

Grace Filled Marriage: Part II

God's grace meets our true inner needs, sets hearts free, builds character, and empowers us to live our lives for something bigger than life. We'll see how these wonderful features of God's grace—when deliberately lived out in our lives as married people—automatically bring the best out of our spouse. We'll learn how the deliberate embracing of God's grace can help couples recover from setbacks to their commitment and galvanize their on-going love, passion, and devotion to each other.

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.

When God's grace overwhelms our heart attitude toward our spouses:

1. **We see our spouses' truest** _____.
 - Secure Love • Significant Purpose • Strong Hope

2. **We know their deepest** _____.
 - Freedom to be different • Freedom to be candid
 - Freedom to be vulnerable • Freedom to make mistakes:

3. **We understand their greatest** _____.
 - Core character muscles of faith, integrity, poise, disciplines, endurance, and courage.

4. **We envision their highest** _____.
 - 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

The distinctive difference in a Grace-filled marriage is that our power to love our spouses is not coming from our love for God or our love for them, but from God's love for us. God's love for us is limitless and must be the driving force in our lives and our marriages!

God has chosen marriage ...

1. As the highest example of his creation
2. To be at the apex of civilization – summit of humanity's story
3. To weather the extreme demands of a reckless culture

He wants our marriages to be a benchmark for His glory!!

1. Marriage was God's first thought when he made man and it will be his first thought when we finally join Jesus for the grand marriage reception in heaven.

You start your love story with dreams; you end it with memories. But if you have invited Jesus along for the ride and let his grace seep its way into all those memories, you'll get to finish your story well. You'll know that the promise of the Bible is true: his grace is sufficient. And his grace will prove to be sufficient all the way to the end of your love story ... when one of you gently lays the other into the arms of God.