

Strengthening Marriage

Melissa and Shawn Coombs

“It is certain that almost any good man and any good woman can have happiness and a successful marriage if both are willing to pay the price.”

- Pres. Spencer W. Kimball

“I have long felt that happiness in marriage is not so much a matter of romance as it is an anxious concern for the comfort and well-being of one’s companion,”
“That involves a willingness to overlook weaknesses and mistakes.”

- Pres. Gordon B. Hinckley

“The secret of a happy marriage is to serve God and each other. The goal of marriage is unity and oneness, as well as self-development... The more we serve one another, the greater is our spiritual and emotional growth.”

- Pres. Ezra Taft Benson

“Honor your wife’s unique and divinely appointed role as a mother in Israel and her special capacity to bear and nurture children. We are under divine commandment to multiply and replenish the earth and to bring up our children and grandchildren in light and truth. You share, as a loving partner, the care of the children. Help her to manage and keep up your home. Help teach, train, and discipline your children. You should express regularly to your wife and children your reverence and respect for her. Indeed, one of the greatest things a father can do for his children is to love their mother.”

- Pres. Howard W. Hunter, “Being a Righteous Husband and Father,” *Ensign*, Nov 1994, 49

“Friendship is ... a vital and wonderful part of courtship and marriage. Nothing is more inspiring in today’s world of easily dissolved marriages than to observe a husband and wife quietly appreciating and enjoying each other’s friendship year in and year out as they experience together the blessings and trials of mortality.”

- Elder Marlin K. Jensen

“Keep your courtship alive. Make time to do things together—just the two of you. As important as it is to be with the children as a family, you need regular

weekly time alone together. Scheduling it will let your children know that you feel that your marriage is so important that you need to nurture it. That takes commitment, planning, and scheduling.”

- Elder Joe J. Christensen

Pres. Russell M. Nelson’s advice on marriage

“My suggestions use three action verbs: to *appreciate*, to *communicate*, and to *contemplate*.”

To *appreciate*—to say “I love you” and “thank you”—is not difficult. But these expressions of love and appreciation do more than acknowledge a kind thought or deed. They are signs of sweet civility. As grateful partners look for the good in each other and sincerely pay compliments to one another, wives and husbands will strive to become the persons described in those compliments.

To *communicate* well with your spouse is also important. Good communication includes taking time to plan together. Couples need private time to observe, to talk, and really listen to each other. They need to cooperate—helping each other as equal partners. They need to nurture their spiritual as well as physical intimacy. They should strive to elevate and motivate each other. Marital unity is sustained when goals are mutually understood. Good communication is also enhanced by prayer. To pray with specific mention of a spouse’s good deed (or need) nurtures a marriage.

To *contemplate*—This word has deep meaning. It comes from Latin roots: *con*, meaning “with,” and *templum*, meaning “a space or place to meditate.” It is the root from which the word *temple* comes. If couples contemplate often—with each other in the temple—sacred covenants will be better remembered and kept. Frequent participation in temple service and regular family scripture study nourish a marriage and strengthen faith within a family. (“Nurturing Marriage,” April 2006)