

# Genesis 22

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[ 0 : 00 ] I'm Matt, I'm one of the elders here at Shoreline.! I'm blessed and very excited to have the privilege to speak here today and share this time with you all.

! In the name of the Lord Jesus and our God, welcome. Welcome this morning. So I wanted to start this morning and ask this question.

And the question is this. What is faith? Now from a secular or maybe a non-church standpoint we could see faith as me and you faith, right?

I have faith in me because I can do it. I'm strong, right? I've done this before and I can do it again. This is the January Planet Fitness mentality.

Yeah, I know. Guilty. Guilty. By February, right, I'm back on my couch eating bonbons and watching reruns of Saved by the Bell.

[ 1 : 10 ] I mean they are good, but this is much like having faith in a three-legged chair. See a three-legged chair most of the time isn't going to hold true to what a chair is supposed to do.

And regardless of how much you will for the chair to do it and you, this chair is going to hold me up, right? It's not going to hold you up. You could be the Arnold Schwarzenegger of faith. You could be the Michael Jordan of faith. You could be the Faith Hill of faith.

But it doesn't matter. Because the object of your faith must be reliable, must be worthy of faith. If not, we'll either have weak faith, right, or we won't have any faith until this thing proves reliable.

And so, who here has ever lost trust or faith in one of these common objects of faith, right? People? Guilty. Sports teams? Guilty. Right?

Your job? The stock market? Politicians? Right? All of us have. We've all lost faith in those things. So that's secular faith. Now how about biblical faith?

[ 2 : 14 ] Let's speak to this. Hebrews 1.11 tells us, Now faith is the confidence in what we hope for, and the assurance for what we do not see. That's the New International Version. And that can be a little confusing.

So we're going to put a slide up here. And this is what we're going to use as our declaration of what faith is today. One theologian put it this way. Faith enables us, or faith enables one, to obey in the absence of understanding the why and how of the thing commanded.

Faith is a trust that assures one that he will receive a promise, though the means of fulfillment is not obvious, because he has confidence in the one who revealed it.

Please pray with me. Heavenly Father, Lord, we are blessed to come here this morning. God, we long to hear your truth and your word.

God, speak to each and every one of us, myself included, Lord. Lord, I ask that you would, Lord, just soften my heart and my mind, Lord, to the words, to declare the words that you've, Lord, established.

[ 3 : 19 ] And, Lord, to be said before the foundation of the world. God, that your truth would be declared this morning, God, and that we would see and understand, God, what this passage means to us, Lord, and what we're to do about it.

So, Lord, use me and soften all of our hearts this morning. In Christ's name, amen. Now, Abraham, the well-decorated man of faith from scripture, right?

We've been going through this in Genesis, several different sermons. He's been the key character in what we've been following in our Genesis studies. So, here's Abraham's story this far. If you haven't had a chance to be here, this is your first week.

We'll catch you up real fast. And if you have, this is a refresher. So, in chapter 12 of Genesis, God tells Abraham to leave the land that he knows. God promises to make Abraham a great nation, and that through Abraham's family, all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

Abraham responds in faith, right, not knowing the details. And he goes. He leaves his home. Chapter 15, God reaffirms his promise to Abraham, right? And he makes a covenant telling him that he would have his own son to be heir of God's promise.

[ 4 : 28 ] His offering shall be, as we read, the star, as much as the stars in the heavens. Dave was talking about that a couple weeks ago. Abraham, although not knowing the details of how he and Sarah could bear a child in their advanced age, in faith they believe God, resulting in receiving God's righteousness.

Chapter 21, finally, right, we see the promised son is born. And that is where we rejoin our story today. Isaac has been born. It could be about 10 to 20 years since Isaac's birth. And so Isaac's kind of a young kid. And that's where we're going to join in today. And so we're going to split up our time this morning, the text, into three different chunks. And those chunks are, we're going to call them the call, the journey, and the result.

And so let's read Genesis 22, 1 through 3 together. That's going to be at the beginning of your Bible. If you don't have a Bible, there's some in the back on the table. So Genesis 22, 1 through 3. After these things, the things we just mentioned, God tested Abraham and said to him, Abraham. And he said, here I am. He said, take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, of which I shall tell you.

[ 5 : 47 ] And Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, took two of his young men with him and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and rose and went to the place which God had told him.

And so as we're looking through this first chunk of scripture, the call, we're going to see that faith means obedience without full understanding.

Now Abraham was told by God to give up his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God. Abraham knew what the Lord was saying. What the Lord was not saying was, Abraham, I want you to murder your son. I want you to kill him in cold blood. That's not what he was saying. And he also wasn't tempting Abraham saying, oh, kill your son and see what happens. That wasn't what he was doing either. God doesn't tempt us to harm ourselves or others.

