



TIGHTEN the knot

We tighten the knot when:

■ We make adjustments **together**.

■ Most couples plan a **wedding** not a **Marriage**.

GOD, not you, made marriage. His Spirit inhabits even the smallest details of marriage. ...So guard the spirit of marriage within you. Malachi 2:15 (MSG)

Doing marriage God's way:

■ We don't enjoy the **benefits** without the **commitment**.

4 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 (MSG)

■ We establish a marriage **covenant** not a **contract**.

...the LORD is the witness between you and the wife of your youth... she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. Malachi 2:14 (NIV)

■ A contract is based on mutual **distrust**.

■ A covenant is based on mutual **commitment**.

■ A covenant **surrenders** rights and **assumes** responsibilities.

■ A contract **protects** personal rights and **avoids** responsibilities.

■ A contract has a beginning and an ending **date**.

■ A covenant has no **ending date**.

We tighten the knot:

● When we take **inventory** of the better.

● When we learn to bring God into our **conflict**.

● Healthy couples work for **resolution**.

● Unhealthy couples press for **victory**.

31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. 32 Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. Ephesians 4:31-32 (NLT)

19 ... You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. 20 Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. James 1:19-20 (NLT)

Bringing God into our conflict:

● Stop to **listen** carefully.

19 ...Everyone should be **quick to listen**. James 1:19 (NIV)

Goal of listening is:

● Seek to **Understand**.

2 A fool finds no pleasure in **understanding** but delights in airing his own opinions. Proverbs 18:2 (NIV)

● Guard your **words** closely.

19 Everyone should be **quick to listen, slow to speak**. James 1:19 (NIV)

23 Watch your tongue and keep your mouth shut, and you will stay out of trouble. Proverbs 21:23 (NLT)

The goal of guarding your words:

● We want to speak **life-giving words**.

● Handle your **anger** righteously.

... Everyone should be **quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry**... James 1:19 (NIV)

"In your anger **do not sin**": Do not let the **sun go down while you are still angry**, and do not give the devil a foothold. Ephesians 4:26-27 (NIV)

The goal of controlling your anger is:

● Surrendering to **God's Spirit**.

16 So I tell you: Live by following the Spirit. Then you will not do what your sinful selves want. Galatians 5:16 (NCV)

● Don't react in **emotion**, respond in the **Spirit**.

16 ...Live your life as your spiritual nature directs you. Then you will never follow through on what your corrupt nature wants. Galatians 5:16 (GWT)

21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:21 (NIV)

Have Questions? Text them to: (559)-464-5754

Questions that can be used in Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday?
- Did you do anything to tighten the knot in your marriage this week? Explain.
- If you're married answer this: How long did you spend planning your wedding? How often do you spend planning your marriage?
- What do the marriage vows mean to you: "For better or worse"?
- Have you established your marriage as a covenant, rather than a contract? Discuss the points that compare a marriage covenant to a contract.
- Do you bring God into the conflict of your marriage? How do you do that?
- Under the subheading "Bringing God into our conflict", Which of these points is most difficult for you?
- How can we listen to our spouse (and others) more carefully? In your conversations do you seek to understand or be heard?
- What can we do to guard our words more closely? How do we give "life-giving" words?
- Do you handle anger God's way? What does it mean to surrender to God's Spirit? Galatians 5:16
- How are you going to bring God into your marriage conflict this week?

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