

God Loves Doing the Impossible & Zac Poonen

by Santosh Poonen

God loves to display his glory and will do impossible things in our lives when we surrender to him and follow the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 1:13:30

Scripture: Genesis 17:1-21, Luke 1:37, Romans 4:13, Romans 4:17, Hebrews 11:11

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Gods Promises"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting God in hopelessly impossible situations, drawing parallels from the lives of Abraham and Sarah, highlighting how God fulfills His promises not based on our abilities but on our faith in Him. It encourages embracing God's promises with faith, even when circumstances seem hopeless, and trusting in His power to work miracles in our lives.

Transcript

I'd like to share a word that has been burning on my heart for the last few months. I did share this message or a similar message some some months ago and it will mostly be the same message but it's still been burning on my heart and I saw something happen beautiful when I first shared it. It was originally for young people but it's a message for all of us I believe with all of my heart.

I don't know if you know that God likes to show off. God is a show-off. We use that word in the world negatively and if any one of us as men, if any human being, any man or woman shows off himself or herself, it's disgusting.

You know that. You probably know about classmates you had in school that you thought oh he's just a show-off or you know other people maybe famous people they just like to show off. There's a natural disgust that we all of us human beings feel when we see some human being showing off because the reason for that is because the only person who can and should show off himself is God himself and I believe with all of my heart that God loves to display his glory because he's entitled to it and we cannot understand that as human beings because it is sacrilegious.

It is unholy for us to show off our own glory.

That's why we as men sit here without a covering on our head and that's why sisters you cover your head when you pray or prophesy because the Bible talks about that as showing off your glory if you don't do that but God his glory must be shown off and I believe God is very much in the business of showing off his glory and I think that God knows that the best way for him to show off his glory is to take the worst possible situation something that was completely hopeless that everybody else had given up on and written off and said there's no way anything can come out of this and make something beautiful out of that so he takes the opposite extreme the worst of the worst possible situations and says I will make the best of the best wouldn't that be the greatest display of his glory when he

picks the most difficult the impossible situations in your life and my life and make something good when he builds the church from people who were so broken that everybody else around them had given up on them and he builds his church I believe with all of my heart that the reason these things are hidden from the wise and the intelligent in the world it's because God is using to do this work of building his church people who were broken despised forsaken and nobody wanted to have anything to do with them they were good for nothing that's a term we use in the world as well God is taking good for nothing people and building a holy nation a people for his pleasure out of that and I hope you relate to that I hope you identify as someone who is good for nothing who was good for nothing and

still is perhaps because God wants to use you he takes the most ugly takes the ugliest situation the ugliest person and makes something beautiful I want you to show I want to show you a verse in 2nd Corinthians chapter 12 as we begin I don't know if you've ever wondered why God answers no very often when God answers no for something that I have asked or you have asked I haven't heard a reason often God is just silent I know the answer is no I asked for something and he said no he didn't and he said no he answered my prayer but his answer was no I'm not going to give that to you I believe that actually when we read God's word very often there is a reason and I don't think God does anything without a reason he may not speak the reason to us every time he says yes or no but it's there in

God's word for instance I wanted to show you this at the very beginning to show you this example in Paul's life in 2nd Corinthians 12 you know this story about Paul and the thorn in his flesh and he says in verse 8 Paul is telling about his own experience he said concerning this problem I had in my life this really difficult situation I mean it was bad enough that it was like a thorn in his flesh a thorn in my foot would be something very irritating I wouldn't be able to walk properly I wouldn't be able to talk properly I would be in much discomfort through it all and he says Paul and this was a spiritual thorn or something like that that Paul had we don't know exactly but he says that in verse 8 I entreated the Lord three times that he would take it from me that it might depart from me

and God answered the prayer you see that in verse 9 and he said to me my grace is sufficient for you my power is perfected in weakness and the living Bible paraphrases this I think in the spirit of what Paul intended to write this is how it reads and the Lord said to me no the Lord answered my three prayers and said no why and then the Lord gave him a reason because my power shows up best in weak things or in weak people and I believe that very often in fact all the time when God answers no to your prayer to your prayer request and he says no the reason for that is because he knows that his power will be best manifest if he says no in that situation and if he does say yes it's for the same reason if God says yes to your prayer request it's because ultimately whether it's yes or no he

wants to show off his glory the most do you see now why it's better for us sometimes for God to answer no to your prayer it might be a spiritual prayer it might be a sincere prayer spiritual prayer that you have that

you think you need to have perhaps you want to get married and you're in a rush to get married and you're still single perhaps you want that job and you think Lord if you give me this job I will serve you faithfully and God says no Lord please heal me from this sickness I know you heal people with far worse sicknesses than this please heal me or heal my child and God says no do you hear him even though you don't hear an audible voice do you hear him saying no because my power is going to be manifest in your life through that weakness through that thing I take you through my

dear child my dear son my dear daughter my power my glory will be shown off even more than if I said yes to your prayer request and when we line up our goal and our ambition together with God's goal and ambition for us on this earth which is to show off his glory then the yes and the no become the same to us because we say Lord whether you answer yes or no you're going to fulfill your glory to the greatest extent in my life do that in my life and I want to clarify that it's good to ask for healing it's good to ask for that job it's good to ask that you do well in your exam as you're about to do write that that test that test or that exam it's good to do that but after you do that and after you work hard you can say at the end of it Lord if you don't allow me to get that job or don't allow

me to marry that person or don't heal me in this particular instance I believe that when I prayed in faith it's because you're going to manifest your glory to the greatest extent in my life and my dear friends that's why we need the Holy Spirit if we could do things in our life without the Holy Spirit what we can do in our life without the Holy Spirit are the possible things and the reason we need the fullness of the Holy Spirit and I believe that's one of those things that is lacking in Christendom today the true teaching the real teaching of the ministry of the Holy Spirit I believe it's lacking because I've heard many many many sermons about the the Holy Spirit and what it means to be full of the Holy Spirit and what is the baptism of the Holy Spirit and all kinds of things about the

