

The Bulletproof Marriage: Week 3

All Is Fair in Love and War: Keeping our passion holy in battle and in bed.

“Marriage must be respected by all, and the marriage bed kept undefiled...”
Hebrews 13:4

Even the best marriages sometimes encounter conflict. You must see conflict as an opportunity for change and growth within your relationship. The only time conflicts will become detrimental is when you are unfair with one another, and you fail to resolve the issue you are fighting over. We must protect this holy passion God has given us for each other.

The Crazy Cycle: Love and Respect Gone Awry

As the Scriptures say, “A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.” This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.
Ephesians 5:31-33

What happens when she feels unloved, or he feels disrespected, and how to stop the cycle.

Practical Tips

- The importance of long-term vision. “We’re in this for a lifetime.”
 - Looking from a 30,000-foot perspective rather than 3 feet.
 - “Burn the ships”. Get the ‘D’ word out of the equation. I’m not going anywhere so we’ve gotta figure this out.
 - It’s not a sprint, it’s a lifetime journey. We don’t have to know all the answers, we just need to have a firm foundation, then build line upon line.
 - **Your purpose (honoring God and each other) is bigger than your problem.**

“Pre-fight” rules. What are your ground rules?

Love is very patient and kind, never jealous or envious, never boastful or proud, never haughty or selfish or rude. Love does not demand its own way. It is not irritable or touchy. It does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do it wrong. 1 Corinthians 13:4-5

- Don’t “set your face” for anger. Hard to smile and get angry at same time.
- No scorekeeping. No generalizations.
- No personal attacks. It’s one thing to say, “I don’t like it when you leave your clothes lying all over the floor.” It’s another when you say, “You’re a filthy pig!”

“Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And

do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” Ephesians 4:29-30

Corrupt communication is not only swearing or foul language, but any words that tear someone down instead of build someone up. When we go on the attack, it's no longer about the issue.

- **“Don't let the sun go down on your anger.”** Doesn't mean you've resolved the issue. It means you agree to 'sleep on it'. Together!
- “Break the glass in case of emergency” tactic: argue naked. ☺

“Post-fight” reflection:

“My dear friends, you should be quick to listen and slow to speak or to get angry. If you are angry, you cannot do any of the good things God wants done.” James 1:19-20

- **Are our learned coping skills Biblical?**
 - Do they honor God and each other?
 - The power of “What could I do instead?”
 - Having a plan and implementing it.
- **Was I “easily offended”?**
- **Did I respond to offense with offense?**
- **Was our emotional investment disproportionate?**

The Undefined Marriage Bed:

- **Intimacy is all about communication.** *Song of Solomon*
- **Intimacy is not a weapon or tool.** (*Do not withhold... 1 Corinthians 7:5*)
- **Mutually respectful.** “I'm not comfortable with that.” “What do you think about...?”
 - Prefer one another. My spouse's enjoyment and fun are as important as mine. *Ephesians 5*
- **Fun and adventurous.** Flirting and fresh. (Realistic expectations)
- **Restoring innocence** and “only have eyes for you”.
 - **Covenant with my eyes** (*Job 31:1*)
 - **You can have what you say.** (*Mark 11:22-25*) Compliment, flirt, proposition.
 - **Retrain your brain:** lights on, eyes open, speak name

Conclusion:

Listen to some of these Scriptures about Biblical Marriage:

- **Song of Solomon 4:7:** You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you.
- **Song of Solomon 4:9:** You have captivated my heart, my bride; you have captivated my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace.
- **Proverbs 30:18-19:** There are three things that amaze me—no, four things that I don't understand: how an eagle glides through the sky, how a snake slithers on a rock, how a ship navigates the ocean, how a man loves a woman.

- **Proverbs 18:22:** He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.
- **Song of Solomon 8:6-7:** Hang my locket around your neck, wear my ring on your finger. Love is invincible facing danger and death. Passion laughs at the terrors of hell. The fire of love stops at nothing—it sweeps everything before it. Flood waters can't drown love, torrents of rain can't put it out. Love can't be bought; love can't be sold—it's not to be found in the marketplace.
- **Matthew 19:4-6:** "Haven't you read," Jesus replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate...no one should desecrate His art by cutting them apart."

God loves your marriage. He's for you and wants you to have the best one ever. Don't settle for anything less!