

## Struggles & Uncertainty .... The Red Sea Rules by Robert Morgan

Romans 12:12 "Rejoice in Hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer" (ESV)

1. Realize that God means for you to be where you are.
  - Deut. 31:6 ... Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."
  - Jeremiah 29:11-13... <sup>11</sup>For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup>In those days when you pray, I will listen. <sup>13</sup>If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. (NLT)
2. Be more concerned for God's glory than for your relief.
  - John 9 talks about a man blind from birth... when the disciples asked who sinned, Jesus said you're asking the wrong question, this man was born blind so that the power of God could be displayed in his life.
3. Acknowledge your enemy but keep your eyes on the Lord.
  - James 4:7-8 ... <sup>7</sup>So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup>Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world.
  - Eph. 6:12 ... For we<sup>[a]</sup> are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. (NLT)
4. Pray for direction and guidance.
  - a. I Thes. 5:16-18 ... <sup>16</sup>Always be joyful. <sup>17</sup>Never stop praying. <sup>18</sup>Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. (NLT)
  - b. Ps. 51:10 ... Create <sup>[i]</sup>in me a clean heart, God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. (NASB)
5. Stay calm and confident and give God time to work.
  - Rom. 8:28 ... And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who<sup>[a]</sup> have been called according to his purpose.
6. When unsure, just take the next logical step by faith.
  - Neh. 9:19 ... But in your great mercy you did not abandon them to die in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud still led them forward by day, and the pillar of fire showed them the way through the night. (NLT)
  - Luke 11:3 ... Give us each day our daily bread. (NIV)
  - Ps. 68:19 ... Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens. (NIV) ... Praise the Lord; praise God our savior! For each day he carries us in his arms. (NLT)
  - 2 Corin. 4:16 ... That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. (NLT)
7. Envision God's enveloping presence.
  - Ps. 139:5-10 ... <sup>5</sup>You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. <sup>6</sup>Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand! <sup>7</sup>I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! <sup>8</sup>If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave,<sup>[a]</sup> you are there. <sup>9</sup>If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, <sup>10</sup>even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me. (NLT)
  - PS. 32:7-10 ... <sup>7</sup>For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory. <sup>8</sup>The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. <sup>9</sup>Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control." <sup>10</sup>Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the Lord.
  - Ps. 33:22 ... Let your unfailing love surround us, Lord, for our hope is in you alone. (NLT)
8. Trust God to deliver in His own unique way.
  - Psalms 34:10 ... The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. (NIV)
  - Psalms 34:19 ... The righteous person may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all; (NIV)

- 2 Peter 2:8-9 ... Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day. <sup>9</sup> So you see, the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials, even while keeping the wicked under punishment until the day of final judgment. (NLT)
- Gal 1:3-4 ... <sup>3</sup> May God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>[b]</sup> give you grace and peace. <sup>4</sup> Jesus gave his life for our sins, just as God our Father planned, in order to rescue us from this evil world in which we live. (NLT)
- Isaiah 55:8-9 ... <sup>8</sup> “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. <sup>9</sup> “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.
- John 13:7... as Jesus washed the disciples feet .... Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.

9. View your current crisis as a faith builder for the future.

- 2 Chronicles 20:15 ... He said: “Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the Lord says to you: ‘Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God’s.

10. Don’t forget to praise Him. ....

- Psalms 77:13-14 ... <sup>13</sup> Your ways, God, are holy. What god is as great as our God? <sup>14</sup> You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples. (NIV)
- Eph. 1:6 ... So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us, who belong to his dear Son. (NLT)
- Psalms 145:3 ... Great is the Lord! He is most worthy of praise! No one can measure his greatness. (NLT)
- 1 Peter 1:3 ... All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, (NLT)

