

Bulletin

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Honor God's Son in 2021!

WOULD YOU MARRY A STRANGER?

BY JIM DALY

YOU WOULDN'T MARRY A COMPLETE STRANGER, WOULD YOU? Well, guess what? If you're married, you already did.

On our wedding day, we all believe the same myth: that we truly know and understand the person we're marrying. The truth is, though we may be genuinely in love with what little we know about our spouse, we don't *know* them. Not really. It takes years—decades even—to know someone deeply.

That's why we *all* marry a stranger. Your spouse will not be the same person five, ten or twenty years from now. And neither will you. Marriage changes us. So does every significant life event, like raising children, building a career or getting older.

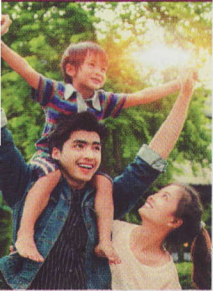
Mark 10:8 says that God desires a man and a woman to "become one flesh." *Becoming* requires the willingness to rediscover your spouse every day.

Your marriage can become the great adventure God intended if you'll commit your relationship to Christ and never stop learning.

Soul mates aren't *found*; they're *formed* over time through growth, sacrifice and enduring love.

That's the challenge—and the joy—of marriage. No matter how deeply you and your spouse know each other, there's always more to discover.

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Tough
Questions
from Kids

Do we
have to pray
for people
we've never
met?



HENRY FORD VS. YOUR MARRIAGE

While it may be lore, the story is told of the time automaker Henry Ford helped a farmer fix a broken-down car. Ford was coming home from a camping trip when he stopped to repair the man's car. Ford used his own tools, his own parts and soon got the man's car back in working order. When the farmer attempted to pay, Ford politely refused and then sent the man on his way.

Imagine that! The president of the Ford Motor Company (and one of the most famous people in the country) rolling up his sleeves, getting down in the dirt and helping a common man with his troubles.

It's one thing to fix a car. With enough tools, time and money, almost any car can be repaired or restored. Your spouse, however, isn't a car. And that's why the old phrase "You can't change your spouse" is some of the best marriage advice you'll ever receive.

Here's the truth:

Your spouse is broken.

Because of sin, we're all broken. One broken person trying to fix another's brokenness leads toward more brokenness. So how do you change your spouse's bad habits? Their addiction? Their differences?

Start by taking your spouse's brokenness to God.

God isn't afraid to roll up His sleeves, get down into the dirt and messiness of our lives and help us in our troubles. Philippians 2:5-7 tells us Christ took on the form of a servant and willingly embraced our messiness. Then He redeemed us from that messiness. He alone can change your spouse's brokenness and make them whole.



—Bill Arbuckle

GROWING A LASTING FAITH

What helps ensure my children carry their faith into adulthood?

This is one of the most important questions parents can ask, for it concerns the vitality and durability of their child's faith in Christ and how that faith stays vibrant through the rough-and-tumble transition of young adulthood.

Research from some of the leading sociologists of religion in the world indicate there are relatively simple things parents can do to greatly ensure faith continuity in their teen and emerging adult children.

The most significant factors that contribute to a lasting faith are having

- **parents** who live out their faith,
- **personal devotions** involving a regular practice of prayer and Scripture reading, and
- strongly held **beliefs** and practices based on experiencing God's hand in their lives through His faithfulness.

If young people have a vibrant, growing faith in their teen years which is supported and encouraged by believing parents and other important adults, they are remarkably likely to not only retain their faith in early adult years, but have it grow as well!

Successful faith transfer is really mostly about relatively consistent faithfulness and honesty in living out a committed faith, even if that faith is less than perfect on every point!

—Glenn Stanton

A MENTOR FOR YOUR CHILD

Doug Barram was our local Young Life leader when I met him. Young Life was an early model of a para-church ministry, committed to having relationships and coming alongside kids. The people in the organization were hanging out wherever the kids were and talking about a guy named Jesus, who said He would never leave them nor forsake them (Hebrews 13:5).

The Young Life ministry, staffed by mostly volunteer mentors and leaders, still goes strong. They continue to help young men and women in the suburbs and inner cities, coming alongside soldiers' children on military bases and private school students. Hundreds of churches have joined them in embracing a relational ministry with youth ministries.

There are churches, probably down the street from you, who are doing extraordinary work in reaching young people. Start with a local church or Young Life club in your area if you're trying to find a mentor.

—John Trent

FAMILY MATTERS

Answers to your questions...

My spouse and I get along great but sometimes disagree over our differing viewpoints. I'm not sure we're handling those "bumps in the road" correctly. Any advice?

ANSWER:

Conflicts in marriage are common; unfortunately, handling conflict well isn't. Here are some steps worth considering.

1. *Face the facts.* All marriages—even healthy, vibrant ones—experience disagreements. Accept the fact that you'll face conflict and deal with it.
2. *Take a time-out.* Rather than avoiding conversation or withdrawing altogether, step back and take a time-out when things get dicey.

3. *Watch your words and gestures.* Don't let your statements become destructive, intense, or disrespectful. Don't give "the look" or roll your eyes.

4. *Value each other.* Eliminate disrespectful behavior and emotional put-downs. Recognize that God has made every person unique and of eternal value.

5. *Think positive.* Choose to think the best. When you find yourself consistently interrupting in a negative way, you're thinking the worst.

6. *Be a team.* Resolve to work together. Remember that you're on the same team and attack the problem, not each other.

7. *Listen intently and intentionally.* Take time to

talk and carefully listen to each other. Don't try to resolve the conflict until both of you believe you've been clearly heard.

8. *Keep getting together.*

Establish weekly meeting times to deal with conflicts—and just to be with each other. Plan "fun times" with no discussion of problems.

No matter how other couples handle conflict, you and your spouse are unique. Keep learning about and enjoying your individuality, and you'll find it easier to deal with the differences.

(Adapted from *The First Five Years of Marriage*, general editors Phillip J. Swihart and Wilford Wooten)

TOUGH QUESTIONS FROM KIDS

ANSWER:

We don't have to meet people in order to pray for them. The Bible tells us to pray for government leaders. We haven't met all our country's leaders, but we should pray for them anyway. It's kind of like helping run the country. Remember that prayer can be an adventure.

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