

Stronger Marriages

No Matter How Long You Have
Been Married,
Every Marriage Can Get Even
Stronger



TOPICS

- + Friends to do life with
- + Personality Differences
- + Communication
- + Conflict Resolution
- + Finances
- + Health
- + Children and Grandchildren
- + Your Spiritual Legacy

I Thessalonians 2:8

“We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you, not only the gospel of God, but our lives as well because you had become so dear to us.”

Friends of the Heart

- + At the end of our lives, it won't be a car, a house, or a vacation that gave richness to our lives. It will be the important relationships in our lives with God and people.
- + Create a group of friends that you can eat with, play games with, go hiking or watch a football game with. They will be a blessing to you and you will bless them.

Swedish Proverb

"Shared joy is a double joy; shared sorrow is half a sorrow."

Genesis 2:18, 24

"It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him....For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh."

Personality Differences

- + There are others, but I recommend D.I.S.C, Enneagram and the Five Love Languages to think about personality.
- + Each spouse can take a test and decide what their basic personality type is - some of their basic tendencies.
- + Now discuss it together. What do you want your spouse to know about you? In what situations do you tend to feel embarrassed, not very confident or insecure?
- + What is your love language? How do you express love?

A husband and wife are each unique. They have different personalities, different spiritual gifts, different strengths and weaknesses, and different experiences in life.

I Corinthians 12:18 *"God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be."*

I Corinthians 12:25 *"there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."*

Communication

- + Learn to ask good questions and then listen.
- + For the next 50 years, continue to ask your spouse questions about their growing-up years. Who were your best friends? What kind of things did you like to do in Elementary School, in Middle School and in High School? Who were your favorite teachers or classes and why? What were your favorite books or movies? What was an embarrassing moment? When did you feel proud of yourself? What was a life-lesson that you learned?

Proverbs 16:24 *"Pleasant words are a honeycomb"*

Proverbs 17:19 *"He who loves a quarrel loves sin."*

Proverbs 18:12 *"humility comes before honor."*

Proverbs 18:13 *"He who answers before listening - that is his folly and his shame."*

James 1:19 *"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."*

Communication

For the next 50 years continue to ask questions about the future and what your spouse thinks about, worries about or is excited about.

- + What kinds of places do you hope we can travel to?
- + Where do you think we might live when we retire?
- + What would you like to learn how to do?
- + Who would you like to visit in another state?
- + What do you most enjoy doing on our days off?

Romans 12:14 *"Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse."*

Ephesians 4:26-27 *"Do not let the sun do down while you are still angry and do not give the devil a foothold."*

Philippians 2:14 *"Do everything without complaining or arguing"*

Colossians 4:6 *"Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt."*

I Timothy 4:12 *"Set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity."*

Conflict Resolution

- + Decide right now that you will forgive your spouse's flaws and work on your own flaws to get better.
- + When you mess up, like we all do, be quick to apologize and ask for forgiveness.
- + Make a lifetime resolution that you will not lie to your partner. Telling a lie might seem like a way to avoid embarrassment but it will lead to disaster. Your spouse will lose trust in you and wonder if you will be truthful the next time.

Matthew 5:9

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.”

Conflict Resolution

- + Look for ways to serve your spouse and not be selfish. Washing the dishes, emptying the dishwasher or washing clothes probably has a bigger impact than flowers once a year. (Also do the flowers!)
- + Say "I love you." every day.
- + Seek to understand your spouse's point of view first before you try to tell your point of view.
- + Don't criticize your spouse to others. Praise them!

Ephesians 4:32

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

I Corinthians 13:4-7

"Love is patient, love is kind... It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs."

Finances

- + Money is a common reason given for marriage problems
- + Avoid debt whenever possible - cars, credit cards, furniture, vacations - save up and pay cash.
- + Don't spend and then save what is left. Instead, save and then spend what is left. Try to save a little every month.
- + Cash back credit cards are good if you pay the balance every month. If you are constantly tempted to overspend, a debit card is probably a better way to go.
- + Eating out is really expensive. Cook it yourself if you can.

Proverbs 11:25 *"A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed."*

Proverbs 13:11 *"he who gathers money little by little makes it grow."*

Proverbs 14:23 *"All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty."*

Proverbs 16:16 *"How much better to get wisdom than gold."*

Finances

- + As your savings grow. Set a goal for your emergency fund of about 4 to 6 months of salary. This gives you a safety cushion for unexpected expenses - medical, new tires, a new air conditioner system, a plumbing problem, a car repair. It helps prevent credit card debt and stress.
- + For long-term investing, starting with an S&P 500 index fund is a good foundation. It has inexpensive fees.
- + Patience is important. Regular savings added every month will grow over time. Have a long-term strategy.

Proverbs 6:10 *"A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest - and poverty will come on you like a bandit."*

Proverbs 20:17 *"Food gained by fraud tastes sweet to a man, but he ends up with a mouth full of gravel."*

Proverbs 22:1 *"A good name is more desirable than great riches."*

Proverbs 22:7 *"The borrower is servant to the lender."*

Physical Health

- + The quality of our diet, exercise, sleep and stress management affects every part of our life. It affects work, family, emotions, energy level and our marriage.
- + As Americans, we tend to eat too much and too much of the wrong kinds of food. Start early in your life to establish good habits - but better late than never.
- + Work, commuting, meals, family, TV and social media will easily expand to fill every moment of our day. You will have to be intentional if you want to schedule exercise.

I Corinthians 6:19

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body.”

Physical Health

- + The professionals say we need to keep moving - walk, run, bike, swim, climb stairs, and play a sport.
- + Lifting weights is important for muscle strength, bone mass and increasing your metabolism.
- + Cardio is important for the heart, circulation, emotional health and muscles.
- + Eat a proper diet - too much sugar and saturated fat is bad in so many ways.

I Corinthians 10:31

*“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do,
do it all for the glory of God.”*

Children and Grandchildren

- + Most of us won't write books or have books written about us. For most of us, one of our greatest contributions and our legacy will be our children and grandchildren.
- + Remember that children spell love "T-I-M-E". From the time they are born, one of our priorities is to teach them, read to them, play with them, explore the world and try to set the best model we can of love, faith, integrity, humility, perseverance, passion and grit.

Proverbs 3:5,6

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight.”

Your Spiritual Legacy

- + Who we are always speaks louder than what we say.
- + The essential spiritual habits in our life are usually reading the Bible, corporate worship, doing life with a small group and finding lots of ways to serve others.
- + Doing these things together as a couple and a family will be important during our whole life. As we get older, the challenges we face will constantly change, but faith in God, supportive friends and the opportunity to serve others will continually support a stronger marriage.

II Timothy 4:7, 17

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith ... the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength."