

# IMPACT

**I** **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday  
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

**Passage:** Hebrews 11:17-19 “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.”

**Quote:** “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.” Jim Elliot (Missionary martyred by the Auca Indians)

This is the second illustration in which Abraham is used in Hebrews 11 as an example of commendable faith. The first one involved his willingness to leave the comfort and the security of the known and venture into the unknown by faith in obedience to God’s call. This second illustration involves his willingness to entrust to God His most prized possession. Wealth is not always measured in money. *God asks believers to display faith by offering to Him what they value most.* Failure to do so makes the treasured person or thing an idol that takes God’s place on their heart’s throne.

Isaac was Abraham’s greatest treasure. “God tested Abraham, and said to him, ‘Take now 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.’ So Abraham rose early in the morning..., and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said to his young men, ‘Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you.’”<sup>1</sup>

The three-day journey made Abraham’s obedience even more deliberate and devoted. Think of what he must have thought as he cut the wood, tied Isaac and placed him on the altar that they built! His willingness to give back to God his greatest treasure displayed

and developed his faith. He knew that God would somehow keep His promise concerning Isaac. “When John Bunyan was in jail for preaching the gospel, he was especially grieved about his little blind daughter. He wrote, ‘I saw in this *imprisonment that I was a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children. Yet, thought I, I must do it; I must do it. The dearest idol I have known, what err that idol be, help me to tear it from Thy throne and worship only Thee.’”<sup>2</sup> What would John Bunyan have gained if he had agreed not to preach the gospel? What would he and the Christian world have lost? Among other things, multiplied thousands would not have benefited from *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, written during his twelve-year imprisonment.<sup>3</sup> “The world over, *The Pilgrim’s Progress* is the second best-selling book in history (behind the Bible) and (it) has been translated into over 200 languages.”*

## Abraham’s Wealth

Bunyan’s decision to place God first and thereby risk exposing his wife and children to fend for themselves did not come lightly. He wrote, “I had also this consideration, that if I should now venture all for God, *I engaged God to take care of my concernments*; but if I forsook him and his ways, for fear of any trouble that should come to me and mine, then I should not only falsify my profession, but should also count that my concernments were not so sure, if left at God’s feet, while I stood...for his name, as they would be, if they were under my own care.” It was Bunyan’s testimony that the Scriptures sustained him in prison. Among others, Jeremiah 49:11. “Leave your fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; And let your widows trust in Me.”

Like Abraham, Bunyan and countless other believers, we display and develop our faith by placing all that we treasure most into God’s care. There is no surer place of safety than the hedge of God’s providence, and no greater cure for anxiety than bowing the knee and praying, “Thy will be done!” Is there any treasured idol that you have placed before God in your own life?

<sup>1</sup> Gen.22:1-5 <sup>2</sup> J. MacArthur <sup>3</sup> www.christianhistoryinstitute.org; also see <http://discerninghistory.com/author/jhuffman>