

TEACHING NOTES (underlined words indicate answers for the handout)

Session VI — 10 Ways To Have a Growing, Healthy, & Happy Marriage

INTRODUCTION

As we begin this last session, I want to share my sincere appreciation to you for letting me come and share these hours with you.

I am very proud of you and your diligence in growing your relationship.

We are rapidly approaching the end of the age and I believe the major attacks of the enemy are on the family and relationships. He knows that if he can weaken the family structure then everything else will fall more easily. Just like the twin towers.

Take time to go through the notes you have taken. Share them with your companion. Ask questions with each other on how you can improve the closeness of your walk.

Let's make this next year a better year for our families and then a better year for our churches as we effectively reach out to touch a lost and dying world.

Now, for our last session: 10 WAYS TO HAVE A GROWING, HEALTHY, AND HAPPY MARRIAGE.

1. You Must Remember Your Commitment.

If you ever begin to question your commitment you are headed for trouble.

This is the personal foundation that helps to keep you grounded to God.

Your commitment is "till death do us part."

Your vow was to God and to another much-loved person before a watching world.

It began by dreaming together, looking forward to things in life together...keep it up.

You must be loyal to your companion not matter what.

This involves caring more about what your partner thinks than what your friends think.

Believe you me, women seem to be very observant when you cater to another female's advice. Be careful.

2. You Must Maintain A Sincere Spiritual Commitment.

How can we do this?

We must keep right before God.

We must pray regularly for our companion.

We must pray together on a regular basis.

We must worship God together.

3. You Must Seek to Know and Understand Your Companion at the Deepest Level.

It is a sad indictment but some go through life without really knowing each other.

Knowing your mate is one thing but seeking to understand them is another. Both are important.

How can I get to know him/her?

a. Study your mate.

What is it that turns them on or off sexually?

What are their nonverbal signals?

What causes mood shifts?

b. Ask them questions.

c. Seek to understand what they need from you.

4. You Should Understand That You Nor Your Partner is Perfect.

It is sort of a relief when you realize that the marriage does not have to be perfect nor you as a partner.

Nobody wants their marriage to fail.

Don't get caught up in taking everything that happens especially emotional explosions personally.

Sometimes it is a mood problem or just letting off some steam.

Sometimes your companion may need a little space of left alone for awhile.

Don't try forcing everything into a perfect mold.

6. You Should Want What Is Best For Your Companion.

Too often we would like to change our mates but the right focus should be what is right with my mate not what is wrong.

God has given to us our companion to work together as a team.

We must rely on each other's strength to help us through life.

Our goal should be to seek ways that we can serve him/her.

6. You Must Make Time To Communicate With Each Other.

We have already spent a lot of time of communication, but let me add just a few practical suggestions.

- a. Take time to walk and talk together.
- b. Travel together.
- c. Call each other up when you have to be separated.
- d. Listen to the sounds of your companion's heart, not just the words spoken.
- e. Allow your companion to vent their emotions without feeling like you have to fix it quickly.
- f. Be quick to settle any disagreements.
- g. Practice talking rather than pouting.
- h. Be quick to listen.
- i. Be careful not to interrupt before they have completed their thoughts.
- j. Be willing to wait patiently before you make your point.

7. You Should Live Life Together.

You ought to have some common interests.

Enjoy doing some of the same hobbies having some of the same friends.

Plan to do fun things together, like attending concerts, picnics, or whatever.

8. You Should Live Romantically, Not Just For Sex.

Romantic living is not just having sexual relations. It has to do with splurging once in awhile on each other.

It has to do with doing little things for each other that communicates a message such as “Thinking only of you,” “Thought of you while I was away”, or “You are the center of my universe.”

Once in awhile, talk with a loving, tender, and caring tone in your voice.

Stay away from the norm when you can and never have an angry, harsh, or bitter tone.

9. You Should Learn From Other Happy Couples.

Look for couples who have been happily married for ten to twenty years longer than you to spend time with.

Be open to have a relationship with someone who would be willing to give you wise counsel during difficult times.

Be aware of spending time with couples who do not have a growing, healthy, and happy marriage.

Two couples we know would go on vacation together. On once occasion, they bumped into each other and embraced. On another occasion they were caught in bed together by his wife.

10. You Should Be Careful to Avoid Certain Things.

I know it is often meant in fun, but negative kidding should be avoided in your marriage.

This includes saying negative things that you don't really mean that hurt secretly and may do serious damage to the person's self confidence.

You must avoid ever having conditional love where you base your love on actions.

Never wait on your mate to meet your needs before you will meet their needs.

Never talk negative about your companion's parents to put them down. This does not mean that you should ignore problems, but be careful how you handle them.

CONCLUSION

I am sure the list could be much bigger, but I really believe that you have heard enough this weekend to make any bad marriage good, or weak marriage strong, or good marriage better. The question is, what are you going to do with the information you have received?

In my estimation, life is a choice. According to the Scriptures, life is a choice ... choose ye this day whom ye will serve.

Well, this evening, the choice is before you. You can choose to take it home and put it on a shelf or take it home and work it into your life. There are two kinds of people in this world: those who make things happen or those who make excuses.

The choice is yours. You have to have the want to, to make your home and relationship strong enough by the power of God to remain true to Him. The longer you wait the harder the choice.

Let's remember our covenant before God.

Vows

No one is going to be embarrassed because you are going to stand right where you are and block out everything and everyone in the room.

I want you to turn toward your companion, holding both hands, and look into their eyes as you recommit yourself to each other and to God. This is for married couples only. This is not a wedding.

Repeat after me, but fill in the name of your companion.

We will start with the man:

I, _____, continue to take you, _____,
as the love of my life.
I will remain committed to you for the rest of my life,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish,
'til death do us part,
according to God's holy covenant for marriage,
and thereto I pledge to you my solemn vow.

Now for the wife:

I, _____, continue to take you, _____,
as the love of my life.

I will remain committed to you for the rest of my life,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish,
'til death do us part,
according to God's holy covenant for marriage,
and thereto I pledge to you my solemn vow.

Listen to what God says in Matthew 19:6: "So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

May God add His richest blessings upon you.

You may now kiss the bride!

[Close with prayer.]