

## Couples In Bloom – Irreconcilable Differences

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**Marriage needs 3 things: irreconcilable differences, death and ministry.**

Hopefully, this description will make more sense by the end of this page. We are defining marriage in the way that Christ loved the church, which is also how husbands are to love their wives ⇒ Ephesians 5:25. Let's look at each of these three components:

**Irreconcilable differences:** During a disagreement and discussion on our 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary vacation in Hawaii, God answered Loren's long-standing question, "*Why are we wired so differently?*" God's answer: "*So you have something to die to.*" Dating services pride themselves for matching couples based on compatibility. Compatibility by itself is a selfish concept and can destroy a marriage. This is not to say one seeks an enemy as a spouse for a lifetime of conflict. Rather, it is to say, "My covenant in marriage is about YOU." A "you serve me" marital motivation will kill the relationship, *even if mutual*. God designed "I serve you" marital motivations because *giving* is how anything *good* happens, not by *getting*: "In the beginning God created..." ⇒ Genesis 1:1. Marriages focused on *getting* have no one to introduce goodness to the other; and that's when the enemy steps in. God designed irreconcilable differences to ensure serving each other, which in turn ensures blessing (God is pretty smart). Divorce proves many people do not understand this. "Even as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." ⇒ Matthew 20:28. Managing irreconcilable differences for success and blessing has two parts:

**Death:** Becoming a Christian requires understanding that some things need getting rid of. A few examples are selfishness, being easily angered and not covering offenses ⇒ 1 Corinthians 13:5, 7. We, as the bride of Christ, are being selfish when we get offended. Getting offended, even at genuinely offensive things, is being part of the same problem. *What does God do when we are offensive to Him?* Does He withdraw His intimacy from us? No; He wisely and compassionately tries to woo us back to righteousness. We cannot play the flesh card and say, "Well, He's God but I'm only human." God provides power through relationship with His Holy Spirit and therefore says, "Be Holy as I am Holy." ⇒ 1 Peter 1:13-16. Humility is NOT something we do; rather, it is something we make room for. The humble know that dying to self *allows* God's power to work through them.

**Ministry:** Love offers Heaven to someone who deserves Hell. This is the attitude and extent of love God says to give our wife, as Jesus did for His Bride. Again, the ability to do this also comes from receiving it first from God. Otherwise it would be a fake show instead of a real overflow from our heart. *A husband needs revelation on how God treats him, as the bride of Christ, in order to have what it takes to love his wife correctly.* This is not a matter of will power, but willingness to receive God's love *and give* it to his wife.

**Marriage is a ministry, not a test.** As the bride of Christ, prepare your heart for eternity. As a married person on earth, love your spouse like Christ loves you. ...selah,

♥ Loren & Kathy Falzone