



**“Sarah – Woman of Faith”  
May 10, 2020**

*Pastor Bear Clifton*

*B. Based on this, how do we know that Sarai had faith?*

**Qualities Sarah exhibited that make her an example for us:**

**Quality 1: She possessed a \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_ spirit.**

*A. What was Sarah’s original name? What did it mean?*

*B. What does the Bible say of her beauty?*

*“Do not let your adorning be external – the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear.” ~ 1 Peter 3:3*

*C. Does nobility come automatically with the package of being a woman?*

*D. What does this nobility look like? (see Proverbs 31)*

*B. Why did this happen? Does our culture today always agree with God about right and wrong?*

*C. How is lack of commitment impacting the church and home today?*

**Quality 2: She possessed strong \_\_\_\_\_.**

*A. What was the basic set-up to Abram & Sarai’s story?*

**Quality 3: She possessed great \_\_\_\_\_.**

*A. What was the darkest time Abram and Sarai faced?*

*B. If laughter and joy has gone out of my life and marriage, what can I do?*

**Quality 4: She possessed \_\_\_\_\_ in life.**

*A. Where do we see this in Sarah’s story?*



## **“Sarah – Woman of Faith”**

### **May 11, 2014**

#### **Qualities Sarah exhibited that make her an example for us:**

##### ***Quality 1: She possessed a noble and beautiful spirit.***

*A. What was Sarah’s original name? What did it mean?*

Sarai meant something along the lines of “noble woman.” Jewish tradition spoke very, very highly of Sarai. Abraham, or Abram as he was first called, which meant “honored father”, was himself a prince among his people and Sarai was in every way a worthy spouse to him. The Bible speaks of her astounding beauty and grace – which even caught the eye of the Pharaoh of Egypt when Sarah was in her sixties, during a time when Abram and Sarai were staying there during a famine.

*B. What does the Bible say of her beauty?*

Sarah possessed an inner nobility and beauty that blessed her home and husband. The apostle Peter alluded to this in his first letter. 1 Peter 3:3 – “Your beauty should not come from outward adornment such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters, if you do what is right.”

*C. How should we understand the concepts of “headship” and “submission” as taught by the Bible?*

The words “head” and “submission” are easily misconstrued and misapplied in many, many places today. The Bible’s not granting

men permission to throw their weight around, pull rank, and browbeat their wives and children. And it’s not condemning women to the role of doormats who are to just sit there and take it. The Bible’s use of “head” is simply a recognition of what nature shows us to be true most of the time – that God gave men stronger bodies, bigger muscles, deeper voices – and with that comes a role and an influence that needs to be used carefully and lovingly. Far from throwing their weight around, men are to recognize the capacity God has given them to exert their will in the home, and then lovingly control it. Which is what Peter says next. “Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.”

*D. If men exercise their ‘headship’ properly, what happens to their wives, and the women around them?*

Men, how do you know if you are exercising your headship properly? As a result of your headship, something happens to your wife, and to the women that are around you. They start to shine. Just as the church, as a result of Christ’s love for her becomes more holy, more radiant (Eph.5:22ff) so a woman around a man like that grows more beautiful and noble and confident and strong.

Proverbs 31 describes a true godly woman. This woman is a queen within her home. She is wise, industrious, disciplined, strong, resourceful, creative and beautiful. And I have no doubt that the writer of the poem had Sarah in mind as he wrote.

##### ***Quality 2: She possessed strong faith.***

*A. What was the basic set-up to Abram & Sarai’s story?*

Abram and Sarai were living quite comfortably and happily with their family and friends in a place called Ur, which at the time, roughly 2,000B.C. was really the pinnacle of civilization. The best that life had to offer humans living then was at their fingertips.

And one day, when Abram was 75 and Sarai was 65, God appeared to Abram and said this to him (it's recorded in *Genesis 12:1-3*): "The Lord said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you. So Abram left."

