

Discovering what God actually thinks about you

Part 3: What does God want from me?

Abraham- Genesis 12:1-4 and 15:1-6

**INTRO:** If there is a God, what does he want from you? Submit? Obey his rules? Sign me up for some of that!

Be holy/righteous? What does that even mean? Doing good things? And how would you even measure that?

Maybe we've missed something. Maybe what wants from us isn't what we think it is at all...

Let's talk about it together.

**WE**

What does God want from us? **Many of us think all that God wants from us is to stay clean by following his rules.**

But the problem is we're a mess and we know it. You're a mess. I'm a mess. That person you live with is definitely a mess.

And we think God likes/chooses those who stay clean and follow the rules... and that's not us.

- So we feel guilty/rejected
- And we either try harder... and feel even more guilt that we just can't get it right
- Or we finally have had enough and just give up.
- OR even worse... we convince ourselves that since we follow the certain rules we think are important we are the clean ones that God likes and subtly/subconsciously look down on those "messy people" that God obviously doesn't like as much as us.

But do rules really clean anything up? I mean there are rules/laws against stealing/murder/etc.- all still happen.

**Rules don't clean us up. They only bring consequences and guilt.**

And to avoid those consequences and guilt...we get good at hiding, justifying, blaming, and finding loopholes.

Rules don't fix anything. They only show us what a mess we are when we don't follow them.

Which is why, when Adam and Eve made the mess of sin... God didn't give them a list of rules to help them get their act together...

He promised a solution. To wade in and fix the mess himself...

Starts In one of the messiest chapters of human history... Ancient Bronze Age Mesopotamia.

He didn't start by creating a list of rules.

He decided he would start his clean-up with a family/nation. That would display his love and character to the world.

But strangely God starts with, not a young hero, but some 75 year old unknown dude and his 65 year old wife who couldn't have kids.

Abram... What we will see... **God doesn't use rules to clean us. He offers a relationship to restore us.**

**GOD Gen 12:1-4**

Wow! God chooses Abram to be his starting point... do all these things for him... to fulfill his promise to Adam and Eve (the offspring) through him...

What did he do to deserve this? Must have been super holy and righteous right?

Nope. There is no indication that there was anything special about Abram. 1st we really hear about him.

God didn't pick Abram b/c he followed the rules... There weren't even any rules yet! (100's of yrs before 10 com's)

God simply chose Abram... b/c he wanted to.

God made the first move... It's how he always starts a relationship... **God makes the first move toward us.**

AND- He didn't make any of his promises to Abram depended on Abram following the rules...

But we always feel it's the other way around.

We expect... "Abram, I'm picking you to be my guy. You're welcome. Yes, great... please grovel a little more... ok good that's enough *for now*..."

So here's what I'm going to need you to do... Here's the rules for this to work. If you're going to start my family I'm going to need you to clean up quite a bit. Rule #1..."

Nope. Instead- "I'm picking you, I'm going to bless you, and make you famous... whether you like it or not."

**God bases relationships on his love for us not rules.**

So Abram goes... But it isn't all rosy and happy... Goes to the land... does some stuff... then a famine hits so they go to Egypt...

Get's in trouble in Egypt... lies and says wife is sister... Goes back north... His nephew, Lot, leaves him for better land

Lot gets caught up in some territorial wars and he and his family get captured

Abram fights a brutal Bronze Age battle to rescue him...

After all of this... Probably exhausted. He's ol d, has no secure home, no family/kids... definitely doesn't feel very blessed.

**Gen 15:1-3** Abram- “God I get it. But you said you’d make me into a great nation. Bless every family on earth through my family. My wife and I aren’t getting any younger, this is a dangerous world, I want to believe you, but there’s not much evidence here...”

**Gen 15:4-5** God said, “I know it might seem crazy but you will have the son I promised you... your future offspring is the One I promised to bring to fix the mess.”

Abram had a choice to make... believe God or believe his feelings... and his own logic.

He knew he and his wife were well beyond the age to be able to conceive... **But he chose to trust God**

And then something happened... something so crucial if we miss this we will never really discover who God truly is...

So simple that **ALL** major religions have missed it... including, at times, Christianity...

Missing this next sentence is what might have turned you off of church/religion...

Missing this is why we still think God only wants us if we clean up first...

Missing this might be why you feel burdened by guilt...

And remember this is 100’s of yrs Before 10 commandments... and before any written Bible/scripture... before any rules.

**Gen 15:6** Abram believed God, chose to trust him... and in that moment...b/c of one single choice... God declared him righteous...

Meaning God gave him his stamp of approval. A perfect standing with him, God said everything you’ve done and will do is forgiven... Your mess is clean. YOU are clean. Our relationship is fully restored.

Most important point in discovering God... **Complete reconciliation with God comes from a single act of trust.**

Not always easy... but it is a simple choice we are all faced with.

