

Abram, Abraham, and the Almighty God

by Chuck Smith

God's ideal requirement for man is perfection, but through faith in Jesus Christ, God accounts us righteous, and we can walk after the spirit.

Duration: 25:07

Scripture: Genesis 17:1-2, Genesis 17:7, Genesis 25:12, Matthew 5:48, Matthew 6:33, Philippians 3:12

Topics: "Abraham"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith focuses on Genesis chapter 17, where God appears to Abram when he is 99 years old. God declares Himself as Almighty God and instructs Abram to walk before Him blameless. Pastor Chuck emphasizes that God's ideal requirement for man is perfection, and though we may never achieve it on our own, through walking in Christ and the power of the indwelling Spirit, we can strive towards that ideal. God also promises to make a covenant with Abram and reveals that the heir of the promise will be born after a spiritual sort, not through the work of the flesh. The sermon highlights the ongoing struggle between the flesh and the spirit, as seen in the descendants of Abram.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
Welcome to The Word for Today Featuring the Bible teaching of Pastor Chuck Smith Of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California
Pastor Chuck is currently leading us on a verse-by-verse study Through the entire Bible And on today's edition of The Word for Today We'll be continuing our look at Abram, Abraham, and the Almighty God
As we pick up in Genesis, Chapter 17, Verse 1 So let's follow along As Pastor Chuck Smith begins today's lesson
When Abram was ninety-nine years old The Lord appeared to Abram and said to him I am Almighty God Walk before me and be perfect or blameless
The last time God spoke to Abram was when he was Eighty-six years old So there has been now an intervening time of thirteen years
When he was eighty-six years old He was complaining to God Because though God had blessed him with immense wealth He had no heir to leave the wealth to His chief servant, Eliezer
Was the one who would be in line to inherit All of the wealth that God had given to him And so Abram was sort of complaining to God
You know, God said, I'm going to be your exceeding rich reward or great reward And he said, yeah, but I don't have anybody to leave it to Except my servant, he's born in my house, he's not my own child
And the Lord said, he will not be your heir But one who will come out of your own body shall be your heir
And so Abram was then asked by God to come outside Look at the stars, and

God said If you can count them for numbers, so shall your seed be And so Abram believed God And it was accounted unto him for righteousness Now though we read there that he believed God And his faith was accounted for righteousness We see an immediate lapse of faith For Sarah came to him with the suggestion That he take her handmaid, Hagar, to raise up An heir, a descendant And Abram took Hagar, she conceived and bore a son And immediately, when she was pregnant She began to despise Sarah And Sarah wanted to get rid of her Abram said, do what you please And she drove her out and the Lord sent her back With a message that she was to submit herself She was going to have a son, he was to be named Ishmael And so God is silent He doesn't speak to Abram now for 13 years He waits now until he is 99 years old Before he speaks again And so he appeared to Abram and said unto him I am the Almighty God Walk before me Now, walk before me how?

Blameless or perfect God's ideal requirement for man is perfection How I would love to be perfect How I would love to fulfill God's divine ideal But I can't Now, the word sin Has as its root meaning missing the mark And the Bible said all have sinned Now, because man could not fulfill God's divine requirement God sent his only begotten son Who took our sins Our missing of the mark And he died in our place So that God's actual requirement for me now Who am not perfect and could not be perfect God's actual requirement for me now Is that I believe in his son who he sent And by my believing in Jesus Christ God accounts me righteous Paul said As he talked about his past life As he was attempting to keep the law of God And his accomplishments as a legalistic Jew Those things which were gained to me I count a loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ For whom I suffered the loss of all things But I count them but refuse That I may know him and be found in him Not having my own righteousness Which is of the law But the righteousness which is of Christ through faith So that faith in Christ By which God accounts me righteous Does that mean God's given up on me then?

