

Sunday 25 February 2024

## Life Group Leaders' Notes

Series: God Of Abraham, Isaac And Jacob

Title: How To See The Best Results In Your Life

Key Text: Genesis 26:12-14

You can see more blessings in your life than you can possibly imagine. When you come close to God you enter a world of new possibilities.

As we continue looking at the life of Isaac, we see a time where Isaac came into a year of unprecedented favour from God. He went through tough times and faced difficulties, including similar situations to his father Abraham, but when he stayed in the right place with God, put Him first in everything and obeyed Him, the Bible tells us that Isaac reaped a hundredfold in one year.

Genesis 26:12-14 tells us: 'Then Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and the Lord blessed him. The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous; for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants.'

As a church, our theme for this year is 'The Great Harvest'. This can be a year like no other year for you, your family and the church as we learn some key lessons from Isaac's life.

1. We have to sow in order to reap (Galatians 6:7-8; Matthew 6:33; Hosea 10:12; Psalm 24:3-4; Romans 12:2; Psalm 126:5-6; Matthew 22:9; Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Corinthians 9:6)
2. We can see blessings on a scale that we never imagined (Genesis 26:12; Genesis 15:5; Luke 5:4-7)
3. We need to understand that the source of blessing is God Himself (2 Corinthians 9:8; Philippians 4:19)

## Apply

**1. We have to sow in order to reap.** Isaac planted. We have to sow. We cannot expect to reap a great harvest if we do not sow. As much as a farmer prepares the soil and the ground for his harvest, we too need to do the same to see people come to Christ (Galatians 6:7-8). If we sow in the flesh, we shall reap in the flesh but if we sow with the Lord and into His kingdom, we shall reap not only in this life but for eternity. So, what are you sowing into? Are you sowing more into your career, your business, your social life more than your spiritual life? These are only questions that you can answer, maybe the Lord is revealing things to you right now. Maybe it's time for you to readdress your priorities. To seek the God life, not just the good life. We need to trust the Lord to provide and bless us, as we seek His kingdom first (Matthew 6:33). We can be sure that He will pour out His blessing on us as He did for Isaac. We need to ensure that we sow the right things in order to reap a great harvest in our families and in our church.

**- Sow by living right with God and man:** To know the blessing of God we need to live the right way and to have a right relationship with the Lord. We need to live right in every area of our lives, to treat each person with respect in how we speak and in our actions towards them. We need to ensure that everything we do is 'above board' in our business lives and our personal lives. We must not just be saints on Sundays but treat people right every day (Hosea 10:12). Everything in life stems from our relationship with the Lord. We need to come into the right relationship with Him each day. Just as we need fresh food and water each day, we need fresh spiritual food from the Lord every day. Each day we need to start by asking the Holy Spirit to come into our lives afresh, to cleanse and purify us, to lead and guide us, to train and correct us (Psalm 24:3-4). Whilst we live in the world it is important that we stay close to the Holy Spirit, that we are sensitive to His voice and prompting. That we put our trust in Him alone and not the things that the world tries to get us to focus on like power, fame, success. Abandon the chase for pleasure, possessions and status, and stop living like everyone else (Romans 12:2).

**- Sow in tears with prayer:** If you need a change in your situation you need to cry out to the Lord in tears and prayer (Psalm 126:5-6). Hannah sowed in tears for a child and the Lord heard her. Cry out to the Lord. If you have spiritual, physical, or financial barrenness then now is your time to cry out to the Lord and we will reap. Prayer is essential to our life as Christians.

Martin Luther said: 'To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.' Before we do anything, we must pray. Pray for the great harvest to come. We need to learn and develop this more, to sow in passion for our loved ones and the lost of the world.

- **Sow in evangelism:** We need to invite people to share in the good news of the Lord Jesus, to invite them to our life groups and church services. All we need to do is invite them; the Lord will work the rest out. If we never invite anyone, how will we expect them to come? To share the good news is a fundamental part of being a Christian a follower of Christ (Matthew 22:9). One of Jesus' last requests to His disciples which is known as the Great Commission to 'Go and make disciples of all nations' (Matthew 28:19-20). This was not a suggestion but an instruction from God Himself.

- **Sow in giving:** We will reap according to what we sow (2 Corinthians 9:6). We can expect that God will honour us if we sow into His kingdom. If we invest in God, He will invest in us. What is your attitude to giving? Do you give freely? Is your attitude 'freely I have received so freely I give' or do we struggle with this? Are we happy to sow generously with our time but not our finances? or perhaps our finances but not our time. When we sacrifice to the Lord by giving to Him, we are not only saying we trust you Lord, but we are putting a spiritual stake in the ground for our families and our generations to come. Today we can ask the Lord to help us to give freely. He wants each of us to give Him first place in every area, and to sow generously with our time and our finances.

**2. We can see blessings on a scale that we never imagined.** We can see a great harvest. Isaac reaped a hundredfold (Genesis 26:12). You may think of it as he reaped 100 times what he had sown but in fact it is much greater than this. A hundredfold return means simply the greatest possible return on any particular seed sown. When we sow with the Lord and according to His will and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can see far more than we ever imagined possible. God can totally expand all possibilities and every horizon in our lives, just as he did for Isaac's father Abraham (Genesis 15:5). The blessing came quickly for Isaac - in one year. In one season of time, he went from a little to a lot. This is the year when we can see abundance. With Jesus by our side, we can achieve great things. Just like the disciples

who had fished all night and caught nothing saw a complete turnaround when they partnered with Jesus (Luke 5:4-7), or Joseph who went from prison to parliament in one day, God can quickly bring changes. Isaac reaped a great harvest in the year that he sowed - it didn't take a long time. We can be sure that the same God who blessed Isaac a hundredfold wants to bless you and your family too.

**3. We need to understand that the source of blessing is God Himself.** Isaac prospered because the Lord blessed Him. The Bible tells us he became very wealthy. We need the blessing of God in our lives, and we can receive it when we line up with the purposes of God. The blessing of the Lord kept coming to Isaac and also for the generations beyond him. We can know God's blessing in our lives too: blessings in our finance, business, family, and ministry. God wants to do greater things with you than you can ever imagine. The blessing was not Isaac's making, it was because the Lord blessed him according to the promise. God has given us the vision for the Great Harvest so we must believe this and work in the areas that God shows us, but also, we need to allow God to work where He needs to. He wants to bless you and your family. When we receive the Lord's blessing, it's not only for us but for our family and future generations. He wants to give you abundance in every area of your life (2 Corinthians 9:8; Philippians 4:19). If we want to see God's abundant blessing poured out, we need to be full of the Holy Spirit. God wants to bless us but what is our focus? What are you sowing into? Don't waste your life by sowing into the wrong things. When we sow according to God's will, look what happens: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph were all blessed, and we can be too.