

NOW THAT YOU'VE SAID “I DO”...

Fraser Lands
Pastor Jim Penner
November 2018




Now that You've Said "I Do"



Seminar Purpose

By God's grace, to establish and grow a Christ-centered marriage that brings glory to God through the way that we love and the way that we live.



Genesis 2:18, 21, 22-25 “Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man He made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man’. Therefore (or “for this cause”) a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

Why the cultural war over marriage and family?

At the core is a spiritual battle: Satan is attacking God by seeking to destroy the very core of what reflects His glory and honors Him – marriage, family, the home. Mankind is God's chosen creation. We are made in His image and likeness (no other creature bears that title) and are His glory. Satan's greatest attack against God is to attempt to destroy that which is most valuable and meaningful to God. His most devastating attack is to destroy marriage and the home – the moral foundation of every society, and in so doing he is attempting to land a devastating blow against God.

Definition of Marriage



“Marriage is when a man and a woman enter into a lifelong **covenant** with God and with each other to become husband and wife. It is the total commitment of two **imperfect people** towards a perfect idea, which God established since Adam and Eve. It is the fulfillment of a **mystery** where two become one flesh.”

God's Design for Marriage



- a) Marriage was created and designed by God exclusively for humankind. It is not found in any other of God's creation. This fact alone sets it apart as **exclusive** and **sacred**.

God's Design for Marriage



- b) Marriage is a God designed format whereby the challenges of close relationship prune and transform us into Christ-like wives and husbands in ways that glorify Him. God designed the marriage relationship to be a reflection of the relationship within the Trinity as well as relationship between Christ and the Church.

God's Design for Marriage



Ephesians 5:31-32 “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.”

God's “Reason” for Marriage



Genesis 2:18 “It is not good that the man should be alone.....”

Genesis 2:24 “For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

God's “Reason” for Marriage



God's reason for marriage is to replace loneliness with companionship. We were created for “relationship” – first with God, then with each other.

Family / marriage is “**THE**” foundation for all human relationships.

J C Ryle said (in 1800's) "The marriage relationship lies at the very root of the social system of nations."

God's Purpose(s) in Marriage



- a) The primary reason marriage is significant to God is because it is part of His **ordained plan** to provide the world with a picture of His love for men and women.

- b) Marriage is God's best **model** of how a man and woman can unite together in a way that will reflect the depths of **relational love**.

God's Purpose(s) in Marriage



c) Marriage is not an end in itself. God's purposes in marriage include the following:

#1 – that your marriage will **glorify God**

#2 – to create the **foundation for society**

#3 – to provide healthy, happy, intimate and fulfilling homes

God's Purpose(s) in Marriage

c) Marriage is not an end in itself. God's purposes in marriage include the following:

#4 – to create the **foundation for moral relationships**

#5 – to create healthy relationships **between the sexes**

#6 – to **train up** children in the way they should go

Marriage is a Mystery



- a) A secret is meant to be hidden and remain hidden; never to be found.

- b) A mystery is a treasure that is designed to be discovered by those determined enough to find it.

Marriage is a Mystery



Ephesians 5:31-32 “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.”

Marriage as a Covenant vs. a Contract



Malachi 2:14 “....the LORD has witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.”

- a) God established marriage as a covenant, not a contract.

Marriage as a Covenant vs. a Contract



b) Comparing contract vs. covenant

- * A *covenant* is based on **trust** between parties. A *contract* is based on **distrust**
- * A *covenant* is based on **unlimited responsibility**. A *contract* is based on limited **liability**
- * A *covenant* cannot be broken if **new circumstances** occur. A *contract* can be voided by **mutual consent**.

Marriage as a Covenant vs. a Contract



b) Comparing contract vs. covenant

- * Contract – is a legally binding document with mutually accepted terms of **agreement and performance**. In every contract there are certain conditional clauses (escape clauses) which state that if one part does not carry out their responsibilities the other part is **absolved** of its commitment to the contract.

Marriage as a Covenant vs. a Contract



b) Comparing contract vs. covenant

- * Covenant – denotes an **irrevocable decision** that cannot be cancelled by anyone. The only release is the **death** of the disposer.

Marriage as a Covenant vs. a Contract



Ephesians 5:31-32 “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.”

Marriage as a Covenant vs. a Contract



Revelation 20:2,9 “And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, ‘Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.’”

Marriage as a Covenant vs. a Contract



c) The act of the entering into covenant

Genesis 15:9, 17 “Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram.”

