

# Understanding Mission: The Covenant People

## Genesis 17:17-19, 18:19

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?" **18** And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!" **19** 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.

**18:19** For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring to Abraham what he has promised him."

Genesis 17 teaches that the covenant is relational, between God and mankind; generational, for Abraham and his descendants; and missional, ultimately for all the nations of the world.

## Discussion Questions

1. Mitchell commented that he appreciated being part of a covenantal, generational community, as now he is part of a community that is primarily first generation believers. What does it mean to you to be part of a generational church community? How have you benefited from those a generation or two above you? Below you? How does that affect the way you live out your faith?
2. Mitchell taught that the church community was designed to be in motion (on mission), and when we stop, we are in danger of asphyxiation. "We are not an institution that sits still while the circumstances of the world change around us." Rather, we are called to mediate His blessings to the world. What does it mean for the Church to be in motion? How is the Church designed to be mobile?
3. The covenant is based on God's promise. How do the promises found in Genesis 17 shape the way we relate to God? How do they affect the way we relate to others?
4. How is Ishmael an example of Abraham not living by the promise of the covenant? In what ways do we struggle today to live by the promise of God?
5. God's promise creates a line of demarcation between the offspring of Isaac and the offspring of Ishmael. What does this mean for us who live in a pluralistic world? Are all religions the same?
6. We are called, not to move away from those not of the line of promise, but to move towards them. People who understand the Gospel move toward those who don't. How are you moving toward those not of the line of promise? How do we sometimes build walls or isolate/protect ourselves from them?
7. "Offspring will put on God's character, justice and righteousness, and thus put on display the character and rule, the personality, of God. And that's how the world will know that there is a covenant God that has a promise. You will be to the world what He has been to you." What is one specific way you can ask God to put His character, justice, or righteousness on display through you today?