

# Charlyne Cares

March 9, 2010

*Each Tuesday Charlyne's husband, Bob, shares from the prodigal's perspective more than two decades after divorce and remarriage.*

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## Living Married

*"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." **Matthew 19:4-6***

May I ask you a question? Regardless of your legal marital status, do you consider yourself to be married in God's eyes? I pray that you do because that covenant between you, your spouse and God is the very basis of your stand, praying and trusting God alone to heal and restore your marriage. It would take a miracle, you say? Yes, it would, but our God is a miracle working God.

There's a second question that needs to be asked. If you consider yourself married, are you acting as though married 100% of the time? The physical absence or presence of your spouse has no bearing on your being married in God's eyes.

From what Charlyne and I are reading and hearing, far too many people, to whom God has spoken His promise regarding the positive future of their marriage, are becoming situational standers. Around other standers and marriage ministries, they talk the talk of a stander, but they then walk the walk of a single person. They are, in effect, like Sunday Christians, who attend church, Bible in hand, sing the songs and go through the motions, but then for the rest of the week live not much different than the world does.

"Who will know if I am standing and acting single?" Foremost, you and God will know. In addition, your absent spouse just may know. A major television network followed a woman from the time she left her apartment, until she arrived at work and discovered how many security cameras captured her on the way. The number was amazing. Do you not feel that if multitudes of strangers can photograph us without our knowledge, that some of what you are doing, be it positive or negative, can filter back to your prodigal spouse?

Each week I share the prodigal's perspective with you. I can say that I came home to a wife whose walk matched her talk 100% of the time. Charlyne was certainly not speaking the lingo of one standing with God and then acting differently.

You need to remember that Satan will turn every situation to his benefit, so you cannot afford to risk having your

prodigal witness or hear of your single-type living. The future of your restored marriage may well depend on your actions in these days.

*"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith." I Peter 5:8-9*

One Saturday morning while we were divorced, I called our home to arrange to pick up the children. Another man answered Charlyne's phone. He obviously knew of me, but refused to say who he was, or why he was in our family home. He refused to call Charlyne to the phone. I suspected that my wife had "gone on with her life" and I was devastated. It turned out that two church families had discovered all that Charlyne needed doing around the home and had shown up on that Saturday for a work day. Charlyne and the ladies had gone to the store and the man was being helpful in answering the ringing phone for my absent wife.

I pray that you can realize how the Enemy is out to turn the best of intentions into a mess, into something that will do additional damage to your family. You must do everything possible to avoid that happening and to do so you must always live, act, behave and talk as married.

You are asking God for a huge miracle. Charlyne and I want to do everything possible to see your family restored. Even though a trademark of Rejoice Marriage Ministries is to not give direct advice, today I feel led to break from that mold because of the magnitude of the problem—and because of the potential future harm to your family, and to offer some items for you to use as a checklist in staying away from becoming a situational stander.

- \* **Wear your wedding band.** That is a reminder to you—and to all who come near you—that you are a married person. That one action resolves many issues. (For centuries Catholic nuns, who never marry, have worn wedding bands as a symbol of their marriage to God. Should you do less?)
- \* **Stay away from singles ministries.** For many people, this is where they shop for future spouses and you are not eligible! You can find good fellowship and teaching elsewhere in your church or community, apart from a single's ministry. Remember, in God's eyes, you are married.
- \* **Have prayer partners of your same sex.** Praying together brings about a level of intimacy. Save that for your returned spouse.
- \* **Avoid phone chats with the opposite sex.** If you are doing this, you are asking for trouble.
- \* **Do not confide in the opposite sex unless a professional.** Do not share details of your life or stand with the opposite sex.
- \* **Do not go out, for any reason, with persons of the opposite sex, except in a large group.** How would your prodigal spouse feel if someone reported seeing you out with a person of the opposite sex?
- \* **If you feel led to call someone to see how they are doing, make it someone of the same sex.**
- \* **Avoid the "But we're just friends" syndrome.** I recently heard a pastor say that if a person is voicing those words, they are already in trouble!
- \* **Use as a guide the question, "If my spouse was home, would I be doing this?"** For example, I would not go out for coffee with an opposite sex stander, so if you consider yourself married in God's eyes, why should you now?

- \* **Stay out of unmonitored chat rooms.** Limit the information you share with anyone online, (you do not know their sex, or even who they really are). Limit email to the opposite sex to only what is absolutely necessary.
- \* **Allow God to be your spouse, your companion, your friend,** not a person of the opposite sex, and not your computer.
- \* **Look for opportunities to minister to people of the same sex,** not the opposite sex.
- \* **Avoid "I'll tell you my troubles if you'll tell me yours" scenarios** with the opposite sex.
- \* **Do not even think about what kind of husband or wife someone else might make.**
- \* **Do not look for loopholes allowing male/female relationships.** Strive to see how far from the edge you can live. Re-focus your thoughts, energies, time and emotions on living as a married Christian, always striving to advance Kingdom work.

The bottom line is that every man and woman, who is serious about standing, needs to start considering themselves to be a married person, all the way, in every way, from this day forward.

You may think as you read this devotional "This could never happen to me. I am in control of my friendships." A male stander gave us permission to share his story to alert other standers to the Enemy's schemes and tricks. He writes:

*"I was a double-minded man and unstable in all of my affairs. My stand took a huge hit with me getting involved with another woman for fifteen months after standing strong for over four years. That ended months ago and I was tormented during the entire time. I'm suiting back up with the spiritual armor, but the Enemy wants me to give up.*

*"I also incurred \$35,000 of debt, spending money selfishly on myself and the other woman, and I legally have to face up to this. I want standers to realize how the Enemy works. When my prodigal spouse told me that she never wanted to hear from me under any circumstances two years ago, that was the green light for me to get involved with somebody else.*

*"Standers be always on your guard! When my prodigal spouse cried out to me for help a few months ago, I did nothing after calling all my friends and spiritual advisor, taking their worldly advice. I knew that I should have run to my wife's side as the next day she was in a hospital. I wasn't ready for my marriage to be restored because I had fallen.*

*"I've put my wedding band back on and it shines so bright. My faith took a huge hit and I'm in the front lines of the battle. I'm dirty, sweaty, wounded, bleeding and I dropped my guard, my sword, my shield and took off my helmet because of sweat in my eyes, being tired and weary. I fell to my knees and then called on the mighty name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and got back up on my feet to stand tall and continue the good fight against the dark realm.*

*"I never stopped reading 'Charlyne Cares' all throughout my adulteress affair. There's nothing that the Enemy can throw at us that good will not come out of it, if we stay the course and walk in the light of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I'm standing and regaining my strength to stand strong forever."*

There is good news for you today. Regardless of how far you have strayed from being a stander, living a married

lifestyle, there is forgiveness to be found in Jesus Christ. My prayer is that today you will seek His forgiveness and also that you will make the change needed in your own life to live for Jesus Christ as one excited about His promise of marriage restoration.

The bottom line is that every man and woman who is serious about standing needs to start considering themselves to be a married person, all the way, in every way, from this day forward.

God has something very special for you in a healed marriage, with everyone serving Him. Charlyne and I desire to share with you any and every obstacle to restoration. The male/female issue is tough, but we sense it is an avoidable pitfall holding back marriage restoration. Today you may need to cry out for repentance as our dear male stander did and he can walk in freedom through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free! Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." Galatians 5:1*

Because He lives,

**Bob Steinkamp**

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