

(Genesis) - Part 22

by Zac Poonen

Abraham's life is a model for seeking God's will and being satisfied with life, while Isaac's prayer and God's sovereignty demonstrate the power of prayer and the importance of humility.

Duration: 1:00:40

Scripture: Genesis 25:20

Topics: "Spiritual Renewal", "Following God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the importance of opening up the wells of truth in the church. They emphasize the need to dig up and uncover the teachings of the Apostles that have been buried and blocked for centuries. The speaker acknowledges that there will always be contention and opposition from those who do not accept these truths. They also mention the story of Paul receiving a clear leading from God to go to Macedonia, which resulted in him being imprisoned. The sermon concludes by referencing a time when Jesus instructed his disciples to cross the lake, implying that following God's leading may not always lead to smooth sailing.

Transcript

Let's turn to Genesis and chapter twenty-five. This is after Sarah's death. Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah, and she bore to him Zimran, Jokshan, Nidan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

These were six other children that Abraham had after Isaac, and Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Nidan, and the other sons of Midian are mentioned in verse four. And then verse five, Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac, but to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and sent them away from his son Isaac eastward to the land of the east. And there we see a good thing that Abraham did, that he had made provision for his children.

It's something that is mentioned even in the New Testament, and that is good for us to see that, so that we recognize our responsibility as parents. In 2 Corinthians 12, 14, it says in the last part, children are not responsible to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. Did you know that there was a verse in the New Testament which says that parents should save up something for their children? Here it is.

If a man does not provide for his own family, 1 Timothy 5, 8, it says in God's word that he is worse than an unbeliever. And that is why we encourage people not to spend everything they earn, but even if it is a little, to save a little so that you can meet the needs of your children as they grow up. Abraham did that.

And we read here further in verse 7, and these are all the years, like Genesis 25, 7, these are all the years of Abraham's life that he lived 175 years. And Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age. He has a very beautiful expression, an old man and satisfied with life.

And he was gathered to his people. And we can ask what it was that made Abraham satisfied. He had left his relatives nearly a hundred years ago.

He was 75 when he left Ur of the Chaldeans. For 100 years he had never seen his relatives. Think of that.

Some people who just can't live without seeing their relatives. But Abraham lived 100 years to do the will of God, to be where God wanted him to be, to fulfill God's purpose for him. Even if it meant that for 100 years of his life he'd never see his relatives, he was satisfied.

It's foolish when we think our satisfaction comes from these earthly values that we have acquired from childhood. He had lived comfortably in Ur of the Chaldeans. And he lived as a pilgrim, never having a permanent house, always in a tent, moving from place to place.

And he was satisfied with life. And that is a tremendous expression that we can ask ourselves whether when we come to the end of our life, whether we will honestly be able to say that, that we are satisfied with the life we have lived. I believe the only person who could say it would be one who has really sought with all of his heart to break free from the ties of earth and relatives and friends and money and earthly things to do the will of God.

Even if it meant misunderstanding, I'm sure Abraham's relatives misunderstood him a lot for the stand he took. He was not bothered. He wanted to do the will of God, whatever his relatives thought.

He was satisfied with life. And those others who lived comfortably way back in Ur of the Chaldeans, they died too, but we don't even hear about them. They never did God's will.

Humanly speaking, it wasn't an easy life Abraham had. It says he was rich, but this constant moving around in tents and no certain dwelling place, he was willing to face all that. And he died satisfied with life, satisfied that he had brought up one son who would live for God and through whom his purposes would be fulfilled.

These were the things that made him satisfied with life when the time came finally for him to die. And then his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machphela in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar. We know that that was the only place in Canaan that Abraham ever owned during his lifetime.

God said, one day this land will be yours, but the only place in that land that he owned in his lifetime was a graveyard. And it came about that on verse 11 after the death of Abraham that God blessed his son Isaac and Isaac lived by Beer Lahai Roy. And then we read a record of the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son described in the next few verses and it says about the, it's just one phrase here, it says about Ishmael and his children in verse 18 they settled from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt as one goes toward Assyria.

