

Building a Stronger Marriage

Lindale Auditorium Class – 2018
(Lessons 1-2)

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Lesson 1 - Hope Found in God

1. **When you have been truly happy in your marriage, what stands out as the elements of that relationship that made you the happiest?**

2. **Is it God's stated plan that marriage be a joyful, rewarding experience, or is it just a necessary evil for the sake of "be fruitful and multiply?"**

(see Gen. 2:20-24; Prov. 5:18-19; 18:22;; 31:10; Eccl. 9:9)

3. **Is happiness in your marriage enough to keep you together forever? Follow up question: is it possible, even in the best of times, for your marriage to be torn apart by the devil's work?**

(see Mark 14:27-31; I Peter 5:8 – the 1st step to failure is _____)

4. **How do you believe that study of God's word over these eight lessons can directly help and strengthen your marriage? (What can an open Bible do for the two of you?)**

(see Jesus! – Matt. 11:28-30; John 13:12-17; Luke 23:34-43)

Lesson 2 - Let's Communicate

(Sunday August 12th)

1. **What is "communication?"**–

Define "verbal" communication –

Define "non-verbal" communication -

(*Example: "I'm Sorry"*) – How can it be said with different verbal inflections?

How do non-verbal signs amplify the message?

2. **How important is communication in your relationship? Why?**

(**Gen. 11:7-8** – What is the natural consequence of communication breakdown?)

(**2 Sam. 10:1-4** – Why did they shave the men's heads if David sent them in kindness?)

3. **How do things like tone, volume, sharpness, and countenance affect communication?**

(**Pro. 12:18; 15:1; 15:28; 21:23; 29:11** – What is Solomon trying to tell us about our speech?)

4. **Have you ever said to your significant other or family: "I'm wrong." Should you?**

(**Pro. 12:15; 26:12; 28:13** – What happens if I am willing to verbalize my mistakes in humility?)

5. **Do you hold grudges and continually bring up the past? Should you?** (Communication is about sharing information that builds relationships in the present and in the future. What value is there in bringing up your mate's mistakes from the past?)

(**Pro. 17:9** – If this is true, then why are old hatchets so often dug up?)

(**Mt. 6:12-15** – Are we exempt from such a simple command if it is our mate?)

6. **Read Ephesians 4:29. Give examples of when this verse is most needed in marriage!**

Lesson 3 - Can We Be Friends?

(Sunday August 19th)

1. **What is a “Best Friend”?** And does it, by definition, have to be the same sex, or the opposite sex, or is it more a person with which you share an exceptionally special connection?

(See **John 15:12-15** – How does Jesus describe His friendship with the Apostles?)

2. **Do you believe God intended a man’s wife to be his “best friend?”**

(see **Genesis 1:27; 2:18; 2:22-25; 3:12** – She was God’s answer for man’s _____)

3. **Can people be married and yet be lonely?** Explain.

4. **Do authority roles make it impossible to be best friends?** In other words, how can he truly be considered her best friend if she is required by God to submit to him?

To help, look at some other relationships where authority roles were present:
(**Deut. 33:26,29** – God and Israel) (**John 16:13-15** – Holy Spirit and Apostles)

(**Proverbs 31:10,25,30** – What about a husband and his godly wife?)

5. **What happens to even the best of friends if they go long stretches without Quality Time?** Should it be a priority in your marriage? How can you claim more of it?!

6. Marriage has purpose – **Genesis 2:20-25**. We cannot fulfill our purpose outside of our roles. Roles are the methods of marital success. Finish below to help us identify those roles:

Eph. 5:22-24 – Wives must embrace their God-given role to _____

Eph. 5:25-28 – Husbands must embrace their God-given role to _____

Lesson 4 - Who Rules the Roost?

(Sunday August 26th)

1. **Do you believe the role of the man as ruler in the husband-wife relationship should be accepted and respected by husband and wife? If so, why?**

Gen. 3:16; 1 Co. 11:3, 8-10; 14:34; Col. 3:18,19 – Subjection to men’s authority in marriage, as well as local church leadership is not about what we think but what God has _____.

2. **What is the difference in *delegated* and *inherent* authority? By which did the husband get his authority in the home? Does it make a difference? (Tip: Use a dictionary)**

3. **Should those in positions of authority view their role as masters, servants, or both? Explain.**

(**1 Sam. 15:17-19, 28** – Was there a penalty for not properly embracing delegated authority?)

(**Jn. 13:1-20; Heb. 2:17** – No one has had more authority than Christ. How did He use it?)

(**1 Pt. 3:7** – If husbands abuse their authority, what is the penalty?)

4. **Though a woman may sulk, or be argumentative, or deride, or belittle, or express her objections in abusive, harsh, and bitter tone and words, as long she submits to him do you believe she is pleasing to God? Explain.**

(**1 Pt. 3:1-6; Pro. 21:9**) --

5. **Does “submission” mean the woman should have no opinions different from her husband?**

(**1 Pt. 3:5-6...Gen. 16:1-5** – How does this info about Sarah help us with our question?)

