

# The Stewardship of Generations: *Our Families*

(Genesis 22:1-18)

**Vision:** *Thirsty Souls Restored, Lives Changed, and Joyful Disciples worshipping Christ*

**Mission:** 'Leading ALL GENERATIONS to love God, follow Jesus, and model His mission to transform *all* peoples and nations with the gospel'

**-Summary:** *All Generations Worshipping God*

## **Series: "The Stewardship of Generations"**

The goal of this series is to help us learn to **TRUST** God the Giver, to see trust as act of worship!

\*Our truest worship begins in the *yielding* of our self, our desires, our possessions to God in order to have the Lord **replace** things we hold in this life with the insatiable desire for Him most.

**=He becomes the prize!**

**All we are** (life; breath; body; future) **and all we have** (what we touch) **belongs to HIM:** believe?

-Our **Families** belong to Jesus (we give them back *as soon as* we get them) -**Child dedication?**

-Our **Jobs** belong to Jesus (He alone gives us power to make wealth)

-Our **Church** belongs to Jesus (His Bride is worth our best effort to serve & bless)

-Our **Money** belongs to Jesus (Generosity is a test of faithfulness of God's provision)

-Our **Future** belongs to Jesus. (Our fears: uncertainties; the unknown - our suffering, our loss, our disappointment, our failures each belong to Jesus).

-Every **GENERATION** belongs to Jesus. (They are ours to steward as precious gifts to cherish!)

**Today:** The Stewardship of our Family.

**\*\*\*Main Point: Our family belongs to Jesus first; He loves them more than you ☺**

**What have you had to give up that was painful? (dog/Nicholas)**

**READ Genesis 22:1-18** Context: God called Abram away from everything he knew (**fam. country, people, from his career, from his comfort -ALL to follow God & to learn to trust God first/most**)

**-Abram passed the Test;** He was willing to TRUST God as an act of worship and give up **ALL** that he knew and loved in order follow God (blindly) to a place God would show him. He trusted God!

**-Abram trusted God to have his own son -even in old age.** 100yrs old/Sarai 90yrs. **Do the deed**

**-Abram had Isaac; the son of the Promise; the son of the Covenant;** he loved/cherished Isaac!!

**\*God showed Himself to be faithful time and time again; that He is a trustworthy God!!!**

-As followers of Christ, as subjects to the King of King, we are called to be stewards of everything we have. **This includes our family!** (Let me remind all of us of something difficult):

**A. If** God grants us singleness or childlessness – we are to steward that position He has given us; steward those desires, that pain, that incompleteness we might feel on this earth – and live, suffer, and thrive in that gift of God w/Joy and for His glory. We may not like it; understand why; or want it – but we are to steward it since we know GOD is better ultimately than a husb/wife or children!

**B. If** God grants us to be married and then to have children – we are to steward each life God entrusts to us; we are to invest in each relationship spiritually and pour our lives out to bless them, serve them, help them, and release them back to the Lord. =both spouses and children.

-To be a faithful steward of our family means that we know who's ultimately they are! **The Lord's!**

\*Let's go to the TEXT: **Gen. 22**

**1. In Kingdom Stewardship, God will test us by asking us to give up anything we love more than Him. Nothing is off-limits!**

**Vs. 1:** Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." God will test our faith (trial) to help us see if our faith is real or pretend. God tests us throughout our life (NOT TEMPT); His testing is for US -He already knows...God is never bashful about asking you to give up something you love *in order for* you to get more of Him. The greatest, most loving thing God could ever give us is **MORE of Him!**  
**-God tests our hearts for our sakes.** He asks for what we love, not because He needs to discover what is in our hearts, but because He intends to deepen our faith, expose our idols, and teach us that He Himself is our ultimate treasure and provider.

**-What is the last thing you heard God asking you to give up? How did that go for you???**

**-What is the thing you would never, ever want God to ask you to give up? BINGO!!!**

**2. In Kingdom Stewardship, God asks us to love Him more than our family. To be willing to give them back to God as the rightful owner of their lives and future. Can you do this? Are you willing? DO you truly know God loves them more than you possibly could?**

**Vs. 2:** Then He said, "Take now your son, your *only* son, whom you *love*, **Isaac**, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you."

-This was a devastating ask by God to Abram's heart. He loved Isaac. He cherished him; future...

-God knew what He was asking of Abram: "**your son, your *only* son, whom you *love*, =Isaac**" (not Ishmael, not a lesser love; =the greatest possession he had ever possessed; a true and miraculous GIFT from God to Abram and Sarai).

-To say that Abram was confused would be an understatement. "**wait...WHAT???**" What about the promise? The covenant? The new land? The posterity of my people/descendants....?? **Crazy!**

**\*\*It's interesting that God never asked Abram to do something that God wasn't willing to do Himself. God the Father gave up His only Son Jesus to be humiliated, tortured, & murdered... and for who? Ungrateful, ignorant, rebellious sinners like YOU and ME! \*The power of GOSPEL**

-Romans 8:32 "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all..."