gifts of the Holy Spirit but none of them have taught it to me this way in the way I learned first in CFC and God has revealed and revealed to me through this that God wants to do impossible things in my life which if I did not have the Holy Spirit I wouldn't be able to do and I hope that as you're thinking back on your life on circumstances that you're walking through in your life even right now you will remember impossible things that God that there are in your life that what God wants to see you accomplish and do because he has filled you with the Holy Spirit and if he didn't fill you with the Holy Spirit you would never accomplish those things I want to use the example of Abraham to to highlight this and to bring it out in a way that is really beautiful because Abraham did some

impossible things in the Old Testament and he was there as an example for us to show us what God can do when we have the same faith as Abraham had in the new covenant so Genesis chapter 17 we'll look at this story here if you turn there with me like I was just saying Abraham is called the father of our faith and he's he's held up as an example of faith we are not called to do the same things that Abraham did for instance Abraham was very rich we are not called to follow his life and example in richness necessarily Abraham was blessed by God because in the Old Testament that was God's sign of blessing he blessed you with physical wealth but now we have something greater we have something much greater than what Abraham had in fact Abraham was probably the richest man on this earth and if

you could hear the words from the richest man in the time of Abraham's time I think he would say to us you poor a villager or you person who's earning just a little bit enough to get by but because you're living in the new covenant and you have the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to fill your life hear what Abraham would say to you forsake those riches get your eyes off of the wealth of this earth it's not worth it he would give

anything to trade places with us today he would say Lord you can have all the riches that you gave me if I could have lived in the times of 2012 AD and experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit and to have God be more than just my friend to be God living in me as a father through his Holy Spirit that's why we covet and desire and hunger for the fullness of the

Holy Spirit that God can do impossible things in our life like he did with Abraham but greater things in the new covenant so Genesis chapter 17 much of this story will be familiar to you but I want to use the story as an example and as a as a pattern or as a type for how God wants to work in our lives as well Genesis chapter 17 verse 1 it says now when Abraham was 99 years old that was perhaps not as old as it is today in our time but it was still pretty old when Abraham was 99 years old the Lord appeared to Abram his name was still Abraham and said to him I am God Almighty and I like how God begins that he says first of all Abraham I want you Abram I want you to remember I am God Almighty Almighty means essentially what that word says mighty for all that means that there is no

circumstance no situation no matter what it is that God is not mighty for that's what he was reminding Abraham of Abram of first of all I am mighty for all things and do you know my dear friends this is the Holy Spirit that is now revealed to me I believe that the Holy Spirit that this is what it means to be full full of the Holy Spirit is to see God as mighty dwelling in me for all things do you want the Holy Spirit like that where he is now mighty for all things that you go through all circumstances all situations that means that there is nothing in your life that you can write off as hopeless it's over there's nothing about your life about which you can say it's over if you are filled with the Holy Spirit now if you're 10% 10% filled with the Holy Spirit that perhaps leaves 90% of your

life that God cannot do the impossible in but when he is truly able to fill you up a 100% of your life is surrendered to him and he is able to fill 100% of your life with his Holy Spirit now your whole life is available for God to do the impossible in your life and so God says I am God Almighty walk before me and be blameless and then these next uh seven verses or so listen to it verse two verses two through eight I will establish my covenant between me and you I will multiply you exceedingly and then Abraham fell on his face and God kept going God wasn't done he says I will establish my covenant with you I will multiply you Abraham falls on his face and then he says verse four God continues as for me behold my covenant is with you and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations

no longer shall your name be called Abram but your name shall be called Abraham Abraham meant exalted father Abraham meant uh father of a multitude for I will make you the father of a multitude of nations and verse six I will make you exceedingly fruitful and I will make a nation of you and kings shall come forth from you and I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant to be God to you and to your descendants after you and I will give to you and to your descendants after you the land of your sojournings all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession and I will be their God I will do this I will do this I will do this I will do this you know the picture I get as I read those verses as I read

those verses and as I read them to you again is of a God that's thinking about how much he can lavish his love upon Abraham and I thought of this phrase exceeding great and precious promises that's exactly what I thought about these are some amazing promises why would God pick out Abraham of all the people that lived in the world at that time and lavish him you would think that God should distribute the blessing among everybody equally how about some for Abraham and some for somebody else and some for somebody else no because God had a purpose and he saw in Abraham somebody who was giving

100 of himself to God and God said Abraham you're giving me 100% of yourself I'm going to give you 100% of me in essence that was the promise I'm going to give you all the blessing not just a little bit

here for everyone do you want that attitude with God exceeding great and precious promises do you want God to give you 10 of the promises in his word and then give 10 to somebody else and then 10 to somebody else God is able to give 100% of the promises in his word second Peter 1 4 I think that's the verse exceeding great and precious promises that he has given to us and then he says in the latter part of that verse to partake of his divine nature that's what it means that's why we want to be filled with the Holy Spirit that I can actually start to be like God I can talk to my wife like God I can look at money like God looks at money I can look at that person who speaks evil of me like God looks at people who speak evil of him to partake of the divine nature and God says you can

have it all because Jesus who is our example who is the head of the church because the fullness of the Godhead was in him it says and now is available to us through him when you are connected to Christ the head in his body now you are as much a part of the head as any other part of the body and the fullness of the head that Christ has is now available to you and I this is why we want to be filled with the Holy Spirit that God can do the impossible in our life God did impossible things in Jesus and through Jesus for example because Jesus lived such a life that was completely surrendered to his father he could take the sin of the entire world baffles our minds doesn't it that one man could live a perfect life on this earth and take the sin of the whole world an impossible situation God did

