



MARRIAGE

Building a **STRONG MARRIAGE**

How can believers become intentional about building a God-honoring marriage?

PRIORITY ONE

Discover God's Design for Marriage

We must understand that every marriage is intended to be a masterpiece reflecting THE marriage between God and His people. Marriage is the most frequent metaphor used in the Bible to describe God's relationship with His people. In fact, writing to the Ephesians, Paul called marriage a "profound mystery" because the man represents Christ, the groom, while the woman represents His bride, the church. The marital union of husband and wife is a sacred reflection of the gospel itself.

PRIORITY TWO

Commit to a Covenant Marriage

Today's civil marriages are much like business contracts—easy to get into and easy to get out of. God's covenant with His people was a promise to remain eternally faithful even if His people were not faithful in return. In covenant marriage, both spouses are committed for a lifetime—in sickness and health, for better or worse. They do not threaten divorce or consider it as an option.

PRIORITY THREE

Pursue a Passionate Marriage

God calls us to pursue a passionate, thriving marriage. The Song of Solomon expresses the kind of love, joy and

celebration God designed for marriage. That passion is built on much more than infatuation and sexual desire. It is rooted in the physical, emotional and spiritual intimacy God created couples to experience as a foretaste of the eternal unity, communion and intimacy we can have with God. Prioritize a routine like date nights to fan the flame of intimacy in your marriage.

PRIORITY FOUR

Become Heroic in Marriage

Christ made the ultimate sacrifice to rescue humanity. Writing to the Ephesians, Paul connected Christ's sacrifice directly to marriage: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:25) and "Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands" (Ephesians 5:24). In other words, mutual submission to one another requires giving up our own interests to heroically serve the other person.

PRIORITY FIVE

Fight for Your Marriage

Every couple will mess up. Too often, however, they also choose to give up. Throughout scripture, God fights for His relationship with His people, remaining faithful in the face of unfaithfulness. He forgives again and again. No couple can avoid strife and arguments, but we can avoid giving the "devil a foothold" in our marriages by keeping short accounts and quickly restoring the relationship regardless of what happens. Prayer is a key part of fighting for your marriage. Praying together on a daily basis is one of the key weapons in fighting for your marriage.

RESOURCES

The Excellent Wife by Martha Peace

- A Scripture-based book covering practical items for a wife in a marriage relationship.

The Exemplary Husband by Stuart Scott

- A Scripture-based book covering practical items for a husband in a marriage relationship.

Strengthening Your Marriage by Wayne A. Mack

- A guide for spouses in key areas that can lead to potential challenges.

Marriage Matters by Winston T. Smith

- Transforming a marriage by living out God's love in the ordinary matters of marriage.

Calvary Bible Church SUPPORT

Marriage Idea Cards

Free resources and date night ideas are available at the Faith at Home Resource Center.

LifeGroups

On Sunday mornings, Calvary offers LifeGroups for all stages of life. LifeGroups are a great way to connect as a couple with others in the body of Christ.