

5. Inability to manage or resolve conflict

Lack of maturity (biblically speaking “selfishness”) and lack of wisdom (biblically speaking “foolishness”) disables one to manage conflicts and handle personality differences or ‘irreconcilable differences’

Hopeful Solutions

Part 1) Map Out the Ideal Marriage and Work Toward It: Example - Philippians 4:8

Biblical Passages of God’s Design for Marriage: (1-2 at most)

Ephesians 5:21-33 for example... “As the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything...Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...”

Practical Application for Your Marriage: *1-2 proper goals to work toward – draw from God’s desires for you (heaven, relationship with Christ, companionship, intimacy, your children’s futures, the Lords’ Work, leisure time...), draw from happy God-pleasing experiences shared in the past to recreate...*

Long Term Goals – *(what are next steps in working together to reach the big goals – Hebrews 11:9-10)*

Day-to-Day Goals – *(building each other up among the day-to-day duties - Galatians 6:2)*

Hopeful Solutions

Part 2) Map Out the Present Damage to the Marriage and Work to Repair It: Ephesians 4:30-5:2

Biblical Principle(s) of Dealing with Hardship/Hurt

Example: Matthew 7:2 “In the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you” (*Will you judge by “Eye for an Eye” or “Grace for Offense”?*)

Each of You Bring a Hardship/Hurt to the Table (*only 1 from each per day for the present time*)

- Set appropriate boundaries for discussion and be quick to call a timeout the moment offense is given / perceived... (Ephesians 4:29)

- Do state the hurt (truth in love) and do listen without negative reaction (best construction) (Matthew 18:15; Ephesians 4:15 and 4:25-27)

- Do confess your sins to each other and do strive to forgive (James 5:16; Matthew 18:21-35)

- Avoid stating anything in such a way as to imply consequences or ultimatums (1 John 4:18)

Part 3) Conclude by praying for the Lord to bring the good you just discussed and eliminate the bad. (Matthew 18:19-20)

6. Differences in personal and career goals (Some of the greatest challenges follow...)

I. How do you feel about children?

- A. When will we have children?
- B. How many children?
- C. Spacing children
- D. Disciplining your children (spank, self-esteem, time outs)

II. Taking care of the home.

- A. Who will do the cleaning?
- B. Who will shop and plan meals?
- C. Who will prepare the meals?
- D. What about the wash and making the bed?
- E. Who will be responsible for yard work?
- F. What about shoveling snow?
- G. Other things?

III. Questions about employment

- A. Will both spouses work?
- B. Will both spouses work when we have children?
- C. If both will work, how soon after a child is born will Mom go back to work?
- D. What about child care/babysitters?
- E. How do you both feel if the wife makes more money than the husband or vice versa?
- F. What about a job that could take us from our hometown and a great distance from our families?

IV. How important is your spiritual life?

- A. What church will we attend and why that church?
- B. How involved will we be in the church?
- C. Will we raise our children in the church?
- D. What about the difficult questions which will come from kids or tragedies?

V. What about friends.

- A. How often can I go out with my buddies/girlfriends?
- B. What about joining ball teams/leagues?
- C. How often should we have people over and how long should they stay?

VI. Going on vacations

- A. How do we split up holiday time with both families?
- B. Where will we spend our vacations?
- C. How much time should we spend with our families?
- D. How do you feel about the in-laws?

VII. Cohabitation

- 70% of couples who cohabit end up in divorce
- The cohabitation paradigm versus the committed paradigm

**People who cohabit (live together) before marriage have higher rates of divorce than people who didn't cohabit (live together) before marriage because differences become gigantic in the course of time. Initial comfort before marriage was imagined to take things ahead in future but in reality it does not happen.*