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Realize that both love and lack of love govern the way we act, the way we react.

Isaac was a man who had a lot of love in his heart. Love caused him to react the way he did in the situations that came his way. His life reflected this fact.

And his reactions worked for his good, bringing the blessings of God upon his life.

Genesis 26:12-14

Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.

Take note that God blessed Isaac. Isaac was so abundantly blessed that he sowed and reaped 100 fold in one year. Yes, God had certainly blessed him - and those many blessings caused the Philistines to envy him.

Genesis 26:16

And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

The Philistines watched as Isaac grew and waxed great. They saw how everything he had abundantly prospered.



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Finally, they could take it no longer - and asked him to leave.

Well, Isaac felt that if they didn't want him around, he might as well get out of their way. So he packed up and moved on.

He went down the road, and found a location where nobody else seemed to be. He decided to settle there, and start all over.

Genesis 26:17-19

And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.



Isaac seemed to be settled in, and everything appeared to be going along just fine - but envy is never satisfied.

The Philistines soon saw that Isaac had a prosperous well in his new location.

Genesis 26:20

And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.

Esek - contention! This well is one which we all have camped beside many times. The name of this well means contention.

It was a good well. Originally, Abraham had dug this well, but the Philistines had closed it up. They had no use for it.

We find here that Isaac reopened it - and suddenly the Philistines wanted it back for themselves. As soon as they saw how it prospered when Isaac reopened it, they changed their minds and wanted it back.

Now, someone who didn't possess enough of the love of God would have contended with the Philistines for that well. They would have put a firm foot down, and declared it was rightfully theirs.

After all, hadn't they done the work of digging it up after it was sealed?

But Isaac had enough of the love of God in his heart to keep quiet. He wasn't about to lose the victory over a well.

Notice that Abimelech had originally asked Isaac to leave, *Go from us, for thou art mightier than we are.*

In other words, You're bigger than we are. We don't want you to take over, so move out!

But notice Isaac's reaction: though he was bigger and mightier than they were, there is no mention that he wanted to take advantage of his power to fight back.

Isaac was a meek man. He wasn't contentious. He had the love of God dwelling in his heart. He didn't go around demanding his right. Rather than contending with the herdsmen over that well, he simply moved further down the road.

Is it worth keeping something that's yours if it causes a bone of contention to come up time after time?

But it's mine!! They have no right to it, and I'm not about to let them have it.

What are you gaining with an attitude like that, other than breeding more contention?



Genesis 26:21

And they dug another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.

Isaac had moved to avoid further contention. But the Philistines were right on his trail.

He had just barely settled down, after digging another well, than they came along to demand that one, too!

In the natural, even if we were able to manifest love the first two times, love would have grown thin by now.

We would have demanded our rights, feeling it was about time they left us alone - after all

their envy had already caused us to move twice!

How far does this love have to go? Are they going to follow me about the rest of my life to have what is rightfully mine?

I know I'm supposed to be blessed of God - but it seems the adversary is succeeding in taking all of the blessings away.

Right about now, some would justify retaliation by quoting the verse: *Don't give place to the devil!*

They would claim that Isaac shouldn't have allowed the devil to chase him away - he should have fought for what was rightfully his.

What a misinterpretation!

My, if Isaac gives in again, the devil will have him running the rest of his life!

That's the attitude many tend to live by. But Isaac wasn't about to give place to the devil.

Isaac knew that by demanding his rights, and defending his property, joining in on the contention - that would be giving place to the devil.

And he also knew just how to prevent that from happening. He knew that by moving on, he would be avoiding any further contention, and would be giving place to God's love.

Isaac was a peacemaker.

Isaac had the victory in his heart and soul - and he wasn't about to let the devil take that from him.

Sitnah - hatred! This was the name of the second well. This word means hatred.

We can see how, from a bone of contention: Esek; to a well of hatred: Sitnah, the matter was getting progressively worse.

A matter may start out with just a bit of contention - but it will grow and grow unless we put it aside right away. If we insist on arguing and fighting to gain what we want, hatred will soon come on the scene.

