



Volume 12, Number 8

# The Family Friend

A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

August, 2010

## What Makes a Marriage Last?

By Norman Bales

Mary Hance is a columnist for the Nashville Tennessean. Recently she asked her readers to contribute words of wisdom for a long and joyful marriage. She published a sampling of the responses in her column.

As I read through these random comments, I realized many of the principles that insure successful marriage can be stated in simple one word summaries. I came up with this list.

- ◆ Conversation.
- ◆ Humor.
- ◆ Respect.
- ◆ Time.
- ◆ Patience.
- ◆ Reinforcement.
- ◆ Consideration.
- ◆ Prayer.
- ◆ Tolerance.
- ◆ Faith.
- ◆ Touching.

Come to think of it, all that is pretty much summed up in a statement from Jesus that we've come to call "The Golden Rule." "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12). The more I think about, the more I believe that most successfully married couples work at keeping these things alive in their marriages.

## Fidelity in Marriage

By Norman and Ann Bales

Our friend was a twenty-something young husband when World War II came along. He was drafted into the service and was asked to choose between the Army and the Navy. He flipped a coin and it came up Navy. In his youth he made a nominal yet sincere commitment to Christ, but his faith was not deeply anchored. However, he married a lovely woman with a deep and abiding faith. After their marriage he began to make progress in the Christian life, and then the war came along.

He knew that he would likely

be separated from his wife a long time. He was aware of the fact that his faith had not been developed as much as it needed to be in order to face the life challenges that lay before him in wartime. He fully understood the kinds of temptations that would be placed before a young sailor on shore leave, but he was determined to remain faithful to his wife for the duration of the war. He believed that vows were sacred.

To prepare himself to grow in the faith and to be strengthened to fulfill his commitment to fidelity, he included two things in his belongings that he thought he would need if he had any chance of remaining faithful to the Lord and his beloved. He chose to pack a King James Version of the Bible and a one volume New Testament commentary. In the three years that followed he read them both over and over again. By keeping himself in touch with Scripture, he stayed close to God, and felt encouraged to hold on to his commitments.

When he got to Proverbs, he ran across texts like these:

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.* - Proverbs 1:7

*Discretion shall preserve*

*thee, understanding shall keep thee.* - Proverbs 2:11

*My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honey-comb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.* - Proverbs 5:1-5

*For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.* - Proverbs 6:26

In the New Testament, he was encouraged by verses like these:

*For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* - Romans 8:13

*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* - 1 Corinthians 10:13

When the war was ended, and he set down his duffel bags to put his arms around his wife, he did so with the knowledge that he had been faithful to her. In the process he had learned something about the scriptures, and in the process of that he got to know God. Eventually he be-

came a preacher of the gospel. Not surprisingly he was well known for his mastery of the book of Proverbs.

Truman Spring, Jr. offers this incredible post script to the story. "Dad and Mom met on 6/21/1939 in downtown Dallas (a block from my office now), and were married exactly six months later 12/21/1939. He and she walked in complete marital faithfulness (a subject which he and I talked about) for their 52+ years of marriage, ended by Mom's passing on 4/18/1992. I know that as a minister, there were women from time to time who wanted to 'lean on his shoulder,' but Dad resisted such invitations."

What a wonderful example this couple showed to others throughout their lives and a legacy of commitment and keeping ones vows in complete faithfulness in marriage and also as Christians. It seems that the reason this fidelity occurred goes back to the time, shortly after their marriage, when Truman left for the Navy. He was determined to stay faithful and prepared to do so by studying God's word. That discipline kept him true to his marriage vows and prepared him for a life in service to the Lord. That's not a bad way to get a start in Christian living and insure fidelity in a marriage.

—via All About Families

## The Laws of Parenting

1. The later you stay up, the earlier your child will wake up the next morning.

### ***The Family Friend***

Published Monthly by  
Calvert City church of Christ

2. For a child to become clean, something else must become dirty.
3. Toys multiply to fill any space available.
4. The longer it takes you to make a meal, the less your child will like it.
5. Yours is always the only child who doesn't behave.
6. If the shoe fits...it's expensive.
7. The surest way to get something done is to tell a child not to do it.
8. The gooier the food, the more likely it is to end up on the carpet.
9. Backing the car out of the driveway causes your child to have to go to the bathroom.

—via **Preaching Daily**

## Quotes of Note On Family

Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

—Leo Tolstoy

The presidency is temporary, but the family is permanent.

—Yvonne DeGaulle, former First Lady of France