it in Jesus and that's the most impossible of them all every other circumstance we face in our life my dear friend I urge you to see that the most difficult impossible trial you have faced or are facing or will face is not even close to the problem that God solved on Calvary through Jesus Christ through the life of one who walked on this earth that was completely surrendered to him and now when we say we are followers of Christ Christians disciples of Jesus what we are saying and should be saying is Lord Father you did that for Jesus like we heard this morning and you're going to do it for me as well you did impossible things in Jesus life and through Jesus life and you're going to do them in my life I have the faith for that so fill me with your Holy Spirit when we have that kind of a

urge and a passionate desire to be full of the Holy Spirit God will do it he's exceeding great and precious promises are that he gave Abraham are a picture of the promises he's given us spiritual promises but you know the interesting thing I've noticed in my own life and perhaps you can relate to that as well when God gives us his promises he doesn't tell us how he's going to fulfill them he didn't tell Abram okay on such and such a date and at such and such a time this is going to happen and you're going to realize that Sarah is pregnant and then Isaac is going to be born he didn't give him any details he just said I'm going to bless you and you know he works that way with us as well for instance you know this verse um Philippians 1 verse 6 he says should be a verse that we all know

well Philippians 1 verse 6 Paul writes to the Philippines and says I am confident of this very thing that he that is God who began a good work in you will perfect it he will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus I'm confident of this Paul says to the Philippines but that's it how is God going to fulfill this how is God going to perfect the good work that he has started in me I don't know and oftentimes I wonder I look at the reality of my life or I remember the reality of my past life and the ways in which I dishonored God and was ashamed to him with my sin and my sinfulness that I still see in my life in my flesh and I think Lord how are you going to take this wretched person that I am and conform him into the image of Jesus he says just take my word for it I will do it and he

doesn't show us how exactly it's going to happen but he's looking for those who say Lord to me it looks impossible to me it looks like there's absolutely no way you're going to be able to take me and stand me next to Jesus have you thought about that that on the day of judgment when God when when Christ and his bride are united we as his church will be standing there next to Jesus and we will look like Jesus do you believe that do you believe what it says in first John 3 that when we see him we shall be like him and I won't have to be ashamed of my past and my guilt I don't have to be ashamed even now but when we stand there before Jesus we will be just like him and God's word says he will complete it and to me I look around at my life and I look at the way I still get so irritated about

little things and I uh gossip so easily about other people and the lust of the eyes is still such a battle and I'm often my I have to control my temper and I think Lord you're gonna stand me next to Jesus and we're gonna look like each other God is able to complete God will complete the good work that he started in you and this is exactly the journey that he took Abram through to show us that just like he gave Abram promises and fulfill them he has given you and I promises for impossible things and wants to fulfill them or for example the journey through the wilderness that the Israelites had their destination was the land of Canaan but you know as they walked through the wilderness when you walk through the wilderness like they did you can't see the land of Canaan they were promised a

land flowing with milk and honey but all they saw around them was desert without any water let alone milk and when you're walking through a desert where you don't even see water and you're holding onto a promise that at the end of this journey God has milk and honey waiting for you will you continue to follow the Holy Spirit the pillar of fire that's leading you and trust God that he will take you into the promised land when you're facing giants that seem uh that to whom compared to whom you look like grasshoppers and you hold on to the promise that God said that every piece of this land is for you for you and every single one of those giants is one that God has given for us to conquer when you see God's promises and believe him like Abraham did about the impossible things then we will

start to take the land of Canaan and experience it so if you're in a wilderness today and you're looking around you and you look there's there's water and it's bitter or there's no water at all and there's no food and you're thinking Lord is this really what the life that you promised me cry out for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and you will experience the promised land day by day step by step he goes on in verse 9 to say God says further to Abraham Genesis 17 verse 9 no as for you you shall keep my covenant you and your descendants after you throughout their generations and then he talked about circumcision now Abraham like you and I we can't fault him for this but just like you and I do decided okay Lord you've given me a promise that I'm going to have a child and you're going to bless

this child through me and you're going to bless the nations through this child I'm going to try to manufacture a child and you know the story right he decided okay God you're going to make me a make me a blessing to the multitudes and you're going to give a seed to me and I look at Sarah and think well there's there's no way it could be my the promise could be fulfilled through Sarah so he looks around you know I think Sarah was still beautiful to him she's 89 years old and still beautiful it's still still attractive to him but he thinks there's absolutely no way that the promise of God could be fulfilled through her I can try to fulfill God's promise but this situation that's too difficult for God God Abraham still hasn't seen God as almighty and so he looks around for another way to

fulfill God's promise in his life he came up with a good-looking promise that's Hagar that's somebody who's 20 years old or 25 whatever however old she was who is capable of bearing children in her own strength

and she and Abraham have a child together you know that child was called Ishmael and Ishmael to me represents those things in our life that we try to present to God ways by which you and I try to fulfill God's promise for instance the promise that God's or the command that God says you must love each other and I think well there's this one brother or this one sister in the church that I just have a hard time loving and so I try to love and I try to spend time with them and I try to invite them over to my house but I still the more I spend time with them the more they irritate me

have you been there have you struggled with people who you really try to reach out to them but it just it's irritating and I try to present to God and says Lord see I'm trying I'm presenting to you this Ishmael I really tried to love this brother that was unlovable or this sister that just irritated me so much here it is Lord and Ishmael I could manufacture a love and God wants to bring us to the place where we realize that it is impossible for me to do this it is impossible for me to love my wife the way Christ loves the church the way Christ loves the church the way Christ loves me despite my wretchedness and my failure I'm called to love my wife that way and I try to manufacture a love the way I read about in books and through these other manuals or how to be a good husband and

