

Sovereign Grace Church
“The Ultimate Test” outline
June 11, 2017

Hebrews 11: 17-19; Genesis 22: 1-19

This morning we come in our study of Hebrews to every parents nightmare!

Abraham is one of the supreme examples of faithful living in all of Scripture. Yet we have seen that His faith was far from perfect. He passed his wife off as his sister in order to preserve his life in hostile environments on at least two separate occasions. His general patience with God's timing in providing a legitimate heir was punctuated by several occasions of doubt....one of which issued in his fleshly efforts to provide a seed through his wife's servant, Hagar.

Yet, over the course of his whole life, Abraham is indeed a supreme example of faith in a God He did not fully understand....but trusted completely. Abraham's final test was the occasion of God's command to sacrifice his only legitimate son....the very son through whom God had said He would accomplish His blessings in Abraham's life. There are many issues which arise for us as we reflect on this historic and extreme example of faith in God's power to lead us as we live our lives....in spite of what we would often consider a more reasonable path. We will consider a few of them during this morning's message.

1. God's test of Abraham's faith 17a; Gen. 22: 1-2

Testing vs. Tempting Jms 1:13; I Pet. 1: 6-7

2. The Nature of the Test vv 17b-18; Gen. 17: 16; Lk 9:24

3. Abraham's Faithful Thinking v. 19

4. Natural Questions

5. Applications

Questions for Conversation and Reflection

- 1. Do you ever think about this test as if you were in the place of Abraham? How does it turn out? Do you believe it is possible to love God more than you love your own children? Does such a love for God manifest itself in a “crusty” hardened demeanor toward everyone else? What sort of emotions might have been flowing through Abraham as he deliberated on his response to God's command? How do you think he handled them?**
- 2. Does the fact that Abraham loved God more than he loved Isaac mean that he didn't love Isaac? What does the “more” have reference to? More emotion? Intensity? What is the result of loving anything/one more than we love God?**
- 3. Do you think Abraham told Sarah about God's command to sacrifice Isaac? If he did, how was Sarah's faith manifested? What would have been your response had you been in Sarah's place? What about Isaac? What does Isaac's willingness to submit to his fathereven to his own death indicate about him?**
- 4. Does the fact that God could test your faith in such a manner as He did Abraham cause you fear? Does such a possibility convey an overly harsh or cold manner to God? Does it lead you to embrace Him or run from Him? If God is love and God loved Abraham...why would He make of Abraham such a severe command?**