He settled in defiance of all his brothers. See there can be an attitude towards our brothers and relatives which is one of defiance. This is a contrast to the attitude Abraham had because I find that when we speak in the church about hating father, mother, brothers, sisters, wives and children there are people who get it in this spirit of Ishmael's children in a spirit of defiance.

And then you know you're following Ishmael, not Abraham. That's the wrong spirit. Abraham didn't have that spirit.

He was glad to live in peace, but he wanted to follow God. And we need to distinguish between these two spirits. He settled in defiance of his brothers.

Yes, they hated their brothers but not in the right spirit. And there are people today who hate their father and mother but not in the right spirit. Or any of the others whom the Bible tells us to hate but not in the right way.

It's in a spirit of defiance which is the spirit of Ishmael's children. That's just in passing. Then we read of the record of generations of Isaac in verse 19 and verse 20 Isaac was 40 years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Paddan-aram the sister of Laban the Syrian to be his wife.

And Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife because she was barren. And the Lord answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived. And it says here in verse 26 the last part that Isaac was 60 years old when she gave birth to them.

We just read that he was 40 years old in verse 20 when he got married. For 20 years he had no children. And that was quite a depressing thing in those days more depressing than it is today.

But you can imagine the questions that went through Abraham through Isaac's mind. Is this the one God has chosen for me? Have I made a mistake? Because she is barren? And yet we saw in our study last week that this was one of the clearest examples of the leading of God in a marriage. And yet God led him to be married to a barren woman.

Think of that. Many people think that if we are led by God in something it means there will be no problem. No difficulties.

Everything is going to be smooth sailing. That's not what God's word teaches. We read in the leading of Paul and his party in one of their missionary journeys that once they got a clear leading from God.

It's the only place in the Acts of the Apostles where we read Paul getting a clear leading from God and a vision to go to Macedonia. He saw a vision. He went to many places but there was once when it was under the clear leading of God.

And as soon as he reached Macedonia Philippi, we read he was locked up in jail. We read of a time when Jesus told his disciples to go across the lake. Soon as they got into the water and went across there was a storm.

So we shouldn't think that just because we got into a little difficulty somewhere that we are out of God's will. There are many people who get married who begin to question the wisdom of their marriage just because they face a little difficulty. That's foolish.

That's the devil coming and saying oh, you may have missed the will of God. Well what did he do? And this is what we should do. Pray to the Lord.

Pray to the Lord. And he prayed to the Lord and I can imagine he prayed for 20 years. 20 years he was barren.

He prayed and prayed and prayed and didn't give up. Prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed. He had a long wait to get a son just like his father Abraham had to get him.

And no doubt he had heard from his father how God is a God who answers prayer. He would have heard from his father son I waited nearly 20 years to get you and I'm glad I got you. And his faith was strengthened that he could also lay hold of the same God and pray for his wife.

For his mother was barren too. And God had done a miracle in her. And now his wife is barren and God can do a miracle for her.

And that teaches us something as parents that in the different situations in life if we can teach our children faith that God is a God who answers prayer and give them examples and demonstrations of it when they grow up and they set up their own homes and they are in a difficult situation they will remember what they learned from their parents and say yeah I remember that type of situation years ago when I was a child and I know what my dad did he prayed, trusted God and God did wonderful things. That is an example for us brothers and sisters. That's why Isaac prayed he didn't give up hope he didn't give up hope in 20 years because he had seen something in his father's life.

It was not a message, it was not a doctrine that Abraham gave Isaac but a living faith. A very beautiful verse in 2nd Timothy 2 Timothy 1 It's not just a father who can give it. Timothy didn't get it from his father he got it from his mother and so the sisters can take heart too.