Burnt offerings in the Old Testament were a purposeful sacrifice for the Lord. And these happen regularly, sometimes up to twice a day or even more, at several big occasions and events during the years, right? We find this in Leviticus chapter one, verses one through 17, a couple of books after Genesis.

[ 6 : 55 ] And the purpose of the atonement was for the atonement of sin and continued acceptance before God, right? And so the offerer, if we were alive then, it'd be you and I would come. We would bring our sacrifice, which was an animal, a pure, a spotless animal, an undefiled animal.

And we would place the animal on the altar and we would place our hands on the animal. And what happened was, as we placed our hands on the animal, we, the offerer, would symbolize to God that we were putting our sin, putting our trespasses, our evils done against God, placing them on this animal.

And that was a symbol. And then we, as the offerer, would trust in faith that God would accept this offering, this sacrifice, and that it would temporarily cover sin.

And so Abraham knew this process well, he did. But the thing is that, although Abraham understood what the burden offering sacrifice was, right? It didn't mean that God's request was any more, I don't know, reasonable, right?

But he was still, he was asking him to sacrifice his son, not an animal, not a lamb. And so let's look at God's call through Abraham's eyes.

[ 8 : 07 ] We want to get a little perspective of Abraham's feelings about this before we go further in our text. And so what was Isaac in relation to Abraham? He was a lot, right? He was something of great value, something that brought him joy and happiness and dignity.

And as Dave talked about, cultural respect. That's what offspring were. He was loved. Abraham was, Isaac was Abraham's flesh and blood.

We love our children. Isaac brought certainty for the future. The family name rested on the firstborn. And without the firstborn, what would be the fate of the lineage?

The firstborn took care of the family. Isaac was also a reminder of Abraham's faith in God. And how he received Isaac as a part of God's promise.

So Abraham's got a lot of stake in this, right? This is significant for him. This isn't like, hey, I want you to give up cheeseburgers for a week, right? Like, I haven't even had a cheeseburger in the last week. So this is something important to Abraham.

[9:10] So if I'm Abraham, or if you're Abraham, at this point we're not quite sure what's going on here. Because Isaac was the first step in God's promise to make Abraham's family's name great, right?

And Isaac was the first step in the promise to bless the nations. But now God's telling me, says Abraham to himself, right? You want me to give up my son? You want him to die? How does this make sense, right? Was he going to have another son? Was there going to be a different son by which this blessing came? And so the truth is that, plain and simple, Abraham didn't know what was going on.

He knew that he loved his son, and God knew that too. He knew that he understood the testament of the burnt offerings in the Old Testament, and God knew that too. But how does it fit together? And Abraham's situation, his understanding of his situation, and his vision into the future, they don't match up, right? There's a big question mark.

[10:11] And so what's Abraham's response? This is amazing. So Abraham's initial reaction, right? It would have been totally reasonable for him to be like, Like, stop the music, right?

Say what, God? I thought you said Isaac was a promise. I thought you said, sacrifice Isaac, the son that I love. Like, I must be hearing you wrong.

Like, did you really mean that? Did you really mean, instead, like, I'm supposed to sacrifice a lamb and Isaac's supposed to come with me? Right? Like, what are you talking about? I can imagine Abraham's kind of nervous laughter.

Like, it would have been reasonable for him to have nervous laughter and to be anxious and to start sweating a little bit, right? Or perhaps, hey, God, this sounds great, but can we try it another time? Or maybe never, right?

Or Abraham, legitimate, could have just said, no, I'm not going to do that. This is my son. And so the most natural, the most reasonable response, the most anticipated response would have been to not obey God.

[11:12] And reasonably so, because Abraham didn't have understanding of what was going on. He didn't know. So what did happen? Look back at verse 3. Verse 3 tells us this. Abraham rose early in the morning and went to the place which God had told him.

And so he didn't ask questions. We don't see Abraham taking a few days to pray about it, to consult his friends or his family or his spouse, right? He didn't sit and have a powwow with God. They didn't chat. They didn't chat for a few hours and come to a mutual understanding or agreement.

He did it. He obeyed immediately. And so it begs the question, how did Abraham respond in obedience? And so we see that faith means obedience in light of God's promise to provide. Abraham's obedience to God's request could not have come from his understanding of the outcome, right? There was no visibility looking forward.

There was no insight into the future. It was a question mark, like we said. And so faith in God isn't the things that I can see or understand or plan to anticipate, right? That goes against the definition of faith in Scripture.

[12:19] That's not faith in God. Faith in God isn't when we have things in order. Faith is a trust that assures that one will receive a promise, though the means of fulfillment is not obvious, because he who has confidence in the one who revealed it.

That was our definition earlier. Faith in God is not the things I can understand or see, and faith in God is also not the white knuckle approach, right? I love this. Faith in God is not the white knuckle approach.

If I try hard enough, right? If I really want it, right? If I can do it, I can have faith, right? And your knuckles turn white, that's what happens.

