

## Conflict through Eyes of Faith

Genesis 13:2-12, CBC, Sunday AM, August 17, 2025

The American church in need of a genuine, robust faith; but what does this mean? I hear words toward this end—closer walk with God, revival, being “in the center of God’s will”, yesterday—one burdened for asked that pray that would be yielded to Holy Spirit? All these phrases have place, but they must be biblically defined along w rest of assumptions of Christian life or we will be blind-sided, side-lined, not able to worship and give God glory as we live life of faith and obedience that perseveres. Let me illustrate. **Poisonous thoughts Andree Seu Peterson (4 slides) 5/2/24 World Magazine**; this important as we continue looking at this man of great, exemplary faith. B/c what I didn’t include in summary of sermons between songs was part of exemplary faith often overlook. Last sermon in March showed **Biblical, saving faith includes the conflict of faith. Conflict Exposes the True Shape of Our Faith and Provides an Opportunity to See God’s Hand**—saw I. **The Conflict of Faith Exposes Our True Values** vv. 10-13 **A. Crisis Expose Fears** vv. 10-12 **10 Now there was a famine in the land; v. 9 starvation, the famine was severe in the land.** Plan—go toward food—Egypt; whatever Egypt represented later, no record out of God’s will here; new fear—they will take my wife/kill me—I’m at their mercy; B. **Our Actions Reflect Our Priorities and Values** v. 13 **13 Plan** “Please say that you are my sister so that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may live on account of you.” **II. The Conflict of Faith Involves Living out the actions of our present faith** vv. 14-16 his fears played out, plan enacted AND got 2 things wanted w plan—treated well (given stuff), stayed alive, and got wife—**so carnal or godly?** custom, culture allowed some of this, messy; Abraham here BECAUSE believed word of God w many unknowns on how to live inside that word, **But DO know even w all pieces, fears grew loud** Calvin, “For Abram, the promises of God which he could not see, were dwarfed by the fearful reality of the danger that he could see.” p. 516 in face of fear, forgot glory and power of the God who had called him to faith; **more evidence of unbelief through fear**; BOTH carnal doubts/unbelief/disobedience and godly thinking/actions are part of every Christian’s life—**so, is it okay b/c he did best anyone could have done in that situation?** Wrong question—stop looking at Abraham/us, look to God of exemplary faith **III. The Conflict of Faith Always Includes the Lord’s Hand** **vv. 17-13:1** First time God mentioned in this passage, judgment **17 But the LORD struck Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife. 18 Then Pharaoh called Abram and said**, has been going better than I could have thought, Yes, you called? “What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? **19 “Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her for my wife?** Here, God uses Pharaoh to rebuke Abram **Bush—sad when saints justly fall under the reproof of the wicked**; silence points to guilt; **Now then, here is your wife**, immediately gives back; seems hadn’t consummated marriage **take her and go.** No room for discussion **20 Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they escorted him away, with his wife and all that belonged to him.** Last time heard go, it was from God—exemplary, God confirmed his actions w confirming promise as he worshipped, now Pharaoh says, Go; leaves Egypt with Egypt’s stuff, but no sense of “all nations blessed through Abram.” But now what, where would he go and what was in store for him? **As look at Abraham for examples of biblical faith, can’t just look for right/wrong, quick absolutes about faith—we about results/answers**; dangerous--**we** are not merely looking for an example of faith, but a life of faith—means must include ALL of it—just beginning few episodes of 175 years of a man’s life representing countless other episodes don’t have; **Exposing Faith in life’s choices takes careful study as go back and forth from what been given about God to how Abraham responded**—looking for intangible evidence of what entailed with life of living in right relationship with Creator and Redeemer; last time, conflict of faith left with question marks, today, we see conflict through eyes of faith; Today, will see that **True faith returns from battles yielded to unbelief and moves toward the next normal test of faith with worship and obedience.** Let’s examine this thought by asking couple of questions as move through chapter

