

Foundations for a Biblical Marriage

A. _____ (John 15:1-7).

- “The great purpose of prayer is to come humbly, expectantly, and – because of Jesus – boldly into the conscious presence of God, to relate to him, talk with him, and ultimately enjoy him as our great Treasure” (David Mathis, *Habits of Grace* pg. 95).
- ““How can we turn our knowledge about God into knowledge of God? The rule for doing this is simple but demanding. It is that we turn each truth that we learn *about* God into matter for meditation *before* God, leading to prayer and praise *to* God . . . Meditation is the activity of calling to mind, and thinking over, and dwelling on, and applying to oneself, the various things that one knows about the works and ways and purposes and promises of God. It is an activity of holy thought, consciously performed in the presence of God, under the eye of God, by the help of God, as a means of communion with God. Its purpose is to clear one’s mental and spiritual vision of God, and to let his truth make its full and proper impact on one’s mind and heart. It is a matter of talking to oneself about God and oneself; it is, indeed, often a matter of arguing with oneself, reasoning oneself out of moods of doubt and unbelief into a clear apprehension of God’s power and grace” (J.I. Packer, *Knowing God* pg. 23).
- Referring to Joshua and the book of the law, David Mathis again writes, “His spare thoughts should go there, his idle mind gravitate there. God’s words of instruction are to saturate his life, give him direction, shape his mind, form his patterns, fuel his affections, and inspire his actions” (*Habits of Grace*, pg. 57).
- “The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into him, that they may delight in his presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God himself in the core and center of their hearts” (A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God* pg. 11).

- “Prayer, for the Christian, is not merely talking to God, but responding to the One who has initiated toward us. He has spoken first. This is not a conversation we start, but a relationship into which we have been drawn. His voice breaks the silence. Then, in prayer, we speak to the God who has spoken” (David Mathis, *Habits of Grace* pg. 94).

B. _____ (1 Corinthians 13:7).

“The verse is not about the object of love’s faith (what it is that we believe); it is about the perseverance of love’s faith (under what circumstances we will keep believing). Love is able to continue believing through the most extreme situations of hardship and suffering” (Phil Ryken, *Loving the Way Jesus Loves* pg. 151-152).

C. _____ (Heb. 3:12-13; Gen. 2:24; Eph. 4:15).

- “Love means being willing to invest the time necessary to discuss, examine, and understand the problems that you face as a couple, staying on task until the problem is removed or you have agreed upon a strategy to response” (Paul Tripp, *What Did You Expect??* pg. 194).
- “. . . friendship love is expressed and grows through both listening and opening up to the other. Friendship is above all a relationship in which it is safe to share fears, hurts, and weaknesses – an emotional refuge” (Tim Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage* pg. 159).

D. _____ (Gal. 5:13-14; John 15:12-13).

- “Love finds joy in your comfort, satisfaction, and safety. Love will serve you and not use you. Love finds more excitement with giving than receiving. Love enjoys the unique vulnerability of the nakedness of the marriage bed and takes care that this vulnerability is never demanding or dangerous. Love sees sex as an act and celebration of the relationship of self-sacrificing love that the marriage is all about” (Paul Tripp, *What Did You Expect??* pg. 173).

E. _____
(Luke 23:34; Luke 23:43; John 19:26-27; Heb. 12:2).

- “Love is being lovingly honest and humbly approachable in times of misunderstanding, and being more committed to unity and love than you are to winning, accusing, or being right” (Paul Tripp, *What Did You Expect??* pg. 192).
- “I am not angry because you have broken the laws of God’s kingdom. I am angry because you have broken the laws of my kingdom.”

F. _____ (Matthew 6:12).

- “When you love someone, you are pained when things separate and divide you. When you love someone, you are willing to overlook minor weaknesses, irritations, and offenses, because you do not want anything to interrupt your life together. When you love someone, real lasting peace is more valuable to you than being right or being in control. When you love someone, you are willing to forgive . . .” (Paul Tripp, *What Did You Expect??* pg. 174).

G. _____ (Proverbs 4:23).

Sex

- Wendy Plump wrote an article for the New York Times December 9, 2010 . . . Wendy looked at her parents and wrote, “They have this marriage of fifty years behind them, and it is a monument to success. A few weeks or months of illicit passion could not hold a candle to it . . . if you were seventy-five, which would you rather have: years of steady if occasionally strained devotion, or something that looks a little bit like the Iraqi city of Fallujah, cratered with spent artillery” (From Tim Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage* pg. 92-93)?

Money

Power

- “Love is being unwilling to make any personal decision or choice that would harm your marriage, hurt your husband or wife, or weaken the bond of trust between you” (Paul Tripp, *What Did You Expect??* pg. 199).

Conclusion

- “The ultimate thing we can say about marriage is that it exists for God’s glory. That is, it exists to display God . . . Marriage is patterned after Christ’s covenant relationship to his redeemed people, the church. And therefore, the highest meaning and the most ultimate purpose of marriage is put the covenant relationship of Christ and his church on display. That is why marriage exists. If you are married, that is why you are married” (John Piper, *This Momentary Marriage* pg. 25).

- “. . . what diverts and destroys physical sexuality is a lack of love. If your spouse hasn’t loved you outside the marriage bed, why would you think that she would love you when you are in the marriage bed” (Paul Tripp, *What Did You Expect??* pg. 173).

- Acts 20:35

Discussion Questions

1. Of these 7 foundations discussed which one do you see as a strength for your spouse or fiancé? Give an example.
2. Of these 7 foundations discussed which one do you think you need the most improvement?
3. What is one action you can take as a couple in the coming days to address one of these foundations?