



SEVEN WORDS THAT CAN BUILD A MARRIAGE

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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Seven Words That Can Build a Marriage

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 Peter 3:1-7

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2407

God designed the divine institution of marriage and has given us the tools to create blessed homes. In 1 Peter 3, there are seven words that can build a marriage and cultivate success in the home.

1. Faith: “For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands...” (1 Peter 3:5).

A three-fold cord is not easily broken; likewise, a marriage made up of a man, a woman and God is difficult to break.

2. Acceptance: “Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear” (1 Peter 3:1-2).

Man and woman are equal in worth before God, but they do not serve the same function. Once we accept our God-given roles, we will receive the blessing of a harmonious marriage.

3. Contentment: “Do not let your adornment be merely outward... rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit...” (1 Peter 3:3-4).

Like true character and beauty, contentment is inward. Both husbands and wives must learn contentment within the home, but even more, within themselves.

4. Forgiveness: “Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous...” (1 Peter 3:8).

We must learn to forgive one another, releasing the grudges and the burden of bitterness.

5. Communication: “He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit” (1 Peter 3:10).

Marriages function based on communication; it is crucial to learn how to communicate with your spouse.

6. Romance: “Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife...” (1 Peter 3:7).

The physical part of our marriages cannot grow cold; we must dwell together, showing consistent admiration and honor to one another.

7. Prayer: “...and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered” (1 Peter 3:7).

Spouses must learn to pray with and for each other. Adrian Rogers often repeated the adage, “The family that prays together, stays together.”

LIFE APPLICATION

We are not perfect people, and we will not have perfect marriages. But if we build our homes upon these seven words, our love will flourish.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Love at first sight is not the miracle, but love after a long, long look.
- b) “Conversation” in 1 Peter 3:1 literally means “behavior.”
- c) “Chaste” in 1 Peter 3:2 means “pure.”
- d) “Coupled” in 1 Peter 3:2 means “joined.”
- e) Abraham and Sarah had a lot of obstacles.
 - i) Family pressures
 - (1) They lived in a tent and were constantly moving.
 - ii) They had unfulfilled passions, desires and ambitions.
 - iii) An ugly episode was when Abraham had a child with Hagar, Sarah’s maid.
 - (1) The blended family caused many difficulties.
 - iv) Abraham failed to protect Sarah and lied to save himself.
 - (1) Yet, he is known as a man of faith.
 - f) Nobody has a perfect marriage.

2) FAITH

- a) “Grace of life” in 1 Peter 3:7 means the power of God that comes into your life through faith.
- b) Despite all of their faults and peccadilloes, they had an abiding faith in God.
 - i) The three cords are: the man, the woman and God.
- c) Your spouse should not be number one in your life.
 - i) God should be first in your life.
 - ii) And you should not be first in your spouse’s life.
 - (1) By putting God first, we can love our spouse stronger, deeper and purer than if our spouse was first.
- d) Build your home on prayer.
 - i) You will never have a successful home apart from God.
- e) We cannot know God as we ought without faith.

3) ACCEPTANCE

- a) Husbands are not going to be perfect and living in accordance with God’s Word.
- b) “Be in subjection to your own husband” does not mean that the wife is inferior.
 - i) The devil has tried to obliterate the differences between the sexes.
 - (1) Men and women are equal before God.
 - (2) Equality of worth is not the sameness of function.
 - (3) God has put headship in the home.
- c) When the husband is the head of the home, that just means he has more responsibility.
 - i) This does not mean that he has a superiority.



- d) You are never more like the devil than when you have an un-submissive spirit.
 - i) You are never more like Jesus than when you have a submissive spirit.
- e) We need to accept the roles that God has given us.
- f) If the husband does not accept his God-given role in the home, he is a slacker, a shirker and a failure as a husband.
 - i) If the wife does not accept her God-given role in the home, she has a rebellious spirit.
- g) This does not mean that there are fewer blessings for the wife.
 - i) It means greater blessings when we find God's plan for the home.

