

## **“Remember The Promise”**

### **Intro:**

Hey Summit Church it's great to be with you. It's great to worship & study God's word together. For those of you who don't know me my name's Louis Tamburro & I'm on staff here as a church planter, I'm actually going to be planting a church in East Orlando as of this year, & as soon as people find out I'm planting in Orlando one of the 1<sup>st</sup> things they ask is what do I think of Disney? It's what do I think of Disney? I mean some of you are obsessed with Disney, but for me it brings back nightmares. It brings back nightmares, because I had one of the worst, most horrific experiences of my life there & it was when I had to take my 4 yr old to the bathroom...He asked me to go to the bathroom & so I took him. I took him, he did his business, I bent down to pick up his pants, the automatic flush goes off, & water splashes, in my eye! I had potty business all up in my eye. I forgot to cover up the automatic flush & got ambushed. So I run out of the bathroom, grab some sanitizer, & start shoving it in my eye. It burned & I was blind for about 5 minutes, but at least my eye was clean. Now my wife's looking at me like I'm crazy & so she asks, "What's wrong with you?" Man I got potty business in my eye. "Well how'd you do that?" Stupid automatic flush! So she starts laughing. I mean tears flowing she's laughing so hard, & I'm getting all angry to where I'm about to cage fight the next Disney employee who says, "Have a magical day!" Man I'm not having a magical day! In fact we go from that to waiting in long lines with no AC, in hot Florida, while some dude rubs his sweaty bird flu all up on you. That's not magical, that's nasty. I'm telling you I start getting all grumpy at Disney. I even start ramming people with the stroller to create space & my wife's like, "Louie you're a pastor." Yeah well today I'm being sanctified & it's not going so well! It was a nightmare. That's what I think when people ask me about Disney. I think nightmare. I love Disney, but that day was no fairytale...

Today as we continue our series called "The Whole Story" where we're going through the entire Bible in a year, I want you to turn your bibles to Genesis 16. It's Genesis 16, as we study the story of Abram, which was no Disney fairytale. His life was no Disney fairytale, & I want you to see that today. I want you to see the faults, failures, & sins of Abram in ch.16. But above all else, I want you to see that despite Abram's sins, God remembers His promises. Despite Abram's sins, God remembers His promises to Abram & He'll do the same for you.

### **Context:**

Here's your context. Last week Pastor J.D. talked about how Noah & the flood were God's way of rebooting the world because of sin. God rebooted the world & made a promise that He would never flood the entire earth again & He hasn't. Despite humanities sin, God remembered the promise. Now in Genesis ch.12 we learn that God makes another promise. He makes a promise that He's going to make a great nation, name, & blessing out of Abram, & for Abram this is great news, because at this point he's broke & can't have kids. So when God makes this promise he immediately grabs his bags & follows the Lord. But shortly after Abram sins. He sins by not trusting in the providence of God, & he sins by pimping out his wife. He literally pimps out his wife handing her over to an Egyptian King, because he's afraid their gonna kill him to get to her. So he pimps out his wife, &

sins. But despite his sin, God remembers the promise. He remembers the promise, He saves Abram's wife before she marries the king, & the rest of ch.12-15 consists of God growing Abram's faith & reminding him of the promise. Let's pick it up from there.

### **The Word:**

*Genesis 16:1-6 states this, "Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. <sup>2</sup> And Sarai said to Abram, 'Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her. And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. <sup>3</sup> So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. <sup>4</sup> And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived."* Both Sarai & Abram sin. They sin. Abram's pimping out Sarai, Sarai's pimping out Abram, & neither are trusting in God's provision. They're trusting in their own works, rather than in the works of God. In fact Sarai even says, "I shall obtain." She says, "I shall obtain children." She's trying to obtain God's promise by her works, rather than by the works of God, & Abram goes along with it. They both sin. But despite their sin, God remembers the promise.