In case there was a question. So it's not the white knuckle approach because, and we know this, because no man or woman or child could have faith enough when asked to sacrifice their son or daughter or loved one would agree with no understanding.

No one. And so, but he did it. And it's not the strength of our faith because our faith is weak. It's the object that we put our faith in that enables us to obey and enables us to get through.

[ 13 : 30 ] Faith is the object of our faith, not the strength of our own personal faith. Because like the three-legged chair, if your faith can be as strong as the best of them, but if you're putting your faith in something that's not reliable, it doesn't matter.

And so, faith, trust, and the promises of God for the future in light, only in light of God's promises and provisions in the past. And what were those things for Abraham?

We just talked about a few of them. Chapter 12, 15, and 21 of Genesis. The promises for Abraham. His family would bless the nations. His offspring would be many. He would have a son of his own. And so when God says, Abraham, I need you to sacrifice your son. He could only have said yes in light of the promises God gave him for his future and the future of his family.

And the provision that he had already received in Isaac, confirming God's holding to his promises. That God was worthy to uphold his promises. And so Abraham's trust in God's promise and God's ability to provide was greater than his understanding.

[ 14 : 37 ] It was greater. And he answered the call and acted in obedience. That's faith. That's faith. That's faith. Let's continue with our story and read verses 3 through 14 in Genesis 22.

So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the offering and rose and went to the place of which God had told him.

On the third day, Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place from afar. And Abraham said to his young men, Stay here with the donkey. I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you.

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and said, Lay it on Isaac. And he laid it on Isaac, his son. And he told, And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. And they went both of them together.

And Isaac said to his father, My father, he said, Here I am, my son. He said, Behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb? Abraham said, God will provide for himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.

[ 15 : 42 ] So they went, both of them together. When they came to the place which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac, his son, laid him on the altar on top of the wood.

Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the angel of the Lord called him from heaven and said, Abraham, Abraham. And he said, Here I am. He said, Don't lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him.

For now I know you fear God, seeing you've not withheld your son, your only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked. And behold, there was a ram caught in the thicket by his thorns.

And Abraham went and took the ram and offered up as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called the name of that place, the Lord will provide. As I said to this day, on the mount of the Lord, it shall be provided.

Wow. So we've talked about the call. Abraham answered God's call through obedience and thus began his journey of faith.

[ 16 : 48 ] And so the journey of faith, sorry, the journey of faith brings questions and fatigue. Imagine cutting the wood in preparation for your own son or daughter.

How Abraham's heart must have ached, right? Abraham was a normal guy. He wasn't some superhero, right? Who didn't have emotion or anything like that, right?

Abraham would be the one to bring his own child's life to an end. Was his mind going in circles? How could this be, Lord? What do you mean sacrifice Isaac? You gave him to me. I thought you would bless the nations through him.

Is there another son? What is this all about? I mean, how did he even wake up the next morning to begin his journey? Right? How many times he could have hit the snooze button on his iPhone and rolled back over and avoided the task that was put for him?

What about when Isaac says, Father, we have the fire and the wood, but where's the burnt offering? Right? And so he asked his father that question. And so, what do you think Abraham felt?

[ 17 : 58 ] How do you think Abraham felt when he knew, it's going to be you? It's going to be my son. And so, we see then, Abraham begins to build the altar where he'll sacrifice his son, right? And he binds Isaac's wrists and maybe his feet and he starts to pin him down to this altar so that he

can't get away.

And we see in verse 10 that he begins to, this is what the text says, he gets ready to slaughter his son. Right? He's reached the moment. This is the moment.

And so, Abraham's heart must have been racing a million miles an hour as he raises the knife and you think of the strength and the power that it took to do that and all the mental and physical energy that was saved for this moment.

The moment where he'll sacrifice his son, the promised son, the son of promise, the son from God that he was given, the son that he loves with tears in his eyes, right? He looks at his son who is also weeping and he's scared and Abraham's scared.

He's sweating, he's trembling. And in verse 11, what do we see? The angel of the Lord calls to him from heaven and says, Abraham!

[19:04] Abraham! And he says, here, here I am! And he says, don't lay your hand on the boy or do anything with him. For now I know you fear God, seeing you've not withheld your son from me.

Right? The rush of emotion, the sweeping emotion as he goes from being ready to sacrifice the one he loves to... The joy, right? The relief, the weight taken off of his shoulders that must have filled Abraham's heart, right?

As God reveals, Abraham, you're not going to sacrifice Isaac. It was a test. And Abraham looks off to the side, right?

And he sees the ram caught in the bushes. And he runs over there. He sweeps up that ram, right? He brings him back to the altar. He puts the ram down.

They prepare the ram, right? And they offer up the ram as a sacrifice in the place of Isaac, his son, right? And I can't help but think that Abraham and Isaac, right?

