

Sunday, February 12, 2017

"The Power for Marriage" Part II

THE MEANING
OF MARRIAGE

Confronting our Self-Centeredness

"And [Christ] died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again."

(2 Corinthians 5:15)

"If two spouses *each* say, 'I'm going to treat my self-centeredness as the main problem in the marriage,' you have the prospect of a truly great marriage."

Journaling/Personal Reflection:

1. Treating *MY* self-centeredness: If I am honest with myself, how am I self centered?

2. How would I like to become more others-focused?

It Only Takes One to Begin Healing

"God asks that you deny yourself, that you lose yourself to find yourself. If you try to do this without the work of the Spirit, and without belief in all Christ has done for you, then simply giving up your rights and desires will be hardening. But in Christ and with the Spirit, it will be liberating."

"The Christian principle that needs to be at work is Spirit Generated Selflessness—not thinking less of yourself or more of yourself but thinking of yourself less. It means taking your mind off yourself and realizing that in Christ your needs are going to be met and are, in fact, being met so that you don't look at your spouse as your savior."



It Only Takes One: Journal Activity

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1. What needs do you have as a relational being?
2. How might you look to a spouse to meet these needs?

Need	What spouse/relationship can do	What Jesus can do Find examples in Scripture!
Companionship	Present sometimes but not always	Jesus is always with you!
Acceptance		
Quality Time		
Touch		
Affirmation		

The Fear of Christ

“Submit to one another out of the *fear of Christ*.” (Ephesians 5:21)

“...to be in the fear of the Lord is not to be scared of the Lord, even though the Hebrew word has overtones of respect and awe. ‘Fear’ in the Bible means to be overwhelmed, to be controlled by something. To fear the Lord is to be overwhelmed with wonder before the greatness of God and His love. It means that, because of his bright holiness and magnificent love, you find Him “fearfully beautiful.”



Growing in the Fear of the Lord

"How can we actually be filled with the Spirit? How can we grow in the fear of the Lord, so we are not controlled by other fears?"

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Reflection:

"This does not happen overnight, of course. It requires disciplined prayer, Bible study and reading, innumerable conversations with friends, and dynamic congregational worship. But unlike learning other thinkers or authors, Jesus's Spirit can come and live within you."

Growing in the "Fear of the Lord" is according to Keller, a slow process of growth. Take a look at the four disciplines Keller suggests we use to grow in "fear of the Lord" Are the following examples of growing up (our relationship with God) or in (our relationships with others)?

1. Disciplined Prayer: _____
2. Bible Study and Reading: _____
3. Conversations/Friends: _____
4. Congregation Worship: _____

- Choose one of the four disciplines you would like to focus on in the coming weeks.

- How will you practice this discipline in the coming weeks? Write a specific goal for how you plan to use this discipline to bless you as you grow in fear of the Lord.



S	SPECIFIC
M	MEASURABLE
A	ATTAINABLE
R	RELEVANT
T	TIME BOUND

Two Ways to "Love"

Love seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care,
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.

Love seeketh only self to please,
To bind another to its delight,
Joys in another's loss of ease,
And builds a hell in heaven's despite.

[by William Blake – from "The Clod and the Pebble"]

Six Word Story



THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE

The only way to avoid sacrificing your partner's joy on the altar of your need is to turn to the ultimate lover of your soul. He voluntarily sacrificed himself on the cross, taking what you deserved for your sins against God and others. On the cross He was forsaken and experienced the lostness of hell, but He did it all for us. Because of the loving sacrifice of the Son, you can know the heaven of the Father's love through the work of the Spirit. Jesus truly 'built a heaven in hell's despair.' And fortified with the love of God in your soul, you likewise can now give yourself in loving service to your spouse."

"We love because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19)

Journaling/ Personal Reflection:

What is something new you have learned about marriage today? How has your view of marriage been impacted or changed?

What is one way today's lesson/discussion can help you be a better spouse, friend, or family member?

