

Two Fleas and No Dog!

The title of this article is taken from a book by the same name “*two fleas and no dog – transform your marriage from FLEADOM to FREEDOM*” by Craig Hill. I highly recommend that you get a copy and read it with your spouse because it goes into much greater detail about what I want to share with you briefly in this Marriage Encouragement. I believe that if you will take to heart what Craig Hill is saying and put into practice the things he suggests you do as a couple, it will transform and set your marriage free as it has for Sue and I. Father’s desire is for every marriage to create an atmosphere where two can become one and complete in His love. Marriage is also meant for us to experience fun, excitement, fulfillment, pleasures, and delights!

For most of us that may sound almost too good to be true because of what we have experienced in our marriage up until now. I’m not saying that Sue and I have not walked through some difficult times too and felt the sting from unloving ways that we have responded to each other during our 46 years of marriage. Just like all of you who have gotten married, we didn’t know how to live together and adjust to the inevitable differences between us that we brought into our marriage. It has been a learning and growing experience that is still unfolding for us as we deal with the issues and changes in our lives together. What I do know is that it’s worth the effort! There is a higher and sweeter level that all of our marriages can go to as we gain more understanding about marriage and receive more of the Father’s Love in our hearts.

As Craig Hill points out in his book, most, if not all, people get married with unhealthy expectations believing they have found the person who will meet all of their needs. In the back of their mind they are thinking, “**I’m giving you the opportunity of a lifetime. You are going to spend the rest of your life meeting all my love needs!**” How many of us would consciously agree to such an offer?!!! Of course not, unless we were completely blind or we are so desperate for love, security, or escape that we will do anything to get it. Unfortunately, this unhealthy expectation is what most of us came into our marriage with and only later on do we realize that it’s impossible for our spouse to fulfill all our love needs. **You can’t give away what you don’t have, and if you are not receiving Father’s love on a continuous basis, you don’t have any love to give away.** What little love you may have at the start of the marriage quickly gets sucked out by your spouse and you are left with nothing. You also can quickly suck your spouse dry and find that they have nothing left to give you either. In this condition, it easy to fall for the devil’s lies like, “I must have married the wrong person.” “I will only find happiness with someone else.” “Divorce is the only way out of this problem.”

The reality is that there is no one else that will ever meet all of your love needs, only Father can. And it’s only having the heart of a son that we can receive the continuous flow of His love needed to sustain a healthy relationship in a marriage. A heart of a son only comes through salvation and then fully submitting your life to allow Father to “father” you and direct all your ways. We all have five basic love needs that Father gave us, ***unconditional love, a safe place, praise and affirmation, a purpose in life, and to be seen, heard, and understood.*** Father wants us to come to Him and allow Him to fulfill those in our life as he “fathers” us. If we don’t trust Father to give us love and our identity, purpose, security, and affirmation, we will start trusting people to do it. That just sets us up for failure. Trying to get your spouse to meet your deepest love needs will only ruin your relationship. That’s why many marriages fail. Your spouse on a

natural level can do a lot of things to help you feel loved and appreciated, but only your heavenly Father can meet all your love needs at their deepest level in your heart.

Sue and I made a quality decision years ago to keep Father at the center of our marriage. We also committed to do whatever we could to make our relationship better and sweeter. Through the years we have read and applied what we read from a variety of sources to help every part of our marriage become even better. You can go to our website www.abbasarmsintl.org and find a list of references in the “Marriage Materials” tab under the “Media” dropdown menu that can help your marriage too. You can also find materials and audio messages at our website on how to walk in sonship and have the heart of a son!

The most important step you can make today is to stop trying to get your love needs met from your spouse and start developing a personal intimate Father-son/daughter relationship with your heavenly Father. Put Father at the center of your marriage and depend on and trust in Him to meet all your deepest love needs! As Jimmy Evans says, “You have a 100% chance of making your marriage successful and last a life time!”

Dialogue Questions

1. In what areas do I feel like you are trying to suck all the life out of me? How does that make me feel? You might also offer some ideas to talk about on how your spouse could do something different so that you would not feel that way anymore.
2. What is one thing that you have done with or for me that made me feel loved or appreciated? How did that make me feel?

Fun Night Ideas

1. If you haven't already or for a long time taken the Love Language Test for couples, go to <http://www.5lovelanguages.com/profile/couples/> and complete the test. It's free and they will e-mail you the results showing what your primary love language is, what this means, and how to use it to connect with your spouse in more intimacy and fulfillment. Once you get the results, talk about some things you might do to enhance your relationship and do one!
2. Go to a lake or larger stream and take a walk along the shoreline or bank. Skip rocks across the water. Throw a stick in the water and try to hit it with small stones. Stand and embrace each other and just take in the beauty of Father's creation. Sit and look into each other's eyes and tell your spouse one thing you appreciate about them and one thing that you are thankful for about them or your relationship.
3. Make a list of things that your spouse could do that would make you feel loved, appreciated, understood, or affirmed. Share your lists and talk about them. Then get comfortable together and watch a guy movie or chick flick and enjoy the closeness with each other!