**Genesis 21:1-21**

***Either God Does It or I Do It***

Introduction

1. We are raised by Performance Based Acceptance. We like performance. Then we get

saved, and we must perform.

2. Are you a performance based Christian? You soon will become tired and weary in your Christian walk. Do you feel you will never measure up? Grace, God does it!

3. In Genesis 21:1-21 It isn’t performance that counts. This passage this morning is applied in (Galatians 4:21-31)…Law brings bondage and we lose our freedom.

Are you living a performance based Christianity? Do you feel you’ll never measure up?

**I. WHEN GOD DOES IT 21:1-8**

There is fulfillment. According to (Gal. 4:28), Isaac is a picture of grace. **God does**

 **it!** From salvation to glory, God must do it!

1. ***The Promise 1-3***
2. **God’s Word 1, 2** *As He had said…As He had spoken…Which God had spoken…*God did what He said. God is a God of His Word. We must live by Truth. There are two forms of Truth. **Absolute Truth** is God’s Word, because God is absolutely true. **Relative Truth** is apart from God’s Word, and usually is based on what one thinks or feels to be true.

**Absolute Truth:** *I am accepted in the Beloved…God loves me…I’m in Christ and Christ is in me…I’m a joint heir with Jesus Christ.*

**Relative Truth:** It’s not what you do, it’s what’s been done to you. You feel worthless. You feel no good. You feel unaccepted, unwanted, unloved.

1. **God’s Way 3** God did it! *Isaac* means, *laughter* and is used 3 times in vss 3-5. The naming of Isaac and his circumcision is *as God commanded.* This required obedience. **If God makes a promise, God must fulfill it (and He will…He’s God!)** God’s Way: Abraham could only produce a son in his own ability. He could not produce Isaac! So it is with us.

*At a set time…*God is never ahead or behind, but He is never in a hurry. This was a 25 year wait. Abraham and Sarah did not have the ability to produce. **God did it! God gets all the glory!**

1. ***The Pledge 4, 5***

By this rite as a child, Isaac became identified with the nation of Israel. **All was based on God’s Word…Truth (Absolute Truth).**

1. ***The Privilege 6-8***
2. **Trying to Trusting 6, 7** She knew that it had all been done by the power of God! She went from a laugh of doubt (ch. 18) to a shout of victory. ***Who can believe what God can do?!***
3. **Famine to Feasting 8** The child would be weaned somewhere between the age of 3 and 5. In our Christian experience we move from *milk*  to *meat of God’s Word.* It’s an occasion for feasting when a Christian begins to grow up. The weaned child lives on grace alone (Heb. 5:13-6:9).

Are you living a performance based Christianity? Do you feel you’ll never measure up?

**II. WHEN I DO IT 21:9-21**

1. ***The Frustration 9-11***

 We live either by the natural or supernatural. We live by either Law or Grace.

1. ***Opposition 9*** *Ishmael* represents human effort, the flesh which is opposed to the free gift of God. **The Flesh cannot tolerate Grace!** *Sarah saw the son of Hagar mocking* (Galatians 4:29) says, *persecuting.* There is no possible communion between Isaac (grace) and Ishmael (flesh and law).
2. ***Option 10*** *Cast out the bond woman and her son.* For 18 years she put up with it!If grace is to reign, law must be removed. It is impossible to have joy in any way, but God’s way. **Either God does it or I must do it! It cannot be both ways!**
3. ***Outcry 11*** This had been Abraham’s pride and joy for 18 years. Absolute surrender is never easy. Abraham wanted to hold on to his love of the flesh. **It had to go!**
4. ***The Flight 12-14***
5. **The Wisdom of Grace 12,13** The two cannot live together. One will always lead you into bondage, and you will lose your freedom. *Isaac* *is the seed called.* That is the miracle of grace. *The ways of God are past finding out v. 13.* Those things produced in the flesh cannot bring glory to God. He only receives the glory as we absolutely surrender to Him. **What God makes has purpose!**
6. **The Wealth of Grace 14 It is going to cost the natural everything, not something!** *And sent her away…*God will not allow grace to be mocked by our efforts. Abraham had to offer Ishmael before he could offer up Isaac. The simplest things are a gift from God.
7. ***The Fruit 15, 16***

Hagar (again is a picture of the Flesh) had to walk by sight. She could not rest on God’s Word (13). Law cannot comprehend the life of Grace through Faith.

1. **Deadness** Hagar looked at the living son and saw death…
2. **Dryness** *water in the skin* will soon run out. **There are no wells of living water!**
3. ***The Faithfulness 17-21***

God is God whether we appropriate what He has to offer or not!

1. **The Word 17, 18** God’s Word is doubted. God operates when we can’t or don’t. God has great things in store for us.
2. **The Wells 19** Isaac lived near wells. Ishmael lived in the desert and didn’t know there was a well nearby. *Filled the skins* is a picture of legalism and our efforts, and this one will never know the joy of Living Water!
3. **The Wilderness 20, 21** The wilderness of the flesh is dry and barren.
4. **The Wife 21** *Wife out of Egypt…*When we live by legalism, our strength, and our efforts, we will always end up married to the world. How do you handle life? Live in the flesh and you will look pretty much like the lost.

**When we are unfaithful, He remains faithful!**

**Are you living a performance based Christianity?**

**Do you feel you’ll never measure up?**

**There are only two ways to live:**

**Grace: God does it! It’s all of Grace from salvation to eternity. He gets all the glory!**

**Flesh: Performance Based Acceptance, a life lived in your strength will produce dryness and deadness.**

**SURRENDER ABSOLUTELY AND LIVE!**