

The Catcher

Genesis 21:8-21

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- * What did you hear?
- * What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- * What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

⁹ But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac. ¹⁰ So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son, for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac." ¹¹ The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. ¹² But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. ¹³ As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring." ¹⁷ And God heard the voice of the boy, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid, for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. ¹⁸ Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him." ¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰ God was with the boy, and he grew up...

MINI-REFLECTION

When we look at this passage from two separate angles, each can say something to us:

- 1) **Perspective of Hagar:** Initially forced to have Abraham's son, she and Ishmael are sent out by Sarah into the desert to die. We can all relate to Hagar in ways we have been wounded or betrayed. They were ultimately woven into the story God promised through Abraham. God will catch us too, when we go from hoping in **something** to **someone**. God reminds us of this through the words we recite in the Lord's Prayer.
- 2) **Perspective of Abraham & Sarah:** They are the authors of Hagar's pain. We have all inflicted pain on others in some way. For us, the Prayer of Confession is our opportunity to fly to the catcher, to forgive ourselves, and for God to redeem the brokenness we cause.

There is nothing God can't forgive and use to allow us to live lives of joy and purpose going forward. If we try to edit the messiness out of our lives, we miss the beauty of how God can respond and make transformation happen.