



LEARNING TO BE GOOD AND MAD

Marriage Rescue - Part 3

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"The people to whom we give the most time and energy and in whom we invest the greatest amount of love and other emotions are the ones we have the highest expectations of. They are also the ones with the greatest potential to trigger in us such emotions as fear, hurt, frustration, and eventually anger." - Gary Oliver and Norman Wright, *Good Women Get Angry*

1. WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

Anger is a secondary emotion.

- The problem of unspoken expectations

Where do you think all these...quarrels come from? Do you think they just happen? Think again. They come about

because you want your own way, and fight for it deep inside yourselves. James 4.1-2 (The Message)

❑ The problem of uncontrolled reactions

The strongest evidence of our maturity is NOT how we ACT but how we REACT.

Button pushers frequently fall into one of these categories:

- *connected to you by blood (family)*
- *connected to you by love (romance or friendship)*
- *connected to you by money (work relationship)*

The thing that makes you most angry tells you the most about yourself.

❑ The problem of your default conflict resolution style

- I'll get them - MY WAY



"It is difficult not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment." - George Sala

Marriage is a "WE" business and always deteriorates when it becomes two "I's."

- I'll get out - NO WAY
- I'll give in - YOUR WAY
- I'll go half-way - HALF WAY

It may cost us the loss of the best to achieve the good of the agreement.

- I care and confront. - OUR WAY

But we are meant to speak the truth in love, and to grow up in every way into Christ.

Ephesians 4.15



2. THE DANGER OF MISMANAGED ANGER

The fool who provokes his family to anger and resentment will finally have nothing left. Proverbs 11.29 (Living Bible)

There are basically two types of people:

- *Exploders*
- *Imploders*

Do not let the sun go down when you are still angry. Ephesians 4.26

There are two words for anger in the Bible, "thumos" which is anger expressed and "perorgismo" which is anger repressed.

See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled. Hebrews 12.15



3. DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH ANGER

Don't let anger manage you.

And don't sin by letting anger gain control over you. Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a mighty foothold to the Devil. Ephesians 4.26-27 (New Living Translation)

- Is it Healthy?
- Is it Hurtful?
- Is it Hateful?

Make anger a visitor, not a resident.

- Acknowledge its presence.

Denial only works for the person who is in it.

Who we are in conflict is who we are in truth.



- Restrain your reaction.

A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control. Proverbs 29.11

"A flooding response is a biochemical reaction in the body where the entire organism kicks into high gear, flooding the individual systems (circulatory, respiratory, digestive, neurological, etc.) for an emergency reaction. Palms sweat, hormones rage, breathing speeds up, blood pressure and heart rate escalate. The negative emotions spewing from the battling couple so flood their being that no new information, no soothing, quieting message, can even penetrate until the flooding mechanism shuts down."
– Joanni Schrof, A Lens on Matrimony, U.S. News & World Report

- Deal with it as soon as possible.

"Get mad – then get over it." – Gen. Colin Powell

- ❑ Accept conflict as proof of love instead of indifference.

Work at getting along with each other. Hebrews 12.14a
(The Message)



- ❑ Keep your comments positive instead of negative.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things. Philippians 4.8

"69% of marriage conflicts are never solved." – The Gottman Institute

"If your marriage is going to succeed – you need a minimum of 5 to 1 ratio of positive to negative interaction."
– The Gottman Institute

"...for every one incorrect input, it required eleven correct inputs to make things right again." – Albert Einstein

- ❑ Seek to understand why instead of who.

We attack the person instead of the problem.

He who conceals or hides his failures [problems] will not prosper. Proverbs 28.13



"Broken marriages begin to mend and communication is reestablished when one of the partners is willing to make a breakthrough and say, 'Lord, begin with me. I am the one who needs to change, to love more deeply and more wisely.' Even if you think your spouse is 100% wrong, when you stand in the presence of Christ you will begin to see that you, too, have shortcomings. You will discern where you have failed to accept responsibility for the marital relationship, and you will be able to say, 'God, change me.'" - Lionel Whitston

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In this message, Pastor Keith discussed a lot about anger, what was your biggest take-a-way? Where did you feel personally challenged? On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the best), how well do you manage anger in your closest relationships? Is that the same score your spouse would give you?

2. When it comes to conflict, there are five default ways of dealing with conflict. Which way best describes you? Have you always been this way? If not, what changed?

- I'll get them - MY WAY
- I'll get out - NO WAY
- I'll give in - YOUR WAY
- I'll go half-way - HALF WAY
- I care and confront. - OUR WAY



3. People tend to be one of two things, exploders or imploders, what way did you observe most in your parents, family members, teachers, or people in authority in your life?

4. In the message, Pastor Keith shared the following quote from the highly respected Gottman Institute...

"If your marriage is going to succeed – you need a minimum of 5 to 1 ratio of positive to negative interaction."
– The Gottman Institute

Share your thoughts about this finding? Have you ever had a time in your marriage when that percentage wasn't true in your relationship? What was the time like? Even when a marriage seems to be struggling or failing, beginning to express gratitude for your spouse will do wonders for your marriage. Right now, make a list of ten qualities or things your spouse does for which you are truly grateful. When you're finished, share your list with your spouse, reading it out loud to them.

5. Lionel Whitston said, ""Broken marriages begin to mend and communication is reestablished when one of the partners is willing to make a breakthrough and say, 'Lord, begin with me. I am the one who needs to change, to love more deeply and more wisely.'" Take some time to pray for yourself and others in the group. If you feel safe in doing so, share with the group what one thing you'd like to most see change in your own life.