

Mawage

Connect 4 series

by Chris Famisaran

Good morning, everybody. It's definitely more potent Bill. We have a new mic system. So hopefully it doesn't pop.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, thank you, Lord for another opportunity to gather together as a church family. Be with us as we now dive into the word in Jesus name, amen.

1987, the great classic Princess Bride appeared. And Peter Cook as the impressive clergyman stated this Mawage. Mawage is what brings us together today. Now, guys, if you didn't get the memo last week, just reminder, Monday is Valentine's Day. And today I wanted to talk about relationships, especially in the context of spouse's love. And some of the things that we're going to talk about today are not just for married couples, or people who were in love, but it's applicable across the board.

Now, a while back, there was a fortune 500 CEO, President who pulled into a gas station, he realized, oh, I'll just, I'll go inside or pay for the money gas side, gets the gas. He also wanted a bottle of water. And as he walks out, he notices. There's a man talking to his wife. And they seemed rather animated. Seemed like they knew each other. And when he got closer, his wife introduced her husband to the service attendant. What he didn't know was that this individual and his wife had been friends in high school. And not just friends. They dated together. So he gets in the car. She gets in the car, she says, bye. So good to see you. You're driving down the road. And mind you. They're in a very nice, nice car, Mercedes. And as they drove in silence, he was feeling pretty good about himself when he finally spoke. You know, I bet. I bet I know what you're thinking. You're thinking that you're glad you married me a fortune 500 CEO, and not him? A gas station service attended? To which she replied, No, I was thinking if I married him, he'd be a fortune 500 CEO and you'd be a gas station attendant. You know, one of the scariest decisions that I ever made in my life, was to ask Leisa's father, Pastor Bob, if I could take his daughter out on a date. Remember, it was February five? No, no, February... August 2, 2002, Friday morning. Scary. Now he's a very nice guy don't get down. I'm not saying he's a scary guy. I just had a lot of great respect for him. And I still do. But one of the best decisions was ask him if I could take his daughter out on a date. Second best decision that I've ever made in the last 20 years was to ask Leisa to marry me. And my biggest accomplishment in the last 20 years is making sure you're keeping Leisa married to me. And I say that in jest, but some of its true. I'm not a perfect guy, please. But no matter what you think I am, I'm just as fallible as everybody else. But I love my wife. And I am so grateful for her for the many years that we've been together. We've been together 19 years. It'll be... we'll be married 15 in September and together we will be together according to me August 4 according to me, but I think in man speak and I just assumed we started dating on this for I didn't know that you had to acknowledge like, Hey, would you like to be my girlfriend? True story. So in her recollection I believe hers. It's August 13. We've been together. But I say this. I say this out of cheekiness in a sense.

But marriage, how many of you have ever been married? Okay, how many of you think it's awesome and easy all the time. Some of you are not speaking. Marriage is wonderful. It's beautiful. And sometimes it has its challenges, especially when you don't see eye to eye. Today, I wanted to talk about how we can deal with some of these challenges. But you know, having a partner, by your side is one of

the best things that you can ever have. You know, there's a famous quote that behind every great man is a greater woman. Well, I'd like to amend that quote, and not have my wife behind me. But Leisa's always been by my side. We've always done ministry. It's always been a partnership. Before we started dating, I was going to have a different career. And when I told her that I wanted to be a pastor, that was the last person she was ..., she did not want to marry a pastor. In fact, I remember her talking to one of her friends that she hadn't talked to him like 13 years, she's, yea I never thought I would marry a pastor. So yeah, it's been one of the best experience would have been one of the best things, best experiences to be able to do life, but also to have a partner in ministry. Now, she may not be up here on the platform. But she has just as beneficial. She has been a sounding board, a accountability partner, where I needed to maybe be reminded that I probably shouldn't do that next time. But she's been my best confidant. She's somebody that I trust, implicitly. She's been faithful, loyal, throughout many years. And having a partner to go through life with is just one of the best things that I've been able to experience.

