

Friendship With God: The Abraham Journey (2)

Hospitality That Brings Heaven Near

Genesis 18:1–15

Introduction: James 2:23 says of Abraham, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and “he was called a friend of God.” That is the series frame for our whole summer: *what does it look like for a man or woman to walk with God in trust, obedience, and relational closeness?* Genesis 18 answers that question in a way that is wonderfully practical. And before the scene is over, that ordinary doorway becomes a meeting place between heaven and earth.

That is why I am preaching on this subject: *Hospitality That Brings Heaven Near*. Abraham’s open tent shows God meets us in simple hospitality. (we will notice this in four movements.)

I. The presence of the Lord (vv. 1–2)

A. The Reception of Abraham –

1. Meeting with Heavenly Visitors

- a. The first thing to notice is not Abraham’s movement toward God.
- b. The first thing to notice is God’s movement toward Abraham.

B. Readers know it is the Lord -

1. God takes the initiative: “The LORD appeared.”
2. God often comes near in ordinary moments.
3. Friendship with God begins with God’s grace.
 - John 1:14 — “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.”

2. Ministering to His Heavenly Visitors

- a. The three visitors appear to be the Lord and two angels.
- b. Genesis 19:1 helps clarify the identity of the visitors.
- c. God is both holy and near.

The very same God who visited Abraham at Mamre has come all the way to us in the Son. Heaven came near in Christ. John 1:14

*Do not overlook ordinary opportunities for fellowship with God.
Leave room in your life for divine interruptions.*

II. The practice of hospitality (vv. 3–8)

A. Abraham acts with haste-

1. **He looks up and sees three men** -Abraham senses that something significant is happening.
2. **Abraham springs into action-**
 - a. Though nearly 100 years old, Abraham runs, hurries, and serves.
 - b. His hospitality is active, joyful, and eager.

B. Abraham’s Hospitality -

1. Abraham Speaks Small and Serves Large - A modest invitation becomes a banquet. (Heb. 13:2; Rom. 12:13; 1 Pe. 4:9; Mt. 25:35; Mt. 18:20)

2. Hospitality Is: (humble, practical, personal, service-oriented)

C. Abraham’s Hosting -

1. A Contrast with Sodom

- a. Genesis 18 vs. Genesis 19
- b. Abraham opens his tent.
- c. Sodom closes its heart. (Ezek. 16:49)

Hospitality is not luxury. Hospitality is availability.

III. The promise of grace (vv. 9–12)

A. The Promise Delivered -

2. The Lord Calls for Sarah –
3. Sarah has a vital role in God’s redemptive plan. (Heb 11:11; 1 Pe. 3:1–7; Rom. 4:18–21)

B. God’s promise becomes personal

1. Sarah will bear the promised son.
2. The Promise Touches the Pain
 - God’s promise lands on Sarah’s deepest wound.
 - Humanly speaking, the promise seems impossible.

C. The Problem of Doubt

1. Sarah Laughs –A hidden laugh reveals a weary heart.
2. Grace Transforms Doubt into Faith (Rom. 4:19–21; Heb 11:11)

The Sarah who laughed in Genesis 18 becomes the Sarah who believed in Hebrews 11.

IV. The power of God (Genesis 18:13–15)

A. Sarah’s Denial – out of fear, Sarah denies her laughter

B. The Lord declares gracefully - “No, but you did laugh.”

The Great Question - “*Is anything too difficult for the LORD?*” (Lk. 1:37; Jer. 32:27)

- The God of Abraham is the God of Mary.
- The God of Mamre is the God of Bethlehem.
- The God who promised Isaac is the God who sent Jesus.

When the Lord is welcomed, impossible things start to happen.