### I. **To what do you return? vv. 1-4**

**1 So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, he and his wife and all that belonged to him, and Lot with him. 3 He went on his journeys from the Negev as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai**, leaves fertile Egypt for **Negev--Rolling hills that end abruptly in desert region** (Zondervan Pictorial Dictionary) don’t know if picture fair, Kidner says area well peopled in time of Abraham, like sub-Saharan belt across Africa must always have been a marginal region—not much rain; Baldwin, dry in summer, but rest of months, pasture land; **goes** from here to area b/n Bethel/Ai—took time, from one watering hole to next; Same places, same people— What’s different? **2 Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold.** Rich translated **12:10** severe, others heavy/weight; substantial increase; Had plenty when came from Ur/Haran—but here we are talking about Abram’s wish 12:13, fulfilled in 12:16; God promised to bless 12:2, materially part of it; but why back to these places? Promised Land—really? You mean land that passed through in chapter 12 filled w Canaanites who weren’t in on God’s word to Abraham—no welcome party—hard life—place where famine drove to Egypt—not his best performance—

why not back to Haran—say tried and follow God there? Don't know, but verse 4 helpful **4 to the place of the altar which he had made there formerly; and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.** this brings back 12:8, points to 12:7 whole reason THERE b/c believed God and left country, culture, family—altars main attraction here; worshipped God, not questioned—God gave promise for descendants; can't easily nail down pieces in Egypt, but NOT Abram at best—tragedy of right/wrong—save life, save integrity, glorify God? GOD delivered, NOT Abram despite best plans—**whatever happened in Egypt, THIS was next right step—not defensive, but humble before God;** He comes back to where last met w God according to God's Word and again calls out to God showing wanted what drove him from his home--under Him, His Word/goals valuable; frequency of altars shows public worship of true God normal—Calvin, publicly celebrated him, solemn rite—made it known that had nothing in common w superstitions of heathen; Phillips notes, God brought Abram back to Canaan enriched not merely w stuff, but lesson of faith in face of fear; **What will people remember about you?** smile, yes, mannerisms, yes smells—hopefully good ones, cupcakes, clothes, but what of substance—what quietly speaks of transcendence—**To what do you return?** whether success, or here, from failure/not best/messy Iain Duguid commenting on Abraham's reversing his tracks and worshipping God when returned, "Here, then, is the key test of the kind of faith you have: does your failure drive you from God or toward him? If your faith is in the power of your faith, failure will drive you away from God. If you are trusting in your own goodness to gain access to God's presence, you will either try to conceal your failure and pretend that it never happened, or you will be devastated by your failure and driven away from God by it. The reason is simple: your failure exposes the emptiness of your claim to stand before God on your own merits . . . if your faith rests in God and what he does for your ability to enter his presence, then your failure won't destroy you. It will drive you back to square one, back to the altar where you started, so that you can repent and call on the name of the Lord." Duguid, p. 29 think prodigal son "Swine-husks are often the hors d'oeuvres before the fatted calf. The only way to get back into the will of God is to go back to the very cause of the departure, confess it, forsake it, and return to the place of fellowship." P. 480 Donald Grey Barnhouse in Boice; **Lk. 22:31-32**, as Abraham worships at altar, think of contrast—had been in palace in Egypt, now in tent but back where God's promises led him; Waltke reminds us that whatever else he is, spiritually, pilgrim in quest of heavenly vision of holy land and city; **Ps. 37:23-24**

