

FROM THIS DAY FORWARD - 5 - NEVER GIVE UP

QUESTION - How many of you would say that you married someone that was a little bit different than you and opposite in different ways? How many of you married someone that's opposite in a lot of ways? RAISE YOUR HANDS

It's interesting that when you're dating they say that **OPPOSITES ATTRACT** but when you are married they say **OPPOSITES ATTACK!**

So often what is cute when you are dating is NOT SO CUTE WHEN married!

Like: How many of you, you're the one who is punctual in your marriage, getting somewhere on time matters to you! My husband 15 minutes early is on time.

How many of you say that you're more creative with your time? Just take your time, raise your hand at your own pace,

Some of you plan a trip AHEAD. Others just kind of spin a bottle whichever way it points when it stops is the way it goes.

Then it seems SPENDERS (MONEY IS FOR FUN) ALWAYS MARRY SAVERS

Opposites will often attract when dating and the GOOD NEWS IS, that if you're different that work, because if you are both the same, then one is unnecessary - God often brings those who are different together. The challenge is we end up with conflicts and what starts out as something small then gets to be something bigger and then there's mistrust and then a lie, and then deceit and then unforgiveness and bitterness. PRETTY SOON we have two people living under the same roof but they've got two totally different lives. SOMETIMES UP COMES THE QUESTION = how do we go from being in love to the divorce court fighting over different things so quickly. THAT IS NOT GOD'S WILL AND THAT

IS WHY WE ARE TEACHING THIS SERIES ABOUT MAKING AND KEEPING FIVE COMMITMENTS: WHAT ARE THEY?

SEEK GOD - WE SEEK THE ONE WITH OUT TWO, PRAY, PRAY

FIGHT FAIR

HAVE FUN - FACE TO FACE, SIDE BY SIDE AND BELLY BUTTON -

STAY PURE

AND TODAY NEVER GIVE UP!

AND as I speak of never giving up today, I'm not talking about you staying in an abusive marriage where you're a punching bag or your being torn up all the time. In that case I believe it's healthy to separate to get counseling to make sure your safe and then work on the marriage.

I also want to say for those of you that had a marriage that need, I don't want you to feel a lot of guilt because you probably already have felt it, you may have done everything you could to keep a marriage going and someone else didn't work with you and it ended.

Others may say quite honestly "Looking back, I did a lot of things that were wrong and I could do it over I would do it differently = and YOU CARRY THE WEIGHT OF THAT.

BUT TODAY IS TODAY - YOU CAN'T UNSCRAMBLE EGGS - SO FROM THIS POINT, FROM THIS DAY FORWARD - WE WANT TO SAY THAT ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE WITH GOD AND WE WANT TO NEVER GIVE UP.

I. **Matthew 19:3-6 3 NASB** "Some Pharisees came to [a]Jesus, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to [b]divorce his wife for any reason at all?" **Some Pharisees came to Jesus to test Him. And they asked that question.** UNFORTUNATELY AT THAT TIME, WOMEN WERE SEEN AS PROPERTY. SO A MAN COULD JUST SAY, "I DON'T WANT YOU"! AND DIVORCE HIS WIFE.

II. **THE PHARISEES WERE TRING TO PUT HIM IN A TRAP** =And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and AND NOW HE IS GOING TO QUOTE GENESIS 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become **ONE FLESH** 6 So they are no longer two, **BUT ONE** flesh.

NOW HE is NOT saying "You no longer have a personality or you no longer have gifts, or you no longer have any identity; but WHAT HE IS SAYING is that the two are now in God's eyes ONE FLESH UNITED before God and that's why he said WHAT GOD HAS joined together, let no man separate."

III. THE would be like taking two pieces of paper; and super gluing the pieces of paper together from the bottom to the top = then they are STUCK - why do you think divorcee hurts so much, it's like ripping your heart out. Those of you who have been divorced, you know the pain. Those of you whose

parents divorced, you know the pain. No matter what you believe about it theologically, you know the pain.

Because what is happening, if I try to rip two pieces of paper that have been glued apart, what's going to happen?

It's going to GET MESSY, THERE WILL BE RIPS AND TEARS, AND PIECES ARE GOING TO GO IN DIFFERENT WAYS AND THATS WHY DIVORCE IS INCREDIBLY PAINFUL,

IV. ANDY STANLEY SAYS. "YOU CAN'T UN-ONE WHAT GOD MADE ONE." YOU CAN'T UN-ONE WHAT GOD MADE ONE!

A. THE PROBLEM IN Our culture is that people DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT MARRIAGE IS. THEY THINK MARRIAGE IS an AGREEMENT or a CONTRACT but the reality is, marriage is a **COVENANT** MARRIAGE IS **NOT A CONTRACT.** EVERYBODY SAY THAT, WHAT?

