

Short All Age Worship Service

(ShortAAW004)

The Big Story of God 4: Abraham – a man of faith

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THE BIG STORY OF GOD 4

ABRAHAM – A MAN OF FAITH

Service Aim:

To teach that Abraham had faith in God and we are to follow his example.

This service can be used on its own or as part of a series of services covering major biblical themes from Genesis to Revelation.

Biblical Reference(s):

Genesis 12:1-5, 15:5-6, Hebrews 11: 8-12, Acts 7:2-5, Mark 1:17, John 10:10b

Outline of Service:

Welcome:	Introduce the theme
Opening Prayer:	Matthew 18:20 and prayer
Opening songs:	<u>A couple of songs about the greatness of God</u> (See Appendix 1)
Warm up:	What and whom we put our faith in. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants us to put our faith in Him
Bible Reading:	Dramatized Genesis 12:1-5, and Genesis 15:5-6
Song:	<u>Song about God's faithfulness</u> (See Appendix 1)
Talk:	God's call of Abraham to leave his home and follow Him – "Follow me" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's promise to Abraham - "I will bless you" • God's reassurance to Abraham – "Look up and trust me" • Abraham's response of faith and obedience
Response:	Where do we need to take a "step of faith"? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film clip "Indiana Jones"
Prayers:	Thank you / Sorry / Please
Lord's Prayer	
Summary:	Follow the example of Abraham and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe that what God says is true and • Obey what God asks you to do.
Final song:	<u>Final song</u> (See Appendix 1)
Blessing:	Numbers 6:24-26

Notes for the service:

General notes and instructions for the service are in black font.

Prayers or responses said by the congregation together are in bold purple font.

The full script of a talk or other activity is in purple font.

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Welcome:

Welcome everyone to the service. Explain that you will be looking at the Old Testament man Abraham during the service and seeing what you can learn from his life. If you are using this service as part of the series: "The Big Story of God", explain that too.

Opening Prayer:

You may choose to open the service with:

- an informal prayer
- a prayer from a book like "New Patterns for Worship"¹ that the congregation can say together,
- or the following verse and prayer:

Jesus said, *"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them"*
(Matthew 18:20)

As you promise to be with us Lord Jesus,
We welcome you here today.

**Help us Lord to worship you,
To listen to your Word,
And to pray in faith,
That we might grow in our love for you and for one another.
Amen.**

Opening Songs:

A couple of songs about the faithfulness of God as per Appendix 1

Warm up:

Before this talk, prepare a father and a young son/daughter (age 5-9yrs) to help you during your talk. Explain to them that you will be asking the child to stand on top of a table facing the congregation. Their father will stand behind them. When you ask them do, you want the child to fall backwards into the arms of his father, who will catch them! Explain that this is much easier and safer if the child holds their arms out the sides as they fall backwards. You will need the props of a table and a chair. You might want to try this out before the service begins!

Every day we put our faith in different things don't we?

- For instance you probably didn't think twice before you sat down on your chair/pew here today.
- Many of you have sat on these chairs/pews before and you know that they will hold your weight and won't collapse when you sit down.

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I didn't see any of you who haven't sat on these chairs/pews before inspecting the chair/pew,

- checking that the screws and nails were all securely in place.....(*model this*)
- before you slowly lowered yourself onto the chair/pew... (*model this on a chair*)
- hoping that you wouldn't end up on the floor.

As well as putting our faith in things, we also put our faith in other people every day.

- If we travel to school or work by bus, we put our faith in the bus driver
- that they will get us to the right place safely and on time. (*Project picture of bus driver*)

If we are ill, we may go to the doctor. (*Project picture of doctor*)

- We put our faith in them that they will know what is going wrong with our body and how to treat it so that we get better.

As we grow up in our families, we put our faith in our parents that they will look after us.

- Can I invite *N* (name of child) to come forward now and bring their dad with them?
(*Child and dad come forward*)

N, please could you stand on this table facing the congregation (*Child climbs onto table and stands facing the congregation*)

- I am going to ask you in a minute to fall backwards off this table,
- but your dad is behind you and is going to catch you.

N, do you believe that your dad has the strength to catch you? (*N answers "yes"*)

- Now your dad might have the strength to catch you, but do you believe that your dad has the love to catch you? (*N answers "yes"*)
- OK, after we count three.....I want you to fall backwards into dad's arms.
- 1,2,3.....(*Child falls backwards into dad's arms*)

Thank you *N* and *N's* dad.....would you like to go back to your seats.

- *N* had faith in his dad that he would catch him, even though he couldn't see his dad,
- because he knew that his dad loved him and wanted the best for him,
- and he also knew that his dad had the power to catch him.