Romans 12:18

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Are you at peace with others?

Are you striving to live in peace with all men? all men . . . saved and unsaved alike?

You don't want anything in your life that destroys peace. You don't want your peace destroyed - and you don't want to be guilty of destroying someone else's peace.

When you follow peace, you will be like Isaac. You will travel on down the road, if you have to, in order to keep peace.

Now, Isaac dug the first well in order to keep peace. But it didn't work out that way.

Then he moved on to build a second well so that he might be at peace, but that didn't work out either.



And here we find him going yet further, proceeding to dig a third well!

Genesis 26:22

And he removed from thence,

and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

This was the love of God at work. Isaac was willing to go to the ends of the earth if need be, that he might keep peace.

When he dug this third well he believed that God had enlarged the borders far enough for him to be able to live peaceably.

Isaac wasn't thinking about picking at the bone of contention.

Neither was he interested in dwelling by the well of hatred.

All that mattered to him was to keep the love of God in his heart, and to live peaceably.

Though he was bigger than those who were striving to contend with him, Isaac wouldn't use force nor firmness to get what was rightfully his.

Instead, he used love. The love of God burned so strongly in his soul that he never lost the victory over this situation.

Now, let's stop to consider God's blessings upon our own lives. There are many things which seem to be cast on our pathway which stir us to contend with others.

Have you ever declared, *The devil's not going to push me around! He's not going to take advantage of me! Why, I'm just not going to allow it. I'm going to defend my rights.*

You may be right - but are you willing to lose your love just to prove it?

Isaac cancelled his rights for the sake of peace. That's how great the love of God was in his heart.

Those wells belonged to his father. If anyone had a right to them, Isaac did. Yet his love prevented him from getting into a brawl over them.

How much of this love do you possess? How much of it do you really have?

My, when we look further into this account we find Isaac going on, even though they didn't strive for this third well.

Genesis 26:23

And he went up from thence to Beersheba.

There must have been some feelings still hanging around for Isaac to move again.

Rehoboth - place of enlargement!

This third well (*Rehoboth*) means place of enlargement. It appeared to be large enough to dwell peacefully there without bothering anyone.

Yet we find Isaac moving still further away to keep from those who envied him.

Some things are hard to get away from. When you deal with someone who is filled with envy and strife, it is hard to get away from that contention.

Often a young couple who are planning to get married want to move in with Momma.

They suggest setting up an apartment in the basement - where they can dig their well and be alone. Sure they can be alone!! At least, they think so.

It isn't too long before in-law troubles begin to crop up. And the only way to clear the air is to move on, to dig a new well someplace else.

The best advice for a couple planning to get married is to find a place where they can live by themselves.

When someone is constantly wanting to strive with us what can we do? Get away! That's exactly what to do - get away from them.

Who said we have to live on the doorstep of trouble? Who said we have to live in a house of contention? Who said we have to live in a place of strife and hatred?

It's not worth it. If it is destroying our peace with God and with others, it is just not worth it!

Genesis 26:24, 25

And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

Here we go again!



My, how many wells would you be willing to dig for the sake of peace?

In the natural, it looked like Isaac has been running from the devil. It looked like he was being pushed out.

But - who met him when he got out there?

God met him. And God blessed him way out there, visiting him and telling him not to fear.

Yes, God was with Isaac while he dug those wells. God was with him to bless. Though it looked like Isaac was retreating, God was leading him out to where He wanted him.

And down there in Beersheba, Isaac finally got a visitation. God appeared unto him, and spoke to him. He promised to bring Isaac all the blessing which had been promised unto Abraham.

Isaac's servants went to work to settle down, and stay in Beersheba. This was where God had visited and spoken - doing a new work in their lives. This seemed to be the place of His blessings.

Do you believe God has such a place for you? a place for your to settle down in Him?

Now, these men hadn't much more than broken up the ground, commencing to dig another well, when they had a visitor.

Genesis 26:26, 27

Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army. And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

You've been chasing me down the road for months! You sent me away. Now what are you coming way out here for?

Genesis 26:28, 29

And they said, We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; that thou wilt do us no hurt,

as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the Lord.

