

GABRIEL'S QUEST

The Invitation

Lesson Link: God asked Abraham to make sacrifices in his life. These sacrifices showed Abraham's faith in God and strengthened his faith in God. Gabriel is faced with a sacrifice that is hard to make. He learns the importance of such sacrifices.

The invitation to the birthday party came in a small envelope with flowers around the border. A girl in Gabriel's class named Emma was turning seven years old. The party would be held on Saturday in a special room at a local ice cream shop.

Gabriel was excited. It was the first time he had ever been invited to a birthday party.

His aunt Belle looked at the date on the invitation. "The party is at the same time you are supposed to talk to your father," she reminded him.

Gabriel's dad worked overseas for the army. Gabriel sometimes went to visit his grandmother and they both talked to his dad on a laptop computer. They hadn't talked in a couple of weeks because his dad was very busy.

Gabriel frowned. "I want to talk to my dad, but I don't want to miss the party."

Over the next several days, Aunt Belle tried to change the time of the call. She could not get through to Gabriel's father.

Gabriel thought about the party and all the fun, games, cake, and ice cream. He thought about the kids he hoped to become friends with. He even bought Emma a small figurine of a horse. Emma liked horses.

The day of the party came. His aunt Belle said, "The choice is yours, Gabriel. You can go to see your grandma and talk to your dad, or you can go to the party."

"I'll talk to him later," Gabriel said.



Aunt Belle shook her head. "We don't know when you'll be able to talk to him again."

Gabriel didn't know what to do. He asked his cousins. Nick said he should go to the party. Sam said he ought to visit his grandma and talk to his dad. Lizzy reminded him how much Grandma Rosa looked forward to their time together. Andrew admitted that it was a hard choice to make.

Finally, Gabriel asked his aunt Belle, "Will you go to see my grandma and talk to my dad for me?"

Aunt Belle said she would. Gabriel hoped his dad would understand about the party.

Uncle Jon drove Gabriel to the ice cream shop. A lot of kids were there. Balloons hung from the walls and ceiling. There was a big table with a large birthday cake. Emma's parents had set up a lot of games. Everyone laughed and had fun. But Gabriel didn't. He kept thinking about his dad and his grandma.

That evening at home, Gabriel asked Aunt Belle about the call. She said, "Your dad and grandma had a good talk. He said he understood why you wanted to go to the party. He hoped you had a good time."

"When can I talk to him again?" he asked.

"He is going on a special job," she said. "He didn't know when he would be able to talk again."

"A special job?" Gabriel asked. "Is it dangerous?"

Aunt Belle said she didn't know.

Gabriel went to bed. He felt bad. What if something happened to his dad on the special job?

The next day after Mass, Grandma Rosa came to lunch at the Perry house. Gabriel told her that he felt sad for going to the party instead of visiting her and talking to his dad.

Grandma Rosa said, "Life is filled with small choices and little sacrifices." She patted his hand. "Learning to choose and to sacrifice is part of growing up."

Gabriel wondered whether he made the right choice.

Questions:

1. **What choice did Gabriel make?** (He sacrificed talking with his dad to go to the party.)
2. **Was Gabriel happy with his decision? Why?** (No. He missed seeing his dad and didn't know when he would see him again.)
3. **Have you ever had to choose between two choices? How did you decide?** (Answers may vary.)