

“Hagar: The Mother Who Endured” - Genesis 16:1-16 & 21:8-21
Pastor Burt Garwood - May 14, 2017

Each Mother’s Day, I try to highlight a mom from the Bible. Sometimes it’s joyous like when we looked at Mary the Mother of Jesus a couple years ago, other times it’s painful, like when we looked at Naomi.

- One of the things I love about the Old Testament is that God works through wounded, imperfect, broken and flawed people.
- When God does this, he brings about redemption to the person, and it becomes a model for us to follow.

One such case is Hagar, the mother of Ishmael. If you don’t recognize her or her son, you might know the father better. Ishmael’s dad is Abraham.

- Hagar was an Egyptian slave. She might have been acquired when Abraham and Sarah were in Egypt, back in Genesis 12, but we don’t know that for sure.
- Hagar was Sarah’s righthand servant. When it became apparent that Sarah couldn’t have children, Sarah tells her husband Abraham to take Hagar as a second wife (Genesis 16:3), and to have a baby with her to carry on his family name.
- Abraham agrees to the idea and Hagar becomes pregnant. Sarah became jealous of Hagar and began to mistreat her. It got so bad that Hagar finally packed her bags and ran away.
- God sends an angel to encourage Hagar. READ: Genesis 16:9-10
- Hagar returns to Sarah and Abraham, her son is born and she names him Ishmael.

When you get to Genesis 21, God had blessed Abraham and Sarah with their own son named Isaac.

- But Abraham’s first son Ishmael was now old enough to mock his little half-brother Isaac. So, Sarah told Abraham to get rid of Hagar and her son Ishmael.
- Abraham sends his wife Hagar and his son Ishmael off into the desert with some food and a skin canteen of water, at the wishes of his jealous first wife Sarah.
- It wasn’t long before the water was gone and Hagar and her son Ishmael began to die of thirst. Hagar put her son Ishmael under a desert bush and walked away because she couldn’t bear to watch her son die...and she began to cry.
- READ: Genesis 21:17-18
- God provided Hagar with water to save her and Ishmael. Hagar faithfully followed God and raised her son in the desert to become a great archer. When he became a man, Hagar found her son a wife from her homeland of Egypt.
- Hagar was a mom in a bad situation who chose to trust God for the outcome.
- Wounded and abandoned by the people she thought were family, she had given up hope until God came to her rescue.

What do we learn from all of this?

- Other people can wound you and not live up to expectations. But God is faithful, he protects us and sees us through hard times.
- In the end, Mother’s Day is about a woman choosing to honor God and follow Jesus.
- You just lock in and set your face toward God and his greater reward, and you walk forward through life.
- That was the only choice left for Hagar. And that’s why we honor her today.

Hagar is a great example for all women because all women are struggling with something. If Hagar were here, she would be encouraging you to endure. Not for the accolades of others...but for the glory of God.

- Self-worth can never be rated by the opinions of others or how they have wounded you, disappointed you, abandoned you or rejected you...or whether they notice what you’ve done for them, or how they have or haven’t affirmed you.
- Self-worth comes, first and foremost, from a secure relationship with Jesus Christ and our Father-God who looks from heaven as says, “You are my daughter and I am pleased with you.”

I was just teaching our Wednesday morning IronMen group the same thing. That a man leads his family spiritually regardless of what others inside or outside the family say. A husband just leads, whether there are any accolades or not...it doesn’t matter.

- No matter what stage of life we are in: married, single, widowed, divorced, parent or not, when the chips are down, we faithfully put our trust in Jesus and we endure to the end. Hagar’s lesson applies to all of us.

I think a lot of moms feel like Mother’s Day can be a mixed bag of emotions.

- And many of you have experienced a piece of Hagar’s pain.
- It’s Mother’s Day and maybe you’re in the middle of a tough season of life.
- If Hagar were here today, she would encourage you to trust the Lord to see you through.
- And she might share this with you as well. It’s written by blogger Amy Young who attempted a few years ago to appreciate all women on Mother’s Day with the following writing. **READ:** “The Wide Spectrum of Mothering” by Amy Young (themessymiddle.com)

Mother’s Day can be a day of mixed emotions for all women. Especially if you allow satan to get you down.

- So, moms...and women of all ages and stages of life
- Endure...trust Jesus and be faithful to the end...
- In the end, Mother’s Day is about a woman choosing to honor God and follow Jesus. You just lock in...and set your face toward God’s and his greater reward...and you walk forward through life.

And remember this, we walk with you.