

Theme: God calls His pilgrim people to go forth, promising to bless them so that they can be a blessing to others.

I. Intro – Headwaters of Missouri River

- A. Documentary on Lewis and Clark expedition
- B. Went up the Missouri from St. Louis
- C. Massive, broad, at times rushing river
- D. Spent almost a year fighting up the mighty Missouri
- E. Headwaters - one man stood on both side of stream!
- F. God's call of Abraham - a real headwater of Scripture

II. God's Call To Abraham

- A. God's call to Abraham
 - 1. The command - Leave and go (v1)
 - 2. Leave everything (v1)
 - 3. Go - where I show you (v1)
 - 4. The pilgrims life of faith! (Hebrews 11:8-10)
 - 5. A pattern for us - God's pilgrim. exile people
 - 6. We have a call to go (Matthew 28:19)
 - 7. The mission of God requires we embrace pilgrimage
 - 8. The great covenant promises hinge on this imperative
 - 9. The blessings found in pilgrimage - not comfort
- B. God's great covenantal promises to Abraham
 - 1. Posterity - I will make you a great nation (v2)

- 2. Provision - I will bless you (v2)
- 3. Prominence - I will make your name great (v2)
 - a. Note the contrast with Gen 11:4
 - b. God's people do not have to make a name for themselves!
- 4. Protection - I will protect you (v3; show in ESV)
 - a. Note two different words for dishonor/curse
 - b. Note plural blessing, singular cursing
 - c. Note cohortative "I will bless" vs. imperfect "I will curse"
 - d. Opposition will come; I will bless & protect
- 5. Purpose - To be a blessing (vv2-3)
 - a. v2 - an imperative - so you must be a blessing
 - b. v3 - The extent - all people on earth!
- C. The centrality of God's purpose to bless through Abraham
 - 1. Bless appears 5x in vv2-3
 - 2. Only 6x in Genesis 1-11 - creation; Noahic blessings
 - 3. 7 phrases - bless is middle and end for emphasis
 - 4. Abraham is a pipeline to bless others
 - 5. Abraham is not to hoard the blessings
 - 6. Abraham's vision must always be outward

III. The Mighty River of God's Missional Purpose

A. This passage is the headwater of God's mission

1. The great mission flows out from here
2. Waltke quote

B. Tracing the river of God's missionary purpose

1. Law - Israel priest among the nations (Exod.19:5-6)
2. Writings - Psalm 2:8 - Messiah of the nations
3. Writing - Psalm 67 - Aaronic blessing to nations
4. Prophets - Isaiah 2:1-3 - nations flow to God
5. Isaiah 19:23-25 - Egypt & Assyria the people of God
6. Isaiah 49:6 - Messiah of the Gentiles!
7. Gospels - Luke 2:28-32 - Messiah light for Gentiles
8. The Magi - Gentiles come to worship Jesus
9. Samaritan woman, centurion of great faith, etc.
10. Epistles - Rom. 1:16 - salvation for Jews & Gentiles
11. 1 Peter 2:9-10 - Exodus 19:5-6 applied to Church
12. Revelation 7:9-10 - Every people group!

C. God is on mission! We are invited to join!

IV. Applying the Word

- A. Have you heard God's call to be part of His people?
- B. Are we living as God's pilgrim people?

1. The call always begins with a call to leave and go
2. For some, this is geographic leaving and going
3. For most, it requires forsaking the lure of the world
 - a. Do I live as a pilgrim or look for my comfort zone?
 - b. Do I live for God's kingdom, or the American dream?
4. Do I have a passion to go where Jesus leads me?
5. Or do I want a little Jesus to make my life complete?

C. Are we part of the mission of God in the world today?

1. Is my focus outward to others or inward to myself?
2. Do I see God's promise to bless me as I follow in faith?
3. Do I see I am blessed to be a blessing?
4. Am I passionately extending God's Good News?

D. Communion - Our Covenant Meal

1. This meal displays the missional heart of God
2. This meal displays God's covenant provisions for us
3. This meal strengthens us for the mission of God
4. Come and see, come and eat - and then go!

The Mission of God

Genesis 12:1-3
Psalm 67
February 6, 2011
Communion
Psalm 67

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. 9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. Hebrews 11:8-10

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Matthew 28:19

Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, **so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.**" Genesis 11:4

"I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse..." Genesis 12:3 ESV

The expansion of the promise of 12:1-3 from individual to national to universal salvation is the essential movement of Scripture. The Bible is a missionary guide: concerned with bringing salvation to all the families of the earth. Abraham as a blessing bearer of salvation is an anticipation of the blessing bearing Christ. Bruce Waltke, *Genesis, A Commentary*, 209

"Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. **Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites." Exodus 19:5-6

Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. Psalm 2:8

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, Selah 2 that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. 3 May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you. 4 May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples justly and guide the nations of the earth. Selah 5 May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the peoples praise you. 6 Then the land will yield its harvest, and God, our God, will bless us. 7 God will bless us, and all the ends of the earth will fear him. Psalm 67

This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: 2 In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. 3 Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. Isaiah 2:1-3

In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will go to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together. 24 In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. 25 The LORD Almighty will bless them, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance." Isa 19:23-25

He says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth." Isaiah 49:6

Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: 29 "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. 30 For my eyes have seen your salvation, 31 which you have prepared in the sight of all people, 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." Luke 2:28-32

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. Romans 1:16

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. 1 Peter 2:9-10

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." Revelation 7:9-10