

Struggle With Love

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

3 SEASONS OF MARRIAGE

HONEYMOON - DISILLUSIONMENT - COMMITMENT

Song of Songs 5:2-6 - *2 I slept but my heart was awake. Listen! My beloved is knocking: "Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one. My head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night." 3 I have taken off my robe—must I put it on again? I have washed my feet—must I soil them again? 4 My beloved thrust his hand through the latch-opening; my heart began to pound for him. 5 I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with flowing myrrh, on the handles of the bolt. 6 I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had left; he was gone. My heart sank at his departure. I looked for him but did not find him. I called him but he did not answer.*

2 Main Roots of Conflict

1. Unmet expectations
2. Self-centeredness

Two persons feelings wronged is the beginning of any conflict.

Even in small fights the enemy gets in and does big damage. - **Your spouse is not the enemy.**

Conflict is going to come - When you see it coming you have choices to make

1. Choose To Act And Not React

1 Thessalonians 5:15 - *15 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.*

- **You can make it right...or be right.** But many times hard to have both.
- **I always tell Tandra - It doesn't matter who is right it matters what is right now.**

Healthy conflict leads to healthy relationships. Unhealthy conflict leads to fighting for victory.

MAKE A LIST OF NEVERS

- **Never in public** - Causes embarrassment and can't come to resolve.
- **Never involve kids** (in front of or using them) - Damages them. Not hiding, respecting.
- **Never speak harshly** - Don't yell, speak angry. **Not what you say but how**
- **Never name call** - Demeaning...makes it personal. Attacking the wrong thing.
- **Never shut down** - Can be triggered by yelling or harsh words.
- **Never physical** - Hands are to love not to hurt.
- **Never historical** - Historical leads to hysterical - Bringing up years ago.
- **Never say never...Or always** - Don't speak in absolutes.
- **Never in bed** - Tired, emotional. Drags out. Make bed a place of intimacy not conflict
- **Never threaten divorce** - "the D word" - Creates instability, not an option.

2. Choose to focus on the good, not the bad

No one can meet 100% of your expectations. Don't see the 20 in someone else and walk away from something great hoping that 20 in someone else makes up for the 80 you have.

Song of Songs 5:10-13 - (She) *10 My beloved is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand. 11 His head is purest gold; his hair is wavy and black as a raven. 12 His eyes are like doves by the water streams, washed in milk, mounted like jewels. 13 His cheeks are like beds of spice yielding perfume. His lips are like lilies dripping with myrrh.*

Song of Songs 6:4-9 - (He) *4 You are as beautiful as Tirzah, my darling, as lovely as Jerusalem, as majestic as troops with banners. 5 Turn your eyes from me; they overwhelm me. Your hair is like a flock of goats descending from Gilead. 6 Your teeth are like a flock of sheep coming up from the washing. Each has its twin, not one of them is missing. 7 Your temples behind your veil are like the halves of a pomegranate. 8 Sixty queens there may be, and eighty concubines, and virgins beyond number; 9 **but my dove, my perfect one, is unique**, the only daughter of her mother, the favorite of the one who bore her. The young women saw her and called her blessed*

3. Choose To Work It Out Not Walk Out

Ephesians 4:26-27 - *26 Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold.*

Jimmy Evans when you let the sun go down on anger you let the devil counsel you

Choose to listen

- **James 1:19** - *Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;*
- Listen with your face - Listen with good body language

Choose to understand

- Seek to understand not be understood - Learn to say "Help me understand"

Choose to be patient

- I want to move on and be done with it. - Circling back makes me crazy
- **Men are like waffles, but women are like spaghetti.**

Choose to validate

- Feelings are real. Whether right or not. They are real and can be validated.

Choose to forgive

- Forgiving releases your spouse of a debt...it says "you don't owe me anything"
- **A good marriage is the union of two good forgivers.** - Ruth Bell Graham

Song of Songs 6:11-12 - *11 I went down to the grove of nut trees to look at the **new growth in the valley**, to see if the vines had budded or the pomegranates were in bloom. 12 Before I realized it, **my desire set me among the royal chariots** of my people.*

The best relationships aren't without conflict, they are committed to work through conflict.

It's not always easy, but it's always worth it.