

The Sermon

Welcome

Good morning!

My Name is Pastor Jonathan, and I have the joy of serving as The Lead Pastor here at Harvey.

And I am so grateful that each of you are here today.

Everyone is welcome at Harvey!

Opening Illustration

Now I grew up in Mississippi, and we moved around a lot.

But there was always one place that felt like home...**my grandparents' house.**

My grandparents lived in a small town in Mississippi.

- My grandfather was a deacon at First Baptist and helped build the Christian Private School there.
- My grandmother taught kids Sunday school at the church for decades.

They raised 4 kids in that town.

- They loved on their neighbors really well.
- They were involved in everything in their community.

So in a town that size...everybody knew them.

In fact, it's the same town where my parents live today...just a block over from the house my mother grew up in.

So as a young boy when I would go to visit, I would run into people at the Piggly Wiggly or in the town, and I'd tell them who my grandparents were....

And every single time they'd look at me and say:

- **Well, whose boy are you?**
- In other words...who is your mother...
- Which one of the 4 kids do you belong to...

And the second I said my mother's name...they knew exactly who I belonged to.

- I didn't have to earn that answer...

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- It was my mother's name before I was ever born.

Transition

And Church, that is EXACTLY what Paul is talking about in our text today.

Because Paul is about to look at a room full of religious people who are very sure they know who their FATHER is...

And he's going to ask them a question they never saw coming.

- *Who is your mother....*

In fact, our BIG IDEA FOR TODAY IS THIS:

Big Idea

Children Of The PROMISE Are Born, NOT MADE.

Transition

So, if you have your Bibles, take them out and turn to the book of **Galatians**, and we're going to be in **Chapter 4, vs. 21-31** today.

And here at Harvey...

- We make a practice of simply going through books of The Bible verse-by-verse to see:
 - What God's Word Says
 - Discover What It Means
 - And at the end, ask How We Can Apply God's Word to our own lives

We're in the middle of walking verse by verse through the book of Galatians

- And if you're joining us for the first time today, you just so happened to come on a Sunday where we are walking through one of the more complex and difficult passages in the book...
- But we don't avoid the difficult texts...we walk through them slowly and faithfully.

So I'm going to begin by reading vs. 21-23...

I. The History (Galatians 4:21-23)

Example of Hagar and Sarah

21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law?

22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman.

23 But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise.

A. You Who Desire To Be Under The Law (vs. 21)

Notice WHO it is that Paul is talking to here.

Paul doesn't say, "you who **ARE** under the law"...

No, Paul says, "you who **DESIRE** to be under the law".

AND, Remember what's going on in this letter:

Paul is writing to The Galatian believers

- Who he shared The Gospel
- They had believed in Christ alone and come to faith and were saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone....

But then some legalistic Jewish people had came to them and said...

- Yes, believe in Jesus...
- But if you really want to be saved...
- Then you also have to add in these rules and regulations...
- You have to **EARN** your own salvation...

So in this whole letter, Paul has been combating the lies of this legalism.

And in today's text...

- Paul says...those of you...**WHO DESIRE**...to be under the law....
- When you've already been freed in Christ!
- Then surely you are willing to **LISTEN** to what the law actually says....
- Because the very law that you want to submit to...rejects the law as a way of salvation!

See, what Paul is doing is he's setting up a problem like a good teacher does...

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- And then he's going to spend the rest of today's text showing them the solution from God's Word itself...
- **THAT THE LAW WAS NEVER MEANT AS A way to be saved!**
- **That THE LAW REJECTS THE LAW AS A WAY OF SALVATION**

B. Abraham Had Two Sons (vs. 22)

And what we have to understand about this culture is:

One of the **proudest boasts** that a Jewish Person could make was:

We are descendants of Abraham.

The Jews believed that they were safe and secure forever...
Because they thought...well...we're children of Abraham...so we're fine!

But then we get to Matthew 3:9 and **John the Baptist** shows up and says, *"Do not presume...we have Abraham as our father...for God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham..."*

And then we see Jesus in **John 8:33** asked by The Jews:
"We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"

And Jesus answered them in **John 8:34-37** saying:
"Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you..."