4) CONTENTMENT

- a) In 1 Peter 3:3-4, Peter is talking about the way women adorn themselves.
- b) In spite of all of their faults, God gave Abraham and Sarah a spirit of contentment.
- c) Learn the secret of contentment.
 - i) We can get along without almost anything, except God and one another, food and clothing.
 - ii) God takes pleasure in the prosperity of His servants.
 - iii) "To whom little is enough, nothing is enough."
- d) This passage does not teach that women are not supposed to fix their hair, wear jewelry or clothes.
 - i) "Whose adornment" means do not count on the outward adornment for your beauty.
 - ii) Learn to have "the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit."
 - (1) This refers to the inner beauty that does not fade unlike the outward beauty.
 - iii) "Meek" does not mean weak.
 - (1) The Roman army was called meek.
 - (2) Meekness means "under control."
 - (3) Jesus was referred to as meek and mild.
 - iv) "A quiet spirit" does not mean mousy or timid.
 - (1) It means serene, tranquil.
 - (2) A person has inner beauty, inner character, a person who has learned contentment.
- e) Both husband and wife need to learn contentment.

5) FORGIVENESS

- a) All married people must learn to forgive.
- b) Tornados are terrible, earthquakes are horrible, but termites destroy more homes.
 - i) Termites are the bitterness and the unwillingness to forgive; the spirit that carries a grudge.
- c) The three levels of life:
 - i) The hellish level
 - (1) Where we give evil for good.
 - (2) Some people do this.
 - ii) The human level
 - (1) Where we give good for good and evil for evil.



- (2) Most people live here.
 - iii) The heavenly level
 - (1) Where we give good for evil.
 - (2) Either spouse may have to practice this at different times.
 - d) A splinter may not seem like much, but if left alone, it will begin to fester and become infected.
 - i) Do not let the sun go down upon your wrath.
 - ii) Never go to bed angry with your spouse.
- 6) COMMUNICATION
 - a) Abraham and Sarah were very different and needed to learn to communicate.
 - b) People want intimacy in their marriage.
 - i) “Intimacy” from the Latin word intermoos, means inmost.
 - c) Men need to learn to communicate.
 - i) Poor communication in a marriage tends to fall on the shoulders of the husband.
 - ii) Make time for communication.
 - d) We all need to have four dates:
 - i) Plan a date with God.
 - (1) We each need a daily quiet time.
 - ii) Plan a date with kids and grandkids.
 - iii) Plan a date with yourself.
 - (1) Spend time alone to sit, think and pray and get quiet; meditate on what you want to do.
 - iv) Plan a date with your spouse.
 - (1) Get out of the house.
 - (2) Avoid emotional and sensitive subjects.
- 7) ROMANCE
 - a) “Dwell” literally means to live with.
 - b) It is a sin against God and your future spouse to live together with someone without the benefit of marriage.
 - i) The Bible calls this adultery.
 - c) Married couples are to live together, to literally share the same bed.
 - d) 1 Peter 3:7 is directly referencing the romance that is in marriage.
 - e) Never let the physical part of your marriage grow cold.
 - f) “Giving honor” comes from a root word that means “precious.”
 - i) See your wife as someone precious.
 - (1) Giving honor shows your spouse that you believe in them.
 - ii) Everybody needs somebody to whom they are number one.
 - (1) This is in reference to other human relationships.
 - g) How do we give honor?
 - i) Give sincere compliments.



- ii) Your spouse wants to be admired.
- iii) Honor your spouse both publicly and privately.
- iv) Never make cheap jokes at the expense of your spouse.
- v) Everyone needs 10 hugs and 10 compliments a day.

8) PRAYER

- a) Learn to pray together.
- b) Pray through your problems and struggles.
 - i) The family (couple) that prays together, stays together.

9) CONCLUSION

- a) Love was never mentioned.
 - i) All of these are facets of love.



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Find, please, First Peter chapter 3. I have a wonderful message on the home and I pray it will be a blessing to your heart. Love and marriage is wonderful. Actually, it is a miracle. But the great miracle is not love at first sight. Friend, the great miracle is love after a long, long look. I told Joyce, "Honey, I still love you after so many years." Well, how do you keep the honey in the honeymoon? You don't want to be like that man who enjoyed showing his pictures of his wedding, the video, backward so he could see himself walking out of the church a free man. You don't want to be like that. How can you keep that excitement, that thrill, here.

