

Small Group Guide

Trusting in Our Wonder-Working God

Based on Genesis 18:1-15

Introduction for Group Leaders

This guide is designed to help your group explore what it means to trust God when circumstances seem impossible. The passage centers on Abraham and Sarah receiving a promise that defied human logic, and it challenges us to examine our own faith, our habits of meeting with God, and our willingness to believe that nothing is too wonderful for the Lord. Encourage honest, open conversation. There are no perfect answers, only genuine ones.

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

- Abraham had a specific place where he regularly met with God -- the Oaks of Mamre -- and God showed up there repeatedly. Our consistency in meeting with God matters.
- Abraham demonstrated radical hospitality and humble servanthood even toward heavenly visitors, reminding us that hospitality is a spiritual discipline, not merely a social courtesy.
- Sarah's laughter at God's promise reflects a very human response to circumstances that seem impossible, yet Hebrews 11:11 affirms that she ultimately exercised faith in a faithful God.
- The Hebrew word behind "too hard" in verse 14 carries the meaning of wonderful or extraordinary. The question is not whether God can handle difficulty, but whether we believe he can do what is beyond wonderful.
- God can work with even the smallest kernel of faith. He is not limited by what limits us.

Opening Activity (5-10 minutes)

Before diving into the questions, invite group members to briefly share a time when something turned out far better than they expected. It does not have to be a spiritual story. The goal is simply to warm up the group to the theme of unexpected outcomes and wonder.

Discussion Questions

Section 1: The Oaks of Mamre -- Your Place of Meeting

1. The Oaks of Mamre was a place where Abraham repeatedly encountered God. Do you have a consistent place and time where you meet with God? What does that look like for you, or what has kept you from establishing one?
2. The sermon mentioned that when you are close with the Lord, you grow familiar with his voice. How would you describe your ability to recognize when God is speaking to you? What has helped you grow in that area, or what has made it difficult?
3. Abraham returned to a place that held spiritual significance for him. Why do you think physical locations and consistent rhythms matter in our relationship with God?

Section 2: The Hospitality of Abraham

4. Abraham ran to meet his guests, prepared an extravagant meal, and stood aside to serve rather than eat with them. What does his example reveal about the posture of his heart toward God and others?
5. Hebrews 13:2 reminds us not to neglect showing hospitality to strangers. In what practical ways can your group or your household practice the kind of hospitality Abraham demonstrated? What obstacles tend to get in the way?
6. The sermon pointed out that Abraham described what he was about to do as "a morsel of bread" when he actually prepared a feast. What does that kind of understated generosity say about his character, and how might that challenge the way we serve others?

Section 3: The Laughter of Sarah -- Faith in the Face of Impossibility

7. Sarah laughed at the promise of God, and yet Hebrews 11:11 credits her with faith. Have you ever found yourself laughing at or dismissing something you later saw God accomplish? What did that experience teach you?
8. The sermon asked whether life has made you cynical or jaded, causing you to lose your sense of wonder for God. How would you honestly answer that question? What circumstances have contributed to that, if so?
9. The Hebrew word behind "too hard" in verse 14 actually means wonderful or extraordinary. How does reframing the question from "Is anything too hard for God?" to "Is anything too wonderful for God?" change the way you think about your current circumstances?

Section 4: Small Faith and a Great God

10. The father in Mark 9 cried out, "I believe; help my unbelief." Have you ever prayed something similar? What does it mean to bring God both your faith and your doubt at the same time?
11. The sermon noted that God cannot be overcome by death, cannot lie, cannot be tempted, and does not change -- and that these are not limitations but expressions of his goodness and glory. How does reflecting on what God cannot do actually strengthen your trust in him?
12. Abraham and Sarah were called, in a sense, to not act their age -- to live with the expectation and hope of people who believed God was about to do something new. In what area of your life do you need to stop acting your age and begin trusting God for something greater than what seems reasonable?

Practical Applications

Work through these individually or discuss them together as a group. Consider choosing one to commit to before your next meeting.

1. Establish Your Oaks of Mamre Identify a specific time and place this week where you will meet with God consistently. Write it down. Remove distractions. Treat it as an appointment you will not cancel. Share your plan with someone in the group for accountability.

2. Practice Intentional Hospitality Identify one person or family you can invite into your home, bring a meal to, or serve in a tangible way this week. Ask God to show you who needs that kind of care. Hospitality is not reserved for people you already know well.

3. Pray the Question Take one situation in your life that feels impossible or beyond hope. Write it down and pray specifically over it this week, asking God to restore your wonder and to work in that situation in a way that only he can. Bring that situation before the group next time and share how God is moving.

4. Revisit the Hall of Faith Read Hebrews 11 on your own this week. As you read through the men and women listed there, note the circumstances they faced and the faith they exercised. Let their stories challenge and encourage your own.

Closing Prayer Guide

Close your time together by inviting group members to share one thing that feels too big for them right now -- something they need God to handle. Then pray together over those things, using the truth of Genesis 18:14 as your foundation: that nothing is too wonderful for the Lord.

You may use this prayer as a guide or pray it together:

Heavenly Father, we come to you acknowledging that you are a wonder-working God. Nothing we are facing is beyond your reach or outside your power. Where our faith is small, grow it. Where we have become cynical, restore our wonder. Where we have stopped asking, give us the courage to ask again. We place in your hands the things we cannot carry, and we trust you to do what only you can do. In Jesus' name, amen.

For Further Reflection

- Read Genesis 18:1-15 again on your own before your next group meeting.
- Consider reading the accounts of Zechariah and Elizabeth in Luke 1:5-25 and Mary in Luke 1:26-38 alongside this passage, noting the theme of God doing the impossible through ordinary people.
- Reflect on the lives of Abraham and Sarah as a whole. Their faith was not perfect, but it was persistent. What does that say about the kind of faith God honors?