THE SLAVE does not remain in the house forever...

THE SON remains forever...

Keep that in mind, and we'll see that again later...

Jesus is saying...**If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works that Abraham did...but you're trying to kill me...**

So Paul is not saying SOMETHING new here...

He's **explaining** what John The Baptist said, and Jesus taught clearly....

That true descent from Abraham is NOT PHYSICAL...IT IS SPIRITUAL!

- Abraham's true children are **NOT THE ONES** with the right genealogy.
- Abraham's true children are the ones who **BELIEVE** like Abraham believed.

We already saw Paul say this back in **Galatians Chapter 3 in vs. 14 and 29...**

So watch what Paul does here...

- Paul says...you want to talk about Abraham...
- Then let's talk about Abraham...

Abraham had TWO SONS...

Now just for a moment let me remind you of this story from **Genesis 16.**

- God had promised a son to Abraham....
- But then nothing happened...and the years went by...
- Abraham was 80-something years old...and his wife Sarah had never had a child....

And finally Sarah said to Abraham...what I think a lot of us have said in our own hearts...

- God, you said you were gonna do this...but we're running out of time...I think you forgot about us...
- So we'll take this into our own hands...

And Sarah told Abraham, I want you to lie with our Egyptian slave Hagar...

- And he did.
- And Hagar had a baby, and his name was **ISHMAEL**...

Abraham had a son...but not with his wife Sarah...

BUT THEN 13 YEARS LATER....

- God told Abraham once again....
- Sarah is going to have a son...
- And Sarah... well...
- She laughed at God...

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- She was 90 years old...

But Abraham must have had faith...because he laid with Sarah..

- AND she did have a son and named him ***Isaac***...which means "***he laughs***"....

And I want to just take a moment here....

- We can read God's Word and recognize the history of what God said... "Abraham, you're going to have a son"...

But ALSO we can see the sinfulness of humans when they got impatient with God's timing...

- God had a plan for Abraham and Sarah to have a baby...
- They got tired of waiting...and took matters into their own hands...

And what happened WAS SIN.

- ***The slavery of Hagar in this moment was sin***
- ***Sleeping with a slave woman was sin...even though they tried to justify it by saying she was another wife...***

Yet even in the midst of this sin...in the midst of all this human wrong...God STILL KEPT HIS PROMISE!

In fact, in ***Genesis 16...***

We see the pain of Hagar who had been sinned against...

- And Hagar cried out to the Lord while she was pregnant...***You are God who sees me...***

Hey today...

There is a whole lot there...but I'll just say this:

- Even in ***OUR SIN***, God is still a promise-keeper...
- And even if we have been sinned against...***we're not ALONE...God still sees us in our PAIN*** when we've been sinned against.

C. Two Sons — Two Different Mothers, Two Different Births (vs. 22–23)

The point Paul is making here is....

- ***Abraham had TWO SONS***
- ***from TWO DIFFERENT MOTHERS...***
- ***from TWO DIFFERENT BIRTHS!***

And these TWO SONS were DIFFERENT...

First, They Had Different Mothers.

- **Ishmael**...his mother was Hagar, a slave...so he was born **INTO SLAVERY**.
- **Issac**...his mother was Sarah, a free woman...so he was born **INTO FREEDOM**.

These boys had the same father.

Both of them could say, **“Abraham is my Father”**...

But each boy had a different mother....and **THAT** changed everything about his standing.

Second, They Were Born In Different Ways.

Vs. 23 Tells us:

Ishmael was born “according to the flesh.”

This means...the whole idea behind how he was born...was in the flesh...it was sinful....

- It was Abraham and Sarah’s impatience with God
- It was humans saying in the flesh...**we can figure this out on our own...**
- **There was no Word from God attached to this birth...**
 - God never told them to “go to Hagar”...
 - They did that out of their sinful desire

Ishmael was born out of the flesh’s desire...out of humans’ impatience to wait on God...

