

Father's Day Message – The Faith of a Father

Preached on June 19, 2016 at Cardiff Baptist Church

Text – Genesis 22:1 - 18

Father's Day Illustration - from a newspaper column written many years ago by Erma Bombeck:

I received a letter from a single mother who had raised a son who was about to become a dad. Since he had no recollection of his own father, her question to me was "What do I tell him a father does?"

When my dad died in my ninth year, I, too, was raised by my mother, giving rise to the same question, "What do fathers do?" As far as I could observe, they brought around the car when it rained so everyone else could stay dry.

They always took the family pictures, which is why they were never in them. They carved turkeys on Thanksgiving, kept the car gassed up, weren't afraid to go into the basement, mowed the lawn, and tightened the clothesline to keep it from sagging.

It wasn't until my husband and I had children that I was able to observe firsthand what a father contributed to a child's life. What did he do to deserve his children's respect? He rarely fed them, did anything about their sagging diapers, wiped their noses or fannies, played ball, or bonded with them under the hoods of their cars.

What did he do?

He threw them higher than his head until they were weak from laughter. He cast the deciding vote on the puppy debate. He listened more than he talked. He let them make mistakes. He allowed them to fall from their first two-wheeler without having a heart attack. He read a newspaper while they were trying to parallel park a car for the first time in preparation for their driving test.

If I had to tell someone's son what a father really does that is important, it would be that he shows up for the job in good times and bad times. He's a man who is constantly being observed by his children. They learn from him how to handle adversity, anger, disappointment and success.

He won't laugh at their dreams no matter how impossible they might seem. He will dig out at 1 a.m. when one of his children runs out of gas. He will make unpopular decisions and stand by them. When he is wrong and makes a mistake, he will admit it. He sets the tone for how family members treat one another, members of the opposite sex and people who are different than they are. By example, he can instill a desire to give

something back to the community when its needs are greater than theirs.

But mostly, a good father involves himself in his kids' lives. The more responsibility he has for a child, the harder it is to walk out of his life.

A father has the potential to be a powerful force in the life of a child. Grab it! Maybe you'll get a greeting card for your efforts. Maybe not. But it's steady work.

Read the text – Genesis 2:1 – 18

This morning I want to examine this passage in Genesis 22, along with some other verses of Scripture and consider this Old Testament patriarch, Abraham, and see that he was not only a great man of faith, but he was also an awesome father.

Pray for the Message

Introduction

Discuss briefly the types from this passage:

The offering up of Isaac is a picture of the offering up of the Lord Jesus on the cross of Calvary:

The mountain where this sacrifice was to take place is Mt. Moriah, which is the very same mountain that would later be called Mt. Calvary, where the Lord Jesus was to be crucified. It is also the same mountain where the temple was located.

Abraham, the loving father of Isaac, is a picture of God who loved His son, the Lord Jesus Christ, yet did not spare Him:

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:31-32)

Isaac, of course, is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaac carrying the wood for the sacrifice is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ carrying His cross.

As Isaac was only a picture of Christ, he could not suffice as the ultimate sacrifice that would take away man's sins. God would provide "himself" a sacrifice. (v. 8)

From our text, we can see that Abraham was a man of great faith.

Supporting New Testament Passages – James 2:17 – 24; Hebrews 11:8 – 19

In Romans 4, Abraham's name is mentioned 4 times alongside the word faith.

The same is true in Galatians 3, including these two verses:

"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."

(Galatians 3:7)

"So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." (Galatians 3:9)

From our text, and from other Biblical accounts we can also see that Abraham was also a great father:

"And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." (Genesis 18:17-19)

So, we see that Abraham was not only a man of great faith, but he was also a great father. A father who lives by faith will be equipped by God to be a great father.

Abraham was a great father for many reasons:

- 1 He taught his children right and wrong.
- 2 He taught his children to love God.
- 3 He taught his children to work.

However, I submit to you that the reason that Abraham was truly a great father was because of three reasons:

I He loved God more than he loved his own son.

- 1 Isaac was the child of promise. God had promised that Abraham would have a son twenty years prior to His giving him a son. Abraham waited twenty years, anticipating a son; and now that his son was finally here, God was taking him away.

Christian – it is at times like this when you are going to have to decide where your priorities lie. Sometimes God will allow some things to be removed from your life. Are you going to continue to love and obey him, even when He takes away from you the thing (or the person) that you love.

- 2 Abraham was given no indication that this was only a test, though we know from Hebrews 11:19 that Abraham believed that God would somehow raise Isaac up.
- 3 Abraham had three days to think about this before he was to follow through. This was not an emotional decision. Abraham determined to obey God, even though it did not make any sense to him. He never questioned “why?”, though he must have been thinking: “Why would God want me to kill my son, after making me wait

so long for him?" He never said" "But God, You said that I was going to be the father of many nations; and you said that in Isaac shall my seed be called."

Christian – How many times do we question God, and reason with Him rather than merely obey Him. Sometimes God will ask you to do things that don't make any sense at all. What are you going to do?

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

II He loved God more than he loved his wife.

What was Abraham going to tell Sarah when he got back home. You go home and tell your wife that you just killed your son, because God told you to do so.

- 1 Abraham's obedience to God could very likely destroy his marriage.
- 2 Abraham's obedience to God could very likely destroy Sarah's faith in God.

III He loved God more than he loved himself.

Abraham loved Isaac. Isaac was perhaps the greatest source of pleasure in the Abraham's life. Perhaps, the child that God had promised, and finally given to Abraham had become an idol in Abraham's eyes – something he loved more than God.

Christian – it is a shame that some of the good and wonderful gifts that God gives us in this life eventually become idols to us, and end up pulling us away from the God Who gave them to us. We love the gift more than the giver of the gift.

Examples – wife, job, children, hobbies, ministry

Practical Thoughts:

To Dad:

Get your life prioritized:

God comes first:

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." (Colossians 3:1-2)

"But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul." (Joshua 22:5)

If you put God first in your life, He will give you more love in your hearts to love the people in your life.

Your wife comes second:

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;"
(Ephesians 5:25)

Your children come next:

1 You are to be an example to your children.

Someone once said regarding his father: "He didn't tell me how to live: he lived; and let me watch him do it."

2 You are to provide for your children:

"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." (1 Timothy 5:8)

3 You are to have rule over your children (Abraham "commanded" his children)

4 You are to teach your children:

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."
(Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

4 You are to love your children:

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4)

Illustration – Unknown author

He teaches kindness by being thoughtful and gracious even at home.

He teaches patience by being gentle and understanding over and over.

He teaches honesty by keeping his promises to his family even when it costs.

He teaches courage by living unafraid with faith, in all circumstances.

He teaches justice by being fair and dealing equally with everyone.

He teaches obedience to God's Word by precept and example as he reads and prays daily with his family.

He teaches love for God and His Church as he takes his family regularly to all the services.

His steps are important because others follow.

To Mom:

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." (Ephesians 5:22)

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." (Colossians 3:18)

"Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." (Ephesians 5:33)

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement." (1 Peter 3:1-6)

To Children:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." (Ephesians 6:1)

"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." (Colossians 3:20)

Conclusion

We have seen from the Scriptures that we have examined this morning that Abraham was a man of great faith, and because he was a man of great faith, he was also a great father, perhaps the greatest human father in the Bible.

But, what about you, Dad? Will you be the man of faith that Abraham was. Will you love and obey God as Abraham did?

This Father's Day, why not determine to be a man of faith.