

SERMON SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, JUNE 7TH 2026

“Knock, knock” based on Genesis 12:1-9, Matthew 9:9-13, and Romans 4:13-25

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In the three Scripture readings today, we are invited to focus on two individuals: Abram in the Old Testament and Matthew in the Gospel. Although they lived in different places, in different cultures, and were separated by many centuries, they shared a remarkably similar experience—they were both called by God.

If we read their stories closely, we discover that Abram and Matthew were called into the same reality: a journey into the unknown. Abram was called to leave behind his country, his people, and his father's household to go to a land that God would show him—a place he had never seen before. Matthew, on the other hand, was called by Jesus while sitting at his tax booth, engaged in a profession that provided him with financial security and power on some sorts. Yet Jesus simply said, “Follow me,” and Matthew was invited to leave behind the life he knew and step into a future he could not fully understand.

What is striking about both stories is that neither Abram nor Matthew was given a detailed plan. God did not hand Abram a map, nor did Jesus explain to Matthew everything that would happen after he left his tax booth. Instead, both were asked to trust. They were called to step away from what was familiar and comfortable and to place their confidence in the One who was calling them.

Now, I would like to invite you to reflect for a moment. In your journey through life, *have you ever been called to do something unexpected, sudden, or even frightening? Have you ever found yourself standing at a crossroads, facing a decision that would take you beyond what was familiar and comfortable?*

Maybe you were asked to leave behind something familiar and step into a new chapter of life. Perhaps it was accepting a new job which required you moving to a different city or province, or even country. Or maybe stepping into a leadership role that you never imagined you would hold. You might have experience where God placed an opportunity before you that seemed far beyond

your abilities, leaving you wondering whether you were truly capable of what was being asked of you.

In those moments, our first response is often questioning ourself or God. We ask questions: *Why me? Am I ready? What if I fail? What if things do not work out the way I hope?*

Imagine being Abram for a moment. Abram had been living comfortably in Haran when God called him to leave. He was about seventy-five years old. Seventy-five, back then and today, is an age when one had settled into routines, relationships, and security. Abram and Sarai were likely established and financially stable. Or in other words, life was familiar for them. Yet God invited Abram into something entirely new by moving away.

Here we see that he was called in his older age to step into uncertainty — to leave behind possessions, friends, and extended family — holding on to nothing but God's promise. While the Bible does not explicitly state the number of days the journey took, estimates suggest it was a long trip, potentially lasting several weeks to a few months.

And in addition to that long walking journey, it was twenty-five years later, when Abram was even older, that he and Sarai finally received the son they had longed for—the son that God had promised before he left Haran. The journey of leaving home and the long journey of waiting for a child were surely not easy. But they kept their faith. So faith, for Abram and Sarai, was not comfortable. It was costly and slow.

Yet it is precisely in these moments of uncertainty that faith becomes real. Because faith is not trusting God when the path is clear and predictable; faith is trusting God when we can only see the next step. Same as Abram did not know where he was going. I believe Matthew did not know what following Jesus would mean. Yet, the Gospel tell us, without hesitation he just did.

⁹As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him." (Matt. 9:9)

Matthew got up and followed him. Immediately.

To follow Jesus meant Matthew would have to loosen his grip on certainty. He would have to surrender his position as tax collector, which was quite prestigious, where he got his own guard, and financially safe, while most Jews live below the poverty line. He needs to let go power that he had over people and becoming a disciple to Jesus of Nazareth, which by that point was not even famous because He just started his ministry time.

Even though the details are different, but I can tell you that the story of Abram and Matthew are not so different in a way where both were called out of comfort. Both were invited into uncertainty. Both were asked to trust before they fully understood.

Now, for those of you who love to travel, within the country or even overseas, you sometimes use travel agent for a more convenient trip. And the travel agent gives you pictures, itineraries, and guarantees about what you would see and experience in the destination country or area. And even though you never been to those places you plan you visit, you would get excited and feel confident because you have an idea about how the place would look like. And most importantly, you know that you will be safe because of everything is taken care of by the travel agent or the tour guide there later.