And so I'd like to go to a passage. Let's go to Ecclesiastes chapter 4, Ecclesiastes, chapter 4. Solomon gives us some wisdom. Oh, by the way, I normally would read, but I have a new mic on and if I keep looking down, it's not gonna catch as well. So I'm just gonna look at my screen. But Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. Are we all there? Amen! How many of us are not there? All right. Almost there. I'll give you another second. All right, here we go. Two are better than what? One, because you have a they have a good return for their labor. In verse 10. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them, also have to lie down together, and they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone, though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves, a cord of three strands is not quickly broke. There's a lot of good life advice here. And the blessings of not just having a partner for life, but also having a community of having friendship. But especially as we look at this in the context of having a life partner. She was better than one obviously, well, you have a partner for life. accomplishing things is it much easier to have somebody help you accomplish an important task? To have that extra time to be able to maybe help get whatever the labor needs to be done to maybe proofread a report to bounce ideas off? Yeah. Having another person help you can be advantageous. But as verse 10 points out, hey, what if one of you falls well, the other can help build them up. If someone gets hurt, we're there to help patch that person up to apply first aid or to be able to hear the challenges, the frustrations, the pains.

And then in verse 11 It talks about also have to lie down together they will keep warm. It's true. Have you ever been really, really cold. And the only thing you could do you didn't have any more jackets so you all bunched up together. And maybe wasn't the most effective but there was a sense of warmth of a camaraderie. And that helped pass the time by when you were freezing. Being warm together, you can uplift one another care for another and soothe one another. And finally, in this passage, the last part where it says, Though one may be overpowered, when it's just one singular person against however many to 5, 10, 20, the odds are not great in that one person's favor. But if you have another person with you, to back you up, to look out for you, to watch your back, they can defend themselves much better. Where it says A cord of three strands not quickly broken. Rope, when you put it together, and it's woven together, it's that much harder to break apart. And so I love this passage because it helps kind of help us understand how a healthy successful relationship can help, especially a marriage move us forward together.

In the Bible, there are in particular 4 Greek words, specifically, that talk about love. In English, we just have love and it could mean many things. But in Greek in ancient Greek, there's at least four. There's

more, but in the Bible that I know there's at least four that we can look to the first one is Agape, it's this era of universal love. For everyone willing to do anything for someone. For instance, firefighters, they practice agape love every day, whenever they get roll on a car accident, do a medical call or jump into a burning building. That is agape love. Love that has no bounds. Caring for one another, willing to do anything for someone. The next Greek word is philia which is affectionate love or and also involving friendship. When you look at the town of Philadelphia, Philea theme and then Adolphus brother city of brotherly love. Okay. And then there's a third one the storge which is the familial love your brother, your parents, your sister, your aunt's your uncle's cousins. That's storge everybody say storge . All right, you've all spoken Greek be proud of yourself. All right, that is a familiar love. And then the last one tends to especially hit the newlyweds those young or newly gotten together is the Eros the passionate romantic love.

And when we look at love, there's no better passage that talks about love then first Corinthians chapter 13. Okay, 1 Corinthians chapter 13. And the love that is talked about here is the agape love the love that is universal for a love to look out for everyone, but also how we can apply this love in our life. Not only for our spouse, those all around us, let's go there. 1 Corinthians 13 All right, we all there? Okay, verse 4. Love is what patient Love is kind. It does not envy. It doesn't boast. It's not proud. It doesn't dishonor others it's not self seeking. It's not easily angered. It keeps no record of wrongs Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth It always protects always trusts always hopes and it always perseveres. True love.

Now last week, we talked about some of the attributes that we need to have for healthy connection okay, we're, we're in our second week of Connect 4 having healthy connections. Last week, we talked about the some of the attributes that we need to have for healthy connections one of them the first one was obviously love, which could also mean kindness, empathy, but love is number one, but number two, you have to be able to have trust and respect for one another. And at times, you may need to have forgiveness because someone may make the may make a mistake and the relationship but true commitment, or sorry, true connection. True relationships. True communication also has committed accountability and accountability. Now practicing all of that, though, okay, let's put the let's put the rubber to the road. What if, for instance, you had a relationship where you're not seeing eye to eye, maybe somebody is getting better into the deal. The other side is feeling taken advantage of, or the other person is just not listening. What do we do? What do we do? How can we practically deal with when a connection, there's a breakdown? Well, one of the things that we can do is simply if you desire something, ask for it. For instance, a husband after dinner wants red velvet cake, because it's his favorite cake. And his wife thinks about it. Okay, well, it's not my favorite cake. But he explains Hey, red velvet cake is one of my favorite cakes because I just... it tastes great. It's wonderful. It's awesome. It makes me feel great. And yeah. Hint, hint... Now, what if the other side is not as receptive to red velvet cake? State now, be assertive, but not critical. Now when we hear the word assertive, we kind of it sounds like what? Aggressive, maybe a little demanding. Okay. But being assertive is not being dominating. I don't mean it in the context of aggressive being dominating. Being assertive means being able to express your feelings and asking for what you want in a relationship.

