

Apply The Word

www.crosswaypa.org



Message Info

Title:

The God Who Sees

Speaker:

Peter Privitera

Date:

February 4, 2023

Scriptures:

Genesis 16:1-16

Theme: Do not strive because the God who sees looks after you.

Introduction: "Strive" is a word that can be used positively or negatively. One can strive to achieve high marks in school, aiming for something good. Or one can strive to achieve acceptance among the cool kids, aiming for something that cannot last or deliver what it promises. In the story of Abram, Sarai, and Hagar, we see striving at a high level and we see the effects it brings for those who strive.

Genesis 16 offers us 2 perspectives on human striving:

1. Human striving (1-6)

Sarai faced a great predicament. She had been promised a child as part of the line of promise, but for years she was barren and unable to conceive. Instead of being comforted by the Lord, Sarai strove tremendously. She wearied Abram with her pleas. Eventually, she pushed surrogacy as a solution. Sarai charges the Lord, and pushes Hagar into Abram's arms. Abram sinfully acquiesces, and a child—Ishmael—is conceived. Sarai "took" and "gave" to Abram (16:3), just as Eve did with Adam (3:6). Sarai acts opposite of the attitude identified with her in 1 Pet 3. Her failure here no doubt was used of the Lord to help her to grow in faith. Their failure to trust the Lord resulted in conflict and suffering, just as our every attempt at self-salvation always does. Yet the Lord was merciful.

2. Divine reassurance (7-16)

As Hagar conceives, she tries to displace Sarai from the head of the home. She despises Sarai and makes her disdain obvious. Sarai is outraged and commands Abram to get rid of her. As throughout this chapter, Abram is entirely passive and follows her commands. Hagar and Ishmael are banished, but the Lord has regard for them. He sees them, cares for them, and sends them back to the people of God. The Lord's care for Hagar in the wilderness is a picture of his care for us. He sees us in our suffering and struggles, and he cares for us. He has all the grace we need every moment to trust him and to walk in faith.

Questions:

1. What unsatisfied desires do you have? Are you striving?
2. What false peace/solutions are you tempted to choose?
3. Does God see you? How does the gospel offer you peace and confidence in the face of your trials?