



## Voices and Choices

### Part 4

June 23, 2024

The Book of Ecclesiastes 4:7-12, <sup>7</sup> Again, I saw vanity under the sun: <sup>8</sup> one person who has no other, either son or brother, yet there is no end to all his toil, and his eyes are never satisfied with riches, so that he never asks, “For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of pleasure?” This also is vanity and an unhappy business. <sup>9</sup> Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. <sup>10</sup> For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! <sup>11</sup> Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? <sup>12</sup> And though a man might prevail

against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” May the Lord add His blessing to the Reading and the Hearing of His Word today, in Jesus Name! Amen!

At the beginning of this month, we began a new series entitled, “Voices and Choices” where our focus has been on the voices that seek to influence our marriages and our homes. Today I will be wrapping up this series in light of next Sunday being our July 4<sup>th</sup> production lead by Pastor Brad and his team. With that said, the past 3 Sundays I have shared quite a bit on marriage and the raising of children; some of my points perhaps were heavy and challenging and yet other parts hopefully were encouraging and motivating to you.

In my observations of marriages and those that I have counseled, the one central thread that seems to be consistent is that I am only brought into the mix when world war III has begun in the home. Not always but the vast majority of the time, when I am asked to counsel a married couple, it is after some massive blow up or a bad decision.

Hence the reason for this series; it is my utmost prayer and my hope that addressing many of these things from the pulpit will assist you all to be proactive in your home and not reactive. Proactive in your marriage and not reactive only. And perhaps the proverbial train goes off the rails because we failed to protect our priorities. Therefore, Point #1...

# 1. If We are Going to Recalibrate our Homes, We must Reprioritize your Priorities!

- a. Your priority must be your spouse and not your children
  - i. “Well our kids are our world” Wrong answer
  - ii. I shared this a few weeks ago... You are not in covenant with your child; your child is the byproduct of covenant relationship with one another before God. If you are not one another’s world that child’s world is going to implode.
  - iii. Your marriage needs to be the priority; not little Timmy’s soccer game.
- b. Your priority must be your spouse and not your financial situation
  - i. “Just five more years on the job and we will be financially to the place where we can focus on our marriage.” Wrong Answer
- c. Your priority must be your spouse and not your retirement plan!
  - i. “Well if we can just make it to retirement then we can make our marriage what we believe it can be.” Wrong Answer
- d. Pastor Tony Evans stated the following, “Your problem isn’t time... you watch tv. The problem isn’t energy... you play softball/baseball. Your problem isn’t money... you have two cars and a smart phone. Your problem is Priorities.”

## 2. If We are Going to Recalibrate our Marriages, We must Reprioritize your Communication!

- a. A man speaks 7,000 words a day; A woman speaks 20,000 words a day. Almost 3 times the number of words
- b. Ladies, your husband is not your girlfriend nor your mama
  - i. Ladies, God designed us (MEN) to be fixers.
  - ii. We are doers; not great listeners so don't get frustrated when your husband wants you to get to the point so he can fix what is bothering you. If he's aware of something broken, he's thinking of how to fix it while you are speaking.
  - iii. Caveman principle - men retreat into their minds when problems are presented to them. And when he comes back out of the cave, he's been working on what you need fixed.
- c. Men, your wife is not your employee nor your co-worker
  - i. The Bible says she is the weaker vessel for a reason; your ribbing and verbal cutting that is considered jesting with your buddies at work is like dropping a nuclear weapon at home.
  - ii. You must in all diligence guard how you speak to your wife, how you speak to your children and how you speak in the professional world because more times than not, all three will require of us to shift our speech.

### 3. If We are Going to Recalibrate our Marriages, We must Reprioritize your Intimacy!

- a. When we do not make intimacy a priority in our marriages, our times of intimacy will get the “leftovers” of our time. Friends, our homes are the most valuable and vital place of Ministry.
- b. If we refuse to Minister in our own homes then how can we expect God to allow us to minister in His House? Our energies must be placed into what is a priority and not the things that are not a priority. You must prioritize and execute; not minimize priorities and excuse your misstep. Who is your priority?
- c. And on that point, using Intimacy as a bargaining chip is sinful and out of order. You should never do that. You should never wager with the one you are in love with but rather see the value of ministering to the one you are in love with.
- d. Friends there are times when things are whirlwinds and difficulties seem to surround us; I get that and I know it to be true. However, there is a difference between a season and a life sentence. And furthermore, your feelings or emotions do not negate your responsibility. Your intimacy and engagement must be a daily priority and not a visitation when either of you feel up to it.



#### 4. If We are Going to Recalibrate our Homes, We must Reprioritize the Environment of our Homes!

- a. Wives, your husband desires to be respected and to feel honored and in a healthy home, the husband is respected and honored by his wife and his children will replicate what they see the mother model. Wives, your children will not honor whom you dishonor.
  - i. Ladies, if you would respect your man and demonstrate honor, you will never have to ask him to take the trash out again. Men perform best as husbands when they are preferred and prioritized; not placed down the list of priorities.
  - ii. He will work himself to the bone to make sure you are loved and feel safe. Why? Because what he needs to fuel his position is being met.
  - iii. But when you disrespect and berate your husband, he retreats into the catacombs of his mind and will never divulge his hurt or his heart to you because he can't trust you with his heart or his emotions.
  - iv. Men are emotional creatures too; we just don't emote like you do. And that's ok.

- b. Husbands, your wives desire to be wanted, to be loved and to feel secure.
- i. Men if you love your woman and create an environment of safety for her, you will never have to demand respect; it will naturally flow to you.
  - ii. Wives, when your husbands lead the way, it should naturally manifest the desire in your own heart to reciprocate; not demand more.
  - iii. Husbands, the Bible says in Ephesians 5:28, **“<sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.”**
  - iv. And if we choose Christ then let us also choose our wives over all else, and love her in so that we can truly say that we love ourselves. Now why is all of this so important?
  - v. **“<sup>9</sup> Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. <sup>10</sup> For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! <sup>11</sup> Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? <sup>12</sup> And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”**