

Home Groups Questions

December 4, 2011

Our Faith Examined

Genesis 22:1-19

Leaders: The questions below are inspired by Sunday morning's sermon. Please take time to review the questions and use them as a tool for discussion in your Home Group. It may be that we have provided more questions than you will have time to answer. If this is the case, please adjust or adapt the questions to fit your group.

Icebreakers/ Conversation Starters – These are random questions designed to create community and encourage conversation.

1. What is your most memorable family trip? What makes it so memorable?
2. On a scale of 1 to 10, how good of a test taker were you in school?
Would you prefer to take a test or write a report?
3. At what age do you find children the most adorable? The most exasperating? Explain.
4. What possession would be the hardest for you to give up?

Turn to Genesis 22:1-19 and read it.

What stands out most to you about the passage or message from this morning?

I. Does God test His children? (22:1)

Genesis 22:1 “¹ Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am....”

1. The Hebrew word that is translated as tested in verse 1 means “to prove the quality of,” it does NOT mean “to entice to do wrong.” What is the difference between these two definitions and why is it important to understand this difference?
2. Larry King said in an interview with World Magazine: “I remember as a kid, my father died when I was young, and that was unexplainable to me. The God of the Old Testament, I didn't like things he did. "Abraham, sacrifice your son." That always bothered me as a kid. I remember thinking, Why would he do that to Abraham? As a test? So I said to myself, I don't know. I just don't know. That's still true to this day”. Larry King has a hard time dealing with a God who tests his children. Does it bother you to think of God as one who test his children? Why or why not?
3. Based on your own personal experiences, how have you felt like God has tested you in the past?

4. Do you sense God testing or challenging you in any area right now? If so, explain.

II. How does God test His children? (22:2)

Genesis 22:2 - "2 He said, "Take now your 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."

1. After years of waiting, Abraham (100 yrs old) and Sarah (90 yrs old) finally had the son God had promised. Why didn't Abraham object or argue with God about the request to sacrifice him? How might your reaction have been different?
2. Isaac was a gift from God. The danger Abraham faced was to substitute the joy, pleasure, and satisfaction found in the gift of God with the joy, pleasure, and satisfaction found in God himself. How can the gifts of God distract us from our commitment to God himself? Is there a way to know when this is happening in our lives?
3. Do you think God's tests get easier over time, harder, or about the same? Explain.

III. Why does God test His children? (22:11-12)

Genesis 22:11-12 - "But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me..."

1. When God tests his children, for whose benefit does God do it: His own? The one being tested? The others involved in the test? Explain.
2. How can God's tests be a benefit to our walk with God? Can they hurt our walk?
3. How is Jesus like Isaac? How is he like the lamb substitute?
4. Where do you find the strength to say "Yes" to God when everything inside you says, "No"?

Prayer Time

Calendar:

December 11 – Home Groups

December 18 – Home Groups

December 25 – No Home Groups

January 1 – No Home Groups

January 8 – No Home Groups

January 15 – Tim Hawkins Concert (No Home Groups)

January 22 – Home Groups