However ISAAC...Isaac was born out of THE PROMISE

- God had promised Abraham and Sarah they would have a Son...
 - He had a father who was 100 years old!
 - He had a mother who was 90 years old and had **NEVER** been able to have a child...
- Issac was born **AGAINST** nature...nothing in nature would say, “Hey, this 90-year-old lady who has never had a baby is gonna have a baby now”...it went against nature!
 - It was supernatural
 - Through an exceptional promise of God!
- **Isaac was a miracle baby!**
- **From a promise-keeping God.**

So the birth of Ishmael represents **HUMAN'S WAY - The way of THE FLESH**

And the birth of **Isaac** represents "**GOD'S WAY - The way of THE PROMISE**"

The difference between these two sons....was never about who behaved better....

- The difference **WAS NOT** in **WHAT THEY DID!**
- The difference **WAS IN HOW THEY WERE BORN!**

Let's keep reading in vs. 24-27 to see what Paul says next...

II. The Interpretation (Galatians 4:24-27)

24 Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar.

25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children.

26 But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

27 For it is written,

"Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear;
break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor!
For the children of the desolate one will be more
than those of the one who has a husband."

A. Allegorically (vs. 24a)

Paul says, this story **MAY** be interpreted allegorically.

Now think back to your English classes...remember what that word means...

- Allegory means **that there is an additional meaning other than what this text says literally.**

And I want US TO BE CLEAR about this:

FIRST - PAUL IS NOT MAKING THIS UP

- This was a real story about real people...in Genesis
- And Paul is not making the original story untrue...

Paul is saying God **DESIGNED** this particular history to carry **AN ADDITIONAL** meaning.

SECOND....AND THIS IS IMPORTANT... - PAUL CAN DO THIS, WE CANNOT.

Paul is writing under the inspiration of The Holy Spirit

- Paul can say these things, because **The Holy Spirit** was inspiring His Words in a real way...
- This is not just some preacher getting clever...
- **This is God...inspiring Paul...**to tell us....what **God's OWN Story meant**...in a way that was not clear before.

B. These Women Are Two Covenants (vs. 24b)

So what does Paul, under the inspiration of The Holy Spirit, say these two women, Hagar and Sarah, **MEAN**?

Paul says in the second half of vs. 24 that these two women are Two Covenants.

Remember what a covenant is?

A covenant is a solemn agreement between God and Man...where God takes a people as His own, and promises to be their God

So Paul says this is an allegory where the 2 women are the two covenants!

- **Hagar and Ishmael** = The Covenant of Law used for Works
- **Sarah and Isaac** = The Covenant of Grace received by Faith

C. The Law Produces Slaves (vs. 24c-25)

Then Paul says Hagar is from Mount Sinai...bearing children for slavery...

Mount Sinai was where Moses received the Law in **Exodus**.

- And Mount Sinai sits in Arabia
- In fact, the Arabians were known as "the sons of Hagar"...

And Paul says...what does a slave woman produce....slaves...they are born into slavery....not freedom!

In other words, Hagar bears children for slavery...AND SO DOES THE LAW!...WHEN YOU'RE LOOKING FOR YOUR BIRTH IN IT!

And then Paul said something that would have been fighting words in this day!

He said, Hagar...corresponds to the present Jerusalem!

- Paul, under the inspiration of The Holy Spirit, told the Jews, who followed the Law...
- You may be descendants of Abraham physically...
- But you're from Hagar's side instead!
- You're sons of Ishamel!!!

ANN This flipped everything upside down the Jews taught and believed!

- The Jews believed the Gentiles were Hagar's people
- They believed the Gentiles were the sons of Ismael....

But Paul flips the whole thing upside down and says...

- NO!

- ***IF*** you're trying to get right with God by keeping the law...
- You're not Isaac...
 - ***YOU ARE ISHMAEL!***
 - ***YOU ARE NOT WHAT YOU THINK YOU ARE!***
 - ***YOU ARE IN SLAVERY...THE SAME WAY HAGAR WAS!***

AND In this day and time...

- This would have been a shocking statement!!!...

D. The Jerusalem Above Is Free (vs. 26)

Then we get to **vs. 26**, and Paul says...

