

Great 1

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Study Given by W. D. Frazee—July 11,

Is Jesus true? Does He mean what He says? Does His program work?
Does His way of life satisfy?

"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed"
Genesis 12:1-3.

If God should come to you as He did to Abraham and tell you that He wanted to make you great so you could be a blessing to many people, would you be willing?

There is something interesting about our attitude toward being great. It makes some people proud. Some people are afraid of being proud, so they never want to be great or anything resembling it.

God wants to make you great, my dear friend. But He doesn't want that to make you proud, because that isn't great. God had a family in heaven before the creation of this world. There was one creature he made the greatest of anything he had created. But Lucifer chose to let that greatness awaken pride in his heart. He didn't have to. He chose to.

Isn't that too bad? And it is too bad that the only way God can keep you and me from being proud is to keep us so little that there is no consequence of what we do, and we are humbled by the inadequacy and lack of results of our lives.

Can you live with greatness? Do you know what it is for? Do you know where it comes from? Do you know how to relate to it?

Joseph didn't get proud. God made him great before the nation of Egypt. He saved the lives of millions of people. He was great in the sight of the Lord and in the sight of men, but it never made him proud. Why? Because he could say from his heart to Pharaoh, It is not in me. God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace. Them that honor Me I will honor, says God.

Daniel was great. He was so great that the king of Babylon got off his throne and got down before him and acknowledged the greatness of Daniel and the God he worshipped. But Daniel could say from his heart, This thing hasn't been revealed to

me for anything that I had more than others. But God wants to give you, king Nebuchadnezzar, the answer to your questions and problems.

When God can teach us to accept greatness without it making us proud there is no limit to what He is waiting to do with His remnant. And many a lad of today, growing up as did Daniel, studying God's Word and His works, and learning the lessons of faithful service, will yet stand in legislative assemblies, in halls of justice, or in royal courts, as a witness for the King of Kings.

It is not going to make them proud. It will not exalt them. They are going to take those opportunities and use them to exalt God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

So let us, as men and women of God, have done with lesser things. Let us enter into God's purpose, and let Him do with us what He longs to do.

It took a long time to work out the plan that God had for Abram. But Abram is remembered for his faith. He believed God's promise. And in recognition of that, God changed his name from Abram to Abraham. Abraham means the father of a great multitude. What a wonderful expression of faith that Abraham accepted that name. Contrary to all appearances and what people would expect, Abraham eventually became the father of the ancestor of not only millions of people, but the Messiah.

Several hundred years later Moses is rehearsing to the descendants of this man of faith the history of God's dealing with them.

"And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments, or no" Deuteronomy 8:2.

Again and again in the Bible we see the Dear Lord in His prophets seeking to keep alive the memories of His leading that they might learn precious lessons. They were to be humbled, but they were not to be inconsequential in their influence.

"Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people" Deuteronomy 4:5-6.

God's purpose in making Israel great was that they might have influence with all the other nations. He told them that if they would do His commandments that the result would be such a demonstration that the other nations would say that Israel has the best laws of any nation on earth. It has the best way of life of any people on earth. So Moses says:

"For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?" Deuteronomy 4:7.

Isn't it too bad that Israel didn't stay with those laws and statutes? They missed their glorious destiny. Again and again they became so attracted by the customs and fashions of the nations around them that they went into idolatry.

Nevertheless, to a certain extent, they carried out these principles at different times. In the days of David and Solomon all the nations of the earth knew about the God of Israel. The queen of Sheba came from a great distance to hear the wisdom of Solomon. Where did he get that wisdom? He got it from God in answer to prayer. God wanted through the greatness of Israel and its leaders to impress all the people of the world with the beauty of His plan and the glory of His way.

God said to Israel, Be careful. Don't lose what I have given you, because your wisdom is in doing what these commandments say. Your success is in doing what the law of God commands. The law of God is to give us that success.

"Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which He swore unto thy fathers: Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all them that hate thee"
Deuteronomy 7:12, 14-15.

I was reading the other day in one of the inspired comments that God intended to take everybody that came out of the land of Egypt through to Canaan without a one of them getting sick or dying. That was His program. As I read it I thought there is coming a time when God will produce a group of people who will have lived through the most awful plagues this world ever saw, and not one of them is going to catch those diseases. They are going to be translated without seeing death when Jesus comes.

