

Where is Jesus calling me to let go of my hold, trusting him completely with my life?

Where am I tempted to believe I know better, I could do better, Jesus has got it wrong this time? I'm sure Abraham was tempted to believe that the LORD had got it wrong this time. But instead he believed the clear promises of the LORD, and let that override what he didn't understand, and his trust drew him even closer to the LORD, and also drew Isaac closer to the LORD. This walk with the

LORD helped cement their relationship; the LORD provided.

What part of my life am I holding onto? What I watch on TV. What I do when I go out to have 'fun'. The people I show love to, or seek to associate with. My idea of success and failure. What part of my life am I holding onto?

Let us pray.  
Jesus show me where I'm holding on, trying to do it my way. Help me to release my grip and trust you. Jesus grow me to greater maturity as your

disciple, trusting you, doing what you say, simply because you say it, and I know your love from me would never get me to do anything that would destroy me or those you love. Help me to love as I am loved by you, freely giving my all so that the Father's will is done and that his kingdom comes, to his glory, honour and praise.  
Amen.

15 August 2010  
**ABRAHAM & ISAAC**  
Genesis 22:1-19



Abraham is regarded as the Father of faith. He built his life around the LORD's call. When the LORD called Abram to leave his home and go to Canaan, Abram packed up everything and went. He trusted the LORD and took him at his word.

But today Abraham is taken right to the edge; he's called to sacrifice his one and only son, Isaac. I don't know about you but the thought of killing my son doesn't thrill me, in fact it repulses me. And I know it is abhorrent to God, yet here we hear him calling Abraham to take a three day journey, and on a mountain in Moriah, sacrifice him. Sacrifice your son because I've asked you to.

Some people believe the mountain that

Abraham went to was the same mountain where Jesus was sacrificed.

What are you most afraid of losing? What do you love most in your life? What would you not want to do without?

Isaac was born when Abraham was 100yrs, the answer to all of the LORD's promises to Abraham. It was through Isaac that the LORD had promised to create a great nation. What must have been going through Abraham's mind? I'm sure the devil would have been having a field day tempting Abraham to lose trust in God. But Abraham, and Isaac trust the LORD, taking him at his word, doing what he says.

Some commentators suggest that Isaac was

around twenty years of age. Isaac doesn't protest but trusts his dad who trusts the LORD.

What is God revealing about himself to us through this encounter with Abraham? Would God ever call us to sacrifice what we hold most dear to him?

What would have happened if Abraham and Isaac decided that they knew better and did their own thing? That reminds me of Adam and Eve. They listened to the devil, thought they knew better and did their own thing, and what a total mess.

Abraham would have lost his son, he would have lost the promise and would have had nothing to look forward to, except his and

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**Christ Church Lutheran**

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am  
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Reaching Out with the Love of Jesus that All my Know, Worship & Grow in Christ

Isaac's inevitable decline and death. Today I'm reminded that whatever I withhold from Jesus I lose. But whatever I give to Jesus lives.

Yes God is calling us to sacrifice what we hold most dear? Yes God, in Jesus, has opened the way for you to have him as the one you hold most dear.

That reminds me of what Jesus says: "Those who love their life will lose it, while those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life." (John 12:25)

"If anyone would come after me, they must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for a person to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? (Luke 9:23-25)

The Message paraphrases Jesus' words this way; "Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You're not in the driver's seat—I am. Don't run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I'll show you how. Self-help is no help at all.

### Abraham withheld nothing.

Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you?" (Luke 9:23-25 Message)

Yes Jesus does call us to sacrifice what we hold most dear, trusting him with them. Whatever I hold onto I end up losing, but whoever Jesus holds onto receives eternal life. I don't have the

power to keep those I love from decaying and finally dying. But Jesus promises, when he returns he will raise all those who have placed their lives in his hand.

Maybe I'm to go a step beyond Abraham and sacrifice myself. Which is what I hold most dear; myself, my life, my wants, my desires!

The Good News that Jesus brings is that I can place my life into his hands, sacrificing myself, giving up living for myself, I can now enjoy living with Jesus. I can enjoy being loved by him, celebrating life together as the Father's loved children.

Of course if I seek to hang onto my life and do it my way, I'll lose it. I can't stop my death, Jesus can raise me. But well before my death, doubts, fears, regrets, mistakes come crashing in destroying my joy of life, robbing

me of hope, leaving my life a fading memory, a distorted mixture of pain, hope, regret, joy, the need to be accepted and loved, but never sure. And outside of Jesus I don't become sure, but arrogant, and arrogance kills love, corrupts healthy relationships, and relationships make life.

So Jesus invites me into a lifestyle of self-sacrifice. Paul puts it this way: "I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is true worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..." (Romans 12:1,2)

I like the way the Message paraphrases this text: "So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping,

eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your

### What am I holding onto?

attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you."

So I'm left asking myself; 'What part of my life am I keeping to myself?'

Am I keeping my finances under my control, or giving them all to Jesus to use according to his will.

It struck me the other day that when I think about my finances and Jesus I'm tempted to believe that simply means giving 10% of my income on the offering each Sunday. But that would leave 90% still in my hands!

Jesus wants to liberate me from the strangle hold of money and possessions. Jesus calls me to sacrifice my desires, my wants, my needs to his will. Letting Jesus shape the way I use all my money. So I don't simply invest money because I'll make a profit, I seek to use this resource so that Jesus' kingdom comes and his will is done. Maybe I'm holding on a bit tight in this area.