



**Sermon-based Guide**  
**Questions for Reflection and Discussion**

**Week of May 16**  
***The New Math of Salvation***

**Scripture: Genesis 18:16-33**

**Additional Scriptures:** Romans 3:21-24, Isaiah 53:1-6, Hosea 11:8-9

**Sermon Themes**

- God allows Abraham to bargain with him over the city of Sodom. And Abraham bargains like a master of the ancient near-eastern marketplace!
- Verses 17-19: God reveals that he wants to invite Abraham into conversation about the divine will—not to hide from him what God is planning to do. Then God allows Abraham to influence that will and become part of it! Awesome! Interwoven are themes of righteousness & justice, as God determines to do right by Sodom.
- Verse 25: Abraham asks God rhetorically, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?” Basically Abraham asks God to step up to the plate and do the truly right thing, which is to show mercy.
- The broader themes include God’s patience when it comes to judgment, and God’s personal involvement with us as conversation partners within the covenant. It’s a unique text but connected to the broader vision of how God invites humans into relationship.

**Questions**

1. Our personal relationship with God can have several different aspects. At some times God seems to us like a loving father, at other times perhaps a lover, a friend, or a teacher. Does God ever seem like a judge to you? Does the biblical image of God as a judge give you hope and confidence, or fear and trembling? Why?
2. Can you think of other examples where the righteousness of one person redeems the wickedness of many? Do you feel this is fair?
3. Roughly how often do you pray in intercession for others? For whom are you called to intercede, and what kinds of intercession are you praying for? When you intercede for others, how does God answer your prayers?