

Foundations & Pillars

The Four Foundations Of A Marriage ...

I. Love

Question: What is love?

Definition: "The accurate estimate and the adequate supply of another's need." (Dick Foth)
The commitment of my will to your needs & best interests regardless of the cost. (John 3:16; 15:12,13; I John 3:16; 4:7-11)

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,
that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.
John 3:16 (NIV)

Question: Is love primarily an emotion?

- Love is not infatuation.
- Love is a commitment based on mutual trust and respect.
- Love is commanded and it is also a choice we must make.
- Love is both a fruit of the Spirit and a learned skill.
- Make love a verb. Take the noun that you fell into and make it a verb. It's going to take action on your part. You have to learn to DO love.

"A new command I give you: Love one another.
As I have loved you, so you must love one another."
John 13:34 (NIV)

Wouldn't you love to be loved this way?

Question: What is the force of love? (Prioritize: Will, Emotion, Intellect)

- Falling in love requires a pulse (attraction).
- Staying in love requires a plan (action).
 1. Intellect – the mind is the first order of love. (Engineer)
 2. Will – the will may then be guided to love. (Engine)
 3. Emotion – the emotions will follow the thought and choice. (Caboose)

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II. Acceptance

Question: What does it mean to accept your spouse?

God has accepted you unconditionally. The acceptance He gives you is unmerited. It is known as grace. You have done nothing to deserve it. Grace is not getting what we do deserve (hell) and mercy is getting what we do deserve (heaven).

Don't
Even
Think
About
Changing
Him/Her

“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”
Romans 15:7 (NIV)

Quote: “Nothing you have done will make God love you less and nothing you can do will make Him love you more.” – Philip Yancey

Quote: “Women marry men hoping they will change. Men marry women hoping they will not. Eventually, both are disappointed.” – Einstein

III. Value

Question: What does it mean to value your spouse?

God has placed an infinite amount of value to your life. It is unlimited and is revealed in His decision to send Jesus to buy us back. Our lives cost Him is one and only Son.

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, rather in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests, but each of you to the interests of the others.⁵ in your relationships with one another, have the same attitude of mind Christ Jesus had:⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.⁸ And being found in appearance as a human being, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!”

Philippians 2:3-8 (NIV)

Selfish ambition means “competitive spirit”; **value** – you defer to them; **respect** – a sense of awe, a decision to put the other persons concerns ahead of your own.

Question: What do you value most about your spouse?

See “Value” Illustration

IV. Truth

Question: Why do people lie? Is lying ever acceptable?

Relative vs. Absolute Truth

“Lips that lie are disgusting to the Lord, but honest people are his delight.”
Proverbs 12:22 (GW)

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“If you want a happy, good life, keep control of your tongue,
and guard your lips from telling lies.”

1 Peter 3:10 (TLB)

Lying comes primarily in four forms ...

1. Deceitfulness
2. Half-Truths
3. Exaggerations
4. Flattery

“I will show partiality to no one, nor
will I flatter any man; for if I were
skilled in flattery, my Maker would
soon take me away.” Job 32:21-22

Question: How did you see the four foundations modeled while you were growing up?

- Father, Mother, Grandparents, Others

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I. Service

Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:42-45 (NIV)

John 13:2-17 (NIV)

Carry The Load vs. Comparing The Load
“One Less Thing”
Vocational, Relational, Emotional &
Spiritual Load

Question: What does it mean to serve your spouse?

“Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another. Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ. The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by cherishing. So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership, wives should likewise submit to their husbands. Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ’s love makes the church whole. His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring the best out of her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness. And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They’re really doing themselves a favor—since they’re already “one” in marriage.

No one abuses his own body, does he? No, he feeds and pampers it.

That’s how Christ treats us, the church ...”

Ephes. 5:21-29 (MsgB)

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“A wife must put her husband first. This is her duty as a follower of the Lord.
A husband must love his wife and not abuse her.”
Col. 3:18-19 (CEV)

II. Forgiveness

Matthew 18:21-35 (NIV)

“Be kind and compassionate to one another,
forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
Ephes. 4:32 (NIV)

“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another.
Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”
Col. 3:13 (NIV)

Question: What is forgiveness?

The act of forgiveness is the action that God took which heals our broken relationship with Him. It is by the act of forgiveness that we are reconciled with God, that is, able to remain in relationship to Him despite our imperfection. Forgiveness allows us to live beyond the power of the past (sin), into a gracious future relationship with God.

Question: What does it mean to forgive your spouse?

Just as God’s definite act of forgiveness arose out of His love for us, so out of our love for one another can we choose to let forgiveness be an active part of our marriage and family relationships. Forgiveness will allow your relationship to survive the imperfection of each of its members.

To forgive in our human relationships does not mean to forget that an event occurred. Many events leave wounds that turn into healthy scar tissue. The scar is still there, the event of the wounding may be remembered, but you no longer have to pamper the wound. It has healed, the scar tissue which has grown is stronger than the original flesh, and you can go on living without regard to that wound. By the same token, if a situation should arise that is similar to the situation which caused the first wound, it will be recognized.

Question: In what area(s) do you need to forgive yourself?

III. Honor

“Honor marriage, and guard the sacredness of sexual intimacy between wife and husband.
God draws a firm line against casual and illicit sex.”
Hebrews 13:4 (MsgB)

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Question: What does it mean to honor someone?

It carries with it the idea that we need to treat each other as an extremely valuable heirloom.

Question: What is one area in which you can honor your spouse?

Salute
“Dino”

IV. Trust

Question: What causes trust to be eroded?

- Sex before marriage.
- Lies & Half-truths

“Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, *and* from a deceitful tongue.”
Psalms 120:2 (KJV)

“I always speak the truth and refuse to tell a lie. Every word I speak is honest, not one is misleading or deceptive.”
Proverbs 8:7-8 (CEV)

Question: Are there any areas where you have trouble trusting each other?

- Past
- Present
- Future

Question: How did you see the four pillars modeled while you were growing up?

- Father
- Mother
- Grandparents
- Others

Resources: “The Two Sides Of Love” (Gary Smalley & John Trent)
 “The Five Languages Of Love” (Gary Chapman)
 “The Marriage Builder” (Larry Crabb)

Let's Pray!