Well, we're going to be studying about Abraham and Sarah, and let's look in the Scripture here, First Peter chapter 3 verses 1 through 7, beginning in verse 1, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation," that literally means the behavior, "of the wives." It includes what one would say, but it goes far beyond that in the King James English. Verse 2, "While they behold your chaste," that means your pure, "behavior coupled," or joined "with fear; Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of the plaiting of the hair, the wearing of gold, or the putting on of apparel, But let it be the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands, Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered."

We'll stop our reading right there. But this is a description of Sarah and Abraham and it uses them as an example. Now that's an encouragement to me because, friend, I want to tell you, Sarah and Abraham had a lot of obstacles. They were not a perfect couple. They had all kinds of pressures. For example, they had family pressures. They lived in a tent. Ladies, how would you like to live in a tent, constantly moving? They had unfulfilled passions and desires and ambitions. They were looking for a city that had foundations, but in their married life they never found it.

There was a very ugly part. There was a third person who came into their marriage, a woman named Hagar, and Abraham had a child by Hagar. That's an ugly thing and I'm sure one of the marks upon Abraham's life that he certainly has to hang his head in shame about. They had difficulty with their children. They had a blended family and not only that, but children themselves are just a



difficulty. We might as well admit it. From the time a child is 12 to 18 he watches his parents age 20 years. They had these kids they had to deal with and Abraham failed.

There was a time when Abraham failed to protect Sarah and he told a half-truth in order to save his own hide. He was kind of a scoundrel when he did that. And yet, he's known as a man of faith. But he certainly wasn't perfect.

And, they went through all of the things that we all go through. They had fiery passions of youth when they fell in love. Then middle age. They say, you know, youth looks forward, old age looks backward, middle age just looks worried. They went through middle age and then they went through old age, what we call old age, the sunset years of life. And they went through all of that, but they made it, and so can you if you'll put into practice some of the things that we're going to teach about today.

Now the point I'm making is: nobody has a perfect marriage because there are no perfect people, right? And you ought to be glad that you're not perfect and that your mate is not perfect. I mean actually, friend, if your mate were perfect, he or she never would have married you. You think about it.

I was speaking over in North Carolina at the Billy Graham Conference Center over there which is absolutely a beautiful place called The Cove, and I was preaching on marriage and the home. And a lady in mature years got up and she spoke to the younger women, and she said, "Now I want you younger women to know this," said, "You may marry a man who is a knight with shining armor on a white horse," but she said, "somebody still has to clean up after the horse." And then, she said in parenthesis, "and enjoy it."

Well, how are we going to have the kind of a home that God wants us to have? May I give you seven simple words? Now the outline today, all you have to do is just write down seven words. But these seven words are going to come out of this passage of Scripture that we're looking at today. And if you will take these seven words and inculcate them, I believe I can promise to you a successful family.

First word is faith, F-A-I-T-H. Now look, if you will, in First Peter chapter 3 verse 5, "For after this manner in old time the holy women also," now watch this phrase, "who trusted in God." I'm just going to stop reading right there. And then go down to verse 7, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, as being heirs together of the grace of life." Now the grace of life means the power of God that comes into your life through faith. It's very obvious that in spite of all of their faults and their peccadilloes, Abraham and Sarah had an abiding faith in God. You know what the Bible says? The Bible says in Ecclesiastes 4 verse 12, "A three-fold cord is not easily broken." When you take one strand, you may break it. Wrap it with another strand, it's harder to break. But three-fold cords are most difficult to break. What is the three-fold cord that binds our homes together? The man, the woman, and God. A three-fold cord is not easily broken.

Our home, I'll give you a testimony, our home is solidly built on Jesus Christ. Joyce knows that she's not number one in my life. She's not first in my life. She knows that God is first in my life. I



know that God is first in her life. I don't mind that because I know that she loves me with a stronger, deeper, purer love by putting God first than she could ever love me if she made me first. And so, it is God that puts us together. In our dating life, we were growing up as high school sweethearts, we would conclude our dates in prayer. The first night of our honeymoon we kneeled beside the bed and gave our home to Jesus Christ. Our home is built on prayer. It began with prayer. It continues with prayer. Now, friend, listen, you'll never have a successful home in my humble, but accurate opinion, apart from God. And you'll never know God as you ought without faith. Abraham and Sarah are listed there in Hebrews chapter 11 as champions of faith.