Now, let's just say let's just name him John, just to be complete. No, Mike.. let's go with Mike. Michael desires red velvet cake. And yet, he feels that his wife does not share the same desire for red velvet cake. And so he has explained why he likes it. He appreciates it. And maybe, and so she listens. Now, if she wants to listen. She's gonna say hey, okay. He desires red velvet cake. He explains and how it would

make him feel one of the best things that she can do is just say, okay, so what I'm hearing is you love red velvet cake, because it makes you feel great. It tastes great, and it's wonderful and awesome. In our communication, one of the most affirming things that we can do is we can truly, truly listen to our partner and not just hear them. But understand where they're coming from, as we've said before, to be able to stand in their shoes. Okay, well walk a mile in their shoes. Now I've heard for instance, there are some things as a minister, I'm certified in preparing and enrich, which is a premarital counseling tool. And so one of the interesting things that I've heard over the years that I've been doing this is some of the challenges that couples face. For instance, there was one couple where the bride to be just does not like pie. And it was a consternation because the groom's mom always served pie. And every time they would go for dinner, there had to be pie. And future mother in law was very insistent on everyone eating pie. And so it caused some friction in the relationship where she said, I don't want to go over. I don't want to have pie. I hate pie. So how are we going to resolve this? And so as we were talking about this, as we were working out, and I suggested, hey, rather than trying to be defensive, how can we collaborate and find a solution? And so they talked about the many ways that they could help come up with a solution. What it just came down to is they just needed to explain to her future mother in law that she hates pie, and it's okay. But getting to that point of sharing and admitting, because oftentimes we don't want to be telling the truth. We don't want to upset the other person. We don't want to make them feel offended. And yet, if you don't share and express what's on your mind, what does that lead to? Discontent, frustration, unmet expectations, conflict. And then you start to argue, and as you start to argue, especially when you're very passionate, we tend to not listen. In fact, often times, as they're speaking, and we're listening, we're not truly trying to listen to what they're trying to say we're re-arming with what we're going to fire back with. Right? And so one of the things that we have to be mindful of and cognizant of, okay, what are they trying to say to me, so connection requires actively listening, not trying, waiting and waiting to respond with fire. Now, if you are at a standstill, sometimes you may go into a silent war, you know, the silent wars, where you don't talk to each other. And it may last a couple minutes, it may last a couple of hours, it may last a couple days. And does that solve anything? No, you're just putting off inevitability.

Now there was a man who he and his wife had gotten into an argument. And they did not see eye to eye for two days, they did not talk to each other. And of course, their pride was getting in the way he did not want to admit where he was wrong. And she was not going to give it. And yet he realized next day, he had a very important flight, he needed to be up by five o'clock. So what did he do? He wrote a note and say, hey, please let me know when it's five o'clock, because I need to get up and catch my flight. So he goes to bed and he wakes up. And the when he wakes up the sun is shining, is 9am. And he realizes he has a panic attack that he's missed this flight. The important meaning that he's supposed to be at is going to be happening in a couple of hours, and he's not going to be there. And as he's panicking, he's upset. He's angry with his wife. He looks to his right. And on her pillow, noted, it's 5am Wake up. All right, again, does that solve anything? No. Stop delaying the inevitability. But we have to as couples, and not just couples, but in general in our relationships and our connections. If there's a problem, there's friction, let's deal with it. And when dealing with it, hey, maybe not everybody is ready to deal with it right? Then maybe they're emotionally they're tired. They've just gotten home from work. And maybe they're spun up, and maybe they didn't have a good day. Whereas you talk and as you try to solve conflict, ask, Hey, is this a good time, and if not, maybe later, or maybe tomorrow, but don't keep putting it off? Now in the inevitability that some of us may just we don't do well with conflict. And sometimes when we're dealing with conflict, and sometimes things get passionate, maybe one side is

