

bargaining with God

Genesis 18:17-33

Many characters in the Old Testament spoke with God face-to-face: Moses, Jacob, even Solomon. Abraham also spoke to God in His presence. Abraham's conversation with Him shows something about how God involves His people to pray for others.

▶ Read Genesis 18:17-19.

- What does God's question and response say about His relationship with Abraham?

Verses 20 and 21 show God's plan to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

- Why does this have to happen?

The next few verses are a "negotiating" conversation between Abraham and God.

▶ Read verses 22-33, and then try to put yourself in Abraham's position, considering God's position of authority.

- Why do you think Abraham pleaded for the righteous in the city?
- Do you think it's possible to talk God out of something?
- What happened as the result of Abraham's prayer?

Genesis 18:17-33

¹⁷Then the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? ¹⁸Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. ¹⁹For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him."

²⁰Then the LORD said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous ²¹that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know."

²²The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD. ²³Then Abraham approached him and said: "Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? ²⁴What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it? ²⁵Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

²⁶The LORD said, "If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake."

²⁷Then Abraham spoke up again: "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes. ²⁸What if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city because of five people?"

"If I find forty-five there," he said, "I will not destroy it."

²⁹Once again he spoke to him, "What if only forty are found there?"

He said, "For the sake of forty, I will not do it."

³⁰Then he said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty can be found there?"

He answered, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."

³¹Abraham said, "Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty can be found there?"

He said, "For the sake of twenty, I will not destroy it."

³²Then he said, "May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?"

He answered, "For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it."

³³When the LORD had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home.

»mon

It's difficult to get people to do things, even though it's good for them. Sometimes we have to urge people to do what's right. Why is it urgent to pray for each other?

»tues

In this verse, young Timothy is reminded by his tutor, Paul, to "first of all" remember prayer. If prayer was your first priority today, what would you ask of God?

»wed

We can get in the middle of people's problems and help them out by praying for them. Who can you be an intercessor for this week? Pray for them now.

»thurs

A wise Christian always focuses (or points) toward God. What can happen if we don't? Take a look at 1 Timothy 1:18-20. How does prayer help us focus on God?

»fri

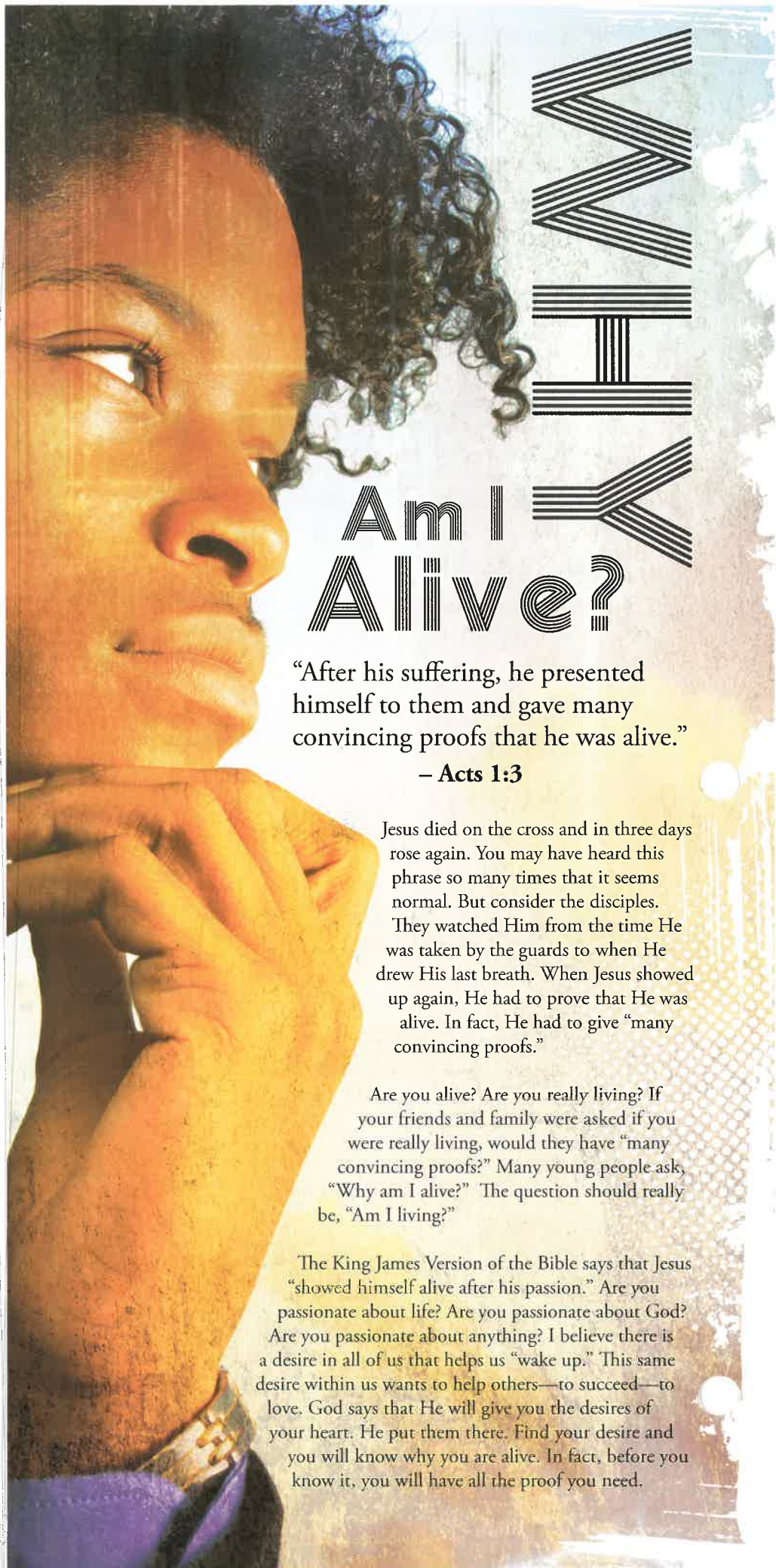
Perseverance is another word for endurance, toughness, and staying power. Ask God to give you patience when you face obstacles as you get in step with the Spirit.

