



Family Circus

- Marriage only works when we **work at it**.

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:

- A marriage that God is in is a **covenant** not a **contract**.

This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. Luke 22:20

...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 covenant is focused on the **interest** of the other person.
- A contract is focused on **personal** interests and personal **convenience**.
- A contract has a beginning and an ending **date**.
- A covenant has no **ending date**.

- We generally experience the better in marriage when we take **inventory** of the better in our marriage.

- Most issues we face in marriage result from unmet **expectations**.

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? James 4:1 (NIV)

We strengthen our marriage:

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

The difference between healthy and unhealthy couples:

- Healthy couples work for **resolution**.
- Unhealthy couples press for **victory**.

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

We end up fighting the wrong **enemy**.

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

Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose. Proverbs 18:21 (MSG)

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.

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

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

2 questions to ask:

Should it be **said**?

Should it be **said now**?

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)

When we control our anger:

- We create a **safe place** for our spouse.

- We surrender to **God's Spirit** for our marriage.

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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)



TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

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? Explain why?
- Do you and your spouse work at your marriage? What does that mean to you guys?
- Talk through the points that differentiate between a contract and a covenant.
- Do you bring God into the conflict of your marriage? How do you do that?
- What does it mean that healthy couples work for resolution while unhealthy couples press for victory?
- How do we make our spouse the enemy in marital conflict? How can we prevent that from happening?
- What are some ways we can we stop and listen carefully to our spouse?
- Do you work at speaking life-giving words to your spouse? Give an example of what that means.
- Do you create "safe place" for you spouse? How do we do that?
- What does it mean to you to surrender to God's Spirit for our marriage?

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Today's Talk..



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