

## HOW TO HAVE A GOOD FIGHT

Ephesians 4:25-32

June 22, 2008 Sunday a.m.

### INTRODUCTION

- A. Shakespeare said, "The course of true love never did run smooth."
  - 1. It's a fact of life that couples argue—even couples that are deeply in love.
  - 2. Some favorite topics that set off couples include finances, kids, sex, and in-laws.
  - 3. Dr. Les Parrott in his book called, "Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts" says, "Knowing how to fight fair is critical to your survival as a couple" –p113.
- B. The Apostle Paul gives us some good pointers on how to fight fair—Ephesians 4:25-32.

### I. FIRST, LETS CONSIDER SEVERAL WAYS COUPLES HANDLE CONFLICT.

- A. "Clamming Up" is one way couples handle conflict.
  - 1. Problems, however, seldom go away on their own.
  - 2. Sometimes they just go underground only to resurface later.
- B. "Giving Up" is another way to handle conflict.
  - 1. It's true that it takes two to fight.
  - 2. Its like one man said though, "My wife never allows us to have any differences".
  - 3. If you never argue it may mean one of you is a human "doormat".
- C. "Blowing Up" is still another way to handle conflict.
  - 1. The excuse "You make me so mad" is just that, an excuse. The only person who can make you mad is "you".
  - 2. The problem with blowing up is arguments can quickly escalate from verbal abuse to physical abuse.
- D. "Wising Up" is the best way to handle conflict.

### II. HOW CAN WE "WISE UP" ABOUT FIGHTING FAIR? PAUL GIVES US SEVERAL POINTERS ON HOW TO HAVE A GOOD FIGHT.

- A. First, don't let problems simmer-25.
  - 1. Paul reminds us that problems don't just go away.
  - 2. Failing to address them can lead to bigger blow ups later.
- B. Second, choose your battles carefully.
  - 1. Kenny Rogers says in his song "The Gambler", "know when to hold 'em and know when to fold 'em.
  - 2. Someone else said, "Never pass up an opportunity to keep your mouth shut!"
  - 3. There are some things that are better off not said.
- C. Third, keep your anger under control-26a, 31 & James 1:9.
- D. Fourth, give up put downs-29, 31- "slander".
  - 1. Its sad, but true, that we say things to the person we promised to love, honor and cherish, that we would never say to anyone else.
  - 2. Col. 4:6
- E. Fifth, learn to call a cease fire-26b.
- F. Sixth, be willing to apologize-32b.
  - 1. Apologize even when its not your fault.
  - 2. Sooner or later it is your fault.

### CONCLUSION

- A. Shakespeare was right, "The course of true love never did run smooth."
- B. Couples will always argue.
  - 1. Take heart, though, because the older you get the less energy you have to argue.
  - 2. Until then, remember Paul's pointers on how to have a good fight, you will need them.