

To rescue relationships, to rescue marriages, to rescue intimacy, to rescue communication, to rescue nearness, we need to be rescued from **SELF**.

The greatest hindrance to any relationship (certainly including marriage) is **YOURSELF**.

It's been well-said: Death to self, not personal gratification, is the center of marriage's gravitational pull.

Background to Philippians 2:1-4 —

Philippians is about UNITY. And, Philippians 2:1-4 is the central paragraph in the book. It's the discourse peak of the book.

The main theme of Phil 2:1-4 & the book as a whole is: UNITY THROUGH SELFLESSNESS.

THESIS — WHAT MUST WE KNOW from Phil 2 about rescuing marriage (& all relationships)?

You must KNOW & HOLD these four keys to a holy marriage:

1. Know your **POWER**/position (1)
2. Know your **PURPOSE** (2)
3. Know your **PRIORITY** (3-4)
4. Know your **PATTERN** (5)

It's been well said: "I'm convinced that 90 percent of marital problems would be fixed if [Phil 2:1-5] was applied in marriages."

I. KNOW YOUR POWER (POSITION) (1)

This is your ability; it's what the TRIUNE God has done for you; *it's the foundation!*

1. Since you have encouragement in UNION With CHRIST (1a)
2. Since you have consolations from the LOVE OF GOD (1b)
3. Since you have FELLOWSHIP WITH THE SPIRIT (1c)
4. Since you know AFFECTION & COMPASSION OF GOD (1d)

II. KNOW YOUR PURPOSE! (2)

You don't marry for your own benefit and pleasure, nor for your comfort of mutual affection nor for the ultimate joy of bearing and raising kids. We marry because in a work of unparalleled glory the Lord built this union together; so we marry because of HIS GLORY! (Tim Savage)

Philippians 2:1-5 — "Rescuing Marriage: Cultivating a Christ-Centered, Others-Focused Relationship of Humble Service"

But when we lose focus of our **PURPOSE** (God glorifying purpose!), then conflict comes, my sin is exposed & my selfishness is spotlighted. (Mark it: not my spouse's sin/fault; but *MY* sin).

So, we must understand the progression of an idol. When we forget our purpose & exchange it for a self-motivated purpose, here's the formation of, or the progression of, an idol...

1. I **DESIRE** (I want...)
2. I **DEMAND** (I need...)
3. I **JUDGE** (I can't believe you.../ I know why...; we think we know their motives; make assumptions)
4. I **PUNISH** (I'll make you pay; I'll get even; revenge; self-exalting/dispensing judgment)
(for more, see Ken Sande, *Peacemaker Ministries*)

III. KNOW YOUR PRIORITY! (3-4)

- This is God's blueprint for every relationship for *UNITY* (especially in marriage!)
- **NOT** self, but other person!

Selfishness/pride is the OVEN for conflict!

James 3.16 - where jealousy & selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing!

➔ your relationship will prosper & glorify Christ to the degree that its based on HUMILITY & SELF-SACRIFICE.

IV. KNOW YOUR PATTERN! (5)

How you act in relationships (& marriage!) must mirror how Christ has acted toward you!

1. **SELFLESS LOVE** —
2. **SINGULARLY FOCUSED** —
3. **SACRIFICIAL DEATH** —
4. **SECURE FAITHFULNESS** —
5. **SERVANT LEADER** —
6. **SHEPHERD OVERSEER** —
7. **SCRIPTURALLY COMFORTING** —

Further Resources to Help [at Amazon]:

- The Excellent Wife (Martha Peace)
- The Exemplary Husband (Stuart Scott)
- Love that Lasts: When Marriage Meets Grace (Gary & Betsy Ricucci)
- Strengthening Your Marriage (Wayne Mack)
- When Sinners Say 'I Do' (Dave Harvey)

Consider Philippians 2:5-11: the humbling, self-sacrificing work of Christ!

- Jesus was intent on ONE purpose, he did NOTHING from selfishness, but looked to the interests of others; and your salvation is **proof of this!**
 - Refresh your heart in the work of Christ!
 - Draw strength to love in humble service from the Savior who humbly loved you & gave Himself up for your gain! Rescue & grow in your marriage as you *GO TO CALVARY!*