

**Ron Armstrong • August 30, 2020**

**The Story: They Did More Than Show Up**

**Genesis 17:1** When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. **2 Then** I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."

**3** Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, **4** "As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. **5** No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. **6** I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. **7** I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. **8** The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God."

**9** Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. **10** This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised ..." **15** God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. **16** I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

**17** Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?" **19** Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac ..."

**Genesis 32:27** The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered.

**28** Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome."

**A. Their new name symbolized change and blessing.**

1. There is often a connection between our change and God's blessing.
2. "Faithfully and blameless" doesn't mean perfectly, but they do connote "striving."
3. God is going to give Abraham the desires of his heart: lots of descendants and a place to call home.

- a. What are the desires of your heart?
- b. What would you like to be called?

<b>Desire</b>	<b>Faithfully (Obedience God will bless)</b>	<b>Blamelessly (Your actions that facilitate blessing)</b>
Fruitful marriage?	Focus on serving each other	Put your spouse's desires ahead of your own
Joyful career path?	Pray for God's directing hand	Be open to what God does in you.

**B. Here are five traps to stop you.**

1. Assumption trap. "As I get older, I'll grow as a person." No, you grow because you take action.
2. Timing trap. "It's not the right time to start." The law of diminishing intent says, "The longer you wait to do something that you know you ought to do, the less likely you are to do it at all."
3. Fear trap. "I might make a mistake."
4. Knowledge trap. "I don't know enough."
5. Perfection trap. "I have to find the best way before I start."