

Hopewell ARP, Culleoka, TN
2019.12.08 Morning Sermon

SERMON TEXT: Genesis 24:1-9
SERMON TITLE: Married By Faith

Main idea: Believers are to approach marriage as something directed by God, dependent upon God, and devoted to God.

Introduction: Sarah is dead and buried. And v1 sounds like the kind of summary statement that is about to close out Abraham's life story too. "Now Abraham was old, well advance in age, and Yahweh had blessed Abraham in all things." In reality, it's introducing a 67 verse (roughly 3 ordinary chapters) long description of how Isaac obtains a wife and is comforted in the loss of his mother. And it is at that point that the narrative will pick back up and close out the Abraham section. So, the long interruption intensifies the focus on the search for Isaac's wife.

1. Marriage directed by God's Word

- a. What happens when we are not directed by God's Word (Gen 6)
 - i. What were they directed by: the impulses of their fleshly desire, without considering God's Word or others' counsel
 - ii. Here, Abraham is especially employing not Isaac but his most trusted servant. Why this servant? Someone else might have been more physically up to the trip. But this is the one who is the most trusted and likely is the wisest and longest-discipled.
 - iii. Not only is this a godly "coalition," but we can see in the immediate passage that Abraham's concerns are directed by God's Word...
- b. Abraham's concerns directed by God's Word
 - i. "that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell" (v3)—"the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete" Gen 15:16
 - ii. "do not take my son back there" (v6) and "only do not take my son back there" (v8) "to your descendants I give this land" (v7)—"know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years." Gen 15:13. Would it be difficult? Yes, the Lord said that they would be "afflicted." But it was the Word of the Lord, and He said that they wouldn't be in their own land.
- c. Our concerns for marriage should be directed by God's Word. His purposes for marriage:
 - i. The imaging of God, Genesis 1:27
 - ii. The comfort and joy of man, Genesis 2:18, 24:67
 - iii. The multiplication of godly offspring, Genesis 1:28, 2:18; Malachi 2:14-15; Gen 22:18
 - iv. The display of Christ's the Redeemer and His glorified church (cf. Eph 5:31-32)

2. Marriage dependent upon God's providence

a. Providence in circumstances:

- i. The God who has given the direction is the God who has put them in this situation. "Yahweh God of heaven took me from my father's house and from the land of my family."
- ii. The God who has given the direction is the God who will work in the immediate circumstances. "He will send His angel before you."
- iii. The God who has given the direction is the God who will work in the future, no matter how impossible it seems. "If the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be released from this oath."
- iv. Trusting God to bring about His promises frees us from either worry or second-guessing to follow His Word. God has brought you to where you are. God is working in your current circumstances. God will bring about all of His good purposes concerning you.

b. Providence in His grace

- i. God is the one who has graciously worked in Abraham, and Abraham's servant, and Isaac, so that they would be willing to pursue this route.
- ii. Notice the assumption that there is such a woman, in whom God will have been working all this time. That too is a providence of His grace.
- iii. Application:
 1. Use the means of grace for yourself
 2. Employ the means of grace in training your children
 3. Encourage other parents to employ these means, and trust that God is graciously working in spouses for your children (or for you if you are a child, or for others in His church if you are a member in neither of these circumstances)

3. Marriage devoted to God's glory

- a. "Swear by Yahweh" in v3—there is no one else to swear by, because His glory is ultimate (Mat 23:16-22; Heb 6:13)
- b. "Yahweh the God of heaven and the God of the earth"—all things are from Him; He created it all... all things are through Him; He upholds it all... and therefore all things are to Him; it all exists for His glory... this is the purpose of Abraham's conversation; this is the purpose of the servant's Mesopotamia mission; this is the purpose of Isaac's marriage; this is the purpose of every part of your life, including and especially your marriage!

Conclusion: God will be glorified in what occurs, but will we be devoting ourselves to and delighting ourselves in His glory? This is a question that can be applied to any situation—how necessary, then, that it would be the primary question when it comes to something to which He has given such an important place as marriage!