Second word. Not only the word faith, here's the second word, acceptance, acceptance. Look now in First Peter chapter 3 and verse 1, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands that, if any obey not the Word, they may without the Word be won by the behavior of the wives." That is, your husband's not going to be perfect. He's not always going to be living in accordance with the Word of God.

Now, there comes a word here, while we're in the neighborhood, "Be in subjection to your own husbands." May I say, friend, that submission to your husband does not mean you're inferior. The devil's pulled a trick on people. The devil today has tried to obliterate the differences between the sexes. Under the guise of making men and women equal, he's tried to make them the same. Men and women are equal before God. "In Christ there's neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek." Galatians 3:28. We're all one in the Lord Jesus Christ. But equally of worth is not the sameness of function. God has put headship in the home. God has made the husband be the head of the home, not the boss of the home. There's a difference between bossiness and headship.

When the husband is the head of the home, that simply means he has a responsibility. It doesn't mean he has superiority, but he has a certain responsibility. You're never more like the devil when you have an un-submissive spirit; you're never more like the Lord Jesus Christ when you have a submissive spirit. We accept one another. Headship for the husband does not mean that the husband has greater privileges. It means that he has greater responsibility. But we accept who we are. We accept our God-given roles.

Sir, if you don't accept the headship that God has given you in the home, you are a slacker, a shirker, a failure as a husband. And, precious lady, if you don't accept God's plan for the home, you have a rebellious spirit. And, by the way, after the service if you disagree with this passage of Scripture, please don't take it up with me. Read it back to the Lord, and say, "Now, Lord, here's one way where You really blew it. Here's one place where You made a mistake." Don't come to argue with me. I am not the author; I am just the Western Union boy delivering the message, okay.

Now this doesn't mean there are fewer blessings. Actually, it means more blessings when we find God's plan for the home. But there is this matter of acceptance. We accept our roles. We accept one another. Neither of us is perfect, but we accept the other. Never marry a person in order to make



them over. If you don't like what you're getting, don't get it. Don't marry. You marry in haste, you'll repent in leisure. But once you're married, you accept it.

Now, number three. The third word is the word contentment, contentment. Look, if you will, now in First Peter 3 verses 3 and 4. Peter's talking about the way that women adorn themselves and dress, and he says, "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of the plaiting of the hair, and of wearing of gold, and putting on of apparel, But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible," underscore the phrase, "that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." And then again in First Peter 3 verse 7, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life," underscore that phrase, "heirs together of the grace of life."

Now, as you study the life of Abraham and Sarah, you find that God had given them, in spite of all of their faults, a spirit of contentment. Now Abraham was a very wealthy man, but he didn't flaunt his wealth and he was able to use his wealth, not abuse his wealth. He did not always live a life of comfort and security because they had to move from place to place.

Now let me say something to you kids who are just getting married. Learn the secret of contentment. Learn that you can get along without almost anything except one another and God, or let me just invert that, without God and one another. If you have God, you have one another, you have something to wear and something to eat, that's all you need. The Bible says in First Timothy 6:8, "Having food and clothing," raiment, "let us therewith be content." Now if you have more, I'm happy for you. If you have, ladies, if you're wearing gold today, I'm happy for you. If you have a fine dress today, I'm happy for you. Sir, if you have been successful in your business, I'm happy for you. The Bible says in Psalm chapter 35 and verse 27, "God takes pleasure in the prosperity of his servants." But listen to me carefully, a wise man once said, "To whom little is not enough, nothing is enough." Now if you didn't hear that, you missed something real good. It's not original with me, but it is, it is so true. "To whom little is not enough, nothing is enough." If you and wife or you and husband have God and one another, you have all you need to be content.

