

November 2, 2025

"The Gift of Surrender" – Bobby Warrenburg

Genesis 16:1-16

1. Read through Genesis 16:1-16 together as a group. What stands out to you, surprises you, or makes you uncomfortable in this story?
2. What do you notice about how different characters are named in this story?
 - In this passage Sarah is introduced as "the wife of Abram who bore him no children." How does being defined by what we lack or can't provide affect our identity and decisions?
 - Hagar is consistently called "the Egyptian slave" rather than by name—until the angel addresses her. What does it mean that the first person to name God in the Bible is a foreign, abused, enslaved woman fleeing for her life?
3. Trace how Sarah's decision creates multiple layers of chaos—between Sarah and Hagar, Sarah and Abraham, and eventually between their children. What does this teach us about how "controlling" decisions ripple outward?
4. The sermon distinguishes between things we can influence (through effort and determination) and things beyond our control (that require surrender). Can you think of biblical or personal examples of each? How do we tell the difference?
5. "The Lord has kept me from..." Sarah believes God is withholding something good from her. When have you felt this way? How does this belief about God's character drive us to "take matters into our own hands"?
6. Bobby invited us to notice our "if only" statements that we say to ourselves. What are some common "if only" statements in our culture? What are yours? What do they reveal about what we're clinging to?
7. Hagar names God "the God who sees me" when she feels most invisible and abandoned. Where in your life do you most need to believe that God sees you right now?
8. The sermon uses the image of the father putting on a pirate costume to join his son, connecting it to Jesus entering our humanity. How does understanding that God "meets us where we are" change how we relate to Him in our struggles?
9. Jesus "lets go of the branch" by surrendering to death on the cross. What does it practically look like for us to "let go and fall into His arms" with the things we're clinging to?
10. What is one specific "branch" you're clinging to right now—something you're trying to control that's actually beyond your control? What would it look like to begin releasing your grip on it this week?
11. The sermon suggests that beneath our grasping is a belief that God is withholding good from us. How might God be inviting you to rewrite that narrative about His character?

12. Who in your life might be "out on the playground fending off invisible enemies"—stuck in their pain or shame? How might you be called to "join them where they are" before inviting them to walk forward?
13. Sarah's abuse of Hagar came from her own pain and Abraham's earlier failures. How do our families, churches, or communities sometimes create "Hagars"—people who become collateral damage of others' attempts to control outcomes? How can we intervene in those cycles?
14. What's one concrete way our group can practice corporate surrender and trust in God's timing for something we're collectively concerned about?

In light of this passage and sermon, complete this sentence: "This week, I sense God inviting me to let go of _____ and trust Him with _____."