

Old Man – New Man “Program 2”

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Have a strong marriage

Statistics show that today the marriage institution is in real trouble. In the secular world as well as in the Christian community the percentage is one of two marriages ends in divorce. Could a man counter these statistics by having a strong marriage? Today we'll discuss how you can have a strong marriage.

Declare

1. Helen Rowland said: “Marriage is like twirling a baton, turning handsprings or eating with chopsticks. It looks easy until you try it.”¹ From what you have seen and experienced, how difficult or easy is marriage? Share with the group remembering that there’s no right or wrong answer. Jokes about marriage may come up but then share from the heart.
2. Elder Consuegra strongly recommended pre-marital counseling. How soon did he recommend that a couple seek this guidance? Early in the relationship or just days before the wedding? What is the purpose of this counseling?
 - a. _____

Dig

3. Couples that cohabit prior to marriage have an 80% higher risk of divorce. Discuss in your group reasons why sex before marriage impacts so negatively the marriage relationship. Make a list on the back of this page.
4. Elder Consuegra talked about the “emotional bank” that each of us have with the people that surround us. Good and kind acts build this account and bad actions withdrawal from this account. Explain how the following actions create withdrawals:
 - a. Angry outbursts _____
 - b. Annoying behaviors _____
 - c. Deceptions _____
5. The Bible gives us wonderful advice on building strong marriages. Paul gives some direction in Ephesians 5:21-33. Men usually love to focus on what is instructed to the women about submitting. But focus on what is said to husbands. Below; list the directions given to men concerning their conduct in marriage. What are men supposed to do?
 - a. _____
 - _____
 - _____

Devote

6. In general, what is the number one need for men and what is the number one need for women? How does this information impact your relationship with our spouse?

¹ Helen Rowland quoted by Robert Keeler in *The Toastmaster, Reader's Digest*, June, 1994, p. 130.

- a. Men: _____ Women: _____²
b. _____
7. Read 1 Corinthians 7:3. What is Paul saying in this text?
a. _____
8. If men and women would be more focused on pleasing each other they would find greater self-fulfillment in marriage. How are you fulfilling the needs of your spouse?
a. _____
9. Communication is a great challenge for many couples. List a couple of things you can do to improve communication in your marriage. Share in the group; you may discover some new ideas.
a. _____
b. _____
10. Think of ways how your marriage can be stronger. Seek material to enrich your marriage, and remember that God is the one that can heal all relationships.

Close the meeting with prayer. Pray specifically for each marriage that is represented in the group. Ask God to fill it with His grace in order to bring in a spirit of forgiveness and to empower it so that each marriage can truly become a “strong marriage.” If some are single; pray that they may remember the things they have learned and remember it’s okay if they wish to remain single.

² For men it is sexual satisfaction, and for women it is affection.