One man had an enormous fortune and overnight he lost it. I mean, he was a big shot. He was like one of those dot.com companies, it just cratered. He lost it all. They had to sell their big, fine home. They moved into a little apartment. They looked around at this small apartment. They'd been living in luxury. He slumped down in the chair and he said, "Well, here we are." She said, "No, here we are!" Don't you like that? Here we are! We have one another and we have God. Learn the secret of contentment.

Sometimes people read this passage of Scripture and they think that it teaches that women ought not to fix their hair and wear gold. Well, look at it. It said, First Peter 3:3, it said, "Don't let your adorning be the braiding of the hair." and they say, "See there. You ought not to braid your hair." "And let not your adornment be the wearing of gold." "See there, women ought not to wear jewelry." "And let not your adornment be the putting on of apparel." "See there. Women ought not to wear clothes." Hey, folks, hey, ladies, He's not against you fixing yourself up. Sarah must have fixed herself



up. I'm telling you one thing. After she was 80 men were still vying for her. She was a knockout. She's dynamite. She's a good-looking gal.

But what He is saying is this, "Whose adornment." Don't let it be that outward adornment. Look, if that's what you're counting on, dear lady, you're fighting a losing battle because you're getting older and there's a new bevy of beauties coming on every day, did you know that? I mean, use your noggin. Think about it. What Paul is saying in First Peter 3 verse 4 is this: that you learn to have, "The ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit, which is not corruptible." You can get more and more beautiful, and I say this is not preacher rhetoric. I know my wife, like her husband, is getting older, but that gal is gorgeous to me. She's beautiful to me. I know her character. I know the inward beauty and I adore her because outward beauty can fade; inward beauty is real. You know that, somebody said, "Beauty is skin-deep; ugly goes all the way to the bone; beauty fades, but ugly holds its own." Friend, listen to me, learn the secret of real beauty and that comes out of real contentment.

You see, the real character is inward. And, do you know what inward serenity means? Again, in First Peter 3:4 he says, "The ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit." That word, meek, friend, it doesn't mean weak. The Roman army was described as meek. All meek means is under control. It's a woman not out of control, a meek spirit. Meekness is not weakness. Jesus was meek and mild. He wasn't weak. And it says, "A quiet spirit." Quiet, that doesn't mean mousy, it doesn't mean timid; it means serene, it means tranquil. It means a person who has inner beauty, inner character, a person who has learned contentment. Both husband and wife need to learn contentment. Be content. Now don't be one these families whose marriage ceremony ought to say, to debt do us part.

Number four. Here's another key word. It's the word forgiveness, forgiveness. Look, if you will, again in First Peter chapter 3 verses 8 through 10, "Likewise be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life," do you love life? Listen, "He that will love life, and see good days," do you want good days? Listen, "Let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile." All married people must learn to forgive.

When tornados sweep through the land. Devastating. Sometimes we read of earthquakes and seeing them destroy homes. But you know what Joyce and I saw in our house? Out of the floor, a little hole, there were coming these termites just pouring out and they were going all the way across. They were singing the Hallelujah Chorus just going all the way across our floor. I mean, just coming out, coming out, coming out. And I thought good night, that floor is so beautiful and up come the termites. Well, we called a man and ripped up the wood and killed those critters.

Let me tell you something. Friend, tornados are terrible, earthquakes are horrible, but termites destroy more homes than anything else. It's the termites that'll get your home. It's that little spirit of bitterness, that unwillingness to forgive, that spirit that carries a grudge. Now notice what he



says here in First Peter 3 verse 9, “Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing.” Somebody does you evil. Bless them. Somebody rails. Bless them.

I’ll give you a lesson. There are three levels of life. One is the hellish level, where you give back evil for good. Some people will do that. That’s the hellish level. The second level is the human level; that is good for good and evil and evil. You do me good; I’ll do you good. You hurt me; I’ll hurt you. Frankly, that’s where most people live. That’s where a lot of families live. But what he is saying here is the heavenly level is good for evil. Sometimes the wife has to practice it and sometimes the husband has to practice it. But you learn to forgive, you learn to bless, and don’t carry around a grudge, the burden of bitterness.

