

## When Things Change

As we move from the fall with all its brilliant colors and into winter and its period of dormancy, it reminds us of the similarities that couples experience in marriage. Marriages also go through many different cycles over the years. There are periods of new beginnings, adventure, mourning, celebration, anticipation, anxiety, stability, and anguish to name a few. These changes are a natural part of life and marriages are not immune. The challenge that couples must overcome is how they will handle the times of difficulty.

One of the most difficult cycles that couples often experience in their marriage is when things seem stale and stagnant. It is not uncommon for couples to experience this shortly after periods of significant change, such as moving to a new location or the birth of a child. The excitement and anticipation of periods of change tend to highlight periods when not much is happening. This sometimes leaves a false impression that something is wrong in the marriage.

There is one verse near the beginning of the story of Samuel in scripture that provides a timeless insight into how we should handle such periods. It says that messages and visions from the Lord were very uncommon during this period. There is often an assumption that Old Testament times were constantly filled with God showing up in miraculous ways. However, this verse points out that it was not the case. Like the cycle that many marriages face from time to time, there were periods when not much was happening supernaturally. Unfortunately, it is easy to become complacent and bored during these periods, both spiritually and in your marriage. Instead of becoming complacent in his spiritual life, Samuel continued to serve the Lord. His servant's heart during this period enabled him to hear the Lord speak to him a short time later.

When you feel your marriage is going through a stagnant period, focus on having a servant's heart. This will better prepare you for the next cycle that is around the corner.

Blessings,

Brian and Trudy

Meanwhile, the boy Samuel served the Lord by assisting Eli. Now in those days messages from the Lord were very rare, and visions were quite uncommon.

- 1 Samuel 3:1