

**"A LESSON ON BEING A BAD EXAMPLE FROM  
THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM AND SARAH"  
(Gen.20:1-18; 26:6-16)**

**INTRODUCTION**

Someone has well said that "an ounce of example is worth a pound of instruction." This saying is especially true when it comes to rearing children.

Oftentimes parents seem to live in some kind of fantasy world expecting their children to grow up and live for the Lord when they themselves set a very poor example for their children to follow.

We cite the Scripture ... "train up a child..." Someone has said "if you're going to train up a child in the way he should go, make sure first of all that you're going that way yourself."

I believe one of the most sobering questions we could answer this evening is this - "would I want my child to be what I have become?"

The truth is - for the most part that's what will happen. If mom and dad set an example of being carnal and worldly before their children that's what they'll be. If mom and dad are dishonest in their dealing... if mom and dad are living for the things of this world... if mom and dad are busy bodies... if mom and dad are in the habit of making all kinds of excuses for not serving the Lord...

Now I want us to consider how Abraham and Sarah set a bad example and I want us to lay down a principle for us to keep in mind as parents.

**CONCLUSION**

The lesson we need to learn from the life of Abraham and Sarah is that a bad example affects others - particularly our children.

This truth is reflected in the following poem:

**"A careful man I ought to be..."**

A careful man I ought to be  
A little fellow follows me  
I do not dare to go astray  
For fear he'll go the selfsame way  
I cannot once escape his eyes  
What e're he sees me do he tries  
Like me he says he's going to be  
The little chap that follows me  
He thinks that I am good and fine  
Believes in every word of mine  
The base in me he must not see  
The little chap who follows me  
I must remember as I go  
Thru summer's sun or winter's snow  
I'm building for the years to be  
That little chap who follows me-  
Author unknown

The question in closing is this - "what kind of example are we setting for others to follow? If we're living a lie and always making excuses then we ought to do something about it while we can help our children - it will be too late tomorrow.  
**Notice...**

**I. THE EXAMPLE WHICH ABRAHAM AND SARAH SET ON THIS OCCASION**

1. Were "living a lie" This is what a lot of people do - try to justify their actions by telling half-truths rather

than being completely honest and saying "I don't want to come to church tonight..."

2. Rather than trusting in the Lord and doing what was right. There's a certain poem which states the importance of how we live...If a person really loves the Lord he will serve the Lord. As we apply ... are you living some kind of lie? Do you really love the Lord? does the Lord have first place in your life?

## **II. THE EXCUSE WHICH THEY GAVE FOR DOING WRONG (20:11,12)**

Abraham...

1. Said he did it out of fear for his life. There's a certain saying we would all do well to remember..."it's never right to do wrong, it's never wrong to do right, it's always right to do right and always wrong to do wrong." This is why it's wrong to lie to children about Santa Claus.

2. And he tried to justify his actions with a half-truth. A radio news series about honesty in America pointed out that people use three types of excuses when guilty of wrongdoing...

### **NO EXCUSE SUNDAY**

To make it possible for everyone to attend church next Sunday, we are going to have a special "No Excuse Sunday."

Cots will be placed in the foyer for those who say, "Sunday is my only day to sleep."

We will have steel helmets for those who say, "the roof will cave in if I ever come to church."

Blankets will be furnished for those who think the church is too cold and fans for those who think the church is too hot.

We will have hearing aids for those who think the preacher speaks too softly and cotton for those who think he preaches too loudly.

Scorecards will be available for those who wish to list the hypocrites present. Some relatives will be in attendance for those who like to go visiting on Sunday. There will be T. V. dinners for those who can't go to church and cook dinner also. One section will be devoted to trees and grass for those who like to see God in nature.

Finally, the sanctuary will be decorated with both Christmas poinsettias and Easter lilies for those who have never seen the church without them.

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Application: - We're either faithfully serving the Lord or we're always having to come up with some kind of excuse. What characterizes your life?

### **III. THE EFFECT WHICH WRONG DOING HAS UPON OTHERS (GEN. 26:6-16)**

1. Teaches evil to others by example. A recent survey disclosed - "if both mom and dad attend church faithfully...

2. And it is perpetuated from one generation to another. There's an old adage "like father like son". This principle is illustrated in the Kings of Israel. It is stated repeatedly in some 19 kings of the northern kingdom - "and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord as his father had done".

Application - if your children follow your example where will it lead them? Godliness begets godliness and ungodliness begets ungodliness. If you can bank on the fact that your life will determine in large measure how your children will live their lives.