



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Genesis 1 – 19 Sermon Series

Supports Session 11: Impatience

Sermon Title: “When You’ve Messed It Up” (Genesis 16:1-15)

Connection to Session 11

God’s timing is perfect, but waiting can be a challenge. When a person takes matters in their own hands, they need to know that God sees, hears, and provides a better way.

Introduction/Opening

Have you ever worked on a project, tried to fix it, but just made it worse?

In 2012, an 80-year-old woman from Spain, Cecilia Gimenez, attempted to restore a classic mural painting named *Ecce Homo* (Latin, “Behold the Man”). Her passion for the painting could not cover her lack of skill, however. What resulted was shocking, and the restoration was so bad that authorities thought it at first to be an act of vandalism. Her restoration work left Jesus with a half-beard, and some have claimed, “a monkey-like appearance.”¹

Thankfully, after the initial outcry, the painting has been seen by thousands of visitors since that fateful discovery. But many of us can sympathize, at least in part, with the woman.

But what happens when we try to fix things that we can’t control? Things in real life. Things that are difficult. Things that we need to rely upon God for.

This is the situation that we find in Genesis 16 concerning Abram, Hagar, and Sarai.

Outline

1. Don’t try to “fix it” (16:1-2)

- a. God, who has a plan, completes His plan.
 - i. There were three possible plans for Abram to have an heir:

¹ Raphael Minder, “Botched Restoration of *Ecce homo* Fresco Shocks Spain,” from the New York Times Online, august 23, 2012, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/24/world/europe/botched-restoration-of-ecce-homo-fresco-shocks-spain.html>.

1. Eliezer, his servant – nothing miraculous about this.
 2. A child from Hagar – also not miraculous.
 3. A child from Sarai. She was 76 years old when she suggested a child through Hagar. Years later, she had Isaac at the age of 90. Now, that's miraculous!
- ii. Rather than manipulate how to accomplish God's plan, trust God to complete His plan. How do we do this?
1. Go to the Word (Ezra 7:10; 1 Cor. 1:18).
 2. Pray to God (Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6).
 3. Wait on God. In Acts 1:6-8, the disciples waited on the promised Holy Spirit. Ten days later, God worked powerfully.

2. Admit your sin and error (16:3-6)

- a. Recognize that sin destroys lives.
 - i. Some of the sins in these four verses: fornication, adultery, and disobedience.
 - ii. Sin created complications in Abram's day that even has affects today.
- b. Realize that blaming others never solves it.
 - i. Sarai suggested the idea of going to Hagar, but blamed Abram after the fact.
- c. Lashing out also never solves it. Sarai mistreated Hagar, her servant, to the point that Hagar ran away.
- d. Instead of ignoring, blaming, or lashing out, admit your sin, repent, and receive God's grace.
- e. This takes us to the next principle: submit.

3. Submit to God in the Storm (16:7-11)

- a. Hagar ran away, but finally stopped near a water spring.
 - i. An angel appeared and spoke to her, "Where have you come from and where are you going?" (v. 8).
 - ii. Her response, "I'm running away from my mistress, Sarai" (v. 8).

- iii. The angel replied, “Go back . . . and submit to her authority. . . . I will greatly multiply your offspring, and they will be too many to count” (vv. 9-10).
- b. God hears us.
 - i. God heard Hagar (v.11).
 - ii. Hagar’s son was named Ishmael, meaning “God hears.”
 - iii. God promised to greatly multiply Hagar’s descendants.
 - iv. Psalm 34:18

4. Praise God for His provision (16:12-15)

- a. Hagar called God *El-Roi*, meaning “The God Who Sees Me.”
- b. God responded to Hagar’s plight.
 - i. God was and is compassionate, loving, and sees all.
 - ii. He forgives the repentant, He heals the brokenhearted, and He comforts those who need comfort.
- c. In the same way, God provides for you.
 - i. We finish with the provision – a healthy birth and life of Ishmael.
 - ii. Abram is a father at age 86, though he still does not have his heir.
 - iii. Yet the principle is clear: God hears and sees us.
 - iv. He desires that we walk in His ways and picks us up when we don’t.

Conclusion

God’s timing isn’t always on our timetable, but He provides a way for His glory. He is in the waiting. Rather than try to do it yourself, trust Him to make a way that honors His name. Let the God who sees, hears, and is above all circumstances lead you to glorify Him daily.

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