

First, Constructive Fighting

- 1) Marriage Intended To Be Lifelong Friendship—Companionship—Oneness
- 2) Fragile Gift That Must Be Protected—Nurtured—Fought For == Protect It From Ourselves
- 3) Marriage Not Endless Romantic Encounter → To Keep Loving Means == **Must** Work Everything Out
- 4) This Relentless Commitment To Figure It Out → Solve Our Problems == Central To Covenant
- 5) Wheat—*“It’s a hard fact of marriage that your partnership will never work well unless the two of you learn to work together in resolving the hundreds of conflicts that arise whenever two human beings try to build one life. How you approach conflict and how well you learn to manage it will be key factors in determining the course of your marriage.”*
- 6) Conflicts Are Inevitable == Accept Fact That We Will Bicker → At Times Engage In Real Conflict
 - a) Act Out & Bicker When == Hungry—Lonely—Tired—Feelings Hurt ==
 - b) Times When Real Issues → Power Struggles → Much of Fighting == War On Our Selfishness
 - c) Enemy of Growing Peace == Demanding—Inflexible—Uncompromising—Critical—Judgmental
- 7) Fights == Form of **Negotiation** → Wills Crossed → Desires Disappointed → Don’t Like Something
 - a) Begin Negotiations For Change == Success Likely Involve Form of Compromise == Flexible & Creative
 - b) Wheat—*“A couple has to learn to negotiate, accommodate, communicate, and tolerate.”*
 - c) Learning To Create Solutions == Win-Win → Compromising → Adjust Our Expectations
- 8) Learn To Bear With One Another → Instead of Criticizing—Judging—Attacking == Adjust & Adapt
 - a) Recognizing == He / She Bearing With Me == My Faults—Foibles—Weaknesses—Sins
 - b) Learning To Help Each Other == Tell Me What You Need → Help Me Succeed
 - c) 3 Ways Expectations Disappointed == Not Expressed → Too High → Not Negotiated Compromised
- 9) Stay On Same Side → Fight Together To Preserve Oneness == Must Not See Spouse As **Adversary**
 - a) Conflict Is An Intruder → **Partners** Figuring Out How To Return To Peace—Real Reconciliation
 - b) Indivisible Unit Who Belong Together == Refuse To Let Anything Come Between You

10) Establish Guidelines → Fighting the Good Fight == Ephesians 4 == Manual For Fighting

a) Eph. 4:26—*“Be angry and do not sin”*

i) Don’t React → Learn To Respond → Admit When Angry = Try To Understand Why

ii) Don’t Fight To Win → Choose Battles Carefully → I Win When Relationship Wins

b) Eph. 4:26-27—*“Do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.”*

i) Keep Short Accounts → Committed to Working it Out → Even If Needs To Be Next Day

c) Eph. 4:29—*“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”*

i) No Name Calling → No Yelling → No Extreme Language == **Always—Never—Every Time**

ii) No Sarcasm → Condescension → Self-Rtness → Try To Hear Spouse → Take Time Out

d) Eph. 4:30—*“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption”*

e) Eph. 4:31—*“Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.*

f) Eph. 4:32—*“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you*

g) Eph. 5:1-2—*“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”*