**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | The Testing of Your Faith |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Hebrews 11:17-19 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2392 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. Warren Weirsbe said, “A faith that cannot be tested, cannot be trusted.”
      1. How would you like to get on an airplane that had never been tested?
      2. How would you like to have a doctor do surgery on you who had not passed some tests in medical school?
      3. We want people to have a faith that can be trusted so therefore it has to be a faith that can be tested.
   2. Hebrews 11:17-19
      1. Isaac was the hope of all of Abraham’s descendancy.
      2. Abraham offered up Isaac as a sacrifice.
   3. God is going to give you some trials, some tests to see if your faith is real.
      1. Genesis 22:1
         1. “Tempt” here does not mean a solicitation to do evil; it means a testing or a trial.
   4. Tests, trials and temptations come in two kinds:
      1. The devil tempts us to do evil to cause us to stumble.
      2. God tests us to do good in order to cause us to stand.
         1. What God wants to do is to make our faith strong and pure.
   5. 1 Peter 1:7
      1. When Jesus comes, don’t you want to have a pure faith, like purified gold?
      2. God is going to put your faith in the fire.
   6. If you’re going through a test, an ordeal and your faith is in the fire now, God means you no harm.
      1. God wants you to know whether or not you have the real thing; real faith.
   7. Temptations from Satan are pretty well standardized.
      1. The trials that come from God are tailor-made.
         1. God knows your circumstances and God may put you through a test.
   8. To understand what the writer of Hebrews is talking about here in chapter 11, we have to go back to Genesis 22.
   9. Genesis 22:1-14
      1. God is not trying to get Abraham to sin, but to stand.
      2. James 1:13
      3. Genesis 22:2 is the first time the word “love” is found in the Bible.
      4. Abraham said that they would both return.
      5. God had never before commanded human sacrifice.
      6. And now He has commanded Abraham to take the son of promise, the beloved son, and put him to death.
         1. Some theologians try to explain this away, but you cannot believe the inerrant, infallible Word of God and say this never happened.
         2. Those who doubt that God is sovereign say that God could not do this.
         3. Sovereign God can do anything He pleases. He doesn’t have to get permission from anyone.
      7. Isaac was the son of miracle birth, he is the son of promise, he is the beloved son.
      8. The Bible says Abraham with no hesitation whatsoever set out for Mount Moriah to do exactly what God told him to do.
         1. Genesis 22:3
   10. God is going to test your faith by asking you to do something that may surprise you.
       1. Not by giving up the wrong things and the bad things, but by giving up the good things.
       2. It would be relatively easy if God asked us to give up the bad things to show that we love Him.
       3. God had given to Abraham a possession.
          1. A wonderful son.
       4. God had given to Abraham a program that would come through that possession.
          1. “I’ll make of you a great nation. You’re going to bless the whole world.”
       5. God had given to Abraham a promise.
          1. “I will do it.”
       6. And now God just seemed to be asking for all of it back.
   11. The test of faith Abraham faced was not what he was giving up for the Lord, but what he was giving back to the Lord.
       1. All of the blessings he was promised.
   12. Are you able to give your blessings back to God?
       1. Not are you willing to give up your sins for God.
   13. Three questions for your heart today to see if your faith can pass the test.
2. CAN I TRUST GOD WITH THE POSESSIONS HE HAS GIVEN ME? (HEBREWS 11:17)
   1. The test was over a gift that God had given to him.
   2. Was the test because Abraham was coming to love Isaac more than he was loving God?
      1. Was he coming to love the gift more than the Giver?
   3. God will never take second place in your life to anything or to anyone.
      1. God does not want a place in your life.
      2. God does not want prominence in your life.
      3. God desires, deserves, and demands preeminence in your life.
      4. He will not be a part-time God with a duplex for a throne.
         1. Many of us like to have God in our lives, but how many of us say, “God, I love You supremely?”
   4. We have to be very careful that our blessings don’t become curses.
      1. Malachi 2:2
         1. God will curse our blessings.
         2. God may have already cursed our blessings because we do not listen.
      2. What is wrong in God-blessed America today?
         1. God is beginning to curse our blessings.
      3. We have been blessed like no other nation on the face of the Earth and we spit in the face of God.
         1. More vileness.
         2. More immorality.
         3. More slaughter of the unborn.
         4. More disregard for God.
         5. More arrogance.
      4. America has put God aside and concentrated on our blessings.
         1. It is frightening that God may turn our blessings to curses unless we turn back to Almighty God.
   5. It was not wrong for Abraham to love Isaac.
      1. No one can truly love his son until he loves God as he ought.
   6. God knew that Abraham loved Isaac. What God wanted to know was, “Abraham, do you love Me more than you love Isaac?”
   7. After the resurrection, Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon, do you love me more than these?”
      1. John 21:15
         1. Some people think He meant, “Do you love me more than all these other disciples love Me?”
         2. He’s asking Peter if he loves Him more than his brothers, his way of life (fishing), “Do you love me more than these things? Peter, I will not take second place in your life.”