He said, well, Chuck, you'll never be perfect No, walking in Christ The whole idea of walking in Christ Is that I might now receive that power Of the indwelling spirit of God To conform me into the image of Christ And to bring me into that ideal requirement Paul said, I don't count myself perfect But this is what I'm doing Forgetting those things which are behind And reaching forth to those things which are before I'm pressing towards the mark That mark of perfection I'm pressing towards it That mark of the high calling of God Which is in Christ Jesus So, I am God Almighty Walk before me blameless God declared I will make And notice Before God said what he was going to do for Abram And Abraham went out and tried to do it for himself Going to give you an heir And Abraham went out and tried

to produce the heir in himself Of the flesh, the work of his flesh But God said that The work of the flesh would not be the heir of the promise But that one who would be born after a spiritual Sort He would become the heir And so you find that the flesh and the spirit were Fighting together and continue To strive with each other to the present day The descendants after the flesh And the descendants after the spirit Of Abram But I will make my covenant God said And now he's going to talk about what I'm going to do God said I will, I will, I will, I will I will make my covenant between me and you And will multiply you exceedingly And Abram fell on his face And God talked with him saying As for me behold my covenant is with you And you shall be the father of many nations No longer shall your

name be called Abram But your name shall be Abraham Now God, what he did was insert the Hebrew letter H Into the name of Abram And the letter H is made with the sound of breath It's a H God put just the sound of breath into his name And the interesting thing is That as he did he made a new covenant with Abraham The covenant of circumcision Whereby he then said No longer after the flesh The cutting off of the flesh In order that you might now be a spiritual man That the H might become in reality A real part of

you, the spirit And a man walking after the spirit And the things of the spirit And so the change of the name was very significant And in changing the name of his wife Sarah He did the very same thing Added the same H to her name The breath, the spirit, the air The letter made with

the air And thus the insertion of God's spirit Or God's life into them Bringing them into this new dimension of life The life after the spirit I have made you the father of many nations I will make you exceedingly fruitful I will make nations of you And kings shall come from you And I will establish my covenant between me and you Your descendants after you And their generations for an everlasting covenant To be God to you And to your descendants after you Also I will give to you and your descendants after you The land in which you are a stranger All of the land of Canaan As an everlasting possession And I will be their God I will, I will, I will God is telling him all he's going to do Now, if you'll turn over to Genesis chapter 35 We find that God appeared unto Jacob There at Bethel In

the first verse Then God said to Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel Dwell there, and make an altar there to God Who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau, your brother And so he arose, went to Bethel And in verse 4 They turned all of their foreign gods and so forth over to Jacob And Jacob came to Bethel Verse 6 And he built an altar there He called the place the God of Bethel Because God appeared to him And God appeared to Jacob Verse 9 again When he came from Padanaram And blessed him And God said to him Your name is Jacob Your name shall not be called Jacob anymore But Israel shall be your name So he called his name Israel The name Jacob literally means heel catcher It has been translated surplanter But when he was born he was a twin And he took hold of his brother's heel As

he came out of the womb And so they called him He's a heel catcher Now God said you're not going to be called heel catcher anymore Your name is going to be called Israel The man of God Or man governed by God And what a beautiful change of name From surplanter or heel catcher Or you might put it in a modern vernacular Dirty, rotten, stinking thief You know Jacob Israel Governed by God Now notice And God said to him I am God Almighty El Shaddai This is the second time that God uses this name The first time was in our text back in chapter 17 When he revealed himself to Abram as El Shaddai The Almighty God The second time he uses that title for himself He is using it with Jacob And notice what God is saying to him Be fruitful, multiply a nation And a company of nations shall proceed from you

Kings shall come from your body The land which I gave to Abram and Isaac I give to you And to your descendants after you I give this land And so God went up from the place So many of the very same things That God promised to Abram When he revealed himself as El Shaddai He promised also to Jacob When he revealed himself as El Shaddai And in both cases The change of name And in both cases The new name signifying A man of God Or a man after the spirit Abraham The insertion of spirit Into his name And Jacob The man of God Or governed by God Israel God said to Abram And God now changes And no longer calls him Abram But now to Abraham And God said to Abraham As for you You shall keep my covenant You and your descendants after you Throughout their generations And this is my covenant Which you

shall keep Between me and you And your descendants after you Every male child among you Shall be circumcised You shall be circumcised In the flesh of your foreskins And it shall be a sign of the covenant Between me and you He who is eight days old among you Shall be circumcised Every male child in your generations He who is born in your house Or bought with money from the stranger Who is not your descendant He who is born in your house And he who was bought with your money Must be circumcised My covenant shall be in your flesh For an everlasting covenant And the uncircumcised male child Who is

not circumcised In the flesh of his foreskin That person shall be cut off From his people He has broken my covenant So God established then This covenant with Abraham And the covenant Was to be

