

TEACHING NOTES (underlined words indicate answers for the handout)

Session VI— Making It Last For Ever

Scripture: John 2:1-5

What is marriage all about from a kids point of view:

1. Marriage is when you keep your girlfriend and don't have to give her back to her parents.
2. Marriage means spending a lot of time together even if you don't want to.
3. It is when 2 people who have a house and kids decided to take the same name so the other people don't get confused.

What is the secret to having a successful marriage?

OBEDIENCE to God is the secret to a successful marriage.

Ten ways we can make our marriage last forever:

1. I must have a GROWING COMMITMENT to make my marriage work.

The commitment cycle is important to understand:

- a. You first have love.
- b. Then you have commitment.
- c. You have more love.
- d. Then you have more commitment.

True commitment keeps growing.

Someone said, "Sustain a family for a long period of time and you can sustain success for long periods of time. First things first. If your family life is in order, you can do whatever you want."

If you love your wife like a thoroughbred, you will never end up with a nag.

2. I must make EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE to my spouse.

Don't be like the one guy that said I told you I loved you twenty years ago. If I change my mind I will let you know.

Expressions of love include touch, words, and gifts.

Too often we treat people outside our families better than our own family members.

Neighbor spills coffee. No problem. But let your husband do it and you ask him, "What's wrong, clumsy?"

How can I show love to my spouse:

a. I can love by SURPRISING.

b. I can love by REMEMBERING.

Remember the big days. What are they? Birthdays, anniversary, valentines, etc.

Special days shared with no one.

c. I can love by PLEASING.

Remember you were creative when you dated.

What are five things you know you can do that will please your spouse:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

d. I can love by CREATING MEMORIES.

e. I can love by RE-AFFIRMING.

Quit giving answers and start giving assurance.

f. I can love by ENHANCEMENT.

One of the best enhancements you can make to your wife or husband is to say it and mean it, "MY GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT IN LIFE WAS MARRYING YOU!"

3. I must put FUN AND ENJOYMENT into my marriage.

What are some fun things you like to do?

4. I must offer FORGIVENESS quickly and easily.

“Bottled up resentments constitute one of the greatest danger to marriage.” Judge John Warren Hill

I love the story of a grandmother and grandfather that had been married for fifty years.

Several friends had come together to celebrate that wedding anniversary. They asked the grandmother, “Tell us what was the secret of your fifty years of successful marriage.”

She said, “I really do have an answer. Before I married the man I have been married to fifty years, I sat down and saw that both of us had some weaknesses.

So, I decided that I would overlook his top ten faults.”

Someone in the group said, “What were they?”

She said, “You know, I never wrote them down. But I went into the marriage saying I will overlook his top ten faults. And whenever he did something that looked a little ridiculous, I WOULD SAY TO MYSELF, LUCKY FOR HIM THAT IS ON MY LIST.”

What a wonderful mindset of a person to overlook the faults of a companion.

5. I must have an effective mutually satisfying COMMUNICATION.

I heard about one wife telling another lady that she did not think her husband listened to her anymore.

The lady asked, “Well, how do you know that?”

She said, “Well, the other day at the breakfast table, as usual he was reading the paper, and so I told him I had decided to go and get cremated.”

And so he said, “Ok, honey, get your hat and let’s go.”

There are five levels of communication: (This is from the lowest level to the highest.)

1. Cliche Communication

- a. How are you?
- b. How are you doing?
- c. This can be a very shallow form of interest to someone whom you love if this is as far as you take your communication.

2. Reporting the facts kind of Communication.

- a. This is when we only get together and tell what is happening.
- b. Cover events on the calendar.
- c. We cover the budget and other pertinent areas of life.

3. Sharing ideas and opinions.

- a. Sharing likes and dislikes.
- b. This is the level where we begin to share our thoughts.

4. Sharing feelings and emotions.

- a. Knowing what makes us happy or sad.
- b. We share with each other what makes us upset.
- c. Knowing when something makes you fearful.

5. The highest level of communication is where we will share complete trust and truth in each other.

- a. This involves our freedom of sharing with each other without any reservation.
- b. You are communicating so close you have no fear of rejection or put down.
- c. Men and women are so different in this area.

1) Women want to share themselves, their feelings, their joys, their problems, and their fears.

2) Where men want to share their world. They want to give advice and solve problems. They want to share information and there is a world of difference.

I am coming to grips with one of my problems which is when there is a problem I want to go right to the bottom line and solve it. You would think after almost 25 years of marriage the boy would have caught on by now. I am finally coming to the realization that my wife really needs a friend. She needs the kind of friends that will simply listen to her and not give her 7 reasons why it will not work or a 3 point sermon with a poem.

It really doesn't work when you try giving an altar call and she does not come but instead you go. Guys, our wives do not always need a Mr. Answer Man.

6. I must be INTIMATE with my spouse.

Adam knew Eve. . . "Knowing each other is the essence of intimacy."

Good sex begins with a good relationship - knowing (Hebrew word for sex), loving, caring, and understanding.

Did you hear about the creative fellow who said that he liked making love on all the days that begin with T; Tuesday, Thursday, Today, Tomorrow, Taturday, and Tunday.

7. I must UNDERSTAND and APPRECIATE the differences between man and woman.

We are not the same and we need to appreciate it.

We think differently.

8. We must both have continued GROWTH and DEVELOPMENT.

We are either growing together or growing apart.

Marriage is not like a picture, because it is continually changing.

What are some ways a husband and wife can grow together?

- a. Have a growth plan - determine personal interests.
- b. Challenge each other to grow.
- c. Have growing experiences together.
- d. Grow as friends.
- e. Have new experiences in life.
- f. Share with your spouse what you are learning.

9. I must live with a SERVANT'S HEART for my spouse.

10. I must have a new DEFINITION of marriage success.

The people who are the closest to me should love and respect me the most.

Not being world famous.

CONCLUSION

When you understand the wedding vows four things should come to your mind:

1. SECURITY — “I love you unconditionally.”
2. SELF WORTH — “You are important in our relationship.”
3. SENSITIVITY — “I want to sense and meet your needs.”
4. SHARING — “I want to spend my life with you.”

Vows

No one is going to be embarrassed because you are going to stand right where you are and block out everything and everyone in the room.

I want you to turn toward your companion, holding both hands, and look into their eyes as you recommit yourself to each other and to God. This is for married couples only. This is not a wedding.

Repeat after me, but fill in the name of your companion.

We will start with the man:

I, _____, continue to take you, _____,
as the love of my life.
I will remain committed to you for the rest of my life,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish,
'til death do us part,
according to God's holy covenant for marriage,
and thereto I pledge to you my solemn vow.

Now for the wife:

I, _____, continue to take you, _____,

as the love of my life.
I will remain committed to you for the rest of my life,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish,
'til death do us part,
according to God's holy covenant for marriage,
and thereto I pledge to you my solemn vow.

Listen to what God says in Matthew 19:6: "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

May God add His richest blessings upon you.

You may now kiss the bride!

[Close with prayer.]