

- The story of God telling Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, it does not sit well with me. In our society human sacrifice is completely unacceptable. We consider it to be barbaric. However, in the ancient time of Abraham human sacrifice was commonplace. In the theatre of the Gods they considered human sacrifice as pleasing to the Gods. They would not recoil the way that we do. Innocent people were killed, buried in the tomb, so that they could serve their Pharaoh in the afterlife. People were cast into the volcanos to try to make the Volcano Gods happy. Innocent people were and still are expendable. We look back at the atrocity of slavery and we feel great shame. In our modern world we come upon human trafficking, indentured slaves, bodies discarded on the side of the road.
- This is happening in our world, and we are, either not aware of it, or we don't care. The bible story does not tell us anything about the mind of Abraham. We wonder what were his thoughts and feelings about God. God gave him a precious son and now God was asking him to sacrifice his only son as well? We don't need to ask. We know full well that Abraham must have been distraught. He must have been in agony. He was about to participate in the slaughter of the innocent. I wonder is it possible to be a cold blooded killer and not feel anything? James Bond and all his friends seem to have no problem with it. The truth is the rest of us have great problems with it.
- I don't quite understand God either. I read the biblical scholars. They explain it all. They let God off the hook, but I don't really care. I want to say to God, "Don't you dare ask me to do something like that?" Too many people have been killed in the name of God already. The one who abandons the faith testifies it was because they couldn't reconcile the idea of a benevolent God with human suffering. I know how they feel. As soon as we witness injustice, the death of the innocent, horrible war and its effect on the innocent we want to put God on trial. How could you allow this? It is easier to blame God even though we know that sinful humanity has to answer for it as well. At his trial, Adolf Eichmann, the great Nazi conveniently pleaded not guilty. He said that he was only obeying orders. He said he was not responsible for what happened.
- We are responsible for plenty of bloodshed. What I find hard to understand is what part God plays in it. I don't want God to be involved in terrible things. The bible teaches us that God is merciful and just. When the evidence seems to contradict that, I am not satisfied. God, how could you allow that? You are the God of mercy and compassion and yet you asked Abraham to kill his son. What a terrible thing to ask. I'm not happy about that at all.
- Thankfully it all ended well for Isaac. Abraham must have been relieved. He must also have been mad at God for asking him in the first place. Is it true to say that we

don't completely understand the mind of God? When we come upon contradictions, hollow answers and conclusions, we are not satisfied. It is like we are playing the game and we don't know how it will all end.

- As the preacher I am not always able to finish with a lovely bow. I don't pretend to stand here and explain the mind of God. There are plenty of days when I get mad at God. There are days when my faith in God is hanging by a thread. But I do know this, I am not willing to make my conclusions based on half of the story. This is my example...we remember how Martha and Mary sent word to Jesus. Ask Him to come and save Lazarus. Jesus came too late. I suspect if I asked Martha and Mary about it they were none too pleased. Maybe in a moment they also abandoned their faith in Jesus. He let them down. But, the story is made clear a few chapters later. We can't come to conclusions based on some of the truth and half of the story. I love the God I worship. When I can't come to a conclusion I am willing to wait for Him to explain Himself. It might take a few chapters more, but I am willing to wait.