



Achieving a Resurrection Marriage

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As we again approach the observance of Christ's amazing trip to the Cross--His death and resurrection--it occurs to us that the strongest marriages are those where both partners have truly embraced the message of the cross—dying to our own agenda so that we may walk and live in “Resurrection Power.” As many have preached over the years, death precedes resurrection. The same is true in what we call “resurrected marriages—those that have moved from high levels of self-centeredness to sacrifice and humility.”

The Bible challenges us with these amazing words from **Phil. 2:1-11**:

¹If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ²then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. ³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

⁵Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!

⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

From this passage, coupled with a lot of experience in marriage, we would offer these ideas for couples to ponder as we approach the Easter season:

- Having a Christ-yielded marriage requires a process of allowing our selfishness to be put to death on a daily basis. As we learn to set aside our own wants and wishes in our day-to-day choices, God can reform and resurrect our relationship. Surprisingly, the more we give up our own agenda and embrace God's plans for us, the more God is able to shape us into what he had in mind for us. (I Peter 5:5-10)
- We are to be diligent in trying to walk together in oneness of spirit and purpose.
- God challenges us to set aside selfish ambition and vain conceit (thinking more highly of ourselves than we should).
- We should actually look for evidence that our partner is better than we are.

- Our day-to-day focus should be more on our partner than on ourselves
- We are encouraged to become a willing servant to our partner
- Christ is a champion—a perfect model--of “death to self.” This involves death to me and mine....death to my agenda....death to my stubborn, unyielding personal opinions.... and death to my desire to change my partner in a way that may or may not line up with God’s plan for them. As we begin to walk in the obedience of Phil. 2, God frequently rewards us (and our partner) with a softened heart. Living with a hard-hearted partner is no picnic.

As we once again ponder the deeper meanings of Resurrection Sunday, Easter again becomes synonymous with new beginnings and fresh starts. Is God calling us to this fresh beginning both in our relationship with Him and with our marriage partner? We would suggest that Phil. 2 says “yes.”

Husbands, let us agree once again to love our wives as Christ loves His Church. Wives, may you have the grace to submit to your husband as unto the Lord (Eph. 5:22-27).