

MARRIAGE, AS THE LORD INTENDED

Rainer and Karin Thorun

1. Introduction

Marriage was established in paradise and is the only thing Adam and Eve were allowed to take with them into the fallen world. The Lord in His love and wisdom, as well as knowing our sinful nature and personal deficiencies, gives us plenty of precious guidance for a successful marriage, pleasing to Him.

First and foremost, we are not perfect - every marriage can be improved. Second, and of almost equal importance - in the eyes of the Lord no marriage is in a hopeless state.

2. The essence of marriage

Genesis 4:1 (KJV) *“And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived ...”*

To ‘know’ is in Hebrew **yada**. Yada is a complex word with different aspects. The threefold meanings of yada are:

- To acknowledge soundly and comprehensively and also to respect deeply (the mental aspects);
- The Lord’s relationship to mankind and vice versa (the spiritual dimension);
- Sexual intercourse (the physical aspect, of least importance in the word yada).

3. The general rule for marriage

Ephesians 5:21 (NIV): *“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ”*

- Edify your spouse and not yourself
- The husband should love his wife with unselfish divine love (making her “shining eyes”)
- The wife should “rest against” her husband and back him

4. How to live out our everyday partnership

- Advice for both of the spouses
- Special suggestions for the husband
- Special suggestions for the wife

WORKING SHEET / QUESTIONNAIRE

The best way to make use of the working sheet is:

1. Wife and husband answer the questions separately, and quietly, on their own.
2. When both are ready they should come together, share their answers carefully, question by question, and discuss them.
3. Each of them should have as their main concern: “What can I learn from this?”

Then... at some later time you should find that working with the answers to the questionnaire, conscientiously and prayerfully, will:

- Give you a clearer idea about the situation and state of your marriage.
- Help and encourage improvement of even the “almost perfect” marriage
- Be the first step in healing an attacked or flawed marital relationship.
- Help any counsellor who is involved in both assessing the situation in a marriage and discerning how to proceed.

If you would like having this questionnaire in digital form please contact Rainer or Karin:

QUESTIONS ON OUR MARRIAGE

1. Why have I married my spouse?

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2. How has my spouse pleased me especially (a) recently? (b) last week or last month?

(a) Recently.....

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(b) Earlier on (last week or month)

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3. What is my greatest real pleasure in our marriage?

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4. What is my greatest real concern?

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5. What aspects of my spouse do I appreciate in particular?

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6. What in my marital life would I like to change in the short term, starting now?

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7. In what ways have I hurt my spouse, do I need to apologise?

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8. What can I do to give my partner a feeling of greater closeness and appreciation?

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9. What do I desire more from my spouse in this respect?

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10. Where do I need more support in my daily life?

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11. In which aspects of our relationship would I like to experience more patience and understanding?

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12. What do I think my spouse's answers will be to the last three questions? (Q9,10,11).

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13. What emotions and thoughts do you experience when your spouse criticises you?

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14. Do I criticise my spouse: too often? in the right way? too seldom?

15. What occasions in our life together do I like most to recall?

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16. What was the most positive and/or enjoyable period in our lives together?

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17. In what situations do I feel myself especially close to my spouse?

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18. What would I really like to say to my spouse...right now?

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