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Sermon Notes

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## **The Second Greatest Act of Faith in History**

### **Hebrews 11:17-19**

*Hebrews 11:17-19* **By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, <sup>18</sup> even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." <sup>19</sup> Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.**

**Westminster Confession of Faith:** There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions; immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of His own immutable and most righteous will, for His own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him; ... most just, and terrible in His judgments; hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

God has all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of Himself; and is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He hath made, not deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them: He is the sole fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things, and has most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them whatsoever He Himself pleases. In His sight all things are open and manifest; His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to Him contingent, or uncertain. He is most holy in all His counsels, in all His works, and in all His commands. **To Him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience He is pleased to require of them.**

### **I. God's Test of Abraham's Faith: The Sacrifice of Isaac**

#### **A. The Fact of the Test Stated Plainly**

##### **1. Hebrews 11:17**

*Hebrews 11:17* **By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice.**

##### **2. Genesis 22:1**

***Genesis 22:1-2 Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. <sup>2</sup> Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."***

B. Who Was This Man Whom God So Severely Tested?

1. Abraham, called by God from Ur of the Chaldees

***Genesis 12:1-3 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. <sup>2</sup> "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."***

2. Abraham, the man God had promised would have descendants as numerous as the stars

***Genesis 15:5-6 He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars-- if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." <sup>6</sup> Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.***

3. Abraham, the man with whom God had made a solemn covenant

***Genesis 15:17-18 When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. <sup>18</sup> On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land***

4. Abraham, the man from whom God could not hide what He was about to do to Sodom

***Genesis 18:17-19 Then the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? <sup>18</sup> Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. <sup>19</sup> For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him."***

5. Abraham, the man called God's friend

***Isaiah 41:8 But you, O Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, you descendants of Abraham my friend***

***James 2:23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend.***

Observation: It is not at all a sign of God's disfavor when tests and trials of the severest kinds come into someone's life; Abraham was called God's friend, and God still tested him most severely. No one has ever been more beloved to God the Father than Jesus, yet it was God's pleasure to crush Him and cause Him to suffer. When tried by God, let us not listen for a moment to Satan's dark whisperings when he tries to insinuate that this proves God doesn't really love you.

### C. At What Stage of His Life Did He Test Him?

1. Toward the end of life, after many other trials
  - a. God built Abraham up, step by step, for this, the greatest test of his life
  - b. God does not place the raw recruit on the front lines of the battle, but rather the battle-scarred veteran of many campaigns
  - c. Like a skillful potter, God has been shaping Abraham's faith through many encounters and many smaller tests and trials
    - i) The original call to leave Ur of the Chaldees
    - ii) The journey to Canaan
    - iii) The wandering around from place to place, living in tents
    - iv) The long, long wait for Isaac finally to be born
    - v) The promise that came the year before Isaac was born, that Sarah would be his mother
    - vi) The fulfillment of that promise exactly when God said He would do it
  - d. Here at last, the graduate school final examination... the doctoral dissertation of faith... the greatest trial of his life
2. During a time of peace and comfort... like a bolt from the blue
  - a. Genesis 22:1: TIMING

### ***Genesis 22:1 And it came to pass AFTER THESE THINGS***

- b. Genesis 21
  - i) Isaac, the miracle baby is finally born, to the indescribable delight of his parents
  - ii) Sarah marvels, saying

**Genesis 21:6-7 "God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me." <sup>7</sup> And she added, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."**

- iii) Ishmael is cast out... only Isaac is left
- iv) Abraham makes a covenant of peace with Abimelech
- v) Abraham is then able to live for a long time at peace in the land of the Philistines

**Genesis 21:33-34 Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there he called upon the name of the LORD, the Eternal God. <sup>34</sup> And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines for a long time.**

- c. In the middle of this peaceful circumstance, when "all is right with the world," like a bolt from the blue, comes this dreadful command

**"Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."**

- d. God knows the best timing for every trial that comes into our lives... His timing is perfect

D. Why Did God "Test" Him? Why Does He "Test" Us?

- 1. Not tempt

**James 1:13 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone**

- a. This kind of temptation is purely evil
- b. It is a pull dragging your soul directly toward something EVIL

