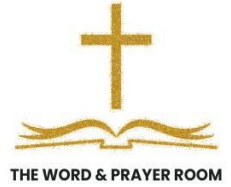


The Uncomfortable Call Series

The Call of Abraham



Day 5: The Call to Believe Beyond Logic

Faith that accepts divine change before seeing divine results.

Key Scripture: Genesis chapter 17:9-14 (NLT)

“Then God said to Abraham, ‘Your responsibility is to obey the terms of the covenant. You and all your descendants have this continual responsibility. This is the covenant that you and your descendants must keep: Each male among you must be circumcised. You must cut off the flesh of your foreskin as a sign of the covenant between Me and you. From generation to generation, every male child must be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. This applies not only to members of your family but also to the servants born in your household and the foreign-born servants whom you have purchased. All must be circumcised. Your bodies will bear the mark of My everlasting covenant. Any male who fails to be circumcised will be cut off from the covenant family for breaking the covenant.’”

Context: When God Asks for Change That Doesn’t Make Sense

Abraham was ninety-nine years old when God gave this instruction. Ninety-nine! At an age when most people were settling into routine and reflection, God was still asking him to grow - still stretching his faith, still calling him higher.

For decades, Abraham had walked with God. He had obeyed, waited, and believed. But here, in his old age, came another uncomfortable command: “Every male among you must be circumcised.” This wasn’t symbolic or simple. It was physical. Painful. Private. And, humanly speaking, it made no sense. Why now? Why this? Why would God require something so radical - so invasive - as a sign of covenant? Because faith, at its core, is not about what makes sense; it’s about what makes surrender.

Abraham's call had begun with leaving what was familiar; now it deepened into cutting away what was fleshly. The covenant of circumcision was God's way of saying, "I don't just want your journey - I want your identity." God wasn't only interested in Abraham's external obedience - the physical act of leaving Ur, walking in faith, and following His instructions. He now wanted to mark who Abraham was at the deepest level: his very identity, his belonging, his source of strength.

Up to this point, Abraham's faith was shown through what he did - leaving, building altars, trusting, waiting. But in Genesis chapter 17, God introduces circumcision: an intimate, permanent, and personal mark. This symbolised a shift from "Abraham the man who follows God" to "Abraham the man who belongs to God." God wasn't just calling Abraham to journey with Him; He was transforming who Abraham was before Him.

In our lives today, the same principle still applies. Many people love the idea of journeying with God - attending church, learning about faith, and enjoying the blessings of relationship. But God desires more than activity - He desires identity. He wants your heart, not just your habits. He wants your character, not just your commitments. He wants to shape who you are, not just what you do.

It's as though God is saying: "You've walked with Me long enough to know My ways - now I want to transform your nature so the world sees that you belong to Me." It isn't about ritual; it was about relationship. God was carving a permanent mark of belonging - a visible sign that Abraham and his descendants were set apart. Faith that only obeys when it's convenient isn't covenant - it's comfort.

Today we face a similar invitation: to allow God to cut away habits, attitudes, and attachments that don't align with His will. We want the blessing of belonging without the pain of transformation - but covenant always costs something. Sometimes God will ask you to do something that feels illogical simply because it identifies you as His.

Focus of the Day: Obedience That Marks You

This moment in Abraham's story is one of the most personal and provocative acts of faith in all Scripture. It wasn't a public miracle like Isaac's birth or a visible altar like Moriah, it was a private act of obedience that would change his body forever. Abraham's obedience left a mark - one that no one else could see but that God would always recognise. Some of God's greatest work in your life won't be public - it will be private and painful.

When Abraham circumcised himself and every male in his household, it was more than a physical act. It was a declaration: "I belong to God, even when obedience hurts." In today's world, believers are still called to obedience that marks us - not through physical signs, but through spiritual separation. We are called to forgive when it feels unfair, to love when it's inconvenient, to remain pure in a culture of compromise, to tell the truth when deception would be easier. These are the modern "marks" of covenant - evidence that you've been set apart. Faith that believes beyond logic doesn't ask, "Does this make sense?" It asks, "Does this make me more like Him?"

