

Why Your Marriage Needs These 5 Facets of Faithfulness in Order to Truly Mature

For most Christians couples, Faithfulness is a given. If a Christian couple walks down the aisle and makes a vow in the sight of God, church and community, of course they are going to keep their word.

I wish this were true. Yet, many Christian, Bible-believing, church-attending Christians fail in this very aspect of faithfulness. The generations before us understood faithfulness. They took the covenant of marriage very seriously. They were taught the biblical meaning of covenant. Many have lost sight of the simple measuring of covenant. I remember when Lisa and I were engaged. We took our engagement very seriously. We read every marriage preparation and marriage book or tape we could get our hands on. Lisa and I walked down the aisle and said our vows of “until death do us part.” We are absolutely serious about this. We are committed to go through the various stages of life, deal with the issues and feel the pain and joys of a life together.

Spiritual faithfulness is a critical form of faithfulness in a Christian marriage. Spiritual faithfulness means putting God first in absolute loyalty. This means that you as an individual will develop and maintain the spiritual muscle of faithfulness through prayer, study, fellowship and service. We express faithfulness to God individually by aspiring to know, love, and serve Him alone more and more over our lifetime.

Spiritual faithfulness also means that we agree to grow together toward Christ. We are committed to the principle of seeking God together.

Emotional faithfulness means that your spouse is the person

with whom you really share your heart or emotional self. They are not second to your parents, friends, coworkers or even your children.

Emotional faithfulness means putting your spouse first in your relationships with absolute loyalty. They are the ones who you let see the core of your being.

Sexual faithfulness is probably the first idea that popped into your head when we started this conversation on faithfulness. Faithfulness requires exclusive devotion to each other.

Sexual faithfulness must be maintained as a top priority in your relationship. We live in a very sexually sick culture. We must be wise. Sexual faithfulness is one of the great agreements to keep.

To create financial faithfulness, a couple creates a financial plan. This is more than a budget; it's a life plan. You tackle retirement, college funds and creating the wealth you perceive is what God has given you permission to create.

Financial faithfulness can help provide a service of safety and teamwork that helps a marriage stay strong. Maturity in this area of faithfulness can add decades of blessings into your marital life.

Most married couples eventually have children, and it is best when both parents are involved in the nurturing and growth of their children in the ways of the Lord. It's in your power, though, to be a team player. You can help with homework, drive the children to events and do projects with the children, but they need a sense of faithfulness toward them and preferably by both parents.

Discipline and discipleship is best when done by both parents consistently. When you include faithfulness in your parenting it can make a world of difference in the years of your

marriage when active parenting is involved.

Marriage is a great relationship and probably the greatest next to our relationship with Jesus. Marriage, however, is not the only relationship a person needs to stay stable and healthy.

We all need friends. God made us so that we do much better in life if we have friends. It's great when friends love us even when they can see our weaknesses. They can laugh us into seeing our faults and can be there in pain and just when you need a little extra help with life.

You can only be responsible for your own relational faithfulness. Maintain some same-gender close relationships. You're going to need friends, and they are going to need you. Relational faithfulness can be another strength you can choose to add to your marriage.

Some people, while walking through these varying aspects of faithfulness, found some areas where they were less than strong. You may have actually found an area of faithfulness that you can now strengthen in your life. Faithfulness can become an incredible lifestyle. As you walk through the various facets of faithfulness with goals, measures and accountability, you are likely to be very successful at becoming faithful. {eo}

Doug Weiss, Ph.D., is a nationally known author, speaker and licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the author of several books including, *The 7 Love Agreements*. You may contact Dr. Weiss via his website, , by phone at 719-278-3708 or through email at heart2heart@.