

Coaching: Marriage Matters



Week 4

Planning for the Marriage Journey

If you and your spouse are preparing for a long trip, there are some important things that need to be settled before you begin. What is the route to be taken? Is there enough room for the luggage? Where will you stay? How much can you afford to spend? Will there be stops or side trips along the way? The enjoyment of any trip will depend a great deal upon good preparation.

The journey of marriage is no different. That is, in order to enjoy the trip and ultimately reach your destination, you and your partner must communicate and coordinate about an assortment of matters. Things such as schedules, expenditures, chores, handling confrontation, allocation of personal time, raising and disciplining children, spiritual practices—these matters must be discussed so that a husband and wife are following the same route and have the same expectations about the destination of their marriage.

When taking a journey of any length or complexity, there likely will be detours, flat tires, bad weather, stalled traffic. You can get hurt. This is also true in a marriage.

Trip guidance from above can help. Navigation aids can speed a journey along by helping you identify hazards, plan alternate routes, and keep you from getting lost. If you are in a car, this would be a GPS device; in your marriage this would be relying upon good, spiritually sound information.

Let's not overlook driver fatigue! Sharing the driving on a long trip will make the journey safer and more enjoyable for everyone by allowing both occupants time to rest and enjoy the scenery. In marriage, both a husband and a wife need to share the load of "driving".

Good marriages are not the ones that experience no road hazards and no road fatigue; rather, the best marriages are those that share in the driving and navigate around what is difficult and unexpected by seeking guidance and remaining vigilant.

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Some Things to Do This Week

- Day 2: Reflect on the message and scripture reading; journal if you like
- Day 3: Pray for or meditate on what you think you need
- Day 4: Discuss the message and scripture with your spouse
- Day 5: Plan how you can best respond to the message
- Day 6: Rest; don't think about the message or the scripture; listen in the stillness
- Day 7: Recommit yourself to your marriage

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