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TOPICAL - Marriage

"IT STARTED RIGHT"

Genesis 01-03

Zig Ziglar tells about an event that occurred several years ago while he was coming in on a plane. He noticed a fellow seated next to him who had his wedding band on the index finger of his right hand. Zig says he couldn't resist the temptation, so he commented, "Friend, you've got your wedding band on the wrong finger." The man responded, "Yeah, I married the wrong woman."

Types A and Z

Reader's Digest, (October, 1982) suggests that there are only two types of people in the world, Type A and Type Z. It isn't hard to tell which type you are.

1. How long before the plane leaves do you arrive at the airport? Early plane-catchers, Type A, pack their bags a day in advance, and pack neatly. If they're booked on a flight that leaves at four in the afternoon, they get up at five-thirty that morning. If they haven't left the house by noon, they're worried about missing the plane. Late plane-catchers, Type Z, throw things in a suitcase at the last minute and arrive at the airport just in time to catch the plane.
2. Type A eats a good breakfast; Type Z grabs something on the way out.
3. Type A turns off the lights when leaving a room and locks the doors when leaving the house. They go back to make sure they've locked it, and they worry later about it whether they left the something pluggen and turned on or not. They didn't. Type Z leaves the lights on and, if they lock the door at all when they leave the house, they're most likely to have forgotten something.
4. Type A sees the dentist twice a year, has an annual physical checkup and thinks they may be coming down with something. Type Z has been meaning to see a doctor.
5. Type A squeezes a tube of toothpaste from the bottom and rolls it very carefully as they use it, puts the top back on every time. Type Z squeezes the tube from the middle, and has lost the cap.....somewhere.
6. Type Z's are more apt to have some Type A characteristics than Type A's are to have any Type Z characteristics.
7. Type A's always marry Type Z's. Type Z's always marry Type A's.

As you might imagine – these “differences” often lead to problems!

Divorce Statistics:

- Every 13 seconds, there is one divorce in America.
- That means that 277 divorces will occur before this service is over.
- 9 divorces will take place in the time it takes for a couple to recite their wedding vows (2 minutes).
- 1,385 divorces happen during the average wedding reception (5 hours).
- The average first marriage ends in divorce in 8 years.

- All Americans: 18 years or older, whether they have been married or not, 25 percent have gone through a marital split.

Professions - divorce rate:

- Highest: Dancers – 43%
- Lowest: Agricultural Engineers – 1.78%

If you or your partner have been married before

- If both you and your partner have had previous marriages, you are 90 percent more likely to get divorced than if this had been the first marriage for both of you.

If you have lived with your partner before you got married

- 60 percent of cohabiting couples will eventually marry. However, living together prior to marriage can increase the chance of getting divorced by as much as 40 percent.

Religion and divorce

- If a person has strong religious beliefs, the risk of divorce is 14 percent less likely to get divorced.- <https://www.wf-lawyers.com/divorce-statistics-and-facts/>

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. I pray that even these few statistics on divorce shows you why we have been teaching a 6-part series on “Family Matters”.
1. This is teaching #4 – **“IT STARTED RIGHT”**
 2. Many relationships start out good but end up terribly wrong!
 3. But if we start out right – we have a wonderful opportunity for success.

II. TEACHING

A. HOW IT ALL BEGAN

1. **Gen 1:26-27** Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." **(27)** God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
 - a) Notice, both male and female were created "in the image of God"
 - (1) The word that is used for "man" is Adam {aw-dawm'} 1) man, mankind
 - (a) So, the Lord made a male and a female version of "the human race"
 - (b) They were Mr. an Mrs. "human"
 - (c) There is no inference in scripture of either one being better or lesser than the other.
 - (d) That notion is more cultural that Godly!

2. **Gen 2:15-17** Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. **(16)** The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; **(17)** but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."
- a) There is a promise of eternal life here *if* they were obedient!
- (1) Within that Garden was the Tree of Life! **(Vrs 16)** and It was there to eat from freely.
- (2) Notice that there was a curse promised if they disobeyed. **Vrs 17**
- (a) The results are in **Genesis 3**.
3. **Gen 3:1-24** Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" **(2)** The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; **(3)** but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" **(4)** The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! **(5)** "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." **(6)** When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. **(7)** Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. **(8)** They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. **(9)** Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" **(10)** He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." **(11)** And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" **(12)** The man said, "The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." **(13)** Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." **(14)** The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life; **(15)** And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel." **(16)** To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you." **(17)** Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. **(18)** "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; **(19)** By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return." **(20)** Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all *the* living. **(21)** The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

(22) Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"-- **(23)** therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. **(24)** So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

- a) In **verse 1** we see the set-up.
- b) In **verses 4-5**, the lie!
- c) In **verses 6-7**, Adam and Eve's fall from grace and innocence.
- d) And in verses **16-24**, the consequences!
- e) Ever since then, this world has been at war and that includes a husband and a wife!

