

Rebuilding Boundaries, Restoring Trust

A good marriage is supreme among human relationships; a troubled marriage wrecks havoc. The most basic and powerful building block on earth cuts both ways. One cannot taste the glory of marriage without also risking its shame.

For example, Annette and I work together, engage constantly on domestic matters throughout the day, and sleep together at night. When rightfully submitted to one another, we both experience a grace and peace that pervades our efforts. But when at odds for whatever reason, the day goes dismal as does the sleepless night.

If a whole trustworthy marriage is an inspired remedy for the chaos and unpredictability each face daily in a fallen world, then how painful is a marriage that has become a source of that chaos and unpredictability?

Such is the case when vows of faithfulness are broken. Marital wholeness depends upon trust. That trust is shattered when one partner goes outside the lines. Period. Quite apart from the reasons one violates or the precise nature of the violation, adultery tears the fabric of the one-flesh union.

One of my best friends committed multiple acts of homosexual adultery as a married man. He had a beautiful wife, one child, and another on the way. Before he brought his violations into the light, he had already cast a shadow of perversion upon the family. Bringing the sin into the light simply confirmed to his wife the sinister disconnect she had been living with.

Breaking the boundaries of marriage breaks the marriage. It looses an evil that has power to undermine the well-being of all involved. For my friend and family, the pain and shame unleashed was almost intolerable. But 'just as there is a momentum to evil, there is also a momentum to repentance'.

My friend and his family took a slow turn in the right direction. He fell face down, took full responsibility, and initiated a long term plan of recovery for himself within his community. That invited his wife to make a decision as to whether or not she would submit to the healing she needed.

Both sought and received the grace they needed to rebuild boundaries. And trust. Today they manifest a marriage that gives life to all around them, especially their four children.

Marriage is resilient, more subject to our repentance more than to our failures. Gratefully.

Honor marriage for the good of all. Vote Yes on Proposition 8.

“O lord, let our repentance prevail over our evil. As You are light, expose our darkness; give courage to those damaged to turn to You as the Restorer of our marriages.”