marked by circumcision Which again signified Not to live or walk after the flesh The cutting off of the life of the flesh In order that you might live The life of the Spirit And God said that if They would not Have the right of circumcision Then they were to be cut off From being the people of God In other words You cannot be a man of God And walk after the flesh If you are to be a man of God It is only as you walk after the Spirit That you are truly a man of God In time to come The child that was born Was not considered a Jew Until he was circumcised Because if they are not circumcised Then they would be cut off From the people of God So you weren't born a Jew You became a Jew The day you were circumcised And that was the right By which you entered into The national life And it would

indicate I am to walk after the Spirit Now Paul when we get to the New Testament Begins to show the folly Of trusting in a ritual And he says it's ridiculous To think that you're a Jew Just because you've been circumcised For it is not the circumcision of the flesh But the circumcision of the heart That God was talking about That's the thing that God is interested That your heart is not after the flesh But your heart is after the Spirit And that circumcision Really doesn't avail a man anything If he is not really walking And living after the Spirit So if God accounts The walk after the Spirit As true circumcision Then it isn't the fleshly right That does anything And therefore the Gentiles Who are not circumcised Are considered the people of God Because in the heart There is that

circumcision The not walking after the flesh But walking after the Spirit And the things of the Spirit And so it is a Right of the Jews By which they became a Jew Entered into the national life And its sequel in the New Testament Is water baptism And the significance is the exact same thing Water baptism signifies The death of the life after the flesh A life governed by the flesh There is the burying of everything That was done in that life of the flesh And the beginning of the new life in the Spirit The resurrection in the newness of life in Christ Jesus To walk now after the Spirit As you come up out of the waters Or out of the grave And so again It's a spiritual thing It's not the washing away of the filth of the flesh As Peter said But of a conscience that is clear Before God So God

established the covenant And There were in the future We will remember when Moses Was ready to bring To come back to Egypt to Deliver The people of God from the bondage as God had commanded him to His sons had not been circumcised and God almost killed him on the way The indication that his wife was opposed to it But for the sake of her husband's life she circumcised the boys and was angry about the thing Later on the children of Israel when they came into the land had Not Been practicing the right of circumcision and so Joshua Ordered them all circumcised before they came into the land of promise God continued to talk to Abraham and Abraham in verse 15 then God said to Abraham as for Sarah Your wife You shall not call her name Sarah but Sarah The insertion of the H shall be her name And

I will bless her And also notice now give you a son by her Ninety nine years old his body now dead And Sarah having passed through the time of childbearing And she shall be a mother of nations Actually from Sarah of course Isaac was born from Isaac Jacob and Esau Esau became a nation the Edomites And also of course Israel from Jacob Kings of peoples Shall be from her Then Abram fell on his face and laughed Now this was not the laugh of Doubt or unbelief It was just sort of the laugh of overwhelmed with what God is now saying is going to happen If it were the laugh of unbelief then God would have rebuked him as later on Sarah's laugh was of unbelief as she was standing in the tent listening What the Angel the Lord was telling her husband she was in the tent laughing and they said how come

Sarah laughed and she's holding on I did And so but you did But hers was the laugh of unbelief so high you know My age Have a son So Abram said to God Oh that Ishmael Might live before you Ishmael is now 13 years old Abram is attached to him He is Abraham's son And God is now promising another heir through Sarah but his attachment for Ishmael he He asked God that Ishmael might also live before the Lord And so God said no Sarah your wife shall bear you a son and you shall call his name laughter he was laughing And you know it's just sort of a Laughing thing to think that at their age they should have a little baby and she should be nursing a child when she's 90 years old So You should call his name Isaac which is laughter I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant

and with his descendants after him and as for Ishmael The name means God hears and God said I have heard you Behold I have blessed him I will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly He shall beget 12 princes and I will make him a great nation and so In a little ways about the 25th chapter we'll read the descendants of Ishmael and out of them there are 12 Princes and so there are 12 tribes of Ishmael Even as there are 12 tribes of Israel We'll return with more of our verse by verse study through the book of Genesis in our next lesson As we learn more about the covenant of circumcision And we do hope you'll make plans to join us But right now I'd like to remind you that if you missed any part of today's message Or perhaps you'd like to order a copy for that special friend or

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