

Married for Life

(2 Corinthians 9:6; 1 John 3: 16)

John Ding, 15 Oct, 2017

We are John and Vyviane Ding, Coaching Couples of 2=1, Married for Life New Zealand.

For those who are married, this message is for you, a message on the power of God's marriage covenant and our goal is to take His message of the oneness and power of that covenant to the Church and to the world. For those who are single and planning to get married, this will definitely apply to you and for those who are single, sorry, we would love to come back and share a message just for you, and hopefully, we can, sometime down the road.

Let me ask you this question? Do you believe that God has a perfect plan for your marriage? because God is perfect and God does not make mistake, therefore we know that our marriage will be a success. But why does marriage fail, it's because we have rejected the Word of God, we have not fully obeyed the Word of God. It sounds extreme, many of you are probably thinking, it cannot be me....

Let me put it to you this way. Our Christian marriage is a perfect plan, it's all because God made marriages. Did you know that a 48-year-old married man has a 90% chance of reaching the age of 65, but the same 48-year-old single man has only 60% chance of reaching 65? Wives have been created to take care of us husband. In **Genesis 2:18 And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."** So when God created man, God said that it's not good for man to be alone, so He creates woman as a helper for man so man can be better off with a woman in their life. Husband and wives, obey God's Word, do everything together, as a team, that's what God made marriages for.

Let us look at this from another aspect. Do you know it takes more preparation and testing to get a driver's license than a marriage license?

Did you also realize that people invest time in preparing for a career, learning a new skill, or developing a talent yet they often marry believing it will "just come naturally"? Ask yourself this question, have we invested in our marriage? And the question is, how much have we invested? We all know the concept of reaping what you sow. In the Bible, there are many verses, but one of my favorites is,

[2 Corinthians 9:6](#) He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will reap bountifully.

Let me use a story to illustrate this point. You might have heard something similar, but this how I like to relate this. In a small village in India, there's a wealthy man, his name is Ravi. He has many cows, the more cows you owned, the wealthier you are. Ravi is also wanting to get a wife. It is the practice there that a man pays for a wife with cows. So, a man can offer 1, 2 or maybe 4 if he wants to find a good wife. In the village, there's a man name Khrisna, who has a daughter named Nila. Khrisna was not a good man, he was abusive and Nila grew up verbally abused and treated badly. Nila walked around with her shoulder slouched, back hunched and hair often covering her face not wanting to look or speak to anyone, therefore, she was not attractive.

But Ravi came to Krishna and asked if he can marry Nila. Krishna, of course, said yes, as he knows he will be offered a cow in return. Because Krishna thinks that Nila is not attractive, he thought, he will be offered 1 cow. But to his surprise, Ravi offered 10 cows... yes, 10 cows for Nila. Krishna instantly becomes wealthy just like that. He never understood why Ravi would be willing to offer 10 cows when he knew 1 cow would be sufficient for Nila. After 1 year, Krishna couldn't stand it anymore, so he went to look for Ravi. When he knocked on his door, a beautiful woman answered the door, she's was stunningly beautiful, perfect upright posture, silky hair, and glowing eyes. After a while, Krishna finally recognized she's Nila, his unattractive daughter. When he asked Ravi that burning question, the answer he got was, I wanted to marry a wife that's worth 10 cows, so that's what he received when he plowed into his investment.

So, moral of this story is sow into your spouse and you will reap the fruits of your labor.

Some of you may think, oh its too late now.... But I'm here this morning to tell you it's not.

As I stand here sharing this message, I can confidently tell you that if I can do it, you can do it too. Yes, I have fallen short, I have been there, I have been the most selfish, self-centered husband, but most all, I have been unfaithful. Yes, it's not something that I'd like to admit or even share, but you know what, God saved me and used that part of me to touch other to save other marriages. I just want to acknowledge my wife, my helper, she's my everything, for, without the grace of forgiveness and love, I wouldn't be standing here speaking to you. I want to call out my wife Vyviane to honor her for what she's had to put up all those years, yet unceasing praying for me and God answered and transformed me. What I'm proclaiming is, we all have our shortcomings especially in our marriages, but don't let the enemy tell you it's the end because God has a plan for success in our marriage, a plan to bless and prosper our marriage and our God's does not make mistake. So it's time to rejoice.

Proverbs 18:22 He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the Lord.