Four Essential Elements of Marriage



Ephesians 5:31 (KJV) “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Four Essential Elements of Marriage



a) “Leave” - **SEVERANCE**

Genesis 2:24 “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

Four Essential Elements of Marriage

a) “Leave” - **SEVERANCE**

- You leave your parents’ home to establish your new home with your spouse.

- It is the “**cutting of the apron strings,**” psychologically, emotionally and physically. This must be done by the husband, wife and both sets of parents. This does not intimate abandonment of parents

Four Essential Elements of Marriage



b) Cleave – **PERMANENCE**

Genesis 2:24 “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

Four Essential Elements of Marriage

b) Cleave – **PERMANENCE**

- The Hebrew word for cleave means “**stick together.**”
- Like **epoxy glue** where two uniquely different components of different chemical make up, designed for each other, are blended together as one, thus producing an **inseparable bond.**

Four Essential Elements of Marriage



b) Cleave – **PERMANENCE**

- Like when **two rivers** come together into one. Once they are united it is **impossible** to separate them.

Four Essential Elements of Marriage



c) One flesh – **UNITY**

Genesis 2:24 “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

Four Essential Elements of Marriage

c) One flesh – UNITY

- “shall become” speaks of a process of growing together in UNITY not UNIFORMITY
- Like an orchestra which is a group of unique and different individual instruments whose differences could produce either chaos or beautiful harmony, all dependent upon their willingness to allow their differences to be blended together in a spirit of cooperation.

Four Essential Elements of Marriage



d) **INTIMACY**

Genesis 2:25 “And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

Four Essential Elements of Marriage



d) **INTIMACY**

- Naked before each other: **physically** - making reference to their sexual relationship as a significant part of becoming one flesh.

Four Essential Elements of Marriage

d) INTIMACY

- Naked before each other: emotionally, spiritually, mentally. This speaks of creating an atmosphere where it is safe to share one's deepest and innermost thoughts, where it is safe to be vulnerable, of letting down your guard in an atmosphere where it is safe for you to let the real you be seen and accepted for who you are – where you are free to bare your inner soul and not be afraid that it will be crushed.

Four Essential Elements of Marriage

d) INTIMACY

- Sexual intercourse-
 - ▣ the wedding night is a significant component to God's miraculous act of creating the bond of "one flesh"
 - ▣ is designed by God for a husband and wife to express their deepest love for each other

Four Essential Elements of Marriage



d) **INTIMACY**

- Sexual intercourse-
 - ▣ is designed for a husband and wife to give each other **intimacy**
 - ▣ is designed for the husband and wife to give each other **pleasure**

Four Essential Elements of Marriage

d) **INTIMACY**

1 Corinthians 7:1-5 “Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: “it is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.” But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”

Fair Marriage Expectations



a) Marriage requires 100% “give” for the husband and the wife.

(would you stand at the marriage altar and marry the person that says in their vows, “I will love you and commit to you 99%”?)

Fair Marriage Expectations



b) In order for the marriage to be happy and healthy, both husband and wife must constantly approach their marriage with the attitude of “**what can I give.**” One of the most frequent reasons marriages are unhealthy and often don’t survive is because of the attitude that:

- ☐ my marriage is here to **serve me.**
- ☐ what can I **get out** of this marriage?
- ☐ it had better meet my **needs.**

Fair Marriage Expectations



- c) Don't stop dating and romance. It is the spice of marriage. Our culture, in all its imagery (TV, movies, etc.) portrays the image that marriage is first and foremost about **romance** and **sex**. How long that thrill exists is how long the marriage lasts.

Fair Marriage Expectations



d) Your spouse **MUST** be your best friend.

- Marriage resembles a pair of shears, so joined that they cannot be separated; often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing anyone who comes between them.

- Find and develop some recreational things you enjoy doing together.

Fair Marriage Expectations



d) Your spouse **MUST** be your best friend.

Amos 3:3 “Do two walk together, unless they have agreed to meet?”

Fair Marriage Expectations



- e) Expect Satan's attacks, challenges, difficulties, and conflict. Don't let your dreams be turned into a nightmare – work through the stuff and you will find the richness of the rewards of marriage that God intends and offers.

Compatibility

Genesis 2:24 “...and they shall become one flesh.”

- We need to see “compatibility” as a **verb**, not a **noun**
- Compatibility is the **process** of learning how to turn your differences into **assets not liabilities**”
- We were born **incompatible**. Each of us have been born with a **sinful** and **selfish** nature

Compatibility



- a) Webster defines compatibility as “**the capability to live together in harmony.**” Our culture highly values compatibility in marriage, but the common belief is you must meet the right person in order to attain this. If you find “the one,” harmony will naturally ensue.

