**Week 2 - Courage to step into the unknown**

**Bible Reading: Genesis 12:1-5**

***Testimony subject – How did you discover God’s will for your life?***

**Introduction**

* What do the following people have in common – William Tyndale, Marie Curie, Abraham (formally known as Abram)?  *Answer - They all had a conviction to do something no one else had done.* 
  + William Tyndale translated the Bible into English.
  + Marie Curie pioneered research into radioactivity.
  + Abram willingly took his family and clan from Haran to Canaan.
* Life often brings moments when we are called to step into the unknown, leaving behind comfort and certainty to follow God’s direction.
* The Bible is rich with stories of individuals who faced this challenge and found the courage to trust God amidst uncertainty. Abram left everything familiar to journey to a land God promised, not knowing what lay ahead. Jonah wrestled with fear and resistance, yet ultimately obeyed God’s call to bring his message to Nineveh. Peter stepped out of the boat and on to the stormy sea, responding to Jesus’ call with faith, even as doubt momentarily overcame him.
* These stories remind us that stepping into the unknown is not about having all the answers, but about trusting God to strengthen us.
* We are all encouraged to explore how their journeys can inspire us to take bold steps of faith in our own lives.

**The call of Abram to step into the unknown**

* We live in a time when the internet can provide advice and guidance on practically anything you want. Particularly during the Covid-19 lockdown, many people took the opportunity to learn a new skill based on videos online.
* Imagine what the world looked like for Abram – no Scripture, no spiritual role models, no idea of how God worked in the past, no real ‘how to get to know God’ booklet or six-week course. Yet he heard God speaking to him.
* During Abram’s time, there had been a growing restlessness with life as it was, feeling that there must be something more. It was into that vacuum that God spoke.
* Perhaps the biggest issue for us is to examine how we hear God speaking to us. There has to be space given for God to speak, openness to wait until God chooses to speak and a desire to hear God.
* But Abram heard God, and the word was so clear that his life was never going to be the same again.
* How do you feel about change? Change in where you live, change in where you work, change in the routine you have from day to day? Now you may not need to uproot your entire life, but it could be as regards wealth, relationships, employment, roles within the corps etc.
* The thing about a call from God is that if it is from him it does not go away. Suddenly words in the Bible and our songs and even everyday things all seem somehow to speak into the same issue.

**Jonah facing the unknown**

* Jonah initially resisted God’s call to go to Nineveh, fearing the unknown and the potential danger of confronting a sinful city.
* Jonah experienced a turning point, realising that obedience to God’s plan required courage and trust.
* When he finally stepped into the unknown by preaching to Nineveh, Jonah witnessed an incredible transformation as the people repented and turned to God.
* Jonah’s journey teaches that having courage to follow God’s direction, even when it’s daunting, can lead to unexpected blessings and fulfilment of his purposes.

**Peter stepped out**

* Peter displayed great courage by stepping out of the boat and walking on water, trusting Jesus’ call despite the uncertainty and fear of the storm.
* His willingness to step into the unknown demonstrated his faith, even though the waves and wind threatened to overwhelm him.
* When Peter’s focus shifted to the storm around him, he began to sink, but his cry for help showed his dependence on Jesus.
* Jesus immediately reached out to save Peter, affirming that courage and faith are strengthened when we keep our eyes fixed on him.

**Application and response**

* God’s call to all disciples necessitates a willingness to step out of our comfort zone and into any new thing that he calls us to.
* It is not for us to come up with the new plan. It is for us to be willing to hear God and do what he asks, even if it will disrupt our present lifestyle.
* It boils down to two things: How much do I trust God to do something different? How much do I mind missing out on the adventure/plan that God has for me?
* What steps into the unknown is God calling you to take? How can you ask him to give you courage to take the next step?