

# WEEK 3 HOMEWORK



M<sub>3</sub> O<sub>1</sub> R<sub>1</sub> E<sub>1</sub> T<sub>1</sub> H<sub>4</sub> A<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub>  
R<sub>1</sub> O<sub>1</sub> O<sub>1</sub> M<sub>3</sub> M<sub>3</sub> A<sub>1</sub> T<sub>1</sub> E<sub>1</sub> S<sub>1</sub>

THE ROAD.TV MARRIAGE SERIES

## Monday

### **The Principle of First Response: The course of a conflict is not determined by the person who initiates, but by the person who responds.**

You may feel it's okay to strike at someone verbally because, "He is picking a fight with me." You may be correct, but that person does not have the power to decide whether a fight actually occurs. That power rests with the responder. As Proverbs 15:1 says, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

Jesus has a well-worn track record with the Principle of First Response. Recall the times that the Scribes and the Pharisees came to question Him. They were the initiators in nearly all of their communication. Their intention was to defraud Jesus and corner Him. In how many cases were they successful? None. They failed because the power to decide the direction of each conflict rested with Jesus, the responder (Luke 20:19-26).

The implications of following Jesus' example were huge. My mate's sin does not give me free license to sin in return. By following the principle of first response, we were being called to take a poorly spoken comment and redirect it.

## **Tuesday**

### **The Principle of Physical Touch: It is difficult to sin against someone while you are tenderly touching him or her.**

A difficult time to apply this principle is after an argument has begun. However, a perfect time is when you know you are about to sit down and have a discussion about something that might lead to tension.

You know what those topics are in your marriage. Maybe it's a conversation about a specific child. Maybe it's your in-laws or your finances. Maybe it is sex. These topics often make for tough conversations.

Research reveals that it is very difficult to fight when a couple is tenderly touching. When we fight we create distance physically and emotionally. By beginning a difficult conversation with touch you determine the direction of the conversation. If at any time during a conversation you move away from touching take it as a sign that the conversation is drifting in a destructive direction and make a correction.

## Wednesday

### **The Principle of Proper Timing: The success of a conversation can be maximized if the timing of the conversation is carefully chosen.**

The book of Proverbs tells us, "A man finds joy in giving an apt reply—and how good is a timely word!" (15:23). You have heard it said that "timing is everything." This is especially true of meaningful conversation.

Use this set of tools to evaluate if the timing is correct for the conversation you would like to have. It is called the HALT method.

**H.A.L.T.** yourself from trying to talk about anything important or that could cause conflict when either of you is:

- **H**ungry
- **A**ngry
- **L**onely
- **T**ired.

If either of you is experiencing any of these ... don't say it yet! You have less success of things going in a good direction with what you are trying to discuss. Ask the Lord to show you a better time and the best way to say it.

## Thursday

### **The Principle of Mirroring: Understanding can be enhanced if we measure it often throughout a conversation.**

The Scriptures inform us that, if we are to understand and become wise, we must be sure to incline our ears. Proverbs 22:17 states, "Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, and apply your mind to my knowledge."

Have you ever meant one thing by what you said but the person you were talking to heard something else? It can make for very frustrating communication.

Mirroring can help you test whether you are hearing your spouse properly. Once your spouse makes a point ... repeat it to him or her. Say something like this: "So, what I hear you saying is ..." or, "Are you saying ... ?" Then, in your own words, tell your spouse what you understand to have been said. Then, the most important part of mirroring comes. You must allow your spouse to either affirm or correct what you've said.

The point of mirroring is not to be right, not to defend yourself, but to know that you are hearing accurately. If you seek to understand rather than to make yourself understood, then you are primed for success with the

## Friday

### **The Principle of Prayer: Success in communication is more likely when we invite God to be an active participant and guide.**

This principle is not complicated, but it requires our close attention. We've become so accustomed to hearing about prayer that its importance often passes us by.

No matter what principle you might be using at the time or what subject you might be talking about, no scenario is beyond prayer.

We will eventually and inevitably sin in our communication with each other. When it begins to drift away from God's intended purpose for it, we have a choice: Will we be puffed up with pride or will we have the humility to stop right where we are and ask God to help redeem our conversation?

One of the greatest difficulties that couples face with this principle is awkwardness. They are not used to praying together. Begin with 30 seconds of prayer as you go to bed each night. Pray regularly as a family prior to eating. Pick one night a week to pray for your children, your pastor, and your marriage. Among the enormous benefits that you'll see in your family, the regularity of prayer will make praying in the midst of communication breakdown much likelier and easier.

# NOTES

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