"Had the Israelites obeyed the instruction they received, and profited by their advantages, they would have been the world's object lesson of health and prosperity. If as a people they had lived according to God's plan, they would have been preserved from the diseases that afflicted other nations. Above any other people they would have possessed physical strength; and vigor of intellect. They would have been the mightiest nation on earth" *Ministry of Healing*, page 283.

To the extent that they let God carry out His plan it was accomplished. To the extent they copied the world around them they lost the blessings.

"The Israelites failed of fulfilling God's purpose, and thus failed of receiving the blessings that might have been theirs. But in Joseph and Daniel, in Moses and Elisha, and many others, we have noble examples of the results of the true plan of living. Like faithfulness today will produce like results" *Ibid*, page 285.

We are living in a generation that wants things done instantly and cheaply. So cheap grace is bringing instant religion. But God, in this time of permissiveness, of a false gospel, is bringing the everlasting Gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. In the balances of the sanctuary every life will be weighed. By God's unerring standard every life will be measured.

"Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come." How do we bring glory to Him? We bring glory to Him by letting Him change our hearts, forgive us our sins, and lead us into a way of life that brings health, prosperity, peace, joy, happiness, contentment. That is what He is waiting to do.

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" 3 John 1:2.

Material, physical, and spiritual prosperity. Why does a person want to be rich? So he can be happy. Why does he want to be healthy? So he can be happy. Why does God want to bring us salvation from sin? So we can be happy. Jesus says, I have told you these things that my joy might remain in you and your joy might be full.

God gave Job patience and faith to press through the darkness, and he couldn't understand what was going on. That was a temporary situation. God didn't intend Job to spend eternity in that state. He was prosperous and healthy to start with, and the latter end of Job was blessed more than in the beginning.

God intends that we shall have a faith that goes through periods of disappointment when we cannot understand God's providence. But He doesn't intend that we shall miss the joys of contentment. He wants us to have a satisfaction in Him and His way of life that witnesses to the universe and to the people around us that God is a good God and His way is a good way.

"That which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth today... to them will be fulfilled all the covenant promises made by Jehovah to His ancient people" *Prophets and Kings*, pages 713-714.

Let us remember that while the covenant promises were spoken to Israel just before going into the promised land, those promises belong to you and me. They

belong to us down here today. They were only partially fulfilled because Israel never fully accepted the provisions. But some people down here today in God's remnant church are going to be in full compliance and have glorious results.

I wonder what you are going to do about it. Are you going to wait until you see it all happen and then want to be a part of it? Did Noah wait for the rain to fall or the clouds to gather before he built the ark? No. And those who survive this wreck of a world and share in the demonstration we are studying tonight will be those who accept by faith what God has said.

In the state of California an extensive research has been conducted on the results of the Adventist way of life. It has been found that it adds several years to the average length of life, and a marked difference in certain types of diseases. But I think that most research workers would agree that this has been a program of partial compliance.

What God is waiting to do is to demonstrate what full compliance will accomplish physically, materially, mentally, spiritually. God wants to have some happy people who can testify by experience that God is good and His way of life is good. Have you found it so?

God works on a plan of gradual development. First the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn. If you and I will start doing what He makes clear to us because we love Him, then as fast as we see the precious results thank Him, this is what will make Him happy.

I was reading an interesting letter that the prophet of the remnant wrote to the manager of the Loma Linda Sanitarium, Elder Burden, in its earliest years in 1910:

"Brother and Sister Burden, I am very anxious that you should work with the best of courage, notwithstanding that there are those who do not speak to you the encouraging words that for their own souls the Lord would have them speak. Yet I have this word for you. You are to press on, still bearing the Lord's message for this time.

"There is a great work that, with the help of the Lord, you can both do. I wish that all those connected with you were united heart and mind in assisting you in the right way by speaking words of encouragement; but so long as you keep the eye of faith fixed on your Leader you are safe. Rest in His hands.

"I am bidden to charge you not to fail or become discouraged. Keep your hearts filled with courage. Talk faith. Some are ready to speak words of discouragement. The Lord says to you, Be of good courage. Walk humbly and work out the way of God. I am to say to you, there are many words of objectionable character by some who suppose thus they can bring in improvements. But go

straight ahead following the instructions of Christ." Loma
Linda Messages, pages 558-559

Did Moses have similar problems back there? Those dear people for whom he was giving his life and for whom God was doing so much murmured and complained again and again. Thus they failed in the demonstration. As a result there were thousands of them that left their bones bleaching in the desert. They could not enter in because of unbelief. But thank God, there was a generation that followed the instructions of the Lord, and by faith went through the River Jordan as their fathers had gone through the Red Sea.