psychology books and I think I'm loving my wife and say see Lord I love my wife and it's an Ishmael and I can sit back and be content with the way I love my wife and God says you haven't even seen how much I love the church and I've given myself for her will you learn to love your wife that way and what it does for me it brings up a hunger and says Lord I my love is a drop in the ocean compared to the way you love your church help me to love my wife that way help me to be so considerate of her needs that I never once think of my own and what I need to do because that's how Christ loved the church he gave himself up for her and he was the one we heard this yesterday he was the one that was always in the right we are the ones that were in the wrong and it doesn't matter about whose right or

wrong it takes an input it is an impossible thing to love somebody I believe when you are completely in the right and they are completely in the wrong I think it's impossible it's impossible to do it without even one sense of feeling like well I know I'm not the guilty one but if I can love the person who has done wrong to me and I know that I am completely clear in my conscience haven't done one thing wrong even if that was the case in order to love them with a Christlike love I must be full of his spirit I must have partaken of the divine love divine nature of love in order to love them that way so Abraham presents this Ishmael and comes up with the Ishmael and then God has to remind him again so we get to verse 15 God said to Abraham listen as for Sarah your wife you shall not call her

name Sarai but Sarah Sarah means princess and what God is trying to tell Abraham he says listen you she has this name but I want you to see that she is your princess and I want you to see that I will fulfill a promise through her and that's what he goes on to say verse 16 I will bless her now God says previously it was Abraham I will bless you and I will bless the multitudes through you the nations shall be blessed through you and Abraham thought okay fine here's Ishmael that's through me Lord and God says no you haven't understood it because you've hidden away in the closet this 89 year old wife of yours that's decrepit and ugly looking and you don't want anybody to think that she could be a mother so you've hidden her away in the closet and you're presenting to me this beautiful new

bride of yours and the child that you have born and think Lord you'll be pleased with this won't you he says no bring that Sarah out of that Sarai out of the closet that thing from your past that that remembrance of things that happened in the past or that trial that that addiction that you have in your life bring it out confess it before me and see if I will not break fulfill the promise of my life for your life through that bring

out that thing before me and lay it before me bring out Sarah whom you're hiding in the bedroom 89 year old woman walking with a hunch and you think Lord no not her I will bless her God is specific now and indeed I will give you a son by her then I will bless her and she shall be a mother of nations kings of people shall come from her Sarah I believe that

represents the hopeless circumstances in our life the hopeless situations in our life that God says are you willing to call that a princess now Sarah that hopeless circumstance will you call it a princess because I'm going to fulfill the promise through me you know when Jesus talked about the Holy Spirit he talked about it like a promise he told the disciples to go and wait in Jerusalem and wait there and pray for it until you get the promise which was power and I believe Isaac is a picture of us the child of promise that is Isaac is a picture of us to us of the Holy Spirit she shall be a mother of nations kings of people shall come from her you will have authority and rulership in your life through that very circumstance that was once a defeat for you the thing about Ishmael's I want to

mention this as well the reason that Ishmael's are a detestable to God's sight is because Ishmael's won't last and I think Ishmael's for me represent those efforts that I make perhaps in struggling with sin and overcoming sin in my own strength I believe it's possible to have a temporary victory over sin in certain areas for instance it's possible for a pretty woman to walk by and for me to through the power of my will and my self-will to not look the Buddhists do this some other moral people know that that's wrong and so they don't do it but it's an exercise of the self-will and that's in Ishmael too when I through my own power and my own struggle and the grit of my teeth and teeth I'm able to come to a victory in my life and present it to God and I sit back and think look at me I'm so

holy I overcame or I sit there with my modest dress and I think I would really want to dress immodestly and dress in a way that's attractive but I sit there and dress modestly and by the grit of my teeth I put on that modest clothing and I think Lord look at me I'm so pleasing to you and he says no that's an Ishmael I want to do some work in you that will last forever and the promise that God gave to Abraham through Isaac was an eternal covenant we saw that earlier an eternal covenant a victory that will last forever a blessing that will last forever and my dear friends in order for us to experience the Isaacs in our life the eternal promise we must be willing to give up the temporary victories that we get we must be willing to forsake our self-righteousness that we are so proud of that

we can experience the righteousness of God that will last forever all the other good works that we do it's like a stinking cloth a stinking rag it's God has to hold his nose as we present to him this victory that I won in a particular situation says take it away I don't want it let me give you the fragrance the aroma of Christ in you well listen what happens to Abraham in verse 17 as God was specific he says listen bring out Sarah I'm going to fulfill the promise through her and then Abraham fell on his face usually when Abraham fell on his face he worshiped this time it was like it was too much for him to handle Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said in his heart will a child be born to a man 100 years old okay that's already done he already did it with Ishmael but with Sarah who

is 90 years old bear a child there's no way Lord I know you you you mentioned Sarah by name but there's got to be some mistake you cannot be talking about 1999 that's the year I hope you would never bring up that that situation in my life or that area in my life that that situation that I struggle with and struggle with and struggle with you cannot be referring to that and so he says in verse 18 oh that Ishmael might live before thee Abraham is still fixated on Ishmael he says Lord you promised a son and look here's my here's my fulfillment of the promise for you and God is trying to get Abraham to the point where he realizes

