

“PROTECTION”

Three actions that will help protect your marriage . . .

- PRACTICE **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**.

- Confession

“So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”
Matthew 5:23-24 (English Standard Version)

Cling tightly to your faith in Christ, and always keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked. 1 Timothy 1:19 (New Living Translation, 1996)

How to Confess

- Accept **responsibility**: *Yes, each of us will have to give a personal account to God.* Romans 14:12 (NLT)
- Go to God to seek **His forgiveness**: *So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.* Acts 24:16 (New International Version, 1984)
- Confess to your spouse and **seek their forgiveness**.
 - Admit **wrong**.
 - **Identify** your offense.
 - **Ask for** forgiveness.
- Forgiveness (See Matthew 18:21-35)

Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.
Colossians 3:13 (NLT)

Practical Forgiveness

- Assess the debt and grieve the loss.
- Forgive the debt.
- Avoid replaying the hurt.

- GIVE YOURSELVES **SEXUALLY** TO EACH OTHER.

Three Principles to Understand God's View of Sex

- Sex within marriage is to be **enjoyed**.

Let your wife be a fountain of blessing for you. Rejoice in the wife of your youth. ¹⁹She is a loving deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts satisfy you always. May you always be captivated by her love. Proverbs 5:18-19 (NLT)

Fine muscles ripple beneath his skin, quiet and beautiful. His torso is the work of a sculptor, hard and smooth as ivory . . . Everything about him delights me, thrills me through and through! That's my lover, that's my man, dear Jerusalem sisters. Song of Solomon 5:13-16 (The Message)

- It is the duty of each marriage partner **to provide sexual pleasure** for the other.

The husband should fulfill his wife's sexual needs, and the wife should fulfill her husband's needs. ⁴The wife gives authority over her body to her husband, and the husband gives authority over his body to his wife. ⁵Do not deprive each other of sexual relations, unless you both agree to refrain from sexual intimacy for a limited time so you can give yourselves more completely to prayer. Afterward, you should come together again so that Satan won't be able to tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 (NLT)

- Each partner must be concerned most with **giving** sexual pleasure rather than receiving it.

- RESOLVE **CONFLICT**.

- Communicate what you'd like to see happen, one issue at a time and without blame.

The tongue of the wise makes knowledge appealing, but the mouth of a fool belches out foolishness. Proverbs 15:2 (NLT)

- The spouse being asked to meet the desire of the other must determine whether he or she is able and willing to do so.
- Agree to pray during the coming week.
- Generate and agree on alternatives that will be acceptable to both.