



WISDOM

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

JAMES 1:5 ESV

God loves to give his children wisdom. He loves to guide us through each of our days, and he loves when we depend on him. He is ready to equip us no matter what we are facing. When we ask him for help, he readily tells us what to do. He has the answers we need, and he does not hide them from us.

Let dependence on God be the foundation of your marriage. It doesn't matter how long you've been married. There will never be a point when you are better off figuring it out on your own. Run to the Lord and ask him for guidance in every situation. Lean on him together and be determined to follow his instructions rather than your own plans and ideas.

How can you practice dependence on God in your marriage today?

UNITY IN MARRIAGE

Make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

PHILIPPIANS 2:2 NASB

For believers to be united in love, we must let Christ dwell in us richly. As we follow his lead, we will display the same beautiful disposition that he had during his earthly life. It is all the more important for married couples to strive toward being like-minded and united in love and purpose. They are joined as one and are lifelong partners in the work of the gospel.

Together with your spouse, commit to growing and maturing in your faith. Only as you are transformed into the likeness of Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, will you be able to discern what is of God and display it in your lives.

In what ways can you encourage each other to grow in Christ this week?



NO FEAR

There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

1 JOHN 4:18 NASB

When we are confident of God's love for us, we won't be ruled by shame, embarrassment, or fear. Those things take over our minds when we are constantly worried about God's punishment or disapproval. Scripture reminds us that we are not meant to live that way. We are meant to be governed by love.

Has shame, fear, pride, or embarrassment kept you from greater intimacy as a married couple? There is a better way. As you experience God's perfect love, you will be able to extend it to your spouse. As you become convinced of his kindness, gentleness, and overflowing mercy, you will be able to love each other with the same qualities.

What is one area where you can replace fear or shame with God's love in order to deepen your intimacy as a couple?

PROCESS ANGER

*Be angry, and do not sin;
ponder in your own hearts on your beds,
and be silent.*

PSALM 4:4 ESV

Feeling angry is not a sin, but we are responsible for our actions. Even when wrongs have been done against us, we have the option to do what is right. Approaching a difficult situation with an angry heart in the heat of the moment can lead to regrettable outcomes. However, taking time to think through the matter in a private place can bring clarity, so it's easier to address the offenses in a calm and collected state.

Knowing when to be silent and when to speak demonstrates wisdom and self-control. It takes practice to learn how to process our emotions in a healthy way. Outbursts of anger are harmful, and it's important to create an environment where anger can be managed.

How do each of you process anger? Learn each other's preferences and treat your anger as an opportunity to show up for each other.



KINDNESS OVERFLOW

Show respect for all people: Love the brothers and sisters of God's family, respect God, honor the king.

1 PETER 2:17 NCV

We cannot control other people, but we can control our responses. We do not have to agree with our spouse, friends, or those in leadership over us, but we do have to act in a way that is befitting of a child of God. Showing kindness has more power to soften hearts than criticism or frustration. Love and grace bring about more change than any disrespectful rebuttal or angry confrontation.

Your spouse's failures will hit closer to home than anyone else's. Their shortcomings will feel extra disappointing because of how much they impact you. Remember that kindness and gentleness are the tools God has given you for success. Treating each other with respect and love is more important than proving your point or stubbornly insisting on your own way.

How can you continue to love and respect each other when you disagree or are disappointed?