(**Heb. 13:17** – When does “difference of opinions” become sin for those under subjection?)

6. **Do you think a man is weak or failing to be the ruler of his house if he listens to his wife?**

1 Sam. 25:14-20, 32-38; Pro. 31:23, 25, 26 - With Abigail and the woman in Pro. 31, her wisdom and strength are an honor to her husband and a strength to him.

Lesson 6 - "I Love You"

(Sunday September 9th)

1. **Does "love" in the Bible always refer to the same thing? Explain your answer.**

(Eph. 5:28 – What kind of love is this?)

(Gen. 29:17,18 – Define this love?)

(Pro. 5:19 – Is this love different than the first two? How so?)

2. **What do you think romantic love adds to a relationship?**

(Gen. 29:20 – Not caring, or sexual – but an attraction that made time fly!)

(Eccl. 9:9; Song of Sol. 2:3-6,10-14; 4:7-11; 5:10-16; 7:10-13) Based on the Song of Solomon verses, how would you describe the romance in their relationship?

3. **Leah was unhappy. What do you think she wanted and needed from Jacob?**

Gen. 29:20,31-32 – What "love" was missing?

4. **Do you think God cares whether people love & feel loved? What makes you think so?**

(Gen. 2:18-24; 29:31-33 – God saw and responded to Adam/Leah's need for closeness.)

5. **Is romantic love always good? In the following examples, what one common thing came of the romantic love involved? _____ Why? I thought it was good, natural even?**

(1 Ki. 11:1-8; 2 Sam. 13:1-3,11-15; Ezra 9:1-4 – While caring love is to be shown to all indiscriminately, romantic love must be directed at the right person, in the right way, and be tempered and governed by caring love.)

6. **Do you believe that "flirting" is a form of romantic love? If so, to what extent should it be shown to someone who is not your spouse? Furthermore, if you don't believe you are flirting, but your spouse does, what should you do about that???**

Lesson 7 - To Have and To Hold

(Sunday September 16th)

1. Why is it important and valuable to talk about physical (sexual) love in a Bible study?

1 Co. 7:1-5 – Did Paul consider it important enough to discuss?

Pro. 5:15-20 – Why is it so important to discuss?

2. Do you believe passionate desires before marriage are normal even in good people? How is this to be dealt with?

1 Co. 7:2 – What role does marriage play in helping with sexual desire?

Matt. 5:27-30 – Is it okay to think such things, as long as we don't do them?

3. Why is caring love so important to passionate love?

1 Co. 13:4,5 – Will this type of caring love help cultivate passionate love? Note “*patient,*” “*kind,*” “*does not seek its own...*”

2 Sam. 13:1-19 – What is the result in this case, where Amnon had passionate love for Tamar, but did not care for her well-being? What happened to his love? What happened to their relationship?

4. Is romantic love the same as sexual love? How do you know?

Gen. 29:17-18,31-34 – How did Leah feel, having one without the other?

5. Do you believe you or your mate (to be) could ever be sexually unfaithful? Explain why you feel like you do.

1 Cor. 7:5; Mk. 14:29 – Satan would love for you to believe that affectionate love is not important in a marriage. And that intimate love is not important. Then he could create a weakness in your marriage to exploit.

Based on human nature, if you aren't giving your mate the attention and affection they NEED, what could very well happen?

Lesson 8 - We Got Problems!

(Sunday September 30th)

1. **Do you believe money can cause serious problems in marriages?** If so, how? Perhaps it stumps moral and religious growth. Or adds tension or worry to the family. Causes greater separation from mate.

(Eccl. 5:10-20; 9:9 – How would such an attitude help a marriage?)

(Pro. 15:17 – Big question. Huge question: Do we believe this???)

2. **How is marriage affected if one mate is a member of the church and the other is not? Maybe they are not a believer or maybe just not faithful to our Lord?** Some areas to consider: church attendance; entertainment; associates; children.

Can I Co. 15:33 become a real truth in marriage? Does it happen often? So, if one mate is not faithful to God, is he hurting only himself?

(1 Pt. 3:1 – It can be done. The woman in I Peter faces a very challenging life, but one in which she can serve the Lord. BUT... marriages can only be what God made it to be when both spouses let Him govern it; so let's take every opportunity to pursue that goal.)

3. **How do you think one should treat his or her in-laws?** What if the in-laws are intrusive, rude, unpleasant, or in some other way difficult to like or like to be with?

(Gen. 2:22,24) - #1 – The Battle Cry! How does this affect your approach to family issues?

(1 Tim. 5:1-2; 1 Tim. 5:8,16 – That being said, we are to treat in-laws with respect, to take care of their needs, and to serve them with love. (But they do NOT come first!)

4. **What do you believe would help men and women avoid and overcome problems?**

(2 Tim. 3:16-17 - _____)

(1 Th. 5:17 - _____)

(1 Co. 16:13 - _____)