Do you ever get a splinter in your finger? Maybe it’s down there deep enough and you see it and you see that little dark spot and you say, “Well, I could get that out, but I don’t know.” You could get a needle and pick it out and say, “Well, maybe it’ll work its way out,” and just leave it there. It seems to be all right. And then one morning you wake up and you’ve got this incredible pain and this thing is throbbing, it is festered, it is infected because you didn’t get it out. The Bible says, “Don’t let the sun go down upon your wrath.” Don’t ever go to sleep, husband and wife, back to back, angry and pouting. Sometimes it’s hard to make up.

I bought Joyce one time a little toy bear and if you push it, it yodels. I bought it in Switzerland. You push it and it yodels. And I’m not going to do it. I’m a good yodeler, but I don’t want to. You push it and it yodels. And it’s just a yodel. It doesn’t have real words in it. But I said to Joyce, “Listen to this yodel and see what it says to you.” “She said, “What does it say?” I said, “Listen to it.” It played three or four times. And what it says is, “you oughte, oughte hold me.” “Is that what it says?” I said, “Now listen to it, you oughte, oughte hold me.” She said, “Yeah, that’s what it says.” So it’s yodel bear. Now we keep that bear in a drawer and when Joyce and I sometime have one of those discussions. I know you never have them, but we do. And, you know, it’s kind of hard to make up a little bit. Somebody will just walk in and push that little bear in the belly and he says, “You oughte, oughte hold me,” and we both melt and put our arms around each other. And learn to forgive. If you don’t have a yodel bear, you get something. You get something. Forgiveness is so important. Now I must rush on.

Here’s the next word. The fifth word is communication, communication. Look again, if you will, in First Peter chapter 3 verses 8 through 10, “Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing, for thereunto are ye called that ye should inherit a blessing.” Here’s the verse that deals with communication, “For he that would love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.”

Now Abraham and Sarah were so very different. So are Joyce and Adrian. So, therefore, you have to learn to communicate. Proverbs 18:21 says, “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.” Again, First Peter 3 verse 10, “For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.”

Now people want intimacy in marriage. The word, intimacy, our English word comes from the Latin intermoos, which means inmost. Men need to learn to communicate. The problem is primarily



with the men. I asked Joyce, I said, “Joyce, what is the basic problem in marriage communication?” She didn’t hesitate. She said, “Men!” “Men!” Have you ever noticed, guys, that woman, whatever it is, they can say it in three letters, men, and that is true! We are the basic problem in communication. Learn to communicate.

I have a lot of material there on that, but I’ve got to skip that, except to say to this: plan to communicate. Make room, make time for communication. Every man and woman, for that matter, ought to plan four dates. Do you know what those dates ought to be? Number one, you ought to plan a date with God. You ought to have a quiet time with God every day. Number two, you ought to plan a date with your kids. Joyce and I try to spend time with our kids and our grandkid personally. And have a date with yourself where you get alone, sit down and think and pray and a quiet, just meditating on what you want to do. And then have a date with your spouse. Go somewhere. Get out of the house and avoid all emotional and sensitive subjects and just love one another.

Now here’s the sixth thing. Here’s the next word, and it is romance, romance. First Peter 3 verse 7, “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge.” Now look at the word, dwell. That word, dwell, literally means to live with. When people are not married and they share the same house, we say they are living together. And, by the way, you have no right to do that. You’re living in fornication and adultery. You say, “It’s not adultery. We’re not married. I’m not married to anybody else.” It’s adultery against the person you may be married to. It is certainly contrary to the laws of God. And if you’re living that way, you need to stop it.

But the Bible says that husbands and wives, those who are married, are to dwell together, and the word literally means to share, or has the implication of sharing the same bed. And what it is talking about here is the romance that is in marriage. Never let the physical part of your marriage grow cold. Actually, the word here says, look, “Giving honor to the wife.” Do you see that in First Peter 3:7? The word, “giving honor,” comes from a root word which means precious. You see your wife as someone, as something precious. When you give honor to a person, what you’re saying to that person is this: that I believe in you. Everybody needs somebody to whom they are number one. Now I said in our home Joyce is number two, but I’m talking about of all human relationships, she’s number one. I am number one in her life and she’s number one in my life.

