



Sons of Saint Joseph tm

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SOSJ Discipleship 3: Obedience Saturday, November 2, 2024

Genesis 22, 1-19

Some time after these events, God put Abraham to the test. He called to him, "Abraham!" "Ready!" he replied. Then God said: "Take your son Isaac, your only one, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him up as a holocaust on a height that I will point out to you." Early the next morning Abraham saddled his donkey, took with him his son Isaac, and two of his servants as well, and with the wood that he had cut for the holocaust, set out for the place of which God had told him. On the third day Abraham got sight of the place from afar. Then he said to his servants: "Both of you stay here with the donkey, while the boy and I go on over yonder. We will worship and then come back to you." Thereupon Abraham took the wood for the holocaust and laid it on his son Isaac's shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two walked on together, Isaac spoke to his father Abraham. "Father!" he said. "Yes, son," he replied. Isaac continued, "Here are the fire and the wood, but where is the sheep for the holocaust?" "Son," Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the sheep for the holocaust." Then the two continued going forward. When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. Next he tied up his son Isaac, and put him on top of the wood on the altar. Then he reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the LORD'S messenger called to him from heaven, "Abraham, Abraham!" "Yes, Lord," he answered. "Do not lay your hand on the boy," said the messenger. "Do not do the least thing to him. I know now how devoted you are to God, since you did not withhold from me your own beloved son." As Abraham looked about, he spied a ram caught by its horns in the thicket. So he went and took the ram and offered it up as a holocaust in place of his son. Abraham named the site Yahweh-yireh; hence people now say, "On the mountain the LORD will see." Again the LORD'S messenger called to Abraham from heaven and said: "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you acted as you did in not withholding from me your beloved son, I will bless you abundantly and make your descendants as countless as the stars of the sky and the sands of the seashore; your descendants shall take possession of the gates of their enemies, and in your descendants all the nations of the earth shall find blessing--all this because you obeyed my command." Abraham then returned to his servants, and they set out together for Beer-sheba, where Abraham made his home.

Questions

1. Above, God tasks Abraham with something that seems contradictory of God. How does our faith today seem to contradict worldly compassion but ultimately assert an authentic compassion? What else does God call us to do that to the world is not the kind, compassionate, or loving thing to do, but really is?
2. In the culture today when one is an obedient Catholic one would be considered “less enlightened.” Why is being obedient to the Church actually being “more enlightened” than less? How do I teach this to children?
3. Abraham shows no hesitation, although he must have had much angst. Do I find myself hesitating in trying to be faithful to God in certain things? What makes us hesitate to follow God’s will? What are helps in overcoming hesitation? Be honest....
4. The Cross is a paradox for the world; that God would forgive and be crucified rather than use overwhelming physical power to reveal Himself. Thus: How does obedience actually defy enslavement lead to true freedom? What are examples of people who radically obeyed God and discovered a profound freedom?