

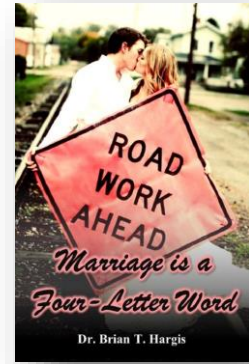
Marriage is a Four-Letter Word

by Dr. Brian Hargis

From CHAPTER 9: Reasonable Rules for Raising Rug Rats

~ For Ministry Workers ~

ALLOW YOUR CHILDREN TO EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF THE MINISTRY



If you are in the ministry, a word of caution is to not sacrifice your family for the ministry. I've seen far too many men of God attempt to reach the world with the Gospel while their family went to "hell." God is not pleased with this type of imbalance. Men, God entrusted you with a family and it's your responsibility to provide for them physically, mentally and spiritually. God comes first, family second, ministry third.

"But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

I Timothy 5:8

Too often ministers bring the negative side of the ministry home to the family, and over time they wonder why their family never wants to be a part of the ministry.

Family members should see the joy of you serving the Lord and the excitement that it is to be a part of the Lord's ministry. Yes, there are ups and downs to ministry. Anytime you deal with people you deal with problems. Anytime you deal with problems it can be stressful and depressing, but your family needs to see the "up" sides of the Lord's work and not all the "down" sides associated with it.



If all your children ever recognize in your life is the grief associated with the ministry, what would compel them to want to be in the ministry?

Dr. Thomas Gresham preached, *"There may be troubles and trials in this life, but you can't beat the saved life!"*

Sometimes I sit back in amazement and thankfulness that God would even use me in the ministry, yet He does. I want to pinch myself to see if it's real or if I'm dreaming. This type of focus and thankfulness is what you should bring out to your family. Sure, it's not all a bed of roses...but success is not measured in wealth and lack of problems. Success for God's ministry cannot be measured in attendance and offerings. Success for the Christian is to know the will of God for your life, and do it!

If you have lost that feeling, you need revived. When ministry becomes a career, an everyday job, or downright drudgery, then it's time to step back, re-evaluate, step down, step away, or be revived.

If the ministry no longer gives you joy, then your joy maker is broken. As one preacher said in an old-fashioned Camp Meeting Revival service, "Get under the spout where the blessings come out and then you can shout!"

As I labor in the ministry, I let my kids share in serving the Lord so that they can see His goodness in it. God is awesome, and His work is great. Serving Him in a full-time capacity is the most rewarding experience on the face of this planet and your children need to know it. What better way for them to know than for them to see it in you? They should see the joy bells of service ringing inside you.

Let them see you talk to God, worship God and praise God. Let them see you in love with God...not only in the church sanctuary, but in your everyday life. Let them see you bless the Lord when your transmission goes out or your health fails. Let them see the God of the valleys as well as the mountains.

"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Psalms 84:10

Lastly, avoid introducing your wife into your realm of ministry issues and problems. She is not designed to bear the load that God has entrusted you with.

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel."

I Peter 3:7

God designed you to bear a larger load than her. She is an emotional being and unnecessarily lading her with ministry cares will eventually lead to problems in the future. Lovingly confide in and communicate with her, but choose carefully how much you place upon her. You have a friend that sticks closer than a brother, and someone that can carry a much larger burden than her.

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

1 Peter 5:7

For more of Chapter 9: **Reasonable Rules for Raising Rug Rats**

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