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Becoming Christlike Women

Week 5 | Trouble Spot #3: Exchanging Nurture for Control

Foundational Passages:

Genesis 3:16

To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.”

Genesis 16:1-6

1Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. 2And Sarai said to Abram, “Behold now, the LORD has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her.” And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. 3So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. 4And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress. 5And Sarai said to Abram, “May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my servant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the LORD judge between you and me!” 6But Abram said to Sarai, “Behold, your servant is in your power; do to her as you please.” Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her.

Big Idea: Christlike Women are created to nurture life, but sin twists feminine strength into anxious control. Jesus calls women to release control, trust His care, and use their strength to build up others in love.

The False Belief: “If I don’t manage this, fix this, carry this, or make this happen, everything will fall apart.”

God Designed Women to Nurture Life

1. Eve was created as a strong helper.
Genesis 2:18 “Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’”
2. A wise woman builds what God has entrusted to her.
Proverbs 14:1 “The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down.” NIV



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Sin Distorts Nurture into Control

Diagnosis in Genesis 3:16

Women were designed to nurture life, but sin twists nurture into a desire to control.

A Powerful Example (Sarai and Abram)

1. Sarai's attempt to control stems from real pain. (16:1)
2. Sarai struggles to wait on God to fulfill His promises. (16:2)
3. Sarai devises her own plan to accomplish God's purposes. (16:2)
4. Sarai uses Hagar instead of nurturing her. (16:3-4)
5. Sarai does not like the outcome of her own plan. (16:4)
6. Sarai blames Abram for the pain caused by her plan. (16:5)
7. Sarai's control leads to harshness. (16:6)

And, generationally, her attempt to control results in....

1. Conflict between the son of Hagar (Ishmael) and the son of Sarai (Isaac).
2. A pattern that reproduces in her family (Rebekah and Rachel).

How can Christlike Women break this cycle?

1. Use nurture to help others, not control them.
2. Pray before you act.
3. Release outcomes to God.
4. Practice Sabbath rest.
5. Say less, not more.



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Discussion Questions

1. Where have you seen your God-given design to “nurture life” show up in your story?
2. Do you ever feel like the weight of the whole world sits on your shoulders, like everything depends on you? Is that a good or bad thing?
3. Where do you see the “desire to control” show up most commonly in your life? Share a time when your attempts to control something made it worse.
4. What would change in your life if you trusted God with the challenges you faced and stopped trying to control every outcome?

HOMEWORK

Memorize this Bible verse: Proverbs 3:5-6

Action item: This week, rather than taking control of a difficult situation, sit back, pray, and turn the situation over to God first. Second, ask the Lord if someone else needs to step forward and take responsibility before you do. Make sure you are not enabling passivity in someone else. Third, if you do act, leave the results in God’s hands.