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Jesus, the Church & Us:

Keeping Your Marriage Strong While Serving in Ministry

WARREN AND SONYA JACOBS



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Christians are supposed to have healthy marriages, right?
Are marriages within ministry leaders struggling? If so, why?

What happens when a leader in ministry has a failed marriage?
What is hurting our marriages?
How do we protect our marriages?

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The Problems Marriages Face

What are the top problems facing marriages according to the *Marriage Health in America* study? The findings largely align with other studies of marriage health, including reports from the National Marriage Project, the Gottman Institute, and Pew Research. Across all four segments of the survey, the ten highest reported marriage problems included:

1. ***Sexual issues/lack of sexual intimacy***
2. ***Stress***
3. ***Busy schedules/Not enough 1:1 time***
4. ***Health/Medical issues***
5. ***Financial issues/Income struggles***
6. ***Lack of emotional intimacy/Deep connection***
7. ***Mental health/Depression/Anxiety/PTSD***
8. ***Communication problems (general)***
9. ***Work-life balance/Career***
10. ***Loneliness/Loveless marriage/Growing apart***

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Marriages within ministry have additional challenges

- **Spiritual Warfare**
- **It's Jesus and His church**
  I am working for/serving God – not just a job
- **Constant availability expectations:**
  Ministry often demands long hours, frequent evening and weekend commitments, and being "on call" for crises.
- **Neglect of the marriage:**
  The spouse can feel neglected or resentful when the church receives more attention than the family.
- **Difficulty setting boundaries:** Many ministers struggle to say "no," leading to burnout and emotional distance at home.

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Keeping Your Marriage Strong While Serving in Ministry

What does it mean to be strong?

- Structural solid, able to withstand pressure

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How do you know if you’re ok/strong?

First stop – is your oxygen mask on

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H - Hungry

A - Angry

L - Lonely

T - Tired

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- Emotionally
- Mentally
- Spiritually
- Physically

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- So you have done an intentional self check…

- What is a healthy check up on a marriage?

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5 steps to a strong marriage

1. Bring your best self
2. Do not neglect the marriage
3. Date your spouse
4. Love your spouse well – fill their tank
5. Healthy boundaries

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This quote changed our marriage ❤️
Craig Groeschel · Follow
Never neglect your marriage. ❤️

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Take personal responsibility to

1. Bring your BEST SELF to the marriage

    ARE YOU HEALTHY

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2. Don’t neglect the marriage -

MARRIAGE IS YOUR FIRST MINISTRY

WORK LIFE BALANCE

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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3. Date your spouse

