

Are We Different or What?

Dr. Gary and Barbara Rosberg, Contributing Writers

Gary says:

Have you ever sat back reflecting on your marriage either in a pensive mood or right in the middle of a conflict and thought, "why can't she see things my way - the right way?"

In fact, one of those times happened just yesterday. We were getting ready for church and I gave Barb and Missy fair warning that we were going to get to the 11am service not only on time, but early. Despite plenty of notice, I once again found myself in the car with blood pressure rising, muttering to myself, "I'm going to have to park blocks away... we'll be the last ones in - again...we'll have to sit in the back row reserved for parents with young children!"

What was I muttering about? To me, it's margins...just trying to plan ahead with enough time to spare. Yet to Barb, it means getting a meal prepared, making final touches to her hair, and all the other unseen things she does before leaving the house.

Are we different or what?

Conflicts, big or small are often found in our differences. To some of you, waiting in the car is the least of your worries. You may be dealing with issues of deep pain and conflict that need to be resolved. Or some of you are like me and you need to die to self and let go of things that don't really matter. While you still have time, focus on what's really important - Jesus, family, and relationships. Like my buddy Joe White, president of Kanakuk Camps, always says, "The best time to plant an oak tree is 20 years ago. The second best time is now." Go for it!

Barb says:

Okay...I run late! And I'm married to Mr. Promptness. I can't stand driving Gary crazy, and when it happens I'm not proud. I've tried to change. I've turned my kitchen clocks ahead twenty minutes to scare myself into being on time. But it never works. On Sunday mornings, Gary's on time, sitting in the car, revving up the engine while I'm preoccupied with the last one or two details that need to be accomplished before leaving. As I run out the door to join him in the front seat, it hurts me to look into Gary's eyes and see the frustration that I've caused him. Few things are as awkward as driving to church when we're mad. My behavior frustrates both of us and there have been times when it leads to a conflict.

Who wants to have a conflict? Not me! But let's face it, it's not a matter of IF you have conflict, it's a matter of WHEN you have conflict. Whether our emotions are heightened over running late, pride, self-centeredness or more major issues - it's essential that we control our tongues so we can build up rather than tear down. Regardless of who did what, our marriages must remain hedged by an attitude of honor.

Gary and I have always said we'll stay up the whole night to solve a problem if necessary. We're

committed to solving our differences and putting our relationship over any issue that may come between us. It is hard resolving every single conflict that comes along, but it's imperative that we do! Why? Because we love each other, and we know that living in harmony is vital to maintaining a healthy, lasting marriage.

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