



How to Build a Strong Marriage - Part 1

Keeping a Close Companionship

Introduction

- When a man and woman unite in marriage, they become _____ flesh (Ephesians 5:31) and should become lovers and best friends.
- The Song of Solomon is an Old Testament book depicting the beauty and satisfaction of the marriage relationship.
- Referring to the bridegroom, the bride declares, "*This is my beloved, and this is my friend.*" 5:16
- We see this principle in the New Testament also, in Titus 2:4 and Ephesians 5:29.
- Friendship can reach its zenith in marriage because the other loves of the relationship enhance it.
- If couples are to build a strong marriage by becoming best friends, the Bible teaches three key principles. We will examine the first this morning:

First, married couples should enjoy a close companionship.

- A. According to the Bible, _____ should enjoy a companionship. Proverbs 18:24, 27:9, 17; Acts 27:3

- B. If married couples are to be companions and best friends, they must engage in regular recreational activities that they can _____ enjoy together.
- You have to decide, do you want to simply fulfill _____ or have a fulfilling marriage?
- C. In the busyness of our culture, couples need to give their time in areas that bring them _____, not fragment their relationship.
- D. Does the Bible teach the idea of a close companionship between husband and wife? Read Ephesians 5:25, 28-31.
- E. Because there are only so many hours in the day and week, couples have to choose:
- They can pursue interests that they can share, resulting in growing _____ together.
 - They can pursue interests that they do not share, resulting in growing _____.

Questions for reflection:

- Are my spouse and I best friends? Are we true companions?
- Is there anyone I'd rather be with than my spouse?
- When I have time off from work, is my first thought, "What could my spouse and I do together?"
- Are our activities and interests taking us in the same direction?