

Significant Women's Bible Study-Week 1

March 7, 2022

Introduction:

God can use the most unqualified woman in the most unexpected ways.

1. Significant women of the Bible were unqualified and described as: bully, reject, outsider, prostitute, pauper and invisible.

Yet, they went on to become some Significant women in history.

2. Reader Matthew 1: The six women we will be studying became Jesus' foremothers. They are _____, _____, _____, _____ and _____.

You may think, why study these ancient women, they don't have much in common with us as we have iPhones, SUVs, takeout, dishwashers.

3. What does the expression, "Blood runs thicker than water" mean to you?

4. Reader: Romans 4:3. *Abraham believed in God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.* What is righteousness? **Right living.** What is justification? **Being made right.**

5. God used his people's faith in him to bring about his purposes. That is how we learned of the miracles through the prophets, priests, and kings.

6. John 3: 16 *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

7. Reader Matthew 12:50 Other examples: Galatians 3:7, Romans 4:23-25.

8. It is important to study the bloodline of Jesus. God used these ordinary, insignificant women to accomplish His greatest work: **salvation for mankind.**

9. This is a 6-week study with 5 days of assignments, done individually. (Don't let this scare you, please come whether you finished the assignments or not.)

Week 1: Sarah-HOT MESS TO MATRIARCH- a Woman of Beauty

1. Reader: **Matthew 1-16**, names important women of the Bible. In my Bible, one of them wasn't named, but alluded to. _____,
_____, _____, _____.

2. Genesis 21:1-3, Another woman is mentioned. Who is it? -

3. **Where is Ur, the prosperous city where Abraham and Sarah lived?** -

4. In Genesis 12:1 We learned that Abraham and Sarah left behind three things: their country, their people, and their father's household.

5. Reader Genesis 12:4-5. Why did God request they leave Ur? Do you think they went willingly? Do you think Ur would have held them back from receiving God's grace?

A. Make his name great

B. Receive a blessing and will bless those who blessed them, and whoever curses him, God will curse them, and

C. all the people will be blessed through Abraham.

6. **Can you think of a time when God's prompting had you make a move to an unfamiliar place?**

7. Reader: 2 Corinthians 6:17. What did the Lord mean by being separate?

8. There are **parallels between our culture and the polytheistic culture of Ur in Abraham's time. Sex, fame, power, financial prosperity, dress.**

9. Conclusion: **We are sometimes called to leave behind familiar comforts to embrace God's path for us.** *Matt: 16:24NLT Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me."*

Takeaway Truth: "Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me." Matthew 16:24 NLT

Day 2. Happy Campers

1. **What is different about Abraham's religious culture compared to ours today?**
2. *Reader: Genesis 12:7 They were able to speak and hear directly from the Lord. They had a personal relationship with God. Can you think of anyone else who had a personal relationship with God?*
3. **Reader: Genesis 12:2-3. God promised 7 things to Abraham and Sarah.**
 - A. Make them into a great nation.
 - B. He would bless them.
 - C. He would make their names great.
 - D. They would be a blessing.
 - E. The Lord will bless those who bless Abraham and Sarah.
 - F. Whoever curses them, would be cursed by God.
 - G. All the people on earth will be blessed through them.

As you read these blessings, did you think, "Too good to be true!"
4. **Cynicism is commonplace for us. Let's not be skeptical of God's promises. Do you believe what is written in the Bible?**
5. *Reader: Luke 16:27-31 story of the wicked rich man and a poor beggar. Another example: Matthew: 14:30-31 Peter walking on the water.*
6. **Have you ever changed relationships?** It is difficult to turn away from certain friends. Elaborate... (Once married, old friends may drop away and take on new friends with your husband.)
7. **Our emotions can stall us in our beliefs.** Ex. **Mark 9:23-24** Man calls on Jesus for help to cure his son who was filled with an evil spirit. Used the words, "if you can." Jesus responded, **"Everything is possible for one who believes.** The man asked God to help him overcome his unbelief.
8. *Reader: Isaiah 43:2. God's promises, which one do you find hard to believe now? God is with you, You are His, You are loved & precious, God makes a way where there is no way, You are forgiven.*
9. **Conclusion: Because faith is foundational to our walk with God, we can shift our focus from trying to trusting.**
10. *Takeaway Truth: We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are."*
Romans 3:22NLT

Day 3. Famine & Feast

We learned that Sarah moved from being a city girl to one living a life of wandering in foreign lands. Abraham and Sarah were obedient and believed God's promises.

