

## **SESSION #21 – FRIENDSHIP**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. “Happy marriages are based on a deep \_\_\_\_\_ . ... These couples tend to know each other intimately.” – Dr. John Gottman
2. God tells us in Genesis 2:18 (ESV) that “... it is not good that the man should be alone ...”
3. Song of Solomon 5:16 (ESV) “... this is my beloved and this is my friend.”
4. Part of our role in marriage is to reject relational \_\_\_\_\_ , take the initiative, and cultivate a great friendship with our wife.

### **II. KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF GREAT FRIENDSHIP IN MARRIAGE**

1. Time \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - You are \_\_\_\_\_ looking for opportunities to create some time together, just the two of you.
  - Create unique \_\_\_\_\_ experiences.
2. Mutual \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - Become a lifelong \_\_\_\_\_ of your wife.
  - Give your wife the gift of having a husband who is endlessly fascinated and intrigued by her and who never ceases to know her better in every way.
  - Looking back is fertile ground for a \_\_\_\_\_ friendship in marriage.
3. Mutual \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - Trust is built on faithfulness to each other.
  - Trust also includes confidentiality about things \_\_\_\_\_ within the marriage.
  - Trust includes having each other’s \_\_\_\_\_ in mind.
4. Grace
  - In marriage, grace acknowledges the \_\_\_\_\_ that you are a broken man married to a broken woman.

- A grace-giving husband doesn't try to \_\_\_\_\_ his wife but loves her as she grows and matures.
- Grace says, "Let's start over" ... maybe even multiple times

#### 5. Oneness

- Genesis 2:24 (ESV) "... and they shall become one flesh."
- This is a oneness that is spiritually, emotionally, financially, and relationally moving from two individual agendas to one \_\_\_\_\_ agenda.
- There is plenty of room in the friendship of marriage for individuality.

### III. THREE DIFFERENT WAYS OF RELATING WITH OUR WIVES

#### 1. Back-to-back

- You're in \_\_\_\_\_ places doing different things with different people.
- Even as you go your \_\_\_\_\_ ways, you have a partner out there who's supporting you, thinking of you, and praying for you even when you're not around.

#### 2. Shoulder-to-shoulder

- So much of marriage will involve you just getting things done \_\_\_\_\_ your wife.
- Some shoulder-to-shoulder activity can even include the two of you being together but not necessarily having a lot of face-to-face.

#### 3. Face-to-face

- This is when you are \_\_\_\_\_ engaged with her. You are focused on listening to her and sharing with her.
- Creating face-to-face time with the lady you chose to marry is one of the greatest privileges we have as a servant leader.
- Your wife needs to be able to share her heart with you, but she also needs to hear \_\_\_\_\_ heart.

**DISCUSSION / REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. Talk about the difference between loving your spouse and liking your spouse.
2. John mentioned five characteristics of friendship in marriage – time together, mutual curiosity mutual trust, grace and oneness. How is your marriage doing in each of these areas?
3. Is there a good balance in your marriage among the different ways you relate with your wife – back-to-back, shoulder-to-shoulder, and face-to-face?
4. Are you an introvert or an extrovert? What about your wife? How does that affect your marriage and the different ways you and your wife relate to each other?

**ANSWERS****I. INTRODUCTION**

1. “Happy marriages are based on a deep **friendship** . ... These couples tend to know each other intimately.” – Dr. John Gottman
2. God tells us in Genesis 2:18 (ESV) that “... it is not good that the man should be alone ...”
3. Song of Solomon 5:16 (ESV) “... this is my beloved and this is my friend.”
4. Part of our role in marriage is to reject relational **passivity** , take the initiative, and cultivate a great friendship with our wife.

**II. KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF GREAT FRIENDSHIP IN MARRIAGE**

1. Time **together** .
  - You are **intentionally** looking for opportunities to create some time together, just the two of you.
  - Create unique **shared** experiences.
2. Mutual **curiosity** .
  - Become a lifelong **student** of your wife.
  - Give your wife the gift of having a husband who is endlessly fascinated and intrigued by her and who never ceases to know her better in every way.
  - Looking back is fertile ground for a **growing** friendship in marriage.
3. Mutual **trust**
  - Trust is built on faithfulness to each other.
  - Trust also includes confidentiality about things **shared** within the marriage.
  - Trust includes having each other's **best** in mind.
4. Grace
  - In marriage, grace acknowledges the **reality** that you are a broken man married to a broken woman.
  - A grace-giving husband doesn't try to **fix** his wife but loves her as she grows and matures.

- Grace says, “Let’s start over” ... maybe even multiple times

#### 5. Oneness

- Genesis 2:24 (ESV) “... and they shall become one flesh.”
- This is a oneness that is spiritually, emotionally, financially, and relationally moving from two individual agendas to one **common** agenda.
- There is plenty of room in the friendship of marriage for individuality.

### III. THREE DIFFERENT WAYS OF RELATING WITH OUR WIVES

#### 1. Back-to-back

- You’re in **different** places doing different things with different people.
- Even as you go your **separate** ways, you have a partner out there who’s supporting you, thinking of you, and praying for you even when you’re not around.

#### 2. Shoulder-to-shoulder

- So much of marriage will involve you just getting things done **alongside** your wife.
- Some shoulder-to-shoulder activity can even include the two of you being together but not necessarily having a lot of face-to-face.

#### 3. Face-to-face

- This is when you are **directly** engaged with her. You are focused on listening to her and sharing with her.
- Creating face-to-face time with the lady you chose to marry is one of the greatest privileges we have as a servant leader.
- Your wife needs to be able to share her heart with you, but she also needs to hear **your** heart.