Compatibility



b) The Bible, however, teaches that harmonious marriages are anything but **natural**. Since the Fall in Genesis 3, sin makes us incompatible as relationships became naturally strained and fractured. But the Gospel gives us hope to live in accord with others as Jesus reconstructs relationships. We become **others-focused** instead of **self-focused**.

Compatibility



Romans 15:5 “May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus.”

- While it is true that you need someone different to complement you, research findings are highly consistent that the most stable marriages are those involving two people with many similarities.

Compatibility



- We need to mitigate this with another significant factor. The more different two people are, if they are determined to live a strong happy covenant marriage, they must **struggle all the more** to create such a healthy marriage.

Compatibility



- Additionally, recognizing and developing our differences adds broader dimensions to our marriage. If we are both the same, life becomes quite narrow, and quite frankly - boring. If both of us are always thinking the same thing then one of us is **unnecessary**.

Compatibility



- This creates an even stronger bond. The point being - the more you invest in something, the more you strive together for survival, the deeper and more meaningful your relationship grows. It seems that these marriages become the most meaningful.

Compatibility

c) Billy and Ruth Graham married June 1943, Friday, August 13th (!). Years later, Ruth described their relationship as “**happily incompatible**. We don’t have a perfect marriage, but we have a **great one**. Being human, not one of us will ever have a relationship with another person that doesn’t have a **wrinkle or a wart** on it somewhere.”

Compatibility



d) Embracing our Differences as husbands / men, and wives / women

e) Activity:

- ☐ Ways you and your spouse are different from each other
- ☐ Ways you and your spouse are similar to each other

Compatibility



f) Strength is derived through “unity in diversity”

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 “Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him – a three cord is not quickly broken.”

Compatibility



A great marriage is not when the 'perfect couple' comes together.

It is when an imperfect couple learns to enjoy their differences.

~Dave Meurer~

Compatibility



g) Establish and go out on a “**date night**” to a nice quiet coffee shop where you can accomplish two things:

- Talk about the things you have in common; areas of **similarities**.
- Talk about the differences as well as agree on a plan of “attack” (not “to attack”), for these differences with love, care, determination, commitment and **LOVE**.

Compatibility

h) Instead of **finding** a compatible mate, Christians are instructed to marry another Christian and **become** a compatible mate. This transformation requires the grace and power of Jesus – good news to those seeking marriage or those already married, as God does not leave change entirely to us:

- **His** is the discernment, wisdom, power
- **Yours** is the hunger and thirst for His guidance and His strength for the acts of obedience

Compatibility



Marriage is more than finding
the right person.
It is being the right person.

Compatibility



- i) Being “equally yoked” is actually an **agricultural** term. It has to do with how oxen are placed side by side to produce straight furrows. The oxen need to learn how to cooperate with each other. If they do cooperate, there is a smoothness, a fluidity, a camaraderie, pleasurable companionship, effortlessness, productiveness. If they do not cooperate they have perpetual conflict, stress, anger, no productivity, no companionship, etc.

Compatibility



- i) Here's the enigma: Opposites attract. Then when we get married we try to change the other person to be like ourselves and in so doing we destroy some of the very real things that attracted us to that person in the first place.

Compatibility



"What counts in making a happy marriage is not so much how compatible you are but how you deal with incompatibility."

~Leo Tolstoy~

Love



- How our society lives love: “Love is a feeling you feel you are about to feel, when you get a feeling that you feel you’ve never felt before.”

Love



- The following Biblical definitions of love are **unique to marriage**. They are designed to provide the fullest, most trustworthy, and deeply enjoyable relationship between a man and a woman. Anything outside of these four Biblical definitions of love **falls short** of a fulfilling trustworthy relationship.

Love

- **Eros** love (physical love, sexual love)
 - This love was designed and purposed by God to create the **deepest bond**
 - between a man and a woman physically, emotionally, spiritually, psychologically
 - Consummating the marriage (sexual intercourse) is part of God's plan
 - whereby He **bonds** a husband and wife into “**one flesh.**”

Love



- **Eros** love (physical love, sexual love)

Proverbs 5:18 “Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth”

Love



- **Philea** love (friendship love)
 - A husband and wife **MUST** be each other's best friend.

Love



- **Agape** love (God's love, spiritual love, unconditional love)
 - ▣ Agape love is an unconditional love. Here a husband and wife receive God's unconditional love and then give it to each other. Also, through praying together, and being devoted to God in their home, their marriage becomes whole, healthy and strong.

