



LOVING JESUS, LOVING PEOPLE, PLOWING A COUNTER-CULTURE

TEXT: Genesis 16–17

MAIN IDEA: God, and God alone, accomplishes the fulfillment of his promises.

LEADERS:

- Beginning in November, Discover Emergence will be happening at 10:30 in suite 300 in Totowa. This is where you can learn all about our church, and about how you can fit in better with what God is doing here. And this is the first step in our membership process. New classes start on the first Sunday of every month. Sign up on our digital bulletin.
- Remember, Boxes of Love are due this upcoming Sunday, October 31. Thanks to everyone who participated this year!
- We've got a worship night coming up on Sunday, November 21. No tickets or registration needed. "Oh come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!" (Romans 15:5–6)
- Baptisms are going on! Sign up through our digital bulletin.

GETTING STARTED:

- Watch this week's Community Extras Video.
 - **Icebreaker:** Share something cool from last Saturday's community engagement project.
 - **Opener:** What did you take away from the sermon this week?
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A DESPERATE ATTEMPT

☺ Steve began this week's sermon by talking about how Abram, now ten years living in the land where God had told him to go, still has not received the offspring that he has been promised (12:7; 15:4–6). What are some areas of your life where you wish God would move faster, and how has waiting impacted your faith?

Read: Genesis 16:1–6

☺  Abram and Sarai resorted to an accepted cultural practice to produce a child whom they thought would be the heir of God's promises. And yet, the act was clearly sinful. What are some things that are abhorrent to God that we are tempted to uncritically accept, simply because they are fine in the eyes of our culture—especially things that are intended to bring about good results?

 How many wrong things can you identify that Abram and Sarai do in this passage?

☺ Reread verses 5 and 6. How should Abram have responded when Sarai came to him with her complaint?



THE LIVING GOD WHO SEES ME

Read: Genesis 16:7–16

🧠 In order to avoid the pain she experienced in Abram’s household, Hagar runs away. Yet God, speaking through his angelic messenger, tells her to return. Have you ever had a challenging situation from which you were tempted to run, even though you knew that God wanted you to remain and engage it?

🧠 What are the various ways that this passage tells us of the Lord’s care for Hagar?

🧠 What does this passage teach us about God’s love for the downtrodden and vulnerable?

A COVENANT THROUGHOUT THEIR GENERATIONS

Read: Genesis 17:1–8

🧠 Here we see the covenant, which until now has been very personally directed towards Abraham, extended to future generations of his offspring. Why is it important to know that God’s saving love extends beyond us as individuals, and into the lives of those around us?

🧠 What does this passage add to the covenantal promises to Abraham?

🧠 How are these promises fulfilled in Israel? How are they fulfilled in Christ?

A COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION

Read: Genesis 17:9–14

🧠 What did Steve say is the reason why circumcision was chosen as the sign of God’s covenant with Abraham?

🧠 As circumcision was the sign of God’s covenant with Abraham, baptism is the sign of the New Covenant in Christ (see Colossians 2:11–13). What does this say about the necessity of baptism in the life of the believer?

YOU SHALL CALL HIS NAME ISAAC

Read: Genesis 17:15–21

🧠 Isaac’s name literally means, “he laughs.” Given what happens in this chapter, what is the significance of this name?



🧠 How does God continue to affirm his care for Ishmael, even in this chapter where Isaac is made the heir of the Abrahamic covenant?

🧡 What is outrageously wonderful about the promises that God makes to use as Christians?

PRAYER TIME

Pray that the Lord would give you patience to wait for the fulfillment of his promises to you.

Thank the Lord for making you part of a new and even better covenant, blessed as the offspring of Abraham, and an heir of every spiritual blessing in Christ.