

June 2026

# GrowInGrace Marriage Newsletter

Issue No. 17



## *Life Lessons I'm Learning by Laurie*

### When Was Your First?

June is our month of firsts.

First contact - Me sending Aaron a smile 😊 on Christian Mingle and him smiling back!

First phone call - Aaron opening things up by praying first 🙏. He had my heart that day and we hadn't even met in person yet. ❤️

First date - Actually happened one week earlier than planned because we couldn't wait to meet!! Casual dinner at Yours Truly in Chagrin Falls. Sitting at the park by the falls for hours talking and getting to know each other, including the all important question .. "Do you like coconut?" 🥥. There was a first kiss 💋 in there too!

The "For Women Only" column continues this thought. So have some fun remembering your firsts as a couple. More thoughts also in "Dates on a Dime".

Laurie 💜

You had me at



### Featured Podcast - Fierce Marriage

Ryan & Selena Frederick

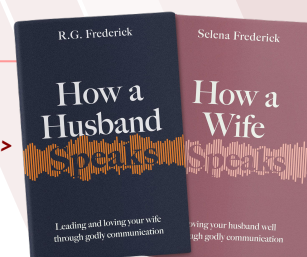
#### **If Bearing Fruit in Your Marriage Feels Forced, You Need to Hear This**

[<listen to podcast>](#) .. (April 16, 2026)

Is your marriage bearing genuine spiritual fruit, or are you simply stapling "good behavior" onto a dying tree? Today we dive deep into the "engine" of a Christian union. We explore the critical difference between moralizing—trying to force change through sheer will—and living a life truly indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Episode webpage: [Fierce Marriage](#) (YouTube channel: [link](#))

Click to order >>



Order the Fierce Marriage  
Communication Bundle

### **THINK ABOUT IT – DISCUSS IT – APPLY IT**

- 1.) "At times, the stresses of life squeeze us, and what's in us comes out, and sometimes what comes out is not what we want coming out." .. What's going on under the hood when this happens?
- 2.) What 'Diagnostic Tool' can tell us the spiritual state of our marriage? (hint: Whatever is happening in the engine, comes out of the tailpipe) See [Gal. 5:22-26](#)
- 3.) Spiritual fruit is born in us from a regenerated heart, however, at times we don't feel authentic in the fruit we're bearing. How can displaying the fruit of the Spirit to our spouse, out of obedience to Christ, even when we don't really feel like it, impact our marriage? See [Phil. 4:8-9](#)

## I Do Every Day: Something Worth Celebrating

'I Do Everyday' Family Life® - By Lisa Lakey (5/22/26)

When my husband and I were dating, we celebrated all the little things: monthiversaries, the anniversary of our first everything—dates, kisses ...

But over time, we left those things behind. Which in some ways, is a good thing. What do you get a guy for your 211th monthiversary anyway? I wonder if Emily Post had protocol for that.

And those little things that seemed so big early on? They pale in comparison to what we've experienced over the past 18 years—both the highs and lows.

Yet ... I sometimes miss those little things—the celebrations of every happy moment shared together.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not wishing to bring back monthiversaries (seriously, who has the time?). But lately, I've been trying to not miss the little moments we're given, because I know each happy moment with my husband is a gift from God.

In [Isaiah 65](#), God tells His people they should be celebrating, happy for everything God has provided. Instead? The Israelites grumble and complain.

He commands them, "But be glad and rejoice **forever** in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness" ([verse 18](#)).

So, in addition to my husband's and my annual September shindig, I'm looking for other reasons to celebrate.

Like when he comes home from work early, we can celebrate with an afternoon coffee break. Or when one of us has a great day at work, that's worth a dinner out (or dessert after the kids are in bed). Hey, I might even start celebrating half birthdays.

Looking for a reason to celebrate your spouse? Here are a few days coming up to put on the calendar:

Say Something Nice Day—June 1

Love Is Kind Day—July 27

Sleep Under the Stars Day—August 8

Kiss and Make Up Day—August 25

[Does enjoying the simple things in life honor God? Listen to this episode of FamilyLife Today®](#)

**The Good Stuff:** "But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness." ([Isaiah 65:18](#))

**Action Points:** What can you celebrate with your spouse this week? Plan a mini-celebration (no streamers needed, but cake never hurts) to enjoy the moment together.

### Wifely Wisdom

*Enjoy the MAN he is. Don't compare him to anyone else. There is little more destructive than hoping he'll become like someone he isn't .. whether you say it aloud or think it silently in your head. Instead, make the most of his own unique qualities.*

~ Lisa Jacobson



Send us  
your prayer  
requests

We're in your corner ..  
and we're praying for  
your marriage!

Couples Corner



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# Why is Maintenance So Important?