[20:11] They're celebrating. They're laughing. They're crying. They're praising the Lord. They're saying, the Lord, he's given a substitute. Isaac doesn't have to die.

The Lord has spared my son. So how did Abraham do it? How is his faith so strong?

And how is he so obedient to the Lord's command? Well, we're going to see that right here. We're going to put up the next slide. The journey brings obedience.

The journey of faith brings obedience only through God's, only through God's promise and provision. We see that he answered the call through recalling and trusting in God's promise earlier in Genesis, in the few chapters before this.

And he uses the same process to complete his three-day journey, from his initial obedience until the angel of the Lord comes, right, and told him to stop.

[21:19] And he revealed that the animal would be sacrificed for Isaac. And so Abraham's journey was rooted in God's provision and God's promise, not in his own understanding, not in his vision and insight into the future.

And so let's look at a few of these verses in the journey that reveal this truth to us. Verse 5, the boy will return. It says, Then Abraham said to his young man, Stay here with the donkey.

I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you. So after his three-day journey, Abraham, he leaves his donkey, right? He took two servants with him.

He leaves his donkey, he leaves his servants. He leaves whatever possessions they might have brought, food or rations for the journey. Right? And he tells him, Stay here. I and the boy are going to go over there. And then we're going to come back. We're going to come back.

We're going to come back. And so, wait a minute. Right? How did he know this? Verse 19, which we'll read in a little bit, tells us that Abraham indeed returned.

[22:24] He did. He returned with the young men and went back to his home. But how could Abraham have known this? God's command was to sacrifice Isaac, right? And the burnt offering sacrifice meant that, in the Old Testament, that the entire sacrifice was burned up.

It was gone. There was nothing left. And so, how did Abraham have such confidence that he returned with his son? And just as we talked about earlier, faith is an understanding in the things we, man, woman, can see.

But it's clinging to the promises and provisions of God. Abraham had faith. He'd return with Isaac to his servants and his donkey and go back home because his faith was in God, who had promised that the nations would be blessed through him and that through his son, Isaac, his offspring, this would occur.

The Lord would provide. Verse 7. This is another example. And Isaac said to his father, Abraham, my father.

And he said, here I am, my son. He said, behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? Abraham trusted in God's promise.

[ 23 : 38 ] We see Isaac ask his father, like, a little confused. You know, where's the lamb? Where's the animal? We do this all the time. We know what's going on. And Isaac knew what they were doing.

He did. He knew they were going to sacrifice a life to God, but he didn't realize that it would be his. Abraham did. And so what's Abraham's response to his son?

He responds with confidence, saying, God will provide for himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son. How could this have been?

How could he have known? Abraham was trusting in God as being good to his promises and does not go back on his promise. How much was Abraham trusting in God and not his own understanding?

Well, Hebrews 11, 17 through 19, I'm going to paraphrase it, gives a little insight into that. It says, by faith, Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and that he considered God was able even to raise him from the dead.

[ 24 : 40 ] Which, figuratively speaking, the text says, he did receive him back. Kidding me? Man, that's some faith.

Another example of Abraham clinging to God's promise and provision. Verse 10, Abraham raises the knife. It says, then Abraham reached out his hand, verse 10, and took the knife to slaughter his son.

Abraham raising the knife to slaughter his son, right? This is not an event that can be done in our understanding. There's no way Abraham just could have pushed through, right?

You can't grit your teeth and white knuckle and use all the willpower of the world to slaughter your child. This isn't screaming as loud as you can doing the last five push-ups in a set of 20.

Right? This isn't that. This is, without question, the most difficult test of Abraham, of obedience in Abraham's life. He literally was taking the life of his son.

[ 25 : 49 ] The only child whom he loved, whom he had waited for, whom was promised to him, and whom was his hope and future, his hope for the future.

The only conceivable way, the only way Abraham could have done this, could have gotten close to taking his son's life in obedience to the Lord by acting and trusting in God's promise and provision. And that's what he was doing for his entire journey, those three days, right?

There's no other way. There's no conceivable way. So, we've looked at Abraham's call to faith through obedience and in his journey and his testing of faith. And now we arrive at the end, the end of the story in Genesis 22.

So, let's read verses 15 through 19. And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven and said, By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you've done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you.

And I will multiply your offspring as the stars in the heaven and as the sand that's on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed my voice.

[ 26 : 58 ] So, Abraham returned with young men and they arose and went to Beersheba. And Abraham lived in Beersheba. So, after the call and the journey, we see the result.

Faith through obedience results in receiving God's promises and provisions. So, at the end of Abraham's journey of faith, he was obedient to God's command without knowing the future, without having insight, without having full understanding, without knowing what was even ten feet in front of him.

But he obeyed. And he didn't know how the sacrifice of Isaac would work, how that would happen, how God's promise would come to be fulfilled. But he believed that it would. And so what happened?

