

Becoming One

“Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Gen. 2:24



Being a typical young man, when I(Rick) first read this verse as a new Christian I immediately focused my attention on the word “flesh” and thought this only meant the sexual union of a man and woman in marriage! I do agree that this can be one interpretation of that scripture, but there is another use of the Hebrew word for flesh “basar” where it could be used to mean the whole body of the man and woman become one “body.” This is more in line with **Gen. 1:27** where, before the fall, the man and woman were both referred to as “man.” I believe this “oneness” was Father’s original intent for a man and woman in marriage.



A book that has greatly influenced my understanding of becoming one is *Every Man’s Marriage* by Stephen Arterburn and Fred Stoeker. I want to share some of what I have gleaned from this book that has improved my relationship with Sue. Before I begin, let me say that ***the underlying success in achieving oneness in any marriage is love that is first given from the Father to us and then flows out of us to our spouse through our attitude, words, and actions. Without love, nothing will work well in our marriage and we will never be able to achieve the level of intimacy, fun, pleasures, and delights that our heavenly Father wants us to experience in our marriage.***



In the latter part of our 48 years of marriage, Sue and I have experienced more oneness in our relationship being able to know each other’s thoughts, agreement in decisions, few conflicts, and more open and transparent communications. We are more united and enjoying every part of our marriage more now than any other time in our life, but it wasn’t always that way. Before I knew what I was doing, I would trample her spirit forcing her to accept my convictions and not honoring hers. In my insecurities I was unwilling to submit to her desires and concerns about our relationship and family and often withdrew to avoid conflict or confrontations. My lustful habits, fantasies, and wandering eyes nearly destroyed any oneness we had as a couple.



After being married a short while, the passion and intimacy began decreasing to their lowest point about 7 years into our marriage. Thank God Sue never quit praying, Focus on the Family and Gary Smalley became our lifeline, and things began to turn around. Through the healing of our hearts and tools to help improve our marriage, there has been a steady change and now our relationship exceeds our wildest imaginations of how good it could be!



For years even after our boys left home, I was always the “Chief Tiebreaker” never honoring Sue’s opinions, thoughts and intuitions. I was trampling Sue’s “essence” and hindering any chance of oneness in our marriage. Essence is what makes a person who they are and different than everyone else. It is their uniqueness and character that causes them to do, say, live, and respond to life’s circumstances the way they do. It is a sum total of their innate qualities given by Father plus all of the negative or positive affects their environment and experiences in life have had on those God-given qualities.



When I started to honor and respect Sue’s essence and submit to the reality that this was just the way she is, it made a huge difference in how I began responding to her. The little

things that used to irritate me and push my “buttons” into negative emotions and actions towards her began to fade away and become less important. ***I can stay relational and keep my heart open towards Sue now by recognizing that it’s just the way she is and I accept and love her in that.*** I no longer have to try and change her behavior or her thinking, or attempt to correct her into doing everything the way I think that it should be done! The times that I still do lose it and respond in my old patterns is becoming less and less. As a result, there is much more peace and joy in our house which has opened the door for us to become one in our marriage in new ways that we never thought were possible. We are now one of Father’s unbeatable teams!



With this new freedom also came the need to lay down my right to be Chief Tiebreaker and begin to submit my will, my rights, and need for control so that Sue could blossom into the woman Father has made her to be. ***I have had to allow a place for the voice from her areas of giftedness to be heard by me and influence the choices we are now making together. Sue is truly becoming my helpmeet that compliments my weaknesses and helps keep me headed in the right direction. In becoming more of a servant leader in our home, it has allowed Sue to mature and grow. The result has been more oneness, sweeter intimacy, a new level of joy and satisfaction in our relationship.***

Dialogue Questions

1. On a scale of one to ten with one being little oneness and ten a high level of oneness, where do I see our marriage relationship? How does that make me feel?
2. List five ways you can see how we could enhance our oneness in our marriage. If we did all five things, how would that make me feel and could it change our marriage?
3. List five things you see in your spouse that help define his or her “essence.” For each one, list several ways that you might honor and respect their unique differences from yours. How does that make me feel?

Fun Night Ideas

1. Sit holding hands and looking into each other’s eyes. Express several aspects of your spouse’s character that you admire.
2. Practice some heart-to-heart hugging either lying chest to chest or chest to back (clothes optional!) Allow your hearts to synchronize and breathe together.
3. Lie or sit next to each other and practice deep breathing with each other. Both of you take a deep breath through your nose filling your lungs entirely by extending your diaphragm. Hold your breath for several seconds, and then exhale through your mouth together. Repeat 10 times. Share with each other how that made you feel. Then cuddle and watch a movie together!
4. Read a fun, exciting, or romantic book together out loud over a period of time. Take time to feel the author’s intent to build the emotions of the story and draw you in. Share your thoughts about the story with each other at appropriate stopping places.