



+ **YOU**

**Sermon Series: Walking in Confidence:**

**To be used with:** Confidence in Times of Testing

**Sermon Title Possibilities:** All In / Destroying Doubt

**Scripture:** Genesis 22:1-14

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the small group study "Walking in Confidence," this sermon discusses the presence of doubt in critical faith journeys. Every believer will have moments in their journey with God where they will need to trust God with a blessing. This sermon does not end with the ram in the bush; rather, it ends in the tension of climbing the mountain in trust. Structuring the sermon like this was intentional to give the listener the ability to continue to read the Scripture to grow their faith with confidence without knowing the end.

**Introduction:**

The story of Abraham, Isaac, and the ram in the bush is a picture of faith until the end. Abraham's confidence in God through his faith has constantly been tested. Each realm of conflict addresses internal and external factors in his life that addressed his maturity, confidence, and trust. This penultimate moment is the first time all of the lessons in Abram's life come fully to a head.

Faith is not faith without the presence of doubt. Faith overcomes all levels of doubt. Let's confront doubt. How do I face my doubt with faith?

**1. Prepare with Details (vv. 2-4)**

As I have done work around the house, I am learning that most of my work comes in preparation. A lack of preparation can make a two-hour painting job take all day. Preparation calls for evaluation of the area you are working on, your tools, and what help is needed to execute the work. We see Abraham prepare all that is needed after God told him to offer Isaac as a sacrifice. He prepared. In his preparation, he showed God he was serious about following through. Abraham's faith was not in the construction of the altar later; it was in his preparation.

When God calls you, how do you prepare? Are you preparing your heart, home, calendar, etc, for what God is calling you to do? Attacking doubt with confidence in God starts with how well you prepare. This reveals to God that you are serious about what He is asking you to do.

**2. Close Your Circle (v. 5)**

Abraham brings two workers to the mountain, yet he asks them to stay where they were as he and Isaac continue up the mountain to worship. Despite the pain

of sacrificing his son, Abraham journeys up the mountain with his sacrifice. When we are working through our pain and doubt, there is a necessity to close your circle. We talk too much! Faith journeys need to be with what you are giving to God and with God alone! Who do you need to remove from your circle?

### **3. Vocalize with Confidence who God is (vv. 7-8)**

Isaac watched Abraham ascend a mountain without a sacrifice and inquires about the sacrifice. Abraham's response to Isaac's question in verse 8 shows an incredible amount of maturity. "God himself will provide" the sacrifice. With confidence, Abraham vocalized the task that God told Abraham to complete. Abraham declared his assignment and God's part in the sacrifice. Abraham did not lose confidence in God even when he did not like the assignment God had for him.

God will put His children in difficult testing seasons. Will you remain confident in God regardless of the assignment? God has something for us when we first remember that God desires our worship. With confidence, remind yourself of the more significant assignment and what God needs from you. The go forward, reminding yourself that God will be God even in your discomfort.

### **Conclusion:**

While we did not finish with the revelation of the ram in the bush, many people are not at the ram in the bush. They are still climbing the mountain. Can you trust your preparation, close your circle, and vocalize with a passion that God will be God at all times? Following Abraham's confident example is the call of the confident believer. Each step up the mountain is a step of faith. Each faith step makes the volume of doubt go down. God honors faith because faith honors God. Keep climbing the mountain. God will be God to you.

*Author Bio:* Rev. Justin Lester serves as the pastor of Congdon Street Baptist Church in Providence, Rhode Island. The church serves it's body of believers and the community through personal, spiritual, and financial development. Justin has earned a M.Div. from Vanderbilt University and a D.Min. from Boston University. Most Importantly, Justin is married to the most beautiful woman in the world, Courtney Lester, and is the father to his "little man," Camden.