## II. **What are your goals in conflict? vv. 5-12**

### A. **Conflict Because of Material Blessing vv. 5-6**

5 Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. Focus been Abraham, WILL be—promise comes through Abraham, but Lot back in picture (v. 1) first of 3 main Abram/Lot passages (ch. 14, 18:16-19:38); Abram wealthy, now Lot wealthy! his material blessing came from Abram's blessing **6 And the land could not sustain them while dwelling together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together.** Problem was "severity" of the blessing; too much b/n two of them—material blessings unsustainable for land; No sin to be rich, warned about eyes taken from God to gifts **1 Tim. 6:10**, poverty has same issue **Pr. 30:8-9**, but once get past dangers associated w wealth, still more considerations; **many responsibilities that come ie. brother has small boat**, think memories of childhood on same lakes at now, but needs cover/garage, tires rot on trailer, lights, registration, taxes—then while boat by self, **often take others—who?** can't fit friends, weight limit—if take one, take others? gas, food—**can you see why many say second best decision was buying boat—first selling it;** **ie. think minimalist lifestyle/houses**; no boat, **but where do things/people come with extra responsibilities that perhaps didn't realize?** **Realize this and run?** No—even materially, interesting to watch trends—interior decorating characterized by a move away from stark, empty spaces and a resurgence of vibrant colors, patterns, and textures, often described as "cluttercore" or "maximalism". AI overview wall filled w pictures, couch w blankets/pillows; we aren't dealing with trends or wealth, **but too many possessions brought to head b/c of conflict** **7 And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock.** Sheep, donkeys, cattle, camels couldn't eat SAME grass, drink SAME water, sleep on SAME bed—Baldwin, pasture at premium on bare limestone hills who gets when both need—take turns, **but what if they not there, (early bird gets the worm) STOP my needy sheep/cattle from grazing while wait for you?** not just sheep, but if couldn't finish job/keep cattle alive, long days/nights for herdsmen—**people w physical, emotional, mental, spiritual needs/limits; where/how are they met;** **me, college was grades, wife, debt=exhaustion**—therefore, few joys/needs?? Sleep?? How much, when? Roommates barge in waking when only few moments to sleep? Lunch?? Amen in chapel—nanoseconds made the difference b/n getting lunch and not before class; **flew past EVERYONE**, willing to be seen as eyeroll to get to lunch, **but when does this lead to taking advantage of others/benefiting at their expense;** LARGE households Gen. 14:14 **318 trained men born into his house;** perhaps Lot had similar numbers, perhaps Abraham doing fine with Lot, but what if overwhelmed by all those under your care? Bush "perverse, contentious, or overreaching disposition of their respective herdsmen." P. 213; **Eccles. 10:1, Heb. 12:15, how keep unified; just like see children/spouse character come out w you—tension, so comes out with others** how much more when **when riches/basic life needs involved which speaks of power, comfort, superiority, responsibility** **Jm. 4 what is source/you fight and quarrel;** another factor in problem--not just herdsmen/2 households; forget that land inhabited already **Now the Canaanite and**

the Perizzite were dwelling then in the land. Waltke reminds that wealthy nomad and alien resident among Canaanites; THEY had first of watering holes, grazing—opportunity for opportunists to wipe them both out, take their wealth, and have all the water/vegetation for themselves; **Worldwatch--Gaza—AID grabbed by gangs instead of given to people—resold for exorbitant amounts; if blessing comes from God and includes material blessing, then why so much hardship/conflict?** careful, don't forget things more important to God than just seeing blessing materially; ie. **Deut. 6:10-13**; problem not riches, but self-confident, forgot God's place/grace, no worship—Babel, Calvin “Therefore God allays the sweetness of wealth with bitterness; and does not permit the mind of his servant to be too much enchanted with it.” P. 369; true blessing? see at end of chapter;

