



Big Idea: Look at trials as opportunities to verify your faith.

-- Trials test whether or not we believe God enough to obey Him even when life is hard.

1.) Be prepared for circumstances you can't EXPLAIN

-- This text alludes to one of the more perplexing accounts in Scripture (Genesis 22:1-18).

-- *Why would God give Moses such a command?*

-- The author of Hebrews seems to depict this scene as a confusing dilemma (v. 17-18).

-- In this event, God is prefiguring the redeeming love He would show us perfectly in **CHRIST** (1 John 4:10).

-- Although we see this, there is no indication *Abraham* did.

2.) Know that God will TEST your faith (v. 17a).

-- The author of Hebrews leaves no doubt as to why this scene took place: God was testing Abraham's faith.

-- The same is true for you and me. Expect God to test your faith (James 1:2-4).

-- Tests from the Lord are part of God's plan for His people, and they will come to us, whether we are ready or not.

-- Tests and trials come so that we might grow in eternally significant ways (1 Peter 1:6-7).

-- Tests from the Lord come as a means of refining our faith as fire refines gold.

3.) Expect God to challenge your **IDOLS** (v. 17b-18).

- God seems to be testing Abraham's faith by challenging his greatest possible idol.
- It would have been very easy for Abraham to make an idol out of his son.
- Whenever you are tempted to love or trust something more than God, expect God to test your faith in that area.
- We obey what we worship, and when trials come, our greatest **ALLEGIANCE** is often revealed (Ezekiel 14:4-5).
 - To trust in anything more than God is to be in an unholy, unhelpful state.
 - God loves us too much to let us trust anything or anyone more than Him.

4.) Respond with unshakable **FAITH** (v. 19).

- Abraham responds with supreme confidence in God's promise.
 - v. 19 – Knowing that God would never break His covenant, Abraham reasons that God would raise Isaac from the dead.
 - God swore by Himself that His covenant was trustworthy (Genesis 15, Genesis 22:15-18).
- Abraham's response to his excruciating circumstances was to **TRUST** God and obey Him (Genesis 22:11-12, James 2:21-23).
- Abraham trusted what God said more than His own feelings.

Application

- Be prepared for trials to come, and when they do, make every effort to walk through them by **FAITH**