BUT...THE JERUSALEM ABOVE...IS FREE...AND SHE IS OUR MOTHER...FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST!

Now what in the world does this mean?

Paul is saying ***ALL WHO ARE IN CHRIST...***

- ***ARE SPIRITUAL DESCENDANTS OF SARAH THROUGH ISAAC!***
- They are born into freedom!

Notice Paul does not say...the Jerusalem ***"to come"***...but he says the Jerusalem ***"above"***....

This means Paul is not talking about ***SOME DAY...***

Paul is talking about ***PRESENTLY...RIGHT NOW!***

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- And this is a big deal....
- Because if Paul had said "The Jerusalem **TO COME**"...
- Then that means OUR HOPE is in something that we'll collect someday...
- But Paul is saying presently...YOU HAVE HOPE!
- God is **ALREADY**...building **HIS KINGDOM NOW!**

What does this mean for Us Today?

It means that you and I, if we are believers of Jesus Christ...we are presently living in the **Already BUT NOT YET!**

If We Live In Christ...We Are:

- **Already** children of The Promise...we ALREADY have The Holy Spirit living inside of us presently!
- **But we're not yet** living in the fullness of the presence of God in Heaven.

Paul is saying...SALVATION...THE JERUSALEM ABOVE...

- is not only something that **IS** coming...
- BUT IT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS **REACHED DOWN INTO RIGHT NOW!**

Christian:

This means that...**TODAY...RIGHT NOW...YOU HAVE HOPE!**

- You **DO NOT** BECOME a citizen of God's Kingdom **SOME DAY...**
- **YOU ARE ONE RIGHT NOW!**

ANYONE who confesses Jesus as Savior and Lord is a Son or Daughter of GOD.

- A true child of Abraham.
- Free in Christ.
- A citizen of the New Jerusalem ABOVE!
- Enjoying freedom in Christ RIGHT NOW.

And Paul calls the Jerusalem ABOVE...OUR MOTHER...

REMEMBER LAST WEEK...in **Verse 19**.

Paul used the language of a mother...

"My little children, for whom I am AGAIN IN THE ANGUISH OF CHILDBIRTH until Christ is formed in you."

I don't think it's any accident that just 7 Verses later....Paul says the Jerusalem above is our MOTHER.

- Sarah....birthing a son by promise.
- Paul last week...saying he's in labor...until Christ is formed in you.
- And this week...a free mother above...***who is still bearing children today.***

This means...Praise be to God...God is not finished giving birth. People are still being BORN AGAIN!

The promise that started in the womb of a ***90-year-old woman*** is ***STILL*** producing children.

- It produced me...
- It produced you...
- And I'm praying that many more will become children of The Promise...through faith in Christ alone!

Martin Luther thought through this in this way:

"The free woman bears children continually by the ministry of The Word."

In other words...as The Word is preached...and proclaimed...

- Jesus is still radically saving people out of slavery to our sin and in freedom through His Blood!
- Jesus is still causing people to be ***BORN AGAIN!***

E. Rejoice, O Barren One (vs. 27)

Then Paul begins to quote ***Isaiah 54:1*** in ***vs. 27***

"Rejoice, O Barren one who does not bear...for the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband".

These words were not written to Abraham and Sarah, but to the Jews. Who were in captivity...and Isaiah says their current situation is like a barren and deserted woman...

- But Isaiah says...***REJOICE***...
- You're gonna have more children than you ever had before...

And then Paul takes these words and points them to Sarah perfectly...

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- Sarah was the barren woman
- It seemed impossible for her to ever have a child...
- Yet God filled her empty arms...just like he did later with Naomi in the book of Ruth...
- Just like he did with those in captivity...
- Just like He is still doing today with people coming to faith and being **BORN AGAIN!**

So Paul is saying...

the spiritual fulfillment of **Isaiah 54** is happening **RIGHT NOW!**

- As churches in our world see many come to faith...
God is still bringing MORE than we could ever imagine to be **CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE!**

So what Paul is saying to the Galatians is this:

- It is **NOT ENOUGH** to claim Abraham as your father.
- Because Abraham had **TWO SONS.**

The question is...WHO IS YOUR MOTHER?

