

There are Blessings in Obeying God

Personal Connection (25 minutes)

Icebreaker

Moving to a new location can be difficult. Would you rather be the person moving or the person helping someone prepare to leave?

Sharing Christ and Praying for Each Other

Who have you been able to share the Gospel with lately and how did it go?

What prayers and praises can your LIFE Group lift to the Lord for you?

Review Last Sunday's *What Now?*

Christ's spirit lives in his followers, equipping them to worship him wholeheartedly and to bring glory to his name by actively using their unique spiritual gifts. The Lord provides all the tools we need to share the gospel and love each other, produce fruit, and inspire passionate worship of our Lord and Savior. Pray to the Lord that you will obediently follow his lead as he shows the way.

Digging Deeper (30 minutes)

This Week's Key Concept:

God's provision, praise, and promises are blessings that *naturally* result from practicing obedience toward the Lord's promptings in our lives.

Read Genesis 22:9-14

Q1. How do you react when God interrupts your plans and directs you to something else you may not have intended to do?

Q2. Fear aside, consider the impact Abraham's obedience had on his son, Isaac, and Isaac's view of God's provision. Have you ever witnessed, first-hand, a blessing someone else received because of their obedience to the Lord? Explain your thoughts.

Q3. Reread verse 14. What do you think is significant in regard to the name Abraham gave this place? How do you think this should relate to your personal stories, when you share your testimony?

Q4. Do you think God's testing of Abraham was to produce faith or to reveal faith? Explain your thoughts.

Q5. Consider this: in Genesis 22:1-8, Abraham is instructed by God to sacrifice his ONLY son, and on the third day after God's instruction, Abraham and Isaac arrive at the place where the sacrifice was to take place. Abraham carried the burden of knowing he was going to sacrifice his child for THREE days, and in addition, carried the knife for the sacrifice the entire time! He could have easily forgotten the knife or changed his mind in those three days. What can we learn from Abraham's example of tested faith, when we are presented with what seems like worst case scenarios?

Impact Questions

Q1. Are you now in a place where you could honestly say that nothing is off limits for the Lord to call you to sacrifice? If not, could you ever see yourself reaching that point? How does growing in our relationship with the Lord help alleviate this fear of sacrifice?

Q2. Can you think of a time in your life when the Lord called you to do something that seemed — in your opinion — completely ridiculous or a bit crazy? Were you able to respond with an obedient heart and, if so, what was the outcome?

Q3. In your life at this current moment, what has the Lord been calling you to surrender (for example, your job situation, relationships, finances, controlling your circumstances, etc.)? How has the Lord been preparing you to move past your hesitation and trust his leading?

Q4. Similar to the concept in last week's sermon of friendship obedience, our obedience to the Lord should come from an authentic outpouring of love toward Christ. The blessings we receive from God come from his provision, praise, and promises, which naturally result from being obedient to the Lord; we can't earn the Lord's blessings. Do you often find yourself still trying to earn the Lord's blessings through being obedient? Explain to your LIFE Group.

Q5. What can we learn from Isaac's example of faith, trust, and obedience?

What now? (15 minutes)

It is not likely in this day and age that the Lord would ask for an identical sacrifice to what he asked of Abraham. However, the Lord often asks us to sacrifice things in our lives that, when we consider living without them, give us great discomfort or grief. Ask the Lord to shed light on the things or people in your life that you think you wouldn't be able to be without. Then, give the Lord praise for continuing to allow his provision to rest upon you in regard to the people and things that are precious to you.

Closing Prayer (15 minutes)

Please continue to be in prayer for Northwest as we seek to follow the Lord's will with our Mission and Vision statements. Please pray for the church and body of Christ globally — that the Lord would revive churches everywhere to share the truth about Christ's redemptive and sacrificial love for mankind. Pray that all barriers would fall and we could be a nation that recognizes the Lord's provisions. Please also continue to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are being persecuted for sharing the gospel, and that the Lord would continue to strengthen them in their time of persecution and sacrifice.

Sermon Notes: