

“FOOTSTEPS”

**Come, follow Me,” Jesus said
Mark 1:17**

Kingdom Kids

**God Tests Abraham
Genesis 22:1-18**

Our lesson for this coming week will be “God Tests Abraham”. Our emphasis for our children will be ‘Our obedience honors God.’ Of all the Bible lessons I have taught, this one has always been one of the most difficult, for me, to teach to children. It is also one of the most necessary to help build a child’s faith and character. It must be handled with great sensitivity and prayer before uttering these words of Abraham’s devotion, love, and trust to our Heavenly Father.

As you prepare to teach this at home, and as I prepare for *Kingdom Kids*, we must follow Abraham’s example in trusting and obedience that God will help and guide us. This will honor Him just as Abraham did thousands of years ago. Isn’t it amazing that, after all these years, His Word is as true to us as it was back then. How magnificent is that?! I will be praying for you this week as well as for me.

As we examine and read the text above, we take comfort in knowing that God never intended for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. The whole event was designed to test Abraham, to show how far he would go to obey God. Later, when God gave the law, it strictly prohibited child sacrifice.

Abraham’s faith in God and his willingness to obey are truly amazing.

Not only was he willing to sacrifice his son, but he maintained faith that somehow his son would be returned to him. He said to his servants, “We will come back to you” (Genesis 22:5). Somehow Abraham was confident that in spite of this command, God would preserve Isaac. Through Isaac, God had promised to make Abraham’s descendants as numerous as the sand on the seashore!

It took Abraham and Isaac three days to travel about 50 miles over rough, mountainous terrain. During the trip Abraham must have had time to think. Certainly questions must have flooded his mind: “What if God really does let Isaac die? What will I tell Sarah? Might God that I serve abandon me now after all these promises?” Abraham could easily have justified disobedience in this case—after all, this was the child God had promised to him and Sarah. He might have thought the voice he had heard wasn’t God’s after all. But whatever thoughts went through his mind, Abraham never swerved from his steadfast obedience.

The Bible tells us nothing of Isaac’s thoughts or feeling during this trip. He must have noticed that his father was behaving strangely. And perhaps Abraham’s sadness gave Isaac a hint of

what was to happen. When Isaac asked about the sacrifice, Abraham's response that God would provide a sacrifice probably did little to clarify the situation to Isaac. Remember Abraham was an old man, probably at least 113 years old. Isaac was likely a young teen and stronger than his aged father. He could certainly have outrun Abraham when he realized what was happening, and possibly he could have overpowered his father. But Isaac, too, showed faith. He submitted to being placed on the altar in obedience to God's command.

We're all relieved to hear the end of the story Abraham's faith shone brightly, and God averted the death of Isaac. Abraham passed the test. Abraham discovered that God can be trusted even when we can't understand him.

When we obey or submit to God's authority, we show that we recognize His right to be the authority—we recognize who God is and that He deserves our love and obedience. Our obedience accomplishes God's plans and purposes on earth. And while we sometimes follow God's rules to avoid His discipline or to receive a reward, there's a much higher reason for obedience. When our actions reflect our love for the Father—when we behave as He wants us to because we love Him—God's name is glorified and we bring Him honor.

This is a fun activity! You need one other person with your child, making a pair. You will also need:

2 Paper Plates per person
Markers

Have one child sit down in a chair and their partner stand beside them.

Place the paper plate on the 'artist's' head and give them a marker. They can hold the paper plate with one hand while they draw.

Ask the child to draw the following on the paper plate on their head, without looking at the paper plate. Have them draw:

1. A house
2. A child
3. Flowers for the front of the house

Tell them they have two minutes to draw the above.

When they finish (after two minutes), everyone looks at the drawing and laughs and comments.

Now have the 'artist' sit back down, and place a new paper plate on their head. This time as they draw, have their partner, who is standing, guide the 'artist's' hand as they draw. After another two minutes, take down the paper plate and look at the drawing. It will be much better.

Now reverse the partners.

Lesson: This is similar to how much easier and how much better it is when God guides our lives.

God has a reason for everything He asks of us. Although we might not know what that reason is at first. But we can trust God. We can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that when we obey God, good things will happen even though we might not be able to see the reason at the time.