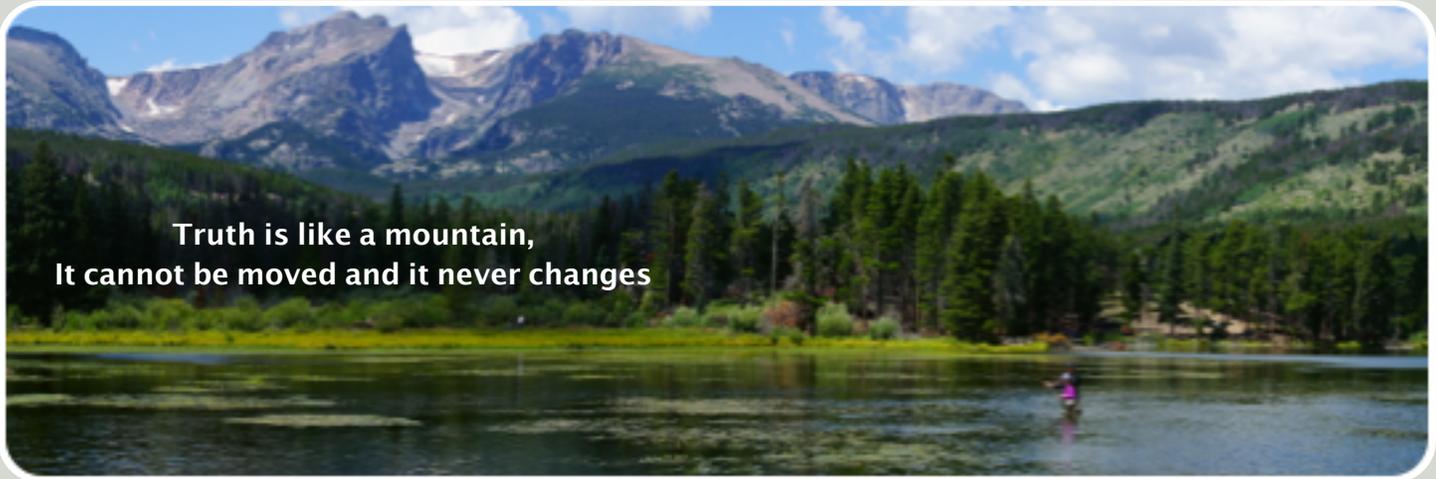


AUGUST 2019

“TRUTH”

**A SURE WORD
FOR TODAY**



Truth is like a mountain,
It cannot be moved and it never changes

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UPDATE

If you are reading this and have not yet subscribed, we want you to know that this is not a problem to us. We are just glad you are reading the newsletter. About half of our readers do it this way.

However, we want you to know that you are missing some wonderful photos that we believe would be a great blessing to you. They are made available only to those who have subscribed. Here is what one person wrote to us last month: “That is the sweetest elk photo I have ever seen - and I have seen lots. We have albums of them but this one is precious.”

The photo she refers to was only made available to our subscribers. Why don't you subscribe today? There is no cost for this and immediately each month you will have access to a page that will bless you. Go to the website, click on the subscribe button, fill out the form with your name and e-mail address, click “SEND” and it's done.

"THE KEY TO A HAPPY MARRIAGE"

CONCLUSION

WARNING: You are entering the "TRUTH ZONE". You may not like what you read. At times it may make you feel uncomfortable. That is not my goal. My goal is to speak truth that will provide spiritual guidance for you and your family in a time of great spiritual darkness. You can be sure that what you read here will be TRUTH!

Last month I started a short series designed to give you what I believe is the one key to building a happy marriage. It seems to me that very often marriage seminars have made marriage far too complicated. There are often multiple sessions, with each one dealing with another facet of what they make difficult and complex. Believe it or not, I attended one seminar where one of the sessions was actually entitled "**How to Fight Right.**" I may tend to oversimplify things, but I believe making marriage so complicated is not a good approach.