   8. The test of faith is not primarily between love and hate but between two loves.
      1. Those things we love dearly and that which we must love supremely.
   9. Do I have in my heart any love that is greater than my love for Jesus Christ?
      1. If you think there may be any love in you that is greater than the love you have for God, God’s message to you is, “Put it on the altar and sacrifice it as a burnt offering.”
   10. List all of your blessings and those you love, and give everything to Him.
       1. Life
       2. Health
       3. Family
       4. Knowledge of the Word of God
       5. Job
       6. Home
       7. Clothing
       8. Retirement
       9. “With an open hand, God, they and these are Thine.”
          1. That’s not easy to do. And you know when you’ve done it and you know when you’ve just said it and didn’t mean it.
   11. Is there anything you would not give back to God that God has already given to you if He asked you for it?
       1. Why He might ask for it back is none of our business.
       2. Anything God has given you, you can trust Him with.
       3. And anything God has not given to you, you don’t need.
3. Can I trust God with the purpose he has for me? (HEBREWS 11:17-18)
   1. God had given Abraham a purpose and he understood that through his son, Isaac, he would have many descendants, a great people of faith.
      1. And now God says, “Put it to death.”
      2. That did not make sense.
   2. Faith is not primarily believing God in spite of the evidence; it is obeying God in spite of the consequences.
      1. Obedience is the great proof of our trust and our faith.
   3. When we know that we have a word from God, we don’t pass it past the judgment bar of our understanding.
      1. We just simply obey.
   4. There’s only one alternative to obedience: disobedience.
   5. We are to obey God.
      1. It must be informed obedience.
         1. Don’t just make some sort of sacrifice to show God how much you love Him.
         2. Listen to God as Abraham did and hear God speaking.
         3. Many Christians endeavor to do things for God that God doesn’t want done.
            1. God has not promised to bless any endeavor He has not commanded.
         4. We must hear God in order to obey God.
      2. It must be intentional obedience.
         1. Report to God for duty.
         2. Real obedience is not mere absence from doing wrong; it is actively seeking the will of God for your life.
         3. Ignorance of God’s will is not an excuse if you don’t have intentional obedience.
      3. It must be immediate obedience.
         1. Genesis 2:23
            1. As soon as possible, Abraham got on the road to do exactly what God told him to do.
         2. Procrastination is a form of disobedience.
         3. If God has told you to say something, give something, do something, don’t wait.
         4. Real obedience is immediate obedience.
         5. Sometimes the test will come and if you don’t obey right away you may get into serious trouble.
      4. It must be impassioned obedience.
         1. Not reluctant.
         2. Not pouting.
         3. Not dragging.
         4. We need to serve Jesus Christ in these days in which we live with a burning, blazing, passionate, emotional love for Him.
         5. No doubt it was a struggle to Abraham, but thank God he passed the test.
4. CAN I TRUST GOD WITH THE PROMISES HE HAS MADE TO ME? (HEBREWS 11:17-19)
   1. Abraham offering Isaac as a sacrifice was antithetical to the promise of blessing that God had made.
   2. Abraham had already learned that God is the God of the impossible.
      1. God gave him a son when he was a hundred years of age and Sarah was ninety.
   3. He knew that God is a God of miracles and his faith was steadfast to believe God.
      1. Abraham did not know how God would do it; he just knew that God would do it.
      2. And God did do it; He did not let Abraham sacrifice Isaac.
   4. It wasn’t Isaac that God wanted, it was Abraham.
      1. God said, “Now I know that you love me more than you love anything else.”
   5. If you love it, let it go. If it is yours, you’ll get it back.
      1. And if not, you will be saved from a fate worse than death, which is holding on to something that would impair your spiritual life.
      2. Mark 8:35
      3. The children’s saying is, “Finders keepers, losers weepers” but God says, “Keepers weepers, losers finders.”
   6. Hebrews 11:19
      1. “Accounting” here literally means to reckon or calculate.
         1. It’s the Greek word we get the words “logistics” and “logic” from.
   7. God gave him back his son.
      1. Abraham called the name of that place, “Jehovah-Jireh,” which means, “God will provide.”
   8. There was a ram there to take Isaac’s place.
      1. It was there no sooner, no later than he was needed, for God is always on time.
   9. Is there any good gift that you’re unwilling to surrender?
   10. Is there any obedience that you’re not willing to perform in order to follow God’s way for you?
   11. Is there any promise that you cannot trust God with when things don’t make sense?
       1. We don’t live by explanations, we live by promises.
5. CONCLUSION
   1. The faith that cannot be tested cannot be trusted.
   2. God wants you to be strong in faith. For without faith it is impossible to please God.
      1. Hebrews 11:6
   3. Jesus said, “Abraham saw My day and was glad.”
      1. John 8:56
      2. He saw the coming Messiah.
   4. The Messiah that Abraham trusted is the one who wants to save you today.
   5. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   6. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16