- The covenant of **WORKS?**...where you're still trying to earn it
- **Or** the covenant of **GRACE?**...where you've rested in Christ alone...

Let's keep reading in verses 28 through 31.

III. Paul's Application (Galatians 4:28-31)

28 Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.

29 But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now.

30 But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman."

31 So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.

A. You Are Children Of The Promise (vs. 28)

Earlier in this text, Paul said he was speaking to those who **DESIRE** to be under the law...

Now Paul says...**YOU BROTHERS...**

- In other words, he's not discounted that they are believers....
- But he is persuading them to rest in that **Christ Alone Is Enough For Salvation...**

So Paul says...you brothers...**YOU ARE** children of The Promise!

HEY For Us Today:

If You Are A Christian:

Would You Hear that:

- You are a spiritual descendant of Abraham and Sarah...
- You didn't earn that...you were adopted into The Family of God...
- And you were made into this family...into The Promise...by the grace of God!
- **Who you are...as a Christian...is a child of The Promise!**

But Paul doesn't stop there...

Paul makes his own applications from the text.

Paul says...if you are like Issac...

Then you should expect to be **TREATED** like Isaac was treated...

So Paul gives us 2 things to expect as Christians...look at vs. 29...

B. Expect Persecution (vs. 29)

Paul reminds them that Isaac was persecuted by Ishmael...

Look back at **Genesis 21:9**

9 But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, laughing.

Abraham had thrown a great feast for Isaac on the day he was around 3 years old.

And Ishmael was 17 years old at this point...

And at this feast...Ishmael was laughing at Isaac...

- Isaac... whose name means "he laughs"...
- Sarah...who laughed at God when He told her she would have a baby at 90
- And now Ishmael is laughing at Isaac "he laughs"...

There's a whole lot going on here...that we don't have time to dive in today...

But Here's The Point...

- **Ishmael had a deep disrespect towards Isaac**

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- Here is a 17-year-old mocking and making fun of a 3-year-old at his own party...not in a playful way...
- But in a way of persecution...

And Paul says...**SO ALSO IS IT NOW**

- In other words, Church, we **MUST** expect the same thing.

The truth is this:

The people who come after you...aren't always OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH...

- Sometimes it's the half-brother...
 - Jesus Himself, was rejected, mocked, and killed by his own people!
 - Paul was chased town to town...not by pagans...but by religious people!
 - And in this very letter....the ones attacking these brothers Paul is writing to...**GO TO CHURCH....**

Even today, you'll hear it said:

- You really think Jesus alone is enough?
- You've gotta clean yourself up
- You've gotta do more
- Other churches may even look down on you for believing what The Bible clearly teaches...

AND underneath it is always the same mindset:

- ***you're NOT good enough***
- ***You're not like US....***

Christian:

If you say salvation is by **GRACE ALONE**, through **FAITH ALONE**, in **CHRIST ALONE...**

Paul tells us to expect people to have a problem with us...just like Isaac did.

There have always been those who try to suck you in to trying to EARN YOUR SALVATION...

When Jesus Christ ALONE has already PAID IT ALL!

C. Expect The Inheritance (vs. 30)

Second, Paul says also you should expect to receive the inheritance.

Because in this text, look who ended up with the inheritance.

- It was ISAAC...who became the heir of THE PROMISE!

And here's the thing...

In Genesis 17...Abraham actually **ASKED GOD** to make Ishmael the heir....

- Abraham cried out... **"Oh that Ishmael might live before you"**...

But God said NO...

- I will establish my covenant, in My WAY...
- With ISAAC...The ONE WHO WAS MY PLAN!

Then a little later in **Genesis 21**, Sarah told Abraham: *"cast out the slave woman and her son"* right after Ishmael had laughed at Isaac.

- And this tore Abraham up... because that was his son...
- But God said...do it...for through Isaac shall your offspring be named.

So Paul is looking back to Genesis and in vs. 30 says...