2nd Timothy 1 verse 5 Timothy says I am mindful of the sincere faith, Paul says to Timothy I am mindful of the sincere faith not the right doctrine but the sincere faith within you which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and I'm sure it is in you as well Paul knew that grandmother had faith first and she transmitted that faith to her daughter Eunice and Eunice transmitted that faith on to her son Timothy so that Timothy could be one day mighty co-worker of the apostle Paul and that's what Abraham and Sarah passed on to Isaac faith that God can do miracles and God did it he prayed for 20 years many another man would have given up hope after maybe 4 or 5 years, not Isaac he prayed and the Lord answered the Lord answered him but we know from verse 26 that it took 20

years for that answer to come 20 years he had an almost similar experience as his father and then his wife conceived there was another miracle Rebecca the barren conceived just like Sarah and it teaches us here the power of fervent continuous prayer finally the children there were twins in her womb struggled together within her and she said why this struggle? why am I this way? and she had acquired some good habits too after having come into Abraham's family for 20 years being with Isaac for 20 years now she knew that when she had a question she should go to the Lord Lord why like this? why is it like this? why this tussle going on inside my womb? a good example for us to do to go to the Lord Isaac went to the Lord Rebecca went to the Lord wonderful example for husbands and wives when you

have a question to inquire of the Lord there are certain things that even your husband cannot answer Rebecca could not have got an answer for that from Isaac there are many things the husband can help you in but certain things you have to go to the Lord and she went to the Lord and the Lord spoke to her and said two nations are in your womb that is Jacob and Esau who are going to be the head of two separate nations two peoples will be separated from your body one people shall be stronger than the other and the older shall serve the younger that is Esau will serve Jacob it's a picture we can say of the struggle that goes on within us of the flesh and the spirit the struggle that went on in Rebecca's womb the struggle that goes on in us flesh versus spirit and the flesh is the older one

because we were born of the flesh long before we were born of the spirit but the promise is the older will serve the younger the spirit will triumph the promise of victory that we can lay hold of and thank God for the one people will be stronger than the other the power of the spirit is far stronger than the power of the flesh the struggle is there but one will triumph that's God's word we have faith in it we believe it will be so in our lives and the other thing I want you to notice here it says here the older will serve the younger apart from the illustration of it being a type of flesh and the spirit in actual terms it was Jacob and Esau and I want you to turn to Romans chapter 9 and see what the Holy Spirit says about this statement of God through the Apostle Paul in Romans 9 in

Romans 9 the subject of Romans 9 is the sovereign choice of God God sovereignly chooses now I want you to understand what I mean by that sovereign choosing means that He does it because He has the right to choose Romans chapter 9 and verse 10 and not only this but there was Rebecca also when she had conceived twins by one man our father Isaac for though the twins were not yet born and had done nothing good or bad it's obvious they had done nothing good or bad and I think when Esau was born he looked just as beautiful and just as innocent as any other child sure I'm sure Judas Iscariot looked just as innocent and just as beautiful as any other child when he was born and they had not done anything good or bad in order that God's purpose according to His choice that is His sovereign choice

might stand not because of works that's the point but because of Him who called it was said to her the older will serve the younger that's the verse we just read the older will serve the younger God told Rebecca and we can ask why there's an answer to that also you will say to me then verse 19 why the Holy Spirit anticipates that question you will ask why and the answer is in verse 20 on the contrary who are you oh man who answers back to God the thing molded cannot say to the molder why did you make me like this why I think it's very important for us to understand a little bit at least of the fact that God chooses sovereignly it's not according to works it's according to His choice have you ever marveled at how God chose you to be His child when perhaps your brothers and sisters have no

interest in the things of God if you think it is because you were a little better that's conceit it's God's choice He picks up the worst one it's His sovereign choice have you ever thought why it is that God's enabled us to hear some of these truths that led us into a godly life that so many others have not had the opportunity to hear I hope you don't think it's luck or good fortune it's God's sovereign choice that He allowed you to come to a particular town and live in a particular place and come across certain people and come to hear the truth it should humble us it's sovereign choice brothers and sisters meditate on it many a time it's something that has humbled me very deeply before God that it's sovereign choice that's placed me where I am and once we understand this it brings a

tremendous rest in us also concerning ministry in the church do you know that ministry in the church is a matter of God's sovereign choice even if you try all your life you can't have the ministry that God has given to another it's got nothing to do with works it's God's sovereign choice that's why it's good for each of us to humble ourselves and say Lord I'm quite content with the ministry you have appointed for me and the circle and boundary that you have drawn around my life I'm not in competition with anybody else I'm not jealous of anyone else it is your sovereign choice that gave another person that task and has given me this the sovereign choice of God nothing to do with works so that God's purpose according to his choice might stand so that's something we must learn while they

were in the womb think of this verse in the book of Jeremiah chapter 1 verse 5 Jeremiah 1 5 it says the word of the Lord came to me saying before I formed you in the womb I knew you when did God know

