

Best Friends

- Who is your best friend? What makes them so?
- How did you get to know them?
 - what process of increasing trust did you go through...?

Alan

- *Alan: Met at camp; British Bulldog!! Came across each other again a couple of years later at camp, were able to share at a deeper level, and be a support and help in a tiring and depressing time... He took initiative in including me in activities (eg Go-Karts to Whithaugh Park), and in suggesting we pray together regularly, which we did for a couple of years; honesty and trust grew as we were prepared to be honest and real with each other; he had a part in focusing my call into Ministry; now we both have families, and our respective boys get on really well. Don't see each other as much - often stay over at New Year, or shared holiday time, CLAN... - but because we have shared so much are able to be a deep support to each other.*

- something brought us together;
- we didn't just nod politely and move on;
- we shared something that was important at the time, and proved able to trust and be trusted;

Recap

- Recap on what we've learned:
 - God made world good, very, very good;
 - humanity rebelled, sin stained and spoiled, and broke relationship with God.
 - began to see where that breakdown took humanity - tower of Babel
- Here we see the beginnings of restoration of relationship:
 - God calls out someone, an individual!
- Abraham! (Abram)

Invitation: Come with me

- The beginning of relationship with God is invitation to come with him:
 - its not "leave here and GO over there";
 - its "leave here and go to the land I WILL SHOW YOU"!
- By implication, God was "going" too.
- That is very clear when you stop and reflect on the fact that God doesn't tell Abraham where he is going!
 - just says come...
- Old Joke: Glasgow/Edinburgh - ask for directions...? (come/go)
- God invites us to come with him, to embark on an adventure of trust, where we don't know where we are going, only that he will go with us.
 - relationships are much less predictable than rules!!
- Invitation needs to be followed by response

Growing Deeper

- God's relationship with Abraham was not static; it grew!
- One of the reasons we read the second passage was to illustrate this very point:
 - what we have in this section of Genesis are a series of stories, not neat and tidy, but which narrate a growing depth of relationship between God and Abraham:
 - call; foray into Egypt (problems!); separation from Lot (what are your priorities - wealth or holiness?); meeting with Melchizedek; second covenant (chp 15; a child of his own); Hagar & Ishmael (doing it his own way...); covenant of circumcision (new name, new clarity to being God's friend and not friend of world)...
 - and so it goes on...

- In all of this, the simple truth that **doing things with the other person develops friendships**, is working out in practise.

Napoleon

- *A great battle was impending, and Napoleon, the great commander, was inspecting his troops. Turning from a mass of undisciplined, inexperienced men before him, he said to one of his generals, "These men I know nothing about." Then, as his eye ran over a body of men who had been with him for a short time, and knew something of march, bivouac and battlefield, he said: "These men I think I can trust." Finally he turned to a division of troops who had been with him in all his campaigns. They were the veterans of his army. They had been baptised in blood and fire in many a fierce and deadly struggle. As they stood before him with set lips and stern countenances, ready and waiting for the onset of the coming battle, the great commander turned from them with a heart pulsating with pride and confidence, and said quietly to his officers, "These men I know I can trust."*
- Napoleon knew that those he could trust were **those he'd spent time with**, worked with, shared hardships with, knew and was known by.
 - **Alan and I know the same thing;**
 - **Abraham and God had the same experience;**
- And we do too in our relationship with God:
 - not just Sunday by Sunday;
 - **but as we spend time with God: prayer, bible study, alone or together;**
 - as we do things with him: any form of service, eldership, Bodybuilders, Holiday Club, SU Camp, Tearfund, Girls Brigade, International Students, hospitality, helping a neighbour in Christ's name...

Reminder

- **15:6 - Abraham believed and he credited it to him as righteousness**
 - it wasn't rules, external appearances, but inner realities that made the difference for Abraham;
 - trust, belief, leaning on a friend, believed in God

Lewis the Leaf

- *story no.5 from "50 Five Minute Stories"*
- Some explanation/conclusion:
 - God is not some great unknowable force, but someone to know and trust;
 - this radical, earth shattering truth was something Abraham learned;
 - *its still a reality we need, not just to learn, to live in today;*
- Are we, with Abraham, able to answer **"yes"** to these questions?
 - **do you know me?**
 - **do you trust me...?**