

## Dysfunction Junction Part 3 *Distance and Your Relationship*

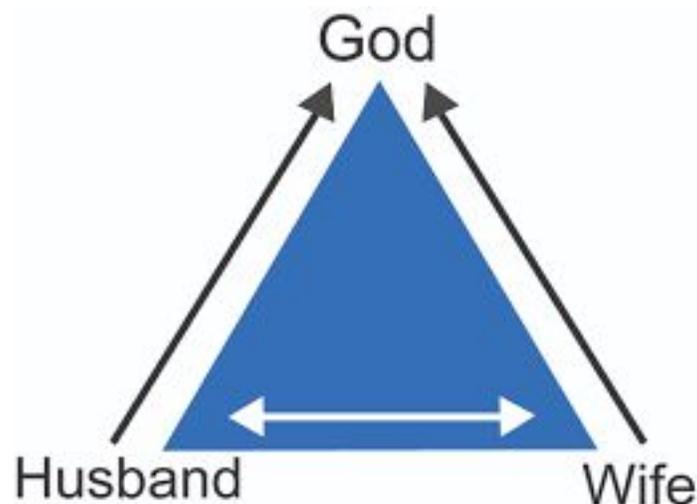
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### Message and Conversation Guide

1. In the days of slavery in America weddings between slaves had vows that included not only “until death do us part” but also “until distance separates us.” This was due to the fact that slave owners could randomly sell spouses separately and they could end up many miles away. Discuss what this must have been like and explore the quote below.

*But the wedding vows they recited promised not “until death do us part,” but “until distance” — or, as one black minister bluntly put it, “the white man” — “do us part.”*  
TERA W. HUNTER

2. Do you know of couples that have distance in their relationship? Discuss the fact that you can live in the same house, eat at the same table, sleep in the same bed and yet emotionally be distant from one another.
3. Discuss the TV scene in the show This is Us when Jack Pearson takes Rebecca for a blindfolded surprise on their wedding anniversary. How can the unpredictable help close the distance gap in our marriages?
4. Discuss these principles of keeping the mystery and excitement in your marriage and relationship.
  - *Constant predictability can create distance in relationship.*
  - *The unexpected and surprises can refresh our relationship.*
5. How does the diagram below illustrate that when two people pursue the Lord passionately it can actually bring them closer together.



1. Why does marrying an unbeliever make it more challenging to stay close together? Why are we wise to adhere to God's ideal?
2. Discuss the following scriptures regarding believers marrying believers.

**2 Cor 6:14-16**

14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. **For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."** NIV

**1 Cor 7:39**

39 A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, **she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.** NIV

**Deut 22:10**

10 Do not plow with an ox and a donkey **yoked together.** NIV

3. What level of relational loyalty does the verse below convey?

**Ruth 1:16-17**

16 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. **Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.**" NIV

4. The verse above conveys loyalty in the three forms listed below. Please discuss.
  - **Common Direction** (where you go I will go)
  - **Common Faith** (your God will be my God)
  - **Common Commitment** (where you die I will die)

**Concluding Thought**

*“A successful marriage requires falling in love many times, always with the same person.” Mignon McLaughlin*