

# Sermon Starter – Living in Wonder and Mystery

*Genesis 12:1-4; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17*

A deep conversation in the dark of night seems to be fertile ground for questions of faith. Nicodemus's faith appears to be rooted in signs and proofs, yet he is not totally comprehending, and seeks more from Jesus. Faith, according to Jesus, has less to do with proofs, signs, claims, and human achievement, and more to do with God's love poured out for the world. Abram says very little in the pivotal story from Genesis about God's call to him. There is so much he doesn't know about his future! He takes the first step and simply goes, as the Lord has told him.

Our desire for certainty can be great. We want to know, prove, and figure it out. Even as we want to be in control, we know we aren't. We live with uncertainty and anxiety. We seem to be living in an increasingly anxious time of information overload. How does God meet us here, in our anxiety?

Jesus invites Nicodemus into a conversation of wondering and mystery that travels away from predictable and logically clear paths. In the life of faith, we need the tools of wonder and curiosity. Jesus speaks to us as he helps Nicodemus explore faith not as calculated and proven, but as a gift of life given by God. God, who is great Mystery to us, engages our doubts, wonderings, and questions. But even more, as the psalmist recounts in Psalm 121, God meets us in our anxiety, assuring us that we are loved and held in God's all-embracing care.

From Leader, Winter 2016-17. ©2016 MennoMedia.