

May 7, 2023

HeartWise in Romance (Proverbs 31:10-31)

Be wise in your relationship with your spouse or the opposite sex through devotion to the Lord.

Bumper In

Hook – Gas Station and CEO (5min)

- Greetings, Thrive, Love Modesto, Rici preaching, Men's Conference (27 men and 9 commitments) – full season, lots of lives being transformed.
- But if any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He is generous to everyone and will give you wisdom without criticizing you. James 1:5 NCV
 - o The problem – we don't ask...we think we have enough wisdom on our own...we only ask for God's help once our way has crashed and burned.
- Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Prov 3:5-6 NLT
- Today – HeartWise in Romance
 - o Are you?
- Who you marry – and do romance – matters, and we need God's wisdom.
 - o **We act differently in romance – we need wisdom so our lives are not ruined!**
 - o **We act like we don't need wisdom in romance – big mistake.**
- A word to the single...singleness a gift – for a season or lifetime.
 - o For those who will someday be married, focus on character – first your own, then the other person's.

Prayer

---Six Secrets of Romance (20-25 min)

I. Lose the Fight.

- Story – All about your happiness
 - o Woman asks man, "do you like my dress?" Man says, "if you like it, I am happy – If you like it, I like it." "So it is all about your happiness then??"
- **Proverbs 17:9-14
 - o ¹⁴Starting a quarrel is like opening a floodgate, so stop before a dispute breaks out.
 - o **Have thick skin.**
 - o Don't let the little things light a bomb.

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¹³ If you repay good with evil,
evil will never leave your house.

- **Assume good motives.**
- We have all had people misunderstand our motives, yet we still do it to others. It's hard to win once that is lost.

¹¹ Evil people are eager for rebellion,
but they will be severely punished.

- **Deal with the problem.**
- People are not the problem; the problem is the problem. Focus on the problem and how to fix it.

⁹ Love prospers when a fault is forgiven,
but dwelling on it separates close friends.

- **Don't keep score.**

- *Should I marry Hannah, things about her I am not sure about, How can I know? Mom: "If she can put up with you..." Ohh – I am the hard one! Marriage has changed me.*

- Has helped me be humble when Hannah and I fight (and we do).
- Be willing to lose – that is winning in marriage.
 - Losing doesn't mean pouting or doing the silent treatment.
 - Single people – quality to look for...
- You are ONE – you can't hurt your spouse without hurting yourself.

2. Be a Builder.

- **"Words build worlds."** Heard this recently as I was working on becoming a better writer.

- Your words are powerful.

- ***Build with your words, expression, and attitude.**

Good people think before they answer,
but the wicked simply pour out evil. (Prov 15:28 CSB)

A cheerful look brings joy to the heart;
good news makes for good health. (Prov 15:30 NIV)

- Positive, Neutral, Negative
 - How many positive words do you say to your spouse?
 - Positive = romance (how you fell in love)
 - Neutral = business. Marriage deteriorates into "information" very quickly – don't lose the notes, the texts, the encouragement?
 - Negative = criticism and negative conflict.
 - = *Easy self-test, early warning sign.*
- First thing you say to your spouse. Constant encouragement all day long.
 - What you say in front of others matters – especially family.

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- The world beats us up – let that not be you with your spouse!

3. Protect and Invest in Your Intimacy.

- ***Cartoon – looking at phone more than date.**

- Are you looking at your phone more than your spouse?

- ***Intimacy is about vulnerability.**

- How you see yourself matters – too high or low will ruin intimacy.
- Full intimacy (sexual and emotional) is meant for marriage alone.
- God is not anti-sex (He made it) but pro-human flourishing.
- Studies show what the Bible has always taught – when you protect and invest in your intimacy with your spouse:
 - sex is more frequent,
 - enjoyment is higher,
 - and you experience security from the intimacy.

- ***Proverbs 5:15-21**

Drink water from your own well—
share your love only with your wife.
Why spill the water of your springs in the streets,
having sex with just anyone?
You should reserve it for yourselves.
Never share it with strangers.
Let your wife be a fountain of blessing for you.
Rejoice in the wife of your youth.
She is a loving deer, a graceful doe.
Let her breasts satisfy you always.
May you always be captivated by her love.
Why be captivated, my son, by an immoral woman,
or fondle the breasts of a promiscuous woman?
For the Lord sees clearly what a man does,
examining every path he takes.

- Stats

- 2.5 million people visit porn sites...every minute. Number grew in the pandemic. USA has the most people. <https://earthweb.com/how-many-people-watch-porn/> (updated Mar 18, 2023)
- Average age for boys is 12 years old. I was 10 when I first saw porn, and I was addicted in my teen years.
 - **I only overcame with honesty and accountability.**
- 56% of divorces include one party having an obsession with pornography websites; 68% involve one party meeting a new lover over the internet.
 - <https://www.covenanteyes.com/pornstats/>

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- Therapists report the damage porn causes a marriage – it hurts sexual performance and intimacy. One wife said, “I am available to him, but he would rather be with his phone than me.”

