

Marriage: A Work Of Art

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I. Introduction.

- A. The time is short and we are to number our days. (Psalm 90:12, 39:4)
- B. Accommodating theology has permitted many divorces.
- C. A marriage cannot be built on these foundations: sex alone, material things, self-centeredness and traditions by themselves.
- D. Marriage 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 is 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. The man is easily susceptible to the “strange woman.” (Proverbs 7)
- 6. Lessons the speaker learned from a temptation.
 - a. Satan is more clever than we are.
 - b. There is a potential Bathsheba in every man’s life
 - c. God’s Word is our salvation as we choose to obey it.

- d. Pre-transparency is a must.
- e. A wife must ask godly questions not nagging.
- f. Wives must not be blindly submissive to the point that they do not ask questions in the Spirit of God.
- g. Women are not to be naïve as to the potential for a man to fail.
- h. Spend lots of time looking into the mirror of God's Word.

C. Do you love me?

- 1. We should declare our love because God is not afraid to declare His love for us. (John 3:16, Jeremiah 31:3, Malachi 3:17)
- 2. God's love is demonstrated as well as stated. (Ephesians 5:25-26)
- 3. Love builds transparency.
- 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)
- 3. We should not be so quick to accuse, hold grudges, or blackmail through the withholding of sexual intimacy.

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, others in general, world needs and our spouses.
- 3. A man ought to praise his wife in public. (Proverbs 31:28)

F. Do we pray together?

- 1. The husband and wife are a great prayer force. (Matthew 18:20)

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 a privilege 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?
