

THE CONNECTION

KINGSTON *wesleyan* CHURCH



Life Lessons From Two Moms

by Pastor Len

What did you learn from your mom? No doubt the list is long and covers a variety of topics. As we celebrate moms this month, I thought I'd share some life lessons from two moms that we just read about in the Life Journal. Their names are Sarah and Hagar and their stories are found in Genesis 16-22.

Like your mother, these moms have some very important lessons to share. For this article, I'll highlight four insights and corresponding instructions that can be learned from their stories.

The first insight is that God sees and hears your struggles. Scripture tells us how each of these women experienced struggles. From struggling with infertility to struggling with knowing what to do - they found themselves in Strugglesville. Maybe you can relate? In His kindness, God reassured each of them that He cared. In one of the most touching exchanges in all of Scripture, Hagar gives the Lord a nickname. She calls Him, El Roi - The God who see me. I hope that it brings great comfort and peace knowing that God sees and hears your struggles. Beyond that, I want to encourage you to do what Sarah and Hagar did once they understood this. Sometimes the struggles bring laughter. Like Sarah, maybe you've been there. Sometimes the struggles bring despair. Like Hagar, maybe you've been there. What I've observed is that when we're on the struggle bus, it either drives us closer to God or away from Him. My encouragement is to look to Him and listen. He not only sees and hears you, He wants you to hear His voice of comfort and direction. He wants to reveal His love, provision, and power.

The second insight is that children are a gift from God. As we've seen, that doesn't mean that there won't be struggles. As I've been told, getting old isn't for sissies. Well, neither is being a mom...or a dad. Nonetheless, every child is a gift. You are a gift. If you have a child, they are a gift. I think there are two important instructions that come with this insight. First, I think it's incredibly important that we treat our children as if they are a gift from God. Cherish them. Protect them. Love them. Second, I think it's vitally important that we not confuse the gift with the Giver. Sadly, it seems that many moms (and dads) bow to their child's every whim and desire. This is guaranteed to not end well for parent or child, or their future spouse for that matter.

The third insight is that parenting is stewarding. Rebecca and I understood from the very beginning that Selah ultimately belongs to God. Like Ishmael and Isaac, God has a plan for her life. Our desire all along has been to seek His will as we do our part to train her in the ways of God, lead her to know the voice of God, and help her navigate life's decisions as she seeks His wisdom and will. Obviously, stewarding a twenty-one year old is different than a two year old, but the principle remains.

The final insight piggy backs off of the third- Ishmael is not Isaac and Isaac is not Ishmael. Likewise, Sarah is not Hagar and Hagar is not Sarah. My point? Don't fall into the comparison trap. As a parent, it's easy to compare our child to another child, especially a sibling. Don't. God has shaped each one differently - literally and figuratively. Each child has their own gifts and challenges. Each child has their own love language. Embrace how God has created them and apply the lessons from the previous insight. It's also important not to compare ourselves as parents to other parents. They're not raising your child and you're not raising theirs...unless you share a child. If that's the case, according to the Bible, you still have different responsibilities and falling into the comparison trap won't benefit anyone.

I'm thankful for the lessons that my mother taught me and the wisdom that Rebecca has passed on to Selah. I'm also grateful for the lessons that can be learned from Sarah and Hagar.

Resources for You

by Pastor Len

We live in a content saturated culture. It's true in general, and it's true when it comes to content that's been created for Christians and those who are seeking to learn more about the teachings of the Bible. No doubt, this provides some wonderful opportunities. However, it can also be overwhelming. Even more, it can become even more difficult to know what resources are helpful and which ones would be better off being avoided.

For the last two years we partnered with with RightNow Media in an attempt to provide a large selection of content and I highlighted ones that I thought would be more useful.

Some of you have already heard the next part via email, but I know some don't receive emails from the church. (NOTE: if you don't but would like to, please complete a Connect Card and let us know.) After prayerful consideration we have chosen to not renew our subscription with RightNow Media. Please know that this decision was not made rashly and the following factors influenced this decision:

- Limited participation: From what we could tell, there weren't too many of you who used Right Now Media.
- Fiscal responsibility: We value every dollar given and want to be the best stewards that we can be.
- Limited options: after 2 years, I personally felt that there was a very limited collection of videos that I could truly encourage the KWC family to view.

I'm pleased to share that we will be launching a resource page on the church website that is scheduled to go live on June 1. On this page, you'll find resources that are constant (i.e. key teachings, links to recommended websites and apps, reading material that can be read online or downloaded, and more). There will also be featured resources that will be updated monthly (i.e. teaching videos for children, resources that connect to the current sermon series, resources that help individuals and families leverage different holidays, seasons, and happenings for spiritual growth).

I also want to encourage you to check out the display in the Cafe. Rebecca has provided a great selection of books and videos that range from entertainment to intense spiritual growth. The selection also ranges from child to adult. There's something for everyone! We also have a library (room 5) that has an even larger selection of books and videos that you can explore Sundays after service.

One final thing, I'd love to hear from you. What kinds of resources would best serve you? Are there resources that you recommend? Please, let me know! Email me (lw Wyatt@kingstonwesleyan.com) or write it on a Connect Card and drop it off at the Connection Center.



Food Distribution by Pastor Len

Our next food distribution is scheduled for June 1. Please help spread the word!

As before, we will need lots of volunteers to help sort items beginning at 9am and then help distribute until noon. It usually takes us about half an hour to an hour to clean up afterwards.

Local Church Conference

Local Church Conference is scheduled for Sunday, June 9 @ 6pm. We will be voting on board members, delegates to the Great Lakes Regional Conference, and nominating committee for next year. We will also be voting on a budget for 2024-2025. All members are encouraged to attend and everyone is welcome.



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