

Love Community Baptist Church

Wednesday Night Virtual Bible Study
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Part 3 - Building Relationships (Husband and Wife)

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR A HEALTHY MARRIAGE

Biblical principles for a healthy marriage include the following:

Honoring each other (*Ephesians 5:33*). Cultivate an atmosphere of honor and appreciation for your spouse's unique qualities and contributions. *However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.*

Respect each other's needs and feelings (*Colossians 3:19*). Acknowledge and validate your partner's emotions, creating a safe space for vulnerability. *Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.*

Giving up your will for the good of the relationship (*Philippians 2:3-4*). Foster selflessness and consider your spouse's needs in every decision. *Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

Serving each other sacrificially (*Ephesians 5:21*). Demonstrate love through acts of service and sacrifice, putting your partner's well-being above your own. *submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

Praying together as a couple (*1 Thessalonians 5:17*). Strengthen your bond by sharing your spiritual journey and seeking divine guidance together. *pray without ceasing,*

Having mutual trust and commitment (*Proverbs 14:12*). Build a strong foundation of trust and maintain unwavering commitment through joys and challenges. *There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.*

Serving your spouse

He spends the entire evening at the office — again. She spends money without entering it in the checkbook. He goes golfing instead of spending time with the kids. From irritating habits to weighty issues that seem impossible to resolve, loving one's spouse through the tough times isn't easy. But the same struggles that drive us apart also shed light on what we value in marriage.

"If happiness is our primary goal, we'll get a divorce as soon as happiness seems to wane," Thomas says. "If receiving love is our primary goal, we'll dump our spouse as soon as they seem to be less attentive. But if we marry for the glory of God, to model His love and commitment to our children, and to reveal His witness to the world, divorce makes no sense."

Couples who've survived a potentially marriage-ending situation, such as infidelity or a life-threatening disease, may continue to battle years of built-up resentment, anger or bitterness. So, what are some ways to strengthen a floundering relationship — or even encourage a healthy one? Thomas offers these practical tips:

- Focus on your spouse's strengths rather than their weaknesses.
- Encourage rather than criticize.
- Pray for your spouse instead of gossiping about them.
- Learn and live what Christ teaches about relating to and loving others.

Young couples in particular can benefit from this advice. After all, many newlyweds aren't adequately prepared to make the transition from seeing one another several times a week to suddenly sharing everything. Odds are, annoying habits and less-than-appealing behaviors will surface. Yet as Christians, we are called to respect everyone — including our spouse.

7 Key Ways to Building a Strong Marriage

1. **Put God first.** In Matthew 6:33, Jesus says, "Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need." Prioritizing God in your marriage means seeking his wisdom and will in all things. When you take the time to pray together, study the Bible together, and be a part of a church community together, you will grow your partnership with God, with others, and with one another.
2. **Love one another sacrificially.** Loving your spouse sacrificially involves putting your partner's needs above your own. As the apostle Paul reminds in 1 Corinthians 16:14, "And do everything with love." This means being there for your spouse through all of life's ups and downs, supporting them in every way possible, and showing them that they are loved and valued. By prioritizing their needs and making them feel cherished, you can build a deep, lasting connection that will stand the test of time.
3. **Practice forgiveness.** In Colossians 3:13, Paul says, "Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others." Forgiveness is essential in any marriage - it means that along the life-long journey, either one will need to forgive and will need to be forgiven. Having a practice of forgiveness will help you release anger, resentment, and bitterness that lingers between you and promote healing, thriving, and remembering what it means to be forgiven by Jesus.
4. **Communicate openly and honestly.** Communication is key - no really, it is! As it is written in Ephesians 4:29, "Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them." It'll maybe be the most important, daily lesson you and your spouse learn and work on - how to communicate with one another, what wise and loving speech is, how to foster honesty and vulnerability in a safe space.
5. **Serve one another.** In Galatians 5:13, Paul says, "For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love." Serving one another is kind intention and intentional thought turned into loving action towards, for, and with one another. What does this look like? Come up with ideas not of "how can my spouse serve me" but "how can I serve my spouse?"
6. **Keep the love alive.** In the Song of Solomon, we see the beauty and passion of a loving relationship between a man and a woman. Cultivating love in your marriage reminds you and your spouse of the affection you share. Small gestures like surprise date nights or leaving sweet

notes around the house can help keep the spark alive. Be creative, be curious, and find ways to foster enjoyment of one another's company.

7. **Seek wise counsel.** In Proverbs 15:22, Solomon writes, "Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed." Marriage in isolation is only so strong. God is always inviting you to find the support that comes with seeking wisdom from him and support from his people. Whether it's a healthy community group, a marriage mentor, a Biblical Care Coach, or a trusted Christian counselor, there are so many ways to walk in a wise community not only during challenging times, but in every season.

Building a strong marriage requires commitment, endures challenge, and experiences joy. While these seven key ways to building a strong marriage are the building blocks to help you stand the test of time, it's uncovering the uniqueness of your marriage that will help you and your spouse discover what works for you.

Types of Relationships that we will be discussing:

Introduction

Family: Mother, Father, Sister, Brother, Children

Spousal: Husband and Wife

Friend

Work: Colleagues

Church: Pastor (Clergy)

Church: Member