

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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April 10, 2022

“Giving God Our Best”

By Bobby K. Thompson

Here is something that many in the world have never tried— giving God our best! Abraham is an outstanding example of one who truly gave his best... the offering of his son in Genesis chapter 22:1-19. Abraham had experienced trials before, but none so severe as this, as God said, *“Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”* (Genesis 22:2)



It was a trial for Abraham to leave his home and be a wanderer (Genesis 12:1-3). The Long delay of the fulfillment of the promise regarding Isaac was not easy to endure, but these trials were light and insignificant in comparison to this one.

God called for Abraham’s best. There were many difficulties connected with this command. God had never before demanded a human sacrifice. Abraham had to weigh possible misunderstandings of his neighbors. What type of a father would offer his own son? Remember also, that he was a stranger in this land. The command was opposed to the feeling of humanity—shedding the blood of a man’s son! And as we know, Abraham was not called upon to offer Ishmael, but the son of promise. Therefore, God called upon Abraham to offer his best— Isaac.

In spite of the cost, Abraham was completely willing to give his best. And in complying with God’s command, it would cost him his domestic comfort. How would this father explain to his wife and Isaac’s mother, Sarah? From a human observation, it would cost him his hopes. With Isaac gone, the long promised son— how could he become the father of a great nation through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed? (Genesis 22:18).

Yet, Abraham did not hesitate. He made no excuses or protests, but arose early and went to God’s appointed place and entered upon this awful ordeal.

“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, “In Isaac your seed shall be called,” concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.” (Hebrews 11:17-19). We should well remember that such deeds of faith are written for our learning (Romans 15:4).

As Abraham was called upon to give his best, God calls upon His people in this age to also give their best. He wants the best of our:

1. LOVE.

I want us all to be impressed with the supreme level or degree of love— to which we all must attain— Matthew 22:37-38, *“Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment.”*

To give God our best, we have to love Him the best! There can be no place for God in our hearts other than first place. Thus Jesus’ words, *“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.”* (Matthew 10:37-39). We

simply cannot love family, self, sin, or the world more than we love God— and still say we are giving Him our best! (1 John 2:15-16; 2 Timothy 3:4).

2. GIFTS.

God commanded gifts to be given under the Old Covenant to the Levites, *“Of all your gifts you shall offer up every heave offering due to the Lord, from all the best of them, the consecrated part of them.”* Therefore you shall say to them: *“When you have lifted up the best of it, then the rest shall be accounted to the Levites as the produce of the threshing floor and as the produce of the winepress.”* Notice that “the best” (Literally, the fat, as opposed to the lean) was to be given to God, and then the rest to the Levites. God wants our best!

In the days of Malachi, the Jews offered the weak, sickly animals to Jehovah, and such were not acceptable to Him. They were robbing God! *“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.* (Malachi 3:8).

Christians are to give liberally to the Lord (2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 9:7). We should still give God the best in our offerings to Him today. Also, God’s people are called upon to “present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.” (Romans 12:1). Total surrender of our life and will to God is offering our best to Him.

3. LABORS.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 15:58). It is obvious from this passage that God wants our best in His service. Anything else such as: laziness, apathy, or neglect is unacceptable to His standard of a good servant of His (Matthew 25:24-30; Romans 12:11).

I am reminded of what Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 9:10, *“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.”* Let us work zealously for the Master while we have opportunity (John 9:4).

4. LOYALTY.

Jesus said, *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”* (Matthew 6:24). Even though Jesus said those words to warn us not to try, many do try to serve both and fail to give God the best they can in their allegiance to Him.

Notice again the words of Jesus, *“He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.”* (Matthew 12:30). And there is no neutrality as far as loyalty to the Lord is concerned. We are either with Him or against Him.

Abraham discovered that what one places on God’s altar is not lost. Not a hair on Isaac’s head was harmed, and Abraham received children numberless as the stars of heaven. Christians need to faithfully realize that what we place on God’s altar is not lost. Let us endeavor to give God our best everyday!

“Who Is The Villain?”

By Bobby K. Thompson

So many times it is not the one who transgresses the word of God— but the concerned party, who tries to restore the one overtaken by sin, who is pictured as the villain. It certainly shouldn’t be this way, but unfortunately, this is the way things turn out. When a person commits fornication to drunkenness, and when one knows of such and seeks to save the sinner (James 5:19-20) by bringing him to repentance, it usually is the one sinning who accuses the other of wrong doing.

It is no wonder that this happens, considering where sin takes us. When one allows Satan to control his behavior in sin, we become just like him— the accuser of our brethren (Revelation 12:10). We see this play out in the meeting of Elijah and king Ahab in 1 Kings 18:17-18, *“When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, ‘Is this you, you troubler of Israel?’ He said, ‘I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father’s house have, because you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and you have followed the Baals.’”*

King Ahab clearly was the one who needed to repent and begin again to be faithful to God, for Elijah was completely just and faithful in his actions to rebuke the wickedness of Ahab and his wife Jezebel.

Let us not allow the tactics of Satan cause us to be intimidated or fearful of doing the good that needs to be done to win back the lost.

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Linda Hunt, David Taylor, Sam Johnson, J F Dancer, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandra Oliver, Nannette Chancellor, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Wesley Trimble, and Greyson Reynolds (Nellie's classmate who was hit by car in the parking lot).