- 2. Test = prove the worth of

- a. Like an assayer's office during the gold rush, where you would bring your minerals and have them assayed
- b. God uses trials to PROVE our faith to be the GENUINE ARTICLE
- c. If our faith were never sorely tried or tested in these ways, there would be no way to prove its existence... faith flourishes where we do not know where we are going, we have not yet received the promises, we do not yet see the outcome, where some severe obstacle mounts up to oppose us

- 3. Three Reasons Why God Tests Our Faith

- a. For His own glory... to put His gift on display
  - i) Genuine faith is a gift from God
  - ii) God wants to show the full power of His own true gift
  - iii) God gives the gift of faith, then orchestrates circumstances that put that faith on display

***Job 1:8 Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil."***

- b. For our own good... to give us a greater assurance
  - i) After this experience, Abraham's assurance must have been sky-high
  - ii) His sense of absolute certainty that God would keep His promises was rock-solid
  - iii) So also after every God-ordained trial, our own assurance gets stronger and we are further along in our salvation

***James 1:2-4 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. <sup>4</sup> Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.***

- c. For the good of others... to learn by example
  - i) We are all sitting this morning in school, the school of faith, and our instructor is Abraham
  - ii) We learn from example, by watching how this man of God handled this severe test
  - iii) So also, when we see how a dear sister in Christ cares for her dying husband with faith and joy, trusting in God's promises, we are vastly better off
  - iv) When we read accounts of missionaries who leave the comforts of home by faith and who go and suffer cheerfully for Christ, we are all strengthened

#### E. How Could Abraham Morally Obey Such a Command?

1. This command is to some people morally repugnant
2. God has already stated His hatred for murder

***Genesis 9:6 Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.***

3. This is the slaughter of a perfectly innocent young boy... a beloved son; how can this be anything but morally repugnant?
4. Key answer: God's absolute sovereignty... His absolute right to do whatever He wants with what He has made
  - a. God does not forbid all human killing of other humans... for that brings us into moral confusion when God later commands the death penalty over and over in the Laws of Moses
  - b. God is the Sovereign King, the giver of all laws, but under no law Himself
  - c. His word IS law... whatever our God commands is right and pure and acceptable
  - d. In the Book of Revelation, the angels in heaven pour out on the surface of the earth bowls of wrath that result in the deaths of a third of mankind... in our age that would be billions and billions of people... and the angels celebrate the commands as right SIMPLY BECAUSE GOD MADE the command

***Revelation 16:5 Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: "You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One, because you have so judged***

- e. Abraham was under an absolute moral imperative to do WHATEVER God commanded him to do

## II. The Greatness of the Test

### A. What Was Actually Commanded?

1. Abraham was to travel to the region of Moriah, to a mountain where God would tell him to go
2. Abraham was to take his son Isaac, and slaughter him
3. He was then to burn his body to ashes

***Genesis 22:6 Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together***

4. The knife was for Isaac's heart; the fire and wood was to burn Isaac's body

## B. Who Was It That Abraham Was Commanded to Sacrifice?

1. What does God say?

***Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love...***

2. Hebrews heightens the tension

***Hebrews 11:17-18 He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, <sup>18</sup> even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."***

3. Not one of your beasts, nor even all of your beasts... not one of your servants... not even Ishmael, the son of your slave woman
4. No... it was Isaac was the miracle baby... the son of their dreams and hopes and plans
5. He was the dearly beloved son of their old age... the one they'd waited for for decades... conceived in Sarah's womb only by the direct power of God; he would be the only child she ever had
6. More than that, God had clearly revealed that it was through Isaac that Abraham's seed would be reckoned...
7. He was to be the progenitor of the Christ... the Savior of the world; through this seed, all peoples on earth would be blessed

Matthew Henry: ... in being called to offer up his Isaac, he seemed to be called to destroy and cut off his own family, to cancel the promises of God, to prevent the coming of Christ, to destroy the whole world, to sacrifice his own soul and his hopes of salvation, and to cut off the church of God at one blow: a most terrible trial!

Peter O'Brien: "When Abraham obeyed God's mandate to leave Ur of the Chaldees, he simply gave up his past. But when he was summoned to Mount Moriah to deliver his own son to God, he was being asked to surrender his future as well."

