



Genesis #9

Isaac: Quiet Faithfulness

w/c 12 July 2026

"The primary action of the church in the world is the action of its members in their daily work." (Lesslie Newbigin)

Read Genesis 25:19–26 and 1 Peter 1:3–9

A key aspect of the story of Isaac is just how little – two dramatic interludes excepted – actually happens. The account is dominated by the episodes around his birth and then, 40 years later, his marriage. The length of chapter 24 gives us some idea as to the importance given to the story of the latter. Abraham's servant seems to get more column-inches than Isaac himself. **Why might the finding of his bride be the most important thing in the life of Isaac?**

As we look at the ages given in these chapters for the main protagonists, it is clear that Abraham was still alive until Jacob and Esau were teenagers. **How do you think the example of him and Sarah helped Isaac and Rebekah through their own long childless years?**

We thought last week about Christian faith not being transactional, it's also not performative. It's not a show; sometimes our calling will be to the quiet life, occasionally to something more spectacular. As ever, it's not what we do, it's what we are, who we are. So, it is with Isaac. Much of his calling lies in simply continuing the thread of Abraham's descendants. Ensuring that one day – whenever that may be – they can match the number of the stars in the sky. **Is that the significance of Isaac or is there more that we should find?**

We too are mostly called to a life of quietly getting on with things, though there may always be exceptions. Two verses spring to mind: *"Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life"*

(1 Thessalonians 4:11) and *"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."* (1 Peter 3:15) to which is added, *"But do this with gentleness and respect"*. There is a need though to balance these thoughts with Jesus' call for us to be *"workers (in) the harvest field"* (Matthew 9:38). **How do we achieve the right balance?**

At St James we have often described our day-to-day interaction with family, friends, colleagues and others as our personal missionary frontline. We can demonstrate our faith journey through our day-by-day, ordinary life. Others can begin to see God in who we are. Mark Greene of LICC discerns six aspects to these daily interactions:

- Modelling Godly character
- Making good work
- Ministering grace and love
- Moulding culture
- Being a mouthpiece for truth and justice
- Being a messenger of the gospel

How can we show these in what we say and do? Or is trying to do them the wrong approach? Perhaps, they actually are more like fruit; simply what happens to people who spend time with Jesus. **How might we better focus on our walk with God, expecting these characteristics to naturally develop?**

"God does not need your good works, but your neighbour does." (Martin Luther)