## **B. Conflict Resolution Exposes Priorities vv. 8-9**

Already seen priorities of herdsmen, Abram as head of clan assesses problem and provides solution **8 So Abram said to Lot, “Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are brothers. 9 “Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me; if to the left, then I will go to the right; or if to the right, then I will go to the left.”** When conflict, so much advice—make sure listen to others—hear their point of view—right, place for all this; **but hearing points should lead to hearing not merely another perspective, but a different triage of priorities—therefore, different values—here, chief values?** NO STRIFE b/n you and me (our herdsmen); Ross-- Abram's words in face of strife are amazing—let there be no meriba; Massa (testing) and Meribah (striving) ominous names b/c people out of unbelief provoked Lord and sent to wander in wilderness until they died **Ps. 95:7-11; Abraham followed warnings of rich I Tim. 6:17-19** showing had other hopes/greater love; **how much do you value working through strife? Rom. 12:18** what does possible mean/entail? **For Abraham, see second value—motivation for no strife? We are brothers—family, so close for so long (only one of father's household left, no heir), hear same in 14:14, 16; how much does this mean to Abraham?** Willing to give best of what needed to meet need creating tension; he head of clan, elder, recipient of promised land—had every right to send Lot on way, or divide up any way want, but gives him EVERY benefit to solve conflict by offering ALL land as choice—he would take what is left; **see how much cared for Lot!** This characteristic of valuing peace, sacrificing rights, loving brother all throughout Scripture **Lev. 19:17-18, Ps. 133:1; Jm. 3:17-18**; so central to God's character as revealed in Christ **Matt. 5:22-26, 43-48—God of peace Rom. 15:33**; Abraham pre-figured attitude of Christ from Phil. 2 as obeyed will of Father; not just Abraham's act in itself—part of bringing glory of God to nations (Canaanites/Perizzites); **this conflict unresolved sends wrong image of Abraham's God to these Canaanites; no parent likes when children fighting even if normal; no marriage likes when fighting, no church—reflects back on God Himself—instead of showing His glory, showing effects of fall; Christians need to feel weight of actions on rest of world Bush, thinking of world mocking gospel “The consideration alone should quench the unholy flame of divisions among brethren.” P. 213 how much will you do/endure to pull your family together? How about God's family? What are limits? What are God's limits?** Personal hurts are real, but keep you from finding healing from God so free to **Heb. 12:14**, not at expense of truth **God's peace does not peacefully coexist with falsehood, sham, or injustice; so Gods' peacemakers cannot simply ignore peace-destroying sin and error, any more than a surgeon can simply close up an infection wound: an abscess is bound to develop. Dennis JOHNSON Peacemakers, appendix in John M. Frame, Evangelical Reunion, Baker, 1991, p. 171. But because we have been reconciled to Christ, given mind/heart of Christ for undeserving sinners like unsaved around you/even family members, but even tighter bond than family with those in Christ; Bush leans into this, “Indeed, if one of the laws of our adoption into the family of God is, that we become in all things brethren to each other, and bound to study each other's interest, how little does that sacred relation effect, if it does not avail to extinguish our mutual animosities? When we look around us in the world, who would believe that the same relationship, and therefore the same powerful motive for peace, still exists among its inhabitants? When we see the quarrels and the coldnesses, the lawsuits and the strifes, between those who are not only bound by the common tie of Christian fraternity, but by the closest bonds of affinity and blood, are we not tempted to inquire, can these men be indeed ‘brethren?’ Can they all be trusting to the same hope of salvation, and expecting, or even desiring to dwell together in the same heaven?” p. 214 **Simply, have conflict, Abram presented solution, now just touch Lot** b/r come back next week; **10 Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere** Baldwin, Lot attracted by promise of prosperous farming, improved standard of living in sub-tropical fertility of **Jordan valley—rivers/springs created oases, growth of vegetation, including trees and luscious fruits, contrasted w barrenness of hills all round; Waltke central ridge where Bethel and Hebron located depend upon Lord to send rain Deut. 11:10-12—this was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah**; foreshadowing that more than what see—Phillips reminds that by time Israelites arrived in Canaan, region east of Jordan blasted wasteland leading to salt-infested Dead Sea—it had not always been this way as Moses points out by saying this was b/r Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah; but Lot doesn't see this; sees what sees—**like the garden of the LORD Gen. 2:10-14** river divided into four parts watered garden of Eden, **like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar.** Egypt well-watered b/c of Nile; **11 So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan**, seen what Abraham values, Lot—does not cast good shadow on him; saw what needed for peace, for life—what DON'T hear is other very important pieces that will come to next week—foreshadowed by Moses as writes—even Zoar (city fled to when Sodom destroyed); don't hear that thought of what uncle lost, needed—position; no reason to believe that didn't love him, but focus on what needed/desired obscured these other values; what saw,**

