

Re-Marry Me – Part 3
 “Connecting”
 1/20/13

Jet Plane, I have a friend who builds fighter jets. I got to spend an afternoon with him a while back to check out his passion. Everything about it screams fly high and fast. It wants to take flight...

Marriage has a quality of making us dream and desire all it could be. Marriage wants to take flight. When people first get married it is with dreams and high hopes. BUT the dominating, long-term trend in our culture is one of frustration and angst.

Think of the aggravations we have...

- He’s never gets off the couch.
- She’s so nit-picky about everything.
- My spouse doesn’t understand me.
- It’s like we’re just roommates.
- His words stab.
- She gives me the silent treatment.
- He’s not committed.
- She doesn’t care if it works.
- Why is he so demanding?
- Why is she so controlling?

The reality is... we can all become trapped in the frustration, pain, disillusionment and anger of a marriage that’s losing altitude and heading for a crash landing. Some of you have been through this and are trying to navigate the pain. You may be divorced, or your parents or adult children have gone through this. So this morning we want to talk about how to keep from nose diving your marriage ... and more importantly how to pull it out of a nose dive. But first we want to make an important point.

~ Don’t avoid investing in your marriage because you think it’s holding its cruising altitude. The truth is... marriage is a relationship between two dynamic, ever changing, fallen, free-willed people. It’s EITHER gaining or losing altitude.

Too often we tell ourselves and others, “We’re hanging in there, we’re holding our own, and we’re doing ok right now. It’s trying to describe a very chronic problem as being ok right now in this particular moment. “Wow, the engine on the left wing caught fire and fell off but if I just turn my head to the right and look at this side I feel better.”

- When a marriage is losing altitude it goes from fascination, to boredom, to contempt.
- When your marriage is gaining altitude it goes from intimacy, to connectedness, to fascination.

Marriage starts with fascination... if you had no attraction, no fascination with the other you never would have gotten married. We look at our spouse as a finished painting. Here’s what

happens... in the first years of the marriage we love to learn about that painting... we love the differences - they're fun! Dating was so wonderful because they were the life of the party or...they were quiet & mysterious...they were organized...they were footloose and fancy-free. But if you see your spouse as that finished painting, at some point you feel like you know everything worth knowing about them.... At a relational level they become a bore.

From Boredom to Contempt – It's interesting that what was once fascinating is now the thing that aggravates us, because there's no mystery to it anymore. Now it's not just that we know every inch of the painting... we see all the cracks, the globs, the peeling. Every one of those little cracks or globs represents a moment... even a small moment, when we feel stepped on. It's a moment of hurt. We will say "This is the thing that's wrong with my mate..." or "This is the reason our marriage is failing..." It's ironic that the thing that once fascinated us is the thing that wounds us.

Personal examples: His talking and need to be doing something can run me over. I'm tired and don't get a chance to talk...he doesn't care what I have to say or what I want. I decided if he "didn't care" about me or what was going on in my life, I wouldn't offer up any information. I deliberately pulled away. It starts piling up.... it becomes an unattended wound... upon an unattended wound. It starts to become this terrible weight that is more than the marriage can bear. We feel hurt and frustrated; we just don't want to deal with it anymore. I want to say "just forget about it."

The way to gain altitude intimacy, connectedness and fascination

1) Fascination to Connectedness

Eph 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Eph 5:19-20 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Submit" is *engagement*. Think of engaging as a means to build connection. Submission is not blindly giving in, but it's about connectedness. Blindly giving in is NOT submission. Engage is an old, old word derived from two old French words for pledge, and make. It literally means to make a pledge.

- A pledge to friendship, to partnership
- A pledge to care in appropriate ways
- A pledge to experience and connect and create intimacy

2) Connection to Intimacy

Gen 4:1 Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived.

This is not the Bible's way of saying "sex" without saying sex. Rather it is trying to speak to a profound part of what sex and intimacy is about. It's not just to know someone physically, but also to know them emotionally, to really know them.

Gen 2:24-25 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. 25The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

In the process of staying connected through life - celebrating together, undertaking different endeavors together, supporting, and giving room to the other to live their calling, and to stay connected through conflict - has a net result. We know them... our souls become sewn together.

It is a unique relationship where we experience what it is to love and be loved, to know and be known. We can either look at our spouse as a painting that is peeling and cracking or see the masterpiece being created. We can seek to understand how our spouse has changed. They are not static. Remember, they are dynamic, ever-changing individuals. If you think about it, if we seek to figure out how to understand and connect to this, we WON'T get bored!

We can look over the shoulder of Jesus while he is painting our spouse. There will be moments when you won't like what Jesus is painting... who do you tell, who do you complain to? Not your spouse.... tell Jesus...He is the painter. Being connected is about discovering who God has created in your spouse. It is engaging in Ephesians 5.

~ Our spouse is not the same this year as they were last year.

Journal

Journal about the changes in your life.
Go on a date and discuss...and really listen.

For many of you this is too painful. We are sorry and want you to know it is ok. Take baby steps. Journal about your own changes. Take time to contemplate how God has possibly changed your spouse or other close relationship.