

# FAITHFUL ONE

THE PROMISE AND THE PAIN

## Part 1: A Handmaid's Tale

### APPETIZER: The Context (Previously on...)

Genesis 12-15

### DINE IN: What's love got to do with it?

Genesis 16 & 21

1. Often, out of our greatest faults come God's biggest blessings.
2. The most significant failure here was not sexual, but relational – failure to love well, by all adults involved. (Sin separates.)
  - Hagar: PRIDE is not love.
  - Sarai: BLAME is not love.
  - Abram: PASSIVITY is not love.
  - Sarai: REVENGE (masquerading as “justice”) is not love.
3. The story shows God's intimacy with each individual involved. Before you push someone away, or judge them from a distance, know that God is intimately involved in their life and, even with their failures, he loves them dearly. (**Genesis 21**)

4. Sarah and Hagar are types for the New Covenant life of freedom and the Old Covenant life of slavery. (**Galatians 4:21-31**)

### TAKE OUT: What story are you in?

*Where have you come from, and where are you going?  
(Gen 16:8)*

The best way to know what to do next is to first recognize what story you're in. YOUR story is a part of MANY stories, and we're all part of GOD'S story.



**NEXT WEEK:** Faithful One, Part 2 (Read Genesis 17 to prepare!)

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## Home Church Questions

### HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic – in one Large Group]

1. Talk about what you remember being most interesting, encouraging, or perplexing in Sunday's message.

### HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture – in Discussion Groups]

2. Read **Genesis 16**.
  - a. What aspect of this story stands out to you the most?
  - b. Hagar was the slave of Sarai. What are some of your initial reactions to this? How do you read this text in light of **Galatians 3:28**? How would you respond to someone who criticizes God and/or the Bible for condoning slavery and misogyny?
  - c. Review the sins of this passage – pride, blame, passivity, revenge (and others you may have noticed) – that are working to separate this extended family. What character do you empathize with the most?
  - d. Ancient texts use naming to help draw out the point of the story that the author wants us to take away. Talk about the lessons for us today behind the name God gives Ishmael, and the name Hagar gives God.
3. Read **Galatians 4:21-31**.
  - a. What verse, idea, or concept stands out to you the most?
  - b. What is the issue that Paul is trying to correct?
  - c. Paul points out that there is nothing miraculous about Ishmael's birth to Hagar ("born according to the flesh"), but Isaac's birth is different, divine, supernatural ("born by the power of the Spirit"). How is this a parallel to the Old vs New Covenants?
  - d. Eventually, God counselled Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away (see **Genesis 21**). How does Paul see this as parallel to our relationship with the Old Covenant?
  - e. How does this New Covenant effect how we worship, make decisions, and read our own Bibles?

### HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

4. Use your Huddle questions and take time to pray for each other.