

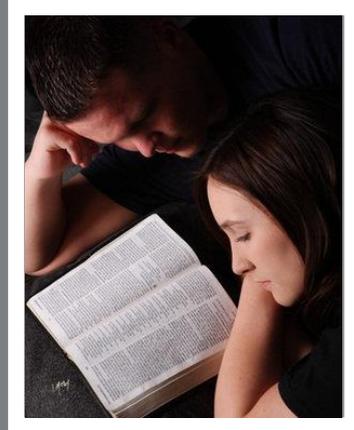
## Developing a Strong Marriage

Where do you turn for marriage advice? Some turn to their parents, some to their friends, and others to couples who have lasted together for many years. While these can be fruitful mentors, let me remind you about the ultimate marriage guide—the Bible.

Do you realize just how much the Bible has to say about marriage? We will not have time to look at all the passages, but we will look at some great passages and some great principals contained within them!

### First things first!

- **Matthew 6:33** teaches us to seek first the kingdom of God. We shouldn't limit this teaching to a narrow context, but incorporate it in our marriages.
- **Hebrew 6:19-20** reminds us that Jesus is our "sure and steadfast anchor" Marriages that last through the storms of life have an anchor.
- **Matthew 5:19-** "Leave and cleave" It is crucial for both husband and wife to realize that their marriage signals the birth of a new family.
- **Ephesians 5:22-33** shows us a glimpse of selflessness. The husband is to focus on the wife, the wife focuses on her husband.



## Do You Have a Far Sighted Marriage?

Scripture talks about planning ahead (Luke 14:28-32) this passage talks about counting the cost before building a tower, or going to war. It shows the importance of being prepared for what lies ahead with no option of turning back. In our marriages, we must prepare for what is ahead with no option of turning back.

- Date your spouse! Make sure that dating does not die on the altar! Ecclesiastes 9:9- "enjoy life with your wife"
- Keep your relationship in its proper place, beneath your relationship with God, above that of your children. (When your children move out, will you even know your spouse?)
- The more time you spend together investing in eternity, the better your relationship will be in the here and now.
- Pray together everyday
- Play together.
- Study the Word together.
- Dream together.

# Families of Faith

## The Impact of a Strong Marriage

Scripture teaches that we are to be children of light (Matthew 5) what better way can we show the world that we are set apart than by the display of a God-centered marriage?

Paul urged Titus in Titus 2:7 to “Be a model.” The world about us desperately needs godly marriages modeled before them.

- The best way to prepare your children for marriage is to show them what God’s standards for marriage looks like.
- It gives the wife a provider, protector, and leader that she would never find in the world (Ephesians 5:22-24)
- It gives the husband a friend, supporter, and companion like this world has never seen. (Ephesians 5:25)
- It provides your children security, and peace of mind.
- Health Benefits: Everydayhealth recently released a study that shows that marriage has tremendous health benefits. Those who are married typically live longer, happier, recover from illness at a fast pace, and battle depression with more success than those who are single or divorced.



## Discussion!

1. What things seem to keep us from “seeking first the kingdom” in our marriages?
2. Why do you think the Bible makes the statement that the man should “leave his father and mother” in order to be joined to his wife?
3. Is it hard for you to keep your marriage a priority in the midst of your children/busy schedules? What advice would you give to a couple struggling with this?
4. What would your life look like without your spouse?
5. How do your children view your marriage?

*“Many marriages would be better if the husband and the wife clearly understood that they are on the same side.-unknown”*