

Beginnings: Like Father, Like Son
Genesis 26

Same Faith (vv. 1-6)

- The crisis in the text and in the life of Isaac is a famine. (v. 1)
 - Isaac may have been passing through Gerar on his way to Egypt.
 - Verse 6 represents a triumph of faith: Isaac defied common sense and personal security.
 - Isaac believed God's difficult, hard-to-understand promise of provision.

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
(Hebrews 11:1)*

- Isaac looked foolish to the world; but Isaac's folly was actually solid wisdom.
 - The *wisdom* of Isaac's decision to remain lies in vv. 3-5.
 - Egypt with all its resources couldn't compare to God with all His.
- Application:
 - Questions for us:
 - How much is God's blessed presence worth to us?
 - Are we willing to embrace what is scary, difficult, and unknown?
 - Do we believe that God can and will infallibly come through?
 - Do we believe that staggering rewards await us in eternity if we'll obey now?
 - God's ways are not our ways; God's ways are infinitely wise and infinitely better.

For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (1 Corinthians 1:22-25)

- Consider the impact of faith from generation to generation.

Same Failures (vv. 7-11)

- The Bible is realistic in its portrayals.
 - Isaac is all too human; all too like Abraham.

- Like his father, Isaac lied about his relationship with his wife for his protection.
 - Unlike Abraham, the revelation of his life was not miraculous.
 - Isaac was exposed by ordinary means.

For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light. (Luke 8:17)

- The fear of man almost always leads to the betrayal of others.
 - When we excessively fear for our reputation or our well-being, everything and everyone becomes fair game in our eyes.
 - The antidote, of course, is not the absence of any fear but the presence of a greater fear.

The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion. (Provs 28:1)

- Application:

We see that very good men have sometimes been guilty of very great faults and follies. Let those therefore that stand take heed lest they fall, and those that have fallen not despair of being helped up again. (Matthew Henry)

- Watch the fear of man in your own hearts and minds.
- Be mindful that God's mercy can yet reach your depths of sin.

If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? ⁴ But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared. (Psalm 130:3-4)

Same Faithful God (vv. 12-35)

- In the end, God is the focus and the hero of the Isaac story.
 - God blessed Isaac for the sake of the nations, despite Isaac's failure among the nations.
 - The ultimate purpose of the blessing of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was that one day there would come from their descendants One who would never lie.
- Isaac is simply another beneficiary of the incredible story of mercy on the part of a faithful God.
 - Not everything was easy in Isaac's life...
 - But Isaac truly received better than he deserved.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (Romans 12:1)

- The bottom-line purpose of Isaac's (and our) lives: goodness that leads to gratitude that leads to God's glory among the nations.