

What to Do When a Christian Keeps Coming Against You

What a change we see in Abraham from Chapter 12 of Genesis to Chapter 13. In Chapter 12, Abraham (well, Abram) goes down to Egypt because of a famine. There, he becomes concerned that his life is in danger. His wife, Sarai, is attractive, and he thinks if Pharaoh knows that they are married, Pharaoh will kill Abram and take Sarai. He gets Sarai to hide the fact they are married from Pharaoh.

It is pretty amazing that Abram was so weak in faith that he was willing to allow his wife to be in Pharaoh's bed. In fact, he got rich from it. Pharaoh thought that they were just brother and sister, so not only did he not kill Abram, but he blessed him with "sheep and livestock, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels" (Gen. 12:16)

Yet God's hand was on Abram. Even in weakness, the Lord protects them both. A plague came on Pharaoh's house because he had taken another man's wife. He sends Abram away with his wife and all the goodies he received.

In Chapter 13, he becomes even wealthier. He begins to see that this "God thing" was solid. He recognized that the blessing on his life was supernatural and he learns to trust God.

Then conflict comes. His workers and those of his nephew Lot, begin to quarrel:

"So Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife, I ask you, between me and you, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are close relatives. Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you will go to the left, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right, then I will go to the left" (Gen. 13:8-9)

Abraham had come to the place where he understood the blessing and favor of God. He was becoming God's friend. He knew it didn't matter which area Lot chose, as God's blessing would remain on him. Lot chose the lush area near Sodom. *It didn't matter to Abram*—if God determines blessing, then blessed you will be.

When I first came into ministry 30 years ago, a fellow elder opposed me. He would seek to publicly embarrass me. He thought we were in competition until the day the senior leader was replaced, and he came after me. Finally, I was going to rebuke him. I shared with a mentor and he said, "Yeah, you could do that. Or you could pray and fast for him."

Ouch! Not what I wanted to hear. Clearly, God was calling me to take the low road. I humbled myself and honored him, praying and fasting for God to bless him. Within a short time, he left the ministry. As long as I was getting offended and taking things into my own hands, the issue remained. The minute I began to pray for him, God resolved it—and quickly. Years later, God restored my relationship with this man.

I came to the place, however, where I realized that if I humbled myself and trusted God, no one could keep me from His favor and blessing. This principle has worked time and time again in my life and ministry. Abram learned this in a big way and, after Lot left him, the Lord renewed His covenant with Abram.

The Lord said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, ""Lift up now your eyes, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward. All the land that you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever. I will make your descendants like the dust of the earth, so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants could also be numbered. Arise, and walk throughout the land across its length and its width, for I

will give it to you” (Gen. 14-17)

Are there areas in your life that you have not surrendered to the Lord, areas where you don’t trust Him? Learn to live as Abram did, realizing that if “God is for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31) {eoa}

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