



10/20/25

So... my husband shared in yesterday's message that I didn't remember meeting him when he met me. That's true. But what he humbly left out was that when I did remember meeting him 3 months later, I was completely mesmerized by him. I just want to set the record straight. To be fair, we've been married 31 years with a lot of ups and downs. But I'm thankful that the Lord draws us closer to Him and closer to each other with each passing year... just to set the record straight. 😊

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Ephesians 4:1-3

There is a word we use a lot. It is never once used in scripture, and yet we see evidence of it all over scripture... Trinity. Father, Son, Holy Spirit... the triune God. How is it possible that He is God in three persons, blessed Trinity? It is that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are so united in character, thought, purpose, and action that there is not one tiny little speck of reality that they disagree on. They are in complete, absolute unity... one mind. And I am God's image bearer. So... of course He would want me to be in relationship with Him AND with others. The relationship I have with others is meant to be a reflection of my relationship with Him. What does that look like?

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 ~

Vs. 9-10 ~ "Two are better than one." Why? "They have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow." It is always a beautiful thing when we work together, because we can accomplish more together than we can apart. By myself, I have weaknesses... and strengths. But I can partner with someone who has strengths where I have weaknesses, and I can provide strengths where the other person is weak.

I see this to be true in so many aspects of my life. My marriage is one. I see that Tim and I are united in our values and faith, but very different in our strengths and weaknesses. Where I am weak, he is strong. Where he is weak, I have strengths. Together we accomplish more

than we could apart.

I see this in my job with my administrative assistant, Joannimal. She has an eye for detail that I just don't have... I am so thankful for her massive strengths where I am weak. And I don't think she'd want to do my job. Together, we accomplish more for the kingdom of God than I for sure could accomplish without her.

I could go on about other relationships... friendships, church family, my adult children... but the bottom line is... these relationships on earth are a model of the relationship of the Trinity... each with different roles, but one in purpose.

"But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!" Why would I not have another to lift me up? Isolation. Pride. Shame. When I feel shame, I feel too unworthy to pursue friendships. When I have pride, I feel that people should come to me. It is never good to isolate and try to do things in my own strength. God made me to need Him and to be in relationship with other people. If my love for the Lord is genuine, it WILL spill out in how I relate to other people.

Vs. 11 ~ "If two lie together, they can keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone?" Wow. What an intimate, mutual statement. God is an intimate, affectionate God who blesses us with the opportunity for deep mutual relationship. He models for us how to care for EACH OTHER'S needs in mutual relationship. If I keep my husband warm, I am not left cold. I am warm as well. He keeps me warm just by being in relationship with me. It is mutual.

Vs. 12 ~ "And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him." When we are in relationship, we are a team. We are able to support each other in ways that we could not do by ourselves. Even in spiritual warfare, when suffering comes, when we support each other in that suffering, it is endurable. As we share life together, the highs and lows... we are able to accomplish more together than we could apart. We are able to care for each other in mutual relationship. We are able to share all the highs and lows together and get through life better because we are not alone.

We were made to be in relationship... and "a threefold cord is not quickly broken." It's like a braiding of three ropes together that make them exponentially stronger together than the individual cords are apart. What's the third strand? I know I'm one strand. My husband is one strand. What's the third? That's the Lord.

In my relationship with Tim, as we are one together, and then one with the Lord... we are a cord of three strands. That makes our marriage "not quickly broken." I find that the more we center our marriage on glorifying God in mutual relationship with Him and with each other, the stronger our relationship is with Him and with each other... not quickly broken. It is most intimate in the marriage relationship, but this oneness with the Lord can be true in any relationship that includes believers. As believers, we have a deeper bond because we are bound by love for each other AND we are bound by the love of the Lord. As we lift each other up,

care for each other's needs, and help protect each other, we demonstrate the beauty of God's character. We become a picture that points to who He is.

Ephesians 4:1-3 ~

If God wants me to model His character in relation to others, how should that affect my relationships? And how especially should that impact my marriage? I believe that ALL scripture about relationship applies to all believers, AND especially to marriage because the marriage relationship is the model of Christ and the Church.

Vs. 1 ~ Therefore... in light of the fact that God loves me and "all the saints" with a love that is beyond comparison and He's able to do more than I ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:14-21), walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which I have been called. What is a manner worthy of my calling? What will it relate to? The way I dress? How I look? What I do? To walk in a manner worthy of my calling, the most important walk will be found in how I handle relationships... because God is a God of relationship.

Vs. 2-3 ~ This is a manner worthy of my calling... because this is who my Lord is...

- Humble... toward God AND others... not treating them as though I'm superior to them.*
- Gentle... being careful with my words and actions, not to tear down but to build up. What words did Jesus use to describe His heart in Matthew 11? He said, "I am gentle and humble in heart." By being humble and gentle, I walk worthy because I walk like Jesus.*
- Patient... long suffering... understanding that we're all broken sinners. We need to be patient with each other and pray for them. 2 Timothy 2:25 speaks of "patiently enduring evil, correcting our opponents with gentleness." I walk worthy when I'm longsuffering.*
- Bearing with one another in love... recognizing that "we all stumble in many ways" (James 3:2). I would want someone to be understanding and patient with me when I mess up. Do the same for them... just as Jesus does for each one of us.*
- Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace... EAGER... pursuing unity OF THE SPIRIT... according to the Spirit... according to God's word... in the bond of peace. That's not easy... and it's not always possible. But, "In as much as it depends on you, be at peace with all men" (Romans 12:18). I can't be responsible for someone else's actions, but I am responsible for mine. Pursue peace as much as possible.*

My God is perfectly humble, gentle, and patient. He bears with me in love. He pursues unity with me. When I'm seeking to model myself after Him, I will care for others... humbly and gently. I will seek to work as a team with others, unified, because we can accomplish more together for the glory of God than we can apart. I will lock arms with others as we take our stand against the schemes of the devil, recognizing that my wrestle is not against the person,

but against the rulers of darkness.

O Lord, please help me to think this way. Please help me to see when I'm trying to be self sufficient, or when I'm expecting others to carry my load. Help me to be about US, not me... because that's who You are.