- INVEST...

- **Intimacy (emotional and sexual) takes work and it needs to be a priority – higher than work.**
 - *Yep, you heard it from your pastor!*
- Check out 1 Corinthians 7 – whole chapter on sex in marriage.
 - It is the job of a spouse to fulfill the needs of their spouse.
 - We all have different needs – communicate them and serve each other.

4. Work Hard.

- Work hard for the family.
- Work hard in the family – dates, talking, trips, plan out time, books.
 - “Change the oil or change the engine.”
 - You take the car in for a tune up – what about your marriage?
 - Challenge from a mentor – Spend more time planning your next date than your next work project.
 - Planned months out at work? Plan months out at home.
- *Proverbs 31:16-18 GNB
 She looks at land and buys it, and with money she has earned she plants a vineyard.
 She is a hard worker, strong and industrious.
 She knows the value of everything she makes, and works late into the night.
- *TIME, TALK, TOUCH – Leave enough in the TANK for your spouse, every day.
- //Ephesians 5 – husbands and wives are to submit to each other.
 - Our culture – struggles to submit because we are “me-first.”
 - God’s way – “we first” and we are serving Jesus.
 - When two people are working hard to serve each other (as a service to Christ), it is beautiful.
- *Clip – Orange County, “Money can’t make you happy.”
 - Show as transition to this point.
 - *Problem – he was a workaholic and she was lazy.*

5. Make Money Mean Less

- Two biggest reasons given for fractured marriage – sex and money (communication and kindness).
- *Proverbs 15:27 NIV
 The greedy bring ruin to their households,

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but the one who hates bribes will live.

- ****Money matters**
 - Have a budget. (spend less than you make)
 - Honesty always. (greed brings grief)
 - Generosity. (a great lesson for you, kids, grandkids)
- **Story – Hannah’s family**
 - **Hannah’s family grew up at times not having anything – no presents for Christmas one year. Changed her for the better (one of the things I was attracted to in her!). We want to pass that on to our kids – yes 5 kids and 1 income (for a long time); Tithing over 10% and giving above and beyond for Building Hope – meant having less but God always gave everything we needed (and more). Part of backpacking is that it is inexpensive (if you don’t buy expensive gear and are willing to borrow).**

6. Serve Jesus.

- ***Proverbs 31:30-31 (also 15:16)**
 - vv.10-31 are a poem to the wife of noble character.
 - No one can perfectly live up to that standard, but we can all seek to follow the example of Lady Wisdom (Sofia).
 - That matters in Romance.

Charm is deceptive, and beauty does not last;
but a woman who fears the Lord will be greatly praised.
 Reward her for all she has done.
 Let her deeds publicly declare her praise.

- **Serve Jesus.**
 - Following Jesus is a covenant commitment.
 - Not obey if you want to, but your commitment – church, decisions, finances, relationships, baptism.
 - God wants to bless you! But He can’t bless bad behavior, apathy, or selfishness.
- ***Perfect love.**
 - The only perfect love is from Jesus – not your spouse. (right expectation)
 - Forgiveness is needed – forgive your spouse like Jesus forgives you.
 - That grows romance.
- ***Purpose for marriage.**
 - One of the purposes of marriage is to serve Jesus together.
 - I know this isn’t possible in every marriage.
 - When it happens, it creates a bond that is so strong.
 - **In marriage, what you need is someone who can forgive you, not fulfill you. Only God can perfectly meet your deepest needs.**

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Punch – Good Thing You Married Me (5min)

- Story – A fortune 500 CEO stopped at a gas station while his wife went inside to pay for the gas. He watched as she had an animated but pleasant conversation with the man working inside. When she returned to the car, her curious husband asked, “Who were you talking to?” “He was an old boyfriend,” she said. “Isn’t that unbelievable?”
 - o Her husband smiled and said, “I bet you’re glad you married me – a Fortune 500 CEO instead of a service station attendant.”
 - o She paused, then replied, “No, that’s not what I was thinking at all. I was thinking, You’re fortunate that I married you, or he’d be the Fortune 500 CEO and you’d be the gas station attendant!”
 - Ray Johnston, Hope Quotient – p.105-106

- Marriage changes you – be wise in romance.
- Don’t forget – God is working in your marriage – even when it is hard – to grow you closer to HIM.

Prayer

Benediction – The “foolish” plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God’s weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength. I Corinthians 1:25