

Coaching: Marriage Matters



Week 47

Marriage Is More Than Just Talent

Talent is a skill or trait that comes naturally. The expression of a talent is usually very spontaneous, even unconscious. Talent can be fulfilling and beneficial to the talented one, and such talent can be impressive, useful, and enjoyable to others. Pure talent can be admired in many settings, but not always in marriage.

Marriage requires that two people be very aware of their personal and collective circumstances and be very tuned in as to how to best meet the needs of one another. It is for this reason that talent can be either a help or hindrance to a marriage. Thoughts and actions that come to a person naturally, things for which there is great skill, can be lived out where there is little effort and forethought, and thus be ill-timed or inappropriate in a given circumstance.

Talent, especially involving personality traits, can become the unintended “default” setting for how one might deal with the demands of the marriage or the specific needs of a spouse. Talent can become a habitual response to every situation. If the husband or wife is just naturally entertaining, productive, attentive, enduring, persuasive, or consoling, the particular circumstances within a marriage may call for action that goes beyond this “default setting.” Circumstances may require one or both of the spouses to exercise an attentiveness or responsiveness that is beyond the area of their natural talent; their default.

If you are entertaining, don’t use this gift for distraction when there is emotional work to be done. If you are productive, learn to read when the family needs a rest. If you are attentive, don’t be afraid of tough love when it is needed. If you are enduring, come clean with your spouse when something is bothering you. If you are persuasive, don’t use this talent to talk your way out of a fault. If you are consoling, don’t create emotional cover for the dysfunctional behavior of loved ones.

Talent needs to be used as a tool in marriage, not become a habit.

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