

## The Promises of God

Welcome back! In the last video we discussed our needs vs. our wants. I know that can be a little discouraging because we want our loved ones to fulfill our needs! In fact, when I first read that list I was so sad because I didn't feel like my husband did any of those things for me. Talk about discouraging!

But the good thing about that is, we have a God who loves us and has made us promises of fulfillment. When I feel discouraged, I hang tight to the promises of God because they give me hope to keep pushing forward. **My marriage may not look like what I want it to but that doesn't mean it can't get better. It's been worse. Why not better?**

The promises of God are connected to our core needs that we talked about yesterday from Dr. Grant Mullen because we can't believe God's promises *if we don't feel worthy of them, don't know who we are, don't feel protected, and don't see meaning in our lives*. If God providing for your needs feels like a Sunday school fantasy, work on building the foundation of your identity in God before you look for all the blessings that come from being His child. It isn't that God isn't blessing you already, He is! But in the heat of a tough moment, it can be difficult to see.

In His Word, God made us promises. Many people think that God only made promises to the Jewish people but that's not true. Paul clears this up in the book of Romans:

*"This means that not all of Abraham's descendants are God's true children. Abraham's true children are those who become God's children because of the promise he made to Abraham."*

*-Romans 9:8 (ERV)*

There are more verses to back up this point of view but I don't want to dwell on it too long. The point is: The promises of God are for us too.

**So, what are the promises of God? And how do these promises relate to our lives, today?**

In the very beginning of the Bible, we learn the story of Abraham. God told Abraham to leave his country and start over in a new place. As a result of his obedience to God, Abraham was told the following:

*"I will build a great nation from you. I will bless you and make your name famous. People will use your name to bless other people. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you. I will use you to bless all the people on earth."*

-Genesis 12:2-3 (ERV)

Now, this is a very long and difficult story so please bear with me as I summarize but basically, Abraham (then called, Abram) and his wife, Sarah (then called, Sarai) went on a very long journey all the way to Egypt.

In Egypt, Abraham knew the Pharaoh and other men would kill him because they would want to sleep with his wife (aren't you glad to live in modern times?!) so he told Sarah to say she was his sister so they would be kind to him. Pharaoh gave Abraham all kinds of livestock, silver and gold before raping Sarah to make her his wife. Obviously, she couldn't be his wife because she was already married and although it was alright to purchase an innocent woman and sleep with her, it was not alright to take someone else's wife (desert logic, no doubt. Too much heat!). The Lord caused Pharaoh and all his men to have diseases (ha!) for what he did (wouldn't you like to know what disease they

got?! I'm pretty curious!) and Pharaoh told Abraham to leave with Sarah (hopefully HPB, HIV, STD-free!).

Abraham is now rich and his wife is recovering from her emotional and physical trauma (I'm taking creative liberty here) and they travel back through the land. Abraham sets up camp and the Lord says to him to look north, south, east and west because all the land he can see will be given to him and it will stay in his family forever. He also says he will make Abraham's descendants so many that they will be *"like the dust of the earth"* (Genesis 13:16). Abraham is fairly happy about this at first but he soon realizes that it's all going to be for naught because he doesn't have any children to pass his inheritance down to.

*"Abram said, 'You have given me no son, so a slave born in my house will get everything I have.' Then the Lord spoke to Abram and said, 'That slave will not be the one to get what you have. You will have a son who will get everything you own. Then God led Abram outside and said, 'Look at the sky. See the many stars. There are so many you cannot count them. Your family will be like that.' Abram believed the Lord, and because of this faith the Lord accepted him as one who has done what is right."*

-Genesis 15:3-6

That family? That's us. The body of Christ. Know going forward that all the promises God makes to Abraham, he is also making to you.

Being human, and old, Abraham and Sarah cook up a plan to have a child. Since she is too old, she tells Abraham to sleep with her Egyptian slave, Hagar, and she will take her child as her own (seriously! Poor Hagar. Also, too much sleeping around in this marriage for my liking- yet, they are the parents of the "promise"). Without going into too much

detail, Hagar has Ishmael and the Lord saves him and he becomes the father of the Arab people. Eventually, God gives Abraham a son.

**Abraham has now become the father of both the Jewish nation (the promise) and the father of the Arab nation.**

**For interest's sake, what is the promised land?** Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, part of Saudi Arabia, part of Egypt and a small piece of Turkey.

Interesting, no?

Clearly, God was fulfilling his promises to Abraham. The promises God made to him were not only for him but for us, too. In fact, there are promises from God made to us all throughout the Bible. These promises are hope-giving truths that we can hang onto when we're struggling with our loved ones. Here are some examples:

**God promises to take care of our needs.**

*"Look at the birds. They don't plant, harvest, or save food in barns, but your heavenly Father feeds them. Don't you know you are worth much more than they are?"*

*-Matthew 6:26 (ERV)*

**God promises that whoever believes in Him will be saved.**

*"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."*

*-Mark 16:16 (ESV)*

**God promises us a way out of sin.**

*“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”*

- 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV)

Your homework for today is to find three more promises in your Bible! If you don't know where to start, begin with the story of Abraham in Genesis 12 or in Matthew 4, the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

I'll see you in the next lesson!