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: *"How To Fill An Empty Heart"*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Fred Johnson
Galatians (Randy Blackaby)
Page #21 Question #1

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Paul Busby
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Russell Briggs
James 2:25
Song Leader: Lee Busby
Lord's Supper: Paul Johnson
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: *"The Faith Of Rahab"*
Closing Prayer: Nathan Meade

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

April 13th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Russell Briggs
Workbook: Jeremiah & Lamentations
(John Humphries)
Page # 17 Question #12
Starting Page & Question: Paul Johnson
Invitation: Brian Meade
Song Leader: Blake Briggs
Closing Prayer:

“How To Fill An Empty Heart”

Lesson Text: Matthew 12:43-45.

- Describes the spiritual condition of that “generation.” **12:38-38; vs. 45.**
- This generation would be condemned by others- **12:41-42.**
- A lesson on the evils of “Neutrality” or just being saved from past sins....

I. The Dangers Of An Empty Heart.

- * The Bible puts a great deal of importance on the heart— **Proverbs 4:23; Matt. 15:15-20.**
- * Our heart is like a home or house that we fill ourselves- **Luke 6:45.**
- * When we teach people about repentance from sin, false religion, selfishness....
Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30. That’s NOT the end of Conversion.
- * Our house can be cleansed- **1 Peter 1:22; Hebrews 10:22.**
- * We must Not think of obeying the gospel as a “*one and done deal.*” Nothing else required....
 - Woman, who was a Satan worshipper, obeyed the gospel, yet did not continue.....
 - What about the drug addicts or those addicted to gambling....
- * The Jews of Jesus’ day needed to do more than just get rid of the prejudices, unbelief, murderous thoughts, and envy of Jesus— but fully come to Him! **John 5:37-40.**
 - They would have to embrace all of Christ & His Teachings- **John 8:31-32; 5:23-24.**
- * Our House can be cleansed, yet not occupied by Christ! **Matthew 12:44.**
 - Remember the maxim: “Nature Abhors A Vacuum.”
 - Jesus said, “*He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters.*” (**Luke 11:23**).
 - **Luke 7:36-48.** Which of the two did for the Lord?
- * We Can Stay An Infant By Not Filling Our Heart— **2 Peter 3:18; Heb. 5:12-13; Eph. 4:14.**
- * We Can Be Disobedient— **Matthew 25:24-27.**
- * We Can Soon Fall Away— **Luke 8:13; Hebrews 3:12-13.**

Notes: _____

II. How Shall We Fill Our Hearts?

1. Realize That Having Our Heart Cleansed Is Only The Beginning— **Heb. 9:14; Titus 2:14.**
2. By Making A Strong Commitment To Grow In Christ— **Acts 2:38— 2:42; 1 Peter 2:1-2.**
3. “Sanctify The Lord God In Your Hearts” **1 Peter 3:15.**
 - “Sanctify” means tom set apart. Christ- as Lord in our life!
4. Be Filled With God’s Word- **Psalm 119:10-16; Colossians 3:16; 1 Timothy 4:13-16.**
5. Worship Regularly- **1 Peter 2:5.**
6. Pray Often- **1 Thessalonians 5:17; Philippians 4:6-7.**
7. Meditate On Wholesome things- **Philippians 4:8.**

Notes: _____

“The Faith Of Rahab”

Lesson Text: **Hebrews 11:31**. An unlikely heroine of Faith.

I. The Story Of Rahab.

— **Joshua 2:1-24**. The Spies, The Harlot, And The Promise.

- ◆ Joshua sent Two Spies out to Jericho to spy out the city (**Vs. 1**).
- ◆ The Spies went to the house of a known Pagan Harlot (Prostitute).
- ◆ Why did the spies go to her house? Their Choice, Chance, or Providence?
- ◆ The King sends messengers to Rahab’s house to get the spies (**Vs. 2-3**).
- ◆ She makes a Deliberate Choice NOT to turn them over to the King (**Vs. 4-6**).
- ◆ She Hides Them and Lies to the Messengers. Did God commend her lying?
- ◆ Her Statement of Faith to the Spies- (**Vs. 8-11**).
- ◆ Her Request and Motivation For Saving the Spies (**Vs. 12-13**).
- ◆ The Two Spies Response To Her Faith And Kindness (**Vs. 14-24**).
- ◆ The Two Spies Are Given Safe Passage Back To Joshua.

Notes: _____

II. The Story Unfolds With God’s Direction.

- **Chapters 3-4** Israel Crosses the Jordan River.
- **Chapter 5** Preparations To Go To War.
- **Chapter 6** The Conquering Of Jericho.
- **Joshua 6:17-25** Rahab’s Salvation.

Notes: _____

III. Lessons From Rahab’s Faith.

- ◆ God Can Use Unlikely People To Carry Out His Plans- David, Deborah, Slave girl...
- ◆ Saving Faith Requires Action On Our Part. **Heb. 11:7; Joshua 6:1-5; James 2:20-26**.
- ◆ God Honors Genuine Faith In Us. **Hebrews 11:31; Matthew 1:5; James 2:25**.
- ◆ God Keeps His Promises. **Joshua 21:45; Deut. 20:4; James 2:5**.
- ◆ God Can Change The Hearts Of Even The Worst of Sinners.
 - Publicans and Sinners (**Matthew 21:31**); Samaritan Woman (**John 4**); Zaccheus (**Luke 19**); Simon (**Acts 8**); Saul of Tarsus (**1 Timothy 1:15-16**).
 - Rahab the Harlot Had a Completely different life from then on— **Matthew 1:5**.

Notes: _____
