

Application Guide: “A Long Walk with Father” (Gen. 22; Heb. 11:17-19)

July 24th, 2005: Jim Nossett, an elder of College Park Church, narrated the story of God’s call to Abraham to take Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice. In light of our current theme, “Camping on the Promises of God,” Jim prefaced the sermon with an overview of God’s interaction with Abraham (cf. Gen. 12-22), to show how the test at Moriah was a test to see if Abraham truly believed God would hold true and faithful to his promises. Its conclusion revealed a proof of the goodness of God and Abraham’s trust in God’s past faithfulness. In light of our present day, Jim provided several applications from the story for us:

1. *All of God’s children are called to great trial.*
 - a. What are some trials you have gone through – or are going through now – that have been a test of your faith in the promises of God?
 - b. How have trials in your life caused you to question your belief in the person and nature of God? Is it really a question of the nature of God or of your own faith? What have trials in your revealed about your heart?¹
2. *When tried, instead of looking for explanations, we have to focus on God’s promises.*
 - a. What biblical explanations are there for trials in a Christian’s life? Is it helpful to keep these in mind when going through trial?
 - b. What promises should we remember as we go through trials? What practical ways can we keep them in mind?
3. *When we are tried, we need to look at God’s past faithfulness.*
 - a. Looking back into the past, what are some particular situations you recall God showing his faithfulness to you? How are you keeping track of God’s faithfulness to you, how he answers prayer, the ways he is working all things for good?
 - b. In what areas do you take God’s faithfulness for granted? How can we be consciously thankful for his faithfulness in even the “mundane” aspects of life?
4. *When we are tried, we must look for resurrection power (cf. Eph 1:19-20)*
 - a. What is “resurrection power”? What does it mean that we have it available to us? What is it to be used for? What does “resurrection power” have to do with trials/tests? Why is it connected with faith/hope (cf. Heb 11:17-19; Eph 1:15-23)?
5. *When we are called to give something up, it is a call to worship*
 - a. When have you had to give something up for the sake of Christ, so you could treasure him more and better serve him (cf. Rom 12:1-2; Heb 12:1-3)?
 - b. What things in your life are apt to become an idol and remove the central place God ought to have? How do you need to redirect their place in your life if you are going to be wholeheartedly devoted to God (cf. James 4:1-4)?
6. *Listen – the bushes are rustling!*
 - a. What does it mean for us that God is “Jehovah Jireh” (the Lord will provide)?
 - b. How does this scene foreshadow what Christ did for us on the cross?

¹ On Sunday night (7/24/05), John Schmidler provided a helpful analogy. In reference to how our Christian lives have to do with our hearts (cf. Rom. 12:1-2; Mt. 7:15-23; 12:33-35), he related it to a cup that gets bumped. If the cup is filled with coffee, when it gets knocked over, what comes out of it will be bitter, but if the cup is filled with lemonade, what comes out of it when it gets bumped will be sweet. So it is with life: The circumstances of life reveal what is truly in our hearts. It is not what circumstances we are in but how we respond to them that matters.