

Marriage Principles II
By Greg Rangel

“Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth” (Proverbs 5:18).

Throughout my ministerial life many couples have sat in my office for one reason or another and have considered divorce. I usually try to have one of the couples speak first without the other one interrupting and vice versa because having it any other way would usually lead to screaming and arguing. And that is what I least want in my office.

Throughout the time that I spend with the couple, all I hear are complaints about each other and how they want that person to change or to do this or that because they can no longer take it anymore.

During those times I notice though that the complaints that are brought up against each other are not really good reasons for divorce. I usually compare their complaints to many leaves on a tree that are for one reason or another drying out.

I will usually make them see that even though they might see the many leaves that are drying out, there are plenty more that are still green. I will also make them see that, when the leaves and or branches of a tree begin to rot, the problem will usually not be within the leaf or the branch, which is on what they are focusing on and which is an error in itself. The problem will usually be at the root of the tree. And that is where I usually focus on.

There are only two principles that my wife and I have placed our marriage on. Through these two principles, we have had a very successful marriage. One principle applies to me, and the other applies to my wife.

Because each one of us has a principle to follow, it is up to each one of us to decide in our hearts whether we will follow our principle or not. By failing to follow the principle that applies to me, I will jeopardize our relationship and our marriage. It is for that reason that I take the principle to heart. These two principles are known as the root of the tree. One cannot exist without the other. In other words, if only one within the couple tries to keep his/her principle, the marriage might still fall apart because the other principle is missing.

All murmurings and complaints and everything that you might see so wrong in your partner exist because either party has failed to keep his/her principle. And, every other advice that either I or anyone else can give you on marriage can actually be based or applied into one of these two principles. By following these two principles, divorce can be avoided.

The first biblical principle that I see in Scripture in regards to marriage applies to the husband. The Bible tells us in Ephesians 5:25 that, *“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.”* The second principle applies to

the wife. Ephesians 5:22 says that, “*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.*”

Even though we will dig deeper into each of these principles, let’s begin to focus on the first one. Most husbands will usually say that they truly love their wife, and most wives will usually say that they do obey their husbands. But unfortunately, many couples do not really know what a true love or a true submission consists of.

Too often the word love is misunderstood. Throughout my days I have seen many husbands say that they truly love their wife, while at the same time they are either physically or verbally abusing her. And because the wife does not want to get physically or verbally abused by her husband, she has no choice but to submit or file for divorce.

That type of love and submission is not the love and submission that the Bible says to have for each other. Because I truly love and adore my wife and the Lord, I willingly choose not to insult her in any way or hurt her physically. I could so easily decide to do the opposite, but I choose not to because I want our marriage to last and because I truly love my wife.

Husbands ought to love their wife’s as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. Has Christ insulted us, or physically injured us? No! That’s the love we should practice.