I would much rather give young couples one thing that will result in huge dividends being returned to them. **If you have not read Part 1 of this series, you need to stop now, go back, and read it.** It is available in the archives section of our website.

In that article I focused on the issue of selfishness. Here is one sentence from the article that talks about the results of dealing with selfishness:

"When two people allow God to do this work in them, they will be happy beyond anything they could ever dream."

Selfishness has destroyed more marriages than all other issues combined. I know that is a bold statement, but I believe I can convince you that it is true. To do that I want to try and show you how selfishness is present in nearly every conflict a couple may face. I have often observed that when couples are willing to talk about their issues they tend to focus on what their mate does that they find totally unacceptable. Try as I might, I cannot understand why this should be an ongoing problem. **If your mate doesn't like something you are doing, stop doing it.** Is this so hard? What makes this so hard? Why are you unwilling to change?

Are you starting to get the picture? In this whole scenario there is one common thread that is always present that allows conflict to continue; it is selfishness.

It is selfish to not give your mate what they are asking of you. Some would counter by saying that it is selfish of them to ask you to change or give. That may be true, but it only serves to prove what I have said; selfishness is at the root of all marriage conflict.

In the history of mankind, every happy marriage has had two people who have put aside their own personal preferences and desires and have lived to make their mate happy. Like it or not, this is how it is! If you are not willing to accept that, you should plan on living the rest of your selfish life single because no matter who you marry, you will never be happy.

Today this has become more difficult because we are living in a time when "**it's all about me**" has become the mantra of an entire generation. Young people too often seem to think that the world exists for their pleasure, satisfaction, and self-gratification. They don't seem to understand that this is a recipe for a lifetime of sadness and frustration. **They have never been taught that the more you give, the more you live.** Their self-centered view of life may have worked for them as teens. But when they get married, they soon find out they must either change or live life unhappy in one failed marriage after another.

To help you see how big this issue really is, I want to show you that there are many ways selfishness can manifest itself. Yes, making demands or failing to give what is demanded is selfish, but an even greater manifestation of selfishness is when someone commits adultery. I cannot think of any greater display of selfishness than adultery! The person who falls into this trap obviously doesn't care about anything except his or her own pleasure. Their mate, their children, their church and friends are all sacrificed for pleasure and self-gratification. I ask you, can you get any more selfish than that?

**“THE KEY TO A HAPPY MARRIAGE”
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2**

By now I hope you are beginning to see why I insist that selfishness is the root cause of all unhappiness in marriages. But trust me, there is more, much more. Another manifestation of selfishness is a mate who is perpetually grumpy. A person who lives like this obviously doesn't care about how they make their spouse and their family feel. They are totally selfish!

It has been my observation that men tend to be guiltier of this than women. I am not sure why this is, but it seems to be quite obvious. Back in May, Miss Linda and I spent three days at Disney World in Florida. **Disney World is a great place to watch people.** How do people handle stress? How do people deal with issues that arise that they hadn't planned on? What I saw was amazing.

Every day I observed entire families that looked like they were on a forced death march to a concentration camp. These families had one thing in common; dad was always a complete grump. He was angry, short-tempered, and obviously didn't want to be there. His family looked frightened of him and they reminded me of wilted flowers in the hot summer sun. How sad. How selfish.

How different it was when dad was happy at the thought of being able to give his family a great vacation. I remember an incident that happened in a restaurant. A family of four came in and sat at a table near us. No sooner had they gotten seated when the little girl, who was about 8 years old, spilled her entire glass of milk. It went all over the table, ran down onto her lap, and then to the floor. What happened next amazed me. Dad quickly jumped up and the first thing he did was to reassure his daughter that it was okay. He then got some napkins and proceeded to dry her off and wipe up all the spilled milk. Five minutes later you would have never known anything had happened. They were all smiling and laughing and talking about the things they had seen and experienced. In my eyes that man was a superhero, and as we left, I told him so.

I want to say to men, **“Stop being a jerk.** It is selfish to make your family live in an environment of fear and intimidation. You are bigger than that and if you repent, Jesus can make you sweet.”

