

WEEK 3: UNFINISHED PRIORITIES

MESSAGE NOTES:



SMALL GROUPS GUIDE

TEACHING AND TESTIMONY VIDEO

Play Teaching and Testimony Video for Week 3. Share reflections from the video. Then, pray for this testimony before you begin the rest of the lesson. Watch the video at eastside.com/unfinished.

OPENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Who is the most “committed” person you know? To what are they committed?
- 2 What does commitment mean to you? To what are you committed?
- 3 When has commitment cost you or caused you to rearrange your priorities?

FURTHER DISCUSSION FROM SCRIPTURE

Read the following Scripture passage and discuss the questions as a group. You may want to have each group member journal their answer first in the provided space before discussing together, as a means of encouraging all to participate more deeply.

PRIORITIZING THE THINGS OF GOD REQUIRES SELFLESSNESS AND RELENTLESS COMMITMENT

Genesis 13:1-17

So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold. From the Negev he went from place to place until he came to Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been earlier and where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on the name of the Lord.

Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. And quarreling arose between Abram's herders and Lot's. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land at that time.

So Abram said to Lot, "Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herders and mine, for we are close relatives. Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; if you go to the right, I'll go to the left."

Lot looked around and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.

The Lord said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you."

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- 1 Abraham clearly had different priorities than Lot in this situation. What were Abraham's priorities as outlined in this passage?

...and what were Lot's priorities?

- 2 There is a passage in Proverbs that states, "The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller." (Proverbs 11:24 MSG). How does this truth play out in this passage?

- 3 In order for Abraham to be the generous man he was in this situation, he had to stay committed to following the ways of God. Do you feel you are committed to following the ways of God in terms of generosity? In what ways are you weak, uncommitted, or wavering?

- 4 As you think about the priority of your generosity to building God's kingdom, do you feel you are committed to generosity above your other financial priorities? Another way to put this might be, does your level of spending control your level of giving, or does your level of giving control your level of spending? Be as honest as you possibly can.

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OUR RESOURCES CAN HAVE A MULTIPLICATIVE EFFECT WHEN WE PRIORITIZE GOD'S PATH AND NOT OUR OWN

2 Corinthians 9:10-15

Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

- 5 Paul, a New Testament parallel to Abraham in many ways, impresses upon the early church at Corinth - and upon US as the Church of today - the importance of giving in such a way that we believe God will 'increase our store of seed' and will 'enlarge the harvest of our righteousness.' But focus in on verse 11: *You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion.* Why does God give resources to us? So that we can have more money for ourselves? So that we can feel more secure? So that we can impress others and feel significant? NO! It's so that we can be generous on every occasion!

6 So let's do a little soul searching and ask ourselves a question:
If you were God, would you give you more money?

7 See, we often say, "Well, if I had more resources, then I would give more."
But here's the thing: If you cannot be trusted with little, why do you think
God would trust you with much?

**REFLECT AND PRAY ON WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO TRULY
PRIORITIZE HIM AS IT RELATES TO OUR GENEROSITY IN
THIS UNFINISHED JOURNEY TOGETHER...**