

11 TRUSTING GOD'S WAYS

KEY TEXT: GENESIS 15:1-6; 16:1-6

CENTRAL truth

Sometimes when we take matters into our own hands, it shows that we are struggling to believe God's word, God's ways. Today we'll read about two occurrences of doubt. Today we'll read about two occurrences of doubt. As a result of this doubt, Sarai and Abram stepped outside of God's design for marriage and deeply harmed another person in the process. Doubt is a natural part of being a human, but when we struggle, we have an opportunity to cling to truth. **We can have faith that God will fulfill His words in His way.**

key question

What does it mean that God "credited" Abram's belief in Him "as righteousness"?

Righteousness is the opposite of sin, so it means doing, thinking, and saying everything perfectly in line with God's law. This verse about Abram is an Old Testament explanation of the good news of Jesus! When sinners look to Jesus as their Savior (that's belief), their sin is placed on Him, and His righteousness is placed on them. When we believe the Lord by looking to Jesus, our belief is credited as righteousness!

keep in mind

- The way Sarai and Abram treated Hagar is certainly a difficult subject! Fortunately, the Bible doesn't ask us to rationalize the terrible behavior of our faith heroes. Unbelief can easily lead to horrible behavior. Rather than go to God with her doubts, Sarai took matters into her own hands, and Abram went along with it. We don't have to sugarcoat this; we can instead point to God as the only One who is always good. The "Give an Answer" note can give additional help on this topic.
- Today's texts reveal two different situations of doubt. Allowing doubts to grow in our hearts without going to God for help is dangerous business. Use these scenarios to train students that their doubts are normal—but they should always run to God with them! God can grow their faith if they go to Him in prayer, read His Word, and talk through their doubts with other Christians.

application

How might this narrative be helpful to you the next time you're full of doubt?

the win

FOR THE STUDENT: Students can begin to build a "game plan" for the inevitable doubts they'll encounter in life. When they doubt, they don't need to take matters into their own hands, but go to God. He loves to help us remember His promises and trust Him more deeply.

FOR THE LEADER: Leaders can establish these two doubt narratives as a reference point for future conversations. They can also seek to protect students from the shame that often surrounds doubt. It's okay to doubt—but leaders can encourage students to seek the Lord in those moments.

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