

Fifth Sunday after Trinity. (AUGUST 18.)

ABRAHAM—*The Father of the Faithful.*

Passage—Genesis xii. 1-10. Text—S. Matt. xix. 29. Hymns—227, 589.

Picture: Abraham, with his back to his dead father, and a broken idol, is crossing the Jordan.

A. 'Our father Abraham.'

I. His name—Ab-ram = 'Father' (abba) 'of exaltation' (ram).
Ab-raham = 'Father of a multitude' (raham).

II. His country—1. Ur—his birthplace.

2. Haran—his resting-place, till his father's death.

3. Canaan—his promised home.

B. Faith.

1. What is the first great virtue?—Faith is *the first* of the three Theological virtues. (2 S. Peter i. 5.)

2. Is Faith *the greatest* virtue?—No; the greatest of all graces is Charity or Love. (1 Cor. xiii. 13.)

3. What is Faith?—Faith is holding on to the revelation or the promise of God. (Romans iii. 4.)

4. Must we have Faith?—Yes. Without Faith it is impossible to please God. (Romans v. 1.)

5. How did Abraham show his Faith?—Abraham gave up his home, and afterwards his son. (S. Mark. x. 29.)

6. Did he lose by his sacrifice?—Abraham gained the Holy Land, and became the Father of many nations. (S. Mark x. 30.)

C. Examples of Faith in leaving home.

First—*Christ*, leaving not only His Heavenly Home and His FATHER, but also His own people, the Jews, to become 'The Everlasting Father' (i.e. 'Father of Eternity'). (Isaiah ix. 6, Revised Version.)
∴ adore Him.

Second—*All Christians* forsaking earthly homes and relations (S. Matt. xix. 29) for the Heavenly Canaan.—
'Have you read 'The Pilgrim's Progress'?'
∴ follow with them.

Third—*Missionaries*, making a new earthly home in a strange land. (Acts xxviii. 30.)
∴ bid them God-speed, with your sympathy, money, prayers.

Sixth Sunday after Trinity. (AUGUST 25.)

ABRAHAM—*The Friend of God.*

Passage—Genesis xviii. Text—S. John xiii. 23. Hymns—169, 529.

Picture: The Hand of the Lord brandishing the lightning over the beautiful city of Sodom in the valley, while Abraham prays on the mountain.

A. The noble title of Abraham. (2 Chron. xx. 7; Isaiah xli. 8; S. James ii. 23.)

Make a list of other men who were intimate with God:—

Enoch and Noah 'walked with God.' (Genesis v. and vi.)

Melchizedek was 'made like unto the Son of God.' (See Heb. vii.)

Moses heard God 'speak.' (Ex. xxxiii. 11; Numbers xii. 7, 8.)

David was 'after God's own heart.' (Acts xiii. 22.)

Elijah 'stood before the Lord.' (1 Kings xix.)

Daniel was 'greatly beloved.' (Daniel ix. 23.)

S. John 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' (S. John xix. 26.)

&c. &c. &c.

B. True Friendship.

1. What other title had Abraham besides that of 'Father of the Faithful'?—Abraham was called 'The Friend of God.' (Job xxii. 21.)

2. What does OUR LORD say about God's friends? 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' (S. Luke i. 28.)

3. What does S. John say?—'He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen.' (Gen. iv. 4, 5.)

4. What, then, are the virtues for friends of God?—Purity and Charity are chiefly necessary for those who would see the Lord. (Heb. xii. 14.)

5. For what else are these virtues needed?—True Friendship among men depends on purity and charity. (Psalm lv. 15.)

6. Cannot we be true friends with bad people?—We cannot hold sweet counsel with those whose lives are impure. (Proverbs xxiii. 29, 30.)

7. What else destroys true friendship? Want of charity is the ruin of friendship. (Proverbs xviii. 24.)