

Fear, Love, and Trust in God

Scripture: Genesis 22:1-19 (The Testing of Abraham)

Key Verse: Genesis 22:12 – "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

Lesson Focus: True fear, love, and trust in God mean placing Him above everything else, even our most cherished possessions or relationships.

Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand how Abraham demonstrated fear, love, and trust in God through his willingness to sacrifice Isaac.
 2. Reflect on how they can trust God with their own challenges and priorities.
 3. Learn that God's provision and promises are trustworthy.
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Materials Needed

- Bibles
 - A small altar model or picture
 - A toy lamb or ram for visual aid
 - Handouts with reflective questions
 - Craft materials (paper, markers, scissors)
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Lesson Outline

1. Opening (10 minutes)

- **Welcome and Prayer:** Thank God for His faithfulness and ask for understanding of His Word.
 - **Icebreaker:**
 - Ask: "What is something very special to you that would be hard to give up?"
 - Relate their answers to Abraham's test of faith in offering Isaac.
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2. Scripture Reading (15 minutes)

- **Set the Scene:**
 - Review Abraham's journey of faith (God's promises in Genesis 12, the birth of Isaac in Genesis 21).
 - Explain that God tested Abraham's faith, not to harm him but to reveal Abraham's trust in God.
 - **Read Genesis 22:1-19:**
 - Assign roles for a dramatic reading (Narrator, God, Abraham, Isaac, Angel).
 - Use props or visuals to enhance the storytelling (e.g., altar model, toy lamb).
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3. Teaching Time (20 minutes)

Key Themes:

1. **Fear of God (Reverence):**
 - Fear of God doesn't mean being scared but showing deep respect and reverence.
 - Abraham feared God by obeying Him, even when the command was difficult (Genesis 22:3).
 2. **Love for God:**
 - Abraham showed his love for God by being willing to surrender what he cherished most—his son Isaac.
 - Jesus echoes this in the greatest commandment: Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37).
 3. **Trust in God's Plan:**
 - Abraham trusted that God would provide, even when the situation seemed impossible (Genesis 22:8).
 - God provided a ram as a substitute for Isaac, a foreshadowing of Christ, the ultimate substitute (John 1:29).
 4. **God's Faithfulness:**
 - God reaffirms His covenant with Abraham after this test (Genesis 22:15-18).
 - Trusting God leads to blessings and fulfillment of His promises.
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4. Activities (20 minutes)

Option 1: "God Provides" Craft

- Create an altar scene using construction paper and markers.
- Draw Isaac on one side and a ram on the other, showing God's provision.

Option 2: Trust Walk

- Set up a simple obstacle course.

- Pair students; one is blindfolded, and the other gives verbal instructions to guide them through.
- Debrief: How did it feel to trust someone else? Relate this to trusting God.

Option 3: Discussion Groups

- Divide into small groups and discuss:
 - What does it mean to fear God?
 - What are some things that are hard to give up for God?
 - How can we trust God when we don't understand His plan?
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5. Reflection and Application (10 minutes)

Discussion Questions:

- How did Abraham show that he feared, loved, and trusted God?
- What can we learn about God's character from this story?
- What might God be asking you to trust Him with right now?

Memory Verse Practice: Genesis 22:12 – Have students write it down or repeat it with actions (e.g., pointing up for "fear God").

6. Closing (5 minutes)

- **Prayer:** Thank God for His provision and faithfulness. Ask Him to help the students fear, love, and trust Him in all circumstances.
 - **Challenge:** Encourage students to identify one way they can show their trust in God this week, such as praying about a problem or giving up something that distracts them from Him.
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Take-Home Handout

Include:

- Summary of the lesson.
- Reflection prompts:
 - What is one thing you find hard to trust God with?
 - How can you remind yourself that God provides?
- A family activity: Read Genesis 22 together and discuss God's provision as a family.

