

What She Said, Week 7

Tuesday

## God's Beauty and Godly Beauty, a Beautiful Partnership

### Godly Beauty: Adorned with Submission

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#### Today's Treasure

*Your adornment must not be merely external - braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him her lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.*

*1 Peter 3:3-6 NASB*

What would you think if I told you that submission is a beauty secret? Would you be intrigued? Offended? Puzzled? When I think about Sarah, her struggle with and jealousy of Hagar are some of the first things that spring to mind. However, there is more to her story. Before we look deeper into that story, keep in mind that Peter, in the verse above, is not saying, "Don't braid your hair, put on jewelry, or a nice outfit." Rather, he is saying, "Don't *only* braid your hair, put on jewelry or a nice outfit, but also, and firstly, and more importantly, cultivate inner beauty." How do we do this exactly? Over the next few days, we are going to see how to develop our inner beauty through our submission, our worship, and our works.

Now, back to Sarah. Genesis 12: 11, 14 tells us that "As he (Abram) was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, 'I know what a *beautiful* woman you are . . . When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that she was a *very beautiful* woman.'" When the Bible says something, it's worth remembering. And, here we see that the Bible says that Sarah was beautiful, not once but twice! Her external beauty was evident to those who saw her. But, Peter is pointing us to Sarah as an example of beauty because she was beautiful not only on the outside but, more importantly, on the inside. Why is this internal beauty more desirable? Because it is imperishable! It lasts and lasts even as our bodies age. Peter not only shows us the example of a spiritual mother who was beautiful inside and out, but he also lets us in on the secret to this beauty.

Many years after Sarah and Abraham's journey into Egypt, the Lord makes a remarkable promise to them. "The Lord said, 'I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.' And Sarah was listening at the tent door behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years. The way of women had ceased to be with Sarah. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, 'After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have pleasure?'" (Genesis 18:10-12) At this point, Sarah has been married to Abraham for many years, possibly as many as 70, so she knows him well! And, in spite of his character lapses, in her private thoughts, revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, she refers to Abraham as "lord." It's like we get to peek into her diary and read that instead of dwelling on the ways that Abraham has failed her (Genesis 12, 20), Sarah's attitude towards her husband was one of submission, which is precious to God who protected her from Pharaoh of Egypt and Abimelek, king of Gerar when Abraham failed to do so.

Submission is desirable because it produces imperishable beauty in us, but that's not all submission does. When Paul writes about submission in Titus 2:3-10, his conclusion is that submission is desirable because it makes beautiful the beauty of the gospel. His teaching is for women and men, servants and free, and he calls us all to submission "so that in everything [we] may *adorn* the doctrine of God our Savior." (emphasis mine) Submission is also an evangelism secret! Beauty invites and the beauty produced by submission invites others to see the gospel. We misunderstand submission when we forget the example of Jesus who was submissive not only to his Heavenly Father (John 6:38, Mark 14:36) but also to His earthly parents (Luke 2:51), who were finite and fallible! His beautiful submission invites us to follow His example.

### **LIFE-GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT**

Friends, I am so glad that my innermost thoughts have not been revealed by the Holy Spirit and written down so that others can study them! What about you? What do you think in private about your husband, boss, teacher, coach, or even the government? Next time you're getting dressed in the morning, don't stop once you have put on your clothes and makeup. Put on submission, too, by intentionally, deliberately, and repeatedly entrusting yourself to our good Father. It's a beautiful thing.

### **PRAYER**

Father, when we struggle with submission, help us to remember the beautiful submission of Jesus, who did not demand His rights but humbled Himself in order to show us the beauty of the gospel.