- 1. What is a contract based on - MUTUAL DISTRUST**
- 2. A covenant is based on MUTUAL COMMITMENT**

1. WHAT does a contract do - It limits my responsibility and it increases my rights. It basically says that if we're in a contract with one another, I'm in as far as you are in.

Ex. Renting a home - If someone rents a home from me and I don't now them, I have them sign a contract, WHY? because I don't trust them and they are not going to trust me. It basically says "If you do what you've agreed to do then I can remove you. and for your benefit, if I don't do what I said I'd do, you have judgement against me! I trust you as long as you perform. If you don't live up to my expectations I am out"!

And a lot of time, that is what so many people do with marriage, "Hey , as long as you make me happy, if you meet my needs, as long as nothing better comes along, then

we'll stick with this, but if you don't live up to you
of the contract, then I quit.

end

But MARRIAGE IS NOT A CONTRACT, IT IS A COVENANT:

1. What is a covenant? It is a permanent relationship. God is a covenantal God and God makes relationships with HIS people that are permanent.

2. In fact, the Hebrew word that is translated as covenant is the word BERITH. meaning a cutting. In the O. T. they would cut a bull in half and then the two parties would walk through the inside of the bull seven times to create a covenant. They would cut the bull in half and they would say, "If I break my cove. may what happened to the bull happen to me.

3. In the O T , people would often get married by standing before the rep of God who would then take the hand of the groom and cut into it with a blade until it bled. and same with bride - and then join their hands together k-why - Life is in the blood = life of the person was in the blood - they would mingle that LIFE. {Priest would take a cord and bind their hands together to symbolize no longer two BUT ONE.

That is why I am a big believer in not just letting anyone marry you-like the justice of the peace. Not the end of the world if you did but if you still have a choice, stand before a pastor to make those vows!

NOT AS LONG AS SHE MAKES ME HAPPY, NOT AS LONG AS I FEEL LOVE FOR HER BUT AS LONG AS WE BOTH SHALL LIVE!!!

With a contract there is an end date but not with a covenant. It is UNTIL DEATH DO WE PART SO HELP ME GOD!!!

There is nothing that can not be fixed IF GOD IS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE EQUATION. it's when he is out of it that the trouble starts, misunderstanding = lack of forgiveness, bitterness springing up - and then comes a THIRD PARTY BUT IT IS NOT GOD - IT IS THE ONE THAT JESUS WARNED US OF - THE THIEF SATAN COMES TO STEAL, KILL AND DESTROY.

V. What happens when marriage becomes difficult, even painful? I read an interview with Billy Graham's wife. She was asked if she had ever considered leaving Billy when times were hard. He would be gone sometimes 6 months and they had 4 or 5 children. She said No she had never considered divorce but had murder.

A. The reality is when we make a covenant before God We will keep that covenant even when "I'm not happy , I don't trust him, She is not this or that - I don't love him or I don't love her.

B. To get divorced because you've run out of love is like selling your car because you've run out of gas. What do you do when you run out of gas? You fill up your tank - I know there are those times when "I don't have any more love, I don't have any more forgiveness. I don't have any more grace- I KNOW - AND THAT IS WHEN YOUR SEEKING GOD REALLY PAY OFF. BECAUSE WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE ANY LOVE , GUESS WHO LOVES THROUGH YOU. THE GOD WHO IS LOVE.

C. I'm not speaking of people abusing you, continuing to be untrustworthy, lying etc. REPENTANCE HAS TO BE REAL IF RELATIONSHIP IS GOING TO GROW AND FLOURISH.

D. And here is the amazing thing about this if you are a Christian, If you are not, this is not for you, but if you are then you cannot say I love God but HATE MY HUSBAND OR WIFE - THE SCRIPTURE SAYS YOU cannot say you love God but hate your brother. I KNOW IT IS HARD, BUT IF YOU TRULY love God you can let HIM LIVE THROUGH YOU. TO FORGIVE THROUGH YOU.

VI. So what happens when you are really trying and seemingly not getting anywhere? I want to encourage you to remember the principle of **SOWING AND REAPING IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP. Gal 6:7-9 "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked, what soever he sows that he shall reap
:8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction. (That is one reason we stay pure) - the one who sows to please the Spirit (we seek God, we seek God, we Seek God.) from the Spirit will reap life.
:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not faint.**

A. Two principles of sowing and reaping in your marriage

1. You reap WHAT YOU SOW. Say ALOUD - I REAP WHAT I SOW

- a. if plant apple seed, will I get an orange tree
- b. If someone smiles at you, what are you likely to do back. **SMILE**, they planted a smile seed, you let them **REAP**
- c. **IN MARRIAGE**, if someone shows grace and compassion and thoughtfulness, what are you likely to show back = **Grace and compassion.**
- d. If someone is always complaining and comparing & critical over and over and over, what's going to happen?= You are likely to come back with defensiveness and anger and self-justification and things that are not good.
- e. Do you need to make a list - don't usually recommend but some people **DO NOT REALIZE WHAT THEY COMMUNICATE.**
- f. **THE HARVEST DEPENDS on THE SEEDS that you PLANT!**
- j. **MEN, DON'T MISS THIS. WOMEN ARE MULTIPLIERS. WHATEVER YOU GIVE THEM, THEY MULTIPLY!**

They can take a messy home and turn it into ORDER AND SMELL GOOD.