showed what looking for; Calvin “whosoever is too eagerly intent upon his own advantage, is wanting in humanity towards others.” p. 373 Must have been ecstatic at his good fortune; Duguid--in prosperity, you receive an abundance of what you crave—if success and wealth, you actually attain it; if marriage or good grades, get it—feel great b/c your idols are blessing you; your emotions now become overwhelming joy, peace, and happiness; and Lot journeyed eastward. Baldwin—went eastwards, down steep drop of some 3000 feet into rift valley to seek fortune in the plain of Jordan—lived among cities of the plain, namely Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Beal (or Zoar) listed in 14:12 Sense of foreboding as eastward not good in Genesis—toward the east speaks of expulsion in accounts of garden 3:24, Cain 4:16, Tower of Babel 11:2 Thus they separated from each other. 12 Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom. just like that, immediate conflict resolved—what wisdom, forethought! results? Good, but can’t help wondering as Abram watched him leave, did it hurt? Leave father’s house—father/Lot came w from Ur; father died in Haran; Lot last one—loved him as will continue to see in chapter 14, So cold, want to hear the weeping that heard from Orpah and Naomi when separated; don’t hear regret as moved off—come back to Lot next week, but why did they have to separate? also if Abram stayed in rest of Canaan away from cities and choicest land, Ross--so much for promise of good land—seemed left that behind b/c this land couldn’t even sustain the two of them together; meant hard work to keep animals/family alive; herdsmen still have hard time, grass didn’t just appear; Canaanites/Perizzites still there vying for land; was he discouraged? At all? Don’t know all these answers, but thoughts like this can point to a subtle shift to wrong focus; what about other things God values more than this focus? Waltke God mingles hardships w blessings so his people don’t equate morality w pleasure—develops virtues such as faith, hope, patience, and upright character Rom. 5; --faithfulness with what given—parable of the talents—I Pet. 4:10-11 All under God FOR God—steward—do you feel weight of that with what have NOW—not yours, but His; when acknowledge this true, but still struggle especially when think have sacrificed like Abraham did for Lot, then must examine foundation of your obedience/service to God; Danger of God owing us because of our obedience We can build Godlike character only upon the foundation of a whole-hearted devotion to God. God must be the very focal point of our lives if we wish to have godly character and conduct. This point cannot be overemphasized. Too many of us focus on the outward structure of character and conduct without taking the time to build the inward foundation of devotion to God. This often results in a cold morality or legalism, or even worse, self-righteousness and spiritual pride... Godly character flows out of devotion to God and practically confirms the reality of that devotion. Jerry Bridges The Practice of Godliness, NavPress, 1996, p. 54, 55, 56, www.navpress.com. What is evidence of this right foundation in Abraham, even today?

remember where we started? True faith returns from battles yielded to unbelief and moves toward the next normal test of faith with worship and obedience. Abraham returned to place faith in God’s Word had led him;—His action to give up rights, land when it was promised to him showed not only love for Lot, value for relationship, showed trust in God Ross “The one who believed that God promised to give him the land did not have to reserve it for himself.” p. 285 Ross--not threatened by possibility of losing out what is our sign that hadn’t forgotten who God is? follow His generous heart back to altar—saw it in v. 4, chapter 12, what preceded altar? Promises; what confirmed around the altars? Promises; next week see it again in vv. 14-17, ends w altar in v. 18 bulletin quote--if you just get the big things straightened out, you will have what you need in the little things. What everyone in the world is obsessed with, God makes a distant second. He’ll give you what you need to live on if you need Him in order to live. David Powlison in Worry – Pursuing a Better Path to Peace, P&R Publishing, 2004, p. 21. Used by Permission. —seems like Abraham getting this—plenty more to learn, but believe he can say with the psalmist Ps. 84:9-12 Can you say this? This is the big thing—get this, you will have what you need in the little things like the conflict and sacrificial yielding of rights we faced today

Leviticus 19:17-18 ‘You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him. 18 ‘You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.  
Deuteronomy 6:10-13 “Then it shall come about when the LORD your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build, 11 and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you eat and are satisfied, 12 then watch yourself, that you do not forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 13 “You shall fear only the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name.  
Psalm 37:23-24 The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way. 24 When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, Because the LORD is the One who holds his hand.  
Psalm 84:9-12 Behold our shield, O God, And look upon the face of Your anointed. 10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside, I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. 11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. 12 O LORD of hosts, How blessed is the man who trusts in You!  
Psalm 95:7-11 For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you would hear His voice, 8 Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, As in the day of Massah in the wilderness, 9 “When your fathers tested Me, They tried Me, though they had seen My work. 10 “For forty years I loathed that generation, And said they are a people who err in their heart, And they do not know My ways. 11 “Therefore I swore in My anger, Truly they shall not enter into My rest.”  
Psalm 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity!  
Proverbs 30:8-9 Keep deception and lies far from me, Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is my portion, 9 That I not be full and deny You and say, “Who is the LORD?” Or that I not be in want and steal, And profane the name of my God.  
Ecclesiastes 10:1 Dead flies make a perfumer’s oil stink, so a little foolishness is weightier than wisdom and honor.  
Matthew 5:22-26 “But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-nothing,’ shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell. 23 “Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. 25 “Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26 “Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last cent.  
Matthew 5:43-48 “You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AND hate your enemy.’ 44 “But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 “For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 “If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.  
Luke 22:31-32 “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; 32 but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”  
Romans 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.  
Romans 15:33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.  
2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.  
1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.  
1 Timothy 6:17-19 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.  
Hebrews 12:14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.  
Hebrews 12:15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;  
1 Peter 4:10-11 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.