

The Big, Bad Wolf that can Blow Your House Down

Ontario couples' seminar #3

Facing our selfish pride

Recommend reading "Palace Beautiful." The Black Dwarf = the big, bad wolf

I. An Illustration from the Old Testament

Israel leaves Egypt and enters Canaan

Salvation vs. Sanctification (in progress),

Red Sea (leaving the world) vs. Jordan River (entering the land of fruit & battle)

Many Christians, even pastors, never cross the Jordan River and do not allow God to lead them to victory over the Canaanites (multiple aspects of selfish pride that must be crucified). Therefore, they do not bear much fruit, but wander in an arid desert. Some crossed the Jordan and began to destroy selfish pride in their lives, but they grew tired of the battle and made alliances with the Canaanites. Now they find themselves increasingly enslaved to the sins they had once conquered.

Name different manifestations of selfish pride (Canaanites) to conquer in our lives.

pride, boasting, **anger** (Which one is Jesus more concerned about, your argument or your attitude? You can be totally right in the argument, but totally wrong in your attitude!), gluttony, gossiping, self-pity, self-confidence, selfishness, inconsiderate, insisting on everything going MY way, laziness, seeking honor from men, unkindness, ingratitude (they owe it to me), dominating conversations (what I have to say is more important than what you have to say), unforgiveness, pornography, masturbation, etc.

Many marriages are destroyed because one or both spouses do not eliminate the Canaanites in their lives. Many more couples are living together in the same house, but are divorced in heart!

II. Jesus' Commandment

Jesus' conditions for discipleship – Matt. 16:24 – "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

#1 – Deny oneself (choose to please Jesus rather than myself)

#2 – Take up your personal cross (choose to please Jesus, even if it brings you shame, suffering, and death.

This has **major** implications for marriage! Am I as the husband denying to please myself to love my wife as Christ loved His church? Am I as the wife denying to please myself to submit to and respect my husband as the church toward Christ?

III. The Example of Jesus – Jn.8:29 “I always do what is pleasing to Him (the Father).”

Also Heb.5:7,8 – “Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; Though He were a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.”

It did not start in Gethsemane. Such was the daily life of Jesus! **This was the key to His close fellowship with His Father and to the effectiveness of His ministry.** See John 8:29. **If we grasp and practice this by the power of the Holy Spirit, it will revolutionize our homes!**

Conclusion:

Get alone (personally, not as a couple) with God, and get totally honest before Him. Are there areas in your life where you know you are pleasing yourself rather than Christ? Surrender all, and you will enter the rewarding life of walking in the Holy Spirit and bearing much fruit!

Share with your spouse what God has done in your heart in this message from His Word?