- **What does Scripture say?**
- Cast out the slave woman and her son...

AND Pay attention to this...

This is the argument that Paul has been building to...

Paul is saying:

- Scripture, The Law, ITSELF...says...cast out the slave...to cast out the law.
- **THE LAW REJECTS THE LAW!**

Paul went back to Genesis and undid the whole system of works the Jews had created.

- The Jews had viewed this as God's casting out of The GENTILES...
- But Paul says...no, actually what this passage is talking about is...
- The Ones being cast out...are **ANYONE Who does not come to God through Christ Alone!...JEW OR GENTILE....**

D. We ARE Children Of Freedom (vs. 31)

Then we get to **vs. 31**, and Paul gives us the big picture....

Those of you **WHO DESIRE TO BE UNDER THE LAW...**

- **We ARE NOT** children of the slave...
- **BUT OF THE FREE WOMAN....**

This question is the same question I got...when I was a child in that Piggly Wiggly in Mississippi...

Who is your mother?

And that question...is the question of this whole text.

Paul says **ABRAHAM HAD TWO SONS...**

The real question is...WHO IS YOUR MOTHER?

- A Covenant of Works...which is slavery and leads to death
- OR A Covenant of Grace...which is freedom and leads to THE PROMISE

HEY Christian FOR US TODAY:

This applies to us as well...

- Are you still trying to **EARN YOUR SALVATION...**
- **OR ARE YOU RESTING THAT CHRIST ALONE IS ENOUGH FOR SALVATION?!**
- **Because children of the Promise aren't MADE.**
- **They're BORN.**
- **BORN AGAIN IN CHRIST ALONE...**

If you are a Child of The Promise...

- 1. Expect Persecution**
- 2. BUT ALSO...Expect To Receive The Inheritance**

Transition

That's what God's Word says and means. Now let's walk through a few ways to apply this to our own lives.

Applications

1. Read God's Word Wide and Deep

Today, we looked at God's Word in Galatians, but to really understand what Paul was saying, we had to take a deep dive into Genesis.

And I hope you saw the beauty of God's Word when we read it wide and deep.

So I just want to encourage you: study God's Word deeply.

- Don't just read a verse and say, "Oh, this is how this applies to me"...
- But get a study bible
- use free online resources such as **Blue Letter Bible** or **Crossway's Faithlife Study Bible**,
- and really get into what the original context of the Word meant before you get to try to apply the content to your own lives.

Not just as a hobby...

- But so that you don't down the road in 10 years....
- And realize that what you had been confident God's Word said
- was never what it actually said.

God's Word is beautiful...

It is a light unto our paths...

So let's study it deep and wide and see the beauty of it.

2. Our Sin Affects Others More Than We Can Know

In our text today, we were reminded of the story of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar.

And when Sarah and Abraham got tired of waiting on God, they instead took matters into their own hands...and what happened was sin.

And in that moment, I'm sure Sarah thought this was a good idea...

In that moment...Abraham went along with it...

- They thought they were taking a shortcut...
- But that shortcut led to sin...

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- Abraham took a slave and slept with her...

And I heard someone say this week that we never sin in a vacuum...

Our sin always affects others more than we know...

This started with two impatient people...and what resulted was sin that affected others.

This sin affected Hagar first...

Like, can you imagine...

- You're a slave...
- You don't get a vote
- You're told: you now belong to this man
- You're told: you're going to have his baby

And so she does...

- And the moment she does...
- Sarah deals harshly with her....
- So harshly that a pregnant Hagar decided it was better to run to the desert than to stay in that house...
- So she runs...pregnant...alone...into the desert...
- Until God meets with her and sends her back...
- And Hagar raised that boy for 17 years in a home where she's not wanted...
- And then one morning she's handed bread and a skin of water and sent packing with her 17-year-old son...

And what resulted is **4000 years** later...

- There is still conflict between Arabs and the Israelis...
- The children of Hagar and the children of Sarah...

AND Abraham couldn't see 4000 years down the road...

Neither can you or I...

But...***EVEN IF GOD*** pulled back the curtain right now

And showed you every single person your sin is going to affect...

