

THE ELEPHANT IN YOUR MARRIAGE EX. 20:4-6; 34:5-7; DEUT. 5:8-10

He always dressed and acted like a white-collar executive....

She was different.... They drifted out of LBC and eventually out of marriage – an impossible situation.

Boundary problems: where I end and you begin! (caused by...?)

The elephant in your marriage is the past!

I. Everyone has a past!

Thoughts:

- Your life up till now
- The people you come from
- The subculture & culture you come from

Exodus 20:5 Thou shalt **not** bow down thyself to them, **nor** serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, **visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;** Exodus 20:6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them **that love me, and keep my commandments.**

II. A past that impacts the present!

Exodus 20:5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children **unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;** Exodus 20:6 And shewing mercy **unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.**

This is not all of one thing!

Good	Bad	Indifferent
Very good Such as a good Christian home	Very bad	Funny
Peculiar / unique: that that makes you you !		

	Potatoes	Pasta	Rice
RLW	Lived on!	Ate 1-2 x's/ week	Pudding at school – maybe 3-4 times in 18 years
Tiffany	Ate...French fries	Live on	Ate occasionally
DaDa	Heard of	Ate...sweet spaghetti & banana ketchup	Live on

The unexamined life is not worth living! The problem is when the past impacts us in a negative / extremely negative way!

The opposite of dysfunctional is dysfunctional.

III. Some of us (maybe most to some degree) have a past that is not past but present!

Exodus 20:5 Thou shalt **not** bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: **for** I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, **visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;** Exodus 20:6 And **showing mercy** unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Hence the elephant in your marriage:

- Bonding / boundary issues

This can take on many forms especially in the extremes.

Impossibly high wall or no boundaries at all.

- Shame or the lack of shame
- Personal secrets - often unspeakable (not just sins which we all have.)
- Family secrets
- Dark family secrets
- Enmeshment

Typically, you get over-share in these cases.

“When one person has a tummy ache, everyone has a tummy ache!”

Secret ≠ private

- **Things were never discussed, hidden, secret, confusing, & stories were constantly changing...**
- **Remember: it takes a great deal of emotional energy to keep dark secrets**
- **Decision making!**

Cannot make a decision

Or, must make every decision

Rarely feel in control

- **Stuck**

And they can find no cause / reason for it!

- **Habits / behavior...that is inexplicable / unexplainable**

IV. A past that must be confronted in the present!

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John 1:16-17

And of his fulness have all we received,

and grace for grace (*χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος*).

For the law was given by Moses,

but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

John 8:32 And ye shall **know** the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Psalms 15:2 He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

1 John 1:9 **If** we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, **I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace**, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto **the throne of grace**, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

1 Peter 5:10 But **the God of all grace**, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*. **1 Peter 5:11** To him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

I don't have a formula / 3 steps!

Surrender / dedication / higher life / deeper life / exchanged life – will not touch these things!!!

This will contains all of the following – ongoing and often:

- **The truth & grace of Christ!**
- **Knowing & obeying the truth**
- **Reading &/ hearing the truth**
- **Telling the truth to yourself, to God & to another → PRN**
- **The Word of His grace**
- **The Throne of grace**
- **The God of all grace**

V. A past that can be put in the past!

Exodus 20:4 Thou shalt **not** make unto thee any graven image, **or** any likeness *of any thing that is* in heaven above, **or** that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth:

Exodus 20:5 Thou shalt **not** bow down thyself to them, **nor** serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children **unto the third and fourth generation** of them that hate me; **Exodus 20:6** And shewing mercy **unto thousands** (*of what?*) of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

Deuteronomy 5:8 Thou shalt **not** make thee *any* graven image, **or** any likeness *of any thing that is* in heaven above, **or** that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters beneath the earth:

Deuteronomy 5:9 Thou shalt **not** bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children **unto the third and fourth generation** of them that hate me, **Deuteronomy 5:10** And shewing mercy **unto thousands** (*of what?*) of them that love me and keep my commandments.

Exodus 34:5 And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. **Exodus 34:6** And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, **Exodus 34:7** Keeping mercy **for thousands** (*of what?*), forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, **unto the third and to the fourth generation**.

GOD WOULD MUCH RATHER SHOW MERCY THAN CURSE!!!

1,000 → 3 OR 4!!!