*B. Based on this, how do we know that Sarai had faith?*

Abraham is always the one whom the Bible puts up as a great model of what faith is. But you know what they say, behind every great man is a great woman. And whatever faith Abraham showed, Sarah matched him step for step, maybe more so even. It wasn't a given that she was act this way either. Abram's nephew Lot and his wife moved with them to Canaan, but their faith was weak, and they never could entirely let go of Ur. Lot's wife kept "looking back" which one day cost her her life.

### ***Quality 3: She possessed great commitment.***

*A. What was the darkest time Abram and Sarai faced?*

When Abraham slept with Sarah's servant Hagar, with Sarah's permission, and she became pregnant with Ishmael.

*B. Why did this happen?*

The culture they lived in believed that if a wife couldn't conceive children for her husband then she should supply a surrogate. Sarah does this, and on the outward surface of things, she seemed willing for this to happen. But in actual fact, she found this to be the most painful, shameful thing she had ever experienced. In chapter 16 verse five, we are told how Sarah felt when Hagar conceived with seat of her husband. Sarah lashes out first and Abraham! "You are responsible for what I am suffering!" She says. She is in agony. Her self-esteem is shattered. And she is tormented by all the feelings of hatred, hurt and confusion that come when a person discovers that their husband or wife is slept with someone else.

*C. Does our culture today always agree with God about right and wrong?*

Our culture condones a lot of things, an ever-growing number of things that oppose the ways and truth of God. That go against the blueprint God provides for how we ought to live if we want to live life well. Things such as co-habitation before marriage, abortion, homosexuality, etc.

*D. How is lack of commitment impacting the church and home today?*

We treat church like McDonald's. Well should I get the number three or the number four? Well, I like that song, but not that one. I wish pastor wouldn't say such nasty things. Maybe we should go to another church. Ours is a country is filled with McChristians who have a pathetic kind of McFaith in a God called McJesus who exists to meet their every need. In the telltale sign of this – little or no commitment. Our Bible's gather dust. Few are actively sharing their faith. Ministries of the church languish because people don't want to serve, they want to be served.

*E. Sarai's commitment makes possible the fulfillment of God's promise to them, and the changing of her name to...*

Abram will no longer be Abram – honored father, now he will be known as Abraham – the father of nations. And Sarai will no longer be Sarai – noble woman, no she will now be called Sarah – ruling princess, a name fitting for the one to become the mother of royalty. The mother of princes, and princesses to come – and in time, the Messiah, the Savior of humanity, through whom all peoples on the earth will be blessed.

### ***Quality 4: She possessed joy in life.***

*A. Where do we see this in Sarah's story?*

In Genesis 18, Sarah is listening in on this conversation that her husband is having with these three men. And here it is again, this talk about her having her own baby. And can you picture her hiding behind the tent flap starting to giggle? This laughter springs out of

one of those “I believe but help my belief” kind of moments. She doesn’t believe that this is going to happen. It’s just so utterly preposterous. But then after all she’s been through with her husband, she keeps sensing that God’s in it all. She says, “After I am worn out... Will I now have this pleasure?”

God doesn’t condemn her for this. In fact, he actually plays around with her. “Why did you laugh?” “I didn’t laugh.” “You did too. I’m on to you. We’ll see you next spring.” And sure enough, it happens. She gets pregnant, gives birth to a son, and names him Isaac which means “he laughs”. And in chapter 21 verse six you can just hear Sarah’s delight: “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.” Sarah, for all she is been through with this funny man of hers, and this peculiar God who shows up at the strangest times, never loses her sense of humor, her appreciation for life’s ironies, it’s twists and turns. I like that in her.

*B. If laughter and joy has gone out of my life and marriage, what can I do?*

Any relationship can change if the desire and commitment to change it is there. You have to be biblical, and place God at the center of your efforts to change. You have to be practical, and strategically devise specific ways to relight the fire. We’ll go on walks together. We’ll go on a date every Friday night. Let’s pray together for five minutes before bed. Let’s look at our pictures. Janis and I took to ballroom dancing classes once. Talk about hilarious. You should see her. Play tennis. Read a book together. Map out your financial goals for the next five years. Give each other a back rub. Lock up the TV for a month. Plant a garden together. The ways are limited only by your creativity. Be biblical. Be practical. Be intentional. Commit yourself to changing.