Leisure Activities

34. **Basic Principle:** Date your mate!

Sexual Expectations

35. **One of God's purposes for sex within a marriage:** To avoid sexual temptations: "The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control." (NIV 1 Cor. 7:3-5)
36. **One of God's purposes for sex within a marriage:** To have children: "God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.'" (Gen. 1:28 NIV)
37. **Realize this sexual difference between men and women:** Men *tend* to operate like microwaves – *getting ready very quickly*, while women *tend* to be like crock pots – *getting ready over a longer period of time*; therefore, women *tend* to enjoy being romanced, which is not important to most men.
38. **Don't unknowing abort your children:** If you have the ability to get pregnant and do not currently desire children, consult your doctor to choose a birth control method that will *not allow conception* to occur.

Family and Friends

38. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NAS **1 Corinthians 15:33** "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals.'"
39. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NIV **Proverbs 16:28** "A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends."
40. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NIV **Proverbs 17:9** "He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends."
41. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NIV **Proverbs 22:24** "Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered."
42. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NIV **Proverbs 17:17** "A friend loves at all times…"
43. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NIV **Proverbs 27:6** "Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses."

Marriage Expectations

44. **Handout:** Top 10 Reasons Marriages Fail
45. **Handout:** 4 Words That Will Predict Your Marriage

Parenting Expectations

46. **Planning for children:** Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having children close together versus far apart.
47. **Planning for Baptism:** It's best to follow all of the steps in Bethlehem's Baptism Information Packet before your child is born! "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-- for all whom the Lord our God will call." (NIV Acts 2:38-39)

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(Last Update: 2-22)

Marriage Tips

Learn Them and Put Them into Practice

GOD WILL BLESS YOU!

Introduction

I'm happy you are married, *and pray you are happily married!* Since God is the One who instituted marriage, *when He brought the first woman to the first man*, He is also the best One to tell us how to function within the marital relationship.

I hope you find these tips to be a blessing! Many of the tips are handouts; *if you want them, let me know*. If you need help with your marriage, contact me to schedule an appointment!

Pastor Green

Spiritual Beliefs

1. **Self-Examination Quiz:**
   a. *Why* do you attend worship?
   b. *How* are you using your Bible?
   c. *Why* do you think God will welcome you into heaven when you die?
   d. *How* is your life / marriage different because you are a Christian?
2. **Handout:** Triangle Illustration
3. **Brochure:** Why Gather Each Week
4. **Handout:** Secret to Marriage: Spiritual Foundation
5. **Handout:** Getting Closer as a Couple
6. **Handout:** Focus on the Family article

7. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NAS **Psalm 119:160** "The sum of Thy word is truth, And every one of Thy righteous ordinances is everlasting."
8. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NIV **Proverbs 30:5** "Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him."
9. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NAS **John 8:31** Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
10. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NAS **John 17:17** "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth."
11. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** NAS **2 Timothy 3:16** "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

Communication

12. **Practice this communication advice:**
    a. Disagree – Yes (okay)!
    b. Disrespect – No (not good)!
13. **Practice this communication advice:**
    c. Avoid using "You" – It *accuses the other person* and leads to conflict.
    d. Try using "I" – It *expresses your feelings* and leads to unity.
14. **Do this:** Give your spouse a special card which expresses your true feelings!
15. **Do this:** Compliment your spouse at least once each day!

Conflict Resolution

16. **Whenever you forgive your spouse, promise the following:**
    a. I will not bring this sin up to use it against you!
    b. I will not bring this sin up to others!
    c. I will not dwell on this sin!
    d. I will not let this sin hurt our relationship!
17. **Whenever your spouse needs your forgiveness:** *Remember that God freely forgave you* – as a gift! Then give that same gift to your spouse!
18. **Whenever you feel this way toward your spouse:** "You hurt me, so I'm going to hurt you!" Let us remember *who we are in Christ*; then have this attitude: "You hurt me, but I forgive you!" Jesus said: "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you ..." (NIV Matthew 5:44)
19. **Forgiveness provides a fresh start!** No matter how a husband and a wife have hurt each other, forgiveness wipes the slate clean, thus provides a fresh start! "If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (NAS 1 John 1:9)
20. **Let your spouse know of your willingness to forgive!** Such knowledge will encourage ◆openness, ◆confession, and ◆closeness.
21. **Stop living in the past!** Forgive and do your best to forget; then focus on the present and the future!
22. **Keep your suitcase empty!** With every issue, even past unresolved issues, work through these steps: regret, repentance, confession, and forgiveness! If you need marriage help, contact Pastor.
23. **Understand and Apply God's Word:** "In your anger do not sin, Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold." (NIV Ephesians 4:26-27) Therefore, forgive quickly so that the devil has no opportunity to hurt your relationship!

Partner Style and Habits

24. **Apply this verse:** NAS **Matthew 7:12** "...however you want people to treat you, so treat them..."

Financial Management

25. **His, mine, or ours:** It's important to combine your resources as well as your bills. Take this attitude: ***With OUR money we will pay OUR bills!***
26. **Set a spending limit:** Agree on an amount that either of you can spend without asking the other person, which gives limited freedom! Anything over the set amount must be discussed and agreed upon.
27. **Apply this verse:** NIV **1 Timothy 6:10** "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."
28. **Christian couples live the Bible:** NAS **Proverbs 3:9** "Honor the LORD from your wealth, And from the **first** of all your produce..." We *honor* the Lord by giving to Him FIRST!
29. **Christian couples live the Bible:** NIV **Deut. 16:17** "Each of you must bring a gift **in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you**." *Base GIVING on RECEIVING!*
30. **Christian couples live the Bible:** NIV **Malachi 3:8** "Will a man rob God? Yet **you rob me**. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "**In tithes and offerings**." Since the tithe belongs to the Lord, *we rob Him whenever we do not give a tithe from whatever we receive!*
31. **Christian couples live the Bible:** For those who *honor the Lord in their giving*: NAS **Proverbs 3:10** "...your **barns will be filled with plenty**, And your **vats will overflow with new wine**."
32. **Christian couples live the Bible:** The Lord challenges us to *put Him to the test*: NIV **Malachi 3:10** "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and **see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it**."
33. **Brochure:** Tithing