

Recap of 10/2/16 (Malachi 2:16):

1. The effect of the Fall on the marriage relationship cannot be overstated. What was once a relationship of cooperation, harmony...oneness, now, because of sin, becomes a battle for control/domination, an epic battle of the sexes. No long will there be a cooperative, reciprocal relationship between husband and wife, but a battle for dominance and control. "...the fall made existing obligations a pain rather than a pleasure" (McGrath). For this reason making a commitment to stay together and to be faithful becomes a challenging proposition. The good news is that with the Word of God and the influence of the Holy Spirit in believers' lives, we don't live at the level of the fall. We can live unselfishly.

2. The second step to build a great marriage is: pray and worship (Collins). Make God the center of your marriage. Build your life and marriage on Him. Jesus said in Matthew 7:24-27 that the wise man builds his house on a rock, not shifting sand. A house built on a rock can withstand the storms of life, whereas one built on sand is destroyed by those same storms. Too many build their marriages on the shifting sands of looks, sex, money, status, and career instead of on the Rock, Jesus Christ and the His Word.

3. Roger & Becky Tirabassi (**How to Live With Them Since You Can't Live Without Them**) suggest the following about staying connected to God in your marriage:

-“As you follow God you will find each other.”

-It requires a commitment of your time...time for prayer, Bible reading and responding to God every day. A non-negotiable commitment.

-Couples stay close to God, through church attendance: to be challenged spiritually; to enjoy fellowship with other believers; to have a chance to use our spiritual gifts in a local church body; and to be accountable (Hebrews 10:25).

-Couples stay close to God through serving God.

-“Staying connected to God is a decision as much as a skill.”

-The take away for them is this: “As we have grown closer to God, we have also grown closer to each other.”