**They can take groceries and turn it into great DINNERS!
They can take the flowers, the affection, the tenderness,
and you are going to reap some belly button to
belly button, AMEN? amen! RIGHT LADIES.
You give them physical love = babies. They multiply -
YOU GIVE THEM A HARD TIME = HELL MULTIPLIERS!**

k. If you don't like your harvest, Look FIRST AT THE SEED YOU HAVE BEEN SOWING. REAPING WHAT WE SOW.

2. YOU REAP WHERE YOU SOW! IF I PLANT A SEED OVER HERE AM I GOING TO GET A TREE OVER THERE? NO NO NO. IF I PLANT ALL my energy and all of my effort and all of my passion into my hobby, is that going to help my marriage be better? No I'm gong to get better at golf or hunting or knitting or

garnering but it's not going to help my marriage. If I put all of my energy into my KIDS and we become CHILD-CENTERED PARENTS, is that going to help my marriage. NO> If I put all my energy and effort into my CAREER, IS THAT GOING TO HELP MY MARRIAGE. NO.

AND that is WHERE ARE ARE RIGHT NOW.

A. Why are things not going great, Because you haven't been seeking God, you haven't been FIGHTING FAIR, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN HAVING FUN, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN STATYING PURE. AND THAT'S WHY YOU FEEL LIKE GIVING UP.

REMEMBER: GOD IS ONE AND OUR SPOUSE IS TWO. WE HAVE TO GUARD THAT PRIORITY. IF ANYTHING ELSE MOVES INTO THAT #2 SLOT OUR MARRIAGE ISN'T GOING TO BE WHAT GOD WANT IT TO BE.

AND THAT INCLUDES putting MINISTRY #2 - NO !

B. Here is ONE STATEMENT THAT SUMS IT ALL UP:

YOUR MARRIAGE IS AS GOOD AS YOU DECIDE FOR IT TO BE!

I hope you will CIRCLE THAT IN YOUR NOTES YOUR /DECIDE

WE all have the same kind of problems - but if we seek God forgive, fight fair (FIGHT FOR RESOLUTION NOT TO WIN) have fun, stay out of trouble and don't give up. IT TAKES BOTH OF US AS ONE.

C. Some are saying Well I'm trying - he's not or I'm trying and she's not - Look God make you ONE - QUIT TRYING TO UN-ONE WHAT GOD MADE ONE.

D. YOU MIGHT AS WELL DECIDE YOU WILL BE A "GOOD ONE" AND NOT A "BAD ONE".

INTERVIEW WITH AMY -

VII LET'S GET DOWN TO WHERE WE ALL LIVE. - I heard all of that stuff -

I still don't feel like doing it, I don't feel like being nice, I don't feel like forgiving like showing grace, like praying, like work on it, like staying married. I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT SO I AM NOT GOING TO DO IT.

What other area of your life can you make that excuse and get away with it? some other significant area.

I don't feel like working this year - I'm tired of it so I'm not going to do it.

I don't feel like taking care of my kids anymore. I'm tired of the baby crying all the time, my kids needing me, so I don't want to be a parent anymore

Well what do you do? You OVERCOME THOSE FEELING AND YOU GO TO WORK, AND YOU REMAIN A RESPONSIBLE PARENT.

I DON'T FEEL LIKE PAYING TAXES - NOT GOING TO ANYMORE.

A. Ok so I'll stay married but It's going to be HORRIBLE.

B. That 's not what we are saying. What we are saying is we are never going to give up on having a God-honoring, God-blessed marriage; there we never stop SEEKING GOD, WE PRAY, WE DON'T STOP, WE NEVER STOP FIGHTING FAIR. WE ARE GOING TO FIGHT? YES BUT FIGHTING FOR RESOLUTION NOT TO WIN. WE ARE GOING TO HAVE FUN, STAY PURE, FIGHT AGAINST THE TEMPTATIONS OF THIS WORLD, GIVING IN TO QUITTING!

WHY? DON'T GROW WEARING IN DOING GOOD, FOR AT THE PROPER TIME,

COULD IT BE THAT THIS ISN'T QUITE THE TIME? God's timing is not always our timing? why wouldn't it be HIS TIMING? HE WANTS US TO GROW, TO BE MATURE EMOTIONALLY / VOLITIONALLY . BE DETERMINED - TO WIN. YOU'LL REAP A HARVEST.