

Faith to Lay Your Isaac Down — December 3 & 4, 2016
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: John 8:48-59

- What were the Jews claiming about Jesus (48)? What did Jesus have to say about this (49-51)? How did the people respond to Jesus' assertion that some will never die (52-53)? While Jesus usually focused on God the Father, the Jews often focused on father Abraham. How do you think it must've felt for Jesus to try to minister to people who never seemed to be on his wavelength?
- What did Jesus then repeat about glory and obedience (54-55)? What did he say about Abraham (56)? Abraham's life, especially in the great test he faced in Genesis 22 is part of a greater story that points to Jesus' life and purpose. This is why he rejoices. What is your response to the great story the many stories of the Bible tell? What confusion did Jesus' comments about Abraham create for the Jews (57)? When he powerfully claimed to have existed before Abraham, how did the situation escalate (58-59)?

Day Two: John 19:16-27

- Who was in charge of Jesus during this part of his trial (16)? What was he carrying, and where were they going (17)?
- Reflect on verse 17 and note the crucifixion story's similarities to the test Abraham faces in Genesis 22, especially verses two and six. All of Abraham's hopes and dreams were tied up in Isaac, while the hope of the world is Jesus himself. Yet, both men are party to their own sacrifices. What do you want to say to God about this? Perhaps tell him what Jesus' death means to you or consider what you'd do if you were in Abraham or Jesus' shoes.
- Describe Jesus' crucifixion, including the sign fastened to the cross (18-22). What did the soldiers do with Jesus' clothes (23-24)? What prophecy did this fulfill (24)? Who stood near the cross (25)? What did he say to his mother and "the disciple whom he loved" (26-27)? What did this cause the disciple to do (27)?

Day Three: James 1:2-12

- What should we consider "pure joy" (2)? Why (3)? What does perseverance accomplish (4)? How can we get wisdom (5)? With what posture should we ask for it (6)? What should the one who doubts expect (7)? Describe what it's like to doubt (6, 8).
- Re-read verses 2-4. While in the thick of a trial, is it "pure joy" or something else? Think of one way a test strengthened you. How might remembering this help you endure future trials? Pray that going forward, tests would always be seasons of deep maturation.
- What is surprising about the positions of the humble and the rich (9-11)? How does James circle back around to the importance of perseverance (12)? What will the one who perseveres receive (12)? What makes persevering through trial a sign of love for the Lord? What experiences in your own life support this claim?

Day Four: 1 Peter 1:3-9

- Why is Peter praising God (3-5)? Which of the following words or phrases from his burst of praise move you the most: great mercy, new birth, living hope, resurrection, inheritance, shielded, and salvation? Why? Take a moment now to add to Peter's praise: what good things do you want to exclaim about God?
- While we "greatly rejoice" in these things, what do we simultaneously endure (6)? Why do these trials happen (7)? How does Peter describe a faith that's been tested (7)? What

does such genuineness mean for faith in the unseen (8)? What is the end result of this faith (9)? Where would you say you are on this faith journey?

- What is one experience in your life that helped you learn that your faith is genuine? What is something that you're going through right now that may indeed be a trial making your faith even more genuine? Maybe you sense the Lord asking you to lay down something precious and very much wanted. Process this with God. Ask him to grow your love for him, even when you are disappointed or scared.

Day Five: 1 Peter 2:20-25

- What rhetorical question does Peter ask (20)? What is "commendable before God" (20)? Why are we called to suffer for doing good (21)? What prophecy speaks to how Jesus suffered for doing good (22)? In what specific ways did he suffer (23-24)? Instead of retaliating, what did he do (23)? How do we benefit from Jesus' suffering (24)? In the past, what path were we on (25)? Today, where do we find ourselves (25)?
- Re-read verse 24. How does it relate to verses 8 and 13-14 in Genesis 22? Abraham's test points to God's plan for salvation. In our sin we deserved to die, but Jesus the lamb died for us instead. He is the ultimate substitute. How does this make you feel? How do you think God wants you to respond to these feelings?
- Conclude by meditating on verse 25. Each day we can either go astray or return to Jesus. What spiritual practices will help you to always do the latter? Incorporate one of them into your life and pray for grace to remain faithful to the practice.