

Sermon Notes

A Tale of Two Sons

Genesis 21:8-24

Intro: Christmas is coming! What response should Christians expect?

1. Two ways to laugh: the arrival of God's promised son prompts starkly opposite reactions (21:6-9)

Sarah's joy at long-awaited, oft-promised impossible birth (6-7)

Ishmael's derision & mockery of God's promised son & heir (9)

An ongoing pattern: *"²⁸Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. ²⁹But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now."* (Gal 4:28-29 ESV)

2. God's stark verdict: the one mocking my promised son will not inherit my covenant blessings (21:10-12)

Even in Abraham's physical family! [Romans 9:6-9, 33, 10:11-13]

3. Yet God has extraordinary "common grace": God's faithfulness, compassion and kindness to Ishmael still continues (21:13-21)

4. A better response: seeking peace with God's chosen heir (21:22-34)

Because the Everlasting God will keep his promises!

Conclusion: what do we expect? To be mocked, or joined, or both?