Look at Genesis 23:1-2. “And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah. And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.”

I want you to imagine this noble old man with his long white hair and flowing beard. See the tears as they course down deep ravines in his cheeks as he looks into the lifeless face of his beloved Sarah. I’m sure his thoughts went back to when they first met. We know that Sarah was a beauty queen. Maybe he thought about how he had wooed her, and won her, and wed her. Maybe he thought about all the things they’d been through.

He probably went back to the time when God had saved him from paganism and how he had led Sarah to a saving knowledge of his Lord. I’m sure he thought about all the times they had laughed, and cried, and prayed together. He’ll no longer see that light dancing in her eyes. No longer would he see that smile playing around the corners of her mouth. She was one given to laughter you know. No longer will they hold hands and watch the sunset together.

Abraham is not weeping as those who have no hope. He’s still looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. He knows Sarah has moved out of her Bedouin tent and into ivory palaces. He knows that one day they’ll reunite for all of eternity.

The important thing is that Abraham and Sarah stayed together as husband and wife...as we say in our wedding vows... “till death do us part.” That’s what God intends...for one man and one woman to stay married as long as both of them shall live.

For many young couples today, what is meant to be a lifetime contract is little more than a 90-day option! Even those who stay married aren’t living in wedded bliss. There was a farm couple who’d been married for 60 years. They were reminiscing when she said, “Husband, this is our 60th anniversary. Do you think we ought to kill a pig?” He said, “There’s no reason to murder a pig for something we did 60 years ago!”
Today we hear so much about love at first sight. But the miracle is when you can keep on looking at each other and still love each other!

You say, “Well, if we were like Abraham and Sarah, we could do that. They were Bible people. They didn’t have any problems.” Are you kidding? They had all kinds of problems! Some of them were biggies…but they made it!

Do you remember the Hagar affair? They overcame that. Remember the problems with their children, Isaac and Ishmael? They overcame that. They were nomads who were constantly moving. They made it through that. Remember Abraham’s lies to Pharaoh? He told him that Sarah was his sister so he could save his own hide. That was a bad thing to do, but Abraham loved God. Don’t mistake the moment for the man.

They had old age to contend with. They went from the Pepsi generation to the Geritol generation. They went from being romantic to being rheumatic…but they made it! They stayed together until death did them part.

They didn’t make it by chance...they made it by Bible principles. I want you to see what those principles are. Turn to I Peter 3. Here’s how you keep the home fires burning. Here’s how you keep the honey in the honeymoon. Look at I Peter 3:1-7. “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel,
and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

I’m going to give you some principles for making your marriage last. Ladies, I want you to learn *Sister Sarah’s Simple Secrets for wives!* Men, I want you to see *Aged Abraham’s Able Advice for men!*

Sarah discovered 3 secrets that helped her keep the home fires burning. First, she learned **an attitude of submission.** Verse 1 says, “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.”

Some of you ladies are thinking, “Sure, that’s fine if you have a guy like Abraham, but you don’t know what I have to put up with!” Well, why did you marry him? You chose him and entered into a covenant relationship with him when you got married. The Bible teaches that simply because he is your husband, you’re to be in submission to him.

You say, “What if he’s not a Christian?” You’re still to be in submission to him. Notice what Peter says, “...be in subjection to your own husbands; **that, if any obey not the word,** they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.”

In other words, if your husband is lost, he needs to go to bed every night with a sermon. He needs to rise every morning with a sermon. He needs to eat breakfast with a sermon, etc. He is to constantly see the beauty of Jesus Christ in you.

Ladies listen very carefully to your pastor. Nagging has never brought a man to Jesus and it never will! This verse says you’re to be in subjection to your husband: it doesn’t say you’re to nag your husband! It doesn’t say that you’re to pin little notes to his pillow every night. It doesn’t say to paste John 3:16 to the side of all his beer cans! It says that you’re to be in subjection to him! If your husband is ever going to be brought to Jesus, it’ll be by your attitude of submission.
You say, “Brother Gary, there’s some things he needs to know and if I don’t tell him, then who’s going to?” If he needs to know those things God will tell him. You say, “But I want to get his attention!” If you want to get his attention, then you need to meditate on verse 2: “While they behold your chaste conversation...” The word “behold” means “to peer at intently.” In other words, there’s something about your life of purity and submissiveness that’ll get his attention.

