

D) Treat your spouse with **KINDNESS** during conflicts. Love is not shown by how you treat another person when everything is going well. Love is shown by how you treat another person when they spit in your face (1st Peter 2:23).

E) **SHOWING KINDNESS ELEVATES A PERSON.** Conflict is one of the most black & white moments in any marriage for choosing how to treat your spouse! Choosing kindness is Christlike and shows trust in God over your spouse!

F) When in the midst of conflict, do your best to keep your eyes on Jesus, not on the other person. **DON'T MIRROR PEOPLE, MIRROR JESUS!** Overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21).

Marriage!

It's rough. It's tough. It's work.
Anybody who says it isn't
Has never been married.
Marriage has far bigger problems
Than toothpaste squeezed
From the middle of the tube.

Marriage means...

Grappling, aching, struggling.
It means putting up
With personality weaknesses
Accepting criticism
And giving each other freedom to fail.
It means sharing deep feelings
About fear and rejection.
It means turning self-pity into
laughter
And taking a walk to gain control.

Marriage means...

Gentleness and joy
Toughness and fortitude
Fairness and forgiveness
And a walloping amount of sacrifice.

Marriage means...

Learning when to say nothing
When to keep talking
When to push a little
When to back off.
It means acknowledging
"I can't be God to you--
I need Him, too"

Marriage means...

You are the other part of me
I am the other part of you.
We'll work through
With never a thought of walking out.

Marriage means...

Two imperfect mates
Building permanently
Giving totally
In partnership with a perfect God.
Marriage, my love, means us!

~Ruth Harms Calkin

The Honeymoon Is Over!

Long Beach Alliance Church • August 20th, 2006 • Pastor Chris Lankford

I AM MY BELOVED'S AND MY BELOVED IS MINE... ~SONG OF SONGS 6:3A (NASB)

1) God's Blessing For A Great Honeymoon

- A) God's blessing was an important aspect of the dating, courtship, engagement, wedding and wedding night for the romance of Solomon & the Shulamite girl (Song of Songs 1:1, 3:6, 5:1).
- B) The single most important ingredient for any marriage is the blessing of God in the midst of their relationship (5:1). Without God in the midst of your relationship, you are handicapped -- "the blind leading the blind."
- C) Up to this point, every "stage" of the relationship has had clear goals, a progressive ladder where each rung of achievement reveals satisfying progress. While success is difficult, it is much easier than what is to come!
- D) It may not happen on your wedding day, or your wedding night. If you're lucky, it won't even happen on your honeymoon. But, it will happen. At some point in every marriage, there will be a conflict which will feel devastating.

2) The Honeymoon Is Over!

- A) The Shulammitte girl and Solomon have now moved to his personal home, where they have separate bedrooms (common cultural practice), and are now a married couple (Song of Songs 5:2).
- B) Solomon, coming home from a hard day of work, comes to his wife, hoping for some "alone time" (5:2).
- C) The Shulammitte girl, however, is less than enthused by Solomon's invitation. While we cannot tell if she responds out of hurt or simple disinterest, she clearly gives Solomon the cold shoulder (5:3).
- D) This "moment of conflict" happens to every married couple in one way or another, at some time or another. Every marriage in all of history has one common thread -- conflict!

3) For Better Or Worse...

- A) Solomon's response to his wife's cold shoulder reveals a great deal about responding to conflict. Note that the very first thing Solomon does is not react, he simply keeps his mouth shut (5:4).
- B) The very sight of Solomon changes his wife's heart, and she gets up to let him into her bedroom (5:5). When she reaches the lock on her door, her hands are soaked in myrrh (cologne/perfume), the equivalency of leaving her flowers!
- C) The Shulammitte girl pursues Solomon in the city, but is abused by the watchmen (5:6-7), and is mocked by the

women of Jerusalem (5:8-9 & 6:1). Her search is desperate and brings clarity to her feelings for Solomon (5:10-16).

- D) The Shulammitte girl responds to the doubtful mocking of the women (6:1) by affirming that her husband has simply gone back to tend his flocks, which is where she also goes (6:2-3).
- E) When Solomon sees his wife, it is a moment of truth for him (6:4). How will he respond, now that she is right there? She says nothing, but he responds by reaching out to her in love (6:4-9).
- F) The Shulammitte wife responds with awe and wonder at Solomon's response, as it raises her own esteem of him, of herself and her overall character in Jerusalem (6:10-13).

4) "Take Home" Principles For Relationships

- A) Conflict in relationships is not the enemy! God has given us conflict so it can refine us through dependence on God and on each other. The goal of conflict should **NEVER BE WINNING!** The goal of conflict is **RECONCILIATION!**
- B) The goal is not always avoiding conflict, but rather learning how to **AROMATICALLY ARGUE!** Conflict is normal, but should not degenerate into fighting dirty. Christian conflict means learning how to **FIGHT CLEAN!**
- C) Trusting God in conflict means **GIVING UP YOUR RIGHTS** to be someone else's "personal Messiah." Trust God to discipline your spouse/others. "When I chasten others, it only hurts. When God chastens, it only helps" (Tommy Nelson).