

Focus Points

"Focus Points" are short activities that draw students into the lesson. They take only a few minutes to do. Many can be used as quick-start activities to engage the students and focus their attention at the beginning of class. Others may fit well during the lesson to reinforce a point and drive it home. Still others may serve as good wrap-up activities. "Focus Points" come in many forms. Choose and use them as you see fit.

Focus Point – Instant Gratification!

Genesis 16:1 *Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. ² And Sarai said to Abram, "Behold now, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.*

Pose this scenario to your students:

You have been putting money aside to buy a video game that your parents have given you permission to get after you save enough money. A friend has been pestering you to get the game so he can play it, too, but you are still several dollars short. Finally your friend gives you the extra money which he says he has borrowed from his father. You accept the money and buy the game. The good times begin. But your parents become suspicious and soon find out how you were able to buy the game so quickly. They confiscate the game until you pay back the difference. Your friend gets totally mad at you, and the whole thing goes sour.

Discuss these questions:

- > Is there an obedient way and a not-so-obedient way to go about doing something?
- > Which is which in this case?
- > Is it always obvious at first that the not-so-obedient way is a road that leads to problems?
- > What problems result in this case?
- > If you had it to do over again, would you do anything differently?

Older students can compare this story with Abram and Sarai's desire to have a son. Rather than wait God's good pleasure, they took matters into their own hands and a number of problems, including strained relationships, followed. See Genesis 16:1-6ff. The way of faithfulness requires obedience. It sometimes involves deferred gratification. Shortcuts lead to problems. Ishmael did not turn out to be the son Abram and Sarai had hoped for.

(This can also be used as a Life Application activity.)