



MARRIAGE EDUCATION AND RESOURCE CENTER

## Newsletter from The Marriage Education and Resource Center (MERCY)



Someone once asked, "If marriage is such a good thing, why is it so hard?"

It is hard because we have an enemy who seeks to disrupt the divine love which God intends.

It is hard because of our own sin and selfishness. It is hard because of our spouse's sin and selfishness.

In addition, the "world" presents us with a distorted view of love and marriage.

The Bible begins and ends with a marriage. Ever since the fall, every marriage exists in the midst of war. Though marriage is hard, when both partners seek the Lord and try to love like Christ, it can be a beautiful union.

Grace and peace,  
Penny and David

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Three Specific Statements Your Wife Needs to Hear - Excerpt from Ashley Willis

### Upcoming Marriage Events

November - Focus on the Family Broadcasts on Marriage



- November 15 & 16 - Cultivating A Kingdom Marriage I & II - Dr. Tony Evans
- November 22 & 23 - Reducing Drama in Your Relationships I & II - Mrs. Kathi Lipp & Mrs. Cheri Gregory
- November 24 - Nurturing Your Spouse's Heart - Mr. Greg Smalley

Note: The broadcast schedule is subject to change. Listen to Focus on the Family Broadcast on your local radio station, your mobile device or online. If you miss one, you can listen **by clicking on this link**

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Rethinking Christian Sexuality

The words you say on a consistent basis can make or break your marriage. Proverbs 18:21 says, "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruits."

"I love it when you \_\_\_\_\_."

This statement is about letting your wife know that you notice her and appreciate her for who she is. Be specific about what you love; i.e., her laugh, the favorite dish she makes for you, etc. Make a mental note of those little things.

"Thank you for \_\_\_\_\_."

We all want to be appreciated and it is a great way to show one another love and respect. The words, THANK YOU, can do so much to build up your spouse and marriage, and they can't be said enough.

"I need you."

Your wife wants to know you desperately need her and want to be with her. She doesn't want to feel secondary to your work, your friends and your hobbies, or even your kids.

So husbands take a moment each day to look into your wife's eyes and tell her that you need her.



Does putting the words, "God" and "sex" in the same sentence make you feel uneasy? How do you approach and handle conflicts about sex in your marriage with a Christian perspective?

Within the pages of Scripture we see God's divine design in our sexuality. And sex, when properly shepherded and expressed is among God's greatest gifts to us.

Focus on the Family has created a FREE 6-part series of short videos called "Rethinking Christian Sexuality" to help you reclaim our Creator's glorious design for sexuality and explain how our views on this sensitive subject impact our views of God.

For more information on these free videos, [click here](#)

### Gray Divorce is on the Rise



Christmas TIME Virtual  
Marriage Workshop -  
December 7 - 8:00 - 9:15  
p.m. (EST)

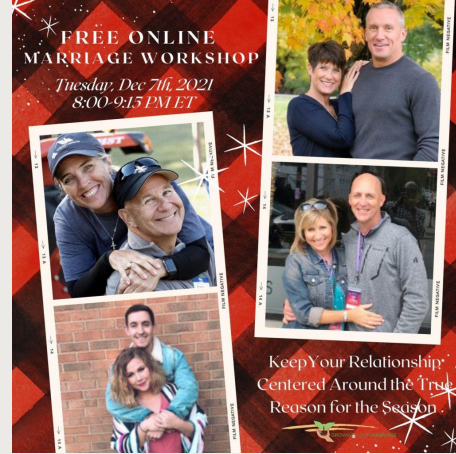


"Gray divorce" is a term used to refer to individuals who divorce after the age of 50. In the last 20 years, the rate of gray divorce has doubled. The Gottman Institute looks at what couples can do more of to prevent this divorce in their own marriages.

Here are some research-based suggestions, from Sinead Smyth, LMFT and Certified Gottman Therapist, for how to create and maintain a vibrant relationship that thrives over the years:

- Maintain a good friendship with your partner over time. Spend time having fun without the kids.
- Address differences in a timely way to avoid building up resentment. Conflict is normal. The quality that separates happy from unhappy relationships is the ability to repair quickly.
- Focus on how you'd like the relationship to be in the future. Share dreams and hopes for what you each want to accomplish, separately and together.