Would that be enough to stop YOU?

Be honest with yourself.

Because most of the time...***WE ALREADY KNOW BETTER...***and we do it anyway.

Which means ***WE DON'T*** have an information problem...***WE HAVE A HEART PROBLEM...***

So today...I'm speaking to you if you're flirting with the idea of sinning in some way...

- And the lie you keep telling yourself is...
 - No one will ever know...
 - This won't hurt anyone...

But look at God's Word...and see that this ***IS NOT TRUE!***

Dads and Moms...your sin affects your children...

- So when you mess up...
- Take every opportunity to own it
- and apologize to your children...

College students and teenagers...

- Your sin will affect others ***and you*** far greater than you can see right now...
- You never know...how that 2 am decision...is gonna come back to haunt you and hurt others for a lifetime...
- So it's probably just better to go to bed...

For ALL OF US...

- Don't buy the lie...that you can sin in a vacuum...
- Your sin ***WILL*** hurt others...
- Your sin ***WILL*** hurt you...
- And your sin ***ultimately is against God...***

Now some of us in here...are the ones who have been affected by others' sin...

- And if that's you...I am sorry...
- But I want you to be reminded of what God did for Hagar...
 - God found her OUT IN THE WILDERNESS
 - When NO ONE in that house came looking for her...
 - GOD DID!

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- And she said... **"YOU ARE THE GOD WHO SEES ME"**...

Today, if you're someone who has been affected by others' sin...

- God sees you...
- And God comes looking for you!
- AND GOD LOVES YOU!

Others of us in this room have already sinned in ways that have affected and hurt others...

You don't need me to tell you that...you know that...

- **But** look at what the text actually says...
 - **Abraham's sin didn't cancel God's promise...**
 - **God still kept His Promise...He still gave them Issac**
 - **Just like He said he would!**

SEE the consequences of our sin are real.

- **They really do affect others in ways we may never know...**

But ALSO AT THE SAME TIME....

- OUR SIN HAS NEVER ONCE CANCELED OUT THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD!

So hear both of these truths today:

- Your sin matters more than you think
- And the grace of God is bigger than your worst decision.

3. You Must Be Born Again

Today...What spiritual family do you belong to?

- **Are you confident that CHRIST ALONE is ENOUGH FOR YOUR SALVATION and you're resting in Him???**
- **OR ARE You still trying to EARN YOUR SALVATION...trying to be good enough for God**

The good news we saw today...is God is still causing people to be born again into the Family of Grace!

The Whole of The Bible Tells Us This:

GOD IS HOLY.

In the beginning, God created all things...and He alone is perfect...

WE ARE SINFUL.

But every single one of us has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God

AND THAT CREATES A PROBLEM.

Because our sin separates us from a Holy God...in this life and in the next...**And no amount of rule-keeping can fix it...**

BUT JESUS IS THE ANSWER.

Because God...sent forth His Son...

- Born of a woman...born under the law...
- He lived the perfect life...
- He went to a cross and He REALLY died...taking the punishment that your sin deserved...
- He was REALLY buried...
- And three days later He REALLY rose from that grave...defeating sin and death forever...

WHY?

- So that you could be born again!
- Into The Family of God as a Child of The Promise!

SO THIS MORNING...

- You may have walked in here a SLAVE...trying earn being good enough...
- But you can walk out of here as a SON...resting in the finished work of Jesus Christ...
 - Not by cleaning yourself up first...
 - But by Being BORN AGAIN!
 - By **GRACE ALONE**...through **FAITH ALONE**...in **CHRIST ALONE**...

TODAY: Would you turn from your sin...

- Confess Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior...
- And believe that He is WHO HE SAYS HE IS?

If that's you...don't leave this room the way you walked in...

- Grab any member of this church...this week...any time...

And we would LOVE to show you what it means to be **BORN into**

THE FAMILY OF GOD!

- Christ is enough!
- Today...***Won't you trust Him?***

Big Idea

Children Of The PROMISE Are Born, NOT MADE.

**Church, I Love You So Much.
Let's Pray.**