

You Can Love Your Spouse More When You Realize This About Them

It seems obvious enough, but many people get married with unrealistic expectations of the person they are marrying. Here is a newsflash for you: Nobody is perfect.

Here's the point: You both bring something into your marriage that is destructive. It is called sin.

Most of the troubles we face in a marriage aren't intentional or personal. In most situations, we don't face difficulty because our spouse intentionally did something to make our life difficult. In moments of anger, that could happen. But most often, what's really happening is that our lives are being affected by the sin, weakness and failure of the person we are living with.

If your wife is having a bad day, that bad day will splash up on you in some way. If your husband is angry about his job, there is a good possibility that he'll bring that anger home with him.

When your ears hear and your eyes see the sin, weakness and failure of your husband or wife, it's never an accident—it's always grace! God loves your spouse, and He's committed to transforming him or her by His grace. And, he has chosen you to be one of His regular tools of change. He will cause you to see, hear and experience your spouse's need for change so that you can be an agent of His rescue.

These are precious moments of ministry, but we tend to turn moments of ministry into moments of anger. Rather than serving God's purpose, we tend to personalize what is not personal. For example, at the end of his bad day at work, your husband

doesn't say to himself, "I know what I'll do. I'll take my bad day out on my wife so that her day gets as wrecked as mine."

No, the trouble you're experiencing is not about you directly. It's your trouble because this angry man is your husband, but what you're experiencing is not personal in terms of conscious intentionality. You're simply living with a flawed person, so you'll experience his sin.

Here's what happens next: When you personalize what isn't personal, you tend to be adversarial in your response. What motivates you is not the spiritual need in your spouse that God has revealed, but your spouse's offense against you, your schedule, your peace and so on.

What should be your response in a moment of ministry (for my spouse) becomes a response in a moment of anger (against my spouse). Rather than desiring to minister to your spouse, what you actually want to do is get them out of your way so you can go back to whatever was engaging you before.

When we respond in an adversarial way, we actually escalate the trouble that the other person splashed up on us. This leads to something else: We settle for quick situational solutions that don't get to the heart of the matter. Rather than searching for ways to help, we tell the other to get a grip; we attempt to threaten them into silence or we get angry and turn a moment of weakness into a major confrontation.

Even during the best of times, you'll experience the sin, weakness, and failure of your spouse. It's inevitable—you're married to a flawed person. But on the Cross, Jesus Christ provided everything you need to respond in a godly way. What response will you choose?

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