

Courageous Trust



Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15 to 16



In today's Bassline we explore the story of Abraham and the covenant God makes with him. As we focus on Genesis 15 we'll reflect on what it means to trust God when the outcome is unclear and waiting feels hard. We'll consider how courageous trust grows as we learn to let God do what only he can do.

You will need:

- 'Courageous Trust' handout
- Pens or pencils
- Paper



Beat

Ask:

Who has seen the film *The Mitchells vs. The Machines*? If so, can you summarise the plotline for those who haven't seen it?

Say:

If you haven't seen it, then it's about a completely ordinary, slightly chaotic family who accidentally end up becoming the world's rescue team.

Watch:

The Mitchells vs. The Machines – Official Trailer (2:40)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=toBGu7yuIV8

Ask:

- What moment in the trailer felt most relatable to you?
- What strengths did the Mitchells show, even in their chaos?
- Where did you see fear, frustration or misunderstanding in the clip?

Say:

In the trailer we discover that the Mitchells are not perfect. They misunderstand each other and get frustrated. They are afraid of the future, but when something big happens they step up and become part of a rescue mission they never expected.

Ask:

- If robots took over the world, how would your family or friend group respond?
- Why do you think stories often choose unlikely people to save the world?

Say:

In our last Bassline session we explored the story of Noah and saw how his courageous trust became the starting point for God's plan to renew the world. This week we meet another ordinary family that God invites into his rescue plan. Instead of building a boat, Abraham is asked to do something just as courageous. He is asked to trust God's promise and step into the unknown.

 **Bridge****Ask:**

When life feels uncertain, what do you think takes more courage: fighting a visible problem or trusting God when nothing seems to be changing?

 **Amplify****Say:**

We've just watched a trailer about an ordinary family caught up in something far bigger than they ever expected. Abraham's story begins in a similar place. He isn't looking for adventure or chasing a mission. He's living an ordinary life when God steps in and changes Abraham's plans.

Ask:

What do you already know about Abraham's story?

Say:

Abraham's journey doesn't move in a straight line. There are moments of courage, fear, trust and disobedience. Our focus today is the covenant found in Genesis 15; but before we arrive there, we need to recap how Abraham reached this point in the story.

Read:

1 The Lord had said to Abram, ‘Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

**2 ‘I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;**

**I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.**

**3 I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.’**

– (Genesis 12:1-3)

Say:

God calls Abraham to leave what is familiar, but he doesn’t give him a full picture of what lies ahead. He creates a vision of what the future will look like without supplying the road map of how to get there.

Ask:

What do you think would be the hardest aspect of responding to a call like this?

Say:

Abraham stepped out in faith, but the journey was not straightforward. Very quickly things became difficult. There was a famine in the land and Abraham became afraid and left for Egypt. He tried to manage the situation himself. Later there were tensions with his family, difficult choices about land and moments where the waiting felt unbearable.

Ask:

What happens when we trust God’s promises and things don’t work out how we expected?

Say:

The twists and turns in Abraham’s story continue, but each time we see Abraham choosing to trust God. In the middle of this uncertainty, Abraham faces another significant moment. His nephew Lot is taken captive during a regional conflict and Abraham chooses to step into danger in order to rescue him. He succeeds against the odds, but the experience leaves him exposed and vulnerable.

After the battle, Abraham is offered wealth and protection by the king of Sodom. Accepting it would have given him security and status, but he refuses. He does not want his future, or the promise God has given him, to rest on power, wealth or human systems. He chooses to continue trusting God.

It is after these events – after risk, fear and costly trust – that Genesis 15 begins.

Read:

¹ After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

‘Do not be afraid, Abram.

 I am your shield,
 your very great reward.’

– (Genesis 15:1)

Ask:

- Why would it make sense for Abraham to feel afraid at this point?
- Why do you think God starts by addressing the fear rather than explaining the promise again?

Read:

² But Abram said, ‘Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?’ ³ And Abram said, ‘You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.’

– (Genesis 15:2-3)

Say:

Abraham responds honestly. He does not deny what God has promised, but he explains the reality of the situation. He has no children to carry on his line, so how can God’s promise become reality?

Ask:

What does this tell us about the way Abraham understands his relationship with God?