### Intentional Focus ... Cherish by Gary Thomas

1. Think of your spouse as Adam or Eve
  - They are the only one on the earth
  - Cherish means making a marital choice to establish a “commitment to contentment.”
2. A cherishing marriage is like a ballet....
3. When wives are not honored (noticed), they feel invisible.
  - Romans 12:10 ... Paul states that Christians are to “Love each other with genuine affection and take delight in honoring each other (NLT) .... (ESV) says ... “Outdo one another in showing honor.”
  - Phil. 2:3 ... Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves (ESV)
4. Cherishing is marked by protecting our spouses’ sense of worth and value – finding meaning in their lives and vocations.
5. Cherishing calls us to go to war against contempt.
6. To have a cherishing marriage, we need to be intentional about the way we speak to each other – not just the content, but the tone and body language as well.
7. Your spouse is a unique individual .... Do not treat them like a stereotype.
8. Cherishing your spouse will require being recharged from time-to-time.
  - James 2:3 ... “for we all stumble in many ways” (ESV) .... “We all make many mistakes” (NLT)
  - Eph. 4:1-3 ... Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. <sup>2</sup> Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love. <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.
  - Prov. 19:11 ... Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.
9. Cherish is a chosen mental attitude.
  - Think about your spouse’s positive qualities.
  - Foster a servant’s heart.

## **Adult Children**

- We were on the boat to Tarshish .... We cried out to God to calm the storm but until we through the one who caused the turbulence overboard we had to endure it. Even those on the boat with Jonah, who did not know who God was, acknowledged God's power over the turbulence.
- Romans 14:10-12 ... It is written: “As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God.’” <sup>12</sup> So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.
- We need to let them go and give them to God (again and again)
- Though we raised them with our morals, values, faith and expectations .... It is now their freedom and responsibility to choose these for themselves.
- Either way, our job is to be there for them
  - Cheer them on
  - Encourage them without being intrusive
  - Listen
  - Offer Influence
- It is NOT our job to
  - Give advice (unless asked for)
  - Expect them to obey us
  - Put our expectations on them
  - Continue to try to raise them
- Differentiating between responsibility and respect can make or break the relationship.
- Healthy communication based in respect is essential
  - The opposite of respect is abuse ... this is often expressed through anger or passive aggressive behavior or even manipulation
- Respect is treating each other as a valuable gift from God

## **Key Take-A-Ways**

- Work Through Conflict ... Red Sea Rules
  - If you are having trouble with this ... tap into the Marriage Mentor Program
- Cherish Your Spouse ... Adam / Eve
- Love Your Adult Children Unconditionally and Prayerfully .... And tell them
- Share God's work in your life with your grandchildren

## **Moving Forward .... Be Intentional**

- Find activities to do together
  - Serve in Ministry
  - Intentional Time / Focused with No Distractions (phone / TV)
  - If both spouses are still working .... Add it to the calendar
  - Date Each Other
  - Get involved in a community group

# **Be Intentional**

### **It's Your Move Child**

I gave you life ... But I cannot live it for you.

I can teach you things ... But I cannot make you learn.

I can give you directions ... But I cannot always be there to lead you.

I can allow you freedom ... But I cannot account for it.

I can take you to church ... But I cannot make you believe.

I can teach you right from wrong ... But I can't always decide for you.

I can buy your beautiful clothes ... But I cannot make you lovely inside.

I can offer you advice ... But I cannot accept it for you.

I can give you love ... But I cannot force it upon you.

I can teach you to share ... But I cannot make you unselfish.

I can teach you respect ... But I can't force you to show honor.

I can advise you about friends ... But I cannot choose them for you.

I can teach you about sex ... But I cannot keep you pure.

I can tell you the facts of life ... But I can't build your reputation.

I can tell you about drinking ... But I can't say NO for you.

I can tell you about drugs ... But I can't prevent you from using them.

I can tell you about lofty goals ... But I can't achieve them for you.

I can teach you kindness ... But I can't force you to be gracious.

I can warn you about sins ... But I cannot make your morals.

I can love you as a son (or daughter) ... But I cannot place you in God's family.

I can pray for you ... But I cannot make you walk with God.

I can teach you about Jesus ... But I cannot make him your Savior.

I can teach you to obey ... But I cannot make Jesus your Lord.

I can tell you how to live ... But I cannot give you eternal life.

But whatever you choose, I will always love you!

— Author Unknown