

News Story Summary

Dabo Swinney, head football coach at Clemson university, promised a party in Death Valley with free pizza for the final College Football Playoffs poll if Clemson is still in the running on December 6. His statement came in response to questions asked by reporters about the initial poll being released on Tuesday, November 3 (Clemson was ranked #1 in that initial poll). He reminded reporters that the first poll is immaterial, pointing to more football games yet to be played.

Swinney stated: The only poll that we're excited about is Dec. 6, and I promise you we'll have the biggest poll party you've seen. We'll open up Death Valley (the football stadium) and serve pizza to everybody. That'll be a time to celebrate a poll. Until then it doesn't matter.

Swinney and the Clemson football team are scheduled to play Florida State on Saturday, November 7. If Clemson wins, they will most likely continue to be projected as finishing in the top four spots in the polls giving them a place in the college football playoffs.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using phrase "Clemson coach promises pizza")

Focus Attention

As the group arrives, ask one or more of the following questions: *What promises have you made in anticipation of some achievement or accomplishment?* Give group members an opportunity to respond, then share the story about the Coach Swinney's comments. Ask: *If you were a fan, how would you respond to hearing this promise? Would it change how you cheered?* Remind the group that promises offer hope only when there is the potential for that person to deliver on that promise. Remind the group of God's promise to Abraham and Sarah of a child. Transition to the study by noting that in Genesis 21:1-8, we find God delivering on His promise.

Challenge

Refer back to the news story. Ask: *What makes the promise made by Coach Swinney believable? Do you think he will deliver on his promise?* After allowing response, explain that when God makes a promise, you can rest secure in the knowledge that He will keep His promises. God kept His promise to Abraham and Sarah because of His character and nature. In the same way, God keeps His promises to us, not because of who we are, but because of who He is.