

Ministry of Grace

Lesson 7 – Humble, Joyous Obedience

Genesis 17:1-27

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, ²that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly."

³Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, ⁴"Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.

⁷And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

⁸And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."

⁹And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. ¹⁰This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. ¹²He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, ¹³both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

¹⁵And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

¹⁷Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" ¹⁸And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!"

¹⁹God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. ²⁰As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation.

²¹But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year." ²²When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

²³Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him. ²⁴Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁵And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁶That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. ²⁷And all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

Synopsis

It's been thirteen years since Ishmael was born to Sarai's handmaid, Hagar and Yahweh has still not fulfilled his promise to give Abram a child by his wife Sarai. Abram is now 99 years old and Sarai is 89. Both of them have become too old to have children, but we are not informed about any more complaining from Abram. As this chapter in Genesis unfolds, we find that Yahweh miraculously appeared to Abram once more and Abram immediately responded by falling on his face before Yahweh. This is the first time that we have seen evidence of Abram humbling himself before Yahweh.

In this appearance, Yahweh introduced himself as El Shaddai, (the All-powerful One or the All-sufficient One) and he informed Abram that he was now going to fulfill the covenant promise he had made with him years earlier. It has been almost 30 years since Yahweh first promised that Abram would be the father of many nations and about 15 years since he confirmed the covenant with Abram and informed him that the Messiah would be one of his descendants.

Now Yahweh tells him that he is to circumcise every male in his household as a sign of the covenant and Abram didn't hesitate to obey Yahweh's directive. He performed this circumcision on himself and every male in his household that very day. As a way to emphasize his promise, Yahweh changes his name from Abram (Exalted Father) to Abraham (Father of a Multitude). He also changed his wife's name from Sarai (Princess) to Sarah (Noblewoman). And, he informed Abraham that his promised son would be born in a year.

In response to this news, Abraham fell on his face again, this time in joyous laughter proclaiming, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"

Genesis 17:1, 2

When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly."

Based on this verse and the last verse of the previous chapter, it has been thirteen years since Hagar gave birth to Ishmael.

Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16)

“the LORD appeared” – God made a visible appearance to Abram. Later in this chapter, we find that Yahweh “went up from him,” indicating that He came to Abram in a physical body, that is, the person of Jesus Christ pre-incarnate.

When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham. (Genesis 17:22)

“Almighty God” – Hebrew *el shaddai* (*el* = “the powerful one” or “God” and *shaddai* = “All powerful” or “Almighty.” Some translate this as “All Sufficient One.”

“walk before Me” – Literally “walk with respect to my face.” This could be interpreted as “walk in my presence” (that is, **walk before me**) or “walk to my face;” (**walk facing me** or **walk toward me**).

When Jeremiah lamented over the disobedience of the Israelites, he used this same metaphor, albeit with them walking away from God:

They have turned to me their back and not their face. And though I have taught them persistently, they have not listened to receive instruction. (Jeremiah 32:33)

“blameless” – Hebrew *tamiym* = “complete, whole, or entire – either physically or morally.” Thus, we could translate the end of verse one as “*walk facing me and be complete.*”

“make” – Hebrew *nathan* = “to give, to bestow, or to grant.” God was not saying that He was about to make a new covenant with Abram. He was saying that He was now going to grant, or fulfill, the covenant that had already been made.

“covenant” – Hebrew *beriyth* = “a covenant or agreement.”

“greatly” – Hebrew *meh-ode meh-ode*; that is, “greatly, greatly” or “exceedingly, exceedingly.” Not only did God fulfill this physically in the children of Isaac and the children of Ishmael (not to mention Abram’s six other sons – see Genesis 25:1, 2), but in the inclusion of the spiritual children of Abram as well:

And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:29)

Genesis 17:3 - 8

Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to

you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."

"Abram fell on his face" – Abraham had learned to revere Yahweh, so as soon as Yahweh announced Himself to Abraham, he bowed down to the ground before Him.

"God said with him, ..."

– One of the keys of hearing God's voice seems to be a humble attitude before Him. Remember what Yahweh told Solomom regarding the Israelites:

if my people who are called by my name **humble themselves**, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, **then I will hear from heaven** and will forgive their sin and heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

"My covenant" – Yahweh declared what Abram's responsibility was in this agreement. His part consists of verses four through eight. Recall that this was not a two-way agreement. It was strictly Yahweh's agreement without any human action required.

"father" – Hebrew *ab* = "father"

"many" – Hebrew *hamon*, contracted to *ham* = "a multitude."