Jeremiah before he was conceived in his mother's womb and when was he appointed to be a prophet he wasn't appointed to be a prophet when he was 20 years old he was appointed to be a prophet before he was born he was consecrated and appointed to be a prophet to the nations the ministry was given to him sovereignly when he was in his mother's womb and in his mother's womb God equipped him with the intelligence and the abilities and the talents and the gifts so that when he would come forth he would grow up to be a prophet you can't fight with that you can't imitate that you can't imitate it

that's why I say it's the height of folly when somebody tries to imitate somebody else's ministry you got to get back into your mother's womb and ask God to start all over again if you want to do that it's impossible you just got to humble yourself and accept the way God made you in the mother's womb God said the younger is going to rule over the older that's it that settles it that's the thing that brings us rest that's the thing that delivers us completely from jealousy and competition we need to see it if Esau had seen it he could have humbled himself but we read in Esau's life all through he was fighting fighting fighting against God's purpose but he didn't succeed God's purpose still succeeded we can't fight against God's purpose when God's given a task and a ministry and a calling

to somebody else it's no use fighting against it you just lose out yourself that's what we learned from Esau if only he had humbled himself and accepted God's verdict it might have gone a little better with him Genesis 25 verse 24 and when her days to be delivered were fulfilled behold there were twins in her womb and the first came forth red all over like a hairy garment and they named him Esau and this was a pretty quick delivery of the second one after what his brother came forth with his hand holding on to Esau's heel so his name was called Jacob which means grabber the one who takes hold of the heel grabber so we see that he didn't begin his life in a very good way he came out grabbing his brother's heel all through his life he was like that he grabbed his brother's birthright by

cheating his father went away to grab a beautiful girl grabbed his father-in-law's property began from the mother's womb this grabber and the interesting thing is that God could choose such a person one would think that it would be a sweet innocent little one whom God chose it was a grabber and that is an encouragement to us that Jesus came to choose sinners he changed that grabber into a prince his name became Israel later on we are also grabbers I tell you we are all grabbers we can be pious looking on the outside but this grabbing spirit to grab the brother by the heel is there in our flesh and if you haven't seen it ask God to help you to see it to seek my own to seek what will the prophet mean very much in our flesh tremendous encouragement that God chooses to call himself the God of

Jacob the God of the grabber one would think that he should call himself the God of Israel by the new name which he gave have you noticed this in Psalm 46 Psalm 46 this is written many many years after Jacob died, after Israel died Jacob's new name was Israel just like Abram's new name was Abraham you know that Abram's new name was Abraham and you never read after Genesis 17 you never read that old name of Abraham again in the Old Testament have you noticed that he is never called the God of Abram he is always called the God of Abraham and following that rule one would think that once Jacob's name was changed to Israel God should call himself the God of Israel always but he doesn't it says here in Psalm 46 verse 11 the last part the God of Jacob is our stronghold and verse 7 also the God

of Jacob and even at the burning bush in Exodus 3 verse 6 Exodus 3 God told Moses I am the God of your father not the God of Abram that was his old name but Abraham the God of Isaac he had only one name but when it comes to Jacob why doesn't he use the new name why doesn't he say the God of Israel why the God of Jacob that is to encourage us grabbers to encourage us sinners that he has come for us

he is the God of the grabbers so that he can transform them so you can get the encouragement out of that praise the Lord so we see that Jacob wasn't a saint he was a crook he had a different personality quite two extreme personalities like very often we see in our children too one this extreme the other extreme we read in Genesis 25 when the boys grew up Genesis 25 verse 27 Esau became a

skillful hunter he was a hairy man tough muscular out in the fields rough can tackle hardship outgoing extrovert making friends with everyone popular popular in school tough big built timid shy retiring not spiritual some of these quiet timid shy retiring people are pretty good grabbers in secret don't be deceived by that outward appearance oh what a humble brother rubbish and God does the work of transformation something will happen otherwise this outward shy timid quiet disposition can conceal a pretty covetous grabbing nature inside and don't think this tough brawny muscular extrovert type of person is useless to God Esau didn't become useless to God because he had hair on his chest that's not the reason it's because he made the wrong choice it makes no difference whether you're an

