

What Would Jesus Say About How You Speak to Your Spouse?

Think back as to what words your soul was marinated in as a developing person. You and your spouse's souls were marinated in words regularly and daily by your parents.

Depending on if the primary ingredient of the sauce was criticism, silence or praise, you may have come into the marriage marinated in this certain flavor. As a child or adolescent, you didn't get to pick the sauce you were marinated in. The choice of the sauce belonged 100% to your parents.

As believers, we get the option to marinate ourselves in another sauce. We can marinate in the Word and presence of God. That's really good sauce and can be the ingredient that transforms our lives and marriage. Now let's look at the sauces you may have been previously marinated in as a little person.

Most of us, when we became parents, made the decision to do things differently—in some cases, way differently—regardless of the sauce we grew up in. I have heard countless parents tell me they decided these children of theirs were going to be raised differently, and they were going to be loved every day. They chose to either praise and connect to their children, spend quality time, buy them gifts or carry out countless other reversals from the parenting they received growing up.

As Christians, we also get to choose to be marinated in the presence, the person and the Word of God. We can decide to marinate in His love for us and allow His voice, His truth and His nurturing of us into all the pores of our soul and be changed by His person in our life. This is a major decision as Christians—we can choose to be impacted by God who loves us,

regardless of what sauce our parents gave to us.

A decision I have rarely seen in my office is what kind of primary voice or sauce you are going to be toward your spouse. We are cognizant of deciding to be better parents, but what about the sauce you are providing to your spouse?

Think about this for a moment. Your spouse was with their family from birth to 18 or so years. You marry them in their 20s and if you stay married for life, your marriage could span 50 to 70 years. Your sauce, whether it is criticism, silence or praise, is the dominant sauce your spouse experiences throughout their life.

Remember: As a child, they had no choice in the sauce. They also have no choice as to what sauce you provide. They are blessed or cursed on a regular basis by the sauce you provide to them. They can't choose the ingredients you feed them, whether you choose your flesh, the devil or the Spirit of God; they simply have to experience your choice of sauce toward them.

Think for a moment about how every word you speak toward your spouse will be evaluated, if that were to be the case. Which scale would weigh the heaviest in your word assessment toward your spouse? Would you weigh heaviest on criticism, focusing on the negative; or silence, leaving them feeling tolerated or managed? Or would you weigh heaviest in praise of them on a regular basis?

Stop and really think what Jesus would say about your sauce toward your spouse. One day He will assess you on this issue, but what would He say today? Take a moment and really think this out. As Christians, we won't have the excuse of our parents because we could have chosen to give God authority over our hearts and lives.

As you consider this, I want you to remember God has given you the responsibility of being the primary voice in your spouse's

life. This is as great a responsibility as being a parent. Intentionally marinate your spouse for their betterment.

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