

MARRIAGE BY THE BOOK

1. DISCUSS PRIDE AND HUMILITY

Proverbs 29:23 (NASB) A man's pride will bring him low, But a humble spirit will obtain honor.

Proverbs 18:12 (NASB) Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, But humility goes before honor.

Proverbs 11:2 (NASB) When pride comes, then comes dishonor, But with the humble is wisdom.

Romans 12:16 (NASB) Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.

Philippians 2:3 (NASB) Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;

James 4:6 (NASB) But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

James 4:10 (NASB) Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

Matthew 23:12 (NASB) "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

2. DYING TO MYSELF

Romans 12:1 (NASB) Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

A. Paul is saying to Christians... **GIVE YOUR LIFE AWAY!**

B. **WHY?**

1. Because of **"the mercies of God"**

C. **WHAT "MERCIES"?**

Romans 5:8 (NASB) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us.**

D. If Jesus' **"MERCY"** is not enough to motivate us to **SACRIFICIAL LIVING... WE MAY NOT KNOW JESUS.**

E. **DISCUSS: DYING TO MYSELF IN MARRIAGE**

1. **PUT YOURSELF AT GOD'S DISPOSAL... "HERE I AM LORD, WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?"**

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- a. On our death beds, we will not say, **"I wish I had spent more time at _____!"**
2. Many Christians think that **MARRIAGE IS TOO COMPLICATED**. They are **CONFUSED ABOUT THE PRIORITY OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, OR THEY DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH FAITH TO GIVE THEIR MARRIAGE GOD... AND LEAVE IT THERE!**
 - a. THAT'S **SATAN TALKING... HE IS THE AUTHOR OF CONFUSION**.
- F. The **MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION A CHRISTIAN SHOULD ASK EVERY DAY** is... **AM I GOING TO PUT MY LIFE AND MY MARRIAGE AT GOD'S DISPOSAL TODAY?**
 1. ... WE ALL **STRUGGLE** WITH THAT QUESTION.
Isaiah 6:8 (NASB) Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!"
- G. Do you ever feel **EMPTY IN YOUR MARRIAGE?...** **PUT YOUR MARRIAGE AND YOURSELF AT GOD'S DISPOSAL.**
 1. STOP TRYING TO **FILL YOURSELF WITH THINGS... AND PUT YOURSELF AT GOD'S DISPOSAL... D A I L Y!**
Luke 9:23-24 (NASB) And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must **deny himself**, and take up his cross **daily** and follow Me. "For whoever wishes to **save** his life will **lose** it, but whoever **loses his life for My sake**, he is the one who will **save it**.
John 3:30 (NASB) "He must **increase**, but I must **decrease**.
 2. DO YOU SOMETIMES FEEL **EMPTY** IN YOUR MARRIAGE?... **PUT YOUR LIFE AT JESUS' DISPOSAL... BUT, FIRST YOU HAVE TO DIE TO YOURSELF!**
3. I DIE DAILY
1 Corinthians 15:31 (NASB) I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, **I die daily**.
Luke 9:23 (NASB) And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, **he must deny himself**, and **take up his cross daily** and follow Me.
- H. **EVERY DAY (HOUR... MINUTE)** we must make a **DECISION** that we will **DIE TO OURSELVES AND LIVE FOR CHRIST** IF WE ARE TO LIVE A VICTORIOUS LIFE AND MARRIAGE.

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1. **DYING TO OURSELVES is NOT a ONE TIME DECISION... IT'S A DAILY DECISION.**
2. Most of us think that **DYING TO OURSELVES** was a **ONE-TIME DECISION made at SALVATION**.
3. **But**, to understand that **FOLLOWING JESUS** is a **ONE-TIME DECISION** is like saying after your **WEDDING**, "Now that I'm **MARRIED**, **IT'S BACK TO LIFE AS USUAL**."
 - a. There is **MORE TO MARRIAGE THAN A WEDDING CEREMONY**.
 - b. ... And, **THERE IS MORE TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE THAN SALVATION/ JUSTIFICATION**.
 - 1) **DISCUSS: SANCTIFICATION = THE PROCESS OF DYING TO MYSELF**
- I. **WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO DIE DAILY?**
 1. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **stopping to help someone on the side of the road when we're already late for an appointment.**
 2. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **picking up the tab for a person who is in need at HEB or at a restaurant.**
 3. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **spending time with our family instead of fishing or working in the shop or playing golf.**
 4. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **speaking kindly or not at all when we're frustrated.**
 5. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **saying "Will you please forgive me for _____?"**
 6. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **spending our lunch serving food to the homeless at a shelter.**
 7. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **that the next time you're talking with your neighbor, instead of playing it safe and keeping comfortable you bring Jesus into the conversation.**
 8. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **changing our vacation plans, and instead of taking our kids to Disney World this year, we take them to the Dominican Republic and volunteer in the feeding centers where hundreds of kids come each day for their only meal.**
 9. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **walking by that empty room in our house and asking God if there is an orphan child or a foster child that should be sleeping in that bed.**

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10. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **selflessly loving a spouse who has cheated you out of the marriage you so desperately wanted.**
11. FOR SOME OF US IT MAY MEAN **giving up OUR rights** for those of **OUR SPOUSE.**
12. WHAT DOES “DYING DAILY” MEAN TO YOU?

- a. REALLY, it's **ONLY BY DYING DAILY** that we are even able to **FOLLOW JESUS.**
 - b. **NOTE...** IF WE AREN'T FOLLOWING JESUS WE ARE FOLLOWING:
 - 1) THE WORLD
 - 2) OUR FLESHY DESIRES
 - 3) THE DEVIL
- J. There are **MANY CHRISTIANS** who get **FRUSTRATED** and **CONFUSED** in their **EFFORTS TO FOLLOW JESUS.** They're **TRYING** as hard as they can and **DON'T UNDERSTAND** why they have such a **HARD TIME** or why they're **SO INCONSISTENT.**
1. **THE ANSWER: “TRYING” EVERY DAY ISN'T ENOUGH.**
 2. It takes **“DYING” TO OURSELF EVERY DAY TO BECOME A FOLLOWER OF JESUS.**
- K. **MANY OF US THINK THAT DYING TO SELF IS PURE MISERY.**
1. **BUT,** when we **DIE TO OURSELVES DAILY** and **COMPLETELY SURRENDER to JESUS,** there is a **surprising side effect to dying; WE DISCOVER TRUE LIFE.**
 2. In a twist of irony, **WE FIND THAT GIVING UP OUR LIVES GIVES US THE LIFE, AND THE MARRIAGE, WE SO DESPERATELY WANTED ALL ALONG!!**
 - a. **BUT, FIRST... WE HAVE TO DIE TO OURSELVES... DAILY.**
4. **DISCUSS: DYING TO SELF IS AS A PROCESS = SANCTIFICATION**
 5. **QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION**