

Aug 6/23 – Leader’s Guide- “El Shaddai”

Read Genesis 17:1-8

1. The name El Shaddai corresponds to God's power to direct and guide His creation to its intended purpose. How did God show His power to direct and guide Abraham in this story from Genesis 17?

God reestablishes His covenant with Abraham by changing Abraham's name and giving him the covenant sign of circumcision. This is God giving reminders to Abraham about the covenant, reminding Him of his identity and future, even though Abraham failed a number of times to remember and act accordingly.

2. El Shaddai does not mean that God troubleshoots the world with His power. Rather, He guides His people as a parent does to their child. In what ways do parents and caregivers direct and guide their children to growth and maturity?

Answers will vary but they would fall within the space of nurturing, caring, compassionate leading, listening, modeling, and sacrificial giving.

Read Matthew 16:13-20

1. Jesus renames Simon to Peter. What is the meaning of Jesus' promise to Peter and what does this act of renaming Peter signify?

Like Abraham, renaming Peter signifies a change in identity and future. Jesus renames Peter so that he can live into a new path of being. The promise to Peter is that the Church will be founded on his leadership and his confession that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. Similarly, Christians are given a new name in baptism, and so inherits a new identity and a new future.

2. As God did with Abraham and Jesus with Peter, we continue to experience God's directing and guiding power. How do you experience God's direction and guidance today?

Allow others to share freely and openly about how they are currently experiencing the power of God to direct and guide their lives, even in their own difficult circumstances.