Now as we all know....things and people that we put our faith in can let us down.

- However there is one person that will never ever let us down and that is God.
- The God who has shown Himself to us through the pages of the Bible and through sending His Son Jesus to earth, loves us more than we can ever imagine,
- and He also has the power to ultimately bring about His good purposes in our lives.

God wants us to put our faith in Him;

- to believe that what He says is true,
- and to obey what He asks us to do.

Abraham was a man who put his faith in God.....

- We find his story in the first book of the Bible (Genesis),
- and we are going to see part of his story acted out now.

You will notice as you watch the drama that Abraham is called Abram. This was his name until God renamed him Abraham later on in his life.

Bible Reading:

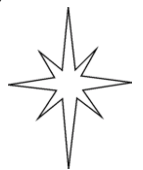
The Bible readings are Genesis 12:1-5 and Genesis 15:5-6. They would work well dramatized. (See Appendix 2). Alternatively the readings could be read from a modern translation of the Bible with some pictures projected to illustrate the reading.

Song:

A song about God's faithfulness as per Appendix 1

Talk:

You will need the following props for this talk: A large suitcase on which are taped the words "*Follow me*" on one side, a large wrapped parcel on which are taped the words, "*I will bless you*" and a large star (you could make this out of card and cover with silver foil) on which are taped the words, "*Look up and trust me.*" The star you make needs to be converted into a cross for later in the talk, so make one the shape of a "Christmas star". You will also need a table to put the bits on as you give the talk.



I wonder how you would feel if God appeared to you tomorrow,

- and told you to pack up your bags, (*pick up a suitcase, showing the side without the words "follow me" to the congregation*)
- gather your family,
- leave your home,
- and go on a journey to a land you knew nothing about.

That's what God did to Abraham around four thousand years ago!

- In Genesis chapter twelve we read that God called Abraham to leave his country and go to a different land.
- In essence God spoke to Abraham and said, "*Follow me*" (*Turn around the suitcase, showing the words, "Follow me" to the congregation and then put on a table in front of you*)

He was calling Abraham to a new way of life.

- A way of life, where Abraham would learn to walk in fellowship with God.

As part of His call, God gave Abraham some amazing promises to hold onto.

- God said, "*I will bless you,*"
- which is essentially God saying, "I will be good to you...I will give you good things." (*show the parcel to the congregation that says, "I will bless you"*)

Some of the good things that God promised Abraham were:

- to make Abraham into a great nation and to make his name great,
- and ultimately to bless all peoples on earth through him.

Now that must have all sounded pretty unreal to Abraham.

- To leave everything familiar to journey into the unknown,
- To father a nation when he was already seventy five years old,
- and he and his wife, Sarah, had been unable to have any children.

However, Abraham didn't look at his circumstances.

- He was willing to believe that what God said was true,
- and to obey what God asked him to do.

So he left his home and country to begin a journey into the unknown with God.

Later on, once Abraham had arrived in the new land, God appeared to him again.

- This time God reassured Abraham that he was going to keep the promises He had made to him.

In response to Abraham's worries about still not having any children,

- God gave Abraham a wonderful visual aid to help him keep trusting.

God told Abraham to look up and try and count the stars in the sky,

- and then told him that he wouldn't be able to count his descendants because they would be so many.

Essentially God said, *"Look up and trust me"* (show the star to the congregation that says, *"Look up and trust me"*)

Again Abraham was willing to believe that what God said was true,

- and so God was able to build a people of faith through him,
- for the blessing of all people.

Having heard a little of Abraham's story, what can we learn from it today?

- The first thing is that God says to each one of us *"Follow me"* (show the suitcase with the words *"Follow me"* to the congregation)
- He invites us to walk with him on the journey through life.

The second thing is that God promises to bless us as we walk with Him. (show the parcel to the congregation that says, *"I will bless you"*)

- His blessings are those of love, forgiveness, presence, provision, life to the full.

And finally, like Abraham, we too can have doubts and worries along the way.

- When we worry because of our circumstances, God says to us, *"Look up and trust me"*
- He doesn't tell us to look up at the stars, as he did to Abraham,
- But to look up at the cross, where Jesus showed us His love by dying for us. (change the star with the words, *"look up and trust me"* into a cross by bending down some of the points of the star)

So what will our response be?

- God wants us to put our faith in Him.

Will we, like Abraham, believe that what God says is true,

- and then obey what He asks us to do?

