

# From Despair to Delight

## Genesis 18:1-15; Hebrews 11:11-12

Matt Fray

Tuesday Morning Men's Bible Study

Park Cities Presbyterian Church

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### Genesis 18:1-15

<sup>1</sup>And the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup>He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth <sup>3</sup>and said, "O Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant. <sup>4</sup>Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree, <sup>5</sup>while I bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." <sup>6</sup>And Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quick! Three seahs of fine flour! Knead it, and make cakes." <sup>7</sup>And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, who prepared it quickly. <sup>8</sup>Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

<sup>9</sup>They said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "She is in the tent." <sup>10</sup>The LORD said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. <sup>11</sup>Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. <sup>12</sup>So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?" <sup>13</sup>The LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' <sup>14</sup>Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son." <sup>15</sup>But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. He said, "No, but you did laugh."

### Hebrews 11:11-12

<sup>11</sup>By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. <sup>12</sup>Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

## Table Discussion Questions:

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1. Read Genesis 18:10-12. Why did Sarah laugh when God told her she would have a son in a year?
2. In Genesis 18:14, God asks Abraham, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" Is there a circumstance in your life right now that seems "too hard" for God?
3. Hebrews 11:11 says, "[Sarah] considered Him faithful who had promised." Why is it important for our faith to be in the person of God versus in the promise of God itself?
4. How might the name Isaac (which means "laughter") remind Sarah both of her sin and God's faithfulness?
5. Hebrews 12:2 tells us to look to Jesus who has "endured the cross" and is now "seated at the right hand of the throne of God." Why is it important for our faith to look "backwards" to what God has done in the past before looking forwards?

"God knows your persistent doubts, your insistent fears, your unfulfilled dreams, and your dark desires, and when you spread them out before Him He deals with you gently and graciously, as with a friend."

(Iain Duguid, *Living in the Gap Between Promise and Reality: The Gospel According to Abraham*, p. 97)