Esau or a Jacob an extrovert outgoing brawny muscular tough shy retiring timid both are grabbers both are equally lost in sin both need equal salvation I say that because very often particularly among young believers they don't seem to have discernment in this area they get fooled very easily as to what true spirituality is they think being introverted is true spirituality no Jacob was a grabber but he was a quiet man he didn't go out in the field he was sitting in the tent he was not popular that's true but God chose him because of his sovereign choice Esau was a hunter he didn't have much time for God only two hunters mentioned in the Bible one is Nimrod the other is Esau pretty bad company to be in to have no time for God now Isaac loved Esau Isaac these boys were probably about 20

years old Isaac must have been about 80 now and unfortunately Isaac is no longer the type who goes out into the field to pray and meditate like he was when he was 40 years old you know we read that last time that when he was 40 years old he was going out in the field praying and meditating but now at the age of 80 some of his lusts have been developed he likes deer's meat very much deer's meat that meant more to him now than meditating in the field and it's an amazing word that says Isaac loved Esau because not even because he was his firstborn and that would have been some reason but because he had a taste for venison for deer's meat think of that think of how this man drifted you know it's a sad thing when you contrast the beginning and ending of Abraham's life with the beginning and

ending of Isaac's life Abraham began out as an idolater but he ended satisfied as we just read because he lived for God, he grew from grace to grace to grace to grace not grace in the New Testament sense but according to that level in the Old Testament from one degree of glory to another but Isaac started off so well think of that submissive son in Genesis 22 submitting to being tied to be slain by his father meditating in the field and at the age of 80 at the age of 40 he's meditating at the age of 80 he's thinking of which of my sons can get me venison and I love that one but Rebecca loved Jacob there was a division in the family through love for the children instead of loving one another very common in Indian families father and mother love their children more than they love each other

and what is worse partiality I love this child of mine more than this one because he is more intelligent because he is more good looking because he is my firstborn all equally stupid reasons as because I love deer's meat or here's another stupid reason because this is the only daughter I have, the others are boys that is like loving deer's meat that is the partiality that has ruined children I've seen many cases of parents who have been partial towards some children for some of these stupid reasons which I just mentioned and then they treat maybe one of their children in a little despising way and you see that one who is despised

turns out to be the most spiritual of the lot, just like here Jacob turned out to be more spiritual the father loved Esau be careful dear parents that you don't

drive away your children from God God is on the side of those who are despised and rejected and who are weak and considered as nothing he is not on the side of those who are attractive and intelligent and who are appreciated by the father and mother necessarily it's a very sad thing when there is partiality towards a child and Jacob no doubt was conscious that my father doesn't love me as much as he loves Esau, many children are sometimes conscious, my father or mother don't love me as much as they love another, it's a very sad thing and they can carry that memory all through life even if they forgive you when they are grown up it's a very sad thing we harm children by being, making one of our children into a favorite doing special favor for one that we won't do for another ungodly, with

God there is no partiality, let's be like him, and what is worse when father loves one, mother loves another and there are sides, there is a division that must never be found in the church never be found this it could be the other way around, I have so many daughters, this is my only son oh, so he is special that could be like that also in our country unfortunately all these evil things we have to cleanse ourselves from it and be like God that all are the same, first born or boy or girl or middle child or last child or anything deformed child, intelligent child no different, that is to be like God and if we don't partake of divine nature here we are just talking a lot of rubbish when we talk about the new and living way partiality is evil and it is in our flesh we have to get rid of it

and that's what we saw divided that family Isaac and Esau versus Rebecca and Jacob and it was like that till the end of their family life Isaac and Esau versus Rebecca and Jacob and whose responsibility was that?