Ruth Graham said, “It’s the woman’s job to love her husband: it’s God’s job to make him good.” You say, “I’m not inferior to him, so why should I be in submission to him?” Lady, submission has absolutely nothing to do with superiority or inferiority.

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are co-equal and co-eternal. Yet, God the Son is submissive to God the Father. Philippians 2:5-7 says, “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant...” Jesus submitted himself willingly.

Lady, you are not inferior to your husband when you’re in submission to him. This is actually a superior lifestyle. You’re more like Jesus when you’re submitting...and you’re more like Satan when you’re rebelling. One thing that kept Sister Sarah being the sweet wife she was and made her an example for all wives, is that she learned an attitude of submission.

And because she had an attitude of submission, she also had an adornment of serenity. Look at I Peter 3:3-4. “Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”
Ladies, Peter is telling you how to be beautiful. Some people look at this passage and say, “See, it says you’re not to wear jewelry... no outward adorning.” Then they say, “You’re not supposed to fix your hair because it says there’s not to be the plaiting of hair.” They say, “You’re not to wear gold or silver.” Well, you can’t stop there. You’re going to have to read it all. I guess you’re also going to say that she’s not to wear any clothes, either, because it also talks about the putting on of apparel.

If you’re going to use this passage to claim that a woman isn’t supposed to fix her hair, or wear jewelry, or wear gold and silver, then you must also say that it’s wrong for a woman to wear clothes!

That’s not what Peter is saying! He’s not saying it’s wrong for you to fix yourself up. You say, “Is it wrong for a woman to wear makeup?” Friend, it’s wrong for some women NOT to wear makeup!

Sarah didn’t go around looking like an unmade bed! She was a knockout! When she was 80 years old, men were still vying for her attention! She was a beautiful woman, but she knew that outward beauty fades. Inward beauty never fades. She knew she could become more beautiful every day. She learned about the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. She had the adornment of serenity.

She was smarter than some of these modern-day girls who put all their eggs into one basket. They think they’re going to keep their husbands by staying outwardly beautiful. But girls, you’re fighting a losing battle! Don’t you know what time is going to do to you?

There’s a bevy of beauties being born every year. If you think you’re going to keep your husband through beauty, you’re wrong. I’m not saying that you shouldn’t do everything you can to stay pretty: I’m saying that Sarah discovered the secret of a meek and quiet spirit.
The word “quiet” doesn’t mean that Sarah was timid. It doesn’t mean that she never lifted her voice. The word “quiet” means “tranquil.” She had peace of heart, which gave her inward beauty. Because she had this inward beauty, the love-lights just flowed from her eyes. Every wrinkle and gray hair was a thing of beauty because she was inwardly beautiful.

Some of the most beautiful people you will ever meet are senior citizens who’ve walked with God. Some of them are in this church. But you can’t have inward beauty and rebellion at the same time. There has to be the attitude of submission before there can be that adornment of serenity.

Then there is an activity of service. Look at verses 5-6. “For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord…”

Some of you women will start to choke right there! You say, “Do you mean to tell me that I have to call him lord?” Let me put it this way: at the very least, Sarah had a deep reverence and sense of respect for her husband.

But the word I really want to key in on is the word “obeyed.” I’m talking about her activity of service here. The word “obey” doesn’t simply mean to do what you’re told. It carries with it the idea of “paying attention to.” In other words, Sarah was attentive to his needs. That’s why God gave woman to man in the first place. She is to be a “fitting help” for him.

Sarah looked to see how she could meet Abraham’s needs emotionally, physically, domestically, in business activities, etc. She was by his side making him a better man than he ever could be without her. Those are Sister Sarah’s Simple Secrets.

