

And They Lived Happily Ever After Until The Honeymoon Ended

John 2:1-11

POINTS TO PONDER:

- 1. Jesus did His first miracle at a wedding. The miracle was directly attached to an unplanned event (no more wine) that was the making of potential disaster.**
- 2. Most put their best foot forward (the expensive wine) and then later in the relationship bring out the cheap wine.**
- 3. If you're not willing to marry the cheap wine don't get wooed in by the expensive wine. Every relationship starts out with the "expensive wine" out front and the "cheap wine" once familiarity sets in.**
- 4. If you want to avoid a potential disaster of "cheap wine" then you must have a well thought out plan for your marriage.**
- 5. You can fake a marriage for so long and then the drunken mess catches up to you.**

STEPS TO HAVING A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE

If we put so much money, effort, time, and energy into one day (THE WEDDING DAY) why do we quit with of the money, effort, time, and energy after the honeymoon is over?

Here is a step-by step-guide on how to build a successful marriage beyond the BIG DAY. This guide is built off of the typical well planned wedding day.

1. STAY BEST FRIENDS - From friend to fiancé, to frustration to failure.

To have a good marriage you have to stay best friends and don't substitute friendship for frustration. If you come to the altar as best friends, why don't you stay best friends? Tolerance isn't Godly. If you allow frustrations to keep brewing it will ruin your friendship.

Do you have any frustrations in your marriage? If so, what are you going to do about it?

Side Note: Ladies, IF YOU WANT HIM TO MARRY YOU STOP GIVING HIM FREE SEX.

2. THE BIG DAY - All the preparation pays off.

On your wedding day you look your best, expect the best, and prepare for the best. So why are you willing to look your worst afterwards? Why only put your best effort to work on day one? Why do we typically not give our best in the months and years following? You've got to look your best, give the best, and expect the best. You are not just living for yourself you are living for your spouse.

Are you giving your marriage your best? or are you giving your left overs?

Side Note: Sometimes left-overs is all you got, but learn to put some seasoning (effort) on it and work with it.

3. HAVE A GOOD SUPPORT SYSTEM IN PLACE - The Wedding Coordinator

It's amazing how we will be so prepared for the wedding day. We even hire someone to tell us exactly what to do and where to stand. Usually it's someone close to us "Aunt Betty" who is IN CHARGE of the program. Aunt Betty barks orders, seizes the chaos, and helps bring order to the moment. But isn't it interesting that after the wedding ceremony concludes we have no one else in our life to tell us how the next 30 years is supposed to go. How foolish to assume you can be successful doing it all alone. Enlist some support system. Find a couple you admire that has been successful and let them mentor you in your earlier years. A good 'marriage mentor' is invaluable.

Who is it outside your marriage that can give you orders on how it should be? Do you have a 'marriage mentor'? Who is it?

4. ANTICIPATION - The Bride Makes Her Entrance.

There's just something special about the walk down the aisle as the most special and most beautiful girl having all eyes are on you. The anticipation of the walk is an incredibly moving moment. However, familiarity can set in and ruin all levels of anticipation. You have to do things in marriage that build anticipation. Don't let boredom seep in.

Text through out the day but don't tell when. Bring flowers/gifts but don't tell when. Surprise each other.

What do you do every week that builds anticipation or are you just boring?

5. HONOR THE PAST BUT LET IT GO - "Who gives this woman...."

Every bride is given away by someone. Then she takes the hand of her new husband to be. This is the imagery of honoring the past but learning to leave it behind. One reason marriages fail today is that we don't honor the past, we get irritated by it and we can not leave it behind. We can't get pass the past. That's when the past begins to ruin the present.

Are there issues you haven't let go of yet or resolved?

6. LAY A SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION - The Biblical Charge

Every marriage must be built on a foundation that is spiritual. What is your verse for your marriage? Do you have a marriage verse? I know we put them on our fridges and pictures on the wall, but do you have one for your marriage? Do you even remember your ceremony and what the verse was that you built it on? Get medicine for your life. (Proverbs 4:20-22) Get a personal verse to stand on so you can stay spiritually grounded in your marriage.

7. DIE TO THE THOUGHT OF DIVORCE - 'Til death do us part!'

For marriage to have long-term success you must die to the **"THOUGHT OF DIVORCE."** It's funny that part of the vows made is *"til death do us part"*. But often this is a fallacy. Divorce is an option for many entering into a marriage. When the only reason you want to get out is because you're having a mid-life crisis, jealousy, another woman/man, boredom, or dissatisfaction it's wrong. Don't get out and get a divorce because you're suffering some emotional crisis. Die to that thought, get out and fix your marriage. Do not use the word divorce in your home.

Is your marriage emotionally dead? If so, what are you going to do about it?

8. BE A GIVER, NOT A TAKER - The Ring Ceremony

Be a giver and not a taker. I'm giving my best to you and you're giving your best to me, and now we seal it with a ring. Are you giving your best being a giver? Or are you being a taker? You can never make a long-term successful marriage with selfish behavior ruling the home. The ring exchange is a symbol of death to selfishness.

What is something you could do daily to express your heart to give?

9. PUSH FOR PEACE, DON'T PUSH BUTTONS - The Unity Candle

Why are we fanatic about the unity candle but not fanatic about the unity of marriage after the ceremony? For a successful marriage you must work hard to settle arguments. Do not push buttons, push for peace. Are you willing to fight for unity every other day? Are you willing to light a 'candle' for unity every day? When you tolerate ongoing chaos it doesn't make for long-term success.

What's your button? What's your spouses button? Do you spend more time pushing buttons or pushing for peace?

10. SPEAK BLESSINGS OVER EACH OTHER DAILY

Verbally bless each other daily. A verbal blessing can stop every curse that is coming after your marriage. When done arguing say, *"I love you and I'm glad I married you."* Take time everyday to speak blessings and life over each other. Don't let negativity and criticism rule your emotions and home.

Have you ever written a blessing over your spouse?

11. KEEP INTIMACY FRESH AND EXCITING - The Honeymoon

Help keep intimacy fresh and exciting. If you're so excited about the honeymoon, is it possible to keep that same excitement through out the marriage? Don't let the bedroom get boring. Make effort to keep romance on the forefront. Romance isn't expensive. Romance is intentional! Don't be a boring romantic.

How are you being intentionally romantic every week?