

Marriage Through the Lens of God's Grace

We all look through lenses that frame and color our attitudes and actions towards the person we married. In this session we'll look through three lenses that erode love and undermine commitment in most Christian marriages. Then we'll learn a better alternative—the lens God looks through when it comes to his spouse (the church)—and how it can create a grace-filled haven for the love story our marriage is supposed to be enjoying.

Tim Kimmel is the founder and Executive Director of Family Matters, whose goal is to see families transformed by God's grace into instruments of reformation and restoration. Tim develops resources for families and churches and conducts conferences throughout the world on the unique challenges facing today's families. He has authored many books, including: *Grace Based Parenting*, *Raising Kids for True Greatness*, *Little House on the Freeway*, *Connecting Church and Home*, and *Grace Filled Marriage*. Tim and his wife Darcy count their role as parents and grandparents as one of their greatest joys. God has blessed them with four children, their children's spouses, and a growing number of grandkids. Tim is a graduate of Bryan College (BA), Dallas Theological Seminary (Th.M.), and Western Seminary (D.Min.).

1. We look at our spouses through different lenses.

- A. The _____ Lens ... about us, no sensitivity to how our actions impact our spouse

- B. The _____ Lens ... irritability, anger, comparison, conditions

- C. The _____ Lens ... self-righteousness, spiritual shaming, name-dropping God into conversations to gain selfish results, guilt

2. The problem with most Christian couples is that they're trying to have a good marriage in their own power.

- A. If love is all you're depending on in your marriage, you're going to run out of ideas and resolve sooner and more often than you prefer.

- B. The missing ingredient in marriage isn't love; it's _____!! Grace is the missing piece and the place to start.
 - Our love for our spouses must be compelled by grace ...
For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view ... Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! ... And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:14-19 NIV

- C. We want to look at our spouses the same way God looks at us and that's through The _____ Lens.

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

3. God's love for US must be the driving force in our life! Prayer, Bible Reading, and Fellowship

- A. God has chosen marriage ...
- Highest example of his creation
 - Apex of civilization – summit of humanity's story
 - To weather the extreme demands of a reckless culture
- B. He wants the two of you to be a benchmark for His glory!