

Faith Christian Fellowship
March 12, 2017
The Way of Faith
6: Danger, Ishmaels Ahead

TEXT: Romans 4:11-12, 16 / Galatians 4:22-23

The Lord spoke that we need to build our faith this year and gave some interesting instructions. We are following the way of faith of father Abraham, his departure from Ur and Haran, the importance of staying put even if it's tough, and of lining up with what He told you. Last time we saw the responsibilities of blessing. We saw the responsibilities of blessing, and two important questions to the life of faith. Today, we will learn about the danger of doing it ourselves.

1) **Reminder:** Faith has three basic components:

- a) Heart content - keep your heart Prov 4:23 / Matt 12:34 ...for whatever is in your heart determines what you say.
- b) Tongue –Your tongue determines your course. James 3:2-15.
- c) Actions – Faith without works is useless. James 2:26

2) **Beware of well-meaning helpers.**

- a) 10 years in Canaan: great victories, repeated promises, encounters with the God of covenants: Still no children.
- b) Sarai has an idea: Let's use the maid! Multiple wives and children were the rule for the wealthy. Abram may have seen this as a fulfillment, even though:
 - i) God has specifically protected Sarai, in a very special way in Egypt, as his wife. Gen 12
 - ii) He said to Abram you will have a son of your own, not a servant's.. Genesis 15:4
 - iii) Pay attention: is there an "if"? If not, don't make up something to make the promise come to pass.
 - iv) Beloved Sarai wants to help, and Abraham wants to listen. Be careful who you listen to and why.
- c) Under pressure with time running long, we tend to look desperately for God to speak. We hear a cricket, then charge off in our own strength. Remember Galatians 4:23
 - i) Are you working to help God? Are you lusting after stuff you don't need?
 - ii) Did you throw away medication and avoid doctors because you are healed, or are you trying to make God heal you?
 - iii) If God says it's yours, let Him do it. Jeremiah 17:5

- iv) Recognize the push of hurry, anxiety, and lust. Don't move from being driven. Move in peace Col 3:15

3) **Clean up Ishmael's messes.**

- a) Genesis 16:5
 - i) People in positions after the flesh bring attitude problems. Pride rises quickly in the gifted. 1 Timothy 3:6
 - ii) Human effort causes delay and unintended consequences.
 - iii) Learn to wait!!!!!! It is easier for God to catch you up, than for you to live out ahead of God until He catches up to you. Proverbs 19:2-3
- b) 16:6-12 God cares for those impacted by your fleshly decisions.
 - i) If you're in an Ishmael job (One you chose), do your job and finish it. Don't run. Ps 15:4
 - ii) No matter how you got in a position, respect the authority of the house and God will honor your integrity. Eph 6:5-6
 - iii) Note Genesis 21: flesh brings division and grief.
- c) Deal with your Ishmaels
 - i) John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh. Everything born of the flesh requires lots of your human effort.
 - ii) People who are Ishmaelites, there for the wrong reasons, will be like wild donkeys: stubborn, mean, and selfish.
 - iii) If you realize you have birthed an Ishmael
 - (1) Repent. Pride is the first challenge. We have to admit we missed it.
 - (2) Get your own attitude right. Rebellion is never of God. Don't you be a wild donkey. (Even if you missed God to get there, stay there until you can leave right)
 - (3) Keep your commitments, especially covenants, God is the great author of plan B. He calls it plan A.
 - (4) Be generous to others. Provide for those who are impacted. **REMEMBER: It is never wrong to do the right thing!**
 - (5) Shut it down: leave the relationship, stop the meeting, sell the car, take your insulin, sell the guitar, whatever it takes. Let the flesh rot away and get back on the promise.