

“FAMILY ~ Divorce proofing Your marriage” 8.15.10

Bride-zilla clip ☺

Today we are going to spend some time with the original Bride-zilla in the O.T. ☺

- I. Ahab & Jezebel (snap-shots into their demise)
 - A. (R) I Kings 16: 29 – 33 or p. 275 in pew Bible
 1. Jezebel was quite the wife ~ she was credited with corrupting not only her husband but the entire N. Kingdom of Israel, by promoting pagan worship.
 2. When she married Ahab & moved to Jezreel, a city that served the Lord, she single-handedly decided to turn it into a city that worshipped pagan god, Baal.
 - B. (R) II Kings 9: 7 (next book to your right)
Jezebel massacred every prophet of God she could find ☹
 - C. (R) I Kings 19: 1 – 4
 1. Immediately following Elijah’s great victory over 450 prophets of Baal & 400 prophets of Asherah who were supported by Jezebel; we find the great prophet of God running for his life in fear of this woman.
 2. Jezebel was not all talk: she not only carried a big stick but used it violently!
 - D. (R) I Kings 21: 1- 15 Conflict Management 101
 - E. KEY VERSE = (R) I Kings 21: 25

Jezebel & Ahab’s marriage was not a match made in heaven. As a matter of fact I can’t imagine how bad their home-life must have been. The state of marriage has been at risk since the early pages of the Bible: It’s still alarming, how many marriages today are at risk.

Every 10 to 13 seconds a husband & wife get divorced ☹

Do you remember your marriage vows? Do you remember the promises you made before God Himself and your spouse?

I fill in your name take you fill in your spouses name to be my wife or husband

to have and to hold; from this day forward;
for better for worse; for richer for poorer;
in sickness & in health; to love & to cherish;

KEY PHRASE:

Until we are separated by death; I will never divorce you;
as God is my witness – I give you my promise!

Tough Reality: 156 couples will break their promises to their spouse & to God (to end their marriage in divorce) by the time this sermon is finished ☹

Every minute of every day in every week → families are being torn apart & broken by divorce.

Today’s msg is about how to Divorce–Proof your marriage.

Over the past (27 yrs) I've collected these ideas from a variety of places that include ministry experience & trusted conservative - pastoral clinicians.

II. 7 ways to Divorce-Proof your marriage:

1st way to Divorce-Proof = Be in love with Jesus

- Primary (foundational) to establishing a healthy family.
- Psalm 127: 1 explains, "Unless the Lord builds a house, the work of the builders is wasted."
- Nurture your love for Jesus (TOGETHER) as early as possible. Learn to PRAY together ~ simply thank God everyday for His blessings. Learn to HONOR together ~ make Jesus the #1 priority above all. Learn to SERVE together ~ maybe in the nursery; good birth control ☺
- Learn to SURRENDER together ~ allow Jesus to lead your family.
 - Ephesians 5: 21, "...submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."
 - Bye-bye power struggles ~ see ya!

2nd way to Divorce-Proof = Be emotionally faithful

- Gentleman, put your wife at the top of every relational list you have.
- Love her unconditionally & love her with every ounce of creativity you can muster.
- Practice of faithfulness requires vigilance every day. Faithfulness is far more than a physical condition: if this idea is vague, answer these questions.
 - Who is your primary emotional confidant?
 - Who do you text most often? Really, who is # 1?
 - Who lights up your fantasy life?

New Infidelity that is destroying too many marriages unnecessarily; Emotional Affairs

Dr. Shirley Glass psychotherapist entitled: Not Just Friends

"she was seeing so many people in loving marriages who were disapproving of extramarital sex & yet who got involved in an affair that began as friendship."

(3) Ways to Avoid an Emotional Affair

1st, Avoid Secrecy

- The boundary between a friendship & an emotional affair is mainly secrecy.
- If the relationship is an open book, it's probably a friendship.
 - When attempts are made to hide feelings or interactions, the friendship is becoming something else.
 - Several things have made affairs & sexual sins so much easier
 - Texting + Social networking + Twitter
 - Virtual internet illicit, secret, clandestine communication
 - (R) Luke 12: 2 – 3 or p. 794 of pew Bible

2nd, Avoid Confidential Investments

- If you have a friend of the opposite sex who needs support or wants to talk about personal problems include your spouse in your helping gesture.
- "Confidential investments" in another person's calamity are a well trodden path toward becoming emotionally involved.

3rd, Avoid Confessing Sexual Attractiveness

- Ephesians 4: 29, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

- Abstain from sexual dialogue w/persons other than your spouse!
 - Conversational intimacy is a great need in many people's lives.
 - Don't flirt – even in jest, only toying w/danger.
 - Avoid flattery – may arouse desire when you did not intend it too!

Proverbs 6: 27 asks a good question, "Can fire be carried in the bosom, w/out burning one's clothes?"

Ole Country Preacher said, "If you don't intend on going in the house, stay off the front porch!"

3rd way to Divorce-Proof = Be proactive

- IF you do preventive maintenance on your car every few thousand miles; then why not your marriage? You would never wait to change your oil until engine stopped. SO why would you wait to address the 2nd most important relationship in your world behind your personal relationship w/Jesus.
- WRCC has a growing + healthy Marriage Ministry by God's grace!
 - INSERT Resources available for marriages
 - These resources can be preventive & not just for emergencies!

4th way to Divorce-Proof = Be accountable

- Surround yourselves with other strong relationships; people with similar values; people who trust God's word; sounds like a small group (just for you)
 - Make peer pressure your ally (in a positive manner)
 - Same sex accountability partners (most important mtg) of my week!

5th way to Divorce-Proof = Be financially prudent

- Money problems rank near the top if not # 1 in marital discord.
- Avoid unnecessary debt at all cost ~ Not all debt is bad = Appreciating debt includes: a mortgage or a property that increases in value.
 - Create a budget and stick to it live w-in your means
 - Tithe-give back to God
 - Save at least 10% of earnings
 - Enjoy life and live on the rest ☺
 - INSERT financial classes to help out

6th way to Divorce-Proof = Be fun & spontaneous

- I bet you got married b-c you just wanted to be together: so be together.
- Hang out + garden together + go to dinner + Travel + give her hugs ☺

Who knows you might fall in love all over again ☺

- My challenge last week was to learn to date your spouse again; WOW, I have received the best e-mails on some dates you guys are going on; awesome!
- Becky's my best girl: even when I forget it; she has little ways of reminding me ☺

7th way to Divorce-Proof = Be confident

- Be assured "...that God who began a good work within you, will continue His work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns." Philippians 1: 6
- As you surrender yourselves to Christ I wholeheartedly believe the best days of marriage will only be in front of you!
- Your marital relationship is like a garden = You have to care for it consciously & consistently; if you want it to produce fruit.
 - My climbing roses = prepared the soil; had rose arbor built; hand-selected my roses from local nursery, read a book: Roses for Dummies; learned how to properly feed and hydrate roses;
 - Becky and I work with them (2-3) week – its fun watching them bloom ☺

Most of all: be confident that God will never leave nor forsake you: BE CONFIDENT that God is the God of reconciliation!

My challenge this week is...

To keep your promise wedding vows you made to your spouse & to God on your wedding day.
Commit to taking the idea of divorce out of your families vocabulary!