Love



- **Agape** love (God's love, spiritual love, unconditional love)

Matthew 6:14 “For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.”

Ephesians 4:32 “Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

Love



- **Sorge** love (protective love)

“Marriage resembles a pair of shears, so joined that they cannot be separated; often moving in opposite directions, yet always punishing anyone who comes between them.” ~Sydney Smith~

Communication



A man in Vegreville, Alberta did not accept his \$125 fine for illegal parking, nor did he accept the \$300 fee for having his car towed away, when there was a sign specially placed where he parked his car, and the sign said, “**Fine for parking.**”

Communication



DEFINITION:

Communication is a **process** (verbal and non-verbal) of sharing **thoughts** with another person in such a way that he understands what you are saying.

Communication



COMMUNICATION IS:

- 7% words
- 38% voice/sounds
- 55% body language
- we hear only 20% of what is being said because instead of focusing on listening in our minds we are formulating our rebuttal

Communication



The **NORMAL** Approach to Marital Communication:

- the desire to be heard more than to hear

The **NEEDED** Approach to Marital Communication:

- the desire to hear more than to be heard

Proverbs 10:19 "He who restrains his lips is prudent."

Communication



Communication has three crucial areas:

- a) **Understanding** (the heart of communication)
- b) **Assumptions** (the #1 problem with communication)
- c) **Listening** (the #1 need in communication)

Communication

How can something so simple be so difficult?

- There are FIVE LEVELS of Communication:
 - Level Five: **Cliche conversation**
 - Level Four: **Reporting the facts about others**
 - Level Three: **My ideas and judgments**
 - Level Two: **My feelings and emotions**
 - Level One: **Complete emotional and truthful personal communication**

Communication

- There are SIX different possible messages that can come through:
 - what you mean to say
 - what you actually say
 - what the other person heard you say
 - what the other person thinks he hears
 - what the other person says about what you said
 - what you think the other person said about what you said
 - (now go back to #1 ...and around and around we go.)

Communication



PARADIGMS

A Distinct Element in Communication

- The blind man who felt the elephant's tail said:
 - ▣ “The elephant is like a rope.”

Communication



PARADIGMS

A Distinct Element in Communication

- The second blind man who felt the elephant's leg said:
 - ▣ “The elephant is like a tree trunk.”

Communication



PARADIGMS

A Distinct Element in Communication

- The third blind man who felt the elephant's trunk said:
 - ▣ “The elephant is like a fire hose.”

Communication



Our most important communicative skill

_____ listening _____

Communication



- We are all given two ears and one mouth.
- Jim Tindale: “If everyone of us could improve our listening skills we would probably solve 80% of our world’s problems.”
- We are given much instruction on how to disseminate information (talking), but virtually no instruction on how to receive information (listening).

Communication



How to be a good listener?

- Ask for **clarification**. Having the other person repeat or rephrase what they are trying to communicate is helpful.
- Seek to **understand**, and then to be understood.
- Say it back in your own words and see if they **agree**.

Communication



How to be a good listener?

- Maintain eye contact.
- Give full attention and avoid formulating a response based on where you think the other person is going with their statement (which you are not giving full attention to).