## C. What In Abraham's Nature Made this Such a Test?

1. Abraham was not a cruel man... actually, he was quite tender-hearted
2. When God revealed that Ishmael was to be cast out and no longer live with him, he could scarcely bear it!!

***Genesis 21:11 The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son.***

3. How much more was this a severe test for such a loving father as Abraham was

## D. What In God's Dealings With Abraham Made this Such a Test?

1. This command seemed to be directly opposite from everything that God had been doing in Abraham's life
2. It flew in the face of all the promises God had made
3. It seemed contrary to the loving, kind and life-giving nature of God Himself... it seemed so un-God-like that it might have seemed to come from an entirely different source
4. We have to imagine that God spoke so clearly on this command that there could not possibly be any doubt whatsoever that it was the same God who had spoken to Abraham all the other times... there could be no room for question whether it was Satan that had whispered this in his ear or something

### III. The Inner Workings of Abraham's Faith

#### A. No Scripture Gives Even a Hint of Inner Turmoil

1. One of the most poignant moments in the Bible... deeply emotional and rich in pathos
2. Many songs and artistic renderings probe the PSYCHOLOGY of Abraham here

Michael Card: "Three days' journey, to the sacred place; a boy and a man with a sorrowful face; tortured yet faithful to God's command, to take the life of his son with his own hand."

SORROWFUL FACE?? Perhaps, but Scripture never mentions it

TORTURED?? Probably, but Scripture never mentions it

#### 3. John Owen's comments

"What now must be the workings of his heart towards Isaac, a son whom he'd so long waited for; the only child of his dear wife who was the companion of all his wanderings; this boy who was now growing up, as is most probable, unto the age of sixteen or seventeen years, and had engaged his affections by all ways possible; the security of his old age, the life of his family—his only hope and comfort in this world? And how was he to deal with him? Not to send him out of his family with some provision and a guide, as he sent Ishmael; not to part with him for a time in a foreign country; but to take him himself, bind him, slay him with a knife, and then to burn him to ashes. Who can conceive what convulsions of nature must have happened at that time? Who can put himself into these circumstances without trembling and horror?"

4. Martin Luther... in his preaching of the account from Genesis 22 spoke at length of the three day battle that Abraham must have endured
5. ALL OF THIS PROBABLY DID HAPPEN... but Scripture says nothing of it



6. Instead, the indications are that Abraham committed all these things to God... the complexities of working all this out were not his responsibility
7. He probably believed here the same way he believed earlier for the birth of Isaac to begin with:

***Romans 4:19-21 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead-- since he was about a hundred years old-- and that Sarah's womb was also dead. <sup>20</sup> Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, <sup>21</sup> being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.***

8. Owen's comment:

“In compliance with the command of God, he shut his eyes as it were against all difficulties and consequents, resolving to venture Isaac, posterity, truth of promises, EVERYTHING upon the authority of God.”

In the end, it was for GOD not Abraham, to reconcile the command of God with the promise of God

#### B. Hebrews 11:19 Tells Us How Abraham Reasoned by Faith

***Hebrews 11:19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead***

1. In Abraham's mind, there was FAITH plus REASONING
2. The word in the original language implies a reckoning process, a reasoning out of this and that... weighing things together
3. This is the only glimpse the Scripture gives us into the inner workings of Abraham's mind
4. As he put everything together, he came up with the concept of resurrection from the dead
5. In one sense, this is absolutely astonishing, since it had never happened before in human history
6. In another sense, it makes perfect sense, for the entire human race was under Adam's death penalty; if for this life alone we walk with God, what's the point?
7. So, Abraham reasoned out resurrection...