The angel of the Lord calls again to Abraham from heaven and says, verse 16, right? By myself I have sworn, this is absolute, this is absolute, this statement, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you.

How? That's what the angel says. First way, I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of the heavens, the sand that's on the seashore. Right? We saw this promise in covenant, Genesis 15 and 17.

[ 28 : 12 ] Number two, the angel says, your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies. This is actually a bonus. This is a new addition to God's promise earlier. And number three, in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

Now, if you're catching on to something here, then you're picking up on what I'm going to say. And that's that there's something critical to realize. And indeed, Abraham did receive some of the promise and some of the provision of God.

He did get some of that fulfillment through Isaac. He received an offspring. God promised a son in the beginning of the promise of many offspring. That was the beginning of that.

And God, and that they would be as numerous as the sands. But he didn't receive the full fulfillment of God's promise. Of number three, in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

Abraham didn't receive any of that promise. He wasn't around. He had died. He didn't see how the nations were blessed through his offspring. So this idea, again, begs us to state what faith is, right?

[ 29 : 22 ] Faith is obedience from clinging. Obedience that comes from clinging or holding on to a promise. Faith does not necessarily mean that we are always going to personally receive that promise God has given us.

But that when we have faith, we are trusting that promise. The promise. Hebrews 11, 13 reads this. These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar. So this is where things get exciting. Although Abraham didn't receive the fulfillment, right, of all the promises he was given, just some of them.

If you and I are believers in Jesus, then we have received the fulfillment of that promise to Abraham through God's provision. How have we received God's provision and promise to Abraham?

The answer brings us back to the beginning of the story in Genesis 22. Right? The entire premise of Abraham's task to offer a burnt offering sacrifice to God, as we talked about earlier, was well known to God's people.

[ 30 : 35 ] The animal would be placed on the altar and consumed entirely. Right? And what did that accomplish? Well, one theologian has this to say. The burnt offering was required by and served to remind the offerer of his depravity.

The burnt offering was thus, not as much to gain forgiveness for a particular sin, but to make atonement for the offerer of sinfulness. Remember, these sacrifices of atonement, right?

They happened all the time, several times a day and many other times during the year. Yet what Abraham may not have known, and what many of God's people at the time may not have known, was that there would be a future fulfillment and completion of the sacrificial process.

Let's read. Forty-one generations after Abraham and Isaac ascended the hills of Moriah, the same hills on which Solomon built the temple to the Lord, outside of Jerusalem.

The man Jesus, from the same lineage of Abraham, also ascended a hill outside of Jerusalem, called Calvary.

[ 31 : 58 ] Calvary. He, like Isaac, was being led by his father, God, in full obedience to offer up a sacrifice.

He, like Isaac, carried the wood on which the sacrifice would take place. when he arrived at the place where the sacrifice would be.

There was no substitute for this man, Jesus. There was no ram caught in a bush to die in his place. He was the substitute. He had to die.

The nails in his hands and feet, the crown of thorns on his head, he hung until death atop that hill on a wooden cross.

So nearby to the same hill that Abraham named, the Lord will provide. In Genesis 22, 14 that we just read, God did provide.

[ 33 : 32 ] Again, he provided a greater sacrifice, the greatest sacrifice. Jesus Christ became the sacrifice, the fulfillment of the burnt offerings of the Old Testament.

He became the fulfillment that those sacrifices were pointing forward towards. Jesus himself became the one final sacrifice that was not temporary like the ones before it, no.

Jesus Christ, once and for all of eternity, shed his blood and God accepted his sacrifice as enough. It was finished. Because of Abraham's obedience to God's promise, if you're here today and you

believe in Jesus Christ's substitutionary sacrifice for you, then you share in that promise that Abraham was given.

You know, Jesus, personally, you have been blessed. You are part of the many nations that were blessed. And that's the promise that God gave to Abraham.

Hallelujah. And it would be terrible for me to not say at this point before going on that if you don't know Jesus as your Savior, and you know, you know if Jesus hasn't saved you, you know if you haven't accepted Christ's sacrifice for your sin, and you can come to faith today.

[ 35 : 19 ] You don't have to clean up your life. You don't have to attend church so many times or read your Bible that many times to know Jesus. It's a decision that can be made today in faith.

So make that choice. So how does Abraham's story in Genesis 22 apply to us? And what do we do with this, right?

You know, it's great to read Scripture and, excuse me, I apologize. It's great to read Scripture and hear truth, right, and read truth and have truth spoken to us from the pulpit, right, and just kind of, oh, that's great truth, right, and then just go home and do nothing.

I fall into that trap all the time. But we don't want to do that. I'm not going to let us do that. So we don't just want to know truth.

We want to know how truth changes us and what truth does to us. So there's three things I want to point out about Abraham's story. The first one, oh, we don't have slides for this, sorry.

[ 36 : 30 ] The first one is this. And if you have a pen, please write this down. I wrote it down. The first one is this. Abraham's righteousness comes by faith.