I am not talking about possible things if you can do something for God God doesn't want it let me say that again if you can do something for God he doesn't want it

ministry if you can preach a good sermon God doesn't want it if you can play the keyboard and sing wonderfully God doesn't want it but when you get to the place where it's impossible even though physically you can play the keyboard or you do have a gift in a particular area when you get to the place where you realize Lord if you don't fill me with your Holy Spirit it's impossible then he says okay good now we can fulfill the promise now I can do impossible things through you this is the promise of the impossible so he's still fixate on an Ishmael oh that Ishmael might live before thee and God because he's long suffering and patient more patient than any of us says God said no but Sarah I hope my dear brother sister especially young people I hope you will hear God saying to you today no

but and right there after that you write that circumstance that you think God doesn't there's no way God could fix that and no matter how old you are even if you're here in this room as an older person you think I'm already 60 years old I made a mess of my life and I'm starting to get revelation on these truths at the age of 60 or 70 perhaps and no matter at what stage you are in your life my dear friend my dear brother sister hear the words of God no but and right after that that thing that you're ashamed of that you're glad the person sitting next to you doesn't know about those evil thoughts that play your mind those dreams that love of money that that situation that you have in your workplace or whatever it might be I don't know what it is that you go through but I know that you have

impossible situations in your life because I have plenty of them and we have the same flesh and I'm laying a hold of God today in a new way and have been especially since God laid the the open my eyes to this if I can put it that way that that he will open his eye open my eyes to see even more impossible things in my life impossible relationships with others with other brothers and sisters an impossible marriage situation impossible relationships between parents and children perhaps or between brothers and sisters in the church between elders whatever it might be if they're impossible God wants to take a hold of it because he knows that we can't fix it no amount of psychological training can fix impossible situations but God is a God of the impossible seek to be filled with the Holy

Spirit for that and he will fill us 19 verse 19 genesis 17 verse 19 God said no but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son and now he goes on to say and you shall call his name Isaac Isaac in the is a in the Hebrew it's actually pronounced Itzhak I think the way I understand it and it's just kind of like laughter that's what the name means laughter you laugh about that and I think I don't know if God had a sense of humor when he said you're going to call him Isaac because you laughed I take comfort in that though because I see that Isaac represents to me the laughably impossible situations in my life where God doesn't laugh at it he says he's interested in fulfilling a promise but the rest of the world laughs at it when you say when you're when when your friends around you know that you

love to lust after women and tell dirty jokes in the workplace and tomorrow or on Monday you go to the work and says listen guys I'm done with dirty jokes and they laugh at you and say no way you're the one that comes up with the best jokes and they laugh at you oh you tell your wife honey I am going to love you today from today onwards like I like Christ loved the church and your wife might say in her heart she might laugh but because she loves you too much she may not laugh in your face but even if it's a laughably impossible situation perhaps you're laughing at it yourself and thinking that relationship there's no way inwardly you're laughing at it like Abraham was and thinking there's no way this will ever work out and God says the laughably impossible situations give it to me I want

to fill you with the Holy Spirit and fill that circumstance with the Holy Spirit and fulfill my promise through that those things that we were hiding for so long in the past verse 21 my covenant I will establish with Isaac whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year something interesting happens after this we won't go through the whole story Genesis 18 19 and 20 as some of the darkest times in Abraham's life around him is immense corruption I mean completely deprived depraved people in Sodom and Gomorrah homosexuality like I don't think we've even seen in the world yet today and just wickedness wicked wicked wicked environment that he lived in so much so that you know God had to send fire down from heaven and destroy that city of Sodom it was so wicked and not only that it gets

worse Abraham there's sin in his personal life in chapter 20 you'll see that he goes on a journey to Egypt and on the way there he tells Sarah to tell a lie that she's his sister so that what will happen he's afraid that if he knows them if people find out that they're married they will kill him so that they can marry Sarah because she was still beautiful and so he says he's trying to protect himself this is this is the man that's upheld as a man of faith and the friend of God what a coward he was he let his wife he told his wife tell them you're my sister yeah they will they will take you and do wicked things to you but at least they won't kill me an adulterer he put his wife into an adulterous situation that's how low things had gotten for this man whom God had just said God just got

done saying I'm gonna bless you Abraham you're my friend and I have special blessings for you these are great promises precious promises I'm gonna bless you and I'm gonna bless you and I'm gonna bless you I'm gonna bless you and then Abraham's life sinks it sinks into terrible wickedness then we reach the end of chapter 20 and if I could I want to read to you Genesis chapter 20 verse 19 you won't find it in your Bible but it's there because I've had Genesis 20 verse 19 moments in my life Genesis 20 verse 19 I'm going to make up some words here this is Abraham after he's been through this wickedness you know that in Sodom there wasn't even 10 righteous men there wasn't even one righteous man besides Lot God saved Lot but because there wasn't even there weren't even I mean imagine if you

lived in the world where there wasn't even 10 righteous people in the world that's the time Abraham lived in and then he himself fell into such wickedness I imagine Genesis 20 verse 19 on their way back from Egypt fortunately God saved Abraham out of that situation didn't make a horrible mess of things Abraham and Sarah are still married and God protected Sarah from that situation they walk they go back to Egypt and they're probably having a fight I can imagine Sarah's not very happy that Abraham made her do that they're probably riding on separate camels and some distance away from each other what do you think is going through Abraham's mind I bet he remembers chapter 17 when God said I'm going to bless you and he thought you're going to bless me Lord I made such a mess of my life here

my wife won't even talk to me because I dishonored her so much and all my friends around me I had my nephew Lot he ended up in such a wicked place you had to destroy that city and Abraham rode back to his home with his head down discouraged thinking it's over there's no hope for me and then we get to Genesis 21 verse 1 then the Lord took note by some of my these are now my favorite words in the Bible then the Lord took note of Sarah as he had said you know that God said earlier we said it'll be one year from now and God promised one year he could have made the promise happen one year earlier so that this situation in Egypt and this wickedness in Sodom never happened but God had to allow Abraham to come to the place of such emptiness and such discouragement if you will it doesn't say that

he was but I think he must have been if he had a flesh like mine when he allowed when things got so bad and here he is on his way back home after letting down his wife letting down his friends letting down God

and embarrassed about his life and God says okay now Abraham you're ready for me to fulfill the promise then the Lord took note of Sarah as he had said and the Lord did for Sarah as he had promised you mean the Lord didn't give up on Abraham when he saw him tell that lie and he saw the wickedness of the world that he lived in you mean God didn't give up on Abraham no because he had a promise that he wanted to fulfill through Abraham and God was watching Abraham protecting him from all in all his journeys through Egypt protecting Sarah they these Egyptians could not take Sarah and

sleep with her they could not have an adulterous relationship with Sarah God was determined to protect it and so he woke up that Pharaoh in the middle of the night saying no this woman has a promise that I that is waiting for her with her husband who is betrayed her that broken situation I know the world is going to take advantage of it but you are not allowed to devil that's what that's what God was telling the devil you get your hands off Abraham and Sarah sure you can test them but I put a hedge around them because there's a promise that I'm going to fulfill in their life don't touch that woman don't touch that man and Abraham and Sarah went back together with their marriage intact so that the promise could be fulfilled and at the right time Isaac is born and the promise is fulfilled

