I will just make notes for this sermon. The last sermon in this series. There are several themes about what humanity is and how God deals with us that I hope will be engrained after going through Genesis 1-12.

Part A: **Genesis 11:1-9**

**Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.**

**They said to each other, “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”**

There are two important points to make here:

1. Show images of ziggurats from PowerPoint.

2. They are specifically contradicting God, just like Eve in the garden, just like Cain built a city, instead of spreading out. How often do we just flatly contradict God in our lives? Kids do this to their parents. Adults do this to their employers, to the government, and to God himself. We think we know better. But we don’t. We can see it in our kids. Can we see it in ourselves?

3. They are glorifying themselves rather than glorifying God. How many of us have self-esteem problems. We are overwhelmed with guilt. Or anger at the way we are treated. Angry at our spouse for not treating us the way we deserve. Look at the way people look at human progress today. I was talking to someone about this last night. Go back and read the newspapers from 100 years ago. It’s all the same arguments. We aren’t learning anything. We’re having the same discussions, experiencing the same divisions as our forefathers.

**But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. The Lord said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.”**

**So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.**

Is this really a punishment? Sort of, but think about it. What is God preventing? Did God stop us from building skyscrapers? No. Did he prevent us from rejecting him and glorifying ourselves? No, we still do that. The significant difference, however, is that now we do that as individual societies. And eventually, some societies will get out of control. But when they do, God will use another society to judge or correct them. Mankind as a whole is not capable of rebelling against God en masse. And now God will call one nation to be his own.

Why do all of our nations hate each other? Because deep down we’re all the same. You would think, it would make sense if we could all get together. But what gets in the way? Individuals want to glorify themselves at the expense of other people. And we do too. How much of the way I treat my family is all about me?

Application for parents: is your parenting for you, or is it for your kids? The only way to really put your kids first is to put God first. Allow him to humble, convict, forgive, and transform you into his servant rather than into someone who uses others for yourself.

**Genesis 11:27-32**

**This is the account of Terah.**

**Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot. While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, in the land of his birth. Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram’s wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor’s wife was Milcah; she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milcah and Iscah. Now Sarai was barren; she had no children.**

**Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Haran, they settled there.**

**Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Haran.**

We are now in the realm of known history. Here are pictures of Ur. Haran is also a city you can visit today. This tells us that Abraham’s journey was a longer process than you might guess from the following chapter. God spoke to Abraham already in Ur, and Abraham took along his entire family. The thing to highlight is what a change. The distance is about 500 miles to Haran and 500 more to Canaan. He went from the center of civilization to a relative backwater, filled with the Canaanites. This took a lot of faith, leadership, and sacrifice.

**Genesis 12:1-89**

**The Lord had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you.**

**“I will make you into a great nation**

**and I will bless you;**

**I will make your name great,**

**and you will be a blessing.**

**I will bless those who bless you,**

**and whoever curses you I will curse;**

**and all peoples on earth**

**will be blessed through you.”**

Here is the answer to fallen humanity. Humanity is what it is. But God calls individuals out of the mess of this world to follow him, and that started with Abraham. And God still had a plan to undo the work of the devil and restore humanity in Jesus, and that also took a great step forward with Abraham and this new nation. The world is concerned about glorifying itself. God’s people are concerned with being blessed by God and being a blessing. What a total different way of living.

Trust vs. self-reliance. Self-denial vs. self-glorification. Serving others vs. using or competing with others. Here was God’s promises. Leave everything. I will make you into a great nation. This happened with the ancient Israelites. It took generations. God blessed Abraham. Everything he did succeeded, even his mistakes. But the main promise was that all people’s on earth would be blessed through him. This is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, whose death has paid for the sins of all nations, and who has created a new humanity made up of people form all nations.

**So Abram left, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.**

**Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.**

**From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.**

So Abraham went to the place where he was to go.

1. Abraham trusted God to bless him. We can trust God because of Jesus and all the trustworthy things he has done for us. He failed often. His faith faltered at times. Yet God covered his sins and credited his faith as righteousness.

2. Abraham’s trust showed itself in surprising actions and prioritizing worship. God has not told us to leave our cities, but he has told us to live differently by abstaining from sin and trusting in God, not the things of this world.

3. Abraham was more concerned about future generations than himself. When he died, he was still living in a tent, but that was okay, because he had passed the faith on to the next generation. Are we living for the next generation? There are a lot of things. Take care of our health. Take care of our finances. But most importantly, are we passing along the faith?

4. Abraham was eager for God to use him to be a blessing, and God did. God calls us to share the blessing of Abraham, Jesus. He makes us blessings in Jesus’ name. Where is God calling you to be a blessing? It starts with your family. One family, multiplied over generations, can have an amazing legacy.