



LOVESICK

God's Prescription for Healthy Relationships
Sunday, August 29th, 2010

1 Peter 3:1-7

In any relationship – conflict is inevitable because God created men and women in uniquely different ways. Those differences not only bring *spice* to a relationship, but they also bring *sparks* to a relationship!

In this passage of Scripture – God deals with basically the two primary spiritual problems that cause conflict in a marriage. A *Better Homes and Gardens* survey revealed that the two greatest problems that people identified in their marriage were 1.) _____ and 2.) _____. We can trace every problem in our marriage to one of us asking “What’s in it for me?” as opposed to “What’s best for our relationship?”

There is no way that you can ever win a battle with your spouse — because the Bible says that you and your spouse are *one*! When one damages the other, they both LOSE because really they are damaging themselves.

In 1 Peter 3 – we see four principles (L-O-V-E) of the prescription for a healthy relationship.

L – _____

In order to love somebody — you have to learn them and study them.

1 Peter 3:7, “*Husbands, likewise be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.*”

WORD STUDY: “Considerate” = to live with your wife according to knowledge. One of the primary needs of a woman is intimacy. You have to learn to communicate with her and make her that partner.

Peter is saying, “If you want to get along with your wife; you had better get to know your wife.” In the ancient culture 2,000 years ago — a wife wasn’t a person you loved; she was a property you owned. Peter is saying that this is not the way God intends for it to be — she is to be treasured and honored. One of the things we need to constantly ask God to do is to help us understand our wives.

Being considerate involves just listening to them – you can’t meet the needs of your wife if you don’t even know what they are!

WORD STUDY: “Live With” = to be at home with. This involves a desire just to spend time with her.

How do you know God loves you? The only way you know that is because God left His world and entered your world! **The only way you can really show how much you love somebody is to leave _____ world and enter _____ world.** You have to enter somebody else’s world to know how to love them, encourage them, and motivate them.

Why does 1 Peter 3 give 6 verses in dealing with the wife’s role in a marriage and only 1 verse to the husband?

1. In this situation, it was the wife who was the _____ and the husband was not. In the ancient culture – if a woman chose a religion different from her husband it would be perceived as an act of rebellion or defiance against him and it would be viewed as a shame and an embarrassment to him.
2. She is the believer and she is the one who is to be bringing spiritual _____ and selfishness to the table.

Peter says in vs. 2 that the husbands, “*may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.*”

WORD STUDY: “See” in the Greek means “to look into something very keenly.” It would be like today watching a replay of a close call in sports. **Men will learn more with their _____ than he will with his _____.**

Peter goes on to say in vs. 3 that “*Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of jewelry and fine clothes. Instead it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.*” Peter is reminding these ladies to not get too caught up in the externals — true beauty is found in the inner spirit. It is a beauty that is loving, and gracious, and kind and submissive to the husband. The way to a man’s heart is not through his stomach – the way to a man’s heart is through your heart.

O – _____

1 Peter 3:8-9, “*Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic...be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing...*”

Opposites really do attract. You are subconsciously attracted to people who have opposite character qualities than you. **Opposites _____ from a distance — but up close, opposites _____!** If you are not careful, the very thing that attracted you will end up irritating you.

Experts have identified six basic areas of marital conflict:

1. _____ – that’s the number one cause. Conflict resulting in money management opinions.
2. _____ AND _____ – real possessive friends or controlling in-laws is a major factor.
3. _____ – either too much or not enough.
4. _____ DUTIES – one person bearing all the load and the other person doing none or one person griping about how the other person does it.
5. _____ – This is conflict over how to discipline or raise children
6. _____ – either differing religion preferences or the lack of interest from one person.

It’s amazing the number of things that married couples will fight over that *do not matter!*

In 1 Peter 3 – when the Bible is talking to wives and husbands it says, “Likewise” When you read the Bible and you see the word “likewise” you look up to the chapter before it – chapter 2 is talking about Jesus Christ. Your mate is not your problem. Your mate is God’s problem.

V – _____

What does submission mean? Everything in the Bible is defined by Jesus Christ. Jesus submitted Himself to God the Father so a great work could be done. What did Jesus really do though? He went around telling people how good God was.

The number one need that men have is admiration. They want to live up to the wonderful things you say about them! The number one need that women have is intimacy. Regardless of anything else you do — if you don’t meet their number one need, they will never feel valued in a relationship.

E – _____

Look at vs. 7, “*Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.*”

What does it mean to “treat them with respect as the weaker partner”? Peter is not implying that the woman is inferior to the husband. Spiritually speaking – men and women are equal before God. But because we are physically stronger—we have to work hard at treating your wife with respect. When getting into a conflict, you should never raise your voice and you should never allow any argument to shut off the lines of communication.

The reason we ought to do this is “*so that nothing will hinder your prayers.*” God is saying that if you have a conflict in your marriage and you’re not willing to work on that conflict — don’t bother praying because God is not going to hear it.

WORD STUDY: “Hindered” = in the Greek language it means “to be cut off.” There are times when marriage can be hard work – but Peter is saying that – wives if you will respond to your husbands in the right way and husbands if you will respect your wives in the right way, there is no problem that the two of you cannot solve.

Teaching Men to L.I.S.T.E.N:

L – _____ FORWARD, _____ THEM IN THE EYES

I – _____ — active listening is responding to what she said.

S – _____ INTERRUPTING — don’t try to “fix it,” listen to the heart of what is being said.

T – T _____ them what they said and _____ if you are correct. Most of our trouble in relationships comes from miscommunication. It’s not always what you don’t know, it’s what you think you know that isn’t so.

E – _____ — Whenever you’re listening to somebody – try to say something that encourages them.

N – Never _____ at your _____ while she is talking.

WIVES: “Do you love your husband enough to live for Jesus Christ in front of him?”

HUSBANDS: “Do you love your wife so much that every day you wake up saying, “What can I do for you and what can I do to be a blessing to you.” The “Doctor’s orders” for a healthy marriage are to 1.) Fight fairly, 2.) Forgive freely, and 3.) Never hold a grudge!