

Marriage: A Work of Art

Bob Boardman

I. Introduction.

- A. When a house (or a marriage) is built on the wrong foundation it is unstable.
- B. We worship and follow the God of differences. The differences we have with our mate or our friends are no excuse for walking out on ones mate.
- C. Marriage is not a matter of personal decision but of gift - we find contentment in whatever state we are in.
- D. The greatest impact in the mission field for the speaker was his own family - few see families that are really happy and basing their lives on eternal principles. It is one of the chief ways God explains Himself - through a God-ordained relationship that depicts man's relationship with God. (Ephesians 5)
- E. It is easy to get our priorities out of sync: quiet time, family time, work time, and leisure times. We need to constantly refocus.

II. Spouse time.

A. Do I communicate with my spouse?

- 1. The problem is that a spouse often does not want to talk about problems when he or she gets home from work.
- 2. It is important to share so long as it is not too late because problems tend to be magnified past a certain time.

B. Am I transparent and honest with my spouse?

- 1. The discovery of the real person is never easy.
- 2. Silence and dishonesty are more difficult. (Psalm 32:3)
- 3. We are to confess our faults to one another. (James 5)
- 4. We exchange growth and progress equally for being truthful and honest. (Psalm 51:6, Ephesians 4:15)
- 5. Blessed is the man that endures temptation. (James 1)
- 6. There are certain things in the timing of the Holy Spirit with discretion that we ought to share.

C. Do you love me?

1. God loves us and His love is a model. (John 3:16, Malachi 3:17)
2. God's love is both demonstrated and stated. (Ephesians 5:25-26)
 - a. If a man really loves himself he will love his wife.
 - b. Loving one's wife is a lifetime lesson.
3. It is easy to take one's spouse for granted.
4. We are to love our spouses with engagement love. (Revelation 2:4)

D. Do I forgive?

1. Mercy and forgiveness is the most visible characteristic of God that differentiates Him from man.
2. Marriage is the union of two good forgivers. (Ephesians 4:31-32)

E. Do I exercise an understanding heart?

1. Wisdom is the principle thing. We are to spend our lives seeking for wisdom, knowledge, discretion and understanding. (Proverbs 4:7, 2:9-10)
2. We need understanding of self, the times (1 Chronicles 12:32), others in general, world needs and our spouses.
3. We are to be students of our spouses.
4. A man ought to praise his wife in public. (Proverbs 31:28)
5. God promises to give us wisdom if we seek it. (Proverbs 14:15, 16:22)

F. Do we pray together?

1. The husband and wife are a great prayer force.
2. A wife's lack of submission to her husband, her failure to emphasize the adornment of Christ, and a husband's lack of consideration in honoring his wife as the weaker vessel all hinder prayer. (1 Peter 3:1-7)

G. Do we go away together?

1. Marital happiness is a goal to strive for, not something given at the outset.

2. Jesus sent the disciples away after a strenuous time in the ministry. Your wife should not be more important than your disciples. (Ephesians 4:3)

III. Conclusion - life priorities:

- A. Honor and serve the Lord.
- B. Love your spouse.
- C. Manage your children.

Application questions.

1. Review the seven questions. Which one is of greatest conviction to you personally? Explain.

2. Explain the importance of transparency. How should this look in a marriage?

3. What principle will you work on in detail in light of this discussion? What three things can you do this week to further achieve your goal?
