

PENINSULA CHRISTIAN F E L L O W S H I P

Being Thankful

Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." (John 14:15)

One of the shortest commands in His Word is, "Be thankful." (Col. 3:15)

Who are some Bible folks you think of as being thankful?

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I Thessalonians 5:18 says, "Give thanks in everything, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Ephesians 5:20 says, "**always** giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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Does that impact your thinking about being thankful?

- Is thankfulness only a response to what we want or enjoy?
- Do you ever feel less than thankful for things you would rather were not?

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Other than Jesus, who ought we to emulate in our life of thankful faith?

- The "**Father of our faith**" comes to mind
- Let's consider thankfulness in his life

Genesis 22:1-18

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Keep in mind it has been at least **40-45 years** since **God's promise** to Abe

- He was **75 years old** when God called & promised him

- He was **86 years old** when Ishmael was born
- He was **101 & Sarah 91**, when Isaac was born
- Isaac is now a young man of **15 years** or more

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Do you think he was thankful during the years waiting with no child?

- When Ishmael is born?
- When Hagar & Ishmael are driven off?
- When God scolds Sarah for mocking His promise?

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Then God says to Abraham, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. **Sacrifice him** there **as a burnt offering** on a mountain I will show you."

- **Do you think he was thankful then?**

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"Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about."

- Like his original calling, he didn't know where yet.
- **I wonder if he was thankful...** don't you?

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After three days of walking, he sees the place God mentioned.

- He tells his servants to wait while **they go off to worship...**
- He tells them **they'll be back.**
- He **loads the wood on his son**, grabs the fire and his knife...

- And they start walking again

What about now? **Is he thankful now?**

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His son says, we've got wood and fire, but **no lamb** for the burnt offering.

- Abe says, "**God will provide for Himself a lamb** for the burnt offering".
- Is he stalling? What is he thinking?
- **Is thankfulness his state of being?**

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What was Abraham thinking as he builds the altar, stacks the wood, ties up his son and puts him on the altar?

- What did Isaac think as **his father lifted the knife** in the air to slay him?
- Did **the father of our faith** give thanks as he prepared to do this?
- It must have seemed like the death of his God given dreams & life purpose

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Just as he begins, God calls his name – "**Abraham! Abraham!**"

- He pauses and replies, "**I'm here**".
- God says, "Do not lay a hand on the boy or do anything to him. **For now I know that**

you fear God, since you have not withheld your only son from Me."

- I think he may have been **overcome with thankfulness** at that point.

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Then he saw a ram in the bushes for the burnt offering, instead of his son

- Abraham named the place "**The-Lord-Will-Provide.**"
- Then God said, "**Because you have done this thing and have not withheld your only son, I will indeed bless you... And all the nations of the earth will be blessed by your offspring because you have obeyed My command.**"

As we like to affirm, God's blessing is often **on the other side of obedience**

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Now **we have become the beneficiaries** of the blessings to be thankful for

My challenge, and maybe yours too...

- Is to not let life's adversities **rob me of being thankful to the Giver of Life**
- Who has **promised us everything in His Son.**