

NEW: FINDING YOUR HUMANITY

NEW MARRIAGE

Pastor Derwin L. Gray & Vicki Gray – January 22, 2017

1. "Father, marriage is sacred. Marriage is to be a sacred picture of You and how You love Your Church and how Your Church responds to You in respect and obedience. May the marriages of Transformation Church be empowered by Your Spirit to fulfill Your purposes for Your glory, our joy, and as a witness to a watching world. In Jesus' name, Amen."

2. Read Matthew 5:31-32

Note: Under Jewish law, "adultery" referred only to the wife's misbehavior, not the husband's. Matthew does not agree with this view (5:28), but because his readers must obey the law of their communities, he deals only with the issue of the wife. Some Pharisaic rabbis allowed divorce for almost anything (just as Roman law did); others allowed it only if the wife was unfaithful (both Jewish and Roman law required divorce for adultery). Yet the stricter rabbis did not view more lenient divorces as invalid. Jesus thus goes beyond the stricter position: not only does He allow divorce only if one's wife is unfaithful, but He regards divorce for any other reason as invalid, thus making remarriage in those cases adulterous. This seems, however, to be hyperbole (as in 5:29-30), a graphic way of forbidding divorce except when the other partner has already irreparably broken the marriage covenant. [Keener, C. S. (1993). The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament (Mt 5:31-32). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.] Jesus later indicates that divorce in the law of Moses (see Deut. 24:1-4) was permitted only because of people's hardness of heart (see Matt 19:8).

- Why do you think Christian marriages fail? Obviously there are a number of reasons, but use this as a point of discussion.

3. What's the Purpose of Marriage? To reflect Jesus & the Church. Read Ephesians 5:25-33 NLT.

- Vicki talked about how as we're transformed by the love of Christ we grow in our relationships. She discussed the differences that men and women typically have as it relates to love and respect and that us being transformed means serving each other's needs. Discuss how surrendering our "rights" and serving each other can transform our marriages.

4. Pastor Derwin and Vicki discussed a few helpful pre-marriage questions.

- a. How do they treat people?
- b. How do they handle conflict?
- c. Are they committed to the American dream or Jesus' Kingdom? (Note: What Pastor Derwin meant by the American Dream in this context is simply materialism and the pursuit of more "stuff.")

- How do you think these questions will help you know if you're romantically involved with the right person?

Discuss the following topics that Pastor Derwin and Vicki spoke about for marriage:

1. Develop holy habits - Worship, Connect, Serve, Give, Invite. Read Galatians 5:13-15 NLT.

- a. How do these Holy Habits benefit your marriage?
- b. It's important that married couples connect with singles, divorced and widowed people in community also. Why is this important?
- c. Pastor Derwin said, "Married couples who beat each other in serving each other, beat the odds and not only stay together, they flourish." Discuss your thoughts on this statement.

2. The best way to bless your kids is by making your marriage a priority.

- Vicki talked about the cultural shift from focusing on our marriages as our top priority (after our relationship with Jesus) to making our kids our top priority in the family. How does making your children a priority over marriage hurt your marriage and your kids?

3. Learn to deal with your collective baggage. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 NIV.

- a. How does God deal with our baggage or "sanctify" us?
- b. Why is this important?

4. Keep short accounts! Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV.

a. Why is this important and how do we get the power to keep short accounts?

b. Vicki talked about women not expecting men to read our minds and to not let "stuff" build up. She also encouraged the men to be willing to talk about the relationship and ways our marriages can grow.

5. Don't surrender your destiny to the American Dream. Read Romans 12:1-2 NIV and discuss.

Soul-tattoo: Fight for your marriage, not each other.

Close in prayer.