

# Family Bonds

By Lee Yates



Being a part of any community changes a person. Families are special communities that come with their own blessings. There is also a cost to being part of a family. What does it mean to be part of your family?

## For

Teen Family

## Season

Fall

## Needed

Bible, paper, pens

## Prepare in Advance

Mark your Bible at Genesis 22:1-14.

## Activity Plan

1. Open in prayer:

*Loving God, help us claim the beauty of our family and speak honestly about the sacrifices we make to be part of each other's lives. Give us patient hearts and open ears. Amen.*

2. Give each family member a piece of paper and a pen. Ask each person to write down the ups and the downs of belonging to your family—the benefits and challenges that come from being in your specific family. (For example: If a parent is a teacher, he or she can help with homework, but also knows everything going on at school because teachers talk to each other.) Reassure family members that there are no right or wrong answers.
3. Ask each family member to tell the benefits of being in your family. (Save the downside for later.)
4. Read aloud Genesis 22:1-14 from your Bible (or see the text below). Discuss the Bible story:
  - How would you describe Abraham's relationship with Isaac?
  - How do you feel about God's instructions to Abraham? Why do you think Abraham was willing to go along with the plan?
  - Do you think God or Abraham would have let anything happen to Isaac? Why or why not?
  - How do you think this event changed Abraham's relationship with Isaac? How do you think this event changed Isaac's relationship with God?
  - How might the story change if a different person were telling it? (For example, how does it change if Isaac or Sarah is the storyteller?)
5. Comment that it would take something really bad to out-do what Isaac went through. Ask each family member to tell about the downsides or challenges of being in your family. Be patient and listen respectfully to each other. Give everyone a chance to speak their thoughts before any discussion.
6. Talk about the similarities and differences among the lists of family members. Remember, that just because something is difficult, it doesn't have to be bad and it doesn't have to be changed.
7. Read aloud Genesis 22:14 and say a prayer of thanks for the family God has provided you:

*God, thank you for the people you have placed in our family. It is unique, and it is ours. While we may wish some things were different, there is something special about our family and we give thanks for the blessing that we are when we are together. Amen.*



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### **Genesis 22:1-14**

After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."<sup>2</sup> He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."<sup>3</sup> So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.<sup>4</sup> On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar.<sup>5</sup> Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy will go over there and worship and come again to you."<sup>6</sup> And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together.<sup>7</sup> And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"<sup>8</sup> Abraham said, "God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So they went both of them together.

<sup>9</sup> When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.<sup>10</sup> Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son.<sup>11</sup> But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."<sup>12</sup> He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me."<sup>13</sup> And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son.<sup>14</sup> So Abraham called the name of that place, "The Lord will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided."

