

III. The Miracle of the Ram in the Thicket

Isaac said, 'but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?' ⁸ Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." vss. 7b-8

Abraham is saying I don't know how God is going to have the debt of sin paid by this sacrifice (that's why we're going up this mountain) and still be the God of promise who says, '*Through Isaac will the world be saved.*' I don't know, but he'll do it."

That's what's getting Abraham up that hill.
Not, "*I must do it or I will do it.*"
Rather "*God will do it. God will provide,*"
not, "*I will provide.*"

"Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son." Genesis 22:12



How to Answer the Call of God in Your Life

Genesis 22:1-14

Sometime later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. ² Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about." ³ Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. ⁵ He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you." ⁶ Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, ⁷ Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" ⁸ Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together. ⁹ When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. ¹² "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son." ¹³ Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called that place "The LORD Will Provide." And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

I. The Nature of God's Call

"Then God said, 'Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.'" vs. 2

"By faith Abraham, when called to go ... obeyed and went ... For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God."
Hebrews 11

Defining the call:

- You begin to sense the call of God when you realize without God there are no foundations for life.
- When you begin to realize, "If there is no God, or if I don't have God, I have nothing," when that begins, *you're hearing the call of God.*
- The nature of God's call is there is no security without God.

Life eventually is going to come and take away everything that you put your hopes in.

- *Your heart says you have to have this to be happy.*
- *Your heart says you have to have this to be of importance.*
- *Your heart says you have to have this to have meaning in life.*

*For every lost dream for your kids, for every diminished hope for yourselves, God's call is asking you, **AM I enough?***

Now I'm sure of this: the sufferings we endure now are not even worth comparing to the glory that is coming and will be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18 (Voice)

Therefore, what does it mean to be a Christian?

To hear the call of God, that there are no foundations here in life without God.

What does it mean to grow as a Christian?

To grasp that call by offering up and making him first, and slowly, bit by bit, you become a person of greatness.

That's the nature of the call.

II. The Sheer Horror of Abraham's Test

If you want to understand how Abraham heard this, you have to understand ancient cultures were not individualistic.

The second thing you have to know something about the
"law of primogeniture."

The *law of primogeniture* means the oldest, the firstborn got virtually the entire inheritance. This was something that was universally practiced by ancient cultures.

WHY?

When God says, "Offer up your son Isaac,"
Abraham realized God was calling in his debt to Abraham.

Offerings were made to God from the earliest time after mankind fell starting in scripture Cain and Abel.

"By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, even though God had said to him, 'It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.'" Hebrews 11

How can God, who rightly can call in this debt of sin, also be the God who says, "Through Isaac, all the nations of the world will be blessed"?

God is confronting Abraham with the question of whether he is willing to give up God's very gift of promise.

What's the answer?