GENESIS 16 - DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

THE GOD WHO SEES AND HEARS - (SERMON MP3)

Abram and Sarai felt pressure from their life stage and surrounding culture. Here Abram "The father of many" had no children. According to the worldly culture of Abram's day, he was due to take a concubine and raise up a heritage through her.

- What are some of the pressure our culture puts on our family that didn't exist 100 years ago?
- What are some ungodly American values and customs we need to challenge? What adverse affects do they have on the family?

Consider some of the themes found in this chapter of Genesis: Submission in circumstances of affliction, when to work and when to wait, the Angel of the Lord, marriage boundaries, what to do with the "Ishmael's" of life (the consequences of sin and regretful choices), how to assess the question - "Where have you come from and where are you going" in life, etc. Do Abram's and Sarai's actions in (Genesis 16:1-6) pose a threat to God's plan (Genesis 17:15-21)? Is the plan in serious danger? Why or why not? Why are these facts important for us to remember?

- What character qualities did Abram display in (Genesis 16:1-6)?
- Abram and Sarai take things into their own hands. Have you ever tried to do God's job for Him? Perhaps you can think of an example to share with the group.

Just because it is an acceptable custom of the world doesn't mean it should be embraced by believers. When it comes to using Hagar as an instrument to produce a male heir, Assyrian marriage contracts, Babylonian law codes and other extra-biblical sources confirm that this was a common practice. But should Abram have gone that route?

- How can we know whether something is okay or not for a Christian? Should, "everyone else does it" be our standard of decision making? Why or why not?
- What are some common and acceptable practices of the world that should be avoided by believers?

Abram doesn't seem to be motivated by lust, but rather by a desire to see God's purposes fulfilled. The promise had identified him as the father (Genesis 15:4), but as of yet, Sarai had not been explicitly designated as the mother of Abram's descendants. So Abram took a short cut. Unfortunately shortcuts don't always take us where we intend to go.

- Can you recount a time when you tried to "shortcut" God's plan and it turned out disastrous?
- Abram and Sarai had trouble waiting on God. After 10 years they had trouble with impatience and distrust. But such attitudes are dangerous. Sometimes we are eager to see events unfold and grow weary of waiting for God to act. Perhaps in your life, you long to be married, or to have a child, or to progress in your career, or finish school, or be healed from some physical problem, etc. What should you do when the promises of God seem slow in being fulfilled? What should you do when you seem to be stuck at a dead end in life with no apparent prospect of seeing your hopes and dreams realized?

Consider (Genesis 16:7-13), and write down some things these verses show us about God. How does the Lord treat Hagar? What does He tell her to do? What does he promise?

- Why was Hagar sent back to Abram and Sarai? Look up (Genesis 12:3) and see if it offers insight correlating Hagar's submission in the house of Abram and her future blessing.
- Have you ever had to trust the Lord in moments of submission to authority? How did it turn out? Be prepared to share an example with the group.

Why does God insist on (Genesis 16:9)? What does that tell you about God's heart for the oppressed? What does that tell you about God's thoughts on authority? What should we learn from the instruction in (v. 9)?

Sometimes temptation comes from a clearly evil source and they attack us like a roaring lion, or assault us like fiery darts. But at other times, the temptation comes from the people closest to us. The friend or family member who is supposed to be a blessing to us, is sometimes the instrument through whom we are led astray.

