

The Substitute

You know, I was just thinking that some people don't know what it means when you say, "It's a good life, living for the Lord." Some people haven't discovered that secret yet, but, you know, it's really not a secret once you turn your life over to the Lord and you ask Jesus into your heart. It is a good life.

Some Christians today don't know that it's a good life. They seem to have forgotten that. Well, if you've gotten away from the Lord, the Lord's ready to have you come back to Him and restore that fellowship with Him. I didn't say restore your salvation. He's there to restore the joy of your salvation.

I've made mistakes in the past and I don't believe there's a Christian living today or has lived in the past who hasn't made a mistake. But you know God is right there and He's willing and ready and able to forgive us just as He forgave us when we came to Him and received Him as our Lord and Savior. He's willing to restore the fellowship that's necessary for us to have a good life in Him.

In just a few minutes now we'll be looking in Genesis 21:3, but first, let me invite you to look at our Website today, www.LRWM.org. On that Website, you'll be able to leave prayer requests; you'll actually be able to leave anything you want, any kind of a comment, but we'd like for you to also leave us any information that you have on answered prayer. Share that with us. We want to be able to have joy in your joy today.

And also, if you would like a transcript of today's lesson, today's message, whatever you want to call it, or any other thing that you hear, any other program that you here of "It's a Good Life," you can write me and I'll send you a transcript of that free of charge. Write to me:

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In Genesis 21:3 the Bible says: *And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.*

I want you to notice with me now the characteristics of Isaac, and I want you to look with me today and compare that to Christ. Isaac was a type of Christ, and we see in the names the appropriateness of not only the name of Isaac but the name of Jesus comparable. "Isaac" means laughter, rejoicing. Jesus is the Messiah, the Consolation of Israel, and as a Redeemer, He brought joy to the whole Earth. He brings joy to the whole Earth today.

In Nehemiah 8:10, it says: *Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry... And notice this... for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*

The whole Earth can have the joy of the Lord today if they would simply receive Him as Savior. All the people of the world could be happy and could understand that it's a good life today when you serve the Lord if they would only receive the joy of the Lord. They could have strength. The joy of the Lord brings strength into the lives of human beings today if they will simply let that happen.

Notice the peculiar circumstances of the birth of Isaac and Jesus. In Genesis 17:16-17, it says: *¹⁶And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her... This is speaking to Abraham. God's speaking to Abraham and telling him that He was going to bless Sarah and He goes on to say... yea, I will bless her [I will bless Sarah], and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of*

people shall be of her. ¹⁷Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

Now, you know, sometimes we look back at this story and we say, boy, these people sure didn't have a lot of faith. They didn't believe God. We get kind of puffed up and we say, "I've got more faith than that." Well, have you? Do you have faith to believe that, if you were a hundred years old and your wife was ninety years old, do you believe that God could give you a child? Well, these people heard this promise, and just as the natural thing would be, they laughed. They said how can this be, and we think that surely these people didn't have a lot of faith. But in Hebrews 11:11, it says, *Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.*

It was God's faith that was going to produce the son. In other words, her and Abraham would have the child, but it was through God's faith, His faith. He gave them the faith to believe that they would have a son and we understand that it was counted to them for righteousness.

In Isaiah 7:14, notice what it says here: *Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

Look in Luke 1:34-35: ³⁴*Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?* The angel had come to Mary and said, "You're going to have a child." Mary said, "How could this be?" And in verse 35 it says: *And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee*

shall be called the Son of God. We see that both of these births were miraculous, that it was something that couldn't be explained away once these births took place.

In Genesis 21:6, it says: *And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.* I believe it has here not the attitude of laughing out loud, or it could have been; I'm not sure; I wasn't there, but I believe what it's saying here, that people would be happy if she was happy, because she would actually be doing something that would be leading to the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Read and study the lineage of the Lord Jesus Christ. Sometimes we get bogged down in our studies and we look back and we start looking at all these names that's listed in the Old Testament and we think what in the world are all these names listed for. I almost fall asleep when I read those names, you may be thinking. But those names are important, because God has placed those names there to let us know that this is the lineage of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice with me in Genesis Chapter 22 once again in verse 2: *And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.*

Can you imagine? Here was Abraham just awhile after God had promised him that he was going to have a son and now we read this whole section of Scripture in Chapter 22 and you find that God had instructed Abraham now to take that son and offer him as a sacrifice. How hard would that be to do? I've never had to do that so I can't really tell you how that feels or what that would be like. But the Bible tells us that Abraham did what God said. He took his son and he bound him. He

placed him on that altar and he was getting ready to sacrifice him on that altar.

Notice in Chapter 22 and verse 11 of Genesis: *And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.*

And in verse 12-14, it says: ¹²*And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.* ¹³*And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.* ¹⁴*And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.*

Jehovah-Jireh, God will provide. We understand that Abraham was willing to offer his son. He even went so far as to lay him on that altar and getting ready to sacrifice him. But he noticed that God provided a substitute for Isaac. Abraham didn't have to offer his son after all. He was willing to, but he didn't have to offer him after all, because God provided a substitute in the form of that ram caught in the thicket.

Notice in John 3:16 with me: *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

Romans 8:32 says: *He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things.* This, of course, is speaking of God offering His Son, Jesus, on the cross of Calvary.

In Acts 3:18: *But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his*

prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

God place His Son in a position of being offered. Jesus laid down His life willingly on the cross. He was placed on that offering, that place of sacrifice. But God didn't offer a substitute for Jesus. He sacrificed His own Son on the cross of Calvary. He became our Substitute. We should have been hanging there, but God provided a Substitute for us. Jesus died for us in our stead.

In John 10:15: *As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.* This is Jesus speaking.

Isaiah 53:7 says: *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*

Jesus died for you today and He died for me. If you don't know Jesus today as your Savior, let me invite you to receive Him right now. Ask Him into your heart. He is the Substitute that takes away the sin of the world. Pray something like this: "Lord Jesus, I know I can't save myself. I believe you died for me and rose from the grave that I could be saved and have eternal life. Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive You just now." If you'll pray that prayer, the Substitute, Jesus, will save you today.

And if you are saved and you've trusted Him as your Savior and you've gotten away from Him, ask Him to forgive you. Ask Him to renew that love in your heart.

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Until next time, this is Doug Anderson reminding you it's a good life living for the Lord. May the Lord bless you richly is our prayer.