Then... God changed name Abram- Exalted Father, Abraham- Father of Many

Wasn’t all sunshine and roses after this either. Still had to wait for his child...

His trust wasn’t always perfect... Still had a lot to learn about God... And a lot of lessons to learn.

How it always is... for all of us.

But God never went back on his promise... Eventually they had a son, Isaac, and through him came Jewish nation.

Paul- **Romans 4:1-5**

Remember- **God doesn't use rules to clean us. He offers a relationship to restore us.**

**YOU:** That's who God is.

We live in the mess sin has created... the mess we were born into, messes we have made, the messes others have made, and we want to clean it up.

So we try to fix it and we make it so complicated... Why there are so many religions, philosophies, rules.

We feel like we have to perform at some level that he never asked for in the first place...

Maybe why you watching and listening... Feel far from God... trying to get back or discover for first time...

What does God want from me? What do I have to do...? What rules do I have to follow to be good with God?

God says, "It's simple. Just trust me."

"I love you and want a relationship with you,

Sin has separated us. I came to restore our relationship... Jesus,

I conquered the ultimate separation, death, by rising again. To be restored all you have to do is trust me."

But we say, "That's too easy!" "I have to earn it," Feel extra bad, say the right prayers, give enough money, do everything I can to squeak by.

God- "Trust me."

US- "No no, God. You're mad at me I know it... You're so harsh and judgmental."

Listen... It's not that complicated. **God is pursuing you. And he is only asking that you trust him.**

Then he starts transforming our hearts... we begin displaying his love to others, not b/c we are afraid of being punished/rejected but b/c we are getting closer and closer to God's heart and can't help but love others b/c he's loved us.

### **Sunken Ship and Coast Guard**

Will you tell them it's too easy and try to swim to shore yourself?

You might make it further than others, but it still won't be far enough.

Or will you trust them and let them do the work for you? One single act of trust will rescue you.

When under pressure, it's so easy and natural instincts to take things into our own hands... not always easy to trust God and his promises... but the trust is where the relationship w/ God becomes real and thrives.

We start trusting him with all of our life... when finances aren't what we want them to be... we know we can trust he cares for us and provides our NEEDS.

- When worried about kids can trust that he is pursuing them and initiating w/ them too.
- When we are hurt by others we can trust that God is with us, that he will defend us in his perfect justice

Will you trust God's promise...that he will restore and perfect our relationship with him through a single/simple choice to trust him?

Maybe for first time?

Or, will you continue to rely on that promise and allow it to grow your trust with all that makes up your life now?

Will you say, "It might sound impossibly easy, and it might not make total sense right now, and even though I still have questions... I'm going to trust that what you say is true and that you will do what you promise you will do."

**Read Romans 4:1-5** Or all of it.

When and if you're ready, pray... **"God, I trust you."**

Then next time you feel like you don't measure up, when you feel that guilt, when you feel far from God... "I trust you"

**WE:** What if everything you thought you had to do to make God happy really isn't from God?

What if it is so simple that we missed it even though it's been there the whole time?

What if we could clear away all the complicated rules and attempts at soothing our guilt and just enjoy the relationship God is offering each of us?

What if it really only takes one single act of trust? What if simply saying, "I trust you," is enough?

It was enough for Abraham and God promises it's enough for you. Trust really is enough.

What does God want from you? Nothing.

**God wants a restored and trusting relationship FOR you.**

## Summary

What does God want from you? To submit to him and obey his rules? Honestly, that sounds a bit horrible. Does he want you to be holy and righteous? What does that even mean and how would we even measure that? Maybe we've missed something. Maybe what God wants from us isn't what we think it is at all.

## Questions:

1. What was a low and a high in your week... how did you see God's love in those experiences?
2. What stood out to you in this week's message? What push back, encouragement, or questions came to your mind?
3. Jon said, "God doesn't use rules to clean us. He offers a relationship to restore us." Why do you think we can be tempted to turn to rules instead of relying on a relationship?
4. Take turns as a group reading Romans 4:1-8 (or the whole chapter) out loud. What words or ideas stand out to you as you think about this passage?
5. Is there an area of your life that you are needing to tell God, "I trust you?" How can your group pray with you and for you in this?

## Main Points

- Many of us think all that God wants from us is to stay clean by following his rules.
- Rules don't clean us up. They only bring consequences and guilt.
- God doesn't use rules to clean us. He offers a relationship to restore us.
- God makes the first move toward us.
- God bases relationships on his love for us, not rules.
- Complete reconciliation with God comes from a single act of trust.
- God is pursuing you. And he is only asking that you trust him. \*
- God wants a restored and trusting relationship FOR you.

## This week's challenge

Read Romans 4:1-5

"God, I trust you."

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## SHOW NOTES

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| EPISODE BIBLE VERSES → Genesis 12:1-4; 15:1-6, Romans 4:1-5



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