Isaac if he had meditated on the fields at the age of 80 like he had done at the age of 40 he would not have been so foolish, if he had stopped loving deer's meat and loved prayer a little more than deer's meat, he wouldn't have been so foolish it's sad that family got divided because father and mother were divided when father and mother are divided children are divided remember that you destroy your children when you are not one with your wife or husband to the best of your ability keep that in mind example of a warning here let me read verse 29 when Jacob had cooked stew, Esau came in from the field, he was famished Esau said to Jacob please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished therefore his name was called Edom red, that's how he got that name, Edom because

he ate that red stuff Jacob said, first tell me your birthright you see, he was not such a sadhu after all, he was pretty shrewd he knew this is the time to get what I want out of this fellow, these shy, quiet timid, retiring types they know when the time comes to grab, not only my brother's heel but my brother's birthright as well don't be deceived by the outward appearance he said, first tell me your birthright he was a real business man this sadhu looking fellow like a lot of sadhu looking people today are, real business men inside the spirit of the business man I'll give you this and Jacob knew, this is what I want from this chap, he happened to be born just a few seconds before me and therefore he's got the birthright but I'm going to get it back from him and Esau said, maybe Jacob

had been waiting, waiting, waiting I wouldn't be surprised if Jacob sort of purposely made it when he saw Esau coming just as out of temptation to grab him, he's capable of anything and Esau said behold, I'm about to die what use then is this birthright to me and Jacob said, first swear to me, he's a real business man, he's got to if they had registrar's offices and all, you know taken him there before he gave him the

meal and got it all sealed and signed swear to me that you've really given it and so he swore he said, alright I've come to see that these people who are outwardly very brash and open and very brusque about their manner are actually safer than these quiet timid types, they say still waters run deep and it's usually like that they're more dangerous very often, and he got it

with the shrewdness he managed it, he sold his birthright to Jacob and Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew and he ate and drank and rose and went on his way, thus Esau despised his birthright for Esau is a young man, around 20 years of age, I presume that was a moment of crucial decision he made a decision that day that affected the whole course of the rest of his life his children, grandchildren and all his posterity one decision, and I believe that with many young people there comes a time in their late teens or early 20s it's usually around that time of life late teens or early 20s when they have to make a decision which can affect the course of their whole life in most cases, the direction is set there are few cases where miracles take place later on but in most cases the direction

is pretty well set particularly if you are a believer the choice is between that which will satisfy my physical earthly need now this pottage, may not be pottage, it may be sex it may be money, it may be some earthly ambition it can be anything, put anything into that bowl in Esau's case it was food some lust in the body, whatever it is maybe the desire for food which I haven't mastered, that I'm a glutton anything but it's a choice between that and what is spiritual because the birthright meant that whoever got it would get the promises that was given to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob knew that's a tremendous thing, to get those promises and it says Esau despised his birthright and in the New Testament the Holy Spirit warns us in Hebrews chapter 12 Hebrews chapter 12 verse 14 pursue after

peace with all men and after sanctification, and there's a price to be paid for sanctification, and that price is that we must master the desires of our body and see it without which no one will see the Lord, see to it that no one comes short of the grace of God that means misses out on God's grace that no root of bitterness bringing up cause trouble and by it many be defiled, that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau Esau was an immoral godless person who sold his own birthright for a single meal who sold his spiritual calling for the sake of one lust in his flesh I believe that there are people whom God could have used mightily if they had conquered one bad habit that they kept in their life one habit, not two one one bad habit that they never really mastered and overcame and

because of that of course God blesses them in a limited way in which God does things for them and through them but it can never be what God really wanted to accomplish through them because of one habit one bowl of porridge they wanted to satisfy their bodily lust be careful dear young brothers and sisters that you don't lose out your calling for the sake of one dirty habit you will discover in eternity what you have missed by retaining one dirty habit in your life one one dirty thought process that keeps on going around in your mind and you never really take it seriously radically to get rid of it it could be a habit of gossiping with some of you sisters, one dirty habit that you never master, never get a hold of your tongue and you become just a meeting attender and not a powerful

