

How To Go Home With A Better Relationship

(Genesis 3:23-25)

- Introduction:
1. Is it not the case that what God ordained for our good has often been perverted to our own harm.
 - a. Government.
 - b. The Church.
 - c. The Home.
 2. There are an enormous number of marriages that are broken in courtrooms across our land, but beyond that, how many are broken in the heart?
 3. For far too many people, the expression, "And they lived happily ever after" is little more than a fairy tale, when it could be a reality.
 4. The reason this expression is a "fairy tale" to some is because they aren't willing to do the work that is necessary to accomplish this goal.
 - a. Some spend more time preparing for their wedding than they do their marriage.
 5. I know that on the surface this may sound trite and little more than a cliché, but Jesus has the answers!
 6. So what direction does the Lord give us that will help us to leave here with a better marriage; a marriage that honors God and blesses our lives as God intended?
 - a. The suggestions I am going to share with you are not some new "secrets" that I've discovered, but rather are time tested, and proven commandments of God, to which we may need to give greater attention.

I. Understand The Meaning Of Love

- A. Love is more than an emotion, it's a commitment.
 1. Many times, I have heard people say, "I just don't love him/her anymore."
 2. What they mean by that is that they don't "feel" the same way toward them that they once did.
- B. What they are lacking is an ingredient of true love: commitment.
 1. Too often we allow our feelings to pull along our commitment.
 2. Rather, we should allow our commitment to pull along our feelings.
 3. Feelings make a terrible engine; they better function as a caboose.
- C. Commitment can be commanded, whereas feelings cannot (John 13:34; Matthew 5:44).
- D. Commitment is the glue that holds marriages together, and is necessary in order to allow time to heal wounds and change behavior.
- E. (1 Peter 4:8).

II. Practice And Develop The Grace Of Forgiveness

- A. Two people come together in marriage, having different backgrounds, different mannerisms, different methods of doing things...there's bound to be confrontations.
- B. If a person is not spiritually mature enough to extend genuine forgiveness, he has no business being married.
- C. How do you handle those confrontations?
 - 1. "I'm mad and you have to guess why?" - (Matthew 18:15).
 - 2. Bring up past conflicts (Proverbs 17:9).
 - 3. Don't exaggerate.
 - 4. When you're wrong - admit it; when you're right - keep quiet (Proverbs 28:13; 17:24).

III. Honor One Another With Your Words & Actions

- A. When's the last time you showed honor to your spouse, especially in a public way?
 - 1. On the other end of the spectrum, when's the last time you used your spouse as the punch line of a joke or revealed something that was embarrassing or humiliating?
 - 2. Does the fact that one says "I was only joking" really make a difference?
- B. In counseling those who have troubled marriage, I have often wondered to myself how some individuals could ever get over the hurt caused by the actions and words spoken by their spouses.
- C. (Ephesians 5:22-33).
 - 1. Husbands - love and cherish your wives.
 - 2. Wives - honor, respect, and obey your husbands.

- Conclusion:
- 1. Friends, God seeks our good. That's why he gave us marriage in the first place.
 - 2. Enter into marriage, and continue in it in harmony with God's instructions and you will find the satisfaction, fulfillment, and joy that God intended for you to experience.
 - 3. In fact, the expression "and they lived happily ever after" can become more than just an ending to a fairy tale; it can be the ending of your life's story.