**-Since God *proved* His love for us by giving up His only Son, does that help you trust Him?**

**-Who do you have in your life that is more important than God? More valuable than Him?**

**-What do you have that the Lord did not give you? If He owns it all, *including your family*, have you truly entrusted them back to the Lord? Completely?**

**\*\*We don't ultimately come to Christ merely to obtain forgiveness, peace, health, prosperity, better lives, restored relationships, a Christian family, or even heaven. Salvation is not to give us a better version of what we always wanted to begin with.**

**\*\*\*We come to Christ to have Christ. Christ is BETTER.....** Paul says in -Philippians 3:8:

**"I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."**

**"If God gave me everything I have prayed for but removed Himself from the equation, would I still be satisfied?" Can you live without God in your life? Would you trade your family for God's presence? Is Jesus truly better than anything, anyone in your life???**

**3. In Kingdom Stewardship, God requires obedience, not excuses. Complete understanding of God's ways, God's plans, God's purpose, or God's timing are not requisite for faithful obedience.**

**Vs. 3:** So Abraham got up early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and his son Isaac; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and set out and went to the place of which God had told him.

- Notice, that though the text does not indicate, Abram must have been *wrecked* from this command to offer up his son to God. **To end the gift God gave him. To destroy the cov. promise.**
- YET, notice Abram's **quick obedience**. He may have internally wrestled, but He obeyed **immed.**
- Biblical faith is not merely intellectual agreement. Right **Faith produces obedient action.**
- James 2:21-23 "Was our father Abraham not justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? <sup>22</sup> You see that faith was working with his works, and <sup>[a]</sup>as a result of the works, faith was <sup>[b]</sup>perfected; <sup>23</sup> and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called a friend of God.
- Faith becomes visible **when obedience costs us something.**  
It is *easy* to trust God when His commands align with our desires. The test comes when obedience requires: waiting, sacrificing, forgiving, confessing, serving, surrendering control.
- What has your faith produced in your walk? What have you truly sacrificed for the Lord?**

**4. In Kingdom Stewardship, our trusting God with our everything is WORSHIP!** The act of believing, trusting, and having faith in God **is** our act of worship. That faith is worship and *produces action*; produces obedience; produces sacrifice which ALSO produces worship!

-Believing God to **be a good God**, a **wise** God, a **powerful** God, a **loving** God -when we do **NOT understand**; when we are confused; when we are unhappy, crushed, overwhelmed, & in pain **is** the essence of WORSHIP. Our trust, our belief, our faith placed in HIM is act of worship!

**Vs. 4:** On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance. <sup>5</sup> Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the boy will go over there; and **we will worship and return to you.**" =With a broken heart, Ab. went to obey & worship

-*"Faith is trusting the **character** of God when you cannot trace the **purposes** of God."*

**\*\*On January 15, 2009, US Airways Flight 1549 lost both engines/geese. Landed in Hudson (just imagine no ancmt; confused; landing on a river; trusting in a pilot never met: **155 saved**)**

-Perhaps the more painful the gift to give back, or the more costly the price, the **more exuberant our worship**. -Our true sacrifice of praise is always costly! **Even when unsure why**  
**If sacrifice is what is required to show obedience, and obedience is an act of worship - what would God call you to give up, offer up, hand over to Him? What do you hold so tightly to in your life? Think you cannot live without? Have you ever even asked God?**

**5. In Kingdom Stewardship, faith (trust) means believing that God will provide to us what is best for us *in His timing and in His ways*: = **Blessings** AND **loss/pain**.**

=*Both* are for our eternal good. God gives seasons of blessings & seasons of loss-to drive us to Him

**Vs. 6:** And Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. <sup>7</sup> Isaac spoke to his father Abraham and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." And he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" <sup>8</sup> Abraham said, "**God will <sup>[a]</sup>provide for Himself** the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."

- Notice Abram understood that the request for this offering was *from* God & *for* God. *Yet imposs*
- Abram understood exactly what was at stake & what God was asking from him. His *heart/son*
- Abram also believed that the sacrif. (his son/or a lamb/a ram) was *never* the point = obedience

-Abram understood that what God wanted was for Abram to choose between what he loved **most**-(GOD) **Himself** OR the gift of God; the promise of God; the plan of God; the blessing of God;  
=People are eternal, but they are **NOT** *ultimate*. Your family is valuable but *not* as prized compared to God Himself. **The Gift never rivals the Gift-Giver!** God wants us to have Him most!  
**Notice also: \*It was always God's plan to provide a substitute, because sinners cannot provide their own salvation.** God provides a ram. Isaac lives. The ram dies.  
**The theological principle is substitution.** One dies. Another lives. The ram takes Isaac's place.  
This anticipates the entire biblical theology of sacrifice: **The guilty deserve death.**  
**God provides a substitute. The substitute dies. The guilty go free. They live in new freedom**  
-John 1:29 "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"  
**Your salvation does not ultimately rest upon what you can provide for God. It rests upon what God has provided for you.** Grace applied. Grace perfected. Grace unleashed in us!!  
-When have you seen some of the worse times in your life actually work out for a better cause?  
An unexpected blessing or an open door that turned out for your good? Others good??