"Abram" – "exalted father"

"Abraham" – the combination of *abram* and *hamon* = "father of a multitude."

"I will make you" – Though this is a prediction of the future, in God's eternity it has already happened.

"offspring" – Hebrew *zera* = "seed"

"I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you." – Yahweh's agreement with Abraham was to be his God (*elohim*) and the God of his "offspring."

"everlasting" Hebrew *olawm* = "concealed;" that is, "the vanishing point," or "eternal."

"I will give to you and to your offspring after you ... all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession" – The other part of this agreement was that Yahweh gave all the land of Canaan to Abraham and his "seed" forever.

Genesis 17:9-14

And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

“As for you” – Abraham’s part in the agreement was circumcision. Remember that the covenant had already been ratified by God alone (see **Genesis 15:17**), but that doesn’t mean that Abraham and his descendants didn’t have any responsibility as a result of the covenant. Their responsibility in maintaining their part of the agreement was to circumcise all males eight days old and older. This was not a legal requirement that they had to perform in order to “ratify” the covenant. It was a “sign” of the covenant which God made.

Abraham performed circumcision both as a sign and a seal according to the Apostle Paul:

He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. (**Romans 4:11**)

Paul goes on to tell us in Romans that the promise (covenant) made to Abraham and his descendants was not based on their being circumcised, but was based on faith. After all, the sign of circumcision was given to Abraham about fifteen years after he was declared righteous by faith.

“you shall keep” – keep is the Hebrew word *shamar*, meaning “to observe, to watch, to guard, or to keep.” Remember, this act of circumcision was not a legal requirement to obtain righteousness. For Abraham it was done as a testimony of something that had already taken place. It was his way of declaring that Yahweh was his God. Throughout the years (even unto this day), to the Jews this is a sign that they are children of Yahweh.

“sign” – Hebrew *oth*, meaning “a sign, a signal, or a mark.”

Genesis 17:15, 16

And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."

“Sarai” – Hebrew *sawray* = “princess.”

“Sarah” – Hebrew *sawraw* = “noblewoman.”

“I will give you a son by her” – This is the first time that we are told that the promised seed would definitely come from Sarah. Up to this point it was implied. Now it is confirmed.

Genesis 17:17, 18

Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!"

“Abraham ... laughed” – Apparently, Abraham had raised up from his initial bowing to the ground and now bows back down. In **Genesis 18:12** we will be told that Sarah laughed to herself when she heard this news, but it was Abraham who first laughed at the prospect of his having a child with Sarah. The reason for his laughter was the fact that he was nearly 100 years old and Sarah nearly 90. This laughter does not appear to be in ridicule or mockery of Yahweh’s promise, for God surely would have dealt with that. It appears that the laughter was out of wonderment and joy.

“**Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!**” – Abraham was not suggesting to Yahweh that He fulfill the covenant through Ishmael instead of Isaac. Rather, as soon as Abraham realized in his heart that there was going to be another son, through whom the covenant was to be fulfilled, his heart immediately turned to the fate of his son through Hagar. It is very likely that Hagar had relayed to Abraham Yahweh’s description of Ishmael, and Abraham wished that Ishmael would not be cut-off from Yahweh’s blessing. His prayer was that Ishmael would be devoted to Yahweh and blessed by Yahweh in spite of the disappointment and disenfranchisement he might feel after Isaac was born. That this was, indeed, Abraham’s intent is borne out by Yahweh’s response to him.

Genesis 17:19 - 22

God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation. But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year." When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

“No” – Hebrew *abawl* = “but, truly, indeed.” Although it seems to be derived from a primitive root which means “to mourn,” giving it a negative connotation, it is not used as a denial or argument. Therefore, its translation as “no” is appropriate.

“Isaac” means “he laughs.”

“I will establish My covenant with him” – The covenant will be continued through Isaac, not through Ishmael.

“As for Ishmael, I have heard you” – This is an indication that Yahweh did not consider Abraham’s comments to mean, *Why not just make the covenant through Ishmael*. Abraham had asked Yahweh to make Ishmael a blessing as well.

“He shall father twelve princes” – According to **Genesis 25:13-16**, Ishmael did have twelve sons who were princes.

“Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year” – This is the first time that Yahweh told Abraham when his promised son would be born. Abraham had been waiting for nearly thirty years since he

was first called out of Ur. Now he had to wait only one more year. The expression “this time next year” implies that the event is approximately twelve months away.

“God went up from Abraham” – This indicates that Yahweh appeared to Abraham in a visible physical form (the pre-incarnate person of Jesus Christ).