Comparison and Contrast: Fear, Love, and Trust in Connection with God

Fear, love, and trust are foundational aspects of our relationship with God, and while they are distinct concepts, they are deeply intertwined and often work together to shape how we approach Him. Here's a comparison of these three qualities and how they relate to God:

1. Fear of God

- **Definition:** Fear of God is not about being afraid of Him in the sense of terror but having a deep, reverential respect, awe, and honor for His power, holiness, and authority.
 - **Biblical Basis:**
 - *Proverbs 9:10*: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."
 - *Psalms 111:10*: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding."
 - **Role in Relationship with God:**
 - **Respect and Reverence:** It is a recognition of God's majesty and sovereignty, acknowledging that He is worthy of all honor and obedience.
 - **Obedience:** True fear of God leads to obedience to His commandments (Deuteronomy 10:12-13).
 - **Motivation:** The fear of God is often a motivator for living righteously, as it helps believers understand the seriousness of sin and the holiness of God.
 - **Filial vs. Servile (Triglotta 261 Apology of the Augsburg Confession Article XII (V.) of Repentance)**
 - **Filial** "can be clearly defined as such anxiety as has been connected with faith."
 - **Servile** "when faith does not sustain the anxious heart...wrath and doubt."
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2. Love for God

- **Definition:** Love for God is a deep affection, devotion, and commitment to Him. It is the emotional and relational response to God's love for us.
- **Biblical Basis:**
 - *Matthew 22:37*: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."
 - *1 John 4:19*: "We love because he first loved us."
- **Role in Relationship with God:**
 - **Intimacy and Devotion:** Love for God is the deepest form of relationship with Him, built on gratitude for His grace, mercy, and sacrifice.
 - **Motivation for Worship:** Love drives us to worship and serve God, not out of duty, but because of the desire to honor Him.

- **Heart Transformation:** When we love God, our hearts are transformed, and we begin to reflect His character in our lives (Romans 5:5).
- **Commandment Fulfillment:** Loving God is the greatest commandment, and it fulfills all other commandments (Matthew 22:37-40).

3. Trust in God

- **Definition:** Trust in God is the confident reliance on His faithfulness, power, and wisdom. It involves surrendering control and resting in His promises, even in uncertainty.
- **Biblical Basis:**
 - *Proverbs 3:5-6:* "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."
 - *Psalms 56:3:* "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you."
- **Role in Relationship with God:**
 - **Dependence on God:** Trust acknowledges that God is in control, even when life feels uncertain or difficult. It involves relying on His wisdom and timing.
 - **Faith in God's Promises:** Trusting in God means believing that His promises are true and that He will fulfill them in His perfect timing (Romans 8:28).
 - **Security and Peace:** Trusting God leads to peace, knowing that He is faithful and will provide for all our needs (Philippians 4:6-7).

Comparison and Interconnection

Aspect	Fear of God	Love for God	Trust in God
Nature	Reverence, awe, and respect for God's authority	Affection, devotion, and deep relationship with God	Confidence and reliance on God's faithfulness and provision
Emotional Focus	Acknowledges God's holiness and power	Centered on God's goodness and sacrificial love	Relies on God's reliability and promises
Motivation for Action	Obedience, reverence, avoiding sin	Worship, service, and devotion	Surrender, reliance, and peace in God's plans

Primary Scripture	<i>Proverbs 9:10, Psalm 111:10</i>	<i>Matthew 22:37, 1 John 4:19</i>	<i>Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalm 56:3</i>
Impact on Relationship	Strengthens a healthy sense of accountability	Cultivates intimacy and closeness with God	Builds confidence and reliance on God's sovereignty
Balance and Harmony	The fear of God leads to loving Him and trusting Him more deeply	Love for God naturally grows from fear and leads to trust	Trust in God enables deeper love and obedience, fostering fear of the Lord

Key Points of Contrast

1. Fear vs. Love:

- Fear involves awe and reverence for God's power and holiness, often leading to obedience out of respect. Love, on the other hand, is motivated by God's goodness and a deep relational connection, leading to worship and devotion.
- **Fear** keeps us from disrespecting or dishonoring God, while **love** drives us to pursue intimacy and a desire to please God.

2. Fear vs. Trust:

- Fear acknowledges God's authority and our dependence on Him but may also lead to feelings of awe that can be intimidating or overwhelming. **Trust**, however, focuses more on God's faithfulness and His reliability to provide and protect.
- **Fear** leads to respect for God's power, while **trust** leads to a peaceful dependence on God's promises.

