



YOU MAY KISS THE BRIDE

3.16.2014 - GROUP DISCUSSION

MESSAGE BY CHAD BRUEGMAN

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

What is the nicest thing that any one has ever said to you?

SHARE

Welcome to part five of our series entitled, "Vows." We have all heard vows before in fact most of us have confessed vows to ourselves and to others. We have all sat at weddings where we have heard vows such as..."I take thee, for better or for worse, richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health till death do us part, " and we wait for the crescendo by the Pastor when he states, "you may kiss the bride."

Our entire Christian faith is based on God's promise to His people it is the most perfect love story.

Read James 3:2-12

All of us can think of a time that we have said something negative or had things said about us that were hurtful. It is often much more difficult to think of the things that we have said to others that build them up.

What is something you have said to another person that has been "life giving"? How did you feel when you said that good thing? How did they respond?

James 3:10 says

And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right!

Chad talks a lot about God's original intent for us. When we speak blessing and cursing out of the same mouth, we defile God's original intent. Last week, we talked about our Identity in Christ and how to begin to understand that we are different when we are "IN" Christ. When we begin to talk about the identity that God has given us, we are able to start to see ourselves as HE sees us. When we see ourselves as HE sees us, we open the door to being able to see others in a different light as well. Remember when Eric challenged us to find the most loving explanation for the behavior of someone? It is a similar concept.

What is one thing that you could stop saying about yourself or another person? What "life giving" statement could you make instead?

GROW

Chad said, “You can’t be flippant and careless with how you talk to your spouse and expect for your marriage to be even remotely healthy...”

When we accept Christ, we literally take on a new identity. So does our spouse, our friend, or our family member when they accept Christ. Sometimes, it is very hard to allow people to change. We say things like “I don’t even know you anymore.” The changes might be good, but we have a hard time allowing them to be reality. A lot of that is based in fear. We might be afraid that it won’t “stick” or that they are just pretending.

Speaking out the truth of WHO we are and WHO they are will start to revolutionize our relationships.

Read Proverbs 18:4, 20-22 & 24

Affirming people for “who they are” isn’t necessarily the same as affirming what they are currently “doing”. We all have bad behavior at times, but that does not change the way that God sees us when we have accepted Him.

It’s okay to call each other on things we’re doing wrong, but it’s never okay to say that what their currently doing is ultimately what they are.

We are IN Christ, and because of that fact we are different. Here are some more things that the Bible says we are when we accept Jesus.

- I am more than a conqueror through Him Who loves me (Romans 8:37).
- I am the temple of the Holy Spirit; I am not my own (1 Corinthians 6:19).
- I am the light of the world (Matthew 5:14).
- I am greatly loved by God (Romans 1:7; Ephesians 2:4; Colossians 3:12; 1Thess. 1:4).
- I am strengthened with all might according to His glorious power (Colossians 1:11).
- It is not I who live, but Christ lives in me (Galatians 2:20).

Will you take the challenge to start speaking life over your spouse?

In the list above, is there something that you can begin saying in your relationships that will help others understand their worth and value?

Is it scary to “speak life” over your spouse?

MOVE

Jesus said this about our words:

Matthew 12:36-37

“I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Marriages and other relationships are best when there is freedom to be honest and real. Being kind with those words is obviously the best thing for us and for others. However, no one can deny that it is hard! We love sarcasm and teasing, but we all know that it can go too far.

What is one that you want to stop saying about yourself or your spouse? What will you replace it with?

Is there a person that you may need to apologize to because of harsh things you have said?

(NOTE: We do not want anyone to feel shame or hopelessness when facing these hard issues of relationship. If help is needed to discern what to do next, please contact a pastor or a Christian Counselor.)

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles that we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

2 Thessalonians 1:3

We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing

TO GO

Hebrews 3:13

But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

Another great resource to read about our true identity is "Who I am in Christ" by Neil T. Anderson. To see a list of Biblical statements on our identity in Christ, check this out!: http://vintagelawrence.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/ANDERSON_WhoIAmInChrist.pdf

Special Note about this LG Weekly:

It is important to note that this LG Weekly study can bring up some difficult topics and memories. Remember, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For many of us who have experienced the pain of broken relationships or marriages, remember that you are forgiven, loved and belong. All of us have fallen short, so you are among a group that is all broken. The important thing is to decide what you think God wants you to do next for you are already loved and accepted by God.

Don't give up, dig in, ask for prayer and let's move on together!