

Can You Stand the Rain

1 Corinthians 7:28 NIV - *But those who marry will face many troubles in this life*

Relationships are not good because people never have problems...good relationships are the ones that worked through the storms of life.

The best marriages are the ones who are committed to whatever work it takes.

What brings storms?

- Money - Kids - Sex - InLaws - Unrealistic Expectations - Mis-communication - or lack of communication

George Bernard Shaw - The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.

The enemy's plan is to divide and conquer. God's plan is to unite and conquer.

Matthew 19:5-6 - 5 *'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'*? 6 *So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.*

The enemy wants to get you fighting... to convince you that your spouse IS the enemy

What do you do when you disagree? How do you handle conflict?

3 SEASONS OF MARRIAGE

HONEYMOON - "sweet month" - everything will be perfect

DISILLUSIONMENT - you wake up and think you married a monster or the wrong person. -

- **70% of marriages get stuck here** because they aren't resolving conflicts they are just managing them or ignoring them.

COMMITMENT - yes we fight but we have skills now to work through them

Healthy conflict leads to healthy relationships. You are going to disagree...you are going to "fight" - Put rules in place in advance.

CREATE BOUNDARIES

- **Boundaries are meant to protect**
- **Never in public** - don't fight in public
- **Never in front of kids**
- **Never in bed**
- **Never physical**
- **Never yell**
- **Never shut down**

SET A TIME LIMIT

- **Ephesians 4:26-27** - *Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil.*

- **Jimmy Evans** - *You let the devil counsel you when you go to sleep angry at your spouse.*

CONTROL YOUR WORDS

- Maybe the hardest but one of the most powerful.
- **Matthew 12:36-37** - 36 *"I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, 37 for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."*
- **Don't name call** - don't use words that demean. It becomes a personal attack at that point
- **Don't bring up the past.** It's not about the past, it's about the present and the future
- **Avoid the use of "always" and "never"**
- **Don't use the word divorce** - Never threaten with this word or to leave. Creates instability.

This is so important because you've now created a safe way to disagree. Disagreement is a part of marriage...but healthy conflict is key to a life-long marriage.

Without boundaries more destructive things can happen than productive

IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP YOU ALWAYS HAVE A CHOICE - PRIDE OR HUMILITY

- Humility admits you could be wrong and is quick to apologize.
- Waiting on the other person to apologize...is a pride issue.
- You're not "giving" in or "losing." It's not about winning. - You're not in competition.
- ***It doesn't matter who is right it matters what is right now.***
- ***You can normally make it right...or be right. But many times hard to have both.***
- **Choose to listen**
 - Look them in the eyes - turn off the TV, put down the phone/social media
 - **James 1:19** - *Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;*
 - Not to just the facts to build a case for your argument
- **Choose to understand**
 - I heard someone say understanding happens when judgement is withheld.
 - Don't pre-judge motives and heart - Seek to understand where they are coming from
 - Non-threatening questions, not attacking - **Words like "help me understand"**
- **Choose to be patient**
 - I want to move on and be done with it.
 - ***Men are like waffles, but women are like spaghetti.*** They want to process and it may take a while.
- **Choose to validate**
 - Feelings are real. Whether right or not. They are real and can be validated.
- **Choose to forgive**
 - **Ephesians 4:31-32 NLT** - 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.*
 - *Forgiving releases your spouse of a debt...it says "you don't owe me anything"*