*Again vs. 4 states, "And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress. <sup>5</sup> And Sarai said to Abram, 'May the wrong done to me be on you!'"* Now I just love this part of the text, because it's so accurate when it comes to marital & dating relationships. I mean can't you see Abram just sitting there confused? "What in the world just happened? I don't get it. I mean she asked me to sleep with Hagar so I did. What's the problem?" He's gotta be confused. Listen I've been married 12 yrs & my wife still confuses me. I remember one time when my wife was pregnant she came up to me saying, "Hey Louie I'm going to the store, you wanna come?" Now I see that as an option right? I can either go or not go. She gave me an option. So I said, No honey I'm gonna stay here & finish my sermon. I gotta preach tonight. "Well fine! Fine then! You just stay & work on your sermon." I was like, What the heck just happened? I mean she asked me a question & I answered it. Where did I go wrong? I look at my 85 lb Doberman & he's like, "That's not my fight, that's yours," & he takes off running. So I just asked her, "Andrea I don't get it. What in the world just happened? I mean you asked me a question, I answered it. Look if you want me to go just say you want me to go & I'll go." To which she replied, "It's not about that. I want you to want to go." OH COME ON!...As men, we don't get that kind of stuff. Ladies you gotta shoot us straight, & before the blow up happens. Sarai's blowing up on Abram, but she has good reason to. **He's just as much to blame as she is.** He should have never gone through with it. They both sinned. But despite their sin, God remembers the promise.

*Again vs. 5 states, "And Sarai said to Abram, 'May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my servant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the Lord judge between you and me!'" <sup>6</sup> But Abram said to Sarai, 'Behold, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please. Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her.'* Sarai dealt harshly with her, meaning she beats her. She literally beats Hagar to the point where Hagar has to flee, & this is what sin does. Sin hurts us. It hurts. It hurts us & everyone around us. They're experiencing all kinds of relational issues because of sin. But despite their sin, God remembers the promise. He remembers the promise, & the rest of ch.16 consists of God saving Hagar & allowing her

to have a son named Ishmael. But Ishmael's not the promise. The promise wasn't given to Abram & Hagar, it was given to Abram & Sarai. So in ch.17 God reminds them of the promise yet again. Despite all the sin in ch.16, God remembers the promise in ch.17.

*Genesis 17:1 states, "When Abram was ninety-nine years old..."* Notice that Abram's now 99. He's 99 yrs old, which is over 25 yrs since God first made the promise with him. That's over 25 yrs! Man I have a hard enough time waiting 25 minutes let alone 25 yrs, no wonder the guys struggling. I'd be struggling too if I were him. I'd be struggling too...& some of you are there...Some of you are there...Some of you are struggling with waiting...You want to have children, but you're left waiting...You want to get married, but you're still single & you're left waiting...You want a career change, but you're still at the same job & you're left waiting...Some of you are struggling with waiting...Look It's hard...Waiting is very hard, & nobody knows your pain more than you...So I'm not going to stand up here & act like I know your situation, because I don't. I don't know why God's making you wait, but what I do know is that God has very good reasons for making Abram wait. He has very good reasons, & one of those reasons is because Abram's not ready. He's not ready. I mean the things God's going to ask him to do especially in ch.22 aren't going to be easy. God's going to have to grow his faith so that he can actually handle the blessings, so he can actually handle the promises. I'll put it like this. There's a lot of joy that comes with driving a car, but that doesn't mean I hand my 4 yr old the keys. He's not ready. So as a loving father I don't give him the keys, I give him a trike, then training wheels, then a bike, & at each stage I'm growing him until he's ready to handle the blessings of the car. But for me to give him the keys now wouldn't be a blessing, it'd be a tragedy. It'd be a tragedy. Because he's not ready...God's your Father...He's your Father...& as a loving Father, He sees what you & I can't see from our limited 4 yr old perspective. So He says wait...He says wait...But He also sometimes says, "No." Sometimes the answer is "not yet," but sometimes the answer is "no." He said "no" to Jesus, so what makes us think the Father won't sometimes say "no" to us. Three times Jesus prayed in the garden of gethsemane asking the Father to take this cup of suffering from Him, asking the Father if there was no other way than the cross. But the Father said "no." He said "no," but Jesus trusted in the character of the Father. He trusted that the Father was loving, good, & new what was best. So Jesus willingly goes through with the cross & the Father's "now," turned into a "yes" for many. The Father's "no" turned into a "yes," the salvation of many. The Father had good reasons for saying "no" to Jesus, & He has good reasons for saying "no" to us, even though we can't always see it from our painful limited 4 yr old perspectives. But God promises that one day He will come & wipe away every tear from our eyes. Every tear from waiting & every tear from His "no's." The resurrection proves this to be true...For Abram, it was a "yes, but not yet." For 25 yrs God told Abram to wait, but God remembered the promise.

