

## STRATEGIES FOR STRESSFUL TIMES

Ryland Walter | April 22-23, 2023

Week 3: How To Keep Your Marriage Growing

### Attitudes That Stunt Marital Growth

- “I can \_\_\_\_\_ him/her”

*If you want a better marriage, start by making a better you.*

Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, <sup>2</sup> when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. <sup>1</sup> Peter 3:1-2 (NIV)

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. <sup>1</sup> Peter 3:7 (NIV)

- “A good marriage is always \_\_\_\_\_”

Half-Hearted Effort  
+ Half-Hearted Commitment  
= Whole-Hearted Disappointment

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her... Ephesians 5:25 (NIV)

*What would happen if you both gave 100%?*

*What will happen if you don't?*

- “This one \_\_\_\_\_ isn't a big thing”

Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards, our vineyards that are in bloom. Song of Songs 2:15 (NIV)

- “There's no \_\_\_\_\_ for my marriage”

This is what the LORD says: “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.” Jeremiah 6:16 (NIV)

### Actions That Keep Your Marriage Growing

1. \_\_\_\_\_ home

Love... does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking. <sup>1</sup> Corinthians 13:5 (NIV)

2. \_\_\_\_\_ romance

Rejoice in the wife of your youth... May you ever be captivated by her love. Proverbs 5:18-19 (NLT)

3. \_\_\_\_\_ differences

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. Romans 12:4-5 (NIV)

4. Throw away the \_\_\_\_\_

Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. Hebrews 13:4 (NLT)

5. Apply \_\_\_\_\_ to you both as a couple

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. <sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:15-20 (NIV)

6. \_\_\_\_\_ God's Spirit who unites you

Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Psalm 127:1 (NIV)

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>1</sup> Corinthians 1:18 (NIV)

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#### 3. Celebrate differences

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#### 4. Throw away the parachute

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#### 5. Apply Bible passages to you both as a couple

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# STRATEGIES FOR STRESSFUL TIMES

## HOW TO KEEP YOUR MARRIAGE GROWING Talk-it-Over Notes | April 22-23, 2023

### REVIEW IT

A marriage is a living, breathing, covenant relationship. As with anything living... just because it's existing, doesn't mean it's growing. Unfortunately, in our culture we can easily pick up lies and attitudes that stunt the growth of our marriages. Here are four: 1) "I can change him/her." The truth is, we are to submit to one another as we surrender to God who uses marriage to make us less selfish. 2) "A good marriage is always 50/50." The truth is, when you think marriage is 50/50, you end up keeping score. When you keep score, you both lose. A good marriage is modeled after how Christ loved the Church. 100%. 3) "This one little thing isn't a big thing." However, it's rarely big problems alone that keep a marriage from growing. It's little things that go unchecked. 4) "There's no hope for my marriage." But, with God, there's always hope.

So, what are some actions that can keep a marriage growing?

1. Hurry home
2. Nourish romance
3. Celebrate differences
4. Throw away the parachute
5. Apply Bible passages to you both as a couple
6. Trust God's Spirit who unites you

**Spend some time in the Bible: 1 Peter chapter 3 and Ephesians chapter 5**

### TALK ABOUT IT

1. Which of the four attitudes that stunt growth do you resonate with most?
2. Go through that list of six actions as a group, and clarify each point. In other words, what was something said in the sermon that stood out to you from that point, or how would *you* summarize the point?
3. What are some actions that keep a marriage growing missing from this list? What would you add? Any Bible verses come to mind in conjunction with that action step?

### ACT ON IT

It's time to get practical. Try this: In one simple conversation with your spouse, decide on one of the four attitudes you need to most reject in your marriage, and then one of the six actions you're going to work on applying for the next month.

### PRAY ABOUT IT

Ask how you can pray for a support one another this week and then close in prayer.