

Emmaus Road

...and he opened to us the Scriptures (Luke 24:32)

Happy New Year! Here we stand together in front of a fresh calendar and new opportunities to see God work in us and through us. Let me begin the year with a question, what are your expectations for 2010? Are you expecting the economy to improve or that you will know better health this coming year? What about your spiritual life? Do you have any expectations about how you will grow, relate, or serve God in 2010? When you made those nifty new years resolutions, did any of them involve a deepening of your walk with Christ? In this edition of the Emmaus Road, I'd like to interact with a story out of the book of Genesis where God asked one of his followers to do something completely radical. It wasn't what he expected but was something necessary and powerful in him becoming fully devoted to God's will for his life. Let's dive in!

Monday - Read Genesis 22:1-4 and I Peter 4:12. Why is God testing Abraham? What do you think Abraham is thinking at this moment? What would you be thinking? Why do you think God is testing his people? What is he trying to produce in us? Are you being tested? What might God be trying to teach you as we move into a New Year?

Tuesday - Read Genesis 22:5-8. What is Isaac thinking is going to happen? What is Abraham saying/believing in verse 8 about what God is going to do? Although Abraham can't see it, he believes God is going to somehow provide. What do you need God to provide for you? Could the deepening of your trust of him be the reason you are being tested? I pray that in 2010 you will know over and over again that God is a God who provides even when it seems hopeless!

Wednesday - Read Genesis 22:9-14 and Hebrews 11:17-19. Here is where we see why God tested Abraham! He wanted to know how willing Abraham was to do the will of God. Are you willing to do the will of God (even if it's a little radical)? In the Hebrews passage Abraham believed God could even raise Isaac from the dead. Abraham's obedience trumped his need to understand! What kind of radical faith/trust might God be calling you to develop in 2010, even if it's a little radical?

Thursday - Read Genesis 22:15-19 and James 1:22-25. What did Abraham's obedience produce according to Genesis 22:17? What does obedience produce in James 1:25? God promises to bless us when we are willing to follow his will. Living under the banner of his radical calling on our lives is and always will be the best way for us to live. How has God blessed you recently? What blessing will you believe God for in 2010 as you are willing to totally obey Him?

Friday - Read Luke 14:25-33 and Philippians 1:21-26. What do these passages describe about the kind of radical life God wants for us? God sent his Son and gave his Spirit that we might be filled to overflowing. The overflow is designed to give us a radical new vision for how to live. In 2010 we are going to be learning about radical faith and commitment. I trust that God will give us, through testing and teaching, a new way to see how big he is and how changed we can become! Happy 2010! May this be a banner year for his people at FBC!!