\*Now, notice the underlying reality (**why has God preserved this text for us 4000 yrs old?**)  
-What do we learn about God? What do we learn about our own hearts??  
**A.** God never wanted **harm** for Isaac or Abram. BUT... God's plan required ultimate trust in God's wisdom and loving plan (=required truest of **FAITH** when nothing made senses).  
**B.** God required Abram to **risk** everything he loved in order to obey God. (**BUT**, in hindsight, **is it ever really a RISK to trust God when God owns it all & controls it all?**).  
**C.** At times, God will take from us those we love (*and we don't know why*); He will allow death, disease, **abuse**, in this evil-laden, in this unjust, unfair, prejudiced, **sin-tainted** and cruel world  
**=If God is sovereign, if God controls all things and even superintends evil in this world, then we have to trust that God has a divine and ultimate purpose in our loss/suffering.**  
...though on this side of heaven we may NEVER know why or to what purpose?  
-Rom. 8:28 "And we know that [a]God [b]causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose"  
**D.** AND *only* God can bring redemption and an eternal purpose in/through our loss/suffering.  
-IF there is NO God (powerless/unloving God) what **HOPE** would there ever be in our loss???  
-Only God can show the praiseworthiness of one's sacrifice as that loss cost us everything; and -  
-Only God can replace and return to us something better than what we loss – Himself.  
\*\*\*\*It may be the hardest lesson we will ever learn on our way to perfect sanctification!

**Notice** God's response to Abram's obedience, Faith, Trust, and WORSHIP of the One true God:  
**Vs. 11:** But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." <sup>12</sup> He said, "Do not reach out your hand against the boy, and do not do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

**Vs. 14:** And Abraham named that place (Jehovah Jireh) The Lord Will Provide, as it is said to this day, "On the mountain of the Lord it will <sup>[a]</sup>be provided."

**Vs. 15:** Then the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, <sup>16</sup> and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son,<sup>17</sup> indeed **I will greatly bless you, and I will**



greatly multiply your [u]seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand, which is on the seashore; and your [u]seed shall possess the gate of [u]their enemies.

\*\*\*\*\* Vs. 18: And in your [u]seed all the nations of the earth shall [u]be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

-Your obedience to trust God *as worship*, by releasing everything to God as *HIS...your obedience never just affects you*...it has an effect on everyone watching your life, your faith, your trusting God in your *losses*, your genuine worship in your *pain* and suffering, and your *JOY* ...esp. when nothing makes sense.

**Main Point: Our family belongs to Jesus first; He loves them more than you!! Believe this? Our family belongs to Jesus;** we get to steward them for a season & give them back to God.

\*Justin and Allison Bloss (formerly White) – Lost two sons in utero just one month before due date: She had to birth them; they held them (**PIC 1**); and had to say goodbye to them. (**PIC 2**)

“We are convinced now more than ever of the goodness, kindness, and sovereignty of God.”

Our heart posture is still the same: “The Lord gives and the Lord takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord.” Job 1:21 (**PIC 2**)

**\*\*What kind of faith leads one to worship God in the hardest loss of your life???**  
**=A faith that Trusts God *no matter what*. A Faith that says my life, my spouse, my children, my future is YOURS Lord God *without reservation*. Do with them what you will. With the Bloss’ faith and family, He is still writing their story...**

**\*\*Karl and Mariah Shannon buried their five month old just months ago. We wept together. They worshipped together. They trusted God with their unimaginable loss.**

**=And they’ve just told me that they are *now* pregnant with **Twins**. (**PIC**)**

To GOD Be the GLORY.....

**With the Shannon’s faith and family, He is still writing their story....**

# Seven Community Group Discussion Questions

**1. Genesis 22:1-2** God asks Abraham to surrender Isaac, "whom you love." Why do you think Scripture emphasizes Abraham's love for Isaac? What does this reveal about the nature of genuine surrender? Why do you think Abraham was willing to offer his son as a sacrifice? If God asked you to do the same, would you? Could you? What does God ask you to offer up to Him as a sacrifice? Romans 12:1-2.

**2. Genesis 22:3-5** Abraham obeys immediately, even though he doesn't understand how God's promise can possibly be fulfilled. **When have you had to obey God without knowing how everything would work out?**

**3. Genesis 22:7-8** Isaac asks, "Where is the lamb?" Abraham responds, "God will provide." What does this reveal about Abraham's faith? How can we cultivate that kind of trust when we don't see God's provision yet?

**4. Genesis 22:9-14** The ram becomes Isaac's substitute. What does this teach us about substitutionary sacrifice, and how does it point forward to Jesus?

**5. What is your "Isaac"?** What good gift, relationship, dream, possession, responsibility, or ambition could potentially become something you love **more than the Giver**? How can you enjoy God's gifts without allowing them to become idols?

**6. Genesis 22:14** Abraham names the place **Jehovah-Jireh—"The LORD will provide."** Looking back over your life, where have you seen God's provision? What did His provision teach you about His character?

**7. The ultimate question:** If God were to remove every blessing from your life—except Himself—would He still be enough? Why or why not? What would it practically look like this week to treasure **God Himself** above His gifts?