1. **Reader: Genesis 12:7-8. Abraham built an altar of stones at** the great tree of Moreh to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord. Both he and Sarah **demonstrated their worship of God.** Moreh means teaching or teacher. **Shechem means shoulder or strength.** God was teaching both of them strong, true wisdom in Him. (God's wisdom is better than all the world's knowledge.)
2. **What are some ways we can demonstrate God's work in our lives?** Journal writing, decorating our homes with Bible verses, telling others our God stories, use social media. Rachel called it collecting stones of remembrance.
3. **Reader: Genesis 12:10 Plans changed for Abraham and Sarah as suddenly they were faced with a famine in the land.** They fell on hard times and were forced to relocate. Do you think they were wondering when the promises of God would be fulfilled? Sometimes, even when you follow God, things don't always turn out as you planned.
4. Rachel gave an ex. Of her husband's conviction of not working on Sundays when he was a teenager. He quit the job because of his conviction.
5. When Abraham and Sarah were traveling, Abraham feared for his life because Sarah was very beautiful. Can anyone share Abraham's plan to save his neck?
6. Reader Genesis 12:14-16. What happened to Sarah? To Abraham? Abraham sold her, not once but twice. Both were guilty because Sarah went along with Abraham's plan even today.
7. **Are we responsible for our actions, even it goes against our allegiance to the Lord?** We will all have to give account for our actions. We are to respect our husbands, but our number one priority is loving and obeying God.
8. **Reader: Genesis 20:7** God inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Sarah's dishonesty. God told King Abimelek that Sarah was Abraham's wife and to let her go or his household would die; infertility was also expected.

9. God cursed their enemies and blessed this couple. (I find this interesting that he provided such a blessing to this couple.) When they were released, Abimelek gave Abraham sheep, cattle, donkeys, servants, slaves, and provided him with land to live wherever he wanted. He also gave Abraham a thousand shekels of silver. They were truly blessed!
10. **Conclusion: We can trust in God because He is faithful even when we're not.**
11. Takeaway Truth: "For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does." Psalm 33:4.

Day 4: Hagar, the Horrible Idea

The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord established his steps." Proverbs 16:9

1. Genesis 12:2-3 God's promise that Abraham and Sarah would be made into a great nation and would be blessed. God even compared their blessings to the dust of the earth and numerous as the stars in the sky. Astronomers say that the Milky Way galaxy has millions upon millions of stars.
2. Three times God spoke to Abraham directly telling him that these blessings would be his. Out of his family lineage prophets, priests and kings would come to fruition.
3. **Reader: Genesis 15:6 Abraham believe the LORD, and he was credited it to him as righteousness.**
4. Unfortunately, as the years went by Sarah remained unfruitful. Sarah grew impatient.
5. **Reader Genesis 16:1-6. Sarah convinced Abraham to take Hagar as his wife** and thought they would help God's plan to have descendants.
6. Because of this decision to have Abraham marry, Sarah they were the **first example of polygamy in the Bible.**
7. **Reader: Genesis 16:4-6. Interesting how Sarah blamed Abraham** for the wrong she was suffering. Hagar held the fact that she was pregnant over Sarah, causing Sarah to despise her. Abraham's response was, Your slave is in your own hands, do with her whatever think best."
8. **Sarah's list of sins included: impatience, faithlessness, manipulation, deceit, and false accusations.** Sarah rushed God's plan. Consequences are seen in **Genesis 16:12:** share the consequences of Sarah's horrible idea:
 - A. Live-in hostility toward all his brothers.
 - B. Would be a wild donkey of a man
 - C. His hand will be against everyone and vice versa.

