

Reading: Ephesians 5:22-31

Topic: Steps To A Successful Marriage

INTRODUCTION: Every marriage will have challenges and problems to _____ with, but solutions can always be found if both _____ and _____ will work together to resolve issues.

I. THE SPIRITUAL NEED:

A. The Relationship With God:

1. The number one step to having a successful marriage is for both husband and wife to have a _____ personal daily relationship with Jesus Christ through private _____ and the Word of God. Mt. 6:6
2. As each husband and wife become closer to Jesus, the marriage bond will become _____ and both will manifest the character of _____ in their daily lives.

B. The Fruit Of The Spirit:

1. When individuals become close to God and are daily filled with His _____ Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit will be manifested in the _____ and actions of husbands and wives. Gal. 5:22,23
2. If the _____ time and Word of God is neglected, instead of the fruit of the Spirit being manifested the works of the carnal _____ will begin to manifest instead. Gal. 5: 16,17;19,20
3. The works of the _____ listed in verse 20 include hostility, quarreling, jealousy, fits of rage, contention and selfish ambitions, all things which are displeasing to _____.
4. When these things begin to happen in a marriage, the blessing of God will be _____ and the Word of God states that your _____ will be hindered. I Pt. 3:7

II. RECOGNIZING GOD GIVEN DIFFERENCES:

A. You Married Someone Different Than You:

1. Some spouses make the mistake of trying to force their mate to become like them, but _____ made a male and a female and they are different both _____ and emotionally. Gen. 1:27
2. The sooner that both husband and wife recognize that God has designed each _____ differently, it will be easier to begin to work together as a _____ instead of trying to change each other. Mt. 19:4,5

B. Divinely Designed:

1. Physically, men are designed by God to be stronger and tougher than _____, who are designed to be more tender and _____ than men are. I Pt. 3:7
2. Both are designed for specific purposes and when spouses _____ trying to compete and instead begin to cooperate as a team, _____ things will happen in their marriage relationship.

C. Enjoying One Another:

1. Marriage brings discovery of the _____ that you married, and you can choose to accept and enjoy one another's differences or you could end up clashing with the one that you _____ and harm the relationship and promote continuous conflict.
2. Usually, one falls in _____ with someone who is different from themselves and the attraction is the differences, and that attraction should be _____ once the marriage occurs and not become a conflict.

III. THE PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIP:

A. God Designed Sexual Union:

1. Unfortunately, the curse of sin and the influence of the devil has perverted the _____ and meaning of the sexual union between male and female and has _____ many lives and relationships.
2. God designed the sexual union to take place in the sacredness of a marriage between a _____ and a _____ for the benefit of their pleasure and fulfillment in the marriage bond. Heb. 13:4

B. Make Time For Love-Making:

1. In this very busy world of ours and the demands of our _____ and energy, it can become difficult to make time to make love with our _____, but it is to be part of our marriage.
2. The Word of God actually exhorts married people to not neglect this _____ of the marriage and to only do so when both make an agreement to take _____ for prayer and fasting and then to resume making love again in order to avoid being tempted by the devil. I Cor. 7:2-5
3. Remember that there are differences between men and women when it comes to the _____ for love-making and romance needs to be involved, not just the _____ act of the sexual union.

IV. CREATING & SUSTAINING A GOOD MARRIAGE:

A. Just Be Christians:

1. Sadly, if one were to spy on what goes on in some Christian marriages and _____, one might find two people treating each other unkindly and not _____-like at all.
2. If both husband and wife just choose to act like _____ and just be good Christians, many problems can be resolved quickly and easily instead of turning into big _____ that last for days. Eph. 4:31,32

B. Praying Together:

1. Each individual needs to have their own private _____ time daily with the Lord, but in addition the husband and wife need to make a _____ to pray together also, not necessarily a long prayer time, but just the time to pray for each other and for any _____ that they might have. Ja. 5:16
2. Husbands and wives can help each other in many natural _____ but they can also help each other to advance and grow spiritually through the prayers and _____ of encouragement.

CONCLUSION: Our adversary, the devil desires to harm and _____ every marriage so as to damage husbands and wives and children and cause them to be _____. Please let all of us be wise to his tactics and not to fall into his trap.

May each husband and wife devote themselves to Jesus Christ and to each other that they and their families will be _____ and go to Heaven one day.