ESSAY · MARCH 16, 2017

The night God saved my marriage

Written by Bill Perkins

That night, after we climbed into bed, repelling each other like the negative ends of two magnets, I asked Cindy, “Would you marry me again?”

Before her heart could beat she said, “No way!”

“Would you marry me again?” she asked.

“Not a chance,” I said.

The Bottom of the Barrel

We had reached the proverbial bottom of the barrel and weren’t even looking up. The lyrics of Simon and Garfunkel’s song might have been penned by either of us that night: “Hello darkness, my old friend.” I can’t remember a darker place in our marriage. Or a more helpless and hopeless feeling.

No One to Turn to but God

“We’ve got no one to turn to but God.," I said.

“Seems that way,” Cindy whispered.

What happened next defies description—like the fragrance of rain on freshly cut grass. I know the smell. But I can’t capture the molecules of scent inside a bottle of words so you can unscrew the lid and enjoy the fragrance. On that night God bent down and touched our marriage.

It Began With a Prayer

It began with a prayer. It’s been so long now I can’t recall the exact words. But it went something like this: “God, we are hopelessly and helplessly caught up in our own selfishness and anger. Apart from you, our lives and marriage are doomed. Please save our marriage.”

The Dam Fractured

In that moment God’s Spirit fractured the emotional dam in our souls and washed away the reservoir of bitterness. The knots in our soul were suddenly severed, emotional tethers snapped, and we were free of the evil that had bound us. We embraced and wept deeply.

The Next Day

The next day we talked about how we had arrived at such a bad place. We each concluded the greatest shock and disappointment of marriage found its orbit, not around the other person's flaws, but around our own. We knew from that night on that God would not only let us sail into relational storms, he would get us to the other side.