

Heart and Home

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Extra! Extra!

REPORT SHOWS THERE IS HOPE FOR TROUBLED MARRIAGES

By Luke Martin

William J. Bennett, author of *The Broken Hearth*, writing in his book about statistics on the family, makes an encouraging statement that should make front-page news. He says on page 158:

"In most marriages on the edge of breakup, one spouse wants to divorce and the other does not; it seems to me that we ought to be more solicitous of those trying to save a marriage than of those trying to end it. Then, too, although happy-ending scenarios obviously do occur, the data I have presented tell us quite unequivocally that in general, people who divorce and remarry tend to find no greater happiness than before, and also that the divorce rate for second marriages is higher than for the first. This may indicate something about the utopian expectations of life that, both for good and for ill, many Americans persist in entertaining; but that is a subject for another day."

"Finally, and most important, a situation that seems very bleak often changes for the better, eighty-six percent of unhappily married people who stay together find that five years later their marriages are happier. And three-quarters of people who have characterized their marriages as "very unhappy" but have nevertheless remained together report five years later that the same marriages are either "very happy" or "quite happy"—meaning that (in the words of Maggie Gallagher and Linda J. Waite) "permanent marital unhappiness is surprisingly rare among the couples who stick it out."

Jesus said concerning marriage in Matthew 19:6, **Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.** If we keep His commandments, we will abide in His love, and our joy will be full.

That's Not What I Meant

Have you ever felt unloved — even by Christian people who are commanded to love? It is very likely that you have, probably more than once. Why would someone following the God of love, make anyone feel unloved?

I believe most people do love. At least they would if anger, greed, alcohol, etc. etc. would not have them bound. However, Christ has set the Christian free.

Nevertheless, sometimes in our weakness we forget and fail, sometimes we do not know how to show love, and sometimes our love is misunderstood.

It can be rather frustrating when our love is misunderstood.

You may have the best of intentions. You may be trying hard to show your love, your respect, your concern, your support to someone — only to have them think you are being rude, or nosy, or manipulative, or condescending,

or unreasonable or oversensitive. What did you do wrong? Maybe nothing.

One cause of misunderstanding is different ways of communicating. Some feel that at times hinting may be kinder. Others are used to speaking more direct. People differ in how loud and how fast they talk, how much to pause between speakers [resulting in one thinking, he doesn't give me a chance to say anything, and the other thinking, he doesn't keep up his end of the conversation], and how much emotion or enthusiasm to show. Some people ask questions to show they care. Others think that's being nosy.

God made us with a need to be involved with other people. We also have a need for independence, to choose what we will do without being controlled by others. These two needs may conflict. The things people do to show their

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**Heart and Home
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involvement, that they care, may be taken as an encroachment on the others independence — minding their business. The things people do in respect of another's space may be taken as rude or not caring.

Though misunderstandings can occur between anybody, even those raised in the same family, the danger is greater between those with different languages and cultures. One example is, in Greece it is expected that in conversation speakers will overlap. It shows you are interested and enthusiastic about the conversation. Many others consider it impolite to talk while someone else is talking. In England, it is considered very impolite. They expect a pause between speakers. Another example is white people look others in the eye while American Indians consider that disrespectful.

Much of our communication is in metessages — what we communicate by things like nonverbal expressions, tone of voice, emphasis — how we say what we say and the things we do, with almost no conscious thought on our part, that reveal our thoughts, feelings, and motives. What we say indirectly and even what we don't say may say a lot. Metessages are an important and pleasant part of conversation, but also can be a source of misunderstandings. People may clearly "hear" you say something you never intended, or fail to catch something you tried to say.

Often we don't say what we

mean in so many words. This indirect way of talking can also cause misunderstandings. So, why don't we just say what we mean? We would lose some of the satisfaction and feelings of rapport we get from our conversations, if we always stated exactly what we meant.

An example of this is shown in the case of a daughter that had to ask her father for permission to go to a social event. She knew that when he said, "Yes, of course go," he approved. If he said, "You may go if you want to," she knew he thought it wasn't a good idea. Then she wouldn't go. This understanding contributed to a feeling of rapport between them. He didn't need to feel like a tyrant and she could feel that she choose to obey. Thus by using indirectness they communicated love and respect for each other and gained a secure relationship.

Often we *can't* speak directly. When we relate something, we cannot say every detail and aspect of the truth. There are always unstated assumptions — both the speakers and the hearers — that may not match. Sometimes honestly stating truth is unkind. Rather than blurting out our ideas, we may try to get a sense of others ideas and potential reactions.

Different styles of indirectness may cause misunderstanding. Say two people are trying to decide a simple thing like what shall we do or where shall we go. She asks him what he wants. He names

something and they do that. It turns out to be not quite satisfactory. She is unhappy because he always does what he wants. He is frustrated because she never says what she wants, then gets upset. Actually, both wanted to be considerate of the others wishes. Her way of negotiating an agreement is to ask questions and give vague suggestions until each has an idea of the others preference. It doesn't occur to her that when he named something it was a suggestion — his way of starting a negotiation. She saw it as a demand.

There is a need in our lives for people to have power, or authority, over others [parents to children, employers to employees, teachers to students, etc.]. We also need solidarity, a feeling of unity, togetherness. In striving to show solidarity, we may be perceived as not showing proper respect for authority. In exercising proper authority, we may be perceived to be unfriendly by some. When you call someone by their first name, will they perceive you as friendly or forward?

Indirectness makes it possible to control others without appearing to. The father who lets his daughter know what he thinks she should do, without actually telling her, wants to direct her. But he'd rather feel his daughter is following because she wants the same thing [solidarity] than because he's "twisting her arm" [power]. Thus, power can masquerade as solidarity. But knowing this, we can mistake

sincere expressions of solidarity for power plays and put-downs. In shaking my hand, do you give an extra squeeze to let me know you like me — or to let me know you're stronger? I may get either message, regardless of which you intend.

An attempt to correct a misunderstanding may result in worsening it, if our reactions to each other cause more of the offending behavior.

Men and women have different ways of thinking and talking. When a wife tells her husband about a problem, all she may want is to be reassured. He may sidetrack her story, crack jokes about it, question her interpretation of the problem, and give her advice about it. Though natural to men, such a response is unexpected to women. She feels he is uninterested, not really listening, and criticizing her. Then he may wonder why she doesn't appreciate his help and why she asked for his advice.

A n o t h e r c a u s e o f misunderstanding is pride and jealousy. Unless they are humble, people feel inadequate when others try to help. Turmoil and feelings of inferiority in a person can elicit some of the most surprising surmisings about someone's efforts to love and help. So if, instead of appreciation, your love or help results in an attack on you — pray for wisdom, and more love and grace — and learn what you can.

These few examples and brief

explanations give us an idea of the many ways that misunderstandings can arise. Sometimes people are unkind and have evil motives. [At times like this, we must remember we too have sinned]. It's no fun to be ill-treated, but neither is it fun to be falsely accused of having ill motives. If we falsely accuse, we are being unkind. So let us be slow to judge another's motives.

When a problem arises, the first thing we should do is search our own heart and life. Step back, look at the situation, and try to understand. Maybe you are misunderstanding another person's expression of love and maybe they are misunderstanding yours. Whatever the situation, consider these Scriptures:

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies [heartfelt compassion], kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or

deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Col. 3:12-17

I, then, the prisoner for the Lord's sake, entreat you to live and act as becomes those who have received the call that you have received — with all lowliness of mind and unselfishness, and with patience, bearing with one another lovingly, and earnestly striving to maintain, in the uniting bond of peace, the unity given by the Spirit. Eph. 4:1-3. [Weymouth]

I want to thank the congregation for their help in writing this, especially Luke and our son Daniel. I didn't write this because I am so accomplished in the matter, rather the opposite.

A Waiting Prayer

Lord, give me patience
to endure the waiting,
patience for you to reveal

Your way to me,
patience when time stands still
and life crawls by . . .

Help me remember
beneath these snows
a blossom
slowly, surely, steadily
grows,
a blossom that will ripen to love
in the summer sun.

Lord, give me patience
that I will not rush
the slow ripening of Your will.

By Elizabeth Jantz

TERRORISM IN

As you read this article, someone in America is being terrorized to death. In fact, this happens with regularity in this country. A million or more innocent Americans are terrorized to death every year. Some will have their brains sucked out of their heads. Some will be decapitated. Some will be torn apart with their legs and arms being ripped from their bodies. Some will be suffocated. Some will have their skin eaten away in a saline solution. But, you won't read about these acts of terror in the headlines of the newspaper. The nation will not mourn. The cable news channels will not spend twenty-four hours a day, seven days every week for over a month talking about these acts of American terrorism. Congress will not pass a "Use of Force" resolution to fight these acts of terrorism. The President will not cry in the Oval Office while talking to the media about these acts of terrorism. The President will not declare war on the perpetrators of these acts of terrorism, or the country that gives them aid and safe harbor. If he did, he would have to declare war on the United States. The terrorism I write about has nothing to do with Anthrax, or flying planes into buildings. I write about the terrorism of the womb.