Genesis 17:23-27

Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him. Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. And all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

Abraham immediately complied with Yahweh’s instructions. Notice:

- ✓ He did not ask why this particular act was to be done, he simply did as Yahweh instructed.
- ✓ Obedience was painful, not only to himself, but he had to inflict pain on those he loved as well.
- ✓ Abraham did not argue or negotiate with Yahweh.
- ✓ He complied completely without cutting any corners (no pun intended). He did not leave out any of his household.
- ✓ Abraham never complained about what he had to endure to be obedient to Yahweh.
- ✓ His obedience came from a submissive, grateful heart, not as a result of a sense of obligation or an attempt to earn favor with Yahweh.

So What?

Thirteen years have gone by since the birth of Abraham’s first child, Ishmael. We are not told anything about what has transpired during this time. However, there is evidence that Abraham’s relationship with Yahweh has grown. There have been no further recorded attempts by Abraham or Sarai to “help” Yahweh with His promises. And, according to the Apostle Paul’s teaching in Romans, Abraham believed that God could still give him another son even though he is now nearly one hundred years old. Here’s how Paul expressed it:

as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations" -- in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be." He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. (**Romans 4:17-21**)

Abraham now was fully convinced not only that Yahweh **could** do what He promised, but that He **would** do it, even though it seemed impossible on the human level.

Throughout this journey we have seen Abraham’s faith grow. Early on he believed in Yahweh and he heard Yahweh’s calling on his life. He had made altars to Yahweh and willingly offered

sacrifices, indicating his recognition of Yahweh as God. Abraham had also called on the name of Yahweh, showing his recognition of Yahweh's personal relationship with him. He had believed Yahweh's promises to him, that Yahweh would make him a father of multitudes, and the father of the Messiah. He had been declared righteous some fourteen years previous, but now we see something new. We see that Abraham recognizes the holiness and lordship of Yahweh. In the presence of this Holy, Righteous, Lord of all creation, Abraham immediately bowed himself to the ground, a sign of reverence and submission.

Are you aware of the presence of God?

If you were to lay down your Christian walk next to Abraham's, how would you stack-up? I know, none of us is perfect and we shouldn't be comparing ourselves to other people, we should be comparing ourselves to God's standard of perfection, Jesus Christ. But humor me for a few minutes.

How do you stack-up compared to Abraham? You believe in God, that's a good start. Perhaps, you have believed on His Son and His sacrifice to pay the penalty of your sins. As a result, God has declared you to be as righteous as Christ. That makes you His child and guarantees that you are able to stand in His presence without fear. You pray to God, knowing that this is what He wants, and you believe that He can and will answer your prayers, even knowing that He may not answer them the way that you want Him to. But, do you recognize the holiness of God and His lordship over you? Well, of course, we would all say *yes* to that. But let's stop and think about this for a minute. When you recognize that you are in the presence of God, are you fully aware of His holiness and your unworthiness? If God were to suddenly appear in this room, would you immediately bow before Him because He is the Sinless, Holy, Almighty God and you, apart from the blood of Christ, are sinful and unworthy to be in His presence? Would you recognize that it is only because of the sacrifice of His Son that you can be in His presence? Well, consider this: God *is* present right here, right now. Let me repeat that. **God is present right here, right now.** Remember what Jesus told His disciples:

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." (Matthew 18:20)

Also, remember what else Jesus said as he commissioned His disciples:

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

So, God *is* present with you at this very moment! The Holy, Righteous, Eternal, Almighty God is right here, right now. Does the mere thought of that humble you? It should!

But – as Christians, we have a unique relationship with this Holy God. Twice, Paul tells us about this unique relationship:

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, (Romans 8:14-16)

And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. (Galatians 4:6-7)

As adopted children of Almighty God, we have special privileges. We can enter into His presence without being summoned. We can have a very personal relationship with Him, which is what He wants. We can come to Him and call him *papa* or *daddy*. But, we must be careful that we don't let our privileges blind us to who He is. He is the Holy, Righteous, Almighty, Eternal God and He is present right here with you right now.

Stop and think about this for a minute! (Pause)

Joyous Belief

Now, let's return to our study. At some point in this encounter with Yahweh, Abraham raised himself up and had a conversation with him. Yahweh confirmed His covenant with Abraham and instructed him to circumcise himself and every male in his household. From that day on, every male in the household had a constant reminder of the promise made to him through Abraham. They were different from all other males. They had a unique position in the eyes of God. They had a visible reminder that the promises of God were theirs - the promise of a land to dwell in and the promise of a coming Messiah. Even today, Jews are constantly reminded that they have been promised a land and a Messiah. They may have missed His first coming, but He is coming back again to save them.

