

**The Year of New Birth I**

# **DESIRE**

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January 6, 2013

**Sermon in a sentence: If spiritual reproduction is our heart's earnest desire, God will bring it to pass.**

**Scriptures: Gen. 30:1-8, 22-24; 1 Sam. 1:1-20, 24-28; Rom. 1:13-16; Rom. 9:1-5; John 15:1-11; Mt. 28:19**

When a couple gets married, we rejoice with them as they go away on their honeymoon, return home and begin their new life together. Friends, relatives and parents are glad to see them taking the time to get to know each other as they establish their new home. Before long however, the couple themselves, (and certainly the parents on both sides), begin to look to them for the next exciting phase of their marriage – the arrival of children.

This is the normal process of marriage and family life, and if too much time goes by before children arrive, subtle, (or maybe not so subtle), questions begin to be asked.

As children of God, many of us have experienced coming into a new, living, vibrant relationship with Jesus Christ, which is most analogous to a marriage: we are the 'bride of Christ'. Although it may take a little time for us to get to know Jesus more fully and to develop our relationship, we also expect that before too long reproduction will begin to take place. As we heard in one of our meetings a while ago: "Healthy bodies reproduce". This is natural and expected.

**As we take a look into the word of God, some very interesting examples related to this concept come to our attention.**

**Gen. 11:29-30 Abram married Sarai and “Sarai was barren; she had no child”.**

**Gen. 12:2 In spite of her barrenness, God said: “I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you”.**

**Gen. 15:1-6 God told Abram his reward would be great. Abram asked what it would be since he was childless. (He certainly wasn’t looking for a financial reward, as he was already fabulously rich.) What Abram truly desired was a son!**

**Gen. 16:1-2 Sarai also desired a son, and followed the common practice of her day to get one. (*We may also be engaged in having spiritual children vicariously, through our prayers and financial support of foreign missionaries and Home Missions. But at the same time, God is looking to see our level of desire for having children of our very own.*)**

**Rachel’s story is told in Genesis 30. As she grew jealous of her sister and grew tired of her inability to conceive, she cried out to her husband, making him very angry as she demanded: “Give me children, or else I die” (v. 1). She also followed Sarai’s example and had children through her maid Bilhah, but her desire for a child of her own did not fade. Finally, “...God remembered Rachel, and God gave heed to her and opened her womb” (v. 22).**

**Her great desire was matched by her consistent prayer, and God responded to her.**

Hannah's story followed the same pattern, as recorded in (1 Samuel 1).

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This family of God that we belong to is totally improbable in nature, miraculous in its genesis and continuation. No one in his or her right mind would think that God would even think to save us, in light of our former antagonism toward Him. As the psalmist observed: "... the wicked boasts of his heart's desire, and the greedy man curses and spurns the Lord. The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek Him. All his thoughts are, "There is no God"" (Ps. 10:3-4 NASB).

However, the fact of the matter is: "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us", and as Dottie Rambo wrote, and sang so many times: "He looked beyond my faults and saw my needs". Our own spiritual re-birth and re-generation is beyond our understanding, but now, it is the Lord's great desire to work *with* us and *through* us to add more children to *His* heavenly family!

Certainly, our level of desire for spiritual children needs to increase to that of Sarai, Rachel, Hannah, even the apostle Paul. He wrote to the Romans:

Rom. 1:13-16 NASB I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that **often I have planned to come to you** (and have been prevented so far) **so that I may obtain some fruit among you also**, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. 14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So, **for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you** also who are in Rome. 16 **For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Rom. 9:1-5 NASB I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed, *separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh*, 4 who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the *temple* service and the promises, 5 whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

**You may well say, “I am old, I am barren, I have tried many times before and have had no success”. That may all be true, but there was something about the people we have discussed that set them apart from the rest. They did not simply resign themselves to the fate of childlessness with an “oh well, poor me” attitude. In spite of their past, and the human impossibilities of their situations, they were all driven by the same characteristic: DESIRE!**

**Others seem to have had no trouble reproducing, but for these barren women, they were pushed to the point where their fervent desire and God’s appointed time came together, and conception took place. In their cases, the factor of desire had to be present. They needed to pray and beseech God for His intervention on their behalf, and they bore very special children: children of promise, children of destiny, children who were mightily used of God!**

**They were not casual about the lives and upbringing of these children – the road to conception and birth had been too difficult for them to now take their children for granted. Their desire led to incredible divine interventions!**

Great desire leads to great answers to prayer, which leads to beautiful children being born, because it is clearly God's desire that we reproduce!

John 15:1-11 NASB " I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. 3 " You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 " Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. 7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. 9 "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. 10 " If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 " These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.

Matthew recorded some of the very last words Jesus spoke before He ascended to heaven:

Mt. 28:19 NASB "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit...."

He desires for us to reproduce. When His desire meets our desire, conception will take place. 2013 is God's appointed time for this assembly to experience a divinely inspired flurry of NEW BIRTH, in fulfillment of His prophetic word, and in response to our fervent prayers of DESIRE!