Which brings me to share a real and practical investment for your marriage, the Married for Life marriage course. Just twelve weeks is all it takes to change your marriage. We are bi-lingual Coaching Couple for both English and Mandarin.

With Married for Life, it's a Holy Spirit filled teaching that teaches us how to succeed in marriage. Not just survive, but to thrive.

Why Holy Spirit, because in John 14:26 **But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.** ... therefore we go to the source who created marriage? That's the one who should have the answers!

Our Married for Life course has been strengthening marriages since 1983. Its success is simply because it is based on God's blueprint for marriage. He wants us to thrive in the covenant relationship of marriage that He created.

Testimony

Marriage was intended by God. 2=1 bring forth biblical truth teaching, it does not matter where your marriage is today... "The thief does not come except to steal, and

to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)

The course recommends that there be no more than seven couples in each class, for we can achieve the dynamic and intimate level of a small group (the level of comfort and willingness to share openly) allows us to go deeper into the lessons, let's look at THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS.

The Greek word translated "forgiveness" literally means "to let go".

- I remembered once my church had a guest speaker that spoke about forgiveness
- After the sermon, I immediately went up to my pastor, Ps Jennifer Heng and asked her can God use me if I just live my life and not bother about those who hurt me, because I don't know how and not sure I can forgive.
- My pastor's reply was not what I hope to hear, she said no. and she prayed. It was that prayer that I believe has convicted me, for it is not what I can; it is nothing is impossible for God.

Forgiveness is painful especially when it involves the one whom I was pulled out from Genesis 2:21-23 – **And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.**

- V23 And Adam said:"This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh;She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."
- **From the same note, John said in our wedding vow, he will love me till death do us part!**

It was impossible for me to let go the betrayal and hurt bring. In the past 15 years, I was living in lies and deceptions. Saying "I am sorry" didn't work. "SORRY NO CURE" (*Singlish phrase used to express indignation at an inadequate attempt at an apology*). I thought and believed the only way to forgive is to forget, how to get rid of memory then?

I asked God if nothing is impossible for you, then erased this part of my memory! Therefore, I tried praying whole night asking God to take away the bad thoughts and I tried hitting my head as hard as I could against the wall, houses in Singapore are made of bricks! Nope, they didn't work too!

Allowing these feelings to inhabit and eventually became emotionally, mentally, verbally, physically murderous, my life was so close to ending. Just then the Lord said, 1 John 3:16: "**By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**" – God's love is beyond what I can imagine, this is it, I found the love that I have been searching for the past 40 years! The love that heals, restores, and brings comfort regardless of what I did...I realized all these years I do not know how to love nor live right with the people I love and Jesus is the only hope to do life again.

I do not know how to forgive but God knows, trusting God and He will fight for us because Satan uses un-forgiveness against us. Should I have allowed un-forgiveness to numb my hurt and embracing numbness harden hearts? **In Hebrews 3:7-11 says: "To avoid hardness of heart, we must submit our hearts to God's Word and God's ways, especially in times of trial."**

Forgiveness is not forgetting the offense. Forgiveness is not choosing to suffer the price for the offense. Forgiveness is a choice, let go of the 'bad' and expect to receive love abundantly. **The Bible teaches that unselfish love is the basis for true forgiveness since love "does not keep account of the injury!" 1 Corinthians 13:4-5**

We have also recognized the enemies! It's Satan's grip of un-forgiveness, we choose to loosen it, in replacing of God's glory. John and I decided to join hands with God, the only way to wrestle with the forces of darkness. [Ephesians 6:12](#) declares, "**For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.**"

These quotes from Corrie Ten Boom helped us wrestle with un-forgiveness...and received God's love to accomplish His purpose for us as 2=1.

*We have no need for the healing ministry of Christ and the church who cannot and do not **admit we are broken.***

*We have no need for the healing ministry of Christ and the church...who cannot and do not admit that **Jesus has something uniquely effective to offer.***

*We will not arrive at their full healing ministry in Christ who cannot and do not **forgive...themselves...and others.** – Corrie Ten Boom*

Forgiveness is an act of will, not our feelings. When we put our will in agreement with the will of God, follow the leading of His Spirit, and determine to forgive, our hearts will eventually follow. God's forgiveness propels us into healing and restoration. God restored and strengthened our marriage.

God has turned our many 'whys' into 'wows'!