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**The Back Story:** Genesis 12-22

A friend of God is loyal when others want to make you great.  
Genesis 14: 11-24

○ Faith

A friend of God is loyal when God's instructions don't seem to make sense. Genesis 22:1-18

○ Doubt

**Four kinds of faith.** James 2:19; Proverbs 19:2-3; Luke 14:28-32;  
John 20:24-29; Acts 12:1-16; Hebrews 11:1-40

- (1) Intellectually believing something is true.
- (2) Taking a wild risk and assuming God will rescue me.
- (3) Being so optimistic that I have no doubts.
- (4) Trusting God enough to do what He says.

**Three kinds of doubt.** Hebrews 11:6; Genesis 3:1-13; Acts 12:1-16

- (1) Doubt that writes God off.
- (2) Doubt that disobeys.
- (3) Doubt that worries but still obeys.

**Loyalty = Friendship**

Q: Who do I desire to see draw closer to God?

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Q: Who needs a loving invite back to church?

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**Going Deeper**

Abraham's example of trusting God with the life of his son can leave us wondering, "How could I ever have that kind of faith and trust God that much?" How do the following passages help you deal with this question?

Mark 9:14-24

John 4:46-53

Hebrews 12:1-3

Perspective means a lot when we find ourselves in a small or big test. How is Paul's perspective in 2 Corinthians 1:3-11 contrary to how most of us would normally think when facing challenges or trials?

What part of this Scripture is most encouraging to you?

What part is most challenging?

If you are facing a great difficulty or challenge, what would you want someone to do (or not do) in their attempt to comfort or help you?

Our trust and understanding of who God is as the object of our faith can either diminish or heighten the sometimes paralyzing effect of doubt. How might the following verses help build your confidence in God in the midst of doubt?

**Psalm 25:8**

Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. [NIV]

**Psalm 89:11**

The heavens are yours, and yours also the earth; you founded the world and all that is in it. [NIV]

**Psalm 145:9-10**

The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. [10] All you have made will praise you, O Lord; your saints will extol you. [NIV]

**James 1:17**

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. [NIV]

2. One of the reasons we may doubt the strength or power of our faith is the ongoing battle we all have at times in dealing with our own sin. What insight does Paul give us in Romans 7:18-21 of how our struggle, doubt and faith can co-exist?

## THE PURPOSE OF LIFE GROUPS

Life Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through meaningful relationships with Jesus and each other through the study of God's Word (Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24-25).

Here's how we accomplish this in our community:

### SHARE

Each week we'll take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include planned "sharing questions." But after the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal as we feel more comfortable.

### STUDY

Each week we'll study a section from God's Word that relates to the previous weekend's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life.

### SUPPORT

Each week we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (John 15:9-13). This care can take many forms such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging one another and meeting real needs.

### SERVE

Spiritual growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. The role each of us fills is important to the health of the church and for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the community in which we live (Ephesians 4:11-16). Throughout the quarter, it is our hope that you can find and/or be affirmed in the ways God has designed you to serve and make a difference in God's kingdom.