»sat

"Everyone must attend school!"
"Everyone must pay taxes!" Why are we supposed to pray for those who lead us and impose rules upon us? Make a list of authorities in your life and pray for each one.

Surge then,
first of all, that
petitions, prayers,
intercession and
thanksgiving
be made for all
people.

—1 Timothy 2:1



Am I
Alive?

Am I Alive?

"After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive."

— Acts 1:3

Jesus died on the cross and in three days rose again. You may have heard this phrase so many times that it seems normal. But consider the disciples.

They watched Him from the time He was taken by the guards to when He drew His last breath. When Jesus showed up again, He had to prove that He was alive. In fact, He had to give "many convincing proofs."

Are you alive? Are you really living? If your friends and family were asked if you were really living, would they have "many convincing proofs?" Many young people ask, "Why am I alive?" The question should really be, "Am I living?"

The King James Version of the Bible says that Jesus "showed himself alive after his passion." Are you passionate about life? Are you passionate about God? Are you passionate about anything? I believe there is a desire in all of us that helps us "wake up." This same desire within us wants to help others—to succeed—to love. God says that He will give you the desires of your heart. He put them there. Find your desire and you will know why you are alive. In fact, before you know it, you will have all the proof you need.

PRAYER JOURNAL



PEOPLE TO PRAY FOR DURING THE WEEK

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

MONDAY

WORSHIP (GOD IS ALL-KNOWING)

CONFESSION (BAD ATTITUDES)

PEOPLE (FRIENDS)

PERSONAL NEEDS (SCHOOLWORK)

THANKS (HEALTH)

TUESDAY

WORSHIP (GOD IS IN CONTROL)

CONFESSION (SELF-DECEPTION)

PEOPLE (TEACHERS)

PERSONAL NEEDS (INSECURITIES)

THANKS (GOD'S PROVISION)



WEDNESDAY

WORSHIP (GOD IS HOLY)

CONFESSION (BAD THOUGHTS)

PEOPLE (ENEMIES)

PERSONAL NEEDS (CLOTHING)

THANKS (THE CHURCH)

THURSDAY

WORSHIP (GOD CREATED EVERYTHING)

CONFESSION (APOLOGIES TO BE MADE)

PEOPLE (MISSIONARIES)

PERSONAL NEEDS (FINANCIAL)

THANKS (THE HOPE OF HEAVEN)

FRIDAY

WORSHIP (GOD PROVIDES FOR US)

CONFESSION (HURTFUL WORDS)

PEOPLE (YOUR CHURCH LEADERS)

PERSONAL NEEDS (WEEKEND PLANS)

THANKS (ANOTHER WEEK OF LIFE)

