

PROTECTING YOUR MARRIAGE

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 NKJV

One of the best pieces of advice I was given when I became concert director in Prescott was: *Protect your marriage...* When we were out Pastoring we would ask seasoned ministers, What would you do differently all these years later? Many said, *I would Invest more into my home, my wife and my children...*

PG, often speaks of his marriage relationship with Lisa, and when he refers to past ministry, he uses the word **WE**- This has set an example and course for my wife and I, for marriage and ministry...

In the passage we are going to look at, the wisdom of the text can be applied to couples... 2 are better than 1-

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 NKJV Two *are* better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. ¹⁰For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls, For *he has* no one to help him up. ¹¹Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm *alone*? ¹²Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

I THE NEED FOR ANOTHER:

A- We all need relationship... We all need our spouse-

1. **Genesis 2:18** The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

a. From the beginning of creation, God speaks to the need for another-

2. This is still true today!

a. Jimmy Evans: a credible christian marriage counselor of 40+ years said; *If you could meet all of your own needs you would have never gotten married... But you couldn't meet all your own needs, that is why you got married!*

3. We have a need for another! **V9** Two *are* better than one-

B- This is a blessed plan from God... For life, and for ministry!

1. **Prov 18:22 NLT** The man who finds a wife finds a treasure...

a. Abraham had his Sarah, Noah had his wife, Moses had Zipporah, Peter had his wife...

b. P Wayman had Nelda (gravestone says They Blessed the World), Pastor Greg has Lisa, Steven has Emily... I Have my Bethany Joy-

c. **Proverbs 31:10** A wife of noble character, who can find? She is far more precious than rubies.

2. Marriage is meant to be a blessing... Marriage is intended to get better...

a. My wife and I got married young... 18 & 19... PWM said “Great! You will grow up together”

i. We have grown up together, and we have grown together-

II PROTECTING YOUR MARRIAGE:

A- So what does protecting your marriage look like?

1. **Investment:** We must make deposits into our spouse-

a. Time: Sending the message that they are a priority in our lives... That the ministry isn't first (after God)

b. Words: We must communicate words of love, affection, appreciation towards our spouse...

i. We can get caught up in complaints and frustrations of discipleship and later the ministry-

ii My wife has said *I am not the problem, I am on your side!*

c. Valuable things: For some that is Gifts, Cards, Physical affection, Quality time...

i. Where we give our best, from our best-

d. Too often couples can over time drift apart...

2. **Spiritual Partnership:** That we have been sent together-

a. **Luke 10:1** After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two...

i. Establish the understanding we are doing this together...

ii Every season and chapter has been done together, laboring together, praying together, following up together!

b. Use wisdom: Keep your wife involved to her limits-

i. Don't compare... at the end of the day, you need to know what your wife can handle... She facilitates your calling

3. **Covering:** Protection through defense-

a. This of course can be spiritual... Hell assaults the weaker vessel-

b. This can be with People... My wife's default is: Speak to my husband... she knows she doesn't have to fix people

- c. This can be through listening... Sometimes your spouse need to be heard, where they cannot always be heard-
 - i. Things they can't relay to just anyone... That means we need to be approachable-
 - ii. What this produces is SECURITY!

B- Are you protecting your marriage... Maybe not, but you can start...

- 1. Its natural to drift, where your spouse is feeling a disconnect from you... Hell wants that-
 - a. **Mark 3:25** And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.
- 2. You can unify your home, when you cleave to your spouse-
 - a. When they know they are needed, wanted, valued-

III THE BLESSING OF 2:

A- Our passage speaks to the blessings of 2:

- 1. **Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 NKJV** Two *are* better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. ¹⁰For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls. For *he has* no one to help him up.
¹¹Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm *alone*? ¹²Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.
 - a. Labors are maximized: Together you can accomplish MORE than you could ever accomplish alone-
 - b. Uplift one another: When you are discouraged, feeling inadequate, dealing with words, rebellion... you have one with you, that can encourage you, and lift you up!
 - c. Companionship: The warmth of love, the warmth of intimate affection, the warmth of grace, warmth of encouragement-
 - d. Strength: There is strength together... a strong bond that enables you to face the troubles of ministry TOGETHER
 - i. 2 are better than 1
 - e. Then the greatest blessing is the hand of God on your lives... The threefold chord-

B- You can have that kind of blessing... You can have that kind of marriage...

- 1. A helper to one another... a partnership that is strong in Christ-