#### C. Genesis 22:5 Tells Us His Mind... PROOF

***Genesis 22:5 He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you."***

1. Not only did Abraham fully expect a bodily resurrection of Isaac, but he expected an IMMEDIATE resurrection
2. He expected to plunge the knife into Isaac's heart; burn Isaac's body to ashes; then stand back and watch the power of God raise the dead boy up out of the ashes into the same state as before!!!
3. Astonishing faith!! GOD CAN DO ANYTHING... anything, except break His promise... that He cannot do

***Titus 1:2 the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time***

D. The Total Focus on God

1. Abraham did not look at the difficulties or the illogic of it all
2. He looked to the omnipotence of God, the wisdom of God, the faithfulness of God
3. He reasoned that GOD COULD RAISE THE DEAD
4. This is a key lesson in a faith trial... LOOK TO GOD ALONE... meditate on the attributes of God... His goodness to you, His power in creating the universe, above all, His faithfulness to keep His promises

E. The Key to Everything: The Promise of Genesis 21:12

1. God had clearly told Abraham this promise:

***Genesis 21:12 But God said to him, "Do not be so distressed about the boy and your maidservant. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.***

2. That is the KEY TO EVERYTHING in this account... this is precisely why Abraham reasoned out that God would raise Isaac from the dead
3. Isaac was indispensable to the promises of God... it HAD TO BE ISAAC and no one else... if God had said "It is through A SON LIKE ISAAC, born in your old age to your wife Sarah", then Isaac would not have been indispensable... he would have been merely just the first in a line of at least TWO SONS from Sarah... then there would have been no guarantees concerning Isaac himself
4. But because Isaac was indispensable (at least until he had a son of his own), he needed to live... and not as a disembodied spirit, a soul without a body... no he had to live as a MAN

5. This promise was the key to everything; thus the NIV's concessive translation makes NO SENSE AT ALL:

*Hebrews 11:17-18 He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, <sup>18</sup> **EVEN THOUGH God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."***

- a. That's absolutely DEAD WRONG
- b. It is precisely BECAUSE God had said to him "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned" that he knew he could obey God and kill Isaac and that God would raise Isaac up from the dead!!!

#### F. The Combination of Faith and Reason

1. Faith and reason in this case are in complete harmony
2. Faith accepts the word of God as an absolute fact... as real as anything the five senses tell him about the world
3. So, the promise of God is as real as this rock or that tree or that soaring falcon or this grazing ox... the promise of God is a sure and certain FACT of God's universe
4. Reason then takes this fact and combines it with that fact
  - a. Fact #1: God has promised me that through my offspring, all peoples on earth will be blessed
  - b. Fact #2: God has promised me that it is through Isaac that my offspring will be reckoned
  - c. Fact #3: God has commanded me to slaughter Isaac and burn his body to ashes
  - d. Fact #4: Isaac must live and have a son before he dies; he must have a physical body to do that
  - e. THEREFORE: God is going to raise Isaac from the dead!!

#### G. Obey and Leave the Rest to God

1. In the end, Abraham's only job was to obey the command of God
2. His faith reasoned out enough to allow him to obey fully
3. Simple obedience is what faith calls for

4. Learning to TRUST THE COMMANDS of God as much as we trust the PROMISES of God

***Psalm 119:66 Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I believe in your commands.***

Faith embraces all of God's commands as good and wholesome and pure and right!

#### IV. The Outcome of Abraham's Faith

##### A. Abraham's Immediate and Total Obedience

1. Early the next morning, he got up, saddled the donkey, took at least two servants and his son and went
2. There is no indication that he told Sarah: this was his trial, not hers
3. There is no indication he sought out any advice or looked for support from anyone; Sarah and his friends would almost certainly have tried to talk him out of it; or at best they would have confirmed what he'd already decided to do anyway, so what was the point?
4. For three days they travelled to the place where God had told Abraham to go
5. He took this boy and the wood and fire and knife up the mountain
6. When Isaac asked him:

***Genesis 22:7-8 Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"<sup>8</sup> Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together.***

7. The moment at last came: Abraham obeyed completely by faith

##### B. Abraham's Display of Faith

***Genesis 22:9-10 When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.<sup>10</sup> Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.***

1. In effect, Abraham did exactly what God had told him to do
2. His will was entirely given over to do the deed
3. His affections were wrapped up in the act

4. Isaac was, as far as Abraham was concerned, as good as dead
5. The sacrifice was made, though God stopped him at the last possible moment

#### C. Abraham's Commendation by God

***Genesis 22:11-12 But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. <sup>12</sup> "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."***

