

The Ultimate Purpose within God's Will

Genesis 22:1-19

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"Walking by Faith" Series on the Life of Abraham - Lesson 18 of 20

Let me get personal for just a minute ... "Have you ever wondered why God allows challenges to come into your life?" While I'm asking questions, let me ask yet another ... "Have you ever wondered what God really wants from you?" Bear with me just one more time ... "Have you ever believed that your problem could be addressed by God's power; yet, when you find yourself in trouble, you find that you are struggling to believe what you said you believed?" If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, Abraham would understand how you feel. I have no doubt that Abraham thought about these same questions as he faced the most difficult challenge of his life.

God had proven Himself faithful to Abraham by fulfilling His promise to give him a son. Sarah did indeed give birth to their miracle and they named their miracle, Isaac. The long years of waiting and wondering were now over. Isaac was a tangible reality of God's faithfulness that they could hold in their arms. All the doubts, as to God's faithfulness, were now erased from Abraham's mind ... God had kept His promise.

Now, God was asking the unthinkable of him ... *Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Take now 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"* (Genesis 22:1-2). God was asking that he give his miracle son back to Him in a sacrifice. This request of God tore at the very soul of Abraham and, no doubt, relentlessly assaulted his mind. Abraham had lovingly watched young Isaac run and play. As he grew in years, Abraham's love for him grew deeper. I have no doubt that young Isaac walked in the very shadow of his father, Abraham. They were inseparable to anyone who saw them.

Abraham must have questioned God about this unbelievable request. "Why would You give me a long-awaited son and then ask me to give him back to You?" Abraham must have wondered what reasoning was in God's mind to make such a request. Abraham realized that if he obeyed this command, he would be right back where he was for all of those years in the near past ... a man without an heir!

Abraham's Crowning Moment in Life

The crowning moment of Abraham's life did not occur in any of the Lord's three dramatic appearances to him. The crowning moment of Abraham's life was not to be found in the birth of his son, Isaac. The crowning moment of Abraham's life would occur on a wind-swept mountain top where God has asked him to present his son, Isaac, to Him as a sacrifice ...

Isaac ... The fulfillment of all of his expectations.

Isaac ... The source of all of his hopes and dreams.

Isaac ... The tangible answer to God's covenant promise to him.

We need to remember what God was asking of Abraham did not line up with what he knew to be true of his God. You see, the pagans spilt the blood of their children in their worship of the demon gods. But Abraham knew that God had never allowed any such form or expression of worship that was directed towards Him.

Abraham no doubt was assaulted by his thoughts as he tried to reconcile this unbelievable request with what he thought he knew about God. He must have wondered, “How could God ask such a thing and why was He asking it of him?” “How could God allow this? This request did not make sense compared to his experiences?” “What would he tell Sarah, as Isaac was her son of promise?” “What would he say to those who knew him if he obeyed this strange command from his God?” “What kind of father would he be if he went through with this?”

Everything Abraham had believed about God was now being challenged. The fulfilling joy of Isaac’s arrival in his life was now shrouded by his overwhelming sorrow.

The Walk of Faith

Abraham was a pioneer of faith! He didn’t have any books to read about how to walk by faith. He couldn’t fire up the internet or turn on his television to hear about the walk of faith. He could not attend a worship service to hear another man of God instruct him in the ways of faith. Yet, Abraham walked by faith!

Abraham had spent much of his life living in despair over the absence of a promised son. Yet, despite all of the uncertainty and disappointment in his life, Abraham was deeply committed to pursuing God’s will. He desired to be found obedient in all that God asked of him.

The dawn of each new day allows us to walk the journey of faith that Abraham walked. We move through our day not knowing what the day will hold for us. We are called to trust our steps to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. It is the Person of the Holy Spirit that produces the fruit and nature of Christ in us, and through us, as we walk into His will.

The Ultimate Purpose of God's Will

The ultimate purpose of God is to ...

- Bring us to the place where we can grasp and understand His nature and His ways.
- Bring us to the place where we abandon ourselves to walk with Him in complete trust.
- Bring us to the place where we have the Word of God as an anchor in our hearts.
- Bring us to the place where we rest in uncertain times knowing God will never fail us.
- Bring us to the place where we never again doubt God’s nature, His character, or His faithfulness to keep His promises.

Abraham enjoyed an intimate relationship with God; however, this intimacy came with a price tag. He was tested over and over again until he had accomplished the ultimate purpose of God’s will for his life. Abraham could not have obeyed God’s command unless he had first settled in his heart what he believed about God’s nature. Abraham’s belief in God’s nature brought him to the point where he could obey God’s commands even though he did not understand God’s ways!

Our walk with God must give evidence to our conviction that God will never violate Himself, or His Word. We must believe that He will do all that He has promised regardless of our current circumstances and bewildering questions. Ultimately, how you walk before God gives evidence as to what you really believe about God!

Learning the Ways of God

Pursuing God's will does not guarantee that you will understand the details of each day's instructions. Pursuing God's will is actually nothing more than the pursuit of God, Himself. It is learning to walk in His ways as spelled out in His Word.

We find two types of people in the Bible. First, the vast majority of people are content and satisfied if they can see the actions of God. Secondly, there are a much smaller number of people who are driven to know the ways of God. Such was the case with Moses and his relationship with God; *He made known His ways to Moses ... His acts to the children of Israel* (Psalm 103:7). The children of Israel were excited and content each time they saw a miracle of God; however, when nothing seemed to be happening, they panicked and complained. On the other hand, Moses was shown the ways of God; and as a result, he became intimately acquainted with God. The relationship between God and Moses was so intimate, that God called Moses His friend.

When we come to the place where our greatest desire is to know the ways of God, it will eliminate the necessity of having to always see something happening to assure us of His presence and faithfulness. When we learn the ways of God, we will be comfortable in seasons of inactivity. People who have to see the sun rise to assure them that another day is dawning will live in fear of the darkness all of their lives. On the other hand, people who understand that God has ordained the rising of the sun will never fear the darkness. They are confident that in God's appointed time ... the sun will rise ... it is a law within the ways of God.

Today, God is looking for a people who, in the face of uncertainty and adversity, will follow His leading. He is looking for a people who will trust Him even though they don't understand where the Lord is leading them. He is looking for a people who will stand in faith and boldly say ...

*My heart is anchored and settled in God's Word.
I know the ways of my God.
I may not understand all that is happening right now,
but I know, that I know, that I know ...
My God is faithful to His Word and He is faithful to me!*

I Timothy 1:12
*Nevertheless I am not ashamed,
I know whom I have believed and am persuaded
that He is able to keep what I have committed
to Him until that Day!*