I know you ladies are waiting for me to get to verse 7! So, let’s talk about Aged Abraham’s Able Advice. Verse 7 says, “Likewise,
ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

There are 4 key words here: share, aware, care, and prayer.

If you’re going to be like Abraham, you’ll have to be the kind of man who’ll **share**. When verse 7 says to “dwell with her,” it doesn’t just mean to live in the same house. This is talking about a life of sharing. Later on, it talks about being “heirs together.” Verse 8 speaks of “being of one mind.” In other words, a man is to share his life totally with his wife.

Isn’t that what Jesus does with the church? If a husband is to love his wife like Jesus loved the church, he must give himself to her. Jesus said in John 15:15, “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends.” Your wife is to be your best friend...someone with whom you share.

There are probably some wives in this room who have no idea how much money their husbands make. They don’t know what kind of investments he has. Some husbands say, “That’s none of your business. I’ll take care of that.” Well, who do you think you are, mister? Of course, it’s her business! You are heirs together!

What good is to be a partner if you’re excluded? What some men call a nosey wife is simply a wife seeking her rightful and God-given place. Becky knows every account, every investment, every piece of property I have. She knows all the passwords and usernames to my computers and my phone.

Your wife is to dwell with you as an equal. Me, don’t ever get the idea that because she is to submit to you that she’s not your equal. Most men, like myself, have out married ourselves. Are you sharing with your wife?
Men also need to be **aware**. Verse 7 says we are to “dwell with them **according to knowledge.**” Men, what do you know about women? Most men study their car manual far more than they study how to be a good husband.

This verse says to give honor to the wife as the weaker vessel. They outlive us by 7 years, but they’re the weaker vessel? They’re weaker physically. They can’t pump iron like we can. But what Peter means is that they are different emotionally. They see things differently than we do, so we need for men to be aware.

We also need men who **care**. The word “honor” means more than simply being courteous to her. I Peter 1:18-19 says, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ...”

The word “precious” is the same word translated “honor” in chapter 3. In other words, you are to look at your wife as someone who’s precious to you...as precious as the blood of Christ.

Wives, do you love your husbands enough to **live** for him? Husbands, do you love your wife enough to **die** for her? The Bible says that Christ gave Himself for the church. As the husband, you are to love your wife sacrificially.

It’s easy to **talk** about being willing to die for her, but you don’t have to die physically in order to die to your ambitions...to put her first...to love her even as you love your own body.

Finally, we need men who are men of **prayer**. Pray for her and with her. I remember praying every day that my wife would get to and from work safely, that she would have a good day at work, etc.

God will hear your prayer **if** you’re a man who’ll share, **if** you’re a man who’s aware, and **if** you’re a man who’ll care. But if you’re
not that kind of man, your prayers are going to be hindered. And without your prayers, your marriage isn’t going to make it.

Abraham was a man who knew how to get hold of God. That’s why he made it! Prayer would stop a lot of divorces...and marriages! Oh, if we only had more men like Joshua who say, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

Sir, you are to be the pastor, priest, and prophet in your home. Your duty is to make your wife a radiantly beautiful Christian. My greatest ministry is not in this pulpit; it’s in my home. God created the home a long time before He created the church.

I’ll close with this. One time, they built the most beautiful subdivision you’ve ever seen on top of an old garbage dump. They hauled in dirt and tamped it all down. But after a few years, the sidewalks began to buckle, the streets started to look like roller coaster rails, the foundations all started to crack, etc. Eventually, the whole place had to be abandoned and people lost huge sums of money. The problem is that they had built their homes on garbage. It can’t be done.

We have an entire generation that’s trying to build their homes on garbage instead of on the solid rock of God’s Word. It’s time we learned from Sister Sarah and Father Abraham.

What’s your home built on today? What’s your life built on? Maybe you need to come to the altar today and speak to the Master Builder. He specializes in mending broken things.