

Grace Filled Marriage: Part 1

The missing ingredient in marriage isn't love; it's grace. All couples start out in love, but without a clear understanding of how to appropriate the power and presence of God's grace as the defining feature of their relationship, even the most conscientious couples can find themselves struggling to maintain marital excitement and commitment. In this session, we'll see how a clear theology of family relationships—a theology founded on God's heart of grace—alters the climate within the marriage in such a way that it automatically draws couples closer. We'll also see how God's grace protects and sustains a couple's commitment as they both win and lose battles with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

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.).

Darcy Kimmel is the Vice President of Family Matters, which she helped found with her husband, Tim Kimmel, in 1982. Family Matters is a ministry dedicated to "equipping families for every age and stage of life." Darcy has a heart for encouraging and equipping women to maximize their unique callings in life as wives, mothers, and grandmothers. She speaks at conferences with her husband regarding marriage and parenting issues. As a writer, Darcy is co-author of several books on parenting, grandparenting, and family relationships. Darcy is also a regular contributor to the Family Matters' blog and writes a quarterly column of encouragement and advice in Family Matters' publication, *Heart of the Home*. Darcy has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Family Studies from Ottawa University. Darcy loves being a wife and mom more than anything else she does.

1. 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 _____!! It's the missing piece and the place to start.

2. We look at our spouses through different lenses.

- A. **The _____ Lens ...** all about us, without sensitivity to how our actions impact our spouses

- B. **The _____ Lens ...** irritability, nitpicking, comparison, conditions
- C. **The _____ Lens ...** self-righteousness, spiritual shaming, Name-dropping God into conversations to gain selfish results, guilt

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. Grace Filled Marriage is simply treating your spouse the way _____ treats His spouse!

- A. A Grace-Filled view looks at marriage through the greater Biblical narrative rather than just the handful of specific passages on marriage.
- B. We want to look at our spouses the same way God looks at us and that's through ...
The _____ Lens.
- C. Our love for our spouses is to be patterned after our Grace-Filled God
- He sees our truest needs
 - He understands our greatest challenges
 - He knows our deepest longings
 - He envisions our highest potential
- D. God has chosen marriage as a portrait of His love for an unsaved world. Much is at stake.

We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother or sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister. John 4:19-21