effective member in the body of Christ remember the word of God that you hear so that you don't have any regrets in eternity the word of God in the church is to save us from regrets at the judgment seat of Christ yup, for one meal he gave up his birthright and there are millions, millions who have followed in the footsteps of Esau he was very cunning in earthly matters, cunning to catch that deer cunning cunning to kill those leopards and the other wild animals but satan was too cunning for him many who are so cunning in earthly matters satan is far too cunning for them why does that habit remain? only because the person

is not radical enough, that's all that's why that one dirty habit remains in many believers because they are not radical they don't fear God sufficiently they don't value

their birthright it says see to it that you don't become an immoral godless person thing to be called an immoral godless person who gives up what spiritually I can get just for the sake of a little pleasure for my body little pleasure for my body one dirty habit, one cigarette one glass of whiskey a little filthiness that's it that's it and God sees it what men don't see one filthy habit and he sees, he saw that transaction going on between Jacob and Esau and he saw what Esau valued and it's in those moments when we are tempted with a lust in our flesh that God sees what we value our birthright, which is to partake of divine nature, that's the birthright as far as we are concerned and I can partake of divine nature and be a part of Christ's bride for all eternity I can despise that and

throw it away for the sake of one dirty habit and I'm just fooling myself if I think I'm following in the footsteps of Jacob, no I'm following in the footsteps of Esau Jacob had his failings but God called himself the god of Jacob, but he's never called the god of Esau no take that to heart Genesis 26 verse 1, now there was a famine in the land besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham so Isaac went to Gerar to Abimelech king of the Philistines and the Lord appeared to him and said, do not go down to Egypt stay in the land of which I shall tell you I want you to notice something here which is very significant there was a famine in the time of Abraham and Abraham went to Egypt without consulting God at all and he came out of Egypt and brought Hagar with him as we

saw, and through Hagar came Ishmael and all the problems associated with Ishmael and his descendants till today in Isaac's time also there was a famine and he also was ready to go down to Egypt and the Lord appeared to him and said, don't go down to Egypt in Jacob's time again there was a famine and we read in Genesis 46 verse 3 and 4 God told Jacob go to Egypt and be with your son Joseph there you see the contrast God told Isaac here don't go to Egypt many years later when there was similar famine, God told Jacob, Genesis 46 verse 3 and 4, go to Egypt what do we learn from this just this one simple truth, that God's will for another person is not God's will for you He may tell another person to go to Egypt He may tell you not to go and we must not take our example from others He did this

so I can do it we can miss the will of God like that if it is concerning these external things, we can imitate another person in the way he is following Christ in his life, in character but in the external details of our life we are not to say, that brother has got this in his house so I can have it, so it must be alright for me to have it, that is stupidity learn it and God told Moses to leave Egypt, think of that all different each person has to find God's will for himself God told Joseph to stay and be the ruler in Egypt, God told Moses who had the chance to be the ruler don't be the ruler in Egypt see when we read the biographies of other men we have to be careful that we don't imitate what they do there is a habit among some usually immature believers, they like to hear anecdotes

about some great man of God tell me more about what this man did in certain situations, they have got a mental list of all the things that various men of God did in various situations to imitate them, ah Joseph stayed and became the ruler in Egypt so Moses could have said, maybe I should also stay and become ruler in Egypt, because Joseph was a man of God, he would have missed God's will completely take this simple warning and be delivered from the immaturity of imitating what some other man of God did, live by the spirit and seek God yourself he may have told that man to go to Egypt, he may be telling you to get out so that is important the Lord appeared to him and said don't go to Egypt stay in the land of which I shall tell you sojourn in this land and I'll be with you and bless you,

to you and your descendants I'll give these lands I'll establish the oath to transport your father Abraham I'll multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven give your descendants all these lands by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed the same blessing that he gave to Abraham for Abraham's sake even though Isaac I think had backslidden a bit by now but still God for Abraham's sake keeps that word because not because you're so spiritual because Abraham obeyed me it's true that children are blessed because of a God fearing father I wonder if you dear young people realize that the greatest blessing on earth you can ever have is a God fearing father and mother so that even if you backslide because your father and mother were so God fearing some blessings still