Since the events of September 11th, I have heard the term "innocent Americans" used many times in regards to the people that have died as a result of those senseless acts of barbarism, other times in reference to all Americans. But, I ask you, who is

more innocent than an unborn baby? These innocent Americans have been terroristically slaughtered by the millions for many years. Yet, there is no national day of prayer and mourning for these innocent Americans who are truly victims of the worst terroristic attacks on American soil. Yet, our government takes no precautions to safe guard the lives of these Americans, whose only crime is having been conceived by merciless and selfish men and women. Why? Because these acts of terror have been sanctioned by the U.S. Supreme Court on January 22, 1973. Since then, tens of millions of innocent unborn Americans have been terrorized to death. And, the main difference between the slaughtered unborn Americans, and those who died on September 11th is the time elapsed from the time of conception.

Thousands of lives were aborted, that is – brought to a premature end on September 11th. In the same way, millions of innocent unborn babies have been and are being aborted. There is no difference. How can we be so shaken by a few thousand people whose lives have come to a savage end and be totally desensitized to the millions of unborn babies that have been and continue to be slaughtered? Isn't it time to end the butchering of the unborn?

This is part of an article Tom Lineaweaver published in AIM, American Independence Magazine,

She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of

Yeast Risen Corn Bread

2 cups water or milk
2 tsp. yeast
1/4 cup sweetener
1 tablespoon salt
4 eggs
2 tablespoon fat [or 1/4 cup cream, reduce liquid 2 tablespoon]
2 cups corn flour or meal
2 cups whole wheat or spelt flour
1 cup rye flour or other grain

Dissolve yeast in warm liquid. Add rest of ingredients and enough flour to make a thick batter. Let rise, stir down, let rise again, stir. Put in cake pans. Let rise 5 or 10 min. Bake at 350°. For a quicker bread, double yeast, and bake after only a few minutes of rising. Good with chili beans, soups, salad, or creamed greens.

Creamed Greens

1/4 cup butter
1 onion, chopped
2 qt. milk
1 1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. dried basil

1 tsp. dried parsley
1/4 tsp. hot pepper
3/4 cup flour
2 or more cups chopped spinach

Cook onion in butter, add rest of ingredients except flour and 1 cup of the milk. Bring to a boil. Stir milk into flour until smooth, add to boiling mixture while stirring. Cook till thickened. Add greens. Serves a large family.

*Optional: add celery, cheese, diced hard-boiled eggs, fresh or dried herbs of choice.

*Use other greens from the garden or use weeds: dandelion, stinging nettles, lambs quarters, or marsh marigold [cowslips]. Harvest in the spring, while young and tender, before they bloom. Use gloves to handle fresh nettles.

Correction: In the recipe for chocolate mint pudding in the last [Fall 2001] issue, the 3 cup milk should have been sour milk, or if you use fresh milk use 2 tablespoon baking powder instead of soda.

Out of the Mouth of Babes Matt. 21:16

Once when Jonathan and Larisa were quite small, big sister Ellen came to investigate why he was crying.

“She hit me,” Jonathan cried. “But I was careful,” Larisa defended. “I did it very carefully.”

How To Dry Herbs

There are several ways to dry herbs, with the idea being the same — to reduce the water content as quickly as possible.

Air circulation:

Cut whole stems or branches and either brush or rinse off excessive dirt and dead leaves. Place them on newspaper, an old window screen, or tie the stems together in bundles and hang upside-down in a cool, ventilated location out of the sun.

Oven Drying:

Snip the leaves from the stems and chop the stems or branches into tiny pieces. Place them in a 150-degree oven on a baking sheet for a few minutes. Be sure to leave the oven door ajar to prevent scorching.

Microwave Instructions:

Arrange a single layer of the plant

to be dried on a paper towel. Place the towel in the microwave on high setting for approximately 1 minute. Turn the plant over and do the same on the other side. The time may vary depending upon what you are drying, so monitor the process closely to prevent burning.

Burying or dehydrating:

Delicate flowers should be preserved by burying them completely in a drying powder or using a dehydrator according to manufacturer's directions.

Properly dried herbs, flowers, and roots can retain their shape and color for about one year. If mold does form, it will most likely be due to the fact that all of the water was not removed before storing.

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