So Abraham, right, he believes in God's promise and God's ability to provide, right, and not in his own understanding. And so what happens? Genesis 15, 6. There's going to be a lot of Scripture coming out here, folks.

Genesis 15, 6 says this. Abraham's faith was in his trusting in God as a promise, as a God of promise, as a God who provides.

And he acted on that faith in obedience. Not because he could see or understand what was going on. Not because he had perfect comprehension. He couldn't understand the future and how things would pan out.

But because he believed that God is worthy to hold to his promises. That's why it was accounted to him as righteousness. His faith was in God, not in himself.

[ 37 : 38 ] So also, friends, if you and I believe the promises that God's given to us through his word, namely that as 2 Corinthians 5, 21 says, for our sake, for our sake, for our sake, God made him who had no sin to be sin for us.

So that in him we might become the righteousness of God. And then Acts 16, 31. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.

Alright? And so, if we've done this, if we've displayed the very, we as Christians have displayed that very same saving faith. The same saving faith that Abraham displayed.

And God's righteousness has been accounted to us as it was to Abraham. But why is it faith? And I really think we need to get this.

It's faith because we cannot know how God puts our sin on Jesus. Do you know how God does that? Can you see how Christ's sacrifice is sufficient for your sin?

[ 39 : 00 ] Can you see that how the interworkings of how you no longer have to die because Christ did? I don't really totally, I don't fully comprehend that.

Can you see that you have an eternal destiny with God because faith in Christ and how much God loves you? I don't understand how much God loves me.

I don't understand it. I know He loves me. And He loves us and He calls us His own. Well, how? Doesn't He see, doesn't He see me?

Doesn't He see my sin? Doesn't He see who I really am? And Romans 8, 17 tells us this. We are God's children and heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.

By faith we believe. So we don't, we can't really comprehend how God takes our sin, pushes it away, takes Christ's blood, puts it on us and then deems us righteous.

[ 40 : 03 ] We don't understand that. We know bits and pieces. We don't really understand how that all works. But by faith we believe.

You don't believe in Jesus as your Savior because you can see and understand everything and every component of it. You don't. Be true to yourself. And you don't have to. You need to just by

faith believe it to be true.

And so, this is heavy on my heart. And so, I think what has started in faith must continue in faith. And I was talking, we were talking at our Bible study this community group this week just with the guys and we were talking about how we don't always have boldness in evangelism and sharing the gospel.

And I think it's because what we do is we talk about faith and accepting God's good news of Jesus being a substitute for our sin.

Right? And we kind of, we put that all in one little bag. Right? And we take that and we move it like over here. Right? Or we move it in our past. And we put it there. And sometimes it kind of stays there.

[ 41 : 15 ] Right? So, faith, trusting God for faith, our salvation, God's gospel, his good news of Jesus kind of sits, you know, it sits pretty, it's nice, like we talk about it, we reference it like, oh, remember that?

Right? But it's not like, it's not here. It's not with, it's not always present. It's easy for our faith not to really have a big impact in what our current life looks like.

But the gospel needs to impact and affect every area of our life. It needs to bring about the change in an eternal way.

The change that it brought about in an eternal way for all eternity needs to also bring about changes in our life right now. And it has to come 100%. It must come from the gospel, from God's good news of Jesus sacrificing himself for our sin so that we can be in relationship with God.

What was broken in the garden in Adam and Eve when they sinned was restored in Jesus. And friends, that needs to mean everything to us. It needs to mean everything.

[ 42 : 29 ] It's not over there, right? It's here. It's here. It's today. And so, we realize that Abraham's righteousness and the way he achieved that through faith is the same way we gained God's righteousness on us.

And so that's the first thing, the righteousness. The second thing, there's one more after this, is that we need to learn from Abraham's call.

Abraham had faith in a God of promise and provision. If you haven't heard that yet today, make sure you're listening for this part.

Right? And he responded to God's call with obedience. We know this. We've read this. So, this could be heavy. I wonder in what ways you've been called to faith in the Lord by obedience.

Abraham surrendered Isaac. He gave up Isaac. He sacrificed Isaac. In what ways have you been called to surrender? You, you, you, you, you, me, everyone.

[ 43 : 38 ] Everyone. In what ways have we, have you, have I been called to surrender? Maybe we've been called to give up idols.

The things that bring happiness and self-worth that God alone should provide. Maybe they're our hobbies. Maybe they're money. Maybe it's our time.

Relationships. Accomplishments. Our job. Our image and reputation in front of others. What other people think of us. These are idols. These things drive us and motivate us to, to want to consume more.

We want to consume more of our idols because they make us feel better. They make us feel like we belong and like we're worth something. So maybe you need to give up your idols.

Maybe you've called to surrender that in obedience. Maybe you've been called to obedience to surrender strongholds. It's a stronghold. Something that's pinning you down.

