



MTA 2015 “MARRIAGE AND FAMILY” Class Notes

Introduction

Elder Qualities

1 Tim 3:2, 4-5 ESV Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach...

He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?

Focus on Marriage

- Marriage is a vital topical study.
- Remember, the foremost biblical analogy that God uses to describe his relationship with his people is no other than marriage!

1.0 Marriage

OT Word Pictures

1. A Serious Oath [*berith*]
2. A Secret Garden [*gan na'u*]
3. A Flowing Well [*be'er nozlim*]
4. A Blazing Fire [*reseph 'esh*]

N.T. instruction

- Heb 13:4
- Eph. 5:22-26

For Singles...

- Choosing a mate (as a disciple) is a spiritual issue
- Part of choosing a mate relates to having a similar vision
- Lots of prayer coupled with good advice is essential

Home Building

Principle: When the home is built well, marriage and ministry complement each other.

- To build the home spiritually, it is essential that the marriage takes priority.
- A leader's ministry is a reflection of his family—his ministry is in many ways an extension of his physical family.

Practical Suggestions

- Plan for your marriage, not just for your ministry.
- Have a regular date. Tip: Don't talk about ministry stuff during your date!
- Invest in your bedroom. (What's the atmosphere? ...Candles or bills?)

Uniqueness of Ministry Couples

- Ministers do carry unique pressures.
- Spouses also have unique challenges.
- Each ministry has unique hassles and opportunities.

Facing Criticism As a Couple

- Recognize that church leadership is particularly vulnerable to criticism.
- Accept the fact that comments will come in various types and times.
- Evaluate the criticism while not focusing on personalities.
- Take the “grain of salt” approach.
- Keep your confidence in God.

Goal-Setting

Principle: It is vital for ministry leader couples to have the same expectations in marriage. We set ourselves up for disappointment with the following:

- Unspoken expectations
- Unclear expectations
- Unwanted expectations
- Unrealistic expectations

Common Areas (for Goal-Setting)

Spiritual
Ministry
Extended family
Finances
Children
Professional/personal development
Nurturing the marriage
Outreach (evangelistic)

Scheduling

Principle: Part of oneness is being in-sync with each other’s schedule.

Principles

- Coordination
- Cooperation
- Evaluation
- Balance

Relationships to Invest In

- Those who know your marriage dynamic
- Those who know your personal weaknesses
- Those whose families model virtues you want to grow in
- Those whose children might be a positive influence to yours

Sermonette:

Discussion (Couple)

What are some things you can start planning about? (see list)

What are some boundaries/guidelines that are working for us now?

What are some (additional) guidelines that might work for us?

2.0 Family

Your Number One job

God’s vision —> Godly offspring

Mal 2:15

(For Parents) Your number one job in the world is parenting.

Personal Reflection

- Do you consider parenting your #1 job?
- Have you ever considered changing your job to have more time for the family?
- Do you tend to rely on the church to teach your kids about God?
- Do your kids see you praying and reading your Bible?
- How much time do you spend with each of your kids in a day?
- How many parenting books do you read in a month? (Some read a lot on their line of work, but stop there.)
- How many parenting websites have you looked at?
- What other activities do you bring your kids to aside from Children's Ministry on Sunday? What about activities with other kingdom kids?
- What efforts are you making for your kids to connect with "Aunties and Uncles" in the church?
- Are your kids comfortable in talking about spiritual matters with you?

What's your goal?

Misguided Goals

- Scholastic or extracurricular achievements
- Well-behaved children as a goal
- Getting our children "saved"
- Family worship goals seen as an end rather than the means to an end

Relational Goals

Christian life is all about relationships.

Parenting is investing properly in our relationship with our children. That relationship changes over time.

Jesus' example: John 13:13-16, John 15:13-15

The Relational Goal of Parenting

Phase 1: Discipline (Birth to 5yrs of age)

Phase 2: Training (Ages 6-12)

Phase 3: Coaching (Ages 13-17)

Phase 4: Friendship (beyond 18)

Two Main Goals

These two main goals (applicable to any family situation/stage in life) will help us go through the four stages.

1. FORGE family identity

Discussion/Reflection:

"Family Identity"

- What do you think is your family known for now? How do you feel about it?
- (If negative about #1) What do you want your family to be known for in the future?
- What activities can you do as a family to strengthen your family identity?
- Are the Great Commandment and Great Commission part of your family identity?

2. CONNECT with a moral community

Exercise: Moral Community — “Who’s raising your child?”

- Excluding yourself and your spouse, list all the people who spend at least one hour with your child during the course of a week.
- Next to their names, place the total hours per week they spend with your child.
- Count the number of people you have listed who have standards and values which differ from your own.
- Count the number of hours they spend with your child weekly.

Practical suggestions

- Make effort to build relationships with families in the church. This includes prayer that God will open doors of friendship.
- Speak well of families in the church. Be careful when discussing church concerns within the family circle (or hearing distance!)
- Be deliberate in helping your children be closer to other kids in the church.
- Goal: For each child to have at least 5 strong relationships with adult Christians by the time they get to their teen years.

Family Values Crucial for Church Leaders

1. Mutual Respect

Show regard both in private and public.

2. Emotional Honesty

There’s nothing like vulnerable openness in a family. Create a “safe place” for all emotions.

3. Individual Spirituality

It’s easy to assume someone is “doing well” in the Lord. Ask the questions in love.

Review