

How to Build an Enduring Marriage

The need to stabilize and strengthen the home is voiced at virtually every level in society. Problems attacking home & family visibly escalated over last half of 20th Century. It is still growing. How do we deal with it? It should be our goal to equip believers with basic skills and understandings necessary for a successful marriage relationship. What is required? What is needed to make marriages enduring?

I. An Accurate Definition of Marital Success

- A. Success is not the mere refusal to divorce.
- B. Both must search for true companionship.
- C. How does a couple reach this point?
 1. A mutual desire to improve the relationship.
 - a) Ephesians 5.33: **Each one** of you is to love his wife as himself, and the wife is to respect her husband.
 2. Treat your spouse as you prefer to be treated.
 - a) Matthew 7.12: *whatever you want others to do for you; do also the **same** for them.*
 3. Move in confidence with God's principles.

II. Develop Unconditional Love

- A. Some have never been taught how to love. Others only know self centeredness and conditional love. Others have failed expectations...
- B. What does unconditional love look like? How does God love?
 - a. Sacrificially: *Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that **he loved us** and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, 1 John 4.10.*
 - b. Without complacency: *love is the perfect **bond** of unity, Colossians 3.14.*
 - c. By deliberate choice: *love **bears** all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, 1 Corinthians 13.7.*

III. Work to Build a Successful Relationship

- A. How can a husband build a successful relationship?
 1. Moral purity: *Christ left you an example...*, 1 Peter 2.21.
 2. Be positively involved in your family: **Follow** me, Luke 9.23.
 3. Lead by serving: *The son of man did not come to be served, but to **serve**...* Matthew 20.28.
 4. Lead by tender kindness: *live with your wives in an **understanding** way...*, 1 Peter 3.7.
- B. How can a wife build a successful relationship?
 1. Pure, **reverent** lives, 1 Peter 3.2.
 2. *Submit* to your husband's leadership, 1 Peter 3.5.

IV. Build Your Communication Skills

- A. Listen to Understand
 1. Are you **quick to listen**?
 2. Or...do you listen to defend or defeat? James 1.19
- B. Watch how you say things.
- C. Understand what the best type of communication your spouse responds to.

As We Close...

- A. God's highest object in marriage is companionship.
- B. All of this starts with a relationship with God.