

BY FAITH

SEEING THE UNSEEN

Friendship with God

Genesis 18:16-33

After reading the passage together, discuss the following questions:

1. Pastor Tom shared a story about a little girl who was scared by a thunderstorm. Her mother tried to comfort her by telling her God loves her and would take care of her. The girl responded "I want someone with skin on to love me." Have you ever, like that girl, felt that God's presence is illusive and hard to experience? Please explain.
2. The Old Testament calls Abraham a friend of God (2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8). Verse 17 of our passage shows God treating Abraham as a friend by taking him into His confidence. Jesus calls *us* his friends (John 15:15). Are there ways that God takes us into his confidence today? Please explain.
3. Through this experience Abraham learned just how near the Lord really is. Have you ever experienced the nearness of God in a particularly vivid way? Please share.
4. Read verse 19 together, then read, John 15:14. Clearly God regards obedience to him as an important part of our friendship with him. Why do you think this is so? How do we avoid turning this obedience into legalism?
5. Do you experience God as a friend? Please elaborate.
6. How do we reconcile God's love and mercy with his judgement on Sodom and Gomorrah?
7. As you consider Abraham's bold prayer, what do you think we learn about God? What do we learn about ourselves and our friendship with God?
8. Was Abraham's prayer answered? Please explain. What does this tell us about our prayers?

Take time to pray for one another.