



Marriage Growth-Track

Week 4 - Day 4

Speaking and Praying

By Doug and Cheryll Duffie

May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Psalm 19:14

There's so many turn-outs on the road to a successful marriage. Outside influences, personal issues, physical setbacks, spiritual warfare—the list is literally endless. Yet, with a steadfast dependence upon Christ and a commitment to honor our spouses, there is an unending supply of support and hope. This is what we see in this verse:

- We are to speak and pray in a way that is pleasing to The Lord

Problems of selfishness, stubbornness, and resentment can be obvious problems in a relationship. There are also problems such as demanding jobs, difficult children, and unhealthy relationships with in-laws which can be much more subtle, but can also lead to a breakdown in communication. These other issues, the 'squeakier wheels' so to speak, demand attention, leaving little to no time for connection between husband and wife. It's no surprise, then, that many of the larger problems in marriage, ultimately, can be traced to poor communication.

When communication breaks down between husband and wife, Satan is always waiting in the wings. He orchestrates an unnecessary power struggle, harsh words are exchanged, the silent treatment follows, and deception is waiting in the wings.

As a simple exercise, ask yourself how many hours--or minutes--did you spend this week engaged in conversation or activity with your spouse that did not revolve around working on the family budget, talking about the children, or watching TV?

Again, many of the larger problems in marriage stem from poor conversations. And poor conversations stem from not making the time for our spouse, letting the children come before the marriage relationship, and from a fear of conflict. But good conversations will involve a positive exchange and allow for acceptance, security, and growth in a relationship.

Maintaining the components of the three-legged stool of marriage (selflessness, forgiveness, communication) is not easy. We will always be competing against our sinful,

selfish nature. We will always be seeking God's strength to forgive. And we will often struggle to find balance between our calendars and our marriage. But if you keep Christ at the center of your marriage and maintain the three-legged stool, you will discover the blessings of marriage.

Discussion Question:

1. How might it affect the way you speak to your spouse, if you were to pray "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you God" daily?
2. Are the words coming out of your mouth, a reflection of your heart?

Application Step:

Write this verse down and meditate on it daily, use it as a guide when you communicate with your spouse.

Prayer:

Dear Lord, show me how I can improve communication in my marriage. I need Your help to be the godly spouse I should be. Help me to keep You at the center of my marriage and to be on guard against selfishness, to be quick to forgive, and to be vigilant to communicate. Help me to keep my spouse as my top priority, second to You, not allowing the other demands and detractors of life to interfere with seeking to effectively communicate with my spouse.

