

Study Reveals Church Best Place to Find Romance

Looking for a spouse? Check at church for a partner if you want a quality relationship, according to a new study released by the Institute for Family Studies.

Seventy-eight percent of men and women in couples who regularly go to services together, or where only the man attends regularly, report that they are “very happy” or “extremely happy,” according to the report.

But don’t just go to church together, build your time together around time with the Lord.

Shared prayer is even more strongly associated with higher relationship quality, such that men and women who report praying together frequently (almost once a week or more often) are 17 percentage points more likely to say they are very happy together, according to the study.

Marriage pastors Alan and Jamie Wood agree that a foundation of prayer is a key to a successful relationship.

This is how it worked for Jamie and I as we began praying together and hearing the Spirit’s ‘still, small voice.’ We would feel extreme peace about a right decision. We would feel conviction about wrong thought patterns,” Alan says.

“Ideas would suddenly come of things we could do to encourage unity. The Holy Spirit also speaks to us through Scripture. He reminds us of the things we need to know (John 14:26). Our faith was increased as we shared with one another what we were learning. We experienced exciting and powerful encounters, a three-way interaction between husband, wife and God’s Holy Spirit.”

The Woods aren't the only couple to experience this phenomenon.

Steve and Laine Craft wrote *Start Again From Scratch* with the recipes for a successful marriage after the two were on the brink of divorce.

"In the end, (when you) wake up and realize that's the only thing you have from God, the devil will disappear if you and your wife get on your knees and confess. There are two lies: one is getting divorced and one is not to get rid of stuff the devil's in," Steve says.

His wife, Laine, agrees.

"One of the biggest things I regret is I didn't personally pray for Steve, I didn't give more to him," Laine says. "I should have mirrored what I wanted. Don't go the blame game, when I started mirroring what I wanted, he was able to mirror it back, but someone has to take first step."

And for Steve, that's all evidenced in following the Lord with all your heart, mind and understanding.

"When a man or woman acts everyday as Christ did, the other person cannot help be in love with them," he says.

The study authors agree that the couple who prays together, stays together.

So get to praying with your (potential) spouse this Valentine's Sunday. After all, it's the foundation of the highest-quality relationships.