

10 Great Ingredients For Marriage

Long Beach Alliance Church • August 27th, 2006 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**BUT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT
IS LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE,
KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS,
GENTLENESS, SELF-CONTROL; AGAINST
SUCH THINGS THERE IS NO LAW.
~GALATIANS 5:22-23 (NASB)**

1) Conflict In Marriage Can Lead To Great Things...

- A) Solomon & his Shulammitte wife work through their conflict by **GIVING UP THEIR OWN RIGHTS**. They **SHOW KINDNESS** to each other which reveals a heart which **TRUSTS IN GOD** more than trusting in their spouse (Song of Songs 5:2-6:9).

- B) Ultimately, Solomon and his bride **MIRROR JESUS** instead of each other in the midst of their conflict. This produces an **ENVIRONMENT OF RECONCILIATION** and **FORGIVENESS** (6:10-13).

2) 10 Great Ingredients For Marriage

- A) Of course, the conflict which Solomon has with his wife is not the "full picture" of what God wants us to aim toward, or what God wants us to avoid, in our relationships. We find more global guidelines in Galatians 5:19-25.

- 1) **Abide in Christ** (John 15:1-11). Abiding in Christ is the only way to truly love one another (John 15:12-17). Without Christ at the center of our relationship, we experience a slow death.
- 2) **Listen Without Reacting**. Listen to the other person, without preparing some sort of response or counter-argument (Proverbs 12:15, 15:31, 21:28). Be "on the same team."
- 3) **Use Constructive Language**. Use words which build up the other person (Ephesians 4:29). Don't publicly embarrass your spouse. Don't call each other destructive names -- no "always/never" labeling! Don't fall into the trap of "an eye for an eye." Rather, "turn the other cheek" (Matthew 5:38-39).
- 4) **Make Peace, Even When It's Not Your Fault**. Be the "minister of reconciliation" in the relationship (2nd Corinthians 5:16-21). Your relationship with God is damaged by conflict, initiate peace IMMEDIATELY (Matthew 5:23-24)!
- 5) **Think of Him/Her First**. Put their needs in front of your own (Philippians 2:3). Guys, when you come home from work -- be affectionate with your wife and touch base with the kids -- show your joy in being home! Ladies, when your husband arrives home -- make the home a great place for him to be -- transition your man into the home with joy for his homecoming!
- 6) **Champion Your "One Flesh" Relationship**. A great Christian relationship takes three, two + God (Ephesians 6:31). This is a public example of Jesus to the world (Ephesians 6:22-33). Don't use the kids, family, in-laws, or friends as a "political majority" in conflicts. If help is needed, make it a mutual decision!
- 7) **Physical Intimacy Is Always For The Team**. Don't withhold intimacy in order to win in conflict (1st Corinthians 7:5). "Fasting" from physical intimacy is a mutual decision! Never touch one another in anger or violence (cf. "outbursts," Galatians 5:19-21).
- 8) **Be Faithful**. God will never create anything more satisfying for you than Himself and your spouse (Hebrews 13:4, Psalm 146:14-16; Proverbs 5:15-23).
- 9) **Make Peace Before Slumber**. Be at enough peace with one another when you go to bed (Ephesians 5:26-27) that you pray with one another each night before sleep (Ephesians 6:18-20). Pray for the success of your spouse (James 5:16-18)!
- 10) **Celebrate Romance As Victory Over Conflict**. A great measure of successful conflict resolution is when a married couple celebrates with romantic intimacy (Song of Songs 7:1-8:3). "Making up" is God's gift for marriage relationships!