Well, I've been thinking about how God has blessed you, and the way He has prospered you.

And as I've been thinking about all He has done for you, and about the way I have treated you - I've been wondering what you would act like if you lost the love you have.

I know that love has kept you from turning on me, so I decided it would be wise to come and make things right - while you still have that love.

I want to talk things over to see if we can't make peace right now. I'm afraid of you, and want to establish a lasting peace with you -

while I can.

When you go far enough in the love of God, you'll be able to break down anybody. When you go deep enough in the love of God, He will make even your enemies to be at peace with you.

You'll bring many a hard-head down to their knees, crying out to God for help.

Romans 12:20, 21

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

This was the philosophy which was deep down in the heart of Isaac. He knew those wells were rightfully his - yet he heaped coals of good on his enemy, giving them up.

He simply moved on for the sake of peace, digging yet another well.

When you heap coals of good on someone's head it doesn't always work, does it! Do you know why it doesn't always work? Because you haven't used enough coals.

Don't give up so easily. You don't have to be stingy with those coals. Just keep heaping on more and more coals - until it does work.

Isaac refused to give up. He kept heaping coals until he got the victory. He gave up well after well for the sake of peace. He didn't use force or hard words. He simply packed up, and moved on.

You might have to dig a few wells before you get to the end of the matter - but keep digging. You might have to show a lot of love, but just keep digging.

It's worth it. Don't stop.

People get worried when you're filled with the love of God. It is more worrisome to them for you to be filled with God's love, and not fight against them - than it would be if you carried a machine gun to fight back. You're more of a threat to them with all that love, than you would be if you came out fighting.

These men couldn't get Isaac to fight back. They couldn't get any of that old carnality to come forth.

Isaac wouldn't hurt anybody. You could run over him with a steam roller, and all he'd do would be to lay down flat, and love you all the more.

Why were they worrying about such a meek man hurting them?

These men thought they could push Isaac around. But, after awhile, they began to look at the man they were pushing around - and they began to notice something about Isaac: **God was with him.**

If they didn't watch their step, they realized that God might take up Isaac's interest.

Oh, they knew Isaac wouldn't do anything to them - but they weren't too sure about God.

A fear of God's judgment came into their hearts. They began to get fearful that God was going to react against them because they had been pushing Isaac around - so they made an oath with Isaac that they wouldn't do him any harm.

They felt this would cause God to leave them alone.

God tells us that we won't have to fight the battle . . . but we might have to dig wells.

Which would you rather do? fight in the battle? or dig wells?

Romans 12:19

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

If vengeance belongs to God, why are you trying so hard to get even? trying so hard to defend yourself? trying to keep that which you feel you might lose? why worry about somebody whom you think is trying to take advantage of you?

If vengeance belongs to God, step back and let Him take care of things for you.

If you want Him to fight your battles, lay your weapons down and step out of the fight.

Ephesians 6:12

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Any time you try to defend yourself, you're trying to fight against flesh and blood. Know that your battle isn't against any person; but your battle is against the devil.

Now, how are you going to fight the devil? by committing the battle unto God!

Anytime you try to get even with someone, you're getting in God's way. After all, it is His battle. He will fight the devil through you - but He'll do the fighting.

It looked like the devil was pushing Isaac around. Yet note the testimony which Isaac left behind. Everywhere he went, he left a good testimony.

What about you? What about the last place you lived? What kind of testimony did you leave there?

Do they remember you as that Christian who lived in the neighborhood? or do they remember you as that hypocrite who called yourself a Christian, but certainly didn't act like one?

We have not touched thee: the only reason they didn't touch Isaac was because he wouldn't fight with them. The only reason there wasn't a sword drawn and a battle fought was because Isaac packed up, and moved on to dig another well.

That's why there wasn't any hassle.

They touched Isaac with their words. They touched him with their envy and hatred. But they didn't touch him physically.

We have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now blessed of the Lord.

My, here they are trying to take credit for the blessings God was giving to Isaac!

