

Preparing for the Journey – Video Session 1

The details of each of our stories differ, but some things remain the same. We meet, we fall in love, and we decide to take the big step of getting married. In this session, we will discuss some of the timeless, universal things that we can do to prepare for a happy and successful marriage that is pleasing to God.

1. Consult the Scriptures.

1. Sometimes there is no good role model among our peers. And even the best role models are imperfect. So we need to consult God's word for timeless principles.
2. Personal devotions should take first priority. Spend time with the Lord and keep your relationship with the Lord primary.
3. If my relationship with the Lord is fresh, then I will treat my spouse right, and have something of value to give.

2. Purity.

1. It is important to note that you are actually more susceptible to compromise in purity with a person you love and are attracted to.
2. In your dating relationship, set parameters that will protect you and Identify weak points that need protective fences or boundaries.
3. Enjoy Private time in public settings. We can have meaningful, relationship-building in places where our privacy is not intruded upon, but where we are also not tempted to cross physical boundaries that are designed for after marriage.
4. Even if you've fallen God forgives. God can help you make changes to do it right from this point forward.

3. Equally yoked.

1. You need to be going in the same direction as one another.
2. Have the same value system and the same goals in life.
 1. Get to know one another and see how compatible you are.
 2. No two people are exactly the same, but now is good time to get to know one another better, to see if you can walk together through life.
 3. See accompanying "Similarities and Differences" worksheet.

4. 3 Things that Newlywed Couples sometimes don't realize the importance of.

1. **Communication.** Disagreements will arise. Emotions rise up and take over the communication. Here are a three principles to help with healthy communication:

1. Don't bring up old stuff. Biblically, we're supposed to have already addressed past issues. Discussions, Repentance, Apologies, and Forgiveness should have already happened with those things and they are not part of present issues.
 2. No name calling. Stop when you are insulting or demeaning the other. You're no longer addressing issues you're just upset.
 3. Do not bring up divorce. Problems are not a reason to end a marriage. They're opportunities to work on those things to build your marriage.
2. **Expectation.**
1. Can't plan for everything, but it helps to know what one another is expecting.
 2. Examples of expectations are Holidays, expecting your spouse to behave how your parents did, where you live, etc.
 3. The only way to clarify expectations is by Talking about them.
3. **Finance.**
1. Don't spend what you don't have. This will put undue stress on the marriage.
 2. Honor the Lord.
 1. What do we give to the Lord?
 2. How do we use discretionary funds?
 3. Sometimes the best use of funds is to spend them for building and preserving your marriage. Spending \$20 on a cheap date is sometimes way more valuable than anything else you could do with those funds.
 3. Talk about finances often.

Homework

1. List at least 3 questions you have from the lesson.
2. Complete the "Similarities and Differences" worksheet below and discuss as a couple.

Lesson 1 Differences & Similarities

Differences and similarities are amazing! They can be a key to success in marriage as well as the catalyst for some level of conflict. We are attracted to each other by them and sometimes they can become quite the irritant! Take the time to answer each of the following questions individually then come together and share your findings.

Think carefully about yourself and your fiancé and fill in the blanks below:

(How are you and your fiancé similar?)

(How are you different?)

Answer the following personal questions with a simple answer. Circle any questions that you think your fiancé does not know about you.

1. A favorite childhood memory?
2. What are your hobbies or special interests?
3. As a child, what did you dream about becoming when you grew up?
4. What awards or certificates have you won?
5. As a child, did you have a nick-name?
6. Who was your childhood best friend? Are you still friends today?

7. Where did you grow up?
8. What was your spiritual life like as a child?
9. When you were first introduced to Jesus?
10. How old were you when you got saved?
11. Who was the first Christian influence in your life?
12. Do you have any siblings? Where are they now?
13. What are your major political views?
14. What is your favorite movie?
15. What is your favorite book?
16. What is your favorite song?
17. What do you feel are your strengths?
18. What do you feel are your weaknesses?
19. Do you like to cook?

20. Are you a tidy person? (Do you clean up after yourself?)

21. Do you keep up with the laundry?

22. Do you have any medical issues your fiancé does not know about?

23. What is your favorite holiday and why?

24. If you could live anywhere, where would that be?

25. What time do you usually go to bed?

26. What do you do when you first get up in the morning?

27. Describe the first hour after you get home from work.