We work with couples at all stages of their relationship. Our services are free. Therefore, if we can help you, please get in touch with us.



The "Growing Your Marriage" team -(Keehner, Slade, Weires and Rose -pictured above) will be reflecting on their own traditions and guiding us in keeping our relationships centered on the true reason for the season.

To register, [click here](#)



Brad and Marilyn Rhodes with Grace Marriage, are launching a new subscription program called "Grace Marriage at Home."

The cost is \$12.99 per month.

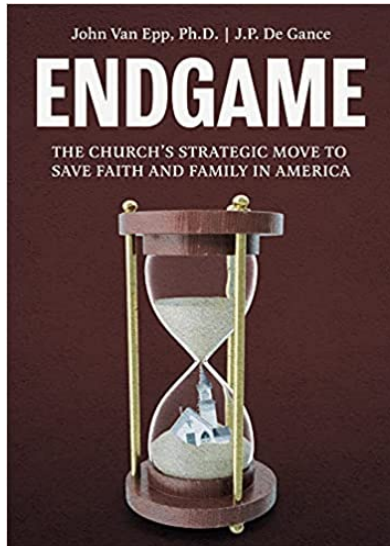
They will offer a monthly lesson and worksheets to cultivate connection and growth, bi-weekly resources, and an online community group.

For more information, [click here](#) or go to: [www.gracemarriageathome.com](http://www.gracemarriageathome.com)

A New Beginning is a counselor-led workshop for couples in crisis.

December 10-12 - Nashville, TN.

For more information, cost, etc. [click here](#) or call: 800.650.9995



*Newsweek* offers a clear look at the research in J. P. DeGance and John Van Epp's recent book *Endgame: The Church's Strategic Move to Save Faith and Family in America*. One result shared from a study in Florida showed how divorce decreased by 24% by increasing the churches' involvement in marriages.

I hope you will read the *Newsweek* article and then we would encourage you to read the book. You can actually check it out at MERCY.

Here's a link to the *Newsweek* article - "Can Our Nation's Churches Save Marriage—and the Family?" by Lee Habeeb - 10/11/21.  
[click here](#) to read it or pick up a copy of the *Newsweek* article.



### 5 Tips to Avoid Awkward Conversations at the Holiday Table

Andy Allan, with Family Life, offers some tips on how to have a more harmonious time at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

He recommends:

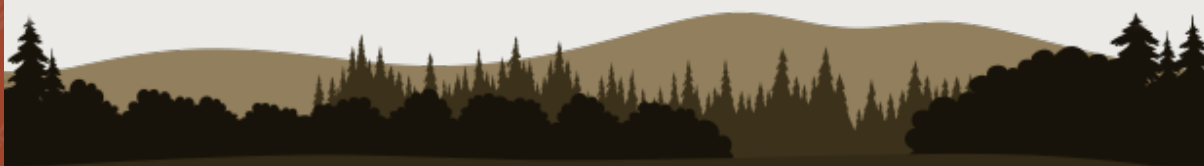
- Set the table - The average person, can endure 10 seconds of silence. We're so averse to the absence of conversation that we'll turn to anything—including awkward stuff—just to



have something to say. Combat the silence by planning out the conversation ahead of time, creating some questions for everyone to talk about during dinner.

- Hire the Opposition - If you encounter a couple of troublemakers, consider giving them a role during the meal to keep them occupied. If "idle hands are the devil's workshop" ([Proverbs 16:27, TLB](#)), why not put those hands to work for you instead of against you?
- Debone arguments ahead of time - While we can't force anyone to resolve conflict, we can encourage them to do it literally any other time.
- Pivot away from awkward conversations - "Hey, can we talk about that later?" Then try to change the subject; for example, say something like, "I was wondering how your vacation went?" It's crucial to sit down at the table already knowing something to ask each relative about.
- Pray a blessing over your holiday table.

To read more, [click here](#)



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Crestwood, KY 40014

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