence. Abram knew only a fool would not believe in God for evidence of God's reality was everywhere. Abram moved from his mind to the heart. He knew through life's

experience of God's love and compassion. God did not abandon Abram in his times of weakness. Because God had never given up on Abram, Abram never gave up on God. He came to love and trust God and he revealed that by living an obedient and holy (to the best of his human ability) life. His commitment to God led God to not only bless Abram, but to make Abram a blessing to countless others.

The great challenge to people today is to live out an authentic witness to being a Christian. Many claim to be Christians. Many claim to be born again in water and the Spirit. But for too often, the faithfulness we demonstrate to God and God's will tells a very different story. To love God is to obey God, and sadly all too many people want God's grace and forgiveness but they do not want to be obedient and try to live holy lives. For all too many, their Christianity is only skin deep and does not go all the way to their heart.

To be blessed by God requires us to be like Abram. We must love and trust God. We must commit our lives to obedience to God's will. We must love others as well as we serve God through the gifts and talents he has provided to us. If we would just commit to loving and trusting God, our lives would be filled with beautiful new beginnings.