*Again vs. 1 states, "When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, <sup>2</sup> that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.'"* God reminds him of the promise. He reminds Abram of the promise, & so with great anticipation. With great excitement Abram's like, "Alright God let's do this. I've been waiting for this for over 25 yrs. I've been waiting for you to make a great nation, name, & blessing out of me for over 25 yrs. So lets go baby! Let's do this thing," & God says this in vs. 11...

*Vs. 11, "You shall be circumcised..."* Man how does Abram even respond to that?... I mean he's been waiting for over 25 yrs & God's response is, "You shall be circumcised."

How does he respond to that?...And as if that's not bad enough God proceeds to tell Abram that he needs to circumcise every male that wants to be in his tribe. Try getting people to sign up for that new member's class...I mean I'd love for some of you to be a part of our launch team for Orlando. I'm serious about that. We still need some people to help us. So I'd love for some of you to join our team, but I'm pretty sure this isn't the way to do it. I mean what kind of church growth strategy is this? "Hey Abram we're gonna plant a church & you need to circumcise yourself & anyone who wants to join the team." Man who wants to join that launch team?...Anyone? Anyone want to join the launch team of a guy who's 99, claiming to have a baby, & wants to circumcise people?...It's madness. It's complete madness...But if it's madness, then why are we still talking about Abram today?...If it's madness then why are we still talking about him over 4,000 yrs later, in 2016? I mean how many names do you remember from 4,000 yrs ago? How many names do you remember from the yr 2,000 BC? Look there's absolutely no reason for us to still be talking about a guy who's 99, claiming to have a baby, & wanting to circumcise people. There's no reason. You can't reach that type of legendary status with the cards he was given. Unless God made a promise & kept it, which He did. Despite Abram's sin, He remembered the promise, & in vs. 19 God says this.

*Vs. 19 God says, "...But Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him."* Notice that God says He's going to make an everlasting covenant. He's going to make an everlasting covenant, meaning one that doesn't ever expire, & the word "covenant" literally means a "contract." It's a binding contract between two parties, which in this case, it's a contract between Abram & God. How profound is that? That God would actually be willing to make a covenant, a binding contract with us. I mean He's the Creator of all things, the Creator of the heavens & the earth, the Creator of the 6 sextillion planets that exist in the known universe. Do you know how many planets that is? A lot! It's millions, billions, trillions, quadrillions, quintillions, then sextillions, & astronomers estimate that there's roughly 6 sextillion, possibly even 300 sextillion planets that exist in the known universe, & yet God set all that in motion with a simple word. He set it all in motion without even breaking a sweat. Try crossfitting that without breaking a sweat. God simply speaks, & it's done, 300 sextillion planets in motion. So the fact that a God that powerful is even willing to interact & make a covenant with us should astound us. I mean He doesn't owe us anything, not even a conversation. Yet out of love He bends down to our puny little 4 yr old levels saying "I'll make a covenant with you...I'll make a covenant, I'll put my name on the line."

Listen Summit! God's name is on the line here. When He makes a covenant with Abram He puts His name & reputation on the line. Because if the covenant doesn't happen then it means He's a liar & there's absolutely no reason to worship Him. If the covenant, if the promise doesn't happen then there's absolutely no reason to worship Him. But if it does happen then it means that God IS trustworthy & we have every reason TO worship Him. So the question we have to ask ourselves is did it happen? Did this 4,000 yr old covenant, this 4,000 yr old contract come true? And the answer is yes. Yes it did come true because if it didn't then why are we still talking about Abram over 4,000 yrs later?...If it didn't happen then why are there over 2.2 billion Christians in the world who trace their lineage back to this very promise?...The reason we're still talking about him & the reason there's over 2.2 billion Christians is because God made a promise & kept it. He promised He would make a great nation, name, & blessing out of Abram & He has through Jesus.

