

A Peaceful Marriage and Life

“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” (Romans 12:18). “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another” (Romans 12:10). “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Philippians 2:3,4). The Bible is clear, very clear - we are commanded to give it our very best effort through Christ’s accompanying strength to get along with people. How much more is this required with our spouse? I want you to throw yourself into neutral gear and hear me out in this brief article. There are four principles I want to share with you on securing a peaceful marriage and life:

1. Give Up.

When I say, “Give up,” I am referring to your attitude toward the Lord. Should there be anybody reading these words who does not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, please go back to “home” on our website and click on “Answers” and when you arrive at that page read carefully “What’s Your Answer” and you will be introduced to the person of Christ if you are willing to repent and believe on Him.

Most of you that are reading this have already made the commitment to receive Christ. If you are having relational problems in your marriage or with others at home, work, or even church, it is imperative you “give up” your whole life to God. The Christian life does not work with halfway surrenders. God blesses those who unconditionally surrender their all to the Lord.

One of the ironies in history is the country of Japan. If you will take a simple drive down any American road you will see that Japan is one of the most prosperous countries in the world. This year Toyota took over the number one manufacturing position from General Motors. Go back with me just over six decades to Emperor Hirohito’s attempt to forcefully import the unkind reign of Japan’s terror over Asia and after Pearl Harbor; we could no longer stay neutral. They would not give up. One of the most heart-breaking records of history came when President Truman made the incredibly hard order for a nuclear attack on Japan. In the assault on Hiroshima and Nagasaki it is estimated that within a few months from the initial bombing the number of lives lost was 310,000. It was devastating. The Emperor, along with all of Japan, surrendered unconditionally. General Douglas McArthur and other American leaders then showed the defeated people not only how to live in peace, but to do so with a democratic flare that would bring prosperity to millions of Japanese within sixty years. Japan’s greatest victories as a nation came after they gave up!

The point I am making is - don’t live in such a way that God has to take drastic measures with us to capture our stubborn will; surrender unconditionally to Him today. The key to getting along with others is complete surrender to God. It is said of King Uzziah, “And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper” (II Chronicles 26:5). God blesses the person who gives up to Him!

2. Give In.

The thought of “giving in” when it comes to maintaining happiness in marriage is not always acceptable in the minds of many, if not most, who think from a humanistic viewpoint. Even among Christians, this is not always a viable reality. Men want to keep their “macho” image and woman want to assert their authority beyond the Scriptural allowance. In the matters of right and wrong, there should be no compromise. We do the right thing, no matter what the consequences. “In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not” (Psalm 15:4).

When it comes to getting along, if your mate wants you to be involved in their special activity in

life, why not consider “giving in”? A husband may really want his wife to go to a professional baseball game with him. If it is on a Friday night and doesn’t interfere with church, go for it! The wife may want him to go bike riding some Saturday morning with her and the kids; do it! Being with her husband, showing him she cares even though she had plans to do some scrap booking can give her a real inroad to his life. His scrubbing his softball game to go biking may not have been what he really wanted to do, but the unselfishness will be appreciated. It is time that we “give in.” It’s worth it to make a marriage happy. “A man’s pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit” (Proverbs 29:23).

3. Give Out.

We are commanded in Scripture to follow the admonition of our Lord who said, “...It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). It is the open arms that receive the embrace, not the clenched fist. The key to great love and great marriage is generosity. How true are these words of inspiration: “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Philippians 2:3,4). The spouse who is on the constant lookout to help meet the needs of his/her partner is being like Jesus in a very selfish world. The world says, “Satisfy yourself at all cost!” I heard with my own ears a young man called into the Dawson McAllister talk show. He had received 300,000 dollars from his deceased grandfather as an inheritance. In one month’s time, he had spent it all on drugs. He sacrificed four athletic scholarships due to his involvement with drugs and follow up time in jail. His teeth were rotting out of his head. This is a sad extreme of an attitude that is pervasive in our society. People want to forget what is best for their families or themselves and satisfy themselves. Throw reason to the wind. The surrendered Christian mentality is, in this life, foremost for the glory of God and pleasure of Jesus Christ. Out of the Christ-life comes the giving life. The life that gives is the life that lives. Winston Churchill said, “You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give.” Barbara Bush said, “Giving frees us from the familiar territory of our own needs by opening our mind to the unexplained worlds occupied by the needs of others.” It is when we explore the world of need in which our spouse or brother or sister lives that we allow our world to merge with theirs, to become a better world.

4. Go On.

For those of you who are already living in the realm with which we speak today, keep up the good work. If you are not there in “giving up, giving in, and giving out” – start today! “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection...” (Hebrews 6:1). It is the consistent life that bears the most fruit. If you decide today to be unselfish, yet tomorrow fight for all the rights you believe your mate and the world owes you, forget it! You will not succeed in keeping peace with your family and friends. You will not be trusted if you are not consistent. This is the hardest part of taking the cross; it must be done regularly and consistently! “And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Luke 9:23).

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- Pastor Pope -

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