[ 44 : 39 ] Something that's keeping you down. Maybe it's fear. Maybe it's anxiety. It's crippling you. Maybe it's an addiction to a substance to sexual immorality.

Maybe it's your pride. Pride's got a hold on you. Maybe it's your selfishness.

Maybe you need to surrender or give up your understanding. Maybe you lost someone you love. That's heavy.

We don't always understand. We usually don't. Maybe you need to give up your understanding about your job or your lack of financial stability.

Your health. Chronic injury or pain or illness. Or your uncertainty about your future. Right? Abraham gave up his understanding about his future.

[ 45 : 51 ] Maybe you're being called to surrender something that's of great value. Priceless. Like Isaac was to Abraham. Maybe you're being called to surrender something that the Lord has actually

called you to.

Right? He's already called you to this and you're doing it and you're obeying but now he's calling you to something else or he's calling you to kind of end that journey, that aspect of obedience and he's calling you to start something else and chances are it's probably something that's greater than the first.

like Abraham needed to sacrifice God's promise and Isaac right? In order to sacrifice Isaac. He couldn't hold on to both things at once.

He couldn't have Isaac, keep Isaac and sacrifice him at the same time. Abraham obeyed God and was ready to give up his son.

His son. And that meant everything. His son meant everything to him. And so how can we do it?

Friends, be empowered. These things are significant to us, right? And they're rooted pretty deep in our souls.

[ 46 : 57 ] They take up a lot of our time, our efforts, our energy. We've laughed through them.

We've cried through them. We've had pain and sorrow through them. Right?

And a lot of the times they are our identity. When we think of ourselves, we view ourselves in light of those things I just talked about, our idols, our strongholds, our understanding, something of value.

And so, like Abraham, how do we do this? Right? Because if they're so rooted and if we let these things go, like we're going to feel hopeless. We might feel weak.

We might feel vulnerable. So how do we do it? Like Abraham, we must cling to the promises and provisions of God. Surprise. to help us respond, yes, Lord, I will trust you.

Okay. The promise of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit empowers us to respond in obedience to God's call. John 14, 16, and 26. Jesus tells his disciples, I will ask the Father and he'll give you another helper.

[ 48 : 02 ] The helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name. He will teach you all the things and bring your remembrance, bring to your remembrance all that I've said to you. And so, if you're sitting here today, you have received God's promise to you if you know Jesus personally.

It's the same spirit that indwelt Christ that was implanted in us as salvation, right? We've received that. God has sent his spirit to indwell us. And so, the spirit, the helper, given to us by faith, he lives in us and he reminds us of God's promise and provision.

He reminds us of our salvation. He reminds, he helps us, he counsels us, he empowers us to respond in obedience to God's call, right? We're not doing this alone.

Actually, God says, obey and respond to my call through remembering God's, my provision and promise for you. And it's not like, we're over here and then like, the Trinity's over there, right? It's like, God says this and then it's like, we're here and the spirit's here.

He's not giving us calls to obedience that he doesn't understand or called him off guard, right? He's giving us these things. He's calling us to obey through faith and he's giving us a spirit. which means everything.

[ 49 : 11 ] We need to yield to, listen to, and submit to the powerful spirit of God in us. The spirit of God in you, Christian. So, this verse is coded often but it has new meaning in light of this.

Philippians 4, 13, right? I can do all things through him, through God's spirit who gives me strength. So, we need to cling to the promise of the Holy Spirit.

We need to see that we've been provided with new life as we're responding to the call. We can choose to respond to God's call to obedience and faith because we've been given the promise of new life.

New life. No longer bound to sin, no longer entrapped by the power of sin. We're not slaves. You're not a slave, Christian. You're empowered to choose righteous living.

You're empowered to obedience, empowered to break the chains of bondage, to live free. Those things we just mentioned that need to be surrendered in your life, they're not your master.

[ 50 : 17 ] Right? They don't control you anymore. They don't. But we need to live in light of these things because if we don't live in light of our new life in Christ, we're going to continue to be bound by those things.

1 Corinthians 5, 17, what a sweet verse. Therefore, if he was in Christ, he's a new creature. You know, Jesus, you're a new creature. You're a new creature. You're a new creature. The old things have passed.

Behold, new things have come. Ephesians 2, 24. Put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

Put on your new self, Christian. So new life means a choice, a new choice, an ability to respond in faith and obedience to God's call because of who I am in Christ, because of my new identity in faith in God.

So we learned about Abraham's righteousness, which is our righteousness. We learned about Abraham's call and the equipping, the empowering by the Spirit and the empowering of new life. And so the final thing is this.

[ 51 : 22 ] Learn from Abraham's journey. What are the characteristics of your journey of faith? It's long. It's difficult.