3. Love vs. Trust:

- Love is an emotional and relational response to God's goodness, while trust is more about relying on God's character and His plans, even when things don't make sense.
 - **Love** motivates us to draw near to God, while **trust** gives us the peace and confidence to surrender our lives to Him.
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Application for Our Lives

- **Fear of God** helps us live in reverence, maintaining a healthy relationship where we acknowledge His greatness and holiness.
- **Love for God** is the foundation of our worship and daily devotion, giving us the strength to serve Him wholeheartedly.
- **Trust in God** is essential for navigating life's uncertainties, knowing that He is good, faithful, and always in control.

These three elements—fear, love, and trust—form the foundation of a strong, vibrant relationship with God. Together, they balance respect, devotion, and confidence in God's will for our lives.

3372. יָרָא (yare') — **331 Occurrences** psalm 34:9

Genesis 28:17

Strong's Hebrew: 3373. יָרָא (yare) — **55 Occurrences** adjective Malachi 4:2

Strong's Hebrew: 4035. מְגֻרָה (megurah) psalm 34: 4 and two other places **מְגֻרָתִי** noun

Strong's Hebrew: 4172. מוֹרָה (mora or mora or morah) — **12 Occurrences** Malachi

https://journaloftheology.org/jtheo_arch/jt-2000-vol-040-num-02.pdf#page=7 fear

Luther very fittingly defines the filial fear of God as follows: "To fear God is nothing else than to serve God with the heart inwardly and with the conduct outwardly; it consists in this, that we hold Him in honor, revere Him, and do or omit nothing but what we know pleases Him."

Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the Lord is **the** beginning **of** knowledge, but stubborn fools despise wisdom and discipline.

used only for God. awesome (1), extremely* (1), fear (35), fearing (1), reverence יִרְאָה!

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In an April 2006 article published in *Inside the Vatican* magazine, contributing editor John Mallon writes that the "fear" in "fear of the Lord" is often misinterpreted as "servile fear" (the fear of getting in trouble) when it should be understood as "filial fear" (the fear of offending someone whom one loves) Wikipedia.

The fear of

First commandment large catechism

"For this reason He wishes to turn us away from everything else that exists outside of Him, and to draw us to Himself, namely, because He is the only eternal good. "

<https://christian.net/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/catechism/web/cat-03.html>

I John 4:18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

Matthew 28: 4 The guards were so **terrified φόβου** of him that they shook and became like dead men. 5 The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. 6 He is not here. He has risen, just as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7 Go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead! And look, he is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him.' See, I have told you!" 8 They hurried away from the tomb, with **fear φόβου** and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

Good fear, or healthy fear, is the type that benefits you. Smart fear encourages you to wear your seat belt, to keep well away from the edges of high cliffs, to buy insurance, and not to leave a candle burning unattended. During a pandemic, healthy fear also prompts you to keep six feet away from others and to wash your hands frequently.

Smart fear can save your life, save you or your loved ones from injury or illness, or save you from incurring financial losses. God put this good type of fear into us to protect us: He wants us to be prudent.

<https://thefaithcafe.com/2020/05/08/good-fear-vs-bad-fear/>

Trust

Strong's Hebrew: 982. נָחַ֑ (batach) — 120 Occurrences Proverbs 3:5 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 paths.

Story of the Great Blondin

Bible teachers often quote the story of the Great Blondin to illustrate what it means to have faith. Blondin was a tightrope walker whose greatest stunt was walking on a tightrope across the raging Niagara Falls pushing a wheelbarrow. Before he began his wheelbarrow stunt, when he asked the watching crowd if they **believed** he could do it, they all roared 'Yes'. After the stunt when he asked them if anyone would sit in the wheelbarrow as he pushed it along the tightrope, nobody said a word.

Since there are notable correspondences between Isaac and Jesus, a special reason for placing this OT

episode into the series is to help us concentrate on our Savior. Some similarities are:

- each was the "one-and-only" son of the father;
- each was long-promised and long-awaited;
- each bore the promise of bringing blessings to all nations;
- no human substitute dare take his place (not Ishmael for Isaac/not anyone imperfect for Jesus);
- each submitted obediently to the father's will (as a lamb to the slaughter);
- each to be sacrificed on Moriah (the site of the temple in Jerusalem);
- Isaac was as good as dead until the third day; Jesus physically dead until the third day;
- each returned to his father to carry out his life's purpose.

In these ways Isaac is a type of Jesus, and Jesus is the prototype for Isaac.