Do you see how strong Abraham's faith has become? Circumcision is a painful operation on a man's most private (and tender) part and this was performed without the use of painkillers. Abraham agreed to have this operation performed on himself and agreed to inflict this painful procedure on every male in his household. In order to undergo this painful procedure and to inflict it on his entire household Abraham would have to be completely sure, without a doubt, that Yahweh was going to fulfill the promise in spite of the apparent inability of both his and Sarai's physical bodies. That's putting his faith on the line.

We Christians don't need this outward symbol of God's covenant because that's not what God has promised us. He has promised us that our sins have already been forgiven, that we have been adopted into His family, that we will inherit His riches, and that we will have eternal life in His presence. Our seal and guarantee is the presence of His indwelling Holy Spirit, as Paul said to the Ephesians:

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14)

As Abraham listened to God he was reminded that he would have a son and God told him that his wait was almost done. God told him that in one year he and Sarah would have the promised son. Here now, we see another sign of Abraham's spiritual maturity. Abraham fell on his face once more in God's presence, but this time he laughed, not out of scorn or disbelief. His laughter was out of belief and relief, belief that God really was going to allow him to have a son with Sarah, and relief that his wait was almost over.

Have you ever laughed with joy over God's promises to you? Have you ever thought about what it's going to be like when we are ushered into His presence with crowns of reward with which we can give Him the recognition He is due? When this short life is over, we will have eternity to declare God's praises and to enjoy the physical presence of the God who loves us so. Do you laugh with tears of joy when you realize the greatness of His promises to you? You, who deserve nothing but the darkness and torment of Hell, can you imagine what it will be like as you pass through eternity's portal and see your God and your Savior standing before you welcoming you into His kingdom with open arms?

Humble Obedience

Before we leave this lesson, let's look at two key characteristics of Abraham's faith, his humility and his immediate obedience. If we look back over Abraham's life up to this point, we see that he has always had a reverence for God. He has always performed the required rituals to please God. He built altars and even called on the name of his God. He learned to act selflessly when he offered Lot the best of the land. He put himself in harm's way for the sake of others when he rescued Lot and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah from Chedorlaomer. He was reverent and obedient, just like many Christians today who can recite the 23rd Psalm and know the Lord's Prayer by heart, attend church every Sunday, give a tithe of their income, serve in the church, and witness to the unsaved. However, if you look carefully at Abraham's early life you will notice that he approached Yahweh as an equal. He complained about how Yahweh was treating him (not giving him a son even after promising he would). But – up until this point in his life he had not humbled himself before Yahweh. In this interaction with Yahweh his attitude is obviously different.

When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly." **Then Abram fell on his face.**

Abraham now sees Yahweh differently and he sees himself differently. He no longer sees himself and Yahweh as somewhat equal. He has developed a reverential fear of Almighty God and immediately humbles himself before Yahweh. It appears that Yahweh has been waiting for Abraham to humble himself and now that he has, the promise will be delivered. Having a humble attitude before God has always been a prerequisite for God's blessing. Remember what Yahweh told Solomon?

if my people who are called by my name **humble themselves**, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

In the New Testament, James said:

But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." (James 4:6)

And the Apostle Peter said:

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, (1 Peter 5:6)

Abraham has learned to humble himself before God. And, when God told Abraham to circumcise himself and all the males in his household, he didn't have to stop and think about it. He didn't have to wait until the spirit moved him. He didn't have to talk it over with Sarai. He didn't have to call all the men together and discuss it with them. He didn't have to put together a plan and make sure he had all the bases covered. He didn't have to wait until he could go out and buy a new flint knife for the operation. No, he did it right away, without complaining and without hesitation! Did you read what verse twenty-three said?

Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins **that very day**, as God had said to him.

As soon as God went up from Him, Abraham called Eliezer and told him to assemble all the men of the household more than eight days old. There were no exceptions and no one was excused for any reason. He performed the task that God had given him, without delay. He heard God speak and he put it into action.

Is that how you respond to God's direction on your life? I'll be honest with you, I'm not there yet! Oh, sometimes I'm fairly prompt, when it's something that I want to do. But if it's something that involves personal pain or sacrifice, I usually have to think about it for a while. Sometimes, I even wait until God prompts me again, just to make sure I'm getting the message right. Oh, to be like Abraham, to have such conviction and focus on God that I wouldn't hesitate one nanosecond after God prompts me to action!

How about you? Is that what you want too?