SERMON CHEAT SHEET

RUNNING DRY | GENESIS 21:1–21

Main Theme: God's divine promise and His never-failing grace are much greater than our flawed attempts at self-reliance and our own makeshift safety measures.

Rely on God's Timing

God came to Sarah and carried out His promise according to the specific time fixed for it, causing Isaac to be born at a time when all human means were entirely impossible. During Abraham's entire journey, any effort on his part to take control of the situation out of impatience had resulted in a state of disorder, while God stayed firm and loyal. Genuine joy is experienced when we give up our dependence on ourselves, yield our own timetable, and patiently accept the gifts which God gives us at His perfect time.

Release Your Control

At the time of Isaac's weaning, Ishmael ridiculed the child who was the promise, and as a result Abraham had to suffer the unpleasant consequences of the makeshift backup plan which he had made fourteen years before. God ordered Abraham to send Ishmael away and would not allow an artificial safety net to undermine the covenant promise; just as we cannot outsmart God by making shortcuts and compromises without in the end having to endure the distress they cause, so we are required to give up all our control mechanisms to Him.

Receive God's Grace

Hagar cried as her son collapsed, even though there was a source of water right beside them. God heard the silent plea of the boy, opened Hagar's eyes so that she could see the well of water, and kept them going in the wilderness. Just as our choices eventually run us dry, God appears to us at the end of ourselves, directing us away from our shame towards the living grace found in Jesus Christ.

LIVE IT OUT THIS WEEK

- Identify one area of life where you are currently tempted to manipulate an outcome, and intentionally pause to ask God for patience.
- Lay down a self-made safety net or secret compromise by confessing it to God and seeking accountability with a trusted believer.
- Take time this week to reflect on God's past faithfulness during periods of waiting, thanking Him for His precise timing.

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Pray for the strength to wait patiently on the Lord without taking matters into your own hands.
- Ask God to reveal any artificial reliance on security that needs to be surrendered to His care.
- Seek spiritual sight to recognize God's active grace and provision during seasons of personal dryness.