

## Living the Sermon in Marriage

We often talk about the importance of being the light of the world. God has put Christians here with the purpose to stand out and by standing out, Christians point others toward Him (Matt. 5:14-16). Have you considered that your marriage can be a bright light in this respect? Observe the darkness that many marriages struggle in today!

- 50% divorce rate for first-time marriages
- Average length of first marriages is 7 years
- Single Parent households headed by a female numbered 10 million in 2000; headed by a male numbered 2 million
- Approx. 1 in 3 Americans is a step-parent, step-child or step-sibling
- Co-habitators comprised 3 million households in 2000
- Sources: [www.divorcemag.com](http://www.divorcemag.com); U.S. Census; State Farm Insurance Report

Other research shows, that there are things that drastically reduce the risk of a divorce.

- Having a baby 7 or more months after marriage VS having baby before marriage, reduces risk by 24%
- Own family of origin intact VS divorced parents, reduces risk by 14%
- Religious affiliation VS none, reduces risk by 14%
- Source: 2004 Rutgers University study entitled: *The State of Our Unions*
- My Conclusion: Marriages modeling the Faith can reduce divorce risk by 52%.

This helps us see that a Christian's marriage really is a light to the world. Your marriage can be a hopeful example to your neighbors. Your marriage is a light for your kids. Mommy and daddy's marriage is their understanding and expectation of marriage. Let's make the light of our marriage burn bright for God's glory and to show others His way. The Sermon on the Mount helps us do this.

### I. The Light of Beatitudes in Your Marriage (Matt. 5:3-9)

- A. What is a beatitude?
- B. Poor in Spirit (Matt. 5:3). Be Humble.
- C. Meek (Matt. 5:5). Controlled strength, self-control.
- D. Merciful (Matt. 5:7). Be forgiving (Matt. 6:14-15).
- E. Peacemaker (Matt. 5:9). Be Reconciling.

### II. The Light of Security in Your Marriage (Matt. 5:21-32)

- A. Add security by controlling Anger (Matt. 5:21-22).
  1. Uncontrolled anger leads to abusive speech (Eph. 4:29, 31).
  2. Uncontrolled anger leads to abusive actions – murder, domestic abuse.
- B. Add security by mortifying Lust (Matt. 5:27-29; Col. 3:5). Kill lust.
- C. Add security by taking Divorce off the Table (Matt. 5:31-32).

### **III. The Light of Shared Treasure in Your Marriage (Matt. 6:19-21)**

- A. Where is your treasure, what are your values?
  - 1. Religion
  - 2. Material things
  - 3. Raising kids
- B. Walk a narrow road together with shared treasure (Matt. 7:13-14). “Can two walk together unless they are agreed?” (Amos 3:3).

### **IV. The Light of the Golden Rule in Your Marriage (Matt. 7:12)**

- A. Do you have needs that you expect to be met in the marriage? So does your mate! Meet your spouse’s needs first – satisfy them.
- B. Dr. Willard Harley’s list of top needs among men and women. See his book, *His Needs, Her Needs*.
  - 1. Female needs in Marriage: Affection, Communication, Openness/Honesty, Financial Support, Family Commitment
  - 2. Male needs in Marriage: Sexual Fulfillment, Recreational Companionship, An Attractive Wife, Domestic Support, Admiration
  - 3. Are these lists the same? Do we need help figuring out what our spouse needs? Sure (1 Pet. 3:7; Titus 2:4).
- C. Don’t wait to reciprocate love, initiate love. That is Love (1 John 4:7-11, 19)!