



Close Encounters #2: Conversations that Shape Faith

September 16 & 17, 2023

Selected Passages Genesis 18:1-15; Genesis 21:1-7

Opener: Share a time when you felt God speaking to you in a powerful way. What was happening in your life at the time? Was it a season of joy and hope or a season of sorrow and trials? What did you hear or feel God revealing to you through your time of talking with Jesus?

Go Deeper:

1. Read Genesis 12:1-9. What do you hear God promising to give Abram (later his name is changed to Abraham)? Does God fulfill this promise immediately? Did God give Abram and his wife Sarai instructions on what to do in the time between God speaking the promise and God fulfilling the promise? Read Genesis 15:1-3. Is the promise of Genesis 12 still in place? If so, what do you hear Abram needing from the Lord God?
 2. Genesis 15:4-7. How does God answer Abram's questions in verses 4-7? What assurance does God give to Abram?
 3. Read Genesis 15:8. What is the cry of Abram's heart? Has he lost his faith in God?
 4. Read verses 9-20 and discuss God's response.
 5. How many years did God wait to fulfill His promise to give Abraham and Sarah a son? How did they hold onto their faith when the child-bearing years came and went for Sarah?
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Live It:

1. Many of us here at Victory Lutheran are living in our second half of life. In this time of your life, do you still have times of "talking to Jesus"? Do you still feel like God is answering your prayers?
2. In this time of your life, does it ever feel like your time of service in God's kingdom is over – "been there, done that"?
3. Are there promises you heard God speak into your life that you are still waiting upon the Lord to be fulfilled?
4. In your time of waiting has there ever been a time where you wondered if you heard God correctly when He gave you the promise, or have you ever wondered if God had forgotten about you?
5. Read Luke 2:21-38. Does the story of Simeon and Anna inspire us as we consider all the Lord God has in store for us during the second half of our lives?
6. Read Psalm 89:1-2. In the times when God feels far away, how have you been able to keep, "singing of the Lord's great love and faithfulness"?
7. What does it mean to you that you are part of the story of God's redemptive plan for humankind?
8. What specifically is God saying to you?
9. What specifically are you going to do about it this week?



GOD TIME:

Daily Bible Readings:

Sunday:	Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7
Monday:	Genesis 25:19-28
Tuesday:	Genesis 25:29-34
Wednesday:	Genesis 27:1-17
Thursday:	Genesis 27:18-29
Friday:	Genesis 27:30-41
Saturday:	Genesis 32:1-8

