

# LIFE GROUP LESSON

Grow Up • Week of November 17

God delivers on *all* His promises. Perhaps not on our timetable or expectation—but God always answers prayer according to His will. The psalmist declares: “God’s way is perfect. All the Lord’s promises prove true” (Psalm 18:30a). A grown-up faith learns to trust God when the picture is bleak and the path is blocked. Simply trusting the Lord like a little child, will open your eyes to see your heavenly Father move on your behalf. All for His glory! Will you believe Him? Abraham trusted God in difficult circumstances and became a ‘friend of God’ because he *believed* the Lord and took God at His Word (James 2:23, Galatians 3:6-7).

## Read Genesis 22:1-14

God tested Abraham more than once. But the ultimate test came when God spoke to Abraham and asked him to take the son promised to him and Sarah in their old age (Genesis 15:4, 17:19), “go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you.” We can only imagine what went through Abraham’s mind as he and Isaac set out for the three-day journey. By “the next morning” Abraham got up early, saddled his donkey, took two servants along with his son, Isaac, and “set out for the place God had told him about” (see Genesis 22:3).

1. Abraham obeyed quickly. This was not the first time Abraham had to physically *move* in response to the Lord (Genesis 12:1-4, 17:9-11,23-27). Think of a time the Lord asked you to do something that did not make sense, was inconvenient, or perhaps painful. How long did it take you to respond? What did the Lord teach you through the test?

In developing a grown-up faith, we become ready to physically respond to God’s directive (like Abraham) by first engaging our minds to God’s Word (Matthew 22:37, also Deuteronomy 6:4-5). God gives revelation through His Word *and* He gives us a mind to think and reason in light of His eternal truth. Ask yourself: How can I *intellectually* begin to honor God more as I see His track record of faithfulness?

## Read Hebrews 11:8-19

The writer of the book of Hebrews says: “It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going” (v8). Many people hold a misconception of faith —

“Some see faith as meaning any form of spirituality (‘he is a person of faith’). Others understand it as a resolute belief that something good is going to happen to them, a ticket to health and wealth. Still others think that faith is a blind leap against known facts. None of these constitutes biblical faith. Instead, faith involves confident action in response to what God has made known... Faith is sometimes rewarded sooner and sometimes later, but people of faith anticipate the rewards because of their confidence in God’s character.” (from the NLT Study Bible, Tyndale - p. 2103).

Because Abraham believed, he personally experienced God’s good track record of faithfulness. Abraham was not perfect, but as he learned to trust God in the midst of life, his faith became an example to those around him. From the two servants who traveled with him to Mt. Moriah, to Isaac, to his entire household, and yes, to all of his descendants, the nation of Israel—Abraham’s desire to trust and obey God is worth emulating. Stop for a moment and think of the many ways God has come through for you.

2. Who in your life has exhibited a kind of faith like Abraham’s, willing to make a sacrifice to God for a greater good?

“Abraham reasoned that if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again. And in a sense, Abraham did receive his son back from the dead” (Hebrews 11:19). How did the angel of God intervene according to Genesis 22:11-12? How did the LORD provide for Abraham according to Genesis 22:13-14? Figuratively speaking, how did Abraham ‘receive his son back from the dead’?

Abraham was willing to give back to God his son, Isaac, who was a gift from God in the first place. As Abraham was willing to give back his most treasured possession (his son!) God gave him a whole nation in response. This is what God has done for us. In fact, the apostle Paul says:

*“There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God’s promise to Abraham belongs to you” (Galatians 3:28-29).*

A definitive mark of maturity is a willingness to intercede on behalf of others. Earlier when there was a parting of ways with his nephew, Abraham intervened before God on behalf of Lot (Genesis 13:8-18). Prayers of intercession (selfless praying) overtime grows our faith. Abraham demonstrated full confidence in the LORD to provide for him and Isaac that day on Mt. Moriah.

“Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son” (Genesis 22:13). Years later, Mt. Moriah would be the very place the LORD would instruct David to build a Temple to honor God’s name, the place where countless prayers of intercession would forever be lifted before the throne of God (1 Chronicles 21:18 – 22:1).

# grow up

Text: Genesis 22:1-14

## PLAIN TRUTH:

Trust in God enables our \_\_\_\_\_ and  
\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ grows us.

## APPLICATION

1. We grow as we trust God's \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. We grow as we trust God with our \_\_\_\_\_.
3. We grow when we \_\_\_\_\_ our \_\_\_\_\_ with God's \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Your prayer life is a measure of your maturity. Ask God to grow your prayers into selfless intercession on behalf of others. As you read the excerpt below, think about one or two people for whom you can intercede this week.

“If we truly love people, we will desire for them far more than it is within our power to give them, and this will lead us to prayer. Intercession is a way of loving others. When we move from petition to intercession we are shifting our center of gravity from our own needs to the needs and concerns of others. Intercessory Prayer is selfless prayer, even self-giving prayer. (from Prayer - by Richard J. Foster, p.191)

Perhaps you have not yet responded to the Lord's invitation to simply trust Him for salvation. The first step in developing a grown-up faith is to ask Jesus into your heart—to accept Him as your Lord and Savior, receive the forgiveness He offers, and be filled with His Spirit. Take time to pray now. Recount God's goodness. The Bible is full of Scriptures that speak of God's unfailing love and faithfulness. Start reading the ONE YEAR BIBLE. Start walking with Christ.

4. Close by praying for others. Lift up the names of unchurched persons in your Life Group right now. Ask the Holy Spirit to stir within them a desire to attend church. Ask the Lord to give you courage to invite them to worship at Christ Church. Pray for others in your network of friends, coworkers and family who may be struggling with issues and problems. Be a channel of God's encouragement. Be a person of your word and carry through with your promises. Live into your prayers.

*“God is not a man, so He does not lie. He is not human, so He does not change His mind. Has He ever spoken and failed to act? Has He ever promised and not carried it through?”  
(Numbers 23:19)*

### One Year Bible Reading

Nov. 17: Ezekiel 35:1-36:38, James 1:1-18, Psalm 116:1-19, Proverbs 27:23-27  
Nov. 18: Ezekiel 37:1-38:23, James 1:19-2:17, Psalm 117:1-2, Proverbs 28:1  
Nov. 19: Ezekiel 39:1-40:27, James 2:18-3:18, Psalm 118:1-18, Proverbs 28:2  
Nov. 20: Ezekiel 40:28-41:26, James 4:1-17, Psalm 118:19-29, Proverbs 28:3-5  
Nov. 21: Ezekiel 42:1-43:27, James 5:1-20, Psalm 119:1-16, Proverbs 28:6-7  
Nov. 22: Ezekiel 44:1-45:12, 1 Peter 1:1-12, Psalm 119:17-32, Proverbs 28:8-10  
Nov. 23: Ezekiel 45:13-46:24, 1 Peter 1:13-2:10, Psalm 119:33-48, Proverbs 28:11

November 16 & 17, 2019