Communication



Three things needed...or it will never work

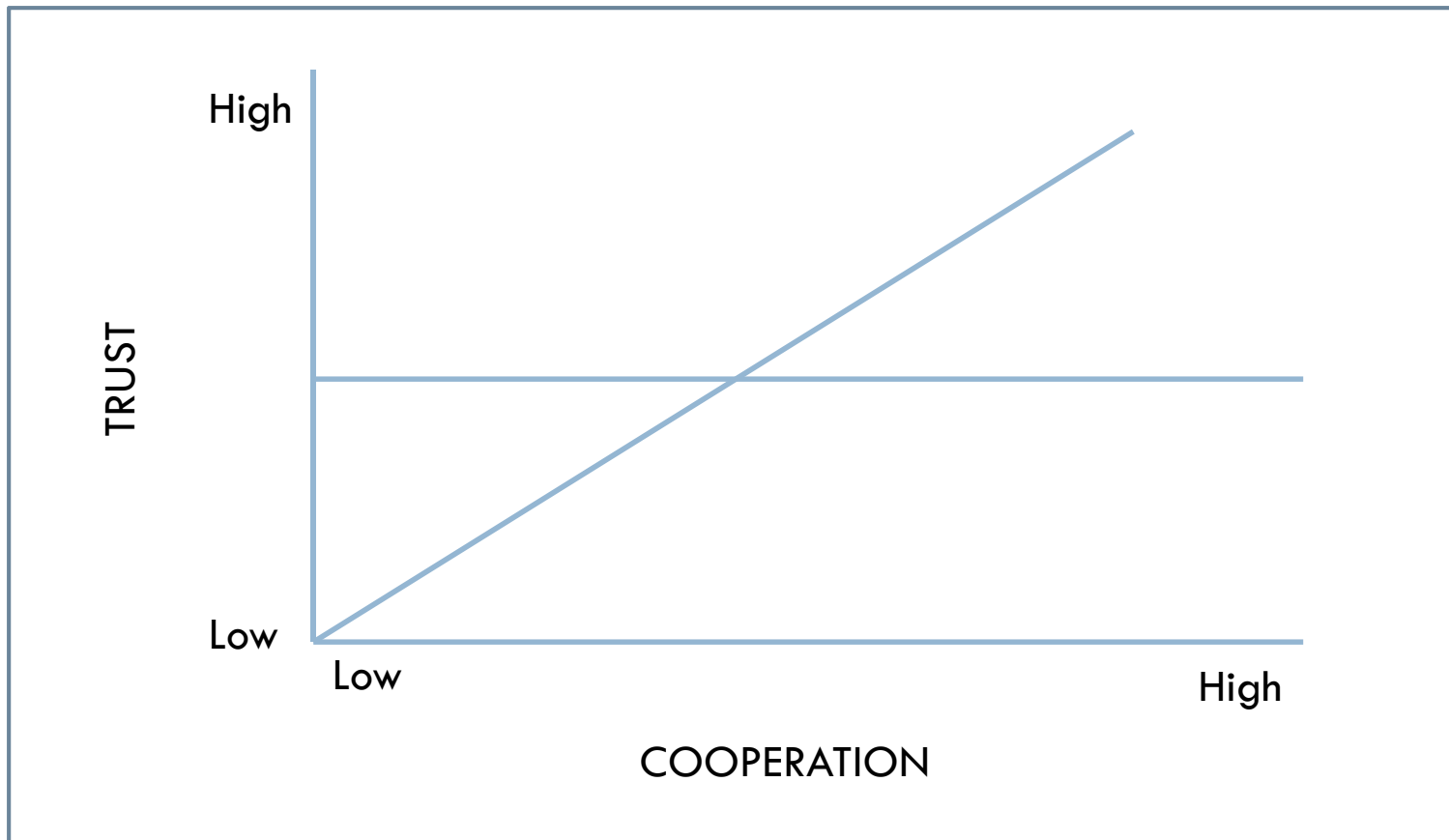
1) **Listen**

2) **Listen**

3) **Listen**

Communication

One more secret



Communication



Tips on How to Effectively Communicate

- 1) Stop what you are doing, face your spouse with **“good” eye contact**
- 2) When your spouse is talking focus on hearing what is being said rather than forming **your rebuttal**
- 3) Seek to receive the message **really sent**

Communication



Tips on How to Effectively Communicate

- 4) Seek to listen with your heart to your spouses heart
- 5) Affirm your spouse's value
- 6) Drop the “you always” and the “you never”, focus on the moment

Commandments of Marriage

Communication



- 1) Make it **safe** to communicate
- 2) Seek to **understand**, not to be **understood**
- 3) Do not **assume** that you know.....**ask**
- 4) Listen, do not **interrupt**

Commandments of Marriage

Communication



5) Do not **nag**

6) Do not **jump to conclusions**

7) Disagree, yes.....**disrespect**, no

8) Deal in **potential**, not in the past

Commandments of Marriage

Communication



- 9) Don't force your spouse to be your **carbon copy**
- 10) Pray **for and with** one another
- 11) Always be honest, ALWAYS.... **No secrets**
- 12) Don't let the sun go down on your **wrath**

Conflict Resolution

- Marriage has been likened unto two porcupines in love and trying to hug – the closer they get the more they **irritate each other.**
- Two **skunks** alone in the frozen tundra will freeze to death but if they snuggle, they easily survive.

Conflict Resolution



Now that You've Said "I Do" – Pastor Jim Penner November 2018

Conflict Resolution



a) Why do we fight?

