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Doctrinal Studies Bible Church
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Marriage, A Divine Institution (#2)

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MARRITAL ADJUSTMENT PERIODS

There are definite periods in marriage when adjustments must be made.

These periods are times when we have prioritized our life with many good things, but in doing so we often push our marriage onto the back burner. Please don't do this because there will always be something, in the next period of adjustment, just as important that will also require you to maintain your spiritual momentum in your marriage.

Nothing should put our **"first love"** on the back burner – neither in our marriage nor with our Lord!

(1 John 4:19) "We love because He first loved me."

We must never fall away from our First Love, with the Lord or our mate.

(Rev.2:4-5a) "But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first."

This lesson will study <u>two aspects</u> of Marital Adjustment Periods.

We will study five marital adjustment periods and signs of drifting away from the first love.

1. It is very dangerous, on so many levels, to put your marriage on the back burner.

One of the biggest dangers is giving the devil a foothold by using marital conflict and miscommunication

(2 Cor.2:11) "Do not give the devil an opportunity." (Eph.4:27)

Here are some danger signs.

- "We don't talk anymore because it just ends in fighting."
- "We don't pray anymore together because we are not close anymore."
- "We don't have loving sex anymore; we just go through the motions."
- "We are not One flesh or One spirit or One mind in our marriage."
- "I just don't know what to do anymore."

ANSWER: Your LORD WANTS TO CHANGE YOU. It is called **transformation**. Transformation changes the inner man, the **YOU**.

(Eph.3:16) "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man.**"

(2 Cor.3:18) "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.**"

(Rom.12:2) "And do not be conformed to this world, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

2. We will mention five marital adjustment periods that are important to the divine institution of marriage.

Your marriage must **never** be put on the back burner in any of these periods. You must keep it as your “**First Love**” priority.

Six periods of adjustment, listed by general years, explaining why adjusting is so important spiritually.

1-3 years of marriage:

Making the transition from single to married life involves space, time, families, friends, social, finances, church, spiritual growth, and recreation adjustments. ALL requiring communication without arguing and fighting over disagreements (Phil.4:6-7). Do not neglect praying together about everything and especially about those things you disagree over! “Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger.” (Eph.4:26)

7-10 years of marriage:

Adjusting to a busy life of work, children often results in neglecting your marriage and then feeling guilty saying things like “I know I should, but I’m just too tired, I will make it up to you, I’m so sorry, I know I promised, but.” Seconds and leftovers will work for a while, but not for long term, and will create even more problems. This is why they call this period, the **seven year itch**. You need to schedule a date night and farm the kids out. “For He says, ‘The two shall become one flesh.’ But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.” (1 Cor.6:16b-17)

16-20 years of marriage:

Adjusting to the unbelievably hectic children’s schedule, a promotion schedule at work, results in being just too busy and tired to work on marriage! You often take each other and your marriage for granted! “We are confident our marriage can make it by coasting through this hectic time period” (red flag). “The husband must fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.” (1 Cor.7:3) “Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.” (1 Cor.7:5)

25-30 years of marriage:

Adjusting to the “empty nest”! The children have moved away and for the past 25 years you have been more often a parent than a mate! “We have had separate lives so long,; I’m not sure I can or want to be a full time mate.” “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together let no man separate.” (Matt.19:5-6)
This would be a good time to take a second honeymoon and recharge your marriage vows to Lord.

35-40 years of marriage:

Adjusting to the reality of the fourth quarter of life – facing the reality of life expectancy – adjusting to the mid and end life crisis – a second adolescence - thinking of years of neglect and what you might have lost and maybe there is still time for one last chance at happiness (1 Tim.5:9-15).

(Eph.5:24-26) “But as the church is subject to Christ, so also **the wives** ought to be to their husbands in everything. **Husbands**, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing water of the word.”

What do you mean; you didn’t take that second honeymoon? Then do it NOW!

50-70 years of marriage:

What you have learned doctrinally about coping and faith victories through the other periods will define how you adjust to health and life issues and your spiritual walk with the Lord out of time into eternity (1 John 5:4; 1 Tim.4:7-8; 5:8).