

Husband, God Is Calling You to a Divine Kind of Maintenance

Let's go back to the Garden of Eden to show you an amazing fact as it relates to the creation of man. Genesis 2:5 says that God has not sent rain on the earth and, "there was no man to work the ground." It appears that God was making all of creation and was looking for man to work it, maintain it, and care for this amazing creation.

Genesis 2:15 confirms this idea of man's commission to maintain and care for this creation. "The Lord took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."

Often when I am sharing this in a marriage conference, I'll say to the men that all of us are simply maintenance men. God has called each one of us, men and women, to care for the garden He has chosen to give us.

Men, everything in your garden is yours to maintain. Everything and everyone in your garden requires maintenance. This maintenance must come only from you. Only you can maintain the people and things God gives to you in your garden. When I accept this, that it's my responsibility before God to maintain or care for my garden, it helps me to not be resistant towards doing the dishes, laundry, or big projects around the house. Maintaining the garden is the first calling of all of ours.

Remember that this calling to maintain the garden preceded the law or sin. Adam and Eve's calling to maintain comes out of God's design for them, even in a sinless world. The calling to maintain is not a result of the fall. The fall made maintaining more difficult and challenging. The fall added

pain to a process that was probably a lot easier before the fall.

To maintain is to be in alignment with you being created in the image of God. To maintain a woman or maintain a man is a calling of God in which he has uniquely equipped you to do. Now in our sin nature we can resist this calling and the blessing of walking in this calling, but it is a calling and responsibility given by God to both of you.

Also I have to remind men that Eve was in the garden too. She also is part of that responsibility to maintain and care for the garden. Eve needs to be maintained by Adam. Eve, Adam is in your garden and yes; he has some needs only you can maintain and that is the blessing of God in marriage to maintain each other.

Maintaining isn't a popular idea here in the United States. We like to hire someone to do this or that for us. We don't even wash our cars anymore; we let a machine do this for us called a car wash. In a culture that is moving further and further from the reality of maintenance, we can lose the very fabric that life is maintenance.

The fact that all of life is maintenance can be felt as painful or delightful to you. I enjoy having a house and that house requires maintenance every change of season. I also have a car and it requires maintenance. If I maintain it well, it is more likely to serve me better and longer over the years. However, if maintenance is a burden or painful, you can employ a technique I have seen many addicts employ in their life called denial. You can simply deny life or that your spouse needs maintenance and then have those things break down more often and require even more maintenance later on.

Attitude is a very important aspect of maintenance. How many of you before you eat a great meal, curse God? "God, why do I have to work to eat, cook and clean up? Why have you cursed

me with this maintenance?" How about in the shower as you get cleansed and smell great from all the products you have in that shower, do you curse God? "God, why do I have to spend all this time in the shower, and the cost of soap...?"

Christ doesn't show up and feed His church irregularly, but daily. If you, as an individual, accept fully that marriage is a daily discipline, marriage can be so much easier. Until you fully accept the daily maintenance of your spouse, you may be angry about it, bargain about it, be sad about it, or even just deny their need for daily maintenance by you, and you alone.

This principle can really set you free, depending upon your response to the very real reality that your spouse requires daily maintenance. If you accept this maintenance principle you have a grateful attitude. Just like you thank God for the food, shower or sleep, you thank God for the spouse and your calling to maintain them.

If, however, you have hardened your heart, the daily maintenance of this child of God will be a burden. You will be burdened by praying with them, sharing your heart, dating, sex, as well as the emotional, and financial cost of a spouse. Maintenance exposes our hearts. If we do this cheerfully, then I think we understand what Jesus feels when He serves His church every day.

If we accept our full responsibility to maintain our spouse this process leads us into the glorious creation of a Godly marriage on earth. When you have a heart of grateful maintenance, you will just try to meet the needs of your spouse's heart, body, sexuality, financially, and parenting, without judging their validity against your own preconceived grid. In the beginning of this article we laid down the idea that we are all called to maintain our garden. God has placed your spouse in your garden. You fully accept your daily maintenance without a negative attitude. To be Christ like is

to accept the maintenance of your spouse with a good attitude.

You have today and the rest of your life to be the most awesome maintenance of your spouse. I say go for the gold when it comes to maintaining your spouse. {eo}

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