I know that is plain and pointed, but that is the kind of tough love men need.

I encourage you to apply what I have written to any marriage problems you may have because it will be life-changing. Start by asking yourself whether or not selfishness is present. If you are honest, I think you will be hard-pressed to find any negative situation where it isn't. When you find it, you must deal with it because pretending you can be happy and selfish at the same time is complete folly.

Remember, the more you give, the more you live. I must also include what should be obvious, but to the selfish may not be. **It takes two!** One of the saddest things I have seen are marriages where one person spends their entire life giving, while their mate takes advantage of that and uses it to perpetuate their own selfishness. The truth is, neither one of them will ever be truly happy; not the giver or the taker. The reason being, it takes two if you are going to experience what God intended marriage to be.

A truly happy marriage will always have a man and a woman who have both committed themselves to one task: living to make their mate happy. When two people accept that as the prime directive for their entire life, they will always end up with an amazing marriage. Can any of this be backed up with Scripture? If you believe that our Christian walk must first start in the home, then yes. If our Christianity doesn't work there, then it is not valid and we shouldn't even think about exporting it to a lost and messed up world. Here is how it is supposed to work:

Romans 12:10 (KJV)

“Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; **in honor preferring one another;**”

The word “preferring” comes from a compound Greek word with the prefix being the word “pro.” In the Greek this word means: “to go before or to take the lead.” When this is applied to what is being said, it tells us that each of us is to take the lead in giving to the other person.

That is the perfect formula for a happy marriage.

**AND THAT MY FRIENDS
IS THE TRUTH!**



A MINUTE WITH MISS LINDA



“What Is Growing In Your Yard?”

In recent years John and I have had something happen that we consider very unusual. We have had some plants spring up in the shrub area of our yard that we never

planted. Yes, I know you all are thinking that weeds sprouting up spontaneously in your yard is not an unusual thing. I agree, but what makes this so unusual is that these plants are not weeds.

Time has revealed that one of them is a Canadian Cherry tree, and the other is a beautiful Cinnamon Ash. As I write this, both of them are now over seven feet tall and they are growing exactly where we would have wanted them. The third turned out to be a wildflower commonly known as the Rocky Mountain bee plant (**cleome serrulata**). It is the most beautiful wildflower we have ever seen. Not only does it attract bees, but the hummingbirds also love it. And you all know what that means; we now have some amazing photos of that flower being visited by the hummingbirds. (Take a look at the next page.) **We feel like these three plants are a kiss from God!**

It would be wonderful if everything that pops up in our yard was as beautiful as these three plants, but such is not the case. Like all of you, we have also had more than our fair share of thistles and thorns. This is just a part of life.

This is also how life works in the spiritual realm. Scripture makes it very clear that life is made up of sowing and reaping. What we reap depends upon what we sow and also what we allow to be sown into our lives.

Matthew 13:24-26 (NIV)

“Jesus told them another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. 26 When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.’”

Because we all know this is true, we should also understand the need to be constantly on guard about what is being sown and also what is growing in our lives. Like our mysterious unplanned trees, things can start as tiny seeds and if allowed to grow, soon become very large issues in our life.

Never before has this analogy been more real. Today there are so many ways through which bad seed can be sown into our minds. We, as believers, need to be constantly alert as to what we are allowing to be planted in us and in the lives of our children because it will eventually take root and bear fruit. **What kind of fruit do you want produced in you, your children, and your grandchildren?**

When our children were young, we realized this and were determined to do all we could to protect them. We were very aware that the evil one would try to plant evil seeds in their lives. Someone once gave one of our daughters a book and we assumed it was okay because it was from a co-worker at her job.

“What Is Growing In Your Yard?”

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

But soon bad things began to happen. Almost every night she would have terrible nightmares. As we prayed, we felt impressed to check the content of the book, and found it filled with many evil things. We pointed out to her that this was probably the source of her nightmares. After she got rid of the book and we prayed with her, the nightmares stopped. It was a lesson learned.

