



Text: Genesis 4: 1-7, 17, Matthew 22:36-40, Exodus 20:23

Plain Truth:

Relationships go the distance by offering our _____ instead of our _____.

1. The Problem in most relationships is _____.
 - a. _____ marriage vs. _____ marriage.
 - b. Parents often _____ their _____ through their kids instead of showing their kids how to _____.
2. We set ourselves up for failure by marrying our _____.
3. Two _____ persons cannot produce a _____ marriage.
 - a. We are sinful and can be selfish.
 - b. We often are rude, arrogant and _____ on our own _____.
 - c. Two _____ persons cannot produce the _____ child.
4. We should first seek the _____ not a _____.
 - a. Too often we try to make our spouse our _____.
 - b. Friends, family or spouse can complement us but only Jesus can _____ us.
5. The Gospel gives the _____ for _____ relationships.
 - a. Practice _____
 - b. Practice _____
 - c. Give our _____
 - d. Practice _____

Action Steps:

1. Find an _____ to worship God together.
2. Practice _____
3. Practice _____ of your spouse.
4. What one incident or hurtful act needs _____ in your marriage?

One Year Bible Reading For This Week:

Feb. 8: Exodus 28:1-43, Matthew 25:31-26:13, Psalm 31:9-18, Proverbs 8:12-13
Feb. 9: Exodus 29:1-30:10, Matthew 26:14-46, Psalm 31:19-24, Proverbs 8:14-26
Feb. 10: Exodus 30:11-31:18, Matthew 26:47-68, Psalm 32:1-11, Proverbs 8:27-32
Feb. 11: Exodus 32:1-33:23, Matthew 26:69-27:14, Psalm 33:1-11, Proverbs 8:33-36
Feb. 12: Exodus 34:1-35:9, Matthew 27:15-31, Psalm 33:12-22, Proverbs 9:1-6
Feb. 13: Exodus 35:10-36:38, Matthew 27:32-66, Psalm 34:1-10, Proverbs 9:7-8
Feb. 14: Exodus 37:1-38:31, Matthew 28:1-20, Psalm 34:11-22, Proverbs 9:9-10

Life Group Lesson

Going the Distance in Relationships - Week of Feb. 8

Read: Genesis 4:1-26

Further Study: 1 Corinthians 13:5-8, Matthew 5:21-24, Hebrews 11:4, 24, Matthew 6:33

Goal: To understand that two flawed people cannot magically produce a perfect marriage. And yet, with Christ at the center, a marriage can become healthy and 'go the distance.'

- How did you envision your spouse 'completing' you?
- What is the difference in finding your soul mate, and becoming a soul mate?
- How can a quest for finding your soul mate – over and above seeking first the Kingdom of God – become idolatrous if we are not careful?

Digging into the Bible

- The LORD challenged Cain's choice to withhold his best from God. Cain's anger toward God was misdirected toward his brother, Abel. God held Cain accountable, and suddenly Cain realized not only had the LORD banished him from the land but from God's Presence (Genesis 4:14a). How does sin distance us from God's presence?

- Jesus says our anger is subject to judgment (Matthew 5:22). While it is often difficult to let go of anger and bitterness – we must choose to forgive, learn to work through the pain, and give our resentment to God. How have you worked through anger in your own life or marriage? What advice would you give another person who is struggling with anger?

Going Deeper & Action Steps

- The Lord Jesus is Messiah and true soul mate. There is a place in your heart that only Christ can fill. How damaging is it to expect your spouse to be your messiah?
- How would Cain's life have been different, if Cain had repented of not giving an acceptable sacrifice? But what did he do when he had a son of his own (Genesis 4:17) Cain couldn't put a ten on Abel's forehead because he felt he had a two on his. Do you have this struggle? If someone put a two on us it is hard for us to put a ten on another. You were created in the image of God—claim this for you and those around you!
- Place a "ten" on the forehead of your spouse. Find an altar and worship God together. What one incident or hurtful act needs forgiveness in your marriage?

Prayer Time—Pray that God would help you value others by placing a ten on their foreheads.