Why We Struggle to Believe When Obedience Hurts

- **Because we prefer change that costs us nothing.** We want God to transform our lives without touching what we love or rely on.
- **Because true obedience often feels invisible.** When no one else can see the sacrifice, it's easy to wonder if it's worth it.
- **Because logic wants control.** Faith gives God permission to lead us into places reason can't explain.
- **Because separation feels lonely.** Standing out is hard. Being different for God often feels like walking alone.
- **Because obedience always exposes pride.** God's cuts are precise - they remove not what harms your body, but what hinders your heart.

God never wounds to destroy; He cuts to covenant.

Detailed Scripture Breakdown: Genesis 17: 9 -14 (NLT)

- **Verse 9: “Your responsibility is to obey the terms of the covenant.”** Faith carries responsibility. God’s promises require participation - not to earn His love, but to express it.
- **Verse 10: “Each male among you must be circumcised.”** This was God’s way of drawing a permanent line of distinction. Real faith doesn’t blend in; it stands out.
- **Verse 11: “You must cut off the flesh... as a sign of the covenant.”** God was teaching Abraham to separate the spiritual from the natural - to depend on promise, not performance. For us, this means cutting off anything that dulls our devotion: pride, comparison, addiction, control, or unforgiveness.
- **Verse 12: “From generation to generation... every male child must be circumcised on the eighth day.”** God’s covenant was generational. True obedience doesn’t end with you; it becomes inheritance.
- **Verse 13: “Your bodies will bear the mark of My everlasting covenant.”** Covenant leaves evidence. If your relationship with God costs you nothing, it may not have changed you yet.
- **Verse 14: “Any male who fails to be circumcised will be cut off from the covenant family.”** Disobedience disconnects. Not because God rejects us, but because refusing to obey isolates us from His best.

What We Can Learn for Our Calling Today

- **Faith requires personal transformation**, not just public confession. God’s work starts where others can’t see.
- **Covenant is both a promise and a process.** God seals relationship through continual obedience, not a single moment.
- **Set-apart living is uncomfortable but essential.** You can’t impact what you’re afraid to be different from.
- **God’s cuts are acts of care.** He removes what limits His life in you. The mark of covenant is identity, not perfection.

You're not called to be flawless - you're called to be faithful.

Key Themes

- God calls you to carry marks that others might not understand.
- Real faith is personal, practical, and often painful.
- Obedience reveals identity.
- Change that hurts is often change that heals.
- Covenant is God's way of saying, "You are Mine."

Practical Application

- **Step 1:** Ask God What Needs Cutting Away. Pray honestly: "Lord, what in me doesn't reflect You?" Write down what comes to mind - pride, fear, compromise - and commit to letting Him remove it.
- **Step 2:** Respond Quickly. Abraham obeyed "that very day." Don't delay obedience, delay breeds doubt.
- **Step 3:** Guard Your Private Obedience. Do what's right when no one's watching. Character is the covenant mark of modern believers.
- **Step 4:** Keep Your Covenant Visible Through Love. Jesus said in John chapter 13 and verse 35, "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are My disciples." Love is the visible mark of covenant.
- **Step 5:** Remember the Reward. Every cut makes room for greater capacity. Obedience always produces fruit, even if it takes time.

Prayer

Father, Thank You that Your covenant still marks Your people today. When You ask for what feels uncomfortable, help me remember that obedience always brings transformation. Cut away what keeps me tied to the old. Remove pride, fear, and self-reliance until only faith remains. Mark my life with the evidence of Your presence - love, humility, and integrity. Teach me to obey even when I don't understand. Let my life bear the marks of someone who belongs to You completely. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Declarations

1. I am marked by God's covenant - I belong to Him completely.
2. I will not delay obedience because it feels uncomfortable.
3. My private faith will produce visible fruit.
4. God's cuts are not punishment; they are preparation.
5. My obedience today builds legacy tomorrow.

Final Reflection

Abraham's covenant of circumcision reminds us that faith doesn't end at belief - it begins at transformation. The God who calls you also marks you. His love cuts away what limits your purpose so that your life can bear the evidence of belonging.

Faith that believes beyond logic doesn't just trust what God says, it allows Him to shape who you become.

Tomorrow, in Day 6, we explore The Call to Legacy and Covenant - how faith builds something that outlives you.

Blessings as you meditate, hear what the Lord is saying, and act in obedience.