

Watch Out for This Oft-Ignored Signal of a Fizzling Marriage

Forty years seems like a long time, but it goes by in a flash. Today, my husband and I have been married for that long. I remember when we first got married. It was almost impossible to think of being married that hope that was there became wishful thinking only a few years into marriage.

Mess

This happens to many people, and unfortunately, marriages are abandoned because our mate was not the perfect person we thought he or she was. As a matter of fact, after about five or six years, we begin to think maybe God made a mistake when He put us together. Or we may think, *Did God really put us together in the first place?* Or the most dangerous of all, we think, *I just made a huge mess out of my life by committing to marriage.*

The biggest issue in failed marriages as I see it is one of the two persons has simply given up wanting to connect with the other. Small issues like dirty, smelly socks not being picked up and put in the hamper or the garbage not being taken out become huge issues that shove any caring, concern or love out of the way. It becomes more about the mess that we are rather than the promise we are becoming.

Dance

Marriage is an interesting dance between two people who are about as opposite as they can be. So we can either learn from each other and become helpmates, a mirror to reflect back to them, or we can become a sledgehammer to smash them to pieces in order to make them like us.

You would not want to marry yourself. You married that man or woman because you were incomplete. Having another person just like you would only make you even more incomplete.

Seeing your mate as God's gift to you to help you learn better how to walk through this life is the first step to lifelong love. Then, each day becomes a beautiful journey of learning and loving.

Communion

After 40 years, I finally love my husband for who he is, not for who I have made him to be. Discovering who he is has become a lifelong adventure, like a gift I unwrap each day and embrace each night.

Scripture says two become one flesh, which is indicated in Genesis 2:24 and reiterated again in Mark 10:8 when Jesus answered a question about divorce. Through these Scriptures, God is indicating one reason for marriage. Yes, He's talking about sex and procreation, but He's also talking about a beautiful communion of two people, which is culminated in one of life's greatest pleasures

Humans, though, have a tendency to pervert any gift God gives us. We do that by wanting more of the delights God has provided for us. So some seek those delights without marriage or outside of marriage.

The bigger issue is, though, we have not really understood what marriage is all about. It's about becoming more than one. It's about allowing God to work in the midst of our marriage to create a strong, deep union that will see us through whatever life throws our way. With Him we form a three-strand cord (Eccl. 4:12), which is not easily broken.

Through Thick and Thin

I've said many times that my husband has loved me through

thick and thin, more of the former than the latter. If it had only been about sex there would have been many years he would have left. The fact he stayed and walked with me through all my issues only makes me love him more.

He has not just been my mate, he has been my anchor, my teacher and my lover. However, there was a time that I loved sugary treats more than anything, even more than him. I didn't cognitively realize it at the time, but my behavior revealed the truth.

Gift

God transformed me, restored me and anointed me to share my message with others. I couldn't have done it without the gift he gave me more than 40 years ago when I met a tall, blonde-haired, blue-eyed man of peace who would become my husband for life.

God knew what and who I needed to steady me, calm me, love me and put up with me. He used Roy Irving Parker to train me to be who I am today. Though I didn't always assimilate all the lessons quickly, I finally learned the ones that matter the most.

My husband is created by God to be who he is. I am created by God to be who I am and together with God we are way more than one.

More than One

I am noise.

You are silence.

I am an abundance of words.

You are well-chosen, words.

I am talk.

You are thought.

I am quick reaction.

You are measured response.

I am weak.

You are strong.

I am faltering steps.

You are dancing on the wind.

I am the receiver.

You are the giver.

You pour your love into and over me

And I gladly receive your gift.

Eye-to-eye,

Skin-on-skin,

We wrestle in our exultations

Of one another's differences.

I am center stage.

You are behind-the-scenes.

I am options and research.

You are get-in-the-car-and-go.

I am work and then work some more.

You are work, play, rest.

Your rhythms are set,

Mine bounce with the day.

All through the night, I feel your heart beat

And I am deeply satisfied

To be the one you have been beside

For 40 years and beyond.

It is said there won't be marriage in heaven,

But something even more glorious.

All of life is but a dress rehearsal

For the day we both will be forever with the Creator.

It's beyond our experiences,

Past the brink of this reality,

Still I have known as much on heaven on earth

As one human being can have and still live in the super-abundance of it all.

I am turmoil.

You are calm assurance.

I am shouts of joy.

You are quiet whispers of love.

I am eyes that see.

You are hands that touch.

Me-You-God, and God is the One who knows

This three-strand cord binds us together as more than one.
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