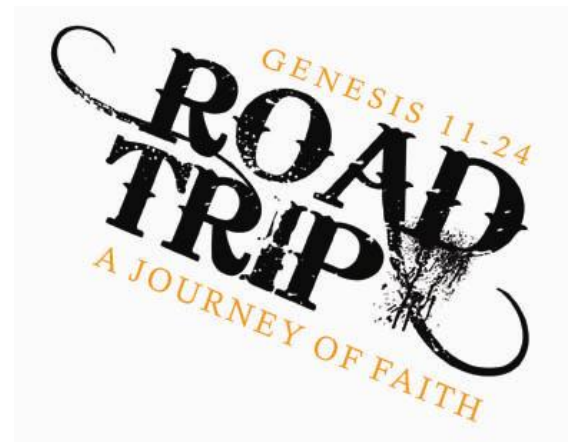




Grace for Our Journey of Faith

Genesis 16; 21:9-21



I. We travel the “Boulevard of Bad Decisions” when we rely on ourselves and not on God. Genesis 16:1-3

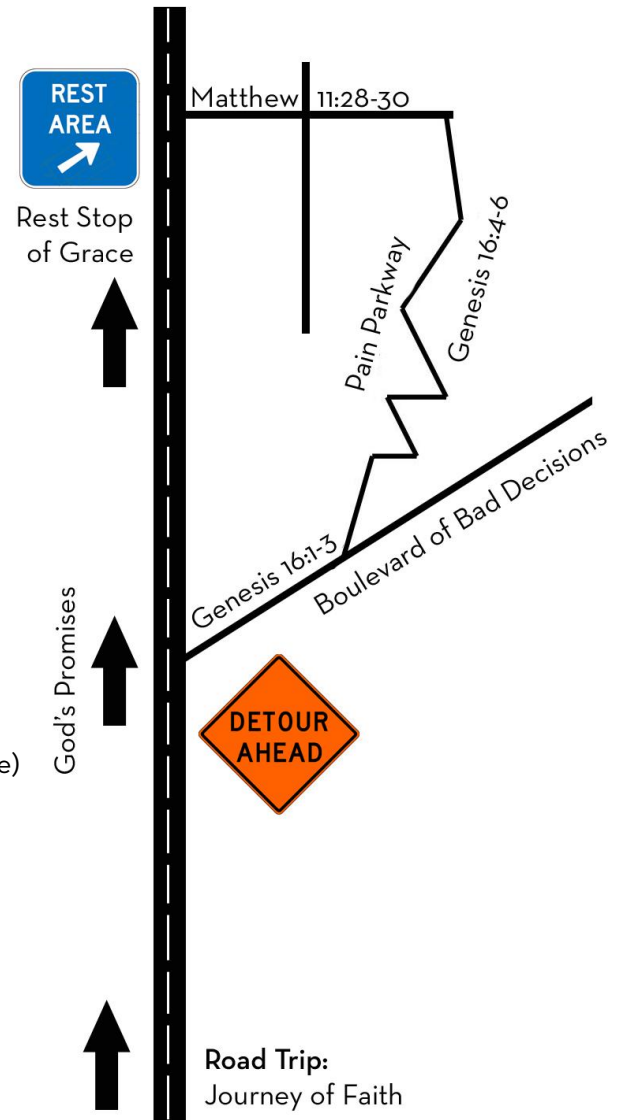
- We doubt God and His Word/promises to us. **Genesis 3**
- We create man-made plans, without God. **Proverbs 3:5-6**
- We are driven by works (achievement), not by grace (“receivement”). **Galatians 4:22-23**

II. We experience the “Parkway of Pain” because of our bad decisions. Genesis 16:4-6

- Pain and Conflict between Hagar and Sarai.
- Pain and Conflict between Sarai and Abram.
- Pain for Hagar (in desert)
- Pain for Sarai and Abram (still no child, no fulfillment of promise)

III. We are met by the “Rest Stop of God’s Grace” in our pain, despite our bad decisions. Genesis 16:7-11 and Genesis 21:1-21

- God’s grace to Hagar by meeting her in the desert and guiding her home. **Genesis 16:7-11**
- God’s grace to Abram & Sarai in keeping His promise, providing a miracle son. **Genesis 21:1-8**
- God’s grace to Isaac and Ishmael in His plans for them. **Genesis 21:9-13**
- God’s grace to Hagar and Ishmael again. **Genesis 21:14-21**
- God’s grace to us! **Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 11:28-30**



Digging Deeper

Day 1: Read and Study Genesis 16:1-3 and Galatians 4:20-5:4. Like Abraham, Sarai and Christians in Galatia in the 1st century, we are tempted to live and boast in the strength of our works rather than by faith in Jesus Christ alone. Why?

Day 2: Because God's wrath fell on Jesus, the blameless and innocent lamb, we are able to receive God's grace. Read Isaiah 53 today and remember the tremendous price Jesus paid for our sins and redemption.

Day 3: Take some time to read and re-read Matthew 11:28-30. This is a clear invitation to come to Jesus for His "Rest Stop of Grace." Take some time today and confess sin that has led to bad decisions and pain and enjoy the rest of forgiveness and grace that only Jesus can provide you.

Day 4: Muslims trace their history back to Ishmael. Part of their hatred towards the Jews stems back from this account in Genesis 16 and 21 where they feel Ishmael was mistreated. Sadly, just as the birth of Ishmael was a product of works, not faith, Muslims base their standing with God by works, not faith in Jesus. Pray for Muslims (sons of Ishmael) to hear the Gospel and respond to Jesus as the risen Savior. Go to www.30-days.net for specific ways you can pray for our Muslim friends.

Day 5: In the bulletin on Sunday we highlighted several local partnerships that minister to women who find themselves abandoned, alone and in crisis like Hagar was. Take some time and pray for the ministries of **BirthChoice** (reaching out to pregnant moms in crisis) and **The Sheepfold** (reaching out to abandoned moms with children) and our own Calvary Ministries, **Safe Families** (biblical hospitality for children in crisis) and **Open Arms** (support group for parents with adoptive and foster children).

Day 6: Read Genesis 17 in preparation for next Sunday and prepare your heart for Communion Sunday

For more info on these ministries and to find out how you can get involved:

- 1) **BirthChoice Santa Ana** - www.birthchoicework.org or Lynn at 714.836.5447
Next BirthChoice volunteer training weekend at Calvary Church is Feb. 26 & 27
- 2) **The Sheepfold** - www.thesheepfold.org or Deanna at 714.237.1444
- 3) **Safe Families** - www.safe-families.org or Renee at 1.800.550.2445 (ext. 1234)
- 4) **Open Arms** - www.calvarylife.org/reach or Matt at 714.550.2378



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