

# MARRIAGE CAN "BEE" SWEETER

*with Pastor James & Rhonda Brown*



# *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12*

*(8) There was a certain man without a dependent, having neither a son, nor brother, yet there was no end to all his labor. Indeed his eyes were not satisfied with riches, and he never asked, "And for whom am I laboring and depriving myself a pleasure?" This too is vanity and it is a grievous task.*

*(9) Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor.*

*(10) For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.*

*(11) Furthermore, if two lie down together, they can keep warm, but how can one be warm alone?*

*(12) And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart.*



# How to Keep The Marriage Sweet

1. Choose to love each other even in those moments when you struggle to like each other. Love is a commitment, not a feeling.
2. Always answer the phone when your husband/wife is calling, and when possible, try to keep your phone off when you're together with your spouse.
3. Make time together a priority. Budget for a consistent date night. Time is the "currency of relationships," so consistently invest time in your marriage.
4. Surround yourself with friends who will strengthen your marriage and remove yourself from people who may tempt you to compromise your character.
5. Make laughter the soundtrack of your marriage. Share moments of joy, and even in the hard times, find reasons to laugh.
6. In every argument, remember that there won't be a "winner" and a "loser." You are partners in everything, so you'll either win together or lose together. Work together to find a solution.
7. Remember that a strong marriage rarely has two strong people at the same time. It's usually a husband and wife taking turns being strong for each other in the moments when the other feels weak.
8. Prioritize what happens in the bedroom. It takes more than sex to build a strong marriage, but it's nearly impossible to build a strong marriage without it!
9. Remember that marriage isn't 50-50; divorce is 50-50. Marriage has to be 100-100. It's not splitting everything in half but both partners giving everything they've got!
10. Give your best to each other, not your leftovers after you've given your best to everyone else.
11. Learn from other people, but don't feel the need to compare your life or your marriage to anyone else's. Comparison puts your focus on the wrong person.



## How to Keep The Marriage Sweet (cont.)

12. Don't put your marriage on hold while you're raising your kids, or else you'll end up with an empty nest and an empty marriage.
13. Never keep secrets from each other. Secrecy is the enemy of intimacy.
14. Never lie to each other. Lies break trust, and trust is the foundation of a strong marriage.
15. When you've made a mistake, admit it and humbly seek forgiveness. You should be quick to say, "I was wrong. I'm sorry. Please forgive me."
16. When your husband/wife breaks your trust, give them your forgiveness instantly, which will promote healing and create the opportunity for trust to be rebuilt. You should be quick to say, "I love you. I forgive you. Let's move forward."
17. Be patient with each other. Your spouse is always more important than your schedule.
18. Model the kind of marriage that will make your sons want to grow up to be good husbands and your daughters want to grow up to be good wives.
19. Never talk badly about your spouse to other people or vent about them online. Protect your spouse at all times and in all places.
20. Always wear your wedding ring. It will remind you that you're always connected to your spouse and remind the rest of the world that you're off limits!
21. Connect into a community of faith. A good church can make a world of difference in your marriage and family.
22. Pray together. Every marriage is stronger with God in the middle of it.
23. When you have to choose between saying nothing or saying something mean to your spouse, say nothing every time!
24. Never consider divorce as an option. Remember that a "perfect marriage" is just two imperfect people who refuse to give up on each other.







## **A Farmer's Wife's Advice for a Sweet Marriage**

*There's no such thing as a husband's or wife's work on a farm. There's just work.*

*Homemade is always better'n store bought.*

*If your man gets his truck stuck in the field, don't go in after him. Throw him a rope and pull him out with the tractor.*

*A city dog wants to run out the door, but a country dog stays on the porch 'cause he's not fenced-in.*

*It's a whole lot easier to get breakfast from a chicken than a pig. Always pat the chickens when you take their eggs.*

*A tongue is like a knife. The sharper it is the deeper it cuts. Nothing gets the frustrations out better than splitting wood. The longer the dress hem, the more trusting the husband.*

*The colder the outhouse, the warmer the bed.*

*You'll never catch a runnin' chicken but if you throw seed around the back door you'll have a skillet full by supper.*

*Biscuits brown better with a little butter brushed on them. .*

*The softer you talk, the closer folks'll listen.*

*Make home a happy place for the children because everybody returns to their happy place.*

*All children spill milk. Learn to smile and wipe it up.*

*It's easy to clean an empty house, but hard to live in one.*

*Enjoy doing your children's laundry. Some day they'll be gone.*

*Invite lots of folks to supper. You can always add more water to the soup.*

*A good neighbor always knows when to visit and when to leave.*

*Visit old people who can't get out and listen to their advice on marriage. Some day you'll be old and hopefully you'll have some sweet advice.*

# What You Were Not Told about Marriage... Some "Stays" In Marriage

## I. Stay Faithful and Intimate

It's easier to abstain from sexual intimacy as singles if you have not tasted how sweet intimacy is. It's very difficult to stay faithful in marriage when you are denied intimacy on any level for whatever the reason. Denial increases at least the temptation to commit adultery.

Because you now know how sweet intimacy is, seduction would come from those who are willing to give and receive.

When your spouse becomes cold on intimacy matters, listen to them. Always remember however, there are several others who are willing to meet their needs.

You need more discipline to stay faithful in marriage to your spouse emotionally and sexually especially in this age when adultery has become a norm.

If you have not been faithful to stay sexually pure while single, it may be difficult to master it when you are married.