I am thankful that there are going to be some people who will talk courage and not complain, who will be humble and let God make them great without it making their heads swell. Them that honor Me I will honor.

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up" James 4:10.

Who is to humble you? You are to humble yourself. What will happen? He will lift you up. It is much better to humble ourselves and let God lift us up than for us to lift ourselves up and God has to humble us. That is much better. Don't you think so? Are you willing for God to make you great?

John the Baptist was great in the sight of the Lord. And God is preparing young people and older ones today who will do a work like John the Baptist did back there. Are we willing for God to make us great, or is the only way that God can keep us humble and cause us to achieve so little that there is nothing to be proud about? Have we settled it in our hearts that whatever success comes from following God's way that the glory belongs to God?

Is the glory all God's? Can we say with David, All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee? Is it really true. Well, you will be tested on this. When someone thanks you for something, or expresses appreciation for something you have done, what do you do? Do you accept the praise, or do you turn it to Jesus? Is your understanding of how to be humble is to say? Oh, that isn't anything. That doesn't amount to a hill of beans. Let's quit that, friends. If God puts in human beings to express appreciation of what God has helped us to do, let's not depreciate it or our Lord. Let's recognize the goodness of God.

I think it would be well for us to study various ways in which we can respond to words of appreciation. If we accept them due to our smartness, or skills, or anything, we have missed the point. We should say, Oh, I am so glad that God blessed you through this. He is waiting to do even greater things for us, if we will let Him. That is a good answer. It doesn't depreciate what He has done today, but it opens the way to expect Him to do more tomorrow, and gets our minds off ourselves and onto Him.

Joseph did this. David did it. Daniel did it. John the Baptist did it. When the people started talking about who he was and who he was going to be he said, After me is coming One whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. He is the Messiah. All

eyes were to be pointed to Christ. He must increase but I must decrease. That was the spirit that made John the Baptist great.

God is going to have some great men and women and young people today. Will you be one of them? So let's quit talking about ourselves either in pride or false humility. Let's not exalt ourselves or depreciate ourselves. Let's give glory to God.

God intends that the treatments we give, the Bible studies we give, the meals we cook, the songs we sing, and everything we do shall bring glory to Him. He intends that our confession of His faithfulness shall bring many to righteousness.

"Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience" *Ministry of Healing*, page 100.

If we tell about our failures and what fools we are, probably people know it anyway. There is no use to advertise it. Why not talk about Jesus. Why not tell of the things He has done for us, and make us happy and glad. There is enough of trouble coming over the radio and TV and in the newspapers and magazines. Men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.

But in the midst of this confusion and trouble and sorrow God is going to have a group of people who will have their eyes fixed upward, and their hearts will be shining with the glory reflecting that Holy Presence at the mercy seat.

Oh, let us studiously avoid bringing a false report concerning God by our words or our countenances. Let us leave the thorns with the Devil who sowed them. Let us gather the beautiful flowers. Let us share with others the bright spots of experience. When we find something that helps us physically, let's tell it to the glory of God. Let's not tell all our pains and aches. They are only symptoms of something that will pass away. Thank God, we have a positive message of health and healing and joy and success.

If we dwell upon what God has promised, and His experiences that He has shared with us that brings joy to our hearts, they will multiply. So if we talk faith, if we tell the experiences that show that God is true and that Christ means what He says, how happy it will make God, and how happy it will make those whose hearts are hungry and thirsty for something better than the world can give.

The greatest thing we can testify to is not material or prosperity or health. We are thankful for those blessings. But the greatest thing we can testify to is that Jesus has taken the burden of guilt and given us peace through forgiving us our sins and accepting us as His children.

Let us not tell others of our failures and faults along the way. Let's give those to Jesus and let Him take them and put them in the sanctuary, covered by His blood.

We are to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by our testimony. We are to testify that God is good.

Has God done something good for us? Has He taken burdens? Has He removed the guilt? Oh, if He hasn't, let's seek God with all our hearts, and He will do what He has promised to do.

"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" John 6:37.

"Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not" Jeremiah 33:3.

"And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me" Psalms 50:15.

Let us praise our God for what He has done.

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