



“Surviving the Highs and Lows of Marriage”  
PANEL DISCUSSION // February 23-24, 2019

## INTRODUCTION

This week we were blessed to hear from a panel of married couples with over 165 years of marriage experience! We listened, we laughed and we learned. Below is the complete list of potential questions that we had for our panel. We hope they serve as the basis for great discussion among your group!

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- A. Dating & courtship
- B. Conflict in marriage
- C. Staying in love
- D. Tragedies/life stages
- E. Avoiding divorce/keep marriage strong

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### A. Dating & Courtship (aka “The Early Years”☺)

1. Thinking back to before you were married, how did you know he or she was **“THE ONE”**? (i.e., what were you looking for that you saw in him/her?)
2. What was the **BIGGEST SURPRISE FOR YOU** in the early years of your marriage?
3. If you could offer **ONE PIECE OF ADVICE** about the time **BEFORE** you were married (or perhaps before meeting your spouse) to our **STUDENT** and **SINGLE** crowd, what would it be?

### B. Conflict in marriage (Money, Sex, In-laws, Kids, Communication)

1. What things do **YOU FIGHT** about the most? **What’s been one of your BIGGEST** fights?
2. What advice can you give about **HOW** to fight/resolve conflict in your marriage? **What do you do when you don’t see eye to eye on something BIG?** (\*Bonus: Are there some conflicts/arguments/places you just don’t engage in? Why?)
3. How do you avoid letting **IN-LAWS** negatively impact your marriage? How do **you avoid BEING “that in-law”** that sabotages the marriage of your kids? ☺
4. How much does your **FAMILY OF ORIGIN** impact the way you relate to one another?

### C. Staying in love (Balancing Faith, Marriage, Kids, Work, Schedules, etc.)

1. What are 1-2 things that, in your mind, have allowed you to stay in love with your spouse over the years?
2. How do/did you deal with the pressures of Work/Kids/Schedules?
3. **If "1) God, 2) Spouse, 3) Kids" is the ideal order: HOW were you able to do that/keep healthy priorities?**
4. **Sometimes it's easy to fall into a rut--What things have you done to keep your marriage "fresh" along the way?**
5. Did you find that you had DIFFERENT PARENTING/DISCIPLINE styles and how did you resolve it?
6. **Once you reach the 35 year mark...you've got this Staying in Love thing figured out, right? ☺ What's something you are working on in your marriage in THIS SEASON?**

### D. Tragedies/life stages

1. **What's one of the most difficult things you've faced in your marriage? (loss?)**
2. How do/did you prepare **for "transitions"** -- your next stage or season, e.g. first child, empty nest, aging?
3. What impact has your FAITH had on your marriage? And what impact has YOUR MARRIAGE had on your FAITH? (\*Bonus: How important do you think it is to have the same religious beliefs to have a healthy/enduring marriage?)
4. How important is FRIENDSHIP with each other — and friendships with other couples--in your marriage? (i.e., on a regular basis, or supporting you in a STORM of life)

### E. Avoiding divorce/keep marriage strong

1. Is it ok to have separate friend groups/go out with your friends separately? How much is too much? What about friends of the opposite sex? What BOUNDARIES or GUARDRAILS have been helpful for you?
2. How do you think SOCIAL MEDIA can help or hurt your marriage?
3. How have you benefitted from either MODELS, MENTORS, or COUNSEL to help you learn what a great marriage could be?
4. You have the opportunity to encourage thousands of people this weekend here and online — from high schoolers dreaming about marriage, to single adults, to couples at all stages of marriage and family. What is the ONE THING — the one piece of advice, the MOST IMPORTANT LESSON about marriage — that you would want us to walk away with today?

### Key Scripture:

Therefore, if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. <sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus. **Philippians 2:1-5**

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Share prayer requests, and commit to praying for one another until you next meet.