God doesn't ask us to fulfill his promises he asks us to let him fulfill his promises through us and I know you struggle with this because I do too when when the standard of teaching that is preached is very high our natural instinct our natural instinct is to try to live up to that standard we try to live a life that's pleasing to God I try to overcome the lust of the eyes and I try to speak kindly to my wife and I try to not get angry and I try to not love money even though I see my neighbor building his big house and having all the fancy cars and everything within me speaks of love of money and I just I try but I try to pretend that I'm not and I'm just looking at them as the house is getting bigger and the cars are getting fancier and I'm jealous of them and then God says quit trying

to fulfill the promises let me fulfill them through you this is turn over to Luke chapter 1 this is a beautiful picture of it as well when Jesus first came to the earth and God was promising something impossible a virgin giving birth to a child impossible there's absolutely no way that could happen I mean it's just physiologically and biologically impossible an impossible situation science will tell you it's impossible a woman that is a virgin cannot give birth to a child science and you study it and study it and study says absolutely impossible and God says okay here bring that impossible situation where everybody in the world says it's impossible and this angel comes to Mary and says verse 31 behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you will name him Jesus he will be

great he'll be called the son of the most high and the Lord God will give him the throne of the father David etc his kingdom will have no end 33 and then Mary asks the obvious question verse 34 how can this be since I am a virgin are you asking God that question today how can this be Lord this is you're talking about me Lord you know my past you know my present how can this be that you're going to bless me and make me like Jesus and conform me to the image of your son so that I'll stand next to him as his bride and we will look like each other how can this be verse 37 nothing is impossible with God nothing nothing is impossible with God I I look at as I look out on you I picture the Holy Spirit God looking out here perhaps over here looking out looking for impossibles look the eyes of the

Lord it says Rome to and fro across the earth 2nd Corinthians 2nd Chronicles 16 looking for those whose heart is completely his that he might strongly support them I the new covenant paraphrase of that if you will for this message is the eyes of the Lord are looking through the rows of this hall for for impossible situations if you don't have one let him pass you by if you don't have an impossible situation because

everything in your life you have got under control your life is well under control let him pass you by it will be the saddest thing you will do in your life but if you have those impossible in your life say put up your hand and say Lord I have one I have 10 my whole life is impossible he says good let me stop here and do a work an eternal work and conform this impossible person

full of impossible circumstances into the image of my son Jesus justified as if he had never sinned as if she had never sinned this is the God we serve I'll close with a couple of more verses Hebrews chapter 11 here Abraham and Sarah are talked about in the new covenant in the context of faith you know like it says about what we should do Hebrews 13 says as you observe your leaders observe their conduct and imitate their faith as you observe God's dealings with Abraham and Sarah imitate their faith that's why that story is written in Genesis 17 through 21 and then he says by faith even Sarah Hebrews 11 verse 11 by faith even Sarah are you one of those that about whom you know your friends would say even her she got the fullness of the Holy Spirit even him even he got the baptism of the

Holy Spirit nobody thought he would get it because that's everybody knows what comes out of that person's mouth but God took a hold of that person and filled him with the Holy Spirit even him even her even Sarah herself received ability to conceive even beyond the proper time of life since she considered him faithful who had promised with Sarah it was too late you have too late in circumstances in your life it's too late for that too late for God to make uh make your life right to fix the mess that you've made out of your life too late if you think it's too late have faith like Sarah did have faith that God who did for Sarah and did for others did for Jesus will do for you because she considered him faithful who had promised consider him faithful who has promised therefore also there was

born of one man verse 12 him as good as dead that's like saying good for nothing are you one of those that's as good as dead useless completely useless a burden in the church as good as dead in your local church God says come as many descendants as the stars of heaven the life of Christ comes pouring out of your life where there used to be death and if you're one of those that people are embarrassed about in your church or your your wife is embarrassed of you and your or your husband is embarrassed of you your friends are embarrassed of you take courage if you will hold on for the fullness of the Holy Spirit God wants to do the impossible in your life there's a story I read recently of a couple named John and Betty Stam who served in in China as missionaries for God and one of the things

that one of the things that John Stam wrote they actually were killed brutally they were in their mid or late 20s I think lived in China in the 1930s left their homes in England I think it was no it was in the U.S. left America and went to China and served God served the people of China there and were brutally killed by the by the red army the red soldiers in China for their faith at the age of 28 or so young couple but something John wrote John Stam wrote in his journal and it stuck with me I'll read it to you says act this is he sensed the Lord telling him act as if I were and you will find that I am let me say that again act as if I were and you will find that I am when God has promised us in his word and you think it's as if God is it's a reality he's it's it's there act as if it is

and you will find that I am act as if proceed in faith as if it's already a done deal you don't have to keep asking you don't have to keep hoping you don't have to keep wishing that God will make you like Christ it's a done deal you walk forward in faith that God you said you will make me like Christ you will fulfill your promise in my life it is so that's what amen means so now when you pray and you say amen you say it is so and you can use these words if you will Lord I'm going to proceed as if you are and if you see the if you're standing in line to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and you think Lord I'm I'm only fit to stand in

