

## **Foundations for Successful Blended Families**

### **Wednesday, April 13, 2022**

- I. Foundations for Successful Blended Families
  - A. Unique Blended Family Issues
    1. A blended family is a marriage where one or both spouses bring children with them from a previous marriage(s) or relationship. (*divorce/death/other*)
      - a. 50% of all families are blended families.
      - b. The divorce rate is higher among blended families because of the unique set of challenges it brings.
  - B. Unresolved Feelings from a Prior Relationship
    1. Ten years after divorce 50% of people still have feelings of love for their ex-spouse. Marriage (and sexual intimacy) joins our soul together with another person.
      - a. (Gen. 2:24-25)
    2. Satan either perverts our memories or poisons them to ruin our future.
      - a. When we're married, Satan is the accuser of our spouse.
      - b. When we divorce, he reminds us of what was right.
      - c. Thank God for any good in the prior relationship, then decide, "I leave it behind and I'm focused on the person I'm with right now."
        - (Eph. 4:30-32) forgive your ex and yourself!
  - C. Lower Trust and Higher Expectations
    1. Lower Trust: "I have less good will and am more suspicious of your motives and actions. I'm not getting my heart broken again."
    2. Higher Expectations: "I expect more of you because of my previous disappointments. I expect you will not make the same mistakes my ex made."
    3. How to establish trust in your current relationship:
      - a. Before and after marriage, date to establish trust.
      - b. Disassociate the past from the present. Forgive and go on.

- c. Dream new dreams. Set goals for your marriage.  
Have an annual vision retreat.

D. Non-Biological Parenting

1. If you are the biological parent, don't let your protective instincts keep your child away from the stepparent.
  - a. The biological parent should enforce discipline, but both parents have authority and stand as a united front.
  - b. The non-biological parent should always honor the child's parent and never try to replace them.
  - c. You should trust each other with decisions related to the children or stepchildren. There is no place for favoritism or the attitude, "You don't love them like I love them."
2. Natural sexual barriers may be missing. Wear appropriate clothing around non-biological children, especially teenagers and young adults.
3. Child support needs to be paid with a good attitude. (Remember the Law of Possession, marriage is sharing. "Your debts are my debts.")
4. Visitation can be a source of conflict and stress.
  - a. Let the adults communicate and don't use the children as messengers.
  - b. Every time the children leave your home, pray over them that God will protect their minds, hearts and sexuality.
  - c. Thank God for every day that you have with them. Be fun and fair, but have righteous standards in your home.
  - d. Have faith and trust God to do what you can't. (Prov. 22:6)

E. The Priority of Marriage

1. Marriage is the nucleus of the family. You can't build a marriage around children, but you can build children around a marriage.
2. Marriage is permanent. Parenting is a temporary assignment.

- a. How will your children succeed in marriage if you don't show them how?
- b. If your children's hurts were caused by a broken marriage, they can be cured by a good one.
- c. When they leave, you will have a stable life and they won't be emotionally needy.