- i) There are few life situations that test true Christianity more than the intimacy of the marriage relationship. Due to the close nature of the marriage relationship, sins of selfishness, pride, laziness, and impatience are readily exposed on a daily basis. The Apostle Paul vividly describes our natural tendencies in 2 Timothy 3:1-13 when he describes us as **selfish, arrogant, and unloving.**

Conflict Resolution



- a) Why do we fight?
 - i) These tendencies are superimposed on the marriage relationship, thus testing Christian character in the areas of sacrificial love, respect, submission, forgiveness, and perseverance. Living together in unity requires much wisdom and **determination** to embrace biblical means of resolving conflict and demonstrating Christian love.

Conflict Resolution



- ii) We have **different** personalities, backgrounds, opinions, priorities, values.

- iii) We both want to **be right**.

Conflict Resolution



b) How does the fight begin?

She said something that slightly irritated me (tone of voice, timing, I'm tired, trivial, etc) but I'm not in the mood to make a big deal over it. Plus, I don't want to be perceived as being immature by being so petty over such a small issue so I "stock pile" it in my pressure cooker. This happens repeatedly over the course of a day or a week or a month.

Finally, the pressure cooker is too full, it can't take any more. THEN she says just one more small little thing and the lid blows, and she looks at me like why did I explode over such a small thing. Then comes Round #1.....

Conflict Resolution



- c) What couples fight about the most: **Money**
- together, create a financial plan
 - for **long term** savings and investment
 - a **budget** for daily living. This is a **MUST**
 - a budget truly gives you both clear **understanding and freedom**

Conflict Resolution



d) How to resolve conflict

i) Attack the problem, not each other

- ▣ the issue seldom remains the issue
- ▣ your flaws become the issue, so we get no where in finding resolution

Conflict Resolution



ii) Set the stage

- ▣ Stop what you're doing
- ▣ Select a time and place to talk **privately** (not enroute to church, not just **before dinner when everyone is tired and hungry, NOT at bed time**)

Conflict Resolution



ii) Set the stage

- ▣ Sit down facing each other
- ▣ Maintain “good” eye contact
- ▣ Rebuff any interruptions (texting, phone, door bell etc.)

Conflict Resolution



iii) Check your **attitude**: respect, love, forgiving, constructive.

iv) Employ all the components of Communication as given in a previous section of this booklet.

Conflict Resolution

- v) Pray **out loud** with each other. Did you know that it is impossible to **stay angry** with someone when you have to pray out loud with that person?

- vi) Begin and end each day with an “**I love you**” and a **hug** (we are relational creatures – the power of a **kind word** and a **soft touch**)

Money: The War Room



(a budget is a “**must**”)

- a) our tithe/ giving is first on our budget
- b) monthly – everything related to the costs of daily living
- c) maintenance – everything that is not a monthly expense
- d) recreational
- e) investments, savings
- f) “mad money”

Money: The War Room



***ALL income is to be pooled together as “our” money. Never “you have yours, I have mine, we each contribute but keep our own.” (This violates “one flesh”)

Money: The War Room



g) all monies can be categorized as follows

- ☐ fixed necessity
- ☐ variable necessity
- ☐ fixed luxury
- ☐ variable luxury

***In today's economy it is critical to have very knowledgeable and often professional financial counsel

The Forgiveness Factor



Ephesians 4:32 “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

Matthew 18:22 “Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.”

The Forgiveness Factor



- a) Without forgiveness you WILL NOT have **anything close** to a good marriage
- b) Forgiveness is the only way to finally conclude conflict
- c) Forgiveness is the only thing that will allow you to **move forward.**

The Forgiveness Factor



- d) Forgiveness **wipes the slate clean**, from this moment forward

- e) Once forgiveness is given, there is no need to bring up the past incident in the future.
 - Jesus is our example and role model

The Forgiveness Factor



f) Why is forgiveness so difficult?

- our **sinful nature**

- our **pride** – we want our way, we want to be “right,” along with an excessively high opinion of ourselves or our importance”

The Forgiveness Factor

f) Why is forgiveness so difficult?

- painful feelings of unfairness – when you forgive someone you continue to live with the effects of the offense and set the offender free. Forgiveness allows the offender to go free while the offended one bears the effect / pain of the offence.

That's what God did for us. That's what He calls us to do – only God can enable someone to do such a thing.

The Forgiveness Factor



g) What are the benefits when I do forgive?

- ☐ You are freed from the chains / bondage of bitterness, anger, rage, vengeance.
- ☐ You are free to continue building a happy marriage.
- ☐ “You ain’t renting space to no one in your head.”

The Forgiveness Factor



- h) Satan has been defeated in his desire to **create** **bondage** in you and tear apart your relationship.

