



We come to the fourth principle in the COUPLE anagram. This ties all the three preceding ones together. We can talk about this