1. Amazing that it was the “angel of the Lord” who stopped him!!
2. I believe with all my heart that Genesis 22 is the clearest passage in the Old Testament revealing that the “angel of the Lord” is in fact that pre-incarnate Christ
3. He says “Now I know...” and “...you have not withheld FROM ME your son, your only son...”
4. Abraham's reasoning of resurrection was not needed in the end... there was no need actually to kill the boy
5. Then the angel gives the greatest commendation to Abraham:

***Genesis 22:15-18 The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time <sup>16</sup> and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup> I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, <sup>18</sup> and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."***

6. By faith, Abraham was COMMENDED as a righteous man because of this offering of faith

#### D. Abraham's Reception of Isaac Physically

1. Abraham thus “received Isaac back from the dead”
2. I think this means simply that he was as far gone as possible
3. To Abraham, Isaac WAS dead
4. When the angel of the Lord stopped Abraham, in effect he was receiving Isaac back from the dead in a figurative sense as well as a PHYSICAL sense
5. The two of them walked down that mountain together, perhaps hand in hand, both of them trembling at what had happened there

### E. Abraham's Reception of Isaac Figuratively

***Hebrews 11:19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.***

1. Hebrews goes deeper, using the word “figuratively”
2. The word is literally “in a parable” ... in a figure
3. I believe at least this is referring to Isaac as a type of OUR OWN resurrection from the dead
4. God is able to raise us from the dead, and in the context, that is the author's primary concern
5. Faith operates for us right through our own deaths
6. So, the deathbed faith of the patriarchs is discussed in verse after verse:

***Hebrews 11:13 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance.***

***Hebrews 11:20-22 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future. <sup>21</sup> By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff. <sup>22</sup> By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.***

More next week!!

## V. The Significance for Us Today

### A. Coming to Christ... the Fulfillment of this Type

1. The type was acted out... a loving father about to sacrifice his only begotten son
2. The fulfillment is CHRIST, dying under the hand of His heavenly Father
3. Only the fulfillment infinitely surpasses the type
  - a. The Father wasn't commanded to do it... He did it freely for us
  - b. The Son knew full well what was happening, and willingly took the cup and drank it

c. Abraham was only asked to do it; God actually DID IT

4. So... come to Christ for the forgiveness of your sins!!!

B. Expecting the Testing of Our Faith

C. How Are We Called On to “Offer Up Our Isaac”?

Thomas Manton, Puritan pastor:

1. Faith-filled acceptance of the strokes of Providence

- a. You give up you Isaac when you don't murmur against God for taking your husband, your wife, your son, your daughter
- b. You embrace what God has willed and “kiss the rod”
- c. Perfect example: Sarah Edwards, Jonathan Edwards's wife, upon learning of his sudden death from a small-pox inoculation, wrote of it in a letter to their daughter, Esther:

O my very Dear Child, What shall I say. A holy and good God has covered us with a dark cloud. O that we may all kiss the rod and lay our hands on our mouths. The Lord has done it. He has made me adore his goodness that we had him so long. But my God lives and he has my heart. O what a legacy my husband and your father has left us. We are all given to God and there I am and love to be.

2. Self-denial for the cause of Christ

- a. We “give up our Isaac” when we are willing to turn our backs on earthly comforts and ease for the sake of the gospel
- b. In a small way, when you risk ridicule at work or in your neighborhood so that you can share the gospel with a lost coworker or neighbor, you are “giving up your Isaac”—a comfortable reputation as a “good guy” or a fun person... risking that they will ostracize you as a result
- c. When you sacrifice time and personal health to go on a mission trip, you are “giving up your Isaac” of a comfortable easy life
- d. How much more if you were to go into full-time mission work; when John Paton said a heart-wrenching goodbye in Scotland to his beloved father so that he could sail to the South Pacific and win cannibals to Christ, he was laying the Isaac of his love for his father on the altar and killing it for the cause of Christ
- e. A Missions minded young woman who breaks off a relationship with a man who is not missions minded is sacrificing her Isaac... Lottie Moon did that

3. Mortifying our “precious” lusts

a. Any time you obey these verses:

***Matthew 5:29-30 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.***

D. Learning to Reason by Faith

E. Learning the Pattern of Unquestioning Obedience

F. Putting All Your Hope on Future Resurrection