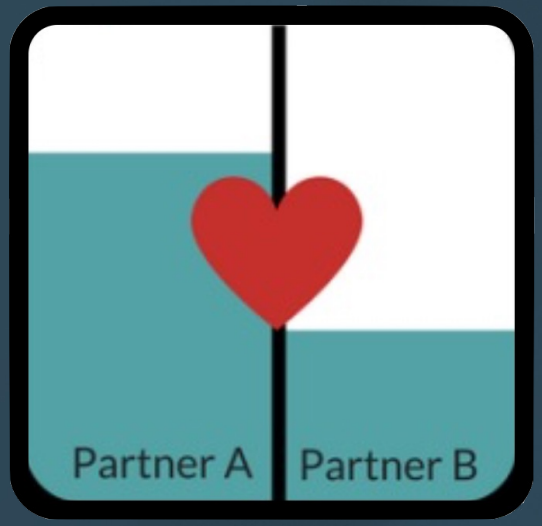
7 – 7 – 7 challenge

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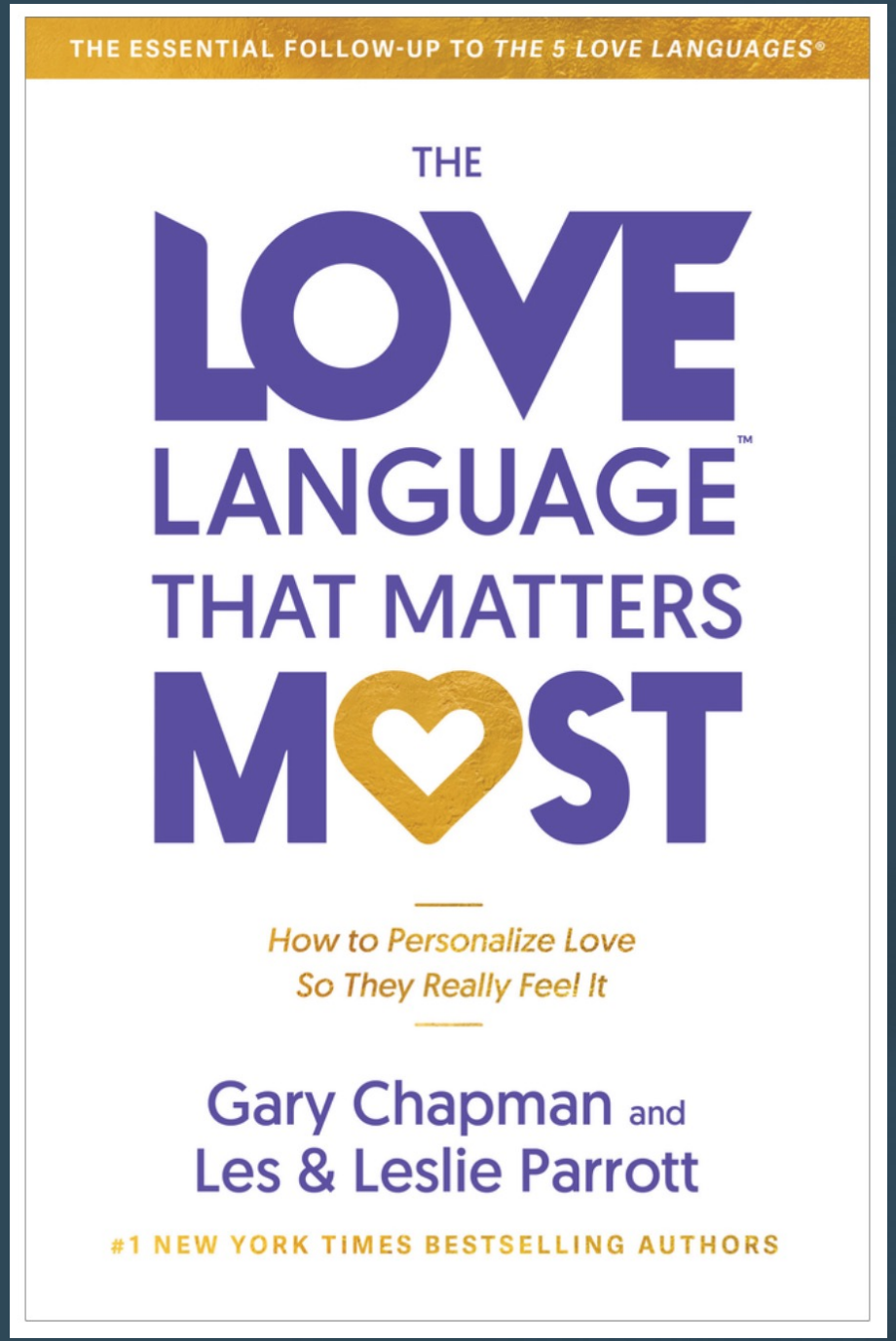
4. Do not just love your spouse – love them well!

Love language dialects

Different tanks require different fuel



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THE ESSENTIAL FOLLOW-UP TO THE 5 LOVE LANGUAGES®
THE
LOVE
LANGUAGE™
THAT MATTERS
MOST
How to Personalize Love
So They Really Feel It
Gary Chapman and
Les & Leslie Parrott
#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHORS

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HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

- Leave your work at work. Transition and bring your best at home.
- If it is your day off, it is your day off. You are modeling for those you lead. Make it clear that unless there is a valid emergency (which you will need to define), the situation can wait until the next working day.
- Don’t make your spouse compete for your attention to ministry
- Gary chapman story: schedule…

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BOUNDARIES

Fight unhealthy boundaries:

- Never be alone with the opposite sex. Never. That means lunch, dinner, etc.
- Privacy creates intimacy

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HOW AND WHEN TO GET HELP

Among those in *unhealthy marriage* relationships, only 14% sought a moderate amount of help or more, while among those in a marriage crisis state, **only 17% sought a moderate amount of help** or more.

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ENJOY YOUR MARRIAGE
"Marriage is meant to be enjoyed, not endured."
WARREN JACOBS
SONYA JACOBS, MABC
TrustedSite
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You can promote or boost a post while using your main profile. To see more, switch to Enjoy Your Marriage.