**ROAD TRIP! Wk 2: OFF ROAD: Following God’s Leading**

**Road trip w/ mom- middle of nowhere- never been here before - what’s ahead? We pull out a Map (Mapsco) remember these? Essential for a road trip… unless you want a little adventure. (Happy Mother’s Day)**

**Bible is filled men & women who burned the map and conventional wisdom and trusted in the adventure of God:**

**Story after story… off the map followers! Off road vid**

**Noah (radically obeyed), Nehemiah (stepped out), Joseph (stood in times of injustice, betrayal, and temptation), David (faced a nations fears), Ruth (left everything), Esther (confronted her greatest fear), Daniel (stood in the face of persecution), Elijah (lived for God when no one else would), Paul (endured beatings and attacks) – All the disciples – leave your map… and follow me.**

**The same today! One thing is for sure – to follow God is to go - Off Road. A wild, messy, sloppy, dangerous, amazing adventure.**

* **We are not called to blend in… but to burn the map!**

**Mom’s today – let’s burn the map of what pop culture says about you**

**One the greatest map burners, one that started it all - Abraham**

**Man was struggling to know God – sin had warped their desires and attention – God has a plan. A seed was planted… with this.**

**From the hills of Babylon, family of idol worshipers (Jewish tradition has his father as chief officer for pagan king Nimrod - worshiped Sun)**

**In a world of idolatry - one person stood out. Near the end of his life – no kids, nothing going for him… except he loved and trusted God.**

**Why did God pick Abraham? God likes to pick the unlikely (why?)**

**Your past does not determine God’s ability to redeem your future. Your background – gives God the platform for a miracle.**

**God loves to work in the most hopeless and helpless situations**

**Genesis 12:1 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.”**

**4 So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. 5 He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.**

**6 Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7 The Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring (not you) I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him. 8 From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord. 9 Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev. 10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. (He was all over the place)**

**Leave everything you know – all your comfort – and start walking… Can you do that Abram? He does… and an adventure begins.**

**To this day Abraham is the most talked about man in the world (outside Jesus) 311X in Bible / 74X in NT, 60% of world religions**

**Abraham – Isaac – Jacob – 12 sons – a nation – Israel – Judah – Jesus.**

**That step of faith was the seed that started a family - that birthed a nation - that would bring us the Messiah, Savior - Jesus Christ.**

**A Great Promise - Genesis 12:2 “I will make you into a great nation, (Israel) and I will bless you; (you will have a sense of peace and purpose) I will make your name great, (most famous person in the world) and you will be a blessing. (The word blessed / blessing - Berakah (ber-aw-kaw') loaded word - To bring peace – bring grace – to be a generous gift) 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; (God will look after his family) and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” (His berakah to us through him is – the Messiah)**

**The mission God gave us like Abe, points to Jesus. Every God mission - To bless the community and to bring life change to the hurting. As a church and families - Blessed to be a blessing.**

**We are at the edge of a new beginning (moving) – we can learn from Abraham a few things about our new beginning.**

Following God’s map will: **(Mom – will you go off the map)**

* **Set you apart from the crowd**

**God told Abram this is what I will do thru you – but it starts with – GO – it will be different, but “I will show you…”**

**Being different is not in all of us- breeds insecurity, peer pressure, even being “different” is usually an attempt to fit into a group.**

**Matthew 5:13 “You are the salt of the earth. (flavor and preserve) But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. 14 “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. (light to guide people home) 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. (a light in your home) 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, (a light to those around you) that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (10:16-20)**

**Upfront let me tell you what your life will be like – salt & light**

**Following God will set us apart (sanctification). We will be different. In how we talk, act, entertainment, pursuits, spending habits, motivations, how we love, treat our family, treat enemies.**

**Philippians 2:14 Do everything without grumbling or arguing, 15 so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky 16 as you hold firmly to the word of life.** **And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. (Ro 12:1-2, 1 Pet 2:9, Ep 2:10, He 13:12)**

**That has always been God’s plan – you will be different!**

* **Encourage others to follow**

**It incites and inspires – others. Inside we know this is not how life is supposed to be. When we see followers of God living off the map of culture – we want that.**

**Abram’s family and staff / workers (hundreds) said Abram – count me in!**

**Everywhere he stopped – he made a altar to God – and his crowd grew.**

**The disciples – followed Jesus before they understood. All they knew is what He was and had – they wanted.**

**Mom – when you live radically to follow Jesus with love and compassion – your kids / your friends / your co-workers will follow. I saw how mom did it – that’s what I want!**

**Matthew 5:16 - In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.**

**1 Peter 2:12 Live such good lives among the pagans (unbelieving neighbors) that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. (glorify = saved)**

* **Bring salvation to others**

**Understand this - we don’t save others, we live a life that causes others to see a God that does save.**

**When we live such a radically diff life – it points to the true life – Jesus. This was God’s plan from step one.**

**\* Mom’s seeing your kids serve Jesus**

**Following God’s map can get:**

* **Uncomfortable**

**Abram and throughout the Bible - following God was about getting out of our comfort zone. Doing what you do not – would not normally do.**

* **Unpopular**

**Abram – people will oppose it – mock it – resist it – fight against it.**

**I think of Noah… I think of Nehemiah… opposition and ridicule.**

**Following Jesus is unpopular - John 15:18 17 This is my command: Love each other. 18 “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. 19 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. 20 Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. 21 They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me.**

**Keep in mind that what following Jesus means some in the world will look down on you – mock you – or attack you – But remember, that is what it means to go off road!**

**They will know us by our love for one another – we are not to be jerks for Jesus! Angry combative and argumentative.**

* **Incredibly painful**

**That doesn’t sound right? I thought Jesus was about good times?**

**Matthew 10:16 “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. 17 Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. (for following God?) 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.**

**It might take you to surprising places – but don’t worry. I got you. Never a dull moment when you live for Jesus unabandoned.**

**But somehow, Christians try so hard to blend in, be liked, become popular, and get comfortable. That’s not the off Road life!**

**His disciples left careers, plans & retirement – you’re going to fish for something different! – they left their lives to go off roading w/ Jesus.**

**Mark 16:24** **Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?**

**Map / plans: born = dot / school = dot / career = dot / marriage = dot / kids = dot / $$ = dot / retirement = dot. We like to say God here is my map – bless it. But Jesus says, (Mark 16) ditch it and follow me. It’s okay to have plans and dreams… but hold them lose and hold me tight!**

**Do you really want to gain the whole world (Map) and lose your soul? Your purpose for life?**

**Jesus come with me - I can show you how to work diff / do marriage diff / be a mom diff – and thrive in a culture that is self-destructive.**

**Two Questions We’re Left With today (Romans 12:1-2, James 4:1-17)**

**This is for mom’s, dad’s, son’s, and daughter’s**

1. **Do we trust God enough to give him our future?**

**Next week we will break this down more. Until then you need to ask yourself - will you be an American success story or will you be a follower of Jesus?**

1. **Is our purpose to make God’s name great, or ours?**

**This what is all comes down to. How do you rate success in life? Because they are two different maps.**

**It is great to ask God to bless your life and expect good things – but if God says – let’s go Off Road and change the world – because it is there that lives are changes… then God yes. Let’s go!**

**Life Teams:**

**John 15:1-25 (Life Teams), Matthew 16:21-27, Philippians 2:1-16 (life Teams)**