It's emotional. It's physically exhausting. I have doubts. I have questions. I have concerns. It pushes me past comfortable. I'm tempted to quit. I'm tempted to resort back to the things I've been called to surrender because they make me feel good.

Right? This isn't a surprise to our God. Mm-mm. In the journey, there's spiritual warfare and there's a battle raging in this room right now.

There's a battle raging everywhere. 1 Peter 5, 8 says, Be sober-minded and be watchful for your adversary, the devil. It's the devil. Prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. He's waiting. spiritual warfare. The enemy is constantly against us. He's constantly nagging and picking at our hearts. He constantly wants us to give in.

[ 52 : 28 ] His goal is for glory to be taken away from God. That's his goal. Number one goal. Number one. See, if he can take away God's glory, then he can refocus it on himself.

The evil one can be exalted in his own way when we sin. Ephesians 6, spiritual warfare. Put on the whole armor of God you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against rulers, the authorities, cosmic powers, spiritual forces of evil in this darkness and in the heavenly places.

Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand the evil day. The armor. What is it? Belt of truth, blessed pride of righteousness, gospel shoes, shield of faith, helmet of salvation.

Please read Ephesians 6 today. We'll empower you. And finally, the best, this is the best, the best, the sword of the spirit, the word of God. And so we see these, these, one, two, three, four, five, six things in the armor of God, right?

[ 53 : 28 ] There's one offensive weapon. There's one, right? Because the enemy's strong. We need a lot of defense, right? We need a lot of defense. We do.

It's powerful. It's not powerful enough. Yeah. The sword of the spirit, the word of God is our offense. Right?

We have God's word. God's word for our journey and obedience comes from God's word. And God's word is in you. The lies of the devil, the temptation to resort back to our old ways, not powerful enough.

They're not. So we have the Holy Spirit, we have new life, and then we have, we've been equipped with God's word. And this is what God gave us for our, specifically for our journey of faith.

Read this. 2 Timothy 3, 16 through 17. All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, training, and righteousness so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

[ 54 : 28 ] It tells us right there. God's word is to thoroughly equip us for every good work. It equips us for the battle. If you don't have one of these, you need to get one.

It's the Bible. It's God's word. And this book is filled with God's promises. And the Bible is alive, and the Bible is at work. In our community group this week, we, or two weeks ago, we created a word document of like, there's gotta be like 30 things on there, about truths about what the Bible declares about itself, right?

I'll share one story, and we're almost done here. The Lord's given me tremendous revelation in the last, about six weeks of my life. And he's taught me to cherish the scripture.

He's taught me that it's food, it's nourishment, it's life. He's taught me a lot about himself through this.

And so, I ask you the same question. Do you know God's book of promises and provisions? Do you know it? Does it collect dust?

[ 55 : 53 ] Right? Is it somewhere hidden that you don't even know? Do you know, do you read God's word? It's God's word, friends. These are the words of God. How many promises do you know from this book?

How many? How can we have faith in the journey if we don't know the promises that we're to cling to? We can't. God's word equips us in our call to faith, and it's absolutely vital in our obedience. And so, as we go through our journey, if we're not clinging to the Holy Spirit and listening and yielding to God's Spirit in us, it's not something creepy, right?

It's not like a ghost or something. It's God's, it's God's life in us. If we're not yielding to the Spirit, if we're not, if we don't understand our new life in Christ, our new identity, and then if we don't see that we've been equipped with God's word, we're not going to obey.

We're not going to. We may start journeys. We may start in obedience, but it's not going to last. It can't, right? It can't because Scripture tells us that faith is the things that you don't understand and can't see, and the only way to conquer those things is through God's word and promises.

[ 57 : 10 ] You don't know God's promises. You don't know who you are. You don't see the Spirit's in you and you have to yield to it. We'll fail in our journeys, I promise you. But we need, we need to leave with hope.

So in conclusion, Abraham had great faith because the object of his faith was God, our God of provision and promise. And faith in God is not moving forward because of what we can see. It's the assurance of things hoped for and a trust in God even when we can't understand and figure out things in advance. This is my parting statement.

In your response to God's call to obedience on your journeys of faith, cling to God's promise and provisions of which the Holy Spirit reminds us, of which our new life empowers in us, of which God's word equips us for and by which we're saved, friends.

Pray with me. Lord God, you have provided all things, God. 1 Peter says all things for life and godliness, Lord. God, you have done it.

[ 58 : 20 ] God, you have saved our souls, Lord, from eternal damnation. God, help us to see that. God, help us to be the beginning of, Lord, our journey of faith.

Help us to realize that was the beginning of our journey of faith, God, and from there, Lord, you still call us to faith. You've equipped us, God. Help us to see your spirit.

Help us to yield. Help us to understand God, the new life we have, no longer having to resort to the old things, God. Help us to see, Lord, that your words equipped us and enabled us to live righteously.

God, you are all and in all. We pray these things in your name. Amen. Amen.