Jesus is the everlasting covenant from Abram's lineage & it's through his life, death, & resurrection that we're eternally forgiven, eternally saved, eternally secured, eternally a part of the family. If you're a Christian then you're a part of the family. If you're not a Christian then repent of your sins, believe in the good news of the Gospel, believe in who Jesus is & what He did for you on the cross & become a part of the family of Abram, more importantly become a part of the eternal family of God. But if you're a Christian, then you're already a part of the family, you're the fulfilled promise, you're living proof of a 4,000 yr old promise that God made, & He kept it. He kept it, which means He's not only trustworthy, but He's worthy of all our worship.

### **The Heart:**

So let's get to the heart of the message. Despite Abram's sins, God remembered the promise. Despite Abram's sins, God remembered the promise, & He'll do the same for you. He'll do the same for you. Despite your sins, God will remember every promise He's ever made to you. Listen the odds were against Abram & if God can fulfill that promise then we can trust that God will fulfill every promise He's ever made, & so I want to end on that. I want to end by remembering some of the promises. I want to end by remembering some of the promises we have in King Jesus. I want to end by remembering some of the promises we have regarding who He is, what He's done, & what He's going to do. Summit Church these are the promises we have in King Jesus.

- He Was Never Created | [Micah 5:2](#)
- He is The Creator of Everything | [Col 1:16](#)
- He is God | [John 1:1](#)
- He is God Incarnate, Fully Human & Fully Divine | [John 1:1](#)
  
- His Essence Never Changes | [Heb 13:8](#)
- He is All-Powerful | [Matt 28:18](#)
- He is All-Knowing | [Col 2:3](#)
- He is All-Loving | [1 John 4:8](#)
- He is Ever-Present | [Matt 18:20](#)
- He is Holy | [Luke 1:35](#)
- He is Righteous | [Isa 53:11](#)
- He is Just | [Zech 9:9](#)
- He is Sinless | [2 Cor 5:21](#)
- He is Gentle | [Matt 11:29](#)
- He is Merciful | [Heb 2:17](#)
- He is Forgiving | [Luke 23:34](#)
- He is Humble | [Phil 2:8](#)
- He is The Way, The Truth, & The Life | [John 14:6](#)
- He is The Great Physician | [Matt 4:24](#)
  
- He Healed a Man From Leprosy | [Matthew 8](#)

- He Healed a Paralyzed Man | [Luke 2](#)
- He Healed a Blind Man | [John 9](#)
- He Healed a Man With a Withered Hand | [Mark 3](#)
- He Healed a Woman Who Was Hemorrhaging | [Matthew 9](#)
- He Healed Many Other Sick People | [Luke 7:21](#)
- He Walked on Water | [John 6](#)
- He Calmed a Storm | [Luke 8](#)
- He Fed 5,000 Hungry People | [Mark 6](#)
- He Raised Lazarus From the Dead | [John 11](#)
- He Came To Save Sinners | [Luke 19:10](#)
  
- His Death On The Cross Reconciles Us With God | [Eph 2:13-16](#)
- He Justifies Us | [Rom 5:9](#)
- He Sanctifies Us | [Heb 10:29](#)
- He Redeems Us | [Rom 3:24-25](#)
- He Gives Us Victory | [Rev 12:11](#)
- He Gives Us Eternal Life | [John 6:53-56](#)
- He Gives Us Everlasting Righteousness | [Dan 9:24](#)
- And He Rose From The Dead **proving it all to be true** | [Luke 24](#)
- He's Alive & Well | [Mark 16:11](#)
- He's Taking Us To Heaven | [John 14:3](#)
- And He's Coming Back In Power & Glory | [Matt 24:30](#)
- He Will Wipe Away Every Tear | [Rev 21:4](#)

Summit he's coming back! He's coming back! King Jesus is coming back, & he's taking you with him. He's taking you with him, & he's gonna bend down to your level, to your little 4 yr old level, & he's going to wipe away every tear from your eye. Every tear from waiting, from...etc...He's going to wipe away every tear from our eyes. Why? Because despite your sin, He remembers His promise.