

# CHANGE & GROWTH IN MARRIAGE

2010 Weekend Marriage Getaway  
Camp Maranatha, Big Lake, AK

# OUR GOALS FOR THIS LESSON

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- Recognize the Necessity for Change
- Identify our Goal for Change
- Learn How to Become an Instrument of Change
- Understand the Consequences of Failure

# A FEAR OF CHANGE

- Change in a marital relationship is often viewed in a negative light...
- Most common causes of divorce:
  - Poor communication
  - Financial problems
  - A lack of commitment to the marriage
  - **A dramatic change in priorities**
  - Infidelity
  - Failed expectations or unmet needs
  - Addictions and substance abuse
  - Physical, sexual or emotional abuse
  - Lack of conflict resolution skills

- from *Americans for Divorce Reform* – [www.divorcereform.org](http://www.divorcereform.org)

# A FEAR OF CHANGE

- As we go farther in our marriage (and grow older), we tend to become more complacent.
  - We settle with the “status quo” in our marriage
    - We become satisfied with just staying together
    - We know what we can get away with and stay married
  - We develop comfortable routines
  - We fear the unknown
    - *Ecclesiastes 12:1,5a – “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;... Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way,”*

# THE NEED FOR CHANGE

- Analyzing the causes of divorce:
    - Poor communication – *Change Needed!*
    - Financial problems – *Change Needed!*
    - A lack of commitment to the marriage – *Change Needed!*
    - **A dramatic change in priorities** – *Is Change the Problem?*
    - Infidelity – *Change Needed!*
    - Failed expectations or unmet needs – *Change Needed!*
    - Addictions and substance abuse – *Change Needed!*
    - Physical, sexual or emotional abuse – *Change Needed!*
    - Lack of conflict resolution skills – *Change Needed!*
- from *Americans for Divorce Reform* – [www.divorcereform.org](http://www.divorcereform.org)

# THE NEED FOR CHANGE

- ▣ All marriages require change to survive the changing landscape of life.
- ▣ “I, *Your Name*, take thee, *Spouse’s Name*, to my wedded Wife/Husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I plight thee my troth.”

- *Traditional Wedding Vows from the Book of Common Prayer*

***The only thing that should remain consistent in our marriage is the commitment we made to our spouse and God.***

# THE GOAL FOR CHANGE

- God has planned change for your life:
  - For those who do not know Him:
    - *1 Timothy 2:3-4 – “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”*
  - For those who do know Him:
    - *Romans 8:28-29 – “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*

# THE GOAL FOR CHANGE

## ▣ Read Ephesians 4:1-15

- ▣ The context is the Church, but the home is in many ways a microcosm of the Church.
- ▣ This passage lays the path for positive growth
  - ▣ Godly Attitudes (v1-3)
  - ▣ Focus on What We Share in Common (v4-6)
  - ▣ Using Our Gifts to Bless One Another (v7-12)
  - ▣ Mental/Spiritual Oneness (v13-14)
  - ▣ Godly Communication (v15a)