the back how much I've let you down I feel like that I'm there I am in the back and everybody else is in the front of the line and I think I missed it

you know you ever stand in line for sometimes they stand in line for visa applications to go to or go abroad or other situations and you know they only take the first 50 or so and you look at the line in front of you and think man there's no way I'm going to get it they're only going to take 50 thank God it's not like that but if you feel like there you are standing in the back of the line wishing that you might that there might be enough of the fullness of the Holy Spirit left for you and you're there waving your hand and saying Lord please me is there enough for me is there a hope for my life and my situation God will see you and God sees you standing in the back of the line and says come the last shall be first and the first shall be last how much of God's Holy Spirit we get is not

determined by how bad our situations are or how old we are how young we are it's by how much we will believe God Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness may it be said of us my dear brothers and sisters he believed God and they received the fullness of God she believed God and she received the fullness of God amen I thank God that the ministry of others brings a balance in the church I've always felt that about my own ministry how terribly terribly imbalanced the church would be if they only listened to me God gives each of us a particular emphasis both are in scripture we need to hear both and that's why personally I'm very thankful when there is an emphasis brought which balances out so that we can hear the whole purpose of God what you heard just now is part of

that whole purpose of God I want to read from Romans chapter 4 before we close Romans 4 and I'm reading from the message like I said yesterday it's like a commentary but it brings out truth in a vivid way and you'll see that Romans 4 verse 13 let me paraphrase it as we go along Romans 4 13 that famous promise that God gave Abraham that he and his children would possess the earth was not given because of something Abraham did do or would do or could do it was based on God's decision to put everything together for Abraham and Abraham just entered into it when he believed you know this aspect of God doing something for us it's so important this is what faith is but there's a place that God brings us to why did God wait so long to fulfill it in Abraham's life just like Santos read a verse

that was not there in Genesis 21 19 is non-existent I want to read another verse in Genesis which is not there and that's Genesis chapter 18 uh sorry Genesis let me get it right Genesis 16 and I want to read verse 17 you got it Genesis 16 verse 17 I'm going to read it to you I'll tell you why because Genesis 16 verse 16 is Abraham was 86 years old when Hagar gave birth to a son to Ishmael and the next word says Abraham was 99 years old hey what happened in those 13 years okay I'll fill it up now with verse 17 when Abraham was 86 years old he was not impotent important means incapable of having a child he could produce a child so verse 17 is God waited 13 years till Abraham became impotent he could not produce a child even through Hagar or through anybody if he wanted then Abraham was 99

years old and then God showed up that's what the message Bible says then God showed up when he was 99 and he says I am the almighty God you're impotent but I'm almighty live before me and Abraham was overwhelmed and fell flat on his face he said okay I'll give you a son when it was when Abraham was 86 to have a child was difficult when Abraham was 99 it was impossible when he was a hundred he got it so what are the three stages in God's working difficult impossible done which stage are you you think it's difficult to get victory over sin you got to wait brother sister maybe 13 years till it becomes impossible you got to get to that verse 17 maybe some of you are in that verse 17 the end of genesis 16 and you wonder why God is waiting how long does he have to wait one year 13 years but

when you come to that place of Lord I can't make it I can't do it I tried I've tried enough I thought it was difficult now I realize it's impossible it's the same principle you know when the disciples went fishing they went it's fishing at six o'clock in the evening difficult no it's six o'clock it was easy we are expert fishermen by the time it came to midnight in John 21 hey it's getting difficult man I've never had such a difficult day in fishing all my life Peter says difficult difficult by four o'clock in the morning it was impossible then Jesus appears who said Jesus didn't have a sense of humor he says hey boys have you got any fish by the way wasn't that humor there he knew all of course didn't have hey children have you got any fish you say no impossible okay cast your net on the

right side you'll get it and they got it they toiled all night and they caught nothing it's very interesting that the old covenant begins with Abraham with an impossible situation God gives a child and the new covenant begins with another more impossible situation more impossible a virgin getting a child that's more impossible than a 90 year old barren woman getting a child we're in the new covenant for more impossible things that first body of Christ was born in an impossible situation a virgin having a child and when I look back you know the first time I was gripped by wanting to build a local church in 1965 when I was in the navy when I gathered together with a few people in Cochin so we're going to be a local church it collapsed in I think about two weeks then I came to Bangalore in

1972 I said okay I come to a new place we're going to start a church and we gathered two or three people together we'd meet during the week you just fold it up because they were not interested in victory over sin one week when I was not there they were meeting together and I asked my wife when I came back I said what were they talking about today he said the main subject was whether we should keep our eyes open or closed when we pray I said there's no hope for this there's no hope here I closed down the meeting and I said Lord I've given up I'm not called to build a church and don't ever ask me I finished I tried twice both times it was an Ishmael I didn't have one Ishmael I had two and I said I give up Lord I just give up you got to find something if you want to do something find

somebody else I'll just go around preaching or something and I came to an end of myself finally and only Ian Robson knows among all of you sitting here and my wife and probably his wife what the situation was in 1975 we had zero desire to build a church when I say zero zero as far as I'm concerned it was in the minus realm leave alone zero and suddenly we found ourselves one day without any expectation thrust out into a situation where we didn't know what to do we didn't know what to do certainly didn't want to build a church because I already had two Ishmaels I didn't want a third one because you know it would spoil my reputation I was not concerned about God I was concerned about my reputation this guy tried another time I'm not going to try I am determined not to try but we met and

what I see today I can really say what the Lord has wrought it's got nothing to do with me and you may not believe it now but one day you will let me read from Romans 4 that famous promise verse 13 that God gave Abraham it was based on not based on something Abraham did or could do or would do I hope you will see that faith is not based on what you can do it was based on God's decision to put everything together for him God has made a decision to put everything together for Jesus Christ his son not for you and me and Abraham just entered in when he believed if those who get listen to this if those who get what God gives them I'm reading from the message if those who get what God gives them only get it by doing everything they are told to do and filling out all the right forms properly

