**Now I Know**

Rereading the story of Abraham offering Isaac as a sacrifice I was struck by God’s response, the second time. The first time the angel spoke, “But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” (Gen. 22:11-12). God is highlighting Abraham’s respect for God. It is not what Abraham “says”, but what he “does” that gains God’s favor.

Of course, Abraham must believe and fear the Lord enough to “obey”. But when Abraham obeys God’s will, not when it is easy, but difficult, God is glorified greatly. How does God respond when he is glorified by such an act of faith? Only a few times we see God’s reaction to our actions in a positive way. “Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, “ By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.” (Gen. 22:15-18). The obedience of Abraham’s faith is underscored by how difficult it would be to offer your only begotten son. But God seems so pleased by Abraham’s faith that he with joy repeats the blessings he has promised.

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Now you know God’s love for you. God stopped Abraham from sacrificing his son, but no one stopped God from offering up Jesus. Now you know how much God loves you and is willing to forgive you. So take it upon yourself to please God like Abraham did. Turn your life around for God. More Biblically speaking, be born again, start over. Be born of the water (baptism) and the Spirit (John 3:3-5). Begin to seek God’s favor by living, walking, obeying God’s commands out of your faith in God. May God be pleased with your faith, as when he was pleased with Abraham’s faith. When do you know that you too, deeply believe? When you also obey when it is difficult. After passing a temptation successfully, “now I know” and “now” God knows and is glorified thereby! God is the one who blesses. God is the hero. God deserves a people of his own possession, zealous for good works. Let us do the deeds of Abraham. Dan Peters