

Why We Get Married

One marriage researcher pointed out that too many couples divorce because they got married in the first place for reasons that matter less and less over time. Think about some of the common reasons people get married these days.

- “We’re in love.”
- “He makes me laugh.”
- “I just want to be with her.”
- “We talk about everything.”

Falling in love feels great, but it’s not a good foundation for a life-long marriage. Being physically attracted to one another has its place, but a good marriage needs more. Gary Chapman says the average life span of the “in love” obsession is two years. What follows is often disappointment, disillusionment, conflict, and sadly divorce.

That’s not to say that romantic feelings and physical attraction aren’t important. They are. They’re just not a strong foundation for marriage. The problem is, our feelings change quickly and can be stirred by another person too easily. That’s when a couple madly in love two years ago tells a pastor they’re getting divorced because they just don’t love each other anymore.

Disposable Marriage

Every couple experiences frustration and disillusionment with their spouse within a few years of marriage. On our wedding day we love each other so much we could eat each other up. Five years later we wish we had! That’s where *commitment* comes in – commitment to God and to our spouse. Unless a person has both commitments, he or she will check out of the marriage.

The problem is, our culture increasingly views marriage as disposable. If we love each other, we don’t need to get married in order to be together. And if we stop loving each other, we don’t need to stay married. We see the fallout all around us in the lives of family members, friends, and indeed our entire society.

Preparing your kids for marriage starts the day they’re born. Your laughter, friendship, and partnership with your spouse shape your children’s view of marriage. How you talk to and about your spouse in front of your children influences how they’ll relate to their spouse. The way you work through conflict makes *huge* impact on them—for better or worse. The best thing you can do to prepare your kids for your marriage is keep making your *own* marriage better!

PROMISE
***We Still Do* series**

In It to Win It

Every couple needs to promise each other they're in the marriage for keeps. Romance ebbs and flows. Friendship goes up and down. It's your commitment to God and to your spouse that makes everything work.

1. What “season” of marriage are you in right now?
 - ◇ Newlyweds (married less than 5 years)
 - ◇ Child-raising years
 - ◇ Empty-nesters
 - ◇ Single (not married)

2. What would you say are the special joys and the unique challenges of your particular season of marriage?

3. One marriage researcher said that too many people get married for reasons that matter less and less over time. Note some common reasons couples get married. Which reasons tend to fade over time? Which ones keep a marriage strong?

4. Pastor Dan said that, in the Bible, marriage is a *covenant* not a contract. What’s the difference between the two? What do the verses below teach about marriage as a covenant with God and with your spouse?
 - Malachi 2:13-16—

 - Matthew 19:3-9—

 - Romans 7:1-3—

 - 1 Corinthians 7:27-28, 39—

5. As we get started in the marriage series, how are you feeling?
 - ◇ *Excited!* We’re growing in intimacy and understanding.
 - ◇ *Hopeful.* I see signs of real closeness in our marriage.
 - ◇ *Frustrated.* I want our marriage to be better, but it doesn’t seem to happen.
 - ◇ *Discouraged.* We need help to get back on track.

We love because He first loved us.
1 John 4:19