

Counting the Stars

Bible Study Discussion Guide`

Genesis 18:1–21 | The People of Absurd Promises

Icebreaker

1. What is something you once thought was impossible or highly unlikely, but eventually happened? What made it difficult to believe it would happen?

Bible Study Discussion

2. Read Genesis 18:9–15. What do you think was going through Sarah’s mind when she heard God repeat the promise that she would have a son? Why do you think she laughed?

- What makes her response understandable?
- How does God respond to her laughter?
- What does this tell us about how God deals with people who struggle to believe His promises?

3. Genesis 18:14 asks, “Is anything too hard for the LORD?” What are some things that make it difficult for us to actually live as though the answer is “No”?

- Do we tend to doubt God’s power, His timing, or His goodness?
- How is trusting God’s promise different from simply believing that God can do anything?

4. The sermon emphasizes the distinction between what God has actually promised and what we wish He would do. Why is that distinction important?

- What are some examples of things Christians sometimes treat as though God has promised them when He actually hasn’t?
- How can we learn to anchor our faith in God’s actual promises rather than our desired outcomes?

5. The sermon repeatedly says, “God’s promises are bigger than us because God’s purposes are bigger than us.” What does that mean?

- Consider Genesis 12:1–3 alongside Genesis 18:18–19.
- How was Abraham personally blessed?
- How was that blessing intended to extend beyond Abraham?
- What changes when we begin to see our lives as part of God’s larger purposes rather than primarily asking, “What does God want to do for me?”

6. The sermon says, “We are not simply blessed to enjoy God’s blessing. We are blessed to become a blessing.” What might that look like in your life right now?

- In your family?
- In your workplace?
- With your neighbors?
- In your church?
- With people who don't yet know Christ?
- Among people or groups who are different from you?

7. Read Genesis 18:16–21. What connection do you see between God's blessing, Abraham's calling, righteousness and justice, and God's purposes for the nations?

- How does this passage expand your understanding of what it means to be blessed by God?

Practical Application

1. Identify one promise of God you need to trust.

Where am I tempted to believe that God is absent, late, or unable to work because I can't see what He is doing? Identify a specific biblical promise you can return to this week.

2. Ask, "How does God want to bless others through me?"

Identify one person, relationship, or situation where you can intentionally be a blessing this week.

3. Look beyond yourself.

Identify one way you can participate in God's larger mission this week. Consider praying for someone who needs Christ, crossing a relational boundary to build a relationship with someone different from you, sharing the Gospel, discipling another believer, serving someone in a way that opens a door for Gospel witness, or praying for an unreached people group.

Closing Reflection

Where have I been asking, "What does God want to do for me?" when perhaps I should also be asking, "What does God want to do through me?"

Key Truth: God's promises may be bigger than we can imagine because God's purposes are bigger than we are. But the God who made those promises is faithful.

