

January 28, 2024
La Jolla Christian Fellowship
Sermon Notes
GENESIS. Behind The Curtain: Abraham – Part 3
Episode 1: The Sinister Sister Sin
Pastor Adam Stadtmiller

Gen 20

Now Abraham moved on from there into the region of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. For a while he stayed in Gerar, ² and there Abraham said of his wife Sarah, “She is my sister.” Then Abimelek king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her. ³ But God came to Abimelek in a dream one night and said to him, “You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman.” ⁴ Now Abimelek had not gone near her, so he said, “Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation?” ⁵ Did he not say to me, ‘She is my sister,’ and didn’t she also say, ‘He is my brother’? I have done this with a clear conscience and clean hands.” ⁶ Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you touch her. ⁷ Now return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all who belong to you will die.” ⁸ Early the next morning Abimelek summoned all his officials, and when he told them all that had happened, they were very much afraid. ⁹ Then Abimelek called Abraham in and said, “What have you done to us? How have I wronged you that you have brought such great guilt upon me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that should never be done.” ¹⁰ And Abimelek asked Abraham, “What was your reason for doing this?” ¹¹ Abraham replied, “I said to myself, ‘There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.’” ¹² Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother; and she became my wife. ¹³ And when God had me wander from my father’s household, I said to her, ‘This is how you can show your love to me: Everywhere we go, say of me, “He is my brother.”’” ¹⁴ Then Abimelek brought sheep and cattle and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham, and he returned Sarah his wife to him. ¹⁵ And Abimelek said, “My land is before you; live wherever you like.” ¹⁶ To Sarah he said, “I am giving your brother a thousand shekels of silver. This is to cover the offense against you before all who are with you; you are completely vindicated.” ¹⁷ Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelek, his wife and his female slaves so they could have children again, ¹⁸ for the LORD had kept all the women in Abimelek’s household from conceiving because of Abraham’s wife Sarah.

1. **There are no victimless sins.**
2. **Sin always has a reason.**

We willingly sin for two primary reasons, to save or satisfy ourselves.

1. **There are no victimless sins.**
 - a. **Vs. 3-4** But God came to Abimelek in a dream one night and said to him, “You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman.” Now Abimelek had not gone near her, so he said, “Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation?”
 - There are no victimless sins.

- "Sin's inklings are within your control, Sins consequences are not."
 - In this passage we see a wife dishonored and a nation nearly destroyed.
 - Isaac, Abraham's son repeats his father's sin in Genesis 26.
 - Lamentations 5:7 Our fathers sinned and are no more; It is we who have borne their iniquities.

2. Sin always has a reason: Vs. 10-13 And Abimelek asked Abraham, "What was your **reason** for doing this?" ¹¹ Abraham replied, "I said to myself, 'There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.' ¹² Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother; and she became my wife. ¹³ And when God had me wander from my father's household, I said to her, 'This is how you can show your love to me: Everywhere we go, say of me, "He is my brother."'"

a. **Reason 1: Vs. 11 Fear**

b. **Reason 2: Vs. 12 Rationalization**

Practical Takeaways:

1. **Kill Sin: Galatian 5:24** Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
2. **Join the resistance:**
 - a. **James 4:7** Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
 - b. **Hebrews 12:4** In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

Small Group Discussion Questions:

1. How does the story of Abraham and Sarah's deception in Genesis 20 illustrate the concept that "there are no victimless sins"?
2. In the passage, Abimelek questions whether God would destroy an innocent nation for his actions. How does this reflect on the consequences of our sins, both individually and collectively?
3. The sermon mentions two primary reasons for willingly sinning: to save or satiate us. Can you think of examples from your own life or from the world where people sin for these reasons?
4. Abraham provides two reasons for his deception: fear and rationalization. How do these reasons align with common motivations for sin in today's society?
5. The sermon includes practical takeaways such as "Kill Sin" and "Join the resistance." How can we apply these principles in our daily lives to resist temptation and overcome sin?