

THE BIG IDEA: Don't waste the wait.

The Take-Off

Last week we kicked off this new series called disCOMFORT and we're taking a look at some of the life and call of Abraham to help us see how God uses discomfort in our lives

It's a timely word for the church in America, because God is doing it again in our lives now - the discomfort we all have felt and are feeling during the COVID-19 shutdown is bringing us to a crossroad

At crossroads, we either CHOOSE God or LOSE God

If we embrace comfort, we'll find ourselves at odds with a Father who often uses discomfort to lead us

So we want to "diss" comfort - push it away and allow God to use discomfort for His good in our lives

Last week we talked about how God calls us out of comfort into covenant to be conduits and how our chains, pains, and brains can trip us up along the way

This morning, let's talk more about the way - the journey and time it can take for God to deliver the promise

It's fitting that I teach this outside our church because so many of us are waiting on these doors to reopen

It's also fitting that I teach it on Mother's Day because no one understands the discomfort of waiting to deliver like a mom!

We've had 2 very different experiences with childbirth (and I use the term "we" loosely because I know NOTHING of the discomfort of being pregnant not the pain of giving birth!):

The boys came early and we didn't feel ready

Sydney came on time and we were past ready

Even the birthing process is different for everybody-

One mom in our church literally had the power go out as she was delivering

I'll never forget the Southern doctor who delivered the boys - he held up Parker and said, "Lookeee heeere! It's a BOOO-OYYYY!" (yes, he turned boy into a multi-syllable word)

Looking back - and again, from a dude's perspective - I see the 9 month waiting period as a gift.

It was a time to prepare, a time to make sure that we were ready.

Heck, it was a time to sleep!

Even now with the interruption of COVID-19, we've been giving a gift: an opportunity to return to what matters most and to allow God to prepare us for what happens next

The challenge is will we?

I remember the woman Wendy and I met in a restaurant who found out we were expecting twins. She had twins and so we asked her for advice. Her response was 2 words long: "Sleep now."

But we didn't. We thought she was joking. We had 9 months to sleep, rest, prepare - and we wasted it.

The Big Idea? **Don't waste the wait.**

What we'll learn from Abraham? 3 ways he almost did.

While we're waiting on God to deliver what He's promised - a healing, a reconciled relationship, a new level of intimacy with Him, a loved one's salvation - we're going to face the same three dangers he did. Recognizing them will help us avoid them.

Here we go - 3 dangers we all face while we're waiting to deliver

1. Inadequacy

- a. **Genesis 15:2-4**
- b. Abraham has been through a lot, but he still doesn't have a son.
- c. **When we feel inadequate, we want the promise to come TO us and not THROUGH us**
- d. God's promises are always bigger than us - His message is greater than us
- e. The sheer weight of it can make us feel inadequate and insignificant and we look for ways to have it handed to us instead of birthed through us
- f. This requires ZERO faith (asking for a large donation BEFORE I stepped out into ministry - BACKWARDS!)
- g. **2 Corinthians 3:5** / our adequacy comes from God

2. Impatience

- a. **Genesis 16:1-4**

- b. **When we feel impatient, we begin to work God's plan instead of allowing God's plan to work**
- c. In other words, we take things into our own hands instead of leaving them in God's
- d. I can relate to this one! I can get so impatient in a line waiting for minutes, but at this point, Abraham had been waiting 10 YEARS and still didn't have the promise! TEN YEARS!
- e. Notice verse 2 - Sarah said "perhaps I can build" - isn't that the essence of impatience
- f. "Let me help God out" or even worse "Step aside, God. I'll do it since You're taking so long!"
- g. But this misses the point of the wait - there is a purpose for it
- h. **2 Peter 3:9** / God isn't slow in keeping His promise - He has a reason
- i. Impatience can cause us to waste the wait.
- j. One last thing before we leave this one: I love **Genesis 16:9-14** and seeing that God gives grace to the lives that WE wreck by trying to force HIS plan.

3. Insecurity

- a. **Genesis 17:15-18**
- b. In one chapter, we've fast-forwarded 14 years and Abraham still doesn't have the promise.
- c. God reminds him of the promise, and Abraham sees his age and Sarah's age (100 and 90)
- d. The reality causes insecurity and he suggests that perhaps Ishmael could be the promise
- e. **When we feel insecure, we ask God to bless what we've done instead of trusting Him for what He'll do**
- f. God wanted Abraham to trust in His faithfulness to do what He said He would do
- g. That's exactly what He's asking of us - to put our security in what we can't see, not what we can
- h. **Hebrews 11:1** / faith is the evidence of things NOT YET SEEN

The Landing

I don't know where you are on the "COVID-19 waiting" scale or on the "when will God deliver the promise" scale, but I want to close this morning calling on you to renew your faith in God to do what He said He would do at the time He knows He should do it

Isaiah 66:9 / "Do I bring to the point of delivery and not give birth?" says the Lord.

Give us faith, Lord, to trust You while we wait. Help us not to waste the wait.

Let's pray.