more vocal and passionate in the way that they talk. Some of us may start to shut down, maybe we may need to take a little timeout. And it's okay to ask for a little mini timeout. Okay, but agree to the timeout, and maybe a couple minutes, maybe an hour, or maybe you need to go for a run and then you come back. But the timeout is not an excuse to say, I want to avoid this. Because again, when you're dealing with issues, you need to deal with them. So in our connections, we actively require listening, share what you desire.

Why it's important. So connection requires actively listening, not waiting to respond for fire. As you talk with one another, focus on the positive attributes and build up one another. And avoid the blame game and cooperatively find a solution. When we're at a disagreement and stalemate. One of the challenges that happens is we tend to play the blame game. And when we blame others. Is your argument strengthened? It's the opposite, right? Because people who always blame everybody and never take accountability for their own mistakes. Then begin to lose credibility. ever deal with a boss who just is very firm. and hard, and sometimes they mess up. And they don't take ownership of it. Do you respect that person even more? No. So you may work hard because you're feeling forced to, because it's your job. And maybe because you have a paycheck that you're dependent on. But to be effective leaders, or to be helpful spouses, listen, and where you may mess up, hey, I'm sorry, I messed up here. Please forgive me. Let's find a solution. Set aside a time to deal with the solution. And just find ideas, bring up 10 ideas. Now out of the 10 ideas, pick the two that are most realistic. And find solutions to how you can overcome and not just overcome, but may your relationship thrive. Connection. It requires listening. It requires love and true love. That is a patient. That is kind it's not envious. It's not boastful, it's not proud, it's not arrogant. And it doesn't dishonor others when we treat each other well. It builds up trust. When we don't put down one another, we're able to be able to share what's truly on our mind. But if we're always firing back, back back, and we're not truly listening, why should your partner want to try and talk to you if you're not going to listen to them? Because they're not being heard? When it comes to talking with one another, it talks about keeping no record of wrongs. Now we're human too, right? Is that easy to just simply let go of things that have been done in the past? No, sometimes it's hard. Right. And sometimes that means being intentional. But yet, true loves can be forgiving. The agave does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth, true love and connection. It protects that trust and always hopes always perseveres. And as many of you have also read this passage in the last verse of this passage, faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of these is what? Love. So where do we go from here reflection, as you think about your life? Is there anywhere where you maybe have a strained relationship? Or maybe you feel like, the connection between you and your spouse is not the best? Are you giving it your full attention that it deserves. And where you feel you may be potentially falling short, choose someone, okay? And ideally, somebody that you can talk to every day, but if not, try to choose somebody that you can be consistent with, and have a conversation with them every day, and practice practicing active listening, listening to what they're hearing, trying to understand what they're saying. And perhaps maybe asking a clarifying question or firming them, hey, is this what I'm hearing what you're saying, affirm what they're saying. And you will be amazed at how quickly your relationship can improve how it's not a guarantee, because there are some times where relationships are so challenged, that you may need to get help. And that's okay. It's okay to get help. Especially when you can have a third party come in who's totally objective, to be able to help you see and help you in the process of helping to communicate with one another.

So my prayer Downey Church, to our friends online, may you be well, may you thrive in your relationships. For those of you who are married, may you be blessed. And for those of you who have a loving relationship. May God bless you leading guide you may spend the rest of your life with a partner lockstep side by side, working together to accomplish whatever you are called to do for the Lord.

Father in heaven, Lord, we thank you for your grace and love, Lord, as we're talking about connections this month, sometimes we have breakdowns on our communication. I pray that help help us Lord to be able to see to understand truly listen, to affirm one another to actively Listen, and Lord, may or relationships be blessed. Not just two fold but 100 fold Lord. May everyone live with love, and may we practice 1 Corinthians 13 Everywhere we go, in Jesus name, amen.

Grace and peace everybody