

## **Married to Your Best Friend**

Ontario couples' seminar #4

I. God's original plan for marriage – Companionship (Gen.2:18-25) and Reproduction (1:27-31)

II. A picture of Christ and the Church – Friendship/Fellowship – Jn.15:15; I Jn.1:3

What is fellowship? "Koinonia" – association, community, communion, joint participation, intimacy

What do best friends do?

- 1) Share their deep hearts with each other. Share emotions—laugh & cry together
- 2) Like to do everything together

III. Building trust is necessary for deep friendship. Honor can be given, but trust must be earned/built. This happens by:

- 1) Building a foundation of trust by sharing your past, both joys/victories and failures/problems from childhood and youth to present. The more you know about each other, the better you can understand each other. Sharing your past failures/problems is not easy, but it removes walls that would otherwise be between you. If you have not already done so, get the skeletons out of the closet! "Now you know all about me!"
- 2) Always being transparent/honest with each other. It is better to tell a disappointing truth to your spouse, than to lie to cover a failure. Sooner or later, they will learn the truth, which will destroy their trust anyway, and in the mean time you will have a wall between you! I John 1:7
- 3) Be a safe place for your spouse to confide. Do not explode emotionally (or give them the "silent treatment"). Respond with love, kindness, and wisdom.

Do not betray your spouse's trust by sending private matters outside, even to family. If your spouse hears things outside that he/she shared in confidence only with you, he/she will not want to share his/her heart with you again.

- 4) Discuss plans together—major purchases, travels, housing, work, ministry, education, children, etc. Don't spring a major surprise on your spouse that she/he should have been involved in planning. Wife should be free to share her thoughts & feelings, even though the husband may feel he needs to take a different plan in the end. Husband and wife should always let each other know where they are going.

IV. Friendship is like a garden. To be fruitful it must be cultivated. It brings a lot of joy! But at times it requires hard work. (Remember how you courted each other, and keep on courting each other!)

Communicate! Communicate! Communicate! Women are usually better at this than men, but men can also learn. Chatter to each other over supper about your day—who you met, where you went, what happened, and how you felt about it.

- 1) Have a daily time as a couple to communicate about your day and pray together, preferably in the morning when you are fresh. You may want to prepare tea to sip while you talk. This need not be long, but sets a good tone for your day!
- 2) Plan a special time to talk together every week, or at least every other week to debrief about your relationship. Be honest in assessing your relationship. You may need to cut something less important out of your schedule to make this happen. This will take more planning when you have children at home. Maybe you can send the children to bed a bit early. You may need to discuss tensions or differences that have arisen between you. Maybe you will want to read a book together, play a game, look at old photos of your childhood, youth, or wedding, etc. If possible, plan a special snack for your time together.

When you are married, you now have new responsibilities and thus new priorities. If you used to spend time with your friends in the evenings, now you need to prioritize time with your spouse and children. If love is in your heart, this is a privilege, not a duty!

#### **Questions:**

- 1) What are the purposes of marriage according to worldly society? What are God's purposes for establishing marriage?
- 2) Honestly assess your communication as a couple. What are some ways you as a couple have learned to build your communication? What things have you found that destroy or hinder your communication?
- 3) Are you and your spouse best friends? If not, do you think you should be, or would you like to become best friends? Do you have a daily time, even a few moments, to talk together about your day and pray together? How often do you have a "date" when you set aside special time to talk about your relationship and/or do something fun together?