- i) What happens if I refuse to forgive? Conversely, when you don't forgive: bondage, unhappiness, joyless, peaceless, vindictive, critical, ostracized, empty, bitter, angry.

The Forgiveness Factor



- i) Forgiveness is an act of self-defense, a tourniquet that stops the fatal bleeding of resentment. (Gary Thomas)

“The first to apologize is the bravest.
The first to forgive is the strongest.
The first to forget is the happiest.”

The Forgiveness Factor



Husband and wife went to divorce lawyer. In waiting room, they were each given a legal size pad and pen and asked to specifically list each of their grievances. After some time, each had filled first page, and on the second page. Suddenly, one of them put their pen down, tears flowed onto pad, blurring the “list.” Finally, wrote four words in big print across the entire page, “**but I forgive you.**”

Marriage Role Expectations

the most critical starting point..... “MUTUALITY”

a) Mutual servanthood

- ☐ mutual value
- ☐ mutual importance
- ☐ mutual respect
- ☐ mutual servanthood
- ☐ mutual submission
- ☐ mutual honor
- ☐ mutual giving

Yet different roles

Marriage Role Expectations



Romans 12:10 “In honor preferring one another”

- Always putting the other person **ahead of yourself**.

Marriage Role Expectations



Matthew Henry: “The woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.”

Marriage Role Expectations

Ephesians 5:21-33 “Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, His body and is Himself its Saviour. Now as the church submits to Christ so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. However, let each of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Marriage Role Expectations



Verse 21 “*Submitting to one another....*” establishes the **core** of the marriage relationship. By establishing equal servanthood, God establishes equal value in **personhood**. This core value must **always** be kept foremost in your marriage.

Marriage Role Expectations

- Some are looking for a **throne and a crown**. In marriage God gives you a **basin and a towel**.

- Where it starts: (notice **how** we are to demonstrate “submitting to one another”)
 - ▣ Husbands: “**love** your wife”
 - ▣ Wives: “**respect** your husband.”

Marriage Role Expectations



b) The Role of the Husband

- # 1 Priority - v.25 “love your wife”

- like Christ does for the church, he is to provide leadership as the head
 - ▣ sacrifice: placing the needs of his family ahead of himself
 - ▣ not Lord it over
 - ▣ not dictatorial

Marriage Role Expectations



- ❑ not a tyrant
- ❑ lead by example
- ❑ Jesus provided servant leadership, not dictatorial domination
- ❑ like Christ did for the church he is to sacrifice for the wife / family
- ❑ Sacrifice: “give yourself “**FOR**”
- ❑ It is the husband’s willful and loving choice to present himself to his wife with this, the highest level of devotion

Marriage Role Expectations



Colossians 3:19 “Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.”

In the partnership of two spiritually equal human beings, man and woman, the man bears the **primary responsibility** to lead the partnership in a **God-glorifying** direction.

Marriage Role Expectations



c) The Role of the Wife

“Submission is the defined calling of a wife to honor and affirm her husband’s leadership, and so help to carry it through according to her gifts.” John Piper

Marriage Role Expectations



- Six Things Submission is Not:
 1. Submission is not agreeing on everything.
 2. Submission does not mean leaving your brain at the altar.
 3. Submission does not mean you do not try to influence your husband.

Marriage Role Expectations



- Six Things Submission is Not:

4. Submission does not mean living or acting **in fear**.
5. Submission is not putting the will of the husband before the **will of Christ**.
6. Submission does not mean getting all of her **spiritual strength** through her husband.

Marriage Role Expectations

- Like the church does to Christ, the wife willingly chooses to devote herself to her husband. Two words are used:
 1. **submit**: “the act of presenting” (as you do with a resume, as one does with a testimony in a courtroom) herself to her husband.

Colossians 3:18 “Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.”

Marriage Role Expectations

- Like the church does to Christ, the wife willingly chooses to devote herself to her husband. Two words are used:

2. subject: “giving allegiance to”

- Giving yourself “TO” - It is the wife’s willful and loving choice to present herself to her husband with this, the highest level of devotion.

Marriage Role Expectations

- To be what God calls “the helper” or “help-meet” or “help-mate” which means the marriage is incomplete without her presence, giftedness, wisdom, discernment, the “woman’s touch.”
- E.G. her presence changes a house into a home.

Marriage Role Expectations



- ▣ The husband may be the head of the home but the wife is the **neck that turns the head.**
- ▣ “No woman wants to be in submission to a man who isn't in submission to God!”

