

The Extremity of Faith

by Soren Kierkegaard

The sermon explores the concept of faith as a movement on the strength of the absurd, using Abraham as an example of how one can move forward in faith and create a new creation.

Scripture: Genesis 22:1, Romans 4:20, Hebrews 11:6, Hebrews 11:17, James 2:21

Topics: "Faith And Obedience", "Abrahamic Covenant"

Description

Soren Kierkegaard delves into the profound story of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac, highlighting the immense faith and love Abraham had for God. Kierkegaard contrasts the concept of immense resignation with true faith, emphasizing that faith is not about seeking happiness in the afterlife but finding blessed happiness in the present world. He explains that true faith involves continually making the movement of faith on the strength of the absurd, ultimately leading to a new creation and a deeper connection with God.

Transcript

If I were summoned to such an extraordinary royal progress as that to the mountain in Moriah I know very well what I would have done. I would not have been coward enough to stay at home, nor would I have rested on the way or dawdled, or forgotten the knife to create some delay; I am fairly certain I would have been there on the dot, with everything arranged. . . . But I also know what else I would have done. The moment I mounted the horse I would have said to myself: "Now everything is lost, God demands Isaac, I sacrifice him, and with him all my joy--yet God is love and for me continues to be so."

Perhaps someone or other in our time would be foolish enough, envious enough of the great, to want to suppose, and have me suppose, that had I actually done this I would have done something even greater than Abraham, for wouldn't my immense resignation be far more idealistic and poetic than Abraham's narrow-mindedness? And yet this is the greatest falsehood, for my immense resignation would be a substitute for faith. The fact that I made the movement resolutely might demonstrate my courage humanly speaking, that I loved him with all my soul is a precondition without which the whole affair becomes an act of wickedness, and yet I would not have loved as Abraham loved. . . .

Abraham had faith. His faith was not that he should be happy sometime in the hereafter, but that he should find blessed happiness here in this world. He believed on the strength of the absurd, for all human calculation had long been suspended. Had it not been thus with Abraham he may well have loved God, but he would not have had faith; for he who loves God without faith reflects on himself, while the person

who loves God reflects on God. At this extremity stands Abraham. the last stage he LOSES SIGHT OF IS INFINITE RESIGNATION.

He really does go further and comes TO faith. For the movement of faith must be made continually on the strength of the absurd, though in such a way, be it noted, that one does not lose finitude but gains it all of a piece. The knights of infinite resignation are readily recognizable, their gait is gliding, bold. But those who wear the jewel of faith can easily disappoint. . . and yet the whole earthly form he presents is a new creation on the strength of the absurd. He resigned everything infinitely, and then took everything back on the strength of the absurd.

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