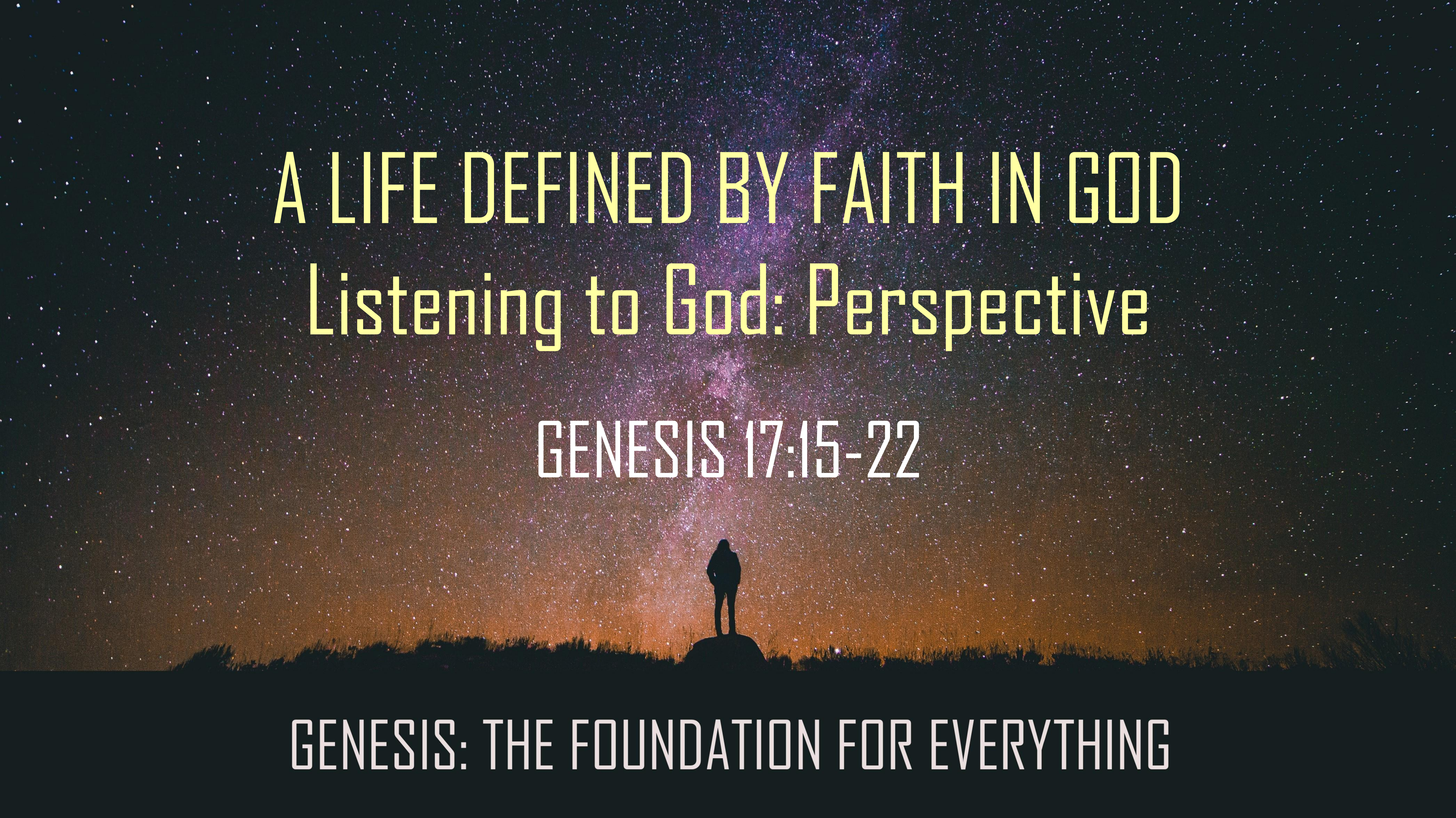




GENESIS: THE FOUNDATION FOR EVERYTHING

A person stands on a dark, silhouetted hill under a vast night sky filled with stars and the Milky Way galaxy. The text is overlaid on this background.

