

RESETTING YOUR MARRIAGE MAY 21, 2017

This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. Genesis 2:24

Thesis: Connection with your spouse leads to God's release of blessing here on earth.

I. Characteristics of a Christian Marriage

- A. It is not a contract, but a _____. A covenant is a deep, personal, binding, exclusive, permanent, legal commitment.
- B. It's not about a give and take, but about how can I help my spouse _____ who God created them to be.

II. Challenges in Marriage

- A. Expect to _____. You will be forced to face your flaws, fears, hang-ups, and hurts.

*"...He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish."
Ephesians 5:25-27*

- B. Expect _____.
- C. Expect _____.
- D. Expect _____ to do great things!

"I also tell you this: If two of you agree here on earth concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you. For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them." Matthew 18:19-20

III. How do you reset your marriage?

- A. Connection comes through _____.
 - 1. Submission is not being a doormat or allowing your spouse to sin against you. It does not mean remaining silent and never voicing your opinion or needs.
 - 2. It means you don't keep score or seek revenge. You don't "check out" on your spouse. You don't live selfishly. You don't take part in destructive behaviors. You live to serve.

3. It means you are vulnerable with your thoughts, your time, your heart, your dreams, your body. It means being available to meet *legitimate* needs that your spouse has.
- B. Build connection _____. Have a date night, pray together, have dinner with friends, do something healthy together like volunteering or exercising.
 - C. Put Jesus at the _____, and _____ with the Holy Spirit.

Answers: covenant, become, change, conflict, spiritual attack, God, submission, habits, center, partner

Practical Tips for Communicating through Conflict

1. Search your heart first. Repent of what you've done, and forgive your spouse for what they did, before talking about it.
2. Be a good listener. Don't interrupt. Repeat back not only what they said, but what you perceive they are feeling.
3. Listen for the need that your spouse is feeling is not met. Often, the disagreement isn't about the circumstance but about an unmet need, or an unhealed wound. For example, a fight over finances might be a fight about your spouse feeling unsafe. Try to find their heart.
4. Analyze your own heart. Ask the Holy Spirit why you're having these emotions. What need do you have that is not being met? Or perhaps there is a hurt in your heart that God wants to heal. Ask Him.
5. Generally speaking, try not to answer a feeling with a fact. If your spouse is talking about feelings, use language like "help me understand." Try to connect with their heart first, and not just their head.
6. Speak the truth in love. Truth without love isn't truth, and love without truth isn't love. That's why forgiving first is so important – otherwise "truth" may sound like judgment. Also, never speaking the truth just enables poor choices and dis-empowers your spouse from ever becoming who God created them to be. That's not loving.
7. Apologize for your part, with no exceptions or justification. "I'm sorry for _____. That was wrong. Will you please forgive me."
8. Forgive unconditionally, and don't hold on to the offense.
9. If corrective action is needed to change a pattern, come into agreement about what that should be. Seek outside counsel if needed.