come down to you but even though Isaac's taken up with venison and deer meat now he says I'll still bless you because Abraham obeyed me and kept my child that's why I encourage you young people to give thanks to God if you are fortunate enough to have God fearing parents who have led you in the right way don't despise them because Abraham kept my commandments he kept my charge he kept my commandments he kept my statutes and he kept my laws what a testimony God could give about Abraham I was the man who obeyed me, kept my charge kept my commandments kept my statutes, kept my laws one with whom God was delighted blessed are we if we can follow in his footsteps so Isaac lived in Gerar when the men of the place asked about his wife he said she's my sister for he's afraid to say my wife

thinking the men of the place might kill me on account of Rebecca for she's beautiful came about when he'd been there a long time that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out and through a window and saw and behold Isaac was sporting with his wife Rebecca then Abimelech called Isaac and said behold certainly she's your wife how then did you say she's my sister Isaac said to him because I said lest I die on account of her and Abimelech said what is this you've done to us one of the people I easily have lain with your wife and you'd have brought guilt upon us so Abimelech charged all the people saying you touching this manner's wife shall surely be put to death our children copy not only our good qualities but also our bad qualities who was the first person who said concerning his wife

this is my sister Abraham and so we find that his son Isaac also does the same thing and I'll tell you something children find it easier to follow our sins than to follow our good habits you've probably discovered that have you noticed sometimes an older child speaking with a commanding tone of voice to the younger brother and then you sit and say where did he hear that he must have heard it from you that's why he's bossing over his younger brother or sister like that now they copy our sins and our failures more than our good habits so Isaac says she's my sister the same thing the same failure of Abraham Isaac sowed in the land and reaped in the same year a hundred fold and the Lord blessed him we must remember they were living in times when the light was not as bright as it is today we

can't get away with it so easily today if you say that's your sister we're living in brighter light under the new covenant a lot of things God overlooked in those days God even permitted divorce in Moses time a lot of things God overlooked in Abraham and Isaac which he would not overlook today because the light is brighter so God could still bless him the Lord blessed him and the man became rich and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy for he had possessions of flocks and herds and the philistines envied him and all the whales which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father the philistines stopped up by filling them with herds you see he was rich he had many flocks the philistines didn't have so many flocks and so they didn't have need of those

whales so they blocked it up one would think it so foolish to go and block up a well unnecessarily it was just to make life difficult for Isaac amazing the evil of human nature when we are jealous what all we'll do just to make life difficult for somebody else and to be happy when somebody else's flocks don't have water their flesh is no different from yours and mine jealousy that made them block up those wells then Abimelech said to Isaac go away from us for you are too powerful for us and Isaac departed from there and camped in the valley of Gerar and settled there then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham for the philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham and he gave them the same name which his father had given them

when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of the living water I just want to say this in closing that this is a picture of the wells that were dug in the days of Abraham, our father means in the days of the apostles which traditions and the denominational churches have blocked up and now we come like Isaac to dig again those truths that have been buried there for centuries and opened up and it says he gave them the same name verse 18 this was called the baptism in the Holy Spirit in the days of the apostles we shall today call it the baptism in the Holy Spirit this was called the new and living way we shall call it the new and living way to dig up all the wells that have been blocked up because there is living water as it says here in those wells living

water that's our calling and there was contention it says when they did it, verse 20 the men of Gerar quarreled there was a fight there is always contention when we dig up those wells from all these denominational people but that's our calling may God help us to be faithful to open up those things that have been blocked for centuries that have kept God's people thirsty the flocks of God thirsty so they can drink once again that's our calling in the church to open up every well that the apostles dug and that have been buried through the centuries and that is the reason why we are in a constant battle with others who don't want to accept these truths but we are following in the footsteps of men who have fought that battle and fulfilled God's purpose

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/13/SID13402.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/genesis-part-22/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net