Marriage doesn't cure adultery, self-control does!

## II. Stay Debt Free

Since it's said that money answers all things, money also destroys many things. As money can spice up love in marriages, it can also ruin it.

What is your perception about money?

Can you pull your accounts together?

As a woman, do you have the mentality of my money is my money, but your money is our money?

As a man, are you ready to work and earn a living rather than seeking your wife's income?

Can you open up to your partner about your financial life without secretly building an estate?

Until you resolve financial issues before and in marriage, it will be increasingly difficult to have a sweeter marriage.



# What You Were Not Told about Marriage...

## Some "Stays" In Marriage (cont.)

### III. Stay Realistic...How Will You Cope?

If you have been dreaming of having your spouse remain slim, always remember your own size.

If he/she had been the romantic and available spouse, but after marriage, green pasture took him miles away, can you survive?

It is wise and better to prepare for the toughest parts of marriage so that you can cope with them when they come. As much as you prepare for sunshine, don't forget to prepare for storms....they will come.

Many prepare so well for the romantic aspects of marriage, but very few groom themselves for the realities in marriage.

However, what breaks a marriage isn't necessarily the lack of romance, but the couple's inability to withstand the hardest part of marriage.

### IV. Stay Patient

Whether you agree or not, handling differences is one of the leading causes of divorce in marriage. Many marriages fail due to irreconcilable differences.

How do you plan to reconcile your differences in marriage should they come?

Our differences can be the toughest part of marriage that you must brace for. Weddings are just a day or two event but marriage is a lifetime journey. More than the excitement of married life, more than the grandeur wedding ceremony, have you been transformed by the renewing of your mind to face any challenge in marriage when they come?

Delay in child bearing, loss of job, relocation, in-law issues, financial issues, trying times or spiritual issues may come; you need to be prepared for whichever one life throws at you so you don't "run and hide" when they come.

Remember: Marriage can be hard. It's one of those truths you might not likely be told or you don't want to hear. Finding the right person to marry is hard, but staying married is the hardest in the face of life's God bless us all.







# The Different Stages of a Sweet Marriage

1. **THE AMAZEMENT STAGE**: This is the "wow" stage. Lots of new things to discover with your spouse. The newness and freshness is so amazing. Sleeping on the same bed, dressing alike/coordinating outfits, cooking together, doing house chores together, bathing together, etc. Wearing your dazzling wedding ring everywhere- turning people's head at the newest couple around. Loads and lots of fun. Sexual exploration and excitement. Being in control of your kitchen, feeding him and lots more. It's the honeymoon stage and it is so so beautiful.
2. **THE IRRITATION STAGE**: This is when you begin to notice weaknesses you have overlooked or blissfully wish they go away but did not. The repetition of such weaknesses begins to work on your nerves and you are getting irritated: he snores a lot, she is slow in the kitchen, she belches loudly, he screams unnecessarily, she won't bathe before coming to bed or shave, he spends many hours watching football and ignores you when you talk. "What's just wrong with this guy?" You think aloud, well it's part of marriage.
3. **THE ANGER STAGE**: This is when the repetition of such weaknesses gets on your nerves and you display your anger. The introverted partner stuffs it in and either keeps malice, avoids you or stubbornly continues with the irritating habit. It's the stage where you begin to wonder: "have I really married the wrong guy?" "Have I married the wrong woman?" No, you did not, you are simply going through a phase together.



# The Different Stages of a Sweet Marriage

4. **THE RESOLUTION STAGE**: This is when you both begin to face the reality of marriage and acknowledge your partner's weaknesses. You eventually realize anger and malice does not solve any problem and you begin to find ways to deal with your differences, both of you begin to compromise here and there and adjust to each other.
5. **THE ACCEPTANCE STAGE**: Here is when it dawns on you that some things are just a part of your partner and those things may never change. You resign from anger, abuse, and quarrel. You choose to accept them. You lovingly adjust to them and enjoy them- regardless of their weaknesses.
6. **THE RESTFUL STAGE**: This is the stage where you permanently accept them- with all their strengths, weaknesses, shortcomings, and flaws. You love them unconditionally, regardless of what they do. This is real love-agape, divine, and true. You reconnect emotionally, spiritually, and physically at a deeper level. You enjoy "honeymoon" again while building a lasting marriage regardless of the challenges you face.





# Revelation 2:2-5

(Vs. 2)

*I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot endure evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false;*

(Vs. 3)

*And you have perseverance, and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary.*

(Vs. 4)

*But I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*

(Vs. 5)

*Remember, therefore, from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place — — unless you repent.*





# Outline

## I. Recognition of the Marriage

- Deeds
- Toil
- Perseverance
- Testing

## II. Rebuke Concerning the Marriage

“...You have left your first love.”

## III. Reconsideration in the Marriage

- Remember
- Repent
- Report for Duty

## IV. Result Pending the Marriage

“I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place...”



# Notes

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# **The Sweetest Marriage**

## **Genesis 2:5 – 25**

### **I. The Setting of the Marriage (Genesis 2:5-10)**

#### **A. There was no:**

1. Shrub
2. Mankind
3. Activity

#### **B. There was:**

1. Garden
2. Trees
3. River

### **II. Mankind for the Marriage (Genesis 2:5-10)**

- A. Man was formed by God from dust.
- B. Man was created by God in His image.

### **III. The Persons in the Marriage**

- A. Adam was alone
- B. Eve was his helper



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