Marriage Role Expectations



The universal principles of leadership which applies to all aspects of life:

- ❑ There must be leadership or there will be total chaos
- ❑ In everything there must be a “the buck stops here” person
- ❑ It is required in order to maximize productivity, shape a positive culture and promote harmony
- ❑ How would an orchestra perform under more than one conductor trying to conduct simultaneously?

Growing Together Spiritually



- worship regularly together
- always use Scripture in devotional times
- try to maintain a consistent time (one of the greatest challenges in a home)
- serve spiritually together

Affair Proof Your Marriage



When secondary purposes for marriage are placed above the primary purpose, discontentment, fearfulness, and disillusionment often result

Affair Proof Your Marriage



Why do mates wander?

- never fully **committed**
- unrealistic / unfair **expectations**
- “**greener grass**” syndrome
- we all have a **sin nature**
- failure to develop true and full **intimacy**

Affair Proof Your Marriage



Matthew 5:28 “But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Count the cost: devastation and destruction that comes with unfaithfulness.

Affair Proof Your Marriage



DISCIPLINE your mind!!!

Hebrews 10:36 “For you have need of discipline, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.”

The many individuals I’ve met with and heard: “If only I could **turn the clock back.**”

Why is Marriage so Hard?

- a) The mundane nature of everyday living.
- b) Having to do things that I don't like and am not good at.
- c) The investor to owner perspective change
- d) No longer having to be “on” once we're married.
- e) Sharing space and co-managing limited resources.
- f) You are both changing people.
- g) Overly high expectations of marriage. Marriage won't solve all your problems.

Why is Marriage so Hard?

- h) Overly high expectations of your spouse.
- i) Overly high expectations of love.
- j) Viewing compatibility as a noun instead of a verb
- k) Two (or more) different ways of “doing family.”
- l) An undefined and changing role.
- m) We are sinners and we are self-centered.
- n) Low view of commitment

Why is Marriage so Hard?

- o) Wrong view of **ownership** over the marriage. It is right to speak of “our marriage” belonging to you and your spouse. (“Leave and cleave”)
- p) Unwillingness to **work** for a good relationship
- q) Bracing against past hurts
- r) A real **enemy** who wants to destroy marriage.
- s) Unwillingness to be **weak**.

Why is Marriage so Hard?



Marriage is the operation by which a woman's vanity and a man's egotism are extracted without anesthetic.

~Helen Rowland~

Don't Forget Your Sense of Humour



Proverbs 17:22 “A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.”

Fruits of a Good Marriage



a) **Companionship**

b) **Enjoyment**

c) **Fruitfulness** (of the mutual faithfulness of covenant marriage)

d) **Protection**

Fruits of a Good Marriage



- e) A healthy happy home
- f) A healthy environment to raise children
- g) A God glorifying marriage
- h) A trustworthy legacy – example for others to follow

Advice from 250 Years of Marriage



- a) Realize that there is a love that will bring you into marriage but it takes another completely different kind of love to keep you happy in marriage
- b) Keep **dating and romance** alive
- c) Give **honor and respect** in the little things
Dr. Cramer: “when you bump into each other in the kitchen, always say, ‘excuse me’.”

Advice from 250 Years of Marriage



- d) HIM: demonstrate genuine **affection** to her on a daily basis
- e) HER: demonstrate genuine **respect** to him on a daily basis
- f) Accepting anything less than a strong relationship is **not an option**

Advice from 250 Years of Marriage



g) Be committed to work through the “**stuff**”

h) Regularly **pray out loud** together

i) Two words: “**yes dear**”

Advice from 250 Years of Marriage



- ❑ My most brilliant achievement was my ability to be able to persuade my wife to marry me. *Winston Churchill*
- ❑ I love being married. It's so great to find that one special person you want to annoy for the rest of your life. *Rita Rudner*

Advice from 250 Years of Marriage

- Your wife will never start an argument, I repeat never start an argument, with you if you are cleaning bathrooms.
- In our marriage we tell the next generation what sex and marriage and fidelity look like to Christians. We are prophets, for better or for worse of the future of Christian marriage. *Evelyn and James Whitehead*

Advice from 250 Years of Marriage



- We're all a little weird. And life is a little weird. And when we find someone whose weirdness is compatible with ours, we join up with them and fall into mutually satisfying weirdness—and call it love—true love.” *Robert Fulghum*

Advice from 250 Years of Marriage

- And she's got brains enough for two, which is the exact quantity the girl who marries you will need. *P.G. Wodehouse*
- *Winston Churchill* was asked who he would like to be if there was an incarnation; he said: "I'd want to be Mrs. Churchill's second husband."