

This Is Why You Can't Solve Your Marriage Problem

I have counseled many spouses who had to stop blaming life, the kids, their finances, work obligations, age or culture for their lack of love. When we remain in blaming mode, we can't heal what is wrong in our heart or our life.

In my more than 30 years of counseling, I've yet to meet a person who is a functional spouse doing the basics or minimum toward their spouse say, "I feel great about the way I treat my spouse." They don't admit that deep down they know they're not giving their marriage or their spouse their best. They know they're not truly being godly because to be godly would be to be a lover. They know they're not all in and being selfish, which feels terrible.

Such low marriage-esteem can then continue to grow to negatively impact the marriage. Imagine two people who know they don't all-in love with their spouse. They promised God, family and friends they'd all-in love their spouse but are failing spectacularly on a daily basis. Both individuals feel like failures because they are. They both know they're liars because they are. They both know they're in direct disobedience to the Spirit of God within them.

This scenario creates resentment and hopelessness toward their spouse for being so irresponsible with their heart, spirit and sexuality. It's also the perfect scenario to build up guilt, shame and lowered self-esteem. The longer they function instead of being in all-in love, the worse everyone feels.

However, and thankfully, our God is a God of mercy and true love. Regardless of any sin we commit, He's not only willing to forgive us but empowers us to overcome that sin. I can hear some of you quietly thinking, 'it's not a sin the way I treat

my spouse.' For some of you, it's not because you're already a lover-spouse and these pages are only going to validate that you're a lover-spouse. However, many might feel conviction of their lack of loving their spouse as a sin. James 4:17 states, "Anyone then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them."

Some of us know a lot about how to love our spouse. We know what blesses them and makes them feel special, yet others often intentionally don't do it. This is a sin.

Logically if not doing it is sin, then doing it is something really good. As believers it's a priority to all of us to hear from the Father at the end of our lives, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

We know we want to hear such words said about who we are at work, by our neighbors, and church family but I believe the greatest place to hear "well done good and faithful servant" is in our marriage.

Our marriage provides a daily opportunity to serve in various capacities, including demonstrating the nature of Christ to our spouse and doing so in such a way that we're all-in lover-spouses toward the one we married.

Our Father in heaven deserves our absolute best in being lovers to our spouse. After all, God's not just our Father, He's our father-in-law. How we treat our spouse deeply affects the way God feels about you.

If you're an all-in lover-spouse toward your spouse, this makes Him happy with you. If, however, you're just functioning, tolerating or, even worse, withholding, He's not happy with you as a son- or daughter-in-law.

Take a moment and really think about God as your father-in-law. Close your eyes and guess at what He feels about you. What would He say to you as your in-law? Would He be proud,

hurt, disgusted? {eoa}

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