

The Ultimate Test of Faith

Word

Scripture Reference

Genesis 22

Discussion Questions

1. What has been the biggest test in your life?
2. In schools, students are tested to see what they have learned. Those who cram for an exam and pass, but forget what information they memorized after a few hours—their knowledge are not accurate representations of their understanding. Our passage gives us an account of how God tested Abraham's faith. Briefly describe what you know of this test.
3. Read Genesis 22. God's test for Abraham revealed six things about Him and about Abraham's faith:
 - a. *God's purpose is to revalidate your faith (v. 1).* The real purpose of a test is not to make you fall or suffer. The purpose of testing is to validate what is genuinely there. Abraham was called the "Father of Faith." Why was it necessary for him to be tested to be a qualified recipient of this title? Did God really intend to take Isaac's life? If not, what was the test for? Share with the group about a time that God tested your willingness to submit to Him.
 - b. *God's demand is wholeheartedness (v. 2).* God's test was very specific. Describe what it was. Scripture tells us that God wanted that which Abraham precisely "loved." What is the one thing, person, position, or possession that's standing between you and God? What does God demanding wholeheartedness imply in your life?
 - c. *God's goal is affirmation (v. 3-12).* The most difficult part of your faith is not believing, but obeying. Faith without obedience is not genuine faith. What was it that proved to you that that Abraham had genuine faith in God? Do you think he deserved the title "Father of Faith?" From what you know about Abraham's life, was his faith in God that strong from the beginning, or was it a process that took years and years in the making? Share how testing has helped your faith to mature. Did it reveal that your faith is real?
 - d. *God's provision is ready (v. 13-14).* You've heard the saying, God will not take you to a place where His grace cannot sustain you. If you trust that God will provide for your needs, then obeying becomes easier. Share about a time when you took a leap of faith in obedience to God's will, and showed you that He is indeed the God who provides.

- e. *God's desire is to bless (v. 15-18).* In testing you, God is not trying to make your lives difficult or to make you suffer. He is actually rooting for you, wanting you to succeed. What was God's promise to Abraham after he passed God's test? How have you been blessed after you have passed a testing of your faith?
- f. *God's timing is perfect (v.19-24).* Why is there a need to record the sons of Nahor, Abraham's brother? Nahor's 12 sons were not born in one day; it took years, so why did God allow Abraham to hear about it only now? Do you believe that God's timing is always perfect, and that faith in Him includes faith in His timing? Share about your experience of an answered prayer that came in perfect timing.

Walk

God would surely test our faith. You will go through periods of testing. Do not be surprised when it happens; you just need to be ready. You have nothing to fear if you are prepared for it to happen. Faith that is not tested is faith that cannot be trusted. As a follower of Christ, are you willing to give up what you love the most for Christ's sake? As with Isaac, God may not take that offering, but He wants to see if you are willing to give it up when He asks. If the person you call the love of your life is not a believer, and you know very clearly from God's Word that Christians should not marry an unbeliever, what should you do? If your work is causing you to do things against your values and beliefs and you cringe every time your boss asks you to do it, but the pay is really good, what should you do? If your dream is to make it big, to become rich, but God is asking you to give up that dream in order to follow Him wholeheartedly, what would you do? Living a life of full surrender is the only way to really live. Only when we are willing to let go of everything and entrust our all to Christ that we will experience true abundant life in Him.

Worship & Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for being the great teacher who tests my faith so that I understand what I believe about You, guides me into maturity of understanding, and shows me what trusting You really means. I pray for courage, wisdom, and strength, that I may be ready for your many tests of faith throughout my life. May You be pleased with my actions and decisions. I look forward to the day when I stand in front of You and You tell me, "Well, done!" In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.