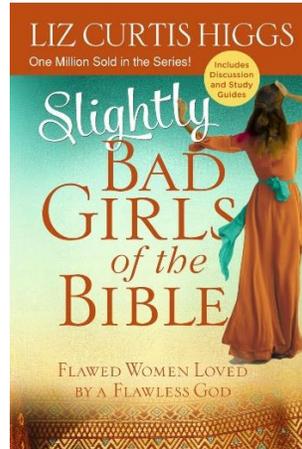


Word by Word with Liz Curtis Higgs on the Faith Radio Network

Bible Study Guide for July 28-29, 2018 | Sarah

from *Slightly Bad Girls of the Bible* by Liz Curtis Higgs



1. Abram and Sarai left everything—family and friends, houses and lands, and all their worldly goods that wouldn't fit on a camel—to follow God's leading. According to Genesis 12:1, what three things did the Lord ask Abram to leave behind? If the Lord asked you to leave everything and follow his lead, what questions would you need answered? And how eager would you be to go? What insights about following the Lord do you gain from these verses: Deuteronomy 13:4, Psalm 16:8, Psalm 91:2, Isaiah 58:11, and John 10:27?
2. According to Genesis 16:1-3, Abram and Sarai had been living in Canaan ten years before she took steps to secure an heir for her husband. Whether prompted by too little faith or too much fear, Sarai decided she could wait no longer. How might Psalm 106:13 apply to Sarai's way of thinking? Was her solution—sanctioned by local custom—reasonable from a human standpoint? What makes you say that? Why do you think she didn't turn to God to solve the problem? How do Proverbs 12:15, Proverbs 16:1, and Proverbs 19:21 contrast human solutions with divine ones?
3. As Genesis 16:5-6 tells us, Sarai blamed Abram for her misery, rather than acknowledging her part in the situation. Then Abram put the problem back in Sarai's hands, instead of finding an honorable solution. What issues do you see at work here? If you were a marriage therapist, how would you counsel this couple? Now read 1 Peter 3:1-6, describing an ideal wife. What do you make of the example given in verse 6? Once Abram had relinquished any responsibility for Hagar, Sarai's attitude and actions toward her slave girl were even more hateful than Hagar's had been toward her. Neither Abram nor Sarai behaved admirably in these scenes. Why do you suppose God chooses to bless such deeply flawed people? What answers does Micah 7:18-20 offer?

4. When God changed Sarai's name to Sarah, he changed her life as well. According to Genesis 17:16, what role did God assign Sarah? Her new title sounds daunting. Yet all of us—single or married, with or without children—can impact the next generation. Perhaps the most thrilling way of becoming a “mother of nations” is sharing in the birth of new believers, nurturing them in the faith, and helping them reach spiritual maturity. If you're already doing such things, what have you discovered in the process? If you're hesitant to disciple the next generation of believers, what's holding you back? What encouragement do you find in Ephesians 4:11–15, and how can you act on it?
5. Ephesians 5:33 says of marriage, “Each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.” Both of those ideals can be strained even in the best of marriages, even between a biblical patriarch and matriarch. How would you characterize Abraham and Sarah's marriage relationship? Adversarial or companionable? Distant or intimate? And how might their relationship have changed over the years? The Bible tells us in Proverbs 19:14 that “a prudent wife is from the Lord.” In what ways was Sarah indeed prudent, meaning “wise and careful”? And in what ways did she fall short? Consider Abraham's response to Sarah's death in Genesis 23:2. What does his grieving tell us about their years together?
6. What's the most important lesson you learned from Sarah, a woman who laughed at God and (almost) got away with it?