Response

The response begins with showing a two minute film clip from the film, “Indianna Jones and the last Crusade.”² The clip begins with Indianna Jones walking a few steps through a rocky cave until he is standing on the edge of a huge cavern, which he needs to cross. The clip ends with Indianna Jones throwing some sand on the “invisible” path he has just crossed. You could introduce the film by saying something like:

As you watch the clip from this film, where Indi has to take a step of faith,

- ask yourself:
 - Do I need to take a step of faith to respond to God saying “Follow me?”
(*show suitcase*)
 - Do I need to take a step of faith and choose to believe that God says, “I will bless you?” (*show parcel*)
 - Do I need to take a step of faith and choose to “look up and trust God?”
(*show cross*)

Prayers:

The prayers continue from the response and so are led by the service leader. You could use the following ideas:

- Give people some silence after the film to answer in their hearts the questions you have asked in the Response section.
- Pray a prayer of THANKS – Thanking God for His call to walk with him and his promise to bless us.
- Pray a prayer of SORRY – Asking God’s forgiveness for where we have doubted His goodness and His faithfulness.
- Pray a prayer of PLEASE – Asking for the Lord’s help to take the next “step of faith” in our lives. Follow this by praying for a couple of situations locally or in the world that need prayer.

Lord’s Prayer:

End by saying the Lord’s Prayer together.

Summary:

Summarize the teaching points of the service ie:

Today as we have looked at part of Abraham’s life can I encourage you to:

- Believe that what God says is true and
- Obey what God asks you to do.

Final Song:

Final song as per Appendix 1

Blessing:

Pray a simple prayer to end the service, something like the blessing prayer from Numbers 6:24-26 ie:

The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
The LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace. **Amen.**

² You can find this film clip on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFntFdEGgws> or buy the film “Indianna Jones and the last crusade” from Amazon at www.amazon.co.uk

[Notices: If your church gives out verbal notices my suggestion is that you do that just before the final song. That way the flow of worship is unbroken]

Appendix 1 - Ideas for Songs and Hymns:

i) A couple of songs about the greatness of God. Ideas include:

- He is exalted (Twila Paris © 1985 Mountain Spring Music)
- Our God is a great big God (Jo Hemming, Nigel Hemming © 2001 Vineyard Songs (UK/Eire))
- Praise Him you heavens (Russell Fragar © 1998 Hillsong Music Publishing)
- The splendour of the King (Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash, Jesse Reeves © 2004 sixsteps Music)

ii) A song about God's faithfulness. Ideas include:

- Faithful One, so unchanging (Brian Doerksen © 1989 Mercy / Vineyard Publishing)
- Give thanks to the Lord (Chris Tomlin © 2001 sixsteps Music)
- Great is your faithfulness (Chris Tomlin © 2002 sixsteps Music)
- How great is your love (All glory) (Martin Smith, Nikki Fletcher, Tim Hughes © 2010 Gloworks)

iii) Final song. Ideas include:

- I'm gonna walk by faith (Jim Bailey © 1994 Thankyou Music)
- In Christ alone (Stuart Townend & Keith Getty © 2001 Thankyou Music)
- This I believe (Matt Crocker & Ben Fielding © 2014 Hillsong Music Publishing)
- We believe in God the Father (Graham Kendrick © 1986 Thankyou Music)

Appendix 2 - Dramatized Bible Reading

Genesis 12:1-5, 15:5-6

Cast: God (off-stage voice), Abram
Props: Table on which are clothes, plate, knife, fork, bottle of water, toothbrush and toothpaste) and suitcase. Outfit for Abram could be a long tunic tied at the middle with a belt and a towel for his head held on with a head band.

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(Enter Abram who walks to the front of the church)

Narrator: Abram lived long ago in the land of Mesopotamia and one day the Lord came and spoke to him and said:

God: Abram

(Abram looks up to the sky)

Abram, leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

Narrator: God then made some big promises to Abram. He said:

God: I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you. I will make your name great and you will be a blessing. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

Narrator: So Abram packed up all of his things *(Abram mimes filling his suitcase with the things on the table and then closing it)* and left his home and country with Sarai his wife, his nephew Lot and all of the people in his household. Abram was seventy five years old when he left Haran to set out for the land of Canaan.

(Exit Abram with his suitcase)

Narrator: When Abram arrived in the land of Canaan, *(Enter Abram without suitcase)* the Lord appeared to him again and reassured Abram that he was going to give him a child and from that child a great nation would be formed. God said:

God: Abram, look up at the heavens and count the stars if indeed you can count them.

Abram: 1,2,3,50, 90, 250, 312.....there are so many I can't count them!

God: You are going to have a lot of descendants Abram.

Narrator: Now Abram didn't really know what God meant because he and Sarai his wife didn't have any children. However Abram chose to believe God and God was pleased with him and accepted him.