signed and that eliminates all personal trust completely that's not a promise that is a contract and that's not a holy promise that's a business deal God deals with us a contract drawn up by some clever lawyer

with plenty of fine print that only makes sure you'll never be able to collect but if there's no contract in the first place but simply a promise and God's promise and you can't break it isn't it wonderful to know that there's no contract but you say what about all these conditions is there something you have to do yes you have to accept it you have to sign and say thank you that's what it means all the promises of God are yes from his side and you have to say amen it's like you take a check to the bank for a hundred thousand rupees by some rich man gave you you did not do one thing

to earn one rupee in that but when you give it in the bank the bank says you got a sign at the back otherwise you can't get it that's what you got to do is that so difficult can you say I got it because I signed at the bank no you could was a pure gift but you had to give it in the bank and sign it that's our part Lord I trust you I'm trusting you and I'm expressing my trust by saying amen this is why the fulfillment of God's promise depends entirely on trusting God and his way and embracing him and what he does God's promise arrives as a pure gift that's the only way everyone can be sure to get in those who have lived bad lives and those who have lived good lives everybody gets in because it's a gift otherwise those who get good lives will boast hey I got in because I was good and you

find some people like that sitting in the church the legalists who think that they're accepted before because of some particular reason there's a verse in Ephesians 2 which says one day God will show to others the exceeding riches of his grace which he showed to sinners like us he doesn't reveal your sins to others thank God he won't reveal all the evil wicked things you did in the past and he won't reveal mine but have you ever prayed like this I have prayed like this I said Lord one day when you get to heaven I want you to show I want you to tell people they will believe you what a terrible sinner I was and you didn't do a work through me or in me because I was good but because of your promise and I trusted you today people don't believe that they think that it's something I did and

they won't believe me they think I'm just being humble when I say it was God but Lord when you get to heaven help them to see that it had nothing to do with me it had to do entirely with you it was your work 100% do you know that brothers and sisters I know it very well about myself and those of you who think you're a little better than somebody else you haven't learned it you'll only keep on producing ishmaels all your life it's based on God's promise that's the only way everybody's equalized and we can all be sure we get it those who are bad and those who are good Abraham is the father of us all and we call Abraham father not because he got God's attention by living like a holy man but God made something out of Abraham when he was a nobody are you a nobody sitting here you feel I'm not

well known in CFC circles a lot of people know others but I've just come here as a nobody and I just sort of hide around and walk around I'm just unknown nobody knows my name I'm not important well here's something for you God made something out of Abraham when he was a nobody that's a great example I believe God picks up nobodies and makes them somebodies in his sight don't seek to be a somebody in this world don't seek to be a somebody in CFC circles I've seen people who try to do that I've seen elder brothers who want to be a somebody in CFC circles invariably their life is a mess their church is a mess and their relationship with others is a mess are you content to be a nobody in the eyes of others till the end of your life oh Lord I want to be a somebody in heaven and before you I

don't want to be somebody here on this earth God picks up people who are nobodies and Abraham was and listen to this Abraham was first named the father of a multitude before he became the father of a multitude he calls you a son of God before it becomes absolutely manifest that you live like a son of God he calls you a son of God because God calls the things that don't exist as though they do that's what it

says here and so if it's a father because he dared to trust God to do what only God could do and if you can think of a life of overcoming and bargaining of God's nature or something only God can do it in my life and if you can trust him he'll do it he can raise the dead to life and with one word he can make something out of nothing that's what Genesis 1 teaches us for from nothing he

made something with a word and when everything was hopeless Abraham believed anyway that's a great word for anybody facing like we heard already a hopeless situation here when everything is hopeless believe anyway what do you lose by believing deciding Abraham decided to live not on the basis of what he saw but what he could not see what he could not do but what he said God would do he based his faith on that not what I saw or what I can do but on what God would do and he was made a father Abraham did not focus on his own helplessness and say it's hopeless it's hopeless it's hopeless this hundred-year-old body could never father a child nor did he look at Sarah's many decades of infertility and give up and I like this he did not tiptoe around God's promise cautiously asking skeptical

questions is it going to happen is it going to happen no he plunged into the promise of God and came up strong ready for God sure that if God has said it he will do it that's why it said Abraham was declared righteous before God because he trusted God to make him righteous but it's not just Abraham it's for us too the same thing gets said about us when we embrace and believe the one who brought Jesus to life when the conditions were hopeless is there anything more hopeless than death that's why the resurrection is the most important truth in the new testament not the crucifixion from that hopeless situation of death see the life of Jesus the first body of Christ begins with a hopelessly impossible situation a virgin to produce a body hopelessly impossible it ends with another hopelessly

impossible situation totally dead and there's a resurrection the body of Christ begins and ends with two impossible situations and into this the church is called to be called the body of Jesus Christ and you and I are part of it and I want to demonstrate through my life and my ministry that in hopelessly impossible situations God can do a miracle those of you who have to preach the word regularly let me tell you something from my own experience some of you may think I'm very gifted and I can get up and speak you don't realize how many times I get into this pulpit for so many years saying Lord I just don't know what to say it's hopelessly impossible for me but I trust you because you love these people and I'm sure you got something from heaven from heaven for them I want to trust you to

trust God more when you stand up to speak to God's people if you got a love for people trust God more and don't depend on your own resources I'm not saying you shouldn't prepare and study the word we all need all that but trust God more and all of you who are facing some difficult situation in your life I hope you got encouraged this morning amen heavenly father thank you for your word thank you for what you're doing in us presenting to us the whole counsel of God apply it to our hearts in a way that we'll never forget what we heard this morning we ask in Jesus name amen

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