

He Is... – Part 4 The God Who Loves Leftovers

John 6:11-13 (CSB) Then Jesus took the loaves, and after giving thanks he distributed them to those who were seated—so also with the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were full, he told his disciples, “Collect the leftovers so that nothing is wasted.” So they collected them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces from the five barley loaves that were left over by those who had eaten.

The idea of “leftovers” has Biblical precedent. The Bible’s word is “Remnant.”

Remnant is the Scriptural synonym for “leftover” (Jer. 42:2 defines “remnant” as those who are “left... A few of many.”)

GOD LOVES LEFTOVERS BECAUSE GOD LOVES AND ALWAYS BLESSES THE REMNANT!

- In the face of the masses, God blesses the little!
- In the face of the big, God always blesses the small!
- In the face of the mighty, God empowers the weak!
- In the face of the rich, God chooses to bless the poor!
- In the face of those who have, God always enriches those who have not!

1 Corinthians 1:26-28 (CSB) Brothers and sisters, consider your calling: Not many were wise from a human perspective, not many powerful, not many of noble birth. Instead, God has chosen what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen what is weak in the world to shame the strong. God has chosen what is insignificant and despised in the world—what is viewed as nothing—to bring to nothing what is viewed as something,

There is a story in the Bible that illustrates the truth that God Loves Leftovers.

It is in Genesis 13... **“The Land Lot Leftover!”**

Genesis 13:8-11 (NLT) Finally Abram said to Lot, “Let’s not allow this conflict to come between us or our herdsman. After all, we are close relatives! The whole countryside is open to you. Take your choice of any section of the land you want,

and we will separate. If you want the land to the left, then I’ll take the land on the right. If you prefer the land on the right, then I’ll go to the left.” Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of Zoar. The whole area was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the Lord or the beautiful land of Egypt. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) Lot chose for himself the whole Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle Abram.

- Abraham (though older, richer) nevertheless is allowing his nephew Lot to choose first.
- He is allowing Lot to pick the choicest land which means that he himself can only have what’s leftover!
- So, off goes Lot (keep his date with Sodom and Gomorrah). And to the land Lot leftover, Abraham now turns... and what he discovers is that God loves leftovers!

Genesis 13:14–18 (NLT) After Lot had gone, the Lord said to Abram, “Look as far as you can see in every direction—north and south, east and west. I am giving all this land, as far as you can see, to you and your descendants as a permanent possession. And I will give you so many descendants that, like the dust of the earth, they cannot be counted! Go and walk through the land in every direction, for I am giving it to you.” So Abram moved his camp to Hebron and settled near the oak grove belonging to Mamre. There he built another altar to the Lord.

While Lot was building his portfolio, Abraham has been building Altars!

- One was focused on wealth... the other on worship!
- One had his eyes on the Land... the other on the Lord!

There are some embedded principles that we can discover for today.

FIRST, THE “PREFERENCE” PRINCIPLE

Abraham shows us how to prefer someone else over ourselves! Look again at Genesis 13:9 - (“Lot, you choose first”)

Abraham sets the precedent for this dynamic spiritual truth. This radical lifestyle principle is embodied in him and then elaborated in

more detail in the New Testament...

- **Romans 12:10** - *"be kind to one another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another."*
- **1 Corinthians 10:24** *"let no man seek his own, but everyone another's wellbeing."*
- **Romans 15:1** *"we then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."*
- **Philippians 2:3** *"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves."* (NIV)

Compare this attitude to our society today... A culture that is increasingly one big cult of selfishness!

The operative motives today are Self-aggrandizement, Self-actualization, Self-realization, Self-promotion, and Self-fulfillment.

Our culture has confused **quality** with **quantity**.

- Know How has been replaced by "How much"
- Value has been replaced with volume...
- Accomplishment takes a back seat to abundance...

Instead of pursuing **qualification**, too many today pursue **quantification**. There's no interest in being better, just bigger (because they've bought into the lie that bigger is better). **All of this has given rise to a cult of selfishness...** the result of the epidemic of narcissism sweeping the land...

The narcissist wants to be... First in line... first to be seen... first to be seated... first to be served...

All of these "Me First" traits betray the rampant narcissism that permeates our society today.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE IS TO WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT!

Paul affirms that Abraham is the "Father of the Faithful" (Romans 4:1-16).

Genesis 13 is a dynamic illustration of just that principle...

- Lot "lifted up his eyes" (NLT: "took a long look")
- Abraham operates under a different mindset... It is NOT what he sees, but what he heard!

• Romans 10:17 ***"faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."***

2 Corinthians 5:7 ***"We walk by faith, not by sight."***

That's what Abraham teaches us in Genesis 13.

- He knew what God had promised him in Gen 12...
- He believed what God had told him!
- Therefore, he is content to choose the land Lot left over because he knows God blesses faith!
- His direction was not North/South/East/West... it was UP.
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Abraham is the embodiment of **Proverbs 3:5,6!**

(A third timely principle)

ABRAHAM MODELS FOR US THE "KINGDOM-FIRST" PRINCIPLE...

The paradox of Gen 13 is that Abraham sought God's kingdom First, which made him choose Second!

Abraham chose second, which clearly was not **first**, but it was **best**... for him.

- Only in Kingdom economy does **second** equal **best!**
- Only in Kingdom economy does preferring others over yourself, establish yourself first in God's eyes.
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Seeking God's kingdom above all else, positions you to receive all of

God's blessings regardless of what everyone else has.

Only in the Kingdom of God does **First** mean **Only!** (Remember **Matt.6:33**... Jesus is saying "Seek God's Kingdom (first) ONLY."
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We see this principle at work in the narrative as Abraham is constantly seeking the

Kingdom of God only... How do we know that? Because he is always Building altars

- Builds an Altar of Praise (12:7)
- Builds an Altar of Prayer (12:8)
- Builds an Altar of Peace (13:18)
- Builds an Altar of Provision (22:13-14)
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Jesus said the reward of Kingdom seeking is "*All these things shall be added to you.*" / Gen. 13:14-17... "*Lift up your eyes now and look... Arise, walk in the land for I give it to you!*"

CONCLUSION:

What do we learn about the Land Lot leftover? What we learn from Abraham is...

- That we should PREFER OTHERS OVER OURSELVES
- That we must WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT... And...
- That we always SEEK GOD'S KINGDOM ABOVE ALL ELSE.

Can you think of principles more practical than these? The Land Lot Leftover has a message for Christianity.