

April 2026

GrowInGrace Marriage Newsletter

Issue No. 15



Life Lessons I'm Learning by Laurie

You Want Me to What???

Public speaking is definitely not my thing. To me, it's right up there with getting a root canal done! Sorry to any dentists out there. That being said, this past weekend I stepped out of my comfort zone for Aaron and I to facilitate "The Art of Marriage" study as a 2 day retreat at Bucyrus First Alliance Church.

Marriage is something that we are very passionate about and when God says go, you go. I don't wanna be a Jonah. Sharing Biblical principles and their applications for marriage from the materials we are presenting makes it worth the discomfort I might temporarily feel. Not only is it encouraging to talk to those attending and have them share what they appreciate from the study, but it also strengthens *our* marriage as we continue to grow closer to God and to each other.

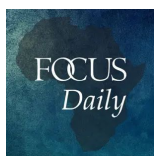
On July 24 & 25, we have the opportunity to facilitate the study "Love Like You Mean It" by Bob Lepine. This study is based on 1 Corinthians 13. It will be held at Veterans Legacy Woods in Newbury Township. I want to strongly encourage all who are reading this to sign up and attend this two day retreat.

Will I be stepping out of my comfort zone again? Yes, but it will be worth it. I know with my whole heart it definitely will be!

Laurie 

**"My comfort has nothing to do
with my obedience to God."**

- Elisabeth Elliott



Featured Podcast - Focus on the Family Daily

Jim Daly with Trey and Lea Morgan

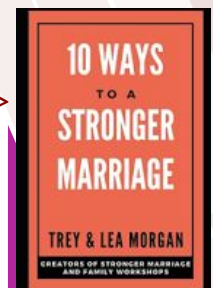
Secrets to A Strong and Happy Marriage

[<listen to podcast>](#) .. (Nov. 19, 2025)

[Click to order >>](#)

Is it possible to shower your spouse with love every moment of every day? Marriage coaches Trey and Lea Morgan share practical advice about the ups and downs of life together after 40 years. We'll explore how "treating your spouse better than they deserve" will strengthen your marriage for the long haul.

Episode webpage: [Focus on the Family Daily](#)



THINK ABOUT IT – DISCUSS IT – APPLY IT

- 1.) Trey and Lea talk about the importance of communication and that it doesn't matter **what** you talk about as much as the **time spent** connecting and learning about each other. Why is conversation so important? What happens in our relationship when we don't allow time to connect with each other regularly?.
- 2.) 16 min. into the discussion, 3-types of intimacy were mentioned. (Se_, In_, Sp_). Our relationship deepens when we add the 3rd type of intimacy. Why?
- 3.) Outblessing one another, demonstrating the lavish love of God toward each other, even when it's undeserved is difficult.. What would this look like and how could this transform your marriage?

I Do Every Day: Better Than Häagen-Dazs

'I Do Everyday' Family Life ® - By Marilette Sanchez (4/1/26)

"God, if You truly wanted us to be together, why would our careers clash like this?"

We were two weeks away from our wedding.

I thought finding my soulmate was supposed to be easy. Our lives and career goals should fit seamlessly together like a puzzle, right?

Even as a young girl, I vowed to never give up career aspirations for a man.

But fast-forward a few years: My soon-to-be husband had been a full-time youth minister for two years. His missionary organization strongly encouraged married couples to join together.

After months of praying and seeking counsel, I was downright shocked when it seemed the Lord finally had a clear answer for me: "Follow your husband."

As Christians, we're called to a humility modeled after Christ's self-emptying. Despite being God, Jesus humbled Himself to join humanity, even to the point of a humiliating death, for our sake.

For some reason, this seems easier to do with just about anyone other than our spouses. Personally, chick flicks and love songs conditioned me to believe that marriage was about finding someone who completes me effortlessly.

When I choose the action movie over the chick flick for date night, I am emptying myself. I empty myself when, as a mom of young kids, I press through exhaustion to initiate sex as a way to show my love for my husband. Or when I hold my tongue as I watch my husband eat the last scoop of ice cream.

Before marriage, I could never imagine giving up the Häagen-Dazs—much less my career—because I hadn't understood the sacrifice a good relationship requires.

Does it take more effort to love sacrificially? Yes.

Is it more spiritually and emotionally satisfying? Most definitely.

[Does having a career and family have to clash? Read more on how you can pursue both.](#)

The Good Stuff: "[Christ], being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness." ([Phil. 2:6-7](#))

Action Points: Look back at the last conflict you had with your spouse. Could the root cause be that one (or both) of you refused to "empty" yourself? What were you grasping too tightly? What are one or two ways you can "empty" yourself in order to love your spouse well?

Wifely Wisdom

Luo Love is the forgiving type of love and the secret sauce that makes it all possible is using 9 magic words ...