A LIFE DEFINED BY FAITH IN GOD

Listening to God: Perspective

GENESIS 17:15-22

GENESIS: THE FOUNDATION FOR EVERYTHING

“The secret of the Lord is for those who fear Him, and He will make them know His covenant.” (Psa. 25:14)

Abraham's reverent devotion to God means he will:

- I. **Look to God** for who God is revealing Himself to be: "*I am God Almighty.*" God teaches us to walk in His ways as we learn about and lean into His character.

II. Listen to God: Know and trust God's Word (Gen: 17:2-22)

Spiritual Responsiveness:

- Listening to God defines our personhood (Gen. 17:3-8)
We listen to God as He defines who we are as His child.
- Listening to God defines our participation (Gen. 17:9-14)
We listen and respond to God by participating in His designs for us.
- Listening to God defines our perspective (Gen. 17:15-22)
We depend on His Word to give and to guide us in the right/truthful outlook, worldview, or assessment of life's issues.

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

This regards our thinking/reasoning in relationship to God.

It speaks to what we believe and how we apply the truth to our lives, to how we make meaning of what is happening to us so that we can please God in our responses to His will.

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

Is Abraham living by the light he was given?

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

Where did Israel get some of their ideas like:

- Having a king for themselves
- Imitating the pagan nations around them
- Making for themselves images to worship and pray to
- Throwing their children into blazing fires as sacrifices to appease foreign gods
- Marrying unbelievers

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

Where did we get ideas like:

- God doesn't want me to suffer...this much
- God wants me to be happy/financially independent
- My sin is my own business
- My life is my own to live
- My will is free to choose and do as I see best
- Church is optional
- The more that Christians can identify with the world by looking and acting like the world, the more the world will listen to us and take us seriously
- There is good in all people and all religions; it doesn't really matter what you believe as long as you love God, love others, and are sincere.

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

Here is the issue to consider: Are Abraham's understandings/perceptions concerning Sarah and Ishmael based on what God has said?

Abraham's perspective is causing him to relate to his wife and son in ways which are not defined and guided by God's relationship to him and to them.

Here is where we see being, doing, and thinking coming together in Abraham's relationship with God.

Here is where we see our need to have our perspective on life defined by what God has actually said about Himself and His relationship to us.

God will always make the best choice for you—so trust Him.

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

How important is it that we live by what God has said in His covenant relationship with us?

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

Here are the facts given to Abraham by God:

- Sarah is My choice for the mother of the child I promised you. *"She will be a mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her,"* by My doing.
- I am God Almighty is changing her name to Sarah, which means *princess* and reflects the royal line (David, Solomon, Jesus) which will come from her.
- Isaac is My choice of what you will call your son born from Sarah; his name means *laughter*. I am God Almighty chooses Isaac to make My covenant with, and his descendants after him.
- As for Ishmael, I am God Almighty does not choose to establish My covenant with him. Ishmael means *God hears*, and I have heard you in what you have asked Me concerning him. I will bless him, make him fruitful, and I will make him the father of 12 princes and a great nation.

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

We must live by faith in who God is and in what God has said.

Anything that serves to weaken, confuse, or undermine your faith and understanding in God's Word, flee from it!

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

When Abraham looked to himself in these things, he felt small, afraid, and weak.

This perspective hurt his walk with God.

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

God's truth and perspective lead me away from myself and to Jesus Christ who:

- Makes me strong where I was weak
- Gives me peace where I was afraid
- Makes me worthy where I was insignificant
- Cleanses me where I was filthy
- Fills me with hope where I was hopeless,
- Gives me grace for forgiveness of my sins where I deserved His wrath and just judgment.

II. Listen to God: Know and Trust God's Word (Gen. 17:2-22)

Listening to God defines our perspective.

Why is it important for me to have God's perspective on all of life?

Suppressing the truth about God with other ideas—so that I deny myself from truly knowing God's designs for me in any given situation—further distorts my perspective about God, myself, and my world. It is a deceptive cycle of misperception.

I am a dead end. Contrast that with I am God Almighty!

A person stands on a dark rock in the foreground, looking up at a vast night sky filled with stars and the Milky Way galaxy. The text "GRACE CHURCH" is written in large, white, serif capital letters, and "WILLIAMSBURG" is written in smaller, white, serif capital letters below it.

GRACE CHURCH

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