“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” Psalm 119:18 (KJV)

Number 1: Being in love is not an adequate foundation for building a successful marriage

*You cannot build a marriage on the idea of being in love
*This phase, this obsessive, euphoric, “aghapy-it-is” phase, has a life-span
*It becomes a problem when people build a relationship on this phase while it may not be very stable.

Symptoms of the “in-love” phase:
- Chills around the person
- Butterflies in your stomach
- First touch causes a pounding heartbeat
- Willing to go great lengths to be with the person
- Get along very well with his/her parents
- Sees nothing wrong with the other

*The problem is not the “in-love” phase, but what happens afterwards.
*The “in-love” phase is like being on Novocain after a visit to the dentist. When it wears off, you feel pain that you were probably not expecting.
*Take the advice of the dentist so that the pain is not as severe; otherwise, you will be in worse pain or will resort to living off of the medication.
*Misery will or could set in once the “medication” wears off.

*This situation is similar to a deep moment with God during prayer. Going in great depths in your prayer doesn’t happen as often as we wish. This, very well, may happen in marriage.
*Living off of and expecting this euphoria in everyday life will lead to disappointment.

Why do people get married?
- We are in love! But why do you love each other (a very disliked question)?
- Some get married based on a feeling, but feelings come and go

*People refuse pre-marriage counseling for the sake of “love.” They think they don’t need it because “we love each other.”

*Falling in love is like catching a big, dumb animal. The hunter observes the animal’s tendencies, makes a trap, and then boom! The animal falls in the trap just like we “fall in love.”

*Our “love” can be flipped to hate easily; then what will happen to the relationship? It will be destroyed.

*Michael Vick, a well-known football player, had decided to join dog-fighting. He went from the most-loved athlete to the most hated in the U.S. in one year, according to a ranking. The people can’t control themselves, they hate and then they love so quickly and vice versa. A problem arises when we allow ourselves to be controlled by our emotions.
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*We cannot base our relationships, with God or with a spouse, solely on “love.”

*Research shows that the “in-love” phase only lasts about 2 years, which alone cannot stand to be a foundation for a life-long marriage.

What are some of the important things that a marriage should be based on?

1. Common Desires
   a. Emotional stage - the couple should have an understanding of one another’s emotional desires
   b. Emotional control is present within the relationship
2. Spiritual Unity and Common Goals
   a. Spirituality should be similar and directed towards the same direction
   b. Walking with a similar speed towards Christ
3. Common Social Interests
   a. Outlook on family - number of kids, etc.
   b. Culture - traditions
   c. Social activities
4. Common Values
   a. How does each deal with hard times?
5. Common Intellectual Level
   a. Similar level of education

*The season of courtship is the time to allow for the couple to explore these five areas, which begins the foundation of the marriage.

Number 2: Romantic love has two stages

1. Initial Euphoric Phase
   a. “Brain damage” stage: you don’t know what hit you
   b. Takes “no work”: you don’t mind serving the other in any way
   c. Takes a lot of energy
2. Hard Work in the Relationship
   a. Requires you to work hard to maintain the relationship
   b. You need to be more intentional in your relationship with God and then comparatively, with your spouse (or soon-to-be spouse)
   c. Sometimes you don’t want to pray, but you force it in order to maintain your relationship with God → similar situation with your spouse

*If the euphoric stage never ended, you would get nothing done in your life since in this phase, all you’re thinking about is about him/her.
* Just because the euphoric stage comes to an end, it doesn’t mean the romantic stage has to.

Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman - each one of us have a different dialect of love that we need to understand about our significant other

The Five Languages:

1. Words of Affirmation: affirming your gratitude or appreciation for the other
   a. The words are like rain on dry soil
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2. Acts of Service: need to see the love, not hear about it
   a. Little actions are what show love
   b. “If you love me then you’ll show it”
3. Receiving Gifts
   a. Any little gift will show him/her that you were thinking about him/her, which is what matters
   b. He/she needs to know that you’re thinking about him/her
4. Quality Time
   a. Require undivided attention for a period of time
   b. Shared time with give and take, not about just being in the same space
5. Physical Touch
   a. Often really “hot” in the beginning, but then becomes “stale”
   b. Shows the person love
   c. Not only sex, but a hug, a handshake - whatever is personal to the relationship

*Each person has primary and secondary languages; you may have more than one or a mixture of all. Every one of them has a place, but there is one that is the most used.

How to figure out your love language:
1. Observe your own behavior. How do you express your love for someone?
2. What do you usually complain about in a relationship? (We don’t talk anymore, what I do is not enough for you, etc.)
3. What do you request most?

Number 3: A toilet is not self-cleaning

*Marriage is work; having a house and building a family takes a lot of work. There are things to take care of: cleaning, laundry, tidying up, etc. These are things to discuss and set a basis for with the person you are planning to build a marriage with.

1. Sit down and have each make a list of all the things that need to be done to run a home.
2. Bring the lists together; merge them and make two copies.
3. Initial next to the things you think you can take care of, and initial for your partner what you think he/she should take care of.
4. Compare choices and talk through the differences. Take into consideration each other’s strengths and weaknesses.

*When you first have a baby, everything he/she does is cute, even when it poops. However, after a month or two, it gets old; you can smell the poop. When someone has to take care of it, it becomes a burden.

*Remember you must speak to the other in a language that he/she will understand, not only what you understand.

*An important thing to remember and emphasize is communication; you are not able to read each other’s minds, so speak out to each other.

*Marriage can be the worst thing in the world, but with preparation and blessing, it can be the most beautiful experience.