	Our only protection is to be so thorough	ally attuned to God's that we a	are able to recognize and resist temp	otation no matter where it comes fron
	The Hebrew in (Genesis 16) correlates t	o the Hebrew in (Genesis 3). See if yo	ou can fill in the table below and ide	entify the parallels.
	GENESIS 3		GENESIS 16	
	Adam		Abram	(Gen. 16:2)
	Eve "took"			(Gen. 16:3)
	Eve "gave"	(Gen. 3:6)	Sarah "gave"	(Gen. 16:3)
	At the root of the problem in both case place in your home? What are some thi	•		Are there evidences of things out of
emp rrive and om- ons	heme of Egypt in the Pentateuch is in ted to return to Egypt. Many times on to d in the Promised Land it was barren (of f Egypt (Genesis 13:10) while the Prom an of Egypt – Hagar, was fertile. In each equences. What lesson does that teach us about to	ne journey, the Israelites had express Genesis 12:10), but Egypt appeared fi nised Land was something less than to a circumstance however, choosing the	sed their desire to go back (Number fruitful. Later the land Lot chose was that. In (Genesis 16), the woman of le fertility of Egypt over faithfulness	rs 11:5, 8, 20;14:3; 20:5). When Abran s described as "well watered like the Promise - Sarai was barren while the to the promise led to disastrous
	of living? The "Egyptian option" may loo	•		
	How does (Hebrews 11:24-27) describe	· ·		
(G es.	enesis 16:11, 13), we come across the "Stop and think about God in these tealing alone. Think about sneaking around of the One who sees and hears?	e name "Ishmael" which means, "G ms. He sees and hears. How does th d in sin or covering up some shamefu	God hears." We also encounter the nat impact you at this stage of your ful deed. What comfort or conviction	name, "El-Roi" meaning "the God what life? Think about crying out in misery named to think about a God in
n (G rees. r fee erms	enesis 16:11, 13), we come across th " Stop and think about God in these te ling alone. Think about sneaking aroun	e name "Ishmael" which means, "G ms. He sees and hears. How does th d in sin or covering up some shamefu sis 16) is Abram's passivity. Can you	God hears." We also encounter the nat impact you at this stage of your ful deed. What comfort or conviction u identify the ways Abram	name, "El-Roi" meaning "the God whife? Think about crying out in misery
n (G ees. r fee erms ine iiled hris	enesis 16:11, 13), we come across the "Stop and think about God in these tealing alone. Think about sneaking around of the One who sees and hears? of the themes that surfaces in (Generate to lead his wife? Why do you think pass	e name "Ishmael" which means, "G rms. He sees and hears. How does th d in sin or covering up some shamefu sis 16) is Abram's passivity. Can you sisvity among American men is so cor	God hears." We also encounter the nat impact you at this stage of your ful deed. What comfort or conviction u identify the ways Abram mmon in our day? What can	name, "El-Roi" meaning "the God what life? Think about crying out in misery named to think about a God in
n (Gees. r fees. r feerms	enesis 16:11, 13), we come across the "Stop and think about God in these tending alone. Think about sneaking around of the One who sees and hears? of the themes that surfaces in (General to lead his wife? Why do you think pastian husbands and wives do about it?	e name "Ishmael" which means, "G rms. He sees and hears. How does the d in sin or covering up some shameful sis 16) is Abram's passivity. Can you exivity among American men is so cor	God hears." We also encounter the nat impact you at this stage of your ful deed. What comfort or conviction u identify the ways Abram mmon in our day? What can	name, "El-Roi" meaning "the God what life? Think about crying out in misery named to think about a God in
n (G ees. r fee erms ne uiled hris	enesis 16:11, 13), we come across the Stop and think about God in these tending alone. Think about sneaking around of the One who sees and hears? The themes that surfaces in (Generation lead his wife? Why do you think past tian husbands and wives do about it? I ways complicates things and the effect of Abram sin with Hagar? Have you made mistakes in the past the	e name "Ishmael" which means, "Gras. He sees and hears. How does the din sin or covering up some shameful sis 16) is Abram's passivity. Can you sivity among American men is so contects can be long lasting. What were not still impact your life in the present?	God hears." We also encounter the nat impact you at this stage of your ful deed. What comfort or conviction u identify the ways Abram mmon in our day? What can e some of the long lasting Are you plagued with the re would be no need for the d. At the cross we see Jesus and home, toward the way of	name, "El-Roi" meaning "the God what life? Think about crying out in misery named to think about a God in