



## Sermon Discussion Guide – *February 24, 2019*

**SERIES** – ROOTS: *Facing Times Of Drought*

**TITLE** - *“Facing Abandonment?”*

*Jeremiah 17:7-8 (NLT), Genesis 16*

**SUMMARY** - The Bible gives us wonderful examples of cultivating a deeper faith when we face spiritual drought. It is important to grow deep roots of faith so that when we are running on empty we still find hope and confidence in God’s faithfulness. The deeper we find our roots the more likely we will still produce fruit in times of drought. This week we look at the story of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar. We see God’s faithfulness and support when Hagar feels abandoned and alone. Deep roots of faith allow us to remember that God sees us and our future and wants what is best for us.

### **DAILY STUDY & PRAYER**

### **Read / Reflect / Respond**

(*READ* the verse, take a moment to *REFLECT* on its meaning, *RESPOND* by writing down some thoughts and praying)

**Monday - Genesis 16:13**, *“You are a God of seeing,” for she said, “Truly here I have seen him who looks after me.”*

**Tuesday - Romans 4:20** *“No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,”*

**Wednesday - Hebrews 6:12 NIV** *“We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.”*

**Thursday - Romans 15:13** *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”*

**Friday - Romans 5:20 The Message** *“But sin didn’t, and doesn’t, have a chance in competition with the aggressive forgiveness we call grace. When it’s sin versus grace, grace wins hands down.”*

**Saturday - James 4:7** *“Submit yourselves therefore to God.”*

### **GROUP DISCUSSION**

(*This is only a guide – select the points you want to discuss or supplement with your own materials*)

Open with Prayer

1. What is something you remember from the sermon that stood out to you or never heard before?
2. How can our experiences with abandonment affect our relationship with God?
3. In our Story of Genesis 16, Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar all make poor choices. What are some of the choices made that led to dysfunction and conflict? What could have been done differently?
4. Scottish novelist George MacDonald was right when he said, “In whatever man does without God, he must fail miserably, or succeed more miserably.” How is this true in our Genesis 16 story?

Close with prayer requests and prayer

### **NEXT STEPS** (Optional for group discussion)

1. **TEMPERATURE GAUGE** – How am I doing when it comes to feeling unwanted or unvalued? Are my roots deep enough to handle it?
2. **RESPOND** – How is the Lord calling me to respond? In confession and repentance? Prayer for help and guidance? Seeking out a confidant or listening ear? Take a moment to write down one action step.
3. **PRACTICE** – What is one way that you can incorporate or practice deepening your roots this week?



## Sermon Discussion Guide Leader Notes

### Preparing to Lead Your Group

- ✓ **PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God's wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God's instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. *Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group!*
- ✓ **PLAN** where you want to take your group during the next series. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives?
- ✓ **EVALUATE** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn't. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. How are you doing with leading the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?

### Using This Sermon Discussion Guide

- Review the discussion guide and sermon notes for this week. You can also view the sermon from our website, [www.faithunitedepc.org](http://www.faithunitedepc.org). As the discussion leader, you should preview and evaluate the questions based on the needs of your group.
- Feel free to adapt the format as needed. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, consider using the Next Steps section or add additional Scripture and resources. Remember this is only a guide and you don't have to complete all of it. It is a tool to promote good discussion. The goal is good discussion not necessarily getting through every question.
- The questions with Bible verses associated with them are there to encourage Bible literacy. So encourage different people to open their Bibles and read selected verses if they are willing and able.
- Your goal as the leader is to bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their needs for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.