

A Joy to Receive God's Gift

Description

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Genesis 21:1-8

Knowing the story of Abraham and Sarah as we do—the pain of barren years and trauma of mountain sacrifices—Genesis 21 is a welcome sigh of relief. Let's not miss the important theme of laughter and its relevant message. Sarah laughs when she hears that she will be pregnant; she laughs as Isaac is born. In fact, they name him "laughter." The double meaning shouldn't be lost: "God has brought me *laughter* (Isaac), and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me" (v. 6).

What a beautiful reminder to each of us. Even during our pain, in the middle of setting our face to doing the hard things, and in the course of bearing and birthing, God's faithfulness ultimately brings us joy.

The danger is that Christians are often quick to negate the pain or the loss, with a positive spin. Let's be honest here—Sarah had long decades of praying, waiting, and mourning over her barren womb. Yes, eventually, Isaac (laughter) came, but if we learn anything from Sarah, we learn the value of honesty.

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