

SOMEONE WHO PLEASED GOD

Heb 11:20

INTRO

- In Faith's Hall of Fame ... we've come to what might seem to be an **ordinary** person
 - He was the just the son of a great father ~ and father of a great son
 - His name was **Isaac**
- **Scripture reading** says Isaac *'blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future'*
 - "Their future" refers to the fulfillment of God's promises -- **Gen 26:4, 5 a**
 - Isaac died without seeing the fulfillment of any of these promises ...
 - ... yet he was so confident in the Word of God ~ he passes them on to his sons
 - This made an otherwise ordinary man **pleasing** to God
 - **We** can learn a lot from the life of Isaac ...

TO START - LET'S LOOK AT HIS EARLY LIFE

- Isaac was the long-awaited son of Abraham and Sarah
 - When God first spoke to Abraham - told him to: **GO** ... he was already 75 yrs old
 - He waited another 25 yrs ~ and Isaac was born @ 2060 BC
- Interesting ~ although Isaac lived longer than any other OT Patriarch ... there's **less** space devoted to his life than all the others - in the books of Genesis/Hebrews
 - The major incident in Isaac's early life occurred @ age 16 ~~ **Gen 22:2**
 - Most sermon's we here on this event focus on **Abraham** ... but let's think about what **Isaac experienced**
- On Mt Moriah ... *as his dad was about to kill him* ... an Angel of Lord spoke: **Vs 11, 12**
 - For an adolescent facing certain death ~ this must of been a significant emotional event { their role in **value** formation }
 - But there was more coming ... **V 13**

- We all remember a life-changing lesson we learned from our parents
 - **SOP** gives a great insight into the lesson **Isaac** learned:
 - *Abraham's great act of faith stands like a pillar of light, illuminating the pathway of God's servants in all succeeding ages. Abraham did not seek to excuse himself from doing the will of God. During that three days' journey he had sufficient time to reason, and to doubt God, **if** he was disposed to doubt. He might have reasoned - the slaying of his son would cause him to be looked upon as a murderer, a second Cain; (or) it would cause his teachings to be rejected and despised; and thus destroy his power to do good to his fellow men.... But the patriarch did not take refuge in any of these **excuses**. Abraham was human; his passions and attachments were like ours; but he did not stop to question how the promise could be fulfilled if Isaac should be slain. He did not stay to reason with his aching heart. He knew that God is just and righteous in all His requirements, and he obeyed the command to the very letter. **PP/153***
- **Isaac** reminds us ... children learn a great many things by watching their parents
 - Next thing we can learn from this saint who pleased God comes when he's @ **40**

LET'S CONSIDER ISAAC'S MARRIAGE

- The longest chapter in Genesis deals with finding **Isaac** a wife
 - Certainly ... our customs/culture are different than ours were ... however, this incident teaches **3** principles we can follow when discerning **God's Will**:

First ... **Obey God's Word** { does what I think God wants - agree with His Word? }

- **Abraham** was getting older and was concerned with finding a wife for his son Isaac
 - So – following the traditions of his day and the commands of God ... Abraham set out to locate a wife for Isaac
 - Abraham didn't want his son to marry a local Canaanite woman ~ evidently God had already told Abraham **not** to let Isaac marry a **pagan**
- **2 Corth 6:14** - tells us **not** to be joined to non-believers

- When determining if something is God's Will for your life ~~ first thing to ask is: ***Does it agree with God's Word?***
 - God never **leads** us to do anything which violates His inspired Word
 - In fact ... God's Will is revealed to us in His Word: **Psm 119:105**
 - Abraham sent a servant to his own kinsmen in modern day Syria

Second ... Pray for God's Guidance

- Abraham's servant travels @ 400 miles to the **City of Nahor** (Nay-har) where Abraham's brother lived
 - When Abraham and Lot migrated to Canaan ~ he stayed behind
 - **Gen 24:12 – 14**
 - Not sure its good practice to put limits on God ... to constrain or restrict the way He might reveal His Will to us ...
 - None-the-less, because of **God's mercy** ... we read: **V 15**
 - A great illustration of the promise found in **Ish 65:24**

Third ... Investigate

- Circumstance and appearances can often lead us astray ... need to check things out
 - **Rebekah** was very beautiful (V 16) ~ but beauty is only skin deep
 - Later the servant finds out she was a **virgin** ... and the **granddaughter** of Abraham's brother...
 - ... so she was not a pagan (V 24)
- Investigation should always play a key role when discerning God's Will
 - An effective way to search out God's Will is seeking counsel of fellow believers
 - **Proverbs 19:20**
- When the servant made it home ... the story has a happy ending: **Gen 24:67**
 - Some 2 decades later when Isaac was 60 yrs old and in answer to prayer ... Rebekah gives birth to two sons: **Esau**, first born ~~ and **Jacob**

- Last thing we'll explore about this saint who pleased God is his "later" life

ISAAC'S LATER LIFE

- Let's pick up the story in **Gen 26:12 – 14**
 - Isaac remained in the land of **Philistines** ~ and his prosperity was an indication God's promises were being fulfilled
 - However tensions arose: **V 16**
 - So Isaac moved and re-opened some of the wells Abraham had dug and the Philistines had filled up
- The last prominent event in Isaac's life is his blessing of his two sons: **Gen 27:1 - 4**
 - Isaac want to bless his eldest son before he died
 - Oral statements from a deathbed had full legal force in Isaac's day ... and a blessing once given couldn't be reversed
 - I think it's safe to assume Isaac knew of the Lord's Words to Rebekah during her pregnancy ~ **Gen 25:22, 23**
- We've all heard sermons about Rebekah's actions ...
 - She dressed Jacob in Esau's clothes ~
 - Cover his hands and neck with goatskins ~
 - She prepared the food Isaac requested ... and tricked him into giving Jacob Esau's blessing: **V 29**
 - Rebekah's deceit can't be justified ~~ but she's an great example of **God using imperfect people** to advance His Will
 - We don't have to be perfect to be of service to our God ... He's perfect
- Isaac's faith in our Perfect God in revealed in **Vs 30 - 33**
 - From the human perspective ~ everything was wrong ... Isaac really messed up
 - But to his credit ... *Isaac had an unwavering faith in God's Word*
 - So he faced death with absolute confidence God would fulfill His promises through his children ... even though he didn't know **HOW**

- Contrary to his expectations ~ Isaac lived another **30 – 40** yrs ... longer than the other Patriarchs did
 - The end of his life is beautifully described in **Gen 35:28, 29**
- Isaac pleased God and is found in Faith's Hall of Fame ...
 - **NOT** because of his good works ~ or mighty deeds
 - But because he was an ordinary person with an **unwavering faith** in God's Word ... especially God's promises
- *Although we may be just ordinary saints* like Isaac ... **we can please God** ... if we have an unwavering faith in His Promises

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- Want to end with three passages of Scripture which can help each of have more faith:
 - **Proverbs 3:5, 6** heart = mind
 - **Luke 17:5**
 - Possibly ... this question is in response to the difficult instruction Jesus had just given in **V 4**
 - Being an obedient child of God isn't easy ... but doable:
 - **2 Corth 5:7**
 - This is how **Isaac** lived his life ~~ and he **pleased God**
 - **We can too**