Not only is it important for us to not allow bad seed to be sown in us and our children, but we need to be sure we are planting the good seed of God's Word. Our children were always rewarded for learning Bible verses, and we made sure they were in church where they were taught God's Word. Now that they are grown, it is a delight to see that seed producing fruit in their lives. Our son, the producer of **Scripture Lullabies**, appreciates the word that was sown into his life, and has made it his life's work to help parents plant that same seed in the lives of their children through his music.

I conclude by asking you to take inventory. What is growing in your life and in the lives of your children? You will find that what is growing depends upon what has been sown, and also upon what is being regularly pulled up. We all know what our yards would look like if we never did any weed control. Likewise, if we want our lives to be a thing of beauty, we must sow the right things and pull up the wrong things.

After we receive Jesus as our Savior, we must always allow Him to continue planting the seed of His Word in us.

Matthew 13:23 (AMP)

“And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands and grasps it; he indeed bears fruit and yields, some a hundred times [as much as was sown], some sixty [times as much], and some thirty.”

**Oh, how we love to see good seed grow
and produce good fruit!**



AND THAT MY FRIENDS IS THE TRUTH

P R O P H E C Y U P D A T E

“An Opinion Is All We Have”

When I was quite young, my pastor would teach on Bible prophecy at least once each year. I remember him having an oilcloth that stretched about 20 feet across the platform of our church. On it were depictions of things the Bible tells us are going to happen in the future. He was a true man of God whom I have always highly respected. I consider my life to be richer because he built in me a true biblical world-view and his teaching on Bible prophecy was a large part of that.

This is why I am very concerned about the lack of teaching on end time Bible prophecy that I see in churches today. I ask you, when is the last time you heard a pastor teach on this subject? **We must remember that it is impossible for our youth to have a true biblical world-view if they don't know what the Bible has to say about the future of this planet.**

Many times I have asked myself, “Why is it that pastors are ignoring such an important subject?” I am not sure, but based on my own experiences, I shall offer a possibility. Pastors like to present themselves as a voice of authority. They want people to view what they say as truth and fact. This is good and this is why open debate and comment is never allowed in churches. For sure, I would have never allowed it.

However, when it comes to Bible prophecy, this creates some problems because much of what is taught will always have a certain amount of personal opinion connected to it. You can't avoid it. The reason for this is that there is not one portion of Scripture that gives us the exact sequence in which end time events will take place. We know from Scripture that certain events will happen, but we do not know the order in which they will happen. The events I speak of are the rapture of the church, the return of Jesus to rule and reign for 1000 years, the revealing of the man of sin spoken of in 2

Thessalonians, and the great tribulation spoken of a number of places in Scripture.

(OBVIOUSLY: Not in that same order!)

We all have our opinions about the timing and sequence of these four events. But we also need to recognize that all we have is an opinion. Is that okay? I believe so. There are many things we should be dogmatic about because they are so clearly presented in Scripture that no room is left for debate. But the sequence of the fulfillment of these four prophetic events is not one of them.

When it comes to the timing and sequence of prophecy being fulfilled, teachers should never present their preconceived opinion as absolute fact. The fact is, if most were truthful, they would admit that they really aren't sure about the order in which things will happen. I believe this is one of the main reasons why they won't teach anything about it.

So where am I going with all this? I want to encourage pastors to teach their congregations what the Bible has to say about end-time events. This is more important today than ever before. Just don't make the mistake of bringing a preconceived opinion of what a timeline of events will look like and then go through the Bible and randomly pull verses to make it appear as if the order of events you are presenting can be backed up with Scripture. **Your flock will appreciate hearing their pastor say, “I do not have all the answers.”**

You need to make sure your congregants are aware that these are momentous times. Everything written in the Bible is going to come to pass. When? In what order?

**Who cares...
I AM LOOKING FOR JESUS!**

AND THAT MY FRIENDS IS THE TRUTH