Editor's Corner by Aaron Eckard

Staying on top of a maintenance schedule is essential to prevent unexpected breakdowns, maximize the overall lifespan, and ensure safety. What does this look like in marriage?

Pray Together: KEEP IT RUNNING SMOOTHLY [*Regularly*]

Check-In with God and with each other. Express appreciation with gratitude.

Connect: KEEP IT PERFORMING STRONG [*Weekly*]

Calendar time to engage in conversation. Listen to understand. It's called a date.

Get-Away: KEEP IT LEGENDARY [*Yearly*]

Reconnect, Renew, Relax, Rediscover, Remember, Romance, Rejoice

No marriage is perfect, but being committed to a maintenance routine keeps you from breaking down and helps you optimize performance. It's not about perfection; it's about prevention and intentionality.

## Looking Under the Hood

**Pray Together:** Keep it simple. You don't need to be a theologian or a preacher. God loves child-like faith. (example: "Lord, help us be patient and kind to each other".)

**Connect:** It sounds like "Hey, wanna go out?". Look at your calendar, find a blank spot, pencil your spouse in. Have fun!

**Get-Away:** Break up the routine. This can be the Carribean or it can be a short (or long) road trip. THE MAIN POINT is to retreat TOWARD each other.

Notice the progression. You will GROW in your relationship as you: Regularly Pray, Weekly Connect, and Yearly Retreat ♥♥

-AE

## WARNING LIGHTS!!

- *Drifting apart*
- *Poor communication*
- *Unresolved conflict*
- *Lack of time together*
- *Taking each other for granted*

*Don't Ignore These Signals  
Get Things Back On Track*

## *Love in Action!*

### *Create a Marriage Service Log*

*Step 1.) Read "Why is Maintenance So Important" together*

*Step 2.) Select a Journal for the Journey (notepad/notebook)*

*Step 3.) Begin logging entries:*

- *Prayed today*
- *Went on a fun date this week*
- *Planned a long-overdue romantic get-away*

*Keep in Mind: The cost and benefits of routine maintenance far outweigh a major overhaul .. and also make the journey more enjoyable!*



Click the wrench for our Marriage Tune Up Chart



## Love It or List It?

'I Do Everyday' Family Life ® by Jim Mitchell (6/8/26)

My wife and I are home-improvement show junkies. Give us a relaxed Saturday afternoon and we'll binge watch like nobody's business.

We've house-hunted vicariously all the way from Austin to Australia. We've spiced up kitchens, crashed bathrooms, and traded spaces. We've flipped 'em, flopped 'em, fixed 'em up, and designed 'em on a dime. It's one of our few shared TV obsessions.

A show we especially like is the HGTV hit Love It or List It. If you're not familiar, each episode features a couple choosing either to renovate their existing home or find a new one that better fits their needs.

Not only do the spouses typically fall on opposing sides of this decision, but so do the program's dual hosts. One oversees an arduous, budget-starved renovation process, while the other scours the market for instant-gratification, turnkey alternatives. Love it or list it?

As a viewer, I admit I almost always favor listing it. The newer houses just look nicer, with no mess and no hassle.

So which option do you think most couples on the show choose? The arduous, budget-starved renovation, of course. And it's maddening to watch! Why in the world would anyone in their right mind choose the imperfect over the dream?

It's simple: **story**

The imperfect has story. Memories from years gone by, hard to release and non-transferable.

A child's growth markings on a door jamb. A family dog's favorite napping spot. A rickety porch swing where boo-boos were bandaged and tears kissed away. Mature trees planted as saplings, with a well-worn path underneath.

These perfectly imperfect sights and smells and sounds are part of a routine, full of charm and nostalgia, with a rich relational patina no amount of money can buy.

Some things are worth hanging on to, not in spite of imperfections, but because of them. And a marriage is one of those.

So, make yours a "love it" episode. Don't list it, flip it, trade it, or crash it. Accentuate the positives. Enjoy the imperfections. You're building something lasting and non-transferable.

[Read more to learn the secrets to a lifelong love](#)

**The Good Stuff:** *"Thus says the LORD: "Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls." But they said, "We will not walk in it.""* ([Jeremiah 6:16](#))

**Action Points:** Decide today, afresh, that it's official ... this relationship is here to stay, a place where you'll put down roots and build a shared history, an "ancient path," with a lifetime of non-transferable memories.

✉ Receive the 'I Do Everyday' email daily <[link](#)>



### - Husband Hack -

#### What Does it Look Like to Love Our Wife?

Replace the word 'Love' with the word 'Cherish'

We 'love' many things, but what things do we 'cherish'?

Pause and think that over for a minute ... the things that we cherish, we tend to handle more gently. We take care of things we cherish.

What does it look like to 'cherish' our wife?

HANDLE WITH CARE ... DELICATE ... FRAGILE