Read:

⁴ Then the word of the Lord came to him: ‘This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.’ ⁵ He took him outside and said, ‘Look up at the sky and count the stars – if indeed you can count them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be.’

⁶ Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

– (Genesis 15:4-6)

Ask:

- How do you think it felt to hear this promise again after years of waiting?
- How did Abraham respond?
- What does it mean to believe God without seeing the outcome?

Read:

¹⁷ When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking brazier with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces.

– (Genesis 15:17)

Say:

Genesis 15 shows us that faith is not about certainty or control. It is about trusting God in the middle of waiting. Abraham is not asked to force the promise into being, but to trust God while living with unanswered questions. This short clip helps us to see how this moment fits into the bigger story of the Bible and points to Jesus.

Watch:

Genesis 15-16 – Hagar – Bible Study Spoken Gospel (3:23)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4uMWc4yQjM

Ask:

- In Abraham's culture, both people would normally walk between the animals when making a covenant. Why do you think it matters that God walks through alone in Genesis 15?
- The clip says that God is effectively saying, 'If this promise fails, let that cost fall on me.' How does that change the way you understand God's commitment to Abraham?
- In Genesis 15, God takes responsibility for the covenant. How do you see that same pattern happening at the cross?

 **Bridge****Ask:**

Why do you think waiting can feel harder than doing something, even when God has promised to act?

 **Sound Check****Leader's notes:**

Our Sound Check activity gives the young people space to explore the different themes of courageous trust found in Abraham's covenant story. They can work independently or in small groups using the 'Courageous Trust' handout. There won't be time to complete every activity together, so the handout can be taken home and used for personal reflection during the week.

When the group has had time to complete some of the activities, then bring them back together to share their thoughts.

'Courageous Trust' Handout Content

Abraham's story shows us that trusting God often takes courage, especially when life feels uncertain and nothing seems to be changing.

The Stars

God asks Abraham to look at the stars and imagine a future he cannot count.

Circle or underline one word that best describes how you feel about God's promises right now:

Hopeful Confused Excited Doubtful Tired Unsure Curious

Why do you think you chose that word?

The Unknown Journey

Abraham was given a destination, but not the journey.

Draw a simple road or path.

Along it write:

- One thing you wish you knew about the future.
- One thing you are being asked to trust God with now.

Famine

Not long after God made his covenant with Abraham, he faced famine and fear.

Complete one or all of these sentences:

- Trusting God feels hardest when ...
- Waiting feels uncomfortable because ...
- When things don't go to plan, I usually ...

Plan B

After God made his covenant, Abraham and Sarah struggled to wait and tried to make the promise happen themselves.

Reflect on a time when you were tempted to move to 'Plan B'.

- What made waiting difficult in that situation?
- Why do you think we're so tempted to act on God's behalf?
- Looking back, what might courageous trust have looked like in that situation?

The Covenant

In Genesis 15, God walks through the covenant alone.

Draw two columns and fill them with your thoughts:

- What I try to carry
- What God promises to carry

What might it look like to trust God with some of what you are carrying?

One Small Step

Courageous trust is often quiet and ordinary.

Write one sentence:

One small step of trust I could take this week is ...

**Say:**

Where did you notice yourself in Abraham's story?

**Say:**

Our time of Selah gives an opportunity to reflect on Abraham's story as we listen to a song written from his perspective. It holds together doubt and trust, waiting and belief, and fear and hope. It reminds us that courageous trust is not about having certainty, but choosing to believe that God is faithful even when we cannot see the outcome.

As the song plays think about the following two questions:

- What promise do you find hardest to trust right now?
- What would it look like to place that promise back in God's hands?

Watch:

Mark Hall & Megan Garrett – 'Who But You (Abraham, & Sarah)' (with lyrics) (5:04)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBgURYFkuOU

Leader's notes:

When the music finishes pray on behalf of the group.

Say:

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music.

Ask:

As you reflect on everything you have learned today, what is your coda?

What is the one thing you will take away from this session about the importance of courageous trust?

Leader's notes:

Give the young people a moment to think about your question and briefly share their coda with the group before the session comes to an end.



‘Courageous Trust’

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