

## *If We Do Not See Each Other Again*

by Bob & Yvonne Turnbull

It was two or three days after the horrendous 9-11 terrorist attack in 2001 when we listened with heavy hearts to a woman being interviewed on TV. Through her tears she sobbed that the last words her husband heard from her were, "I wish I had never married you!" She had slammed the door behind him as he left for work in one of New York's Twin Towers. His body was never discovered among the rubble.

She went on to say, "I never meant those words. They were shouted out of frustration in the midst of an argument we were having. What made it worse is that this was a very rare argument in our 23 years of marriage. And what made *it* worse is that a few days later, I discovered he was 100% correct about what we were arguing about. And to compound all of that, I will go to my grave knowing that those were the last words he heard from me, his wife. I cannot take them back. I can ask God's forgiveness, but in my memory those hurtful words will always remain."

What she recounted on TV reinforces a positive action we decided upon several years ago and something we encourage couples to incorporate into their daily lives. (Note: If you

are single, stay with us, for the principle we are going to describe can be tweaked for your use as well.)

Each time the two of us part from one another, we ALWAYS do three things. We kiss - we say, "I love You" - and we say spiritual words like, "God bless you," "God loves you and so do I," etc. In other words, we speak a blessing. Those three ingredients are always included in our parting from each other, whether Yvonne is flying out of town to speak at a women's conference or Bob is just going down the street to a local fitness center. Long distance, short distance, a few minutes or several days. It does not matter. We want our goodbye words to each other to be positive, as in Proverbs 16:24 (MSG) - *Gracious speech is like clover honey - good taste to the soul, quick energy for the body.*

**"I wish I had never married you!"**

One time we had a few, shall we say, **hurtful** words before Bob was going to drive out to do an errand. He got in the car and started backing out of the driveway when

suddenly Yvonne was running out the back door and down the driveway waving her arms. When she got to the driver's side window she leaned in and said, "We cannot leave each other this way." The engine was turned off and we discussed the problem, and even though it wasn't solved on the spot, we agreed to discuss it upon Bob's return. Then we kissed, exchanged our love for each other, and mutually asked for God's forgiveness for our selfishness and His blessing upon the other. We always part like that, especially since then, for if someday one of us answers a knock at the front door and there stands a California Highway Patrol officer informing us that our spouse has just been killed in a car wreck - as stunned and grieving as we would be, we would know the last time we saw each other ended with a kiss, an "I Love You," and a spiritual blessing - NOT angry or hurtful words. We can go to our graves with that in our memory. How about you?

We encourage you to think about this and discuss it with your spouse. If you are already doing something like this - GOOD! Keep doing it! If not, we know by experience if you incorporate this into your lives, your love

## If We do Not... (cont')

relationship will greatly increase.

**Three ingredients are always included in our parting.**

This is not exclusively for married couples. If you are single, something similar can be incorporated with a roommate or close friend – for example you can always ask God's blessings upon your roommate or friend as you leave each other. You will know what is appropriate to say.

If you are a parent, when your children are leaving for school you can give them a kiss, tell them you love them and ask God's blessings upon them. Should that, for whatever reason, be the last time you saw them, well...enough said. Children can learn to do this for their parents as well.

You have just read what we do when we part from one

another. But what if the parting turns out to be permanent, such as in a death?

Unfortunately we have found that the majority of couples have made little or no final preparations should one of them die. We have structured our plans to the point we are prepared to handle everything necessary in the event God calls one of us to Heaven before the other.

**What if parting turns out to be permanent?**

Instead of explaining everything we have done to be prepared, we highly recommend Laurie Ecklund Long's "The Next 48 Hours." Laurie was one of Bob's staff members at the Waikiki Beach Chaplaincy back in the 70's. Part of her website ([www.mylifeinabox.com](http://www.mylifeinabox.com)) asks - In case of an emergency, or death, could you locate these family documents within 3-5 minutes? Social security

cards, birth certificates, driver's licenses, medical insurance, health care directives, living trust and will, and other important personal and family documents and records? "My Life In A Box" introduces a simple way to develop a filing system that helps you locate and organize all the vital information into one box. In case of a family emergency, terminal illness, or death, this downloadable 32-page workbook, "The Next 48 Hours" will offer you step-by-step directions that will help you get organized BEFORE the emergency arises. Also, for further information, Laurie's email address is [aglpub@sbcglobal.net](mailto:aglpub@sbcglobal.net).

As the cliché goes - the ball is now in your court. If what you just read has impacted you and you decide these are suggestions to follow, will you procrastinate or will you take immediate action? Your choice. Make it a good choice.

Check out Bob & Yvonne Turnbull's website at: [www.turnbullministries.org](http://www.turnbullministries.org)

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