*I am sorry ..
I was wrong ..
Please forgive me*

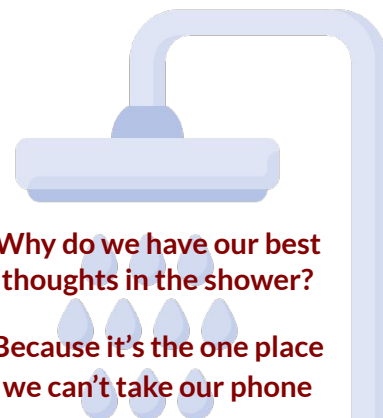
~ Laurie



Couples Corner

Send us your prayer requests

We're in your corner praying for your marriage!



Why do we have our best thoughts in the shower?

Because it's the one place we can't take our phone



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How Does Your Garden Grow?

by Aaron Eckard

I believe that a comparison can be drawn between a garden and a marriage relationship. Both need to be fed and cared for. Both require identifying invasive weeds and uprooting them. We also need to care for and nurture the plants, pruning away dead growth, treating disease, and protecting them from harsh environments.

When we are diligent in providing this needed care, the crop we reap may reward us with ten, fifty, or a hundredfold. Gardening and marriage both are not for the faint of heart. It takes commitment, a lot of effort and hard work, and we may grow weary, but we must not give up, for God has a masterful design and purpose, and when we are faithful and tend to what He has entrusted to us, there is a harvest of blessings that are in store not only for us, they spill over into the lives of others.

Certainly we can get discouraged or disappointed when we put forth effort, laboring continuously, and don't see any fruit or reward for the investment of our time and energy, however, Galatians 6:9 reminds us.. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up".

Take heart friend. For our God is doing a great work through you. He is the Master Gardener and He can use the things that you think are disappointments to bring Him glory.

-AE

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up” - Gal. 6:9

DID YOU KNOW ??

=====

Every happy marriage has 1 thing in common

two people who are grateful

- Scot Anderson (Instagram)

Want a happy marriage? Shift your mindset and focus on the things that are great about your spouse .. I bet those are the things you'll begin to notice more often.

Love in Action!

An Exercise in Practicing Gratitude

Ask yourself: *what if you woke up this morning and the only things you had were the things you thanked God for yesterday?*

Your spouse .. food .. clothing .. family .. employment

Gratitude is a key element to the Christian faith

1 Thessalonians 5:18 says .. "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus". God is the source of all blessings. Every good and perfect gift is from Him (Jam. 1:17).

Maybe at the moment something (or someone) doesn't seem like a gift, but God is good, all the time, and in His divine plan, He is faithful and gives us just what we need.



Be My Pablo?

'I Do Everyday' Family Life ® by Carlos Santiago (4/10/26)

I met my best friend in fifth grade. We took the same classes in high school, went to the same college, worked for the same companies—even married sisters.

After my wife and I got married, my “Pablo time” was significantly reduced. Distance, responsibilities, and a genuine desire to spend every waking moment with my new bride meant I rarely saw my old friend.

One morning years later, when I attempted to leave for work, the car wouldn't start. My automotive resume, at this point, contained only two lines:

Expert gas pumper

Proficient windshield-wiper fluid filler

I had no clue what to do next. I needed Pablo, but he was 70 miles away and on his way to work.

When my wife came in, she found me leaning under the open hood. I stood there for a moment, considering my options.

Then I asked her, “Could you be my Pablo?”

She turned around and left the garage. When she returned a few minutes later, her clothes told me she was ready to get her hands dirty.

My wife understood what I was asking. I needed her to be more than my wife—more than someone I did fun things with. I was asking her to work beside me to fix this problem.

But more than that, I was asking her to be my new best friend.

Over the years, we've not only diagnosed and repaired the car multiple times, but we've gutted and remodeled our kitchen, run cables, paved a walkway, built a deck, and tackled hundreds of little projects together.

I still enjoy working with Pablo, and marriage will never replace my outside friendships. But nothing compares to working with my wife.

[Read on for a few secrets to matrimonial friendship.](#)

The Good Stuff: *“This is my beloved and this is my friend.”* ([Song of Solomon 5:16](#))

Action Points: What is one way you can encourage the friendship side of your marriage? Maybe there's an interest you share with your friends that you can include your spouse in. Or consider something your spouse enjoys and plan some time to do it together.

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



On your coffee date, ask each other fun questions like ..
“If you could have one super power, what would it be and why?”

.. or you can ask more thought provoking questions like ..
“How do you imagine God?” or “What do you imagine heaven is like?”

- Husband Hack -

Danger, There's a Breakdown Dead Ahead

The funny thing about married men is that we're reluctant to attend a marriage seminar, yet we regularly service the fluids, brakes and even check the tires on our cars ...

Listen guys (and I'm speaking from experience here on a number of occasions) ... Don't wait for your marriage to break down and need to pull onto the berm.

Don't wait for your wife to recommend a marriage conference to strengthen your relationship. Get her in for preventative service. Take the initiative and suggest attending a weekend retreat. Here are a couple suggestions:

[Weekend To Remember](#) (use code 'GrowInGrace' to \$\$ave)

[Love like You Mean It](#) (July 24 & 25, 2026 .. >> [details](#))

- AE ❤️