

# SMALL GROUPS

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Winter Semester - Week 7

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*Remember, these questions are just tools for discussion. You don't need to 'get through them all'.*

*Use the questions that are helpful, skip the ones that are not, and let the conversation flow naturally.*

#### OPTIONAL ICEBREAKER(S)

- a) What is something that you laughed hard about recently?
- b) Share a funny experience of waiting for something.

#### PASSAGE AND DISCUSSION

##### **Read Genesis 21:1-8**

- a) What stands out to you upon first reading of this passage?
- b) The Bible is filled with God's promises for His people. God had promised Abraham that he would be the father of nations. Abraham held onto that promise, and we see in our reading that it has come to pass. Are there any of God's promises you are currently clinging to?
- c) Have you ever doubted God's power in a situation and what you doubted was possible came to pass? Was that a humbling experience? Why or why not?
- d) **Read Hebrews 11:11.** Take time to read this verse and reflect on what it means that, "Sarah herself received power to conceive...since she considered Him faithful." What does it mean to have faith?
- e) Do you find it interesting how the author placed the story of Abraham's encounter with Abimelech (his lack of trust in God) prior to the birth of Isaac? What message might the author be intending by the placement of these stories?
- f) Have you ever waited a really long time for something, and then eventually received what you hoped for? What was that experience like for you?
- g) What did the birth of Isaac teach Abraham and Sarah about God? (4 points made in the sermon.)
- h) **Read Genesis 21:1, 2 Corinthians 1:20, and Joshua 21:45.** What do these verses teach us about God's character?

- i) Cam mentioned a word of caution about correctly applying Scriptural promises, so as to not improperly apply them and thus misconstrue God's character in disappointment. However, there are so many promises that DO apply to every believer (so don't be discouraged!). Why is it important to understand the context of Bible verses?
- j) How does your view of God's power influence how you approach God in prayer? What is the truth about God's power?
- k) **Read Isaiah 55:8-9.** In light of this verse, discuss this quote by Corrie ten Boom, "Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God." How does this comfort you or challenge your faith?
- l) **Read Galatians 3:8.** How does the birth of Isaac foreshadow the birth of Jesus Christ?
- m) Compare Isaac's birth story with Jesus' birth story in **Luke 1**. What is similar and what is different? Do you agree that Isaac's birth foreshadows the birth of Christ? Why or why not?
- n) As the birth of Isaac brought Abraham and Sarah laughter and joy, so the birth of Jesus brings joy for the whole world. Discuss why Jesus' birth is good news for everyone, especially for those who believe.

### **TAKE IT HOME (OPTIONAL IDEAS FOR RESPONSE THIS WEEK)**

- a) Reflect on the promises of God in **Psalm 145:8-9** and commit these verses to memory.
- b) What is something that you are waiting on God for? Ask God for patience, and submit our timeline into His hands.

### **OPTIONAL IDEAS FOR PRAYER TIME**

- a) Share some praise items in your small group.
- b) Pray that God would help you to live within the joy of the Lord this week.