

Lesson 5

Conflict / Mistakes

Key Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 3:1-7

Four Critical Mistakes that Ruin Relationships

1. Blowing Up

- Danger! Outbursts of anger can destroy your marriage, your family, and even your life. You must get a handle on your anger before it ruins you!
- *"A quick-tempered man acts foolishly ... He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, but he who is impulsive exalts folly ... A man of great wrath will suffer punishment, for if you rescue him, you will have to do it again"* (Proverbs 14:17, 29; 19:19 NKJV).
- *"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, but the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness ... A wrathful man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger allays contention ... The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and his glory is to overlook a transgression"* (Proverbs 15:1-2, 18; 19:11).
- *"The beginning of strife is like releasing water; therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts."* (Proverbs 17:14)
- Discuss some things that cause blow ups in marriage. Why does this happen?

2. Shutting Down

- When a person "shuts down" emotionally, the marriage is headed for disastrous times. Someone once said, *"The opposite of love is not hate, but apathy, because apathy means you just don't care anymore."*
- *"So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies, he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church"* (Ephesians 5:28-29).

- *"Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life" (Proverbs 31:10-12).*
- *"the older women ... that they admonish the young women to love their husbands ..."* (Titus 2:4).
- *"Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel ..."* (1 Peter 3:7).
- *"The beginning of strife is like releasing water; therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts."* (Proverbs 17:14).
- Discuss the reasons women shut down emotionally in marriage.
- Discuss the reasons men shut down emotionally in marriage.

3. Digging In

- Being obstinate, stubborn, inflexible and unwilling to change is a dangerous path to take in our relationship with God.
 - *"... Today, if you hear His voice: 'Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion. As in the day of trial in the wilderness, when your fathers tested Me; they tried Me, though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, "It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they do not know My ways." So I swore in My wrath, "They shall not enter My rest"' (Psalm 95:7-11).*
 - *"For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them ... O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under wings, but you were not willing!" (Matthew 13:15; 23:37).*

- Being obstinate, stubborn, inflexible and unwilling to change can also destroy the marriage relationship.
 - *"Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, than in a house shared with a contentious woman ... Better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman" (Proverbs 21:9, 19).*
 - *"He who disdains instruction despises his own soul, but he who heeds rebuke gets understanding ... A wicked man hardens his face ... He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy ... but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity" (Proverbs 15:32; 21:29; 28:13-14).*
- Discuss problems associated with digging in.
- Discuss some solutions for keeping one's heart open.

4. Walking Out

- God's design from the beginning has been: one man for one woman for life!
- Any time man alters God's plan in any way, sin is involved. Walking out is not the solution to the problem, only the beginning of another host of problems.
- *"For the Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with violence," says the Lord of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.'" (Malachi 2:16).*
- *"Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife" (1 Corinthians 7:10-11).*
- *"For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress, but if*

he dies, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man" (Romans 7:2-3).

- Discuss problems associated with walking out.
- Discuss some ways to avoid walking out.

Conclusion

These four critical mistakes will devastate a marriage relationship. By following the other principles examined thus far in the class, we can avoid these destructive elements and build a strong, happy marriage.

Notes and Observations From Lesson 5