

**ONCE UPON A MARRIAGE—1
JACOB & LEAH (AND RACHEL)
-NEVER SATISFIED-**

16 Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel was lovely in form, and beautiful. Gen 29:16-17

WHEN MARRIAGE IS YOUR ANSWER

1) YOU COMPROMISE MORE THAN YOU SHOULD.

18 Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel..." Gen 29:18

2) BECOME DEMANDING.

21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to lie with her." Gen 29:21

3) ALWAYS END UP DISSATISFIED.

23 But when evening came, (Laban) took his daughter Leah and gave her to Jacob, and Jacob lay with her... 25 When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn't I? Why have you deceived me?" Gen 29:23, 25

31 When the Lord saw that Leah was not loved, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. 32 Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, for she said, "It is because the Lord has seen my misery. Surely my husband will love me now." Gen 29:31-32

SEARCHING FOR THE WRONG ONE

• TO REALLY BE FULFILLED IN LIFE, YOU HAVE TO FIND THE ONE.

• GOD IS YOUR ONE AND YOUR SPOUSE IS YOUR TWO.

35 She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, "This time I will praise the Lord." So she named him Judah. Then she stopped having children. Gen 29:35

Note: Leah (not Rachel) was the mother of Judah. Through him, Jesus, the Savior of the world would one day be born.

ONCE UPON A MARRIAGE—2 AHAB AND JEZEBEL

No one else so completely sold himself to what was evil in the Lord's sight as Ahab did under the influence of his wife Jezebel.

1 Kings 21:25 NLT

- **AHAB REPRESENTS THE PASSIVE HUSBAND.**
- **JEZEBEL REPRESENTS THE CONTROLLING WIFE.**

THE PASSIVE HUSBAND

2 Ahab said to Naboth, "Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth." 3 But Naboth replied, "The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers." 4 So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat. 1 Kings 21:2-4

THE CONTROLLING WIFE

5 His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, "Why are you so sullen? Why won't you eat?" 6 He answered her, "Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, 'Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.' But he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" 7 Jezebel his wife said, "Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I'll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." 1 Kings 21:5-7

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- **BELITTLES HER HUSBAND WITH HER WORDS.**
Jezebel his wife said, "Is this how you act as king over Israel?" (7a)

- **TAKES OVER.**
I'll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." (7b)

THE HUSBANDS'S CALL TO LEAD

- **THE PROVIDER**
- **THE PROTECTOR**
- **THE PASTOR**

GOD WILL HOLD THE HUSBAND ACCOUNTABLE

15 As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, "Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead." 16 When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth's vineyard. 17 Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite: 18 "Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth's vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it. 19 Say to him, 'This is what the Lord says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?' Then say to him, 'This is what the Lord says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood — yes, yours!'"

Talk It Over Questions:

- Share your experiences with passivity. How have you seen it weaken a relationship?
- What kinds of controlling behaviors are damaging your relationships? If this is something you struggle with, what might be the source of this tendency?
- What changes do you need to make to step into the right role God created you to fill as a man or woman of God?

You will never have the marriage you desire without giving God control. Start by talking it over with someone this week. Join the conversation on Facebook. Get resources from www.lifechurch.tv/talkitover.

ONCE UPON A MARRIAGE—3 ABRAHAM AND SARAH FAITH-LESS OR FAITH-FULL?

The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. 2 "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." Genesis 12:1-2

8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. Hebrews 11:8

FAITH-LESS SEASONS

1) WE FALL VICTIM TO FEAR.

As (Abram) was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are. 12 When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live. 13 Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you." Genesis 12:11-13

2) WE GET AHEAD OF GOD.

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar; 2 so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her." Genesis 16:1-2

3) WE DON'T BELIEVE GOD WILL DO IT FOR US.

17 Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?" Genesis 17:17

12 So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?" 13 Then the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?' 14 Is anything too hard for the Lord?"
Genesis 18:12-14

19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead — since he was about a hundred years old — and that Sarah's womb was also dead. 20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, 21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. Romans 4:19-21

TALK IT OVER

- Share your earliest dreams about marriage. How is your life different from how you thought it would be?
- Discuss how each of the faithless seasons has played out in your life. Which one do you identify with the most?
- Even with faithless seasons, Abraham and Sarah are icons of faith. How will you live from now on so your life (and marriage) will be characterized by faith?

Take time to identify what next steps God wants you to take. Talk it over on the phone, over lunch, even in the car on the way home. For more, visit www.lifechurch.tv/talkitover.

ONCE UPON A MARRIAGE—4 HOSEA AND GOMER UNFAILING LOVE

When the Lord began to speak through Hosea, the Lord said to him, "Go, take to yourself an adulterous wife and children of unfaithfulness, because the land is guilty of the vilest adultery in departing from the Lord." 3 So he married Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. Hos 1:2-3

THE MOST COMMON MARRIAGE MISCONCEPTION

- **WHAT I'M MISSING IS BETTER THAN WHAT I HAVE.**

...She said, 'I will go after my lovers, who give me my food and my water, my wool and my linen, my oil and my drink.' Hosea 2:5

GOD'S RESPONSE TO SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

• **RIGHTEOUS ANGER**

She has not acknowledged that I was the one who gave her the grain, the new wine and oil, who lavished on her the silver and gold... 9 "Therefore I will take away my grain when it ripens, and my new wine when it is ready. I will take back my wool and my linen, intended to cover her nakedness. 10 So now I will expose her lewdness before the eyes of her lovers; no one will take her out of my hands. Hosea 2:8-10

• **UNFAILING LOVE**

Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her. 15 There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. Hosea 2:14-15

GOD'S MESSAGE FOR THE BETRAYED SPOUSE

• **FORGIVE AND LOVE AS YOU'VE BEEN FORGIVEN AND LOVED.**

The Lord said to me, "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another and is an adulteress. Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods..." Hosea 3:1

12 Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, until he comes and showers righteousness on you. Hosea 10:12

TALK IT OVER

- Share an example of a marriage you know of that has been a good illustration of God's faithfulness. What can you learn from them?
- How will you keep from practicing for divorce whether you're married, unmarried, or divorced?
- What are some ways you've been unfaithful to God? What will your next steps be to restore that relationship?

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