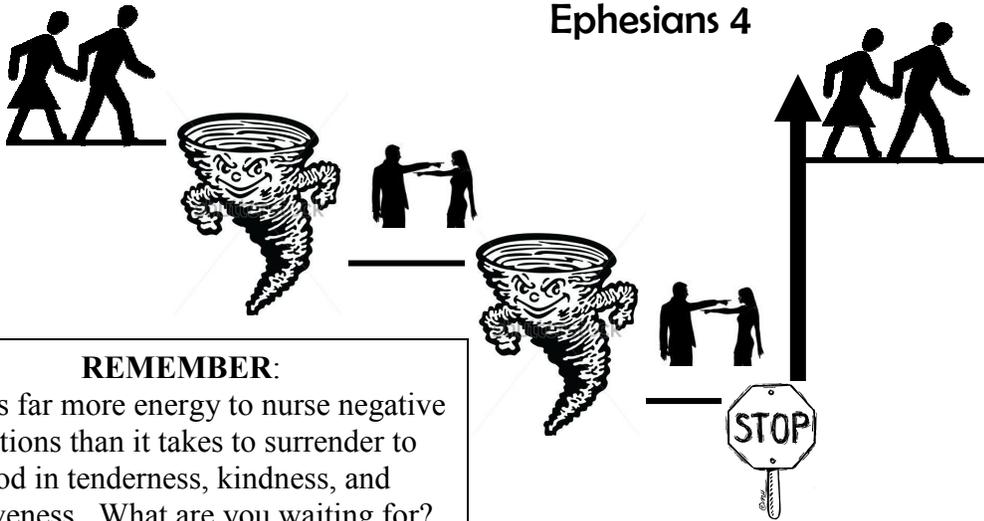


The Crazy Cycle

Ephesians 4



REMEMBER:

It takes far more energy to nurse negative emotions than it takes to surrender to God in tenderness, kindness, and forgiveness. What are you waiting for? Avoid the crazy cycle!



A perceived insult or disrespect occurs. Then comes...

Bitterness (playing the hurt over and over)

Wrath (rage)

Anger (clamming up, grudge holding)

Clamor (shouting, blowing up)

Slander (insults, which starts new crazy cycle)

Malice (a settled hostility)

Selfishness

The crazy cycle is fueled by selfishness. With a selfish attitude, the goal is always to “protect or nurse my hurt” and to get my way no matter what. James says this way of thinking brings “disorder and every vile practice” (James 3:16).

The Answer to Selfishness? Surrender!

What’s the solution to the crazy cycle? Simple. Surrender to God. Die to self. Stop prosecuting your case. Swallow your hurts and feel for the other person (tenderness). Serve the other person and make life easier for them (kindness) and ask for forgiveness while refusing to insult the other person with their wrongs. Never say “Please forgive me, but...” Ask for forgiveness for your sins to God and to your spouse. Remember also that 99% of the time, the man is going to need to take the initiative in this because he is the picture of Christ in the relationship. Christ went after His Bride and laid His life down for her. So must every husband.

Take Up Your Cross

Swallowing selfish pride will hurt. Receiving insults and not paying back evil for evil will take the divine love of Christ. If you are a Christian you have the power to do it!

Godly Communication

Once you are committed to a moment by moment surrender to God, you can begin to build trust. The answer is not to change your spouse, but to see transformation in your own life. Trust is absolutely necessary to have godly communication. The more tender, kind, and forgiving you are, the more you will be able to work on your problems / difficulties in a godly way. Every time you choose to please God instead of self, you build trust.

The only way to stop the crazy cycle:

1. Remember Proverbs 13:15, “the way of the transgressor is HARD.”

2. Surrender to God with...

- Tenderness
- Kindness
- Forgiveness

The “surrender cycle” begins with Eph. 4:32: glorifying God by feeling the pain of the other person (tenderness), making life easier for the other person (kindness), and taking responsibility for my wrongs while forgiving the other person (forgiveness).

Surrender Cycle vs. Crazy Cycle

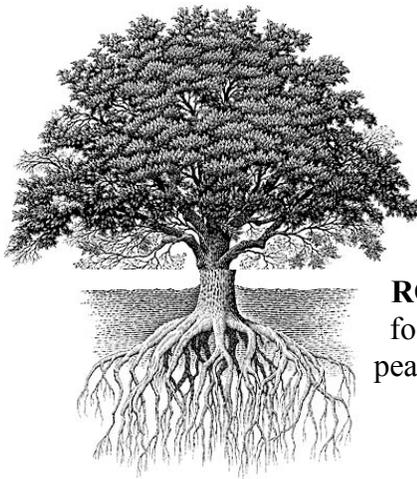
Ephesians 4; James 3

Wisdom from Above Fuels Surrender

FRUIT: The “surrender cycle” described in James 3 as good conduct, humble wisdom, purity, peaceful, reasonable attitude, sincerity, righteousness, and peace-making. The goal in the surrender cycle is found in Eph. 4:32: glorifying God by feeling the pain of the other person (tenderness), making life easier for the other person (kindness), and taking responsibility for my wrongs while forgiving the other person (forgiveness).

GOAL:

Grow and change into the image of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:28-30). Remember Jesus prayed, “Not my will but thine be done” (Luke 22:42).



ROOTS: A selfless attitude focused on God that is pure, peaceable, reasonable, sincere, impartial and righteous (James 3:13-18).

Matthew 7:17-19

“...every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

Wisdom from the Pit Fuels Crazy Cycle

FRUIT: The “crazy cycle” of toxic emotions/behaviors described in Ephesians 4: bitterness, wrath (rage), anger (clamming up), clamor (shouting), slander (insults), malice (a settled hostility). Other fruit: disorder and every vile practice. The goal in the crazy cycle is protecting and nursing my hurt (selfishness).

GOAL:

Get my way and protect my hurt no matter what. Remember Proverbs 13:15, “the way of the transgressor is HARD.”



ROOTS: A pouty attitude focused on me that includes bitter envy, i.e. a mean spirit, and selfish ambition. James says this attitude (wisdom) is earthly (self-centered), unspiritual (grieves the Holy Spirit), and demonic (3:15).

