BY FAITH

SEEING the UNSEEN

THE CHALLENGE OF SUCCESS

Genesis 13:1-18

After reading the passage together, discuss the following questions:

1. Some Christians feel uncomfortable when the topic of financial giving comes up. Why do you think this is? Does the topic make you uncomfortable? Why or why not?

2. Abraham's wealth is shown to be a blessing from God (Gen. 13:2; see 24:35). Deuteronomy 28:11 promises those who obey God that "the Lord will grant you abundant prosperity." How should we understand these Old Testament passages today?

3. Pastor Tom suggested that being financially successful is as much a test of faith as poverty is. Have you ever looked at it that way? What do think are the specific temptations of wealth?

4. In verses 9-11, we learn that Abraham was expansive in his generosity, while Lot was led only by the prospect of gain. The one man walked by faith, the other by sight. How does faith set us free to be generous? Have you ever taken a crazy risk to give beyond your means? What was your experience?

5. In Mark 10:29-30, Jesus says: ""Truly I tell you… no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age: homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—along with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life."

   In this text Jesus talks about how those who leave all to follow Him receive wealth, not only in heaven but on earth, as well. He is referring to the "brothers, sisters, mothers, and children" we receive when we become part of the church. We receive "homes…and fields" in the same way as we put our resources at one another's disposal in the church. How have you experienced this in your church community? How could we be better at living out what Jesus envisions?

6. Have you ever been deeply touched by someone else's generosity. Please describe that occasion.

   Pray for one another. Pray also that we can be good stewards of the wealth God has given us.

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