

MARITAL MANIPULATION

This lesson series, Marriage is Divine Institution, is related to the marriage of Abraham and Sarah, now after ten years on the Canaan foreign mission field.

In our last lesson we discussed the problem of intimacy in their marriage and how to fix it. This lesson will deal with the problem of Marital Manipulation, how it affects intimacy and how it is often used, by one mate in their marriage relationship, to coerce the other to do their carnal bidding by worldly thinking (Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus) (OMCD). In the case of Abraham and Sarah, it directly attacked the Directive Will of God.

Today's lesson will discuss four aspects of Marital Manipulation and how to correct them.

1. While there are many biblical examples of marital manipulation. We will begin with a biblical classical case of it – Samson and Delilah.

The Directive Will of God for Samson, the 12th Judge of Israel while being governed under a Theocracy, (Judges 13-16) is important to this biblical story.

(Judges 13:5) “For behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and **no razor shall come upon his head, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of Philistines.**” (His mother was also barren / 13:4b)

Samson, in a state of Carnality, was lusting after sex with an unbeliever Philistine woman named, Delilah, who was lusting after money and wealth. (Judges 16:4-6; 14:2 -3, 16-20) [Typical Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus – Worldly thinking]

The game of manipulation intensified between these two, both very good players in this “lusting” game! (Judges 16:7-19, Chs. 15-17). He manipulated her for sex and she manipulated him for money.

Finally this relationship ended as a result of Divine Intervention and Divine Discipline for Samson, this carnal believer! (Judges 16:20-27).

Then something happened that put Samson in the **Faith Hall of Fame** in Heb.11:32. He is listed with four other believers from the Period of Judges. He confessed his sin and prayed an important prayer to a merciful God (Judges 16:28-31/ “Let me die with the Philistines!”).

“So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he killed in his life.” (Judges 16:30b). (Judges 13:5, God's Directive Will)

2. Manipulation is a harmful power struggle within relationships and especially harmful to genuine intimacy.

It is used to dominate the weaknesses and strengths of the other person in your relationship. It intensifies when both have “skin in the game.”

This is happening in the marriage of Abraham and Sarah recorded in Genesis Chapters 16-20. Over the 25 years on the mission field, their marital manipulation game will be projected unto others like Pharaoh (Gen.12) and Hagar (Gen.16) and Abimelech (Gen.20).

The fact that God intervened three times didn't change their carnal thinking and behavior. Even the unbeliever, Abimelech, had more **integrity** than carnal Abraham!

(Gen.20:4-5) "Lord, will You slay a nation, even though blameless? Did he himself not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she said, 'He is my brother.' **In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this.**"

3. Note that the age of Abraham and Sarah (100 and 90) and their spiritual maturity:

Yet, even after being on the foreign mission field for 25 years, neither their "walk with their Lord" or just human "lessons learned" have been able to prevent their Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus (OMCD) [worldly] thinking – especially during those times of the testing of accepting God's Directive Will and Promise regarding the Abraham Covenant

(Ps.139:23-24) "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and **see if there is any hurtful way in me**, and lead me in the everlasting way."

- When couples work with each other's spiritual strengths and weaknesses, they grow together (Rom.14:13; Eph.6:12).
- When couples work against each other's carnal strengths and weaknesses, they grow apart. (Rom.7:15-25; 8:5-9).

(Rom.12:2) "And do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed** by the renewing of your mind, **so that you may prove** (dokimazo) [to test for approval; (2 Tim.2:15)] **what the will of God is**, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

4. As spiritually advancing believers, it is important that we not transfer or project our fears and insecurities of OMCD thinking and behavior upon our mates.

It is encouraging that by the age of 100 and 90, and after 25 years being on the foreign mission field, they were able to recover their marriage. They did so by applying the Word of God (Categorical Bible Doctrine) residing and functioning in their lives. They will return to their First Love of the Lord and of each other (Rev.2:5; 1 John 4:19).

- Whose problem was Sarah's barrenness?
- Whose problem was Abraham's fearfulness of death on mission field?

The answer is the One who gave the promise of the Land, the Seed, and the Blessings of Abraham Covenant (Rom.4:21).

There will be 37 more years of marriage without marital manipulation (Sarah: 90 to 127; Gen.21:1-23:1).

They will do this by transformation (metamorphoo/ NMDV)

(Rom.12:2) "And do not conformed to this world, (Old Man Cosmos Diabolicus [worldly] thinking (OMCD), but be **transformed by the renewing** (te anakainosis/ inst.s.f) [to/ renovate; completely overhaul] of your mind (the result of applying New Man Divine Viewpoint thinking) [NMDV], that (eis+acc of divine purpose) you may prove (to dokimazo) what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." (Eph.3:16-17 and 4:22-24)