III. THE WAR BETWEEN FLESH AND SPIRIT

A. **Romans 7:15,18&19, 21-25** **Rom 7:15** For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I *would* like to *do*, but I am doing the very thing I hate. **Rom 7:18-19** For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good *is* not. **(19)** For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. **Rom 7:21-25** I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. **(22)** For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, **(23)** but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. **(24)** Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? **(25)** Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

1. We human beings are sinful by nature!
 - a) There is that terrible, dirty little 3-letter word that we are all so familiar with and hate so much!
2. Even when we want to do the right thing, our nature will try to take a sinful way out every time!
3. How do we get out of this "CATCH 22?"
 - a) Paul gave us the answer in **Rom 7:24-25** **Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? (25) Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!...**
 - (1) **Rom 8:1** Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
 - (a) Since Jesus is the answer to sin, He is also the answer to our marriage problems!
 - (b) We can either run our marriages according to the sinful flesh and end up as a statistic - or we can live according to Godly principles!
 - (c) The second half of this teaching is to give us all an opportunity to evaluate how we love:
 - (a) Is it according to GODLY principles OR have we adopted a world view of marriage?

The difficulty with marriage is that we fall in love with a personality, but must live with a character.--Peter DeVries

- B. Here is just a simple reality check: There is no Prince Charming, and there is no Cinderella! There are just broken people!

IV. WHAT LOVE IS NOT!

- A. **1Co 13:4-8** Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, (5) does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, (6) does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; (7) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (8) Love never fails; ...
1. Godly love is not ***jealous!***
 - a) "A negative feeling of dislike toward anyone who has something you wish you could have or achieve."
 - (1) In some marriages, there is a lot of jealousy!
 - (2) Being jealous of someone implies that God has cheated us and doesn't know what He's doing!
 - b) God opposes jealousy because it's not His way:
 - (1) **Mar 9:35** Sitting down, He called the twelve and *said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."
 - (a) A servant has no rights over the one he serves!
 - (b) Therefore jealousy makes it impossible to serve!
 - (2) **Jam 3:16-17** For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. (17) But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.
 - (a) In a household where a husband and wife are jealous of each other "confusion and every evil thing." will be there.
 2. Godly love does not ***brag!***
 - a) "An aggressive act of parading ourselves and accomplishments for others to applause."
 - (1) Bragging is taking credit for something we don't deserve!
 - (2) **Joh 15:5** "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."
 - (a) It puts credit on us and takes the glory from the Lord.
 - (i) **Eph 2:8-9** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; (9) not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.
 - (b) Bragging causes us to feel superior to others and makes us unyielding to the Lord.
 3. Godly love is not ***arrogant!***
 - a) "A feeling of superiority over others."
 - (1) Satan rebelled because of pride and arrogance!
 - (a) It was a serious enough sin that God kicked him out of Heaven.

- (2) Arrogance refuses to look at the facts:
- (a) God is great, we are small
 - (b) The Lord doesn't fellowship with the proud and arrogant!
 - (i) **Psa 51:17** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.
 - (a) Contrite means "deeply and humble sorry for sins"
 - (ii) **Phi 2:5-8** Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, (6) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. (8) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
4. Godly love is not **unbecoming!**
- a) "Unthoughtful, rude, and obnoxious"
 - (1) **2Th 3:7-8** For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, (8) nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we *kept* working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you;
 - (2) **Eph 4:1-4** Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, (2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, (3) being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (4) *There is* one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
5. Godly love does not ***seek its own!***
- a) "Putting our wishes, wants, and desires before God and others."
 - (1) This is a part of our "sinful nature" that must be overcome!
6. Godly love is not **provoked!**
- a) "Easily Irritated, resentful, frustrated and angry."
 - (1) When we get to this point, it is impossible to look for the best in the other person!
 - (2) This reaction usually comes when we think there is no solution to the problem!
 - (a) **1Co 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.
7. Godly love doesn't take into account a wrong suffered!
- a) "Doesn't "add up" or become hateful when wronged!"
 - (1) **Rom 12:19-21** Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord. (20) "BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE

HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD." (21) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

(a) Leave it to the Lord!!!!

- (2) **Eph 4:31-32** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. **(32)** Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

(a) Be forgiving!!!!

- (3) **Col 3:12-13** So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; **(13)** bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

(a) Be compassionate, kind, and humble!!!!

V. CONCLUSION

- A. **Rom 5:5** and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

1. If through this teaching, you've seen some things wrong in your marriage - good!
 - a) It is much better to see the need for change than to think that everything is OK when it's not!
 - b) And folks – LISTEN TO YOUR SPOUSE! Hear what they are saying!
2. The only way to have a happy, Godly marriage is to rely upon the constant infilling of the Holy Spirit to do it HIS way, not ours!
3. I'd like to challenge you, before you leave this morning, to recommit yourselves to your marriage! Decide that you are in it for the long haul!

Zsa Zsa Gabor once said, "To have twenty lovers in one year is easy. To have one lover for twenty years is difficult."

4. Lastly, I'd like to ask you to give your marriage back to the Lord and let Him put it all back together the right way!