

1 Wait even when the waiting is long.

Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" **GENESIS 17:17**

The Lord gave the promise of an offspring to Abraham when he was 75 years old (Genesis 12:1-4,7), but Sarah was only able to bear a child 25 years after this promise was given. In spite of the long period of waiting, Abraham believed God and continued to walk with and obey Him. Even when we don't see the fulfillment of the promise yet, let's continue to seek and obey Him and trust that His timing is perfect. This time of waiting is when we can grow deeper in our relationship and faith in Him. Share about a time you waited on the fulfillment of God's promise to you. How did your faith grow in that waiting time?

2 Believe even when what you are waiting for seems impossible.

Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" **GENESIS 17:17**

Abraham and Sarah received the promise of a child when they were considered physically incapable of having one, but God showed that He can make the impossible possible with His power. When God calls you to wait for the impossible, trust and obey His Word, just as Abraham did. Every Word He says is true and will accomplish His plans and purpose (Isaiah 55:11). How does knowing this encourage you to believe God for the seemingly impossible things in your life?

3 Embrace God's plan when it is different from yours.

God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him." **GENESIS 17:19**

(Read also **GENESIS 17:20,21.**)

Abraham tried to fulfill the promise by having a son through Sarah's maidservant, Hagar, even when God told him that He will give him descendants through his wife, Sarah. As we wait on the promise of God, it is tempting to try to "help" God fulfill the promise using our own ways and resources. When God reveals His plan, we should respond in faith, trusting God and submitting to His plan even when it is different from ours. Although His plan may seem impossible, He will come through. Recall a time when God was leading you to a direction that wasn't your original plan. How was your faith built during that time?

APPLICATION

- Are you having difficulty in your walk with God while waiting on Him? Are you having doubts about God's promise for you? What verse from the Bible can you hold onto?
- What is one promise from God that you are claiming in your life right now? How is God calling you to respond while waiting for that promise?
- Do you have a family member or friend who needs to be encouraged with God's faithfulness to fulfill His promise and to grow in faith this week? How can you encourage him or her to continue to grow in his or her relationship with God and persist in faith?