And how do you give honor? Well, one way that you give honor is a sincere compliment. When I preach and somebody says to me, “Pastor, I was blessed by that,” that’s a blessing to me. And if you want to do it, that’s fine. I mean, if you want, and if you don’t want to do it, I feel sorry for you, but that’s fine, but now listen. There are times when I preach and a dog won’t even wag his tail at me. But if Joyce will say, “That was good,” that means something to me. A husband wants to be admired. A wife wants to be admired. And it literally means giving honor. And you need to honor the person that you’re married to. And all of this is under the heading of romance, because it’s all part of it. You give honor not only privately, but publicly, and you honor your wife. Never make any cheap



jokes about your wife. They're not funny. Everybody needs about 10 hugs and 10 compliments a day, everybody does.

Joyce and I walk in the mornings. When the weather's nice, we walk outside; sometimes we're on a treadmill. But there's a place on our walk where there's a curve, I call it the Compliment Curve, and the whole time we're walking that thing, we're giving one another compliments, just as many compliments as we can give by the time we're walking on that walk. We do it in the mornings, just giving out compliments. And then, at the end of that Compliment Curve is a telephone pole. I call it the Passion Pole. Right there I give her a hug and a kiss and she gives me a hug and a kiss. And then we go a little bit further there's a little sharp corner. That's the Critical Corner. We get around that as quick as we can. If you have anything bad to say, you'd better say it now because we're going around this corner and we're going to get that thing out.

Friend, keep the romance there. Keep the joy there. Keep the excitement there. Don't ever let anybody tell you to grow up. On my way home I'm grateful for a cell phone. I call her, and I say, "This is the love mobile calling in." "I'll be home, baby, in five minutes. You sensitize your lips." Seriously. Keep the romance there. I have a crush on that gal.

Last of all, prayer, prayer. That's the seventh word. Look at it again, First Peter 3 verse 7, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered." Learn to pray together. Pray it through. It's more than trite to say that the family that prays together stays together. Psalm 127:1, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman wakes but in vain; except the Lord build the house, the laborer labors in vain." Learn to pray together.

Now you say, "Pastor Rogers, that's a very strange thing, because you gave us seven words about having a successful home, but you never mentioned love." Friend, all of these are facets of that one thing called love. They are all facets of love.

Now God knows Abraham and Sarah were not perfect, and God really knows that Adrian and Joyce are not perfect. Joyce comes close, but I'm light years away. But I'll tell you one thing. Where it not for God, we'd never would have made it. I know the arrogancy in my own heart. I know my native inclination to selfishness and pride and obstinacy. But I'm so grateful for a Christian home.

Now some are saying, "Pastor Rogers, I heard this message too late. My home's in shambles. We've been divorced," or, "you're talking about a Christian home and I'm not even married, and maybe, all the good guys or good gals seem to be taken. Maybe I'm destined to live a single life. And, really, what you've done maybe to encourage some people and instruct others, just made me sad today, because, frankly, that's not the picture of my life. And I don't see a future like you've described. I wish I could have a home that way, but I don't know that I can."

Let me say something to you. You're not a second-class citizen. God loves you. God has a wonderful plan for your life. God has a plan for the single life as well as for the married life. That's another sermon, but it's a wonderful plan. I'll tell you something else. If you have blown it and messed up, our God is a God of grace and forgiveness, and you never forget that. And God can mend a broken life if you give Him all the pieces. You say, "Well, I don't have a family." You can have a family.



You can have a big family called the church if you want it. What a wonderful family our church family is. There's a way for all of us.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. And if you know that you know the Lord Jesus Christ, would you begin to pray for those around you who may not know Him! And if you're hungry for God, you want to know that you're saved beyond the shadow of any doubt, would you pray and say, "Dear God, I am a sinner and I'm sorry for my sin. I need You and I want You. Jesus, You died on that cross and shed Your blood to pay for my sin. Thank You for doing that. I open my heart and by faith now, like a child, I receive You into my life as my Lord and Savior. Take control of my life and begin now to make me the person You want me to be, and help me, Lord Jesus, never, ever to be ashamed of You. Jesus, I'll make this public this morning. I will not be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray. Amen."



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