9. A bit of history: Ismael's lineage would prove to become a great nation, but not the one through which God would choose to fulfill his promises to Abraham. There is unrest within these descendants and the land.
10. **Have you ever been impatient and tried to speed up plans without placing God first?** getting your husband to do something in your time frame..
11. **Conclusion: Sometimes God calls us to wait instead of taking matters into our own hands.**
12. **Takeaway Truth:** Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord. " Psalm 27:14

Day 5 Laughter, the Best Medicine

This is how the hold women of old made themselves beautiful. They put their trust in God..." 1 Peter 3:5a NLT

1. **Sarah and Abraham started out strong as believers in God, but when they left Ur, Abraham's fear of the powerful, evil men led him to be deceitful to God. God in his goodness continued to provide protection.**
2. **Reader: Genesis 17:17-18.** As for Sarah...I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.
3. **What were Jacob's and Sarah's response when God shared what he would do?** (He laughed in disbelief because of his age of 100 and Sarah's 90 years, and Sarah also laughed and then lied and said she didn't.)
4. This was a miracle from God. What name did they give their child and what does the name mean? (Isaac, means laughed)
5. Her joy wasn't just the **joy of motherhood, but it was finally getting her way and giving birth and being part of God's bigger plan for her.**
6. Even though Sarah's life was filled with deception, manipulation, abuse, doubt and fear, the rest of the scripture is positive. Think about it, **she is really our mother too.**
7. **Two covenants:** Those of us who choose salvation through Christ are Sarah's children, free, born of a promise; 2nd covenant from Mount Sinai, Hagar's children, born through natural birth are to be slaves. This comes from Galatians 4: 23-5:1.
8. **Reader: Romans 9:4-5 Seven purposes:**

- A. Theirs is the adoption to sonship
 - B. Divine glory
 - C. Covenants
 - D. Receiving of the law
 - E. Temple worship
 - F. Patriarchs
 - G. Human ancestry of the Messiah
9. **Reader: Romans 9:8; 9:30. Abraham and Sarah were Jewish. Does that mean we are excluded?** Even though we are not Jewish, we are not left out, because we choose him. This is clearly stated in Romans 9:8. It is not the children of physical descent who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring. We are daughters of the promise when we give our life over to the Lord.
10. **What is true beauty?** Have you experienced laugh lines or crow's feet as I have? Sarah's beauty was definitely physical, but she also had that inner beauty that we should all strive for. In 1 Peter 3:1-6 NLT we are told not to be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. Instead concern us with the beauty that comes from within, the beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit.
11. **How to get real beauty?**
- A. Trust in God. Suggest Proverbs 3:4-5
 - B. Accept the authority of our husbands.
12. **Accepting the authority of our husbands** can be a stickler for many women. As Christian women we are not weird, non-thinking robotic, doormats, instead the key is to show an attitude of respect for our husbands. Sarah referred to Abraham as master. In our culture today; may refer to our thinking of slaves and their owners.
13. Our husbands want us to be able to think, feel and act for ourselves. Ideally, husbands want our input when major decisions as to be made.
14. Rachel goes a step further, by having us give respect not only to our husbands; but our bosses, law enforcement, church leaders, even our president. It is easier said than done!
15. As women, we can be loving, caring, and respectful, but when we don't get our way can turn ugly. Sometimes, it is in the small things that irk us the most. Rachel shared how her husband went to the store to buy wild bird seed and came home with parakeet feed. Easy to be condescending saying something like, "Can't you

read?”

16. **Showing respect is what God expects of us**, which will show our inner beauty.
17. Rachel touched on abuse and abusive behavior. Do we need to put up with abusive behavior? Ephesians 5: 33 *However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves, himself, and the wife must respect her husband.* If you are in an abusive relationship, get help from your pastor or a friend.
18. **Conclusion: A woman of true beauty trusts the Lord enough to let go of her own way of doing things, and lives with an attitude of respect for others, instead of disdain.**
19. **Takeaway Truth:** “You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.” 1 Peter 3:6.

Challenge: Put a makeup item someplace visible in your home. When you look at it, think about what real beauty is.