

Christopher Wright: *The faith and obedience of Abraham therefore are not merely models for personal piety and ethics. They are also the essential credentials for effective participation in the limitless mission encapsulated in the two Hebrew words translated as “Be a blessing.” There is no blessing for ourselves or for others without faith and obedience. Those whom God calls to participate in his redemptive mission for the nations are those who exercise saving faith like Abraham and demonstrate costly obedience like Abraham.*

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Do you agree that this test is about love for God with all the heart? Can you think of other times in Scripture where one's love for God is tested through a call to sacrifice?
- What do you love most? Is there something God is asking you to bring to the place of faith and sacrifice to Him?
- Where does God test you to see how much of you that He owns? What is He learning about you?
- Why didn't God simply say, “Human sacrifice is repulsive to me, I will provide the substitute; I will send a Savior”?
- What is the difference between knowing something by means of knowledge and knowing something by means of experience? Why might the latter be more pleasing than the former?
- Do you think God finds pleasure in our lives as we live by faith and worship Him sacrificially? Do you think He is displeased when we don't?
- Discuss this statement about Abraham's test: *From God's perspective the lesson was all about Abraham's love for Him. From Abraham's perspective, the lesson was all about the truth that God will be the One to provide the necessary sacrifice of atonement, of expiation necessary in this relationship.*
- What are the tests which you face today? What is the Lord asking from you? How are you responding?

Genesis: Truth for Understanding Our World (part 14)

Will Abraham Trust God for Nothing?

Jerry Cisar — February 7, 2016

Text: Genesis 22

Introduction: W.I.I.F.M.

I. The Test (22:1-2)

A. “Abraham,” ... “Here I am.”

B. The Command

i. *Take your son*

ii. *Your only son*

iii. *Whom you love*

➤ Matthew 10:37

C. The Unique Nature of this Test

i. Genesis 12

ii. Genesis 17

Brodie: The mountain, instead of being located, is indefinite; God will say where to go. Abraham is being asked to bring his love to a land of God's seeing and saying.

iii. God is testing whether or not Abraham will trust God even if it meant nothing but God.

a) Job 1:9

b) Mark 10:21

c) Philippians 3:8

D. This is a test, it is only a test!

i. *Why did God bother telling Abraham to sacrifice Isaac if He intended to stop him?*

ii. *This God will provide the sacrifice; not Abraham. We can never appease this God; we can never expiate or propitiate His wrath.*

II. Abraham's Response (Genesis 22:3-8)

A. *Early the next morning...*

B. *"On the third day..."*

i. *Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance.*

ii. *We will worship and then we will come back to you.*

➤ Hebrews 11:17-19

C. The Point of No Return

i. Isaac carries the wood; Abraham the fire and knife.

ii. Finally Isaac speaks.

iii. Abraham, a prophet.

III. God's Response (22:9-18)

A. *"Abraham, Abraham," ... "Here I am."*

B. *"Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him."*

All too often we are content with learning truths about God but fail to see that God is interested in learning truth about us: who we are and whether or not we will serve Him with our whole hearts.

iii. The text tells us *why* God tested Abraham this way.

a) *Doesn't God know everything already?*

b) *"Now I know that you fear God..."*

Charles Bridges: *But what is this fear of the Lord? It is that affectionate reverence, by which the child of God bends himself humbly and carefully to his Father's law. His wrath is so bitter, and his love so sweet; that hence springs an earnest desire to please him, and—because of the danger of coming short from his own weakness and temptations—a holy watchfulness and fear, "that he might not sin against Him" (Heb 12:28, 29).*

C. 13-14 *On the Mountain of the Lord it will be provided.*

IV. The Test and the Mission of God (15-19)

God has a mission to accomplish—to restore the world to Himself. To return humanity to Eden, to His presence, to the place of blessing and fruitfulness. And God will accomplish that mission through servants who withhold nothing. Through servants who willingly obey His voice and sacrifice all for Him.