

# GUILTY BY ASSOCIATION OR BLESS BY RELATIONSHIP

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Thursday's Bible Study – Church Growth... conclusion our church grows based upon our individual relationship with God. The only way that that's going to happen is spending time in the word & in the presence of God.

**(R) GEN. 12:1-4** -Now [in Haran] the LORD had said to **Abram**,

"Go away from your country, And from your relatives  
And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you;  
<sup>2</sup>And <sup>[a]</sup>I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you [abundantly],  
And make your name great (exalted, distinguished);  
And you shall be a blessing [a source of great good to others];  
<sup>3</sup>And I will bless (do good for, benefit) those who bless you,  
And I will curse [that is, subject to My wrath and judgment] the one who  
curses (despises, dishonors, has contempt for) you.  
And in you all the families (nations) of the earth will be blessed."<sup>4</sup> So Abram  
departed [in faithful obedience] as the LORD had directed him; and **Lot** [his  
nephew] left with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left  
Haran. **Because God opened the door to relationship we have access,  
through Jesus Christ**

**(R) ROM.8:15-17** - For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, <sup>[a]</sup> Father." <sup>16</sup>The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup>and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together. **The Apostle Paul understood the mechanism of this relationship**

**(R) PHIL. 3:7-15** - <sup>7</sup>But whatever *former* things were gains to me [as I thought then], these things [once regarded as advancements in merit] I have come to consider as loss [absolutely worthless] for the sake of Christ [and the purpose which He has given my life]. <sup>8</sup>But more than that, I count everything as loss compared to the priceless privilege *and* supreme

advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord [and of growing more deeply and thoroughly acquainted with Him—a joy unequaled]. For His sake I have lost everything, and I consider it all garbage, so that I may gain Christ, <sup>9</sup>and may be found in Him [believing and relying on Him], not having any righteousness of my own derived from [my obedience to] the Law *and* its rituals, but [possessing] that [genuine righteousness] which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith. <sup>10</sup>*And this*, so that I may know Him [experientially, becoming more thoroughly acquainted with Him, understanding the remarkable wonders of His Person more completely] and [in that same way experience] the power of His resurrection [which overflows and is active in believers], and [that I may share] the fellowship of His sufferings, by being *continually* conformed [inwardly into His likeness even] to His death [dying as He did]; <sup>11</sup><sup>[a]</sup>so that I may attain to the resurrection [that will raise me] from the dead.

<sup>12</sup>Not that I have already obtained it [this goal of being Christ like] or have already been made perfect, but I actively press on <sup>[b]</sup>so that I may take hold of that [perfection] for which Christ Jesus took hold of me *and* made me His own. <sup>13</sup><sup>[c]</sup>Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have made it my own yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal to win the [heavenly] prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>All of us who are mature [pursuing spiritual perfection] should have this attitude. And if in any respect you have a different attitude, that too God will make clear to you.

**(G/A) LUKE 22:31-34** -“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. **32** But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” **33**But he replied, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.” **34** Jesus answered, “I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.” **Peter had a relationship with Jesus, but abandoned the relationship and took on a spirit of guilt because of fear.**

Let's examine our relationship- Are we guilty by Association (**ashamed of the Gospel**) or blessed by the relationship?