Yes, they were a cause of God's blessings coming upon Isaac, but not because of their goodness towards him - it was because they were pressing him, striving and fighting against him, sending him on his way.

God turned His hand of blessing on Isaac more than ever before - because of them.

They hadn't changed a bit. Their envy and their hatred were still there.

They still believed they were in the right, and Isaac was in the wrong. After all, he didn't belong there - because they wanted the land.

David was like Isaac. While he was running from his son Absalom, afraid his wife and family would be killed by the pursuing army, Shimei stood up to curse him. He railed out on David with some awful names, throwing stones at him.

II Samuel 16:9

Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.

Wouldn't that be the normal reaction?

You talk like that to me, and I'll fix you! I'll get even with you!

It's a normal, carnal reaction to give railing for railing, accusation for accusation. It is normal - but David had the love of God in his heart, so he didn't react carnally.

II Samuel 16:11, 12

. . . let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day.

David ran that day - and, no doubt, he ran the next day, too.

But God gave him the victory: that same son who was out to take his life was destroyed. The victory was given, and the kingdom was restored back to David.

But things might have turned out differently if David had defended himself.

Are you in that place yet? Can you pass off touchy, contentious situations, leaving them with God? Do you have enough love in your heart to entirely keep out of such things?

Do you have enough love to not react at all, leaving the matter in the hands of the Lord?

If, by chance, God wants to do something about it, let Him do it - but don't you try to straighten things out yourself.

If somebody rails out at you, God will defend you - [when you keep quiet](#). What does it matter what they say to you, anyway? You're a child of God, aren't you? and their words can't change that fact.

How big are you?

Can you take an offense quietly? Have you grown up to where you can take it, turning the cheek and going on? When you've got enough love in your heart to where you can keep your mouth shut, then you really have the victory.

David took it. He wouldn't even allow his men to retaliate for him. What was at work in his life that day? it was the love of God.

[When we get the love of God burning deeply within, we can take anything that comes against us. It may seem hard - but we can do it.](#)

This was why Isaac didn't arm his servants and attack the Philistines when they harassed him. This was why he didn't fight back to defend his rightful property. This was why he didn't declare that they'd have to take the well over his dead body.

These Philistines claimed they had come to make peace with Isaac. They said they hadn't done anything to him, and that they wanted a covenant for him to leave them alone, too.

That's humorous! but it happens that way. When you get enough love in your heart, to where you quit fighting, even your enemies will want to be at peace with you.

Well, I don't say much - as long as I can at least get in the last word. Isn't that the attitude many have? The battle of words goes back and forth, both parties striving to get that last word in.

This man thought he was justified for his treatment of Isaac - yet Isaac refused to battle with him. I believe Isaac was big enough to leave the matter up to God to do the judging.

Genesis 26:30

**And he made them a feast,
and they did eat and drink.**

Talk about going the last mile! After they came down the road boasting about how they were the cause of Isaac's blessings, how they had stood with him through thick and thin - Isaac turned around to heap more coals on them.

He didn't bother defending himself, nor question their motives. He simply showered them with goodness.

Genesis 26:31

**And they rose up betimes in the morning,
and swore one to another: and Isaac sent
them away, and they departed from him in
peace.**

Do you get the essence of this message?

Finally, real peace came on the scene. Oh, it took a long time. Yes, it took a lot to get it to come - but it finally came.

Yet Isaac was at peace all along the journey. He never lost his peace over all that had come against him.

But the enemy didn't have peace. They were driven day and night by contention.

What finally caused the enemy to be at peace? I believe it was the love of God expressed to them through Isaac. The love of God brought them to the place of being willing to make things right.

Genesis 26:32

And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water.



This water was better than any of the previous wells - because it was the covenant well.

The covenant well! God was at peace with Isaac, and He made him to be at peace with his enemies.

It certainly pays to do things God's way.

It is simply a matter of growing up. There are too many Christians running around who stopped growing when they were two weeks old.

They have some love, enough for their family and for those who treat them right. But that's as far as their love stretches.

When they get big enough to turn the cheek and continue to love their enemies, regardless of what they have done to them, then they will have finally grown up.



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