

Sunday February 4, 2024 - "Genesis - Abraham Week 5 - It's Only a Test" - Doug Kempton

Key Passages: Genesis 22:1-19, Psalm 11:5, Proverbs 17:3, Jeremiah 17:10, James 1:2-4, Ephesians 4:15

- Feel free to read the passage(s) out loud as a group
- Allow the group to share freely about what stood out to them from the passage or from Sunday's message

#### Main Ideas

- Sacrifice of Isaac
  - It's an outrageous request
  - But this was a common practice in the days of Abraham
- After these things...
  - Isaac was likely 20-30 years old
  - Long journey of faithfulness with God
- God TESTED Abraham
  - Unthinkable...only son and promised heir
  - We almost can't comprehend the request
  - He didn't know but thought God could raise the dead
- First time in scripture we see a person loving another person in the scriptures
- Does God test all of his followers?
  - Yes he does...Psalm 11:5, Proverbs 17:3, Jeremiah 17:10
  - It wasn't a test to see what Abraham knew...God wasn't confused
  - NOT God's evaluation of Abraham
  - The purpose of the test is to inform the test taker - Doug Kempton (Jeremiah 17:9-10 - we are easily deceived)
- Our response to the test always informs us of what we truly believe
- This isn't Abraham's first test
  - Do you believe I am your provider? (leaving father's house, famine, Egypt)
  - Do you believe I will protect you?
- Sometimes test are circumstances, other times they are just obedience tests
- 2 Important truths
  - 1) Tests and your response are not intended to produce shame/guilt
    - They are invitations...being tested shows you are chosen
    - God wants you to reach full potential
  - 2) Horrific events in life aren't orchestrated by God to test you or someone else
    - We live in a fallen world
    - Because of sin we will have trouble/trial
- God is still up to something good
- Abraham got answers right later in life because he got them wrong earlier in life
- Test are to be expected and celebrated (James 1:2-4, Ephesians 4:15)
- Abraham says "Here I am"... in contrast to Adam in the garden (open to God, full attention)
- Listening takes being intentional

Questions (Feel free to use all of these, some of these, or none of these)

1. When was a time that you were tested by God? What did you learn?
2. What have you learned about yourself through the tests that you have experienced?
3. Knowing tests are to be expected, how do you prepare your heart and order your life?
4. How can you be intentional in listening for God and his leading?
5. Where is God asking for your full attention right now?
6. What is God inviting you into as a result of this message or passage?

#### Songs from the weekend:

[Open the Eyes of My Heart - *Paul Baloche*] - [I Speak Jesus - *Charity Gayle*] - [Look to the Lamb - *Jesus Image*] - [Holy Forever - *Bethel Music*]