

The Good, Bad & Ugly of Marriage  
The Bad Marriage - Abraham & Sarah  
February 17, 2019

If the good marriage is built on Determined COMMITMENT - Surprising LOVE - Noble CHARACTER! We might want to begin this morning with the admission that building this kind of marriage is hard work.

Tony Evans, pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Church in Dallas, Texas wrote...If you are married, you're in a battle whether you realize it or not. The battle is for your unity to be destroyed, your love to be diminished, and ultimately your marriage to fail.

If a good marriage seems like a DREAM, know that nothing is IMPOSSIBLE for the LORD!

*Genesis 12:1-3 – 1 Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”*

### Transforming the Bad Marriage...

#### 1. Speak the TRUTH.

*Genesis 12:10-13 – 10 Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. 11 When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to Sarai his wife, “I know that you are a woman beautiful in appearance, 12 and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me, but they will let you live. 13 Say you are my sister, that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared for your sake.”*

Build your marriage on a lack of truth, and it doesn't matter how big your bank account is, it's going to be a bad marriage.

*Ephesians 4:25 – 25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.*

#### 2. Adjust your PRIORITIES.

**Genesis 12:16-20** — **16** And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male servants, female servants, female donkeys, and camels. **17** But the Lord afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. **18** So Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? **19** Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife; take her, and go." **20** And Pharaoh gave men orders concerning him, and they sent him away with his wife and all that he had.

**Philippians 3:13-14** — **13** Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, **14** I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Your spouse is more important than your stuff, your hobbies, your career, your friends, even your kids. The only thing that is more important than your relationship with your spouse is your relationship with the God who created you and redeemed you. And if your relationship with your spouse isn't right, then neither is your relationship with God.

### 3. Stop playing GAMES.

Have you ever heard the statement...God helps those who help themselves? Here's another one...God helps those who help Him. Those sound so good, only problem is neither one of them is actually in the Bible...or taught in the Bible.

**Genesis 16:1-4** — **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. **3** So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. **4** And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress.

**Ephesians 5:33** — **33** However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. Serve each other and you're on your way to a great marriage. Fourth...

### 4. Own your MISTAKES.

Part of the problem in marriage when it goes from good to bad is this tendency we have to blame the other person.

**Genesis 16:5-6** — **5** *And Sarai said to Abram, “May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my servant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the Lord judge between you and me!”* **6** *But Abram said to Sarai, “Behold, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please.” Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her.*

**James 5:16** — **16** *Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*

Until you own your mistakes in your marriage, you’ll never be able to overcome them.

5. Make a Mistake - **ONCE**.

**Genesis 20:1-2** — **1** *From there Abraham journeyed toward the territory of the Negeb and lived between Kadesh and Shur; and he sojourned in Gerar.* **2** *And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.” And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.*

I wonder if Abraham had had a journal that he could have looked back at if he’d have made this same mistake again?

**Genesis 18:14** — **14** *Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.”*

Let’s talk about transforming the Bad Marriage...

1. What kind of dream has God put in your heart for your marriage and your family (Genesis 12:1-3)?
2. Describe a time when a big move put a strain on your marriage (Genesis 12:4-6)?
3. What was the lie that Abraham started telling that made things so bad in his marriage (Genesis 12:11-13)?
4. What do you think are the appropriate priorities to have that would support the building of a good marriage (Genesis 12:16)?
5. What was Sarah’s plan to help God out concerning the promise that He had made to them (Genesis 16)?
6. How do we use manipulation to get what we want out of our spouse (Genesis 16)?
7. Why do you think it was so important for Abraham and Sarah to know that nothing was too hard for God to accomplish (Genesis 18)?
8. What can you do to ensure that you don’t make the same mistakes over and over again in your marriage (Genesis 20:1-2)?