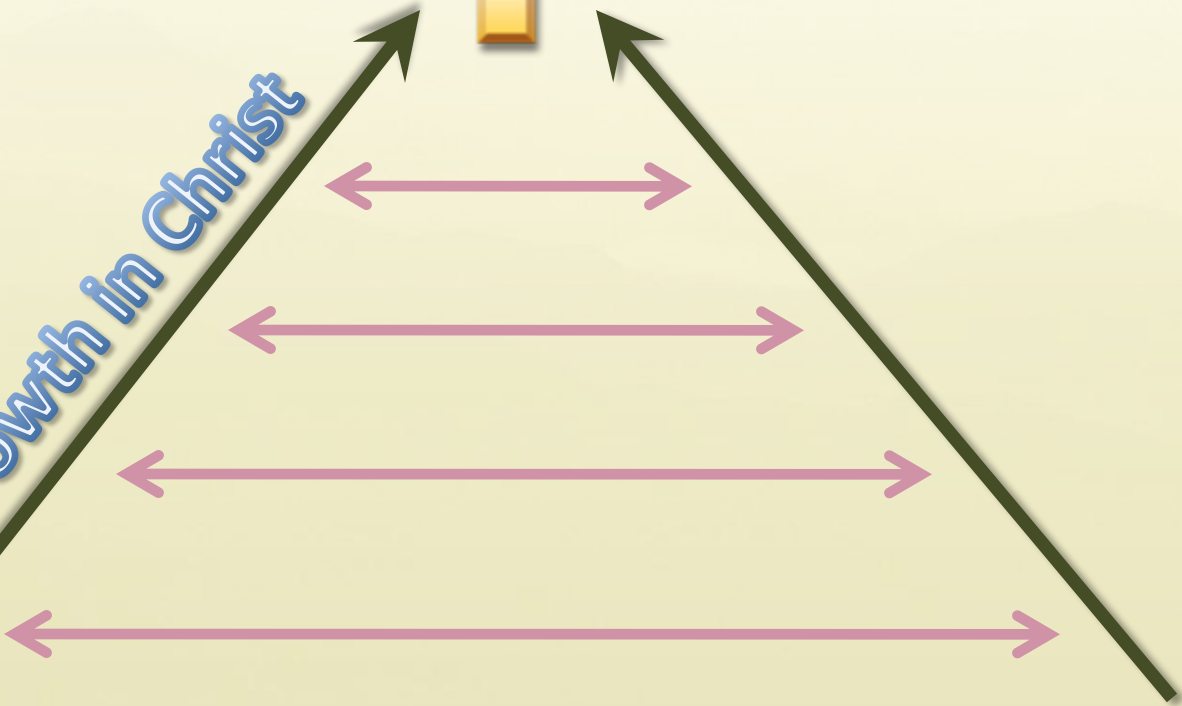
*This all works together to bring us together, to grow us  
into Christ (v15b-16)*



CHRIST



Growth in Christ



# BECOMING AN INSTRUMENT OF CHANGE

## ■ You can not be the...

### ■ Designer of Change

- *Jeremiah 29:11 – “For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.” (NASB)*

### ■ The Effector of Change

- *Genesis 2:18 – “And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” (KJV)*

***Do not try to be the Holy Spirit to your spouse!***

# BECOMING AN INSTRUMENT OF CHANGE

## ■ You can be an Instrument of Change

- *Genesis 2:21-22 - “And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.” (KJV)*

**God used Adam to make Eve into who He (God) wanted her to be.**

# BECOMING AN INSTRUMENT OF CHANGE

## ■ Husbands as Instruments of Change

- *Ephesians 5:25-27 – “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” (KJV)*
- How does Christ change (sanctify and cleanse) the church?
  - He loves her and has given Himself up for her.

*In order for God to use Adam to create Eve, Adam had to sacrifice his rib. If God will use you, He will also require a loving sacrifice!*

# BECOMING AN INSTRUMENT OF CHANGE

## ▣ Wives as Instruments of Change

- ▣ *1 Peter 3:1-2 – “In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.” (NASB)*
- ▣ Your means of effecting him requires you to be changed as well.
- ▣ Nagging is not necessary and is actually discouraged

*This is contrary to our sinful nature and much advice the world will give you, but this is God’s design!*

# IF WE DO NOT CHANGE...

- ▣ “Insanity is doing the same thing, over and over again, but expecting different results.”  
*- not the real definition, but a good quote just the same...*
- ▣ The destruction of most marriages comes incrementally, little by little, as we allow ourselves to become fixed in sinful patterns of behavior.

# IF WE DO NOT CHANGE

## ▣ There are immediate consequences...

- ▣ **Wives:** *Proverbs 14:1 – “Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.” (KJV)*

*Like our walk with God. You are either building or tearing down. There really is no middle ground.*

- ▣ **Husbands:** *1 Peter 3:7 – “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” (KJV)*

*To love her is to love yourself. God has tied you to her.*

# IF WE DO NOT CHANGE

- There are long-term consequences...
  - To be suffered by your children
    - *Proverbs 22:6 – “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (KJV)*
  - To be suffered upon God’s name
    - *Titus 2:4-5 – “That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.” (KJV)*
  - To be suffered by you
    - Read Malachi 2:13-17



# IF WE DO NOT CHANGE

## *To Those Who do not Know Jesus...*

*Coming to this conference, learning principles, and applying them without knowing Christ is like being thrown into the midst of a burning building with fire retardant clothes and a hose but no water. You may see the fire burning all around you and you may uncomfortably avoid getting burned right away, but there is nothing you can do about the fire and left unchecked, you will eventually burn up too.*

# TIME FOR CHANGE!

## To those Who do Know Jesus...

*Romans 13:11-14 – “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” (KJV)*