



Letting Go Of The Good

One of the most majestic creatures in North America is the bald eagle--so majestic in fact that the species is not only the national bird, but also the national *animal* of the United States of America. I've never seen an eagle in all its glory, soaring through the sky: that striking white head, angry yellow eyes, and those impressive seven-and-a-half foot long wings spread against a bright blue sky. Animal Planet though. I love shows about animals because oftentimes the Holy Spirit will reveal things to me as I listen to the pleasant-voiced narrator talk about creatures that my creator created!

Something I was surprised to find out about eagles is that drowning is a common cause of death for them. We've all seen footage of the mighty birds swooping down from the sky and snatching a shiny salmon from the water with its talons. Sometimes, though, the salmon is too heavy, and if the eagle is stubborn enough, he won't let go of his dinner. The fish will actually pull the bird down into the water and drown him. **To prevent a watery grave and live to soar another day, all the eagle has to do is let go, but we all know it's hard to let go of a good thing.**

In Genesis 22 we read about God asking Isaac to let go of his son, to sacrifice and kill his son, his son who was most definitely a good thing! **Isaac was not just a child, he was a promise.** God told Abraham that it was through Isaac that the covenant descendants who outnumbered the grains of sand promised to him would be born.

Since Isaac did not have any children, God was asking Abraham to let go of a promise that had yet to be fulfilled. He had to learn the difference between trusting the promise and trusting the Promiser. **I think sometimes we feel it's up to us to bring God's promises to pass, even if we have to step out of God's will to do so.** We try to lean on our own understanding instead of fully leaning into God.

When God asks us to let go of something good— a job, a home, finances, a relationship, a promotion, a promise— can we trust Him?

There was no hesitation in Abraham. None of this made a lick of sense to his natural mind, but he didn't wait until it did to obey. The Bible tells us that he rose EARLY to head to the place where he would sacrifice his promise. Even though the scriptures never mention how he feels, you know he had to have been feeling so unbelievably scared, hurt, and confused, **but he was a faith man so he wasn't going to be led by his feelings.**

You all know the end of the story. Because Abraham chose to let go, God provided a ram for the sacrifice, Isaac lived, and the promise was fulfilled.

Three summers ago God asked me to let go of a good job. I had been working for a really great family ministry going on ten years. It was the perfect job for me. I had the best boss ever, I could work from home, and use my God-given gifts to build the kingdom. Plus, it provided a nice flow of extra income for our family. It was a good thing for so many reasons, but I knew I had to obey. It didn't make sense to me and it didn't make sense to my husband, but I knew it was what I had to do.

Five months later we moved to Oklahoma City to pioneer New Song Church. Shortly after we moved, I understood why God asked me to let go of that job. He knew what was coming before I did. He knew I would not be able to stay afloat working for the family ministry and caring for my own family while helping my husband with the huge task of planting a church. I would have been trying to hold on to too many good things and I would have drowned.

Hear this today friends: **God created us to soar high on wings like eagles.** Do you feel as if you are soaring through life, or are you drowning? When you look at the sum of your weeks, are more days spent gasping for air or breathing in God's life?

I'll be honest, this week has been more of a drowning than soaring week for me so I'm asking the Lord to show me what I need to let go of. I can't decide without Him.

Everything I'm holding onto is good, but I'm holding onto more good than I can handle at the moment.

Being a Christian means daily surrendering our lives to Christ--all of us, the good, the bad, and the ugly. Sometimes I think surrendering the good is even more of a challenge than surrendering the bad or the ugly, but all means all. **Can He really have it all?** Will you let go of the good when God asks you to?

Be warned, you may feel like you are letting others down in the process of letting go of something good. I felt like I was letting my family down sacrificing that paycheck. I felt like I was letting my boss down by resigning my position. I'm sure Abraham felt like he was letting his wife Sarah down as he was taking their promised son up the mountain to sacrifice him. But again, he wasn't moved by his feelings. **We need to be like Abraham, unmoved by the feelings derived from the fear of disappointing people.** We can't let our emotions dictate whether or not we are going to let go when God says let go.

It's not God's plan for us to feel overwhelmed. Matthew 11 says that the burden, the call that He has placed on our lives, is light. **It's a call that we can carry while still soaring.** When I start to sink, it's time to re-evaluate. It's time to invite the Holy Spirit in and allow Him to speak into my schedule and show me what I need to let go of.

Maybe for you it's letting go of one of your children's five different extra-curricular activities or resigning your role as PTA president. Maybe it's letting go of some of the money in your savings account to take your family on a much-needed vacation or passing up that promotion. Maybe it's letting go of training for that marathon or pushing pause on that business idea. Maybe it's being okay with a messy house for the weekend or letting go of your kids a few hours every week so you can spend one-on-one time with your spouse. Maybe like Abraham, it's letting go of a promise.

Know that whenever God asks you to let go of the good, if you are faithful to obey, He is faithful to carry out His perfect and pleasing will for your life. After all if it's not God, it's not really good.



CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. Isaiah 40:31 says, “But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” When you look at the sum of your days, weeks, and months, which eagle do you relate more to: the one soaring high or the one trying to carry too much and struggling to stay above water?
2. Abraham is #goals when it comes to trusting God. We just read that those who trust in the Lord find new strength. Explain why trusting God is so important in the race we are running and what you see in Abraham that spurs your faith.
3. Share about a time when you chose to let go of something good and how you saw God work out the details. OR share about a time when you held on too long and what the consequences looked like.
4. Does the fear of letting others down ever keep you from obeying the Holy Spirit?



HIS HEART WORK

Study: Read, study, meditate, dissect, and memorize Isaiah 40:31. Share your favorite translation and any revelation you get as you soak in this promise with your small group.

Act: Start each day surrendered to the Lord in prayer. Ask Him to show you if you are trying to carry too much. Ask Him to help you manage well what you have in your hand and to give you the courage to let go, when He says let go. If you have a drowning, overwhelming, bitten-off-more-than-you-can-chew kind of day, give yourself grace, and remember that His mercies are new every morning.



PRAYER NEEDS

Write down the prayer requests of your group members, and pray fervently for them! Let your group members know when you are praying for them, if you have any scriptures or encouraging words for them, etc.