But here in the bible reading today, Abram had none of that. No map, no pictures, no guarantee, just a promise. And faith, friends in Christ, often looks like that: where we are asked to walk without the full map. And perhaps that is where we find ourselves today. In uncertainty, with questions about God or why certain things happened to us. Maybe we are in situation where we don't know what is the next step in our life. With physical ability that decreasing, body that weaken, or caring for someone who are facing those things, we sometimes find it difficult to accept and to trust that God is with us.

A lot of times we listen to the voices within us that say that we are too small to do the great things God has called us to do. But through Abram and Matthew story I think we can see that God uses all different kinds of people and work through them all.

When Jesus calls Matthew, and Matthew decided to follow Him, unfortunately the challenge was not end there. As it's written:

10 While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (Matt. 9: 10-11).

There are always be people who discourage us. But thankfully, Jesus is not only a good teacher but also a good advocate, *12 On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 13 But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matt. 9: 12-13)*

When the religious leaders question Matthew's place among Jesus' followers, Jesus immediately steps in and defends him. Jesus sees beyond Matthew's past, beyond his reputation, and beyond the label others have placed upon him. While others see a tax collector and a sinner, Jesus sees a disciple and a beloved child of God.

I think this is an important reminder for us because sometimes the greatest obstacle to answering God's call is not the call itself, but the voices that tell us we are not worthy of it. We hear voices saying, "You are not holy enough." "You are not talented enough." "You do not know enough." "Look at your past mistakes." "Look at your failures." Yet Jesus responds to those voices in the same way He responded to the Pharisees. He says, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." In other words, God's call is not based on our perfection. God's call is based on God's grace.

The same truth can be seen in the story of Abram. From a human perspective, Abram did not seem like the ideal candidate through whom God would bless all the nations of the earth. Yet God called him anyway.

Throughout Scripture, God repeatedly calls ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary purposes. God called Moses, who struggled with speaking. God called David, the youngest shepherd boy in his family. God called Matthew, a tax collector whom society had rejected. Again and again, God chooses people not because they are already qualified, but because God is able to work through them.

And this particularly close to my heart because God calls me to do this ministry, thousand miles away from home and family, with a ton of limitations I have. I can list more reasons to not answering the call for ministry than reason to do ministry. And that would discourage me to see this call as a call that I am able to accept. However, what I often forget is that God's call is not primarily about my abilities; it is about God's faithfulness.

When God told Abram to leave his country and go to a land that He would show him, God also made a promise: "I will bless you." The command and the promise always go together.

God never calls us somewhere without also promising His presence along the way. Does the blessing always come immediately? Unfortunately, no. Abram wait for years. But he believes in the promise that God will take care of it.

And I think that is why Abram could leave what was familiar. That is why Matthew could get up from his tax booth and follow Jesus. Neither man knew exactly what the future would hold, but both trusted the One who was calling them. Their confidence was not in themselves. Their confidence was in God.

So friends in Christ, perhaps there is something in your life today that God is calling you toward. Perhaps it is a literal new place, a difficult conversation, a step of forgiveness, a deeper commitment to discipleship, or simply trusting God through a season of uncertainty. Whatever that call may be, the stories of Abram and Matthew remind us that God does not wait until we feel ready. God calls us as we are and invites us to trust Him for the journey ahead.

The question is not whether we have enough strength, wisdom, or courage on our own. The question is whether we are willing to trust the God who calls us. For when God calls, God also guides. When God sends, God also accompanies. And when God invites us into the unknown, God has already gone ahead of us. So now, when God knock on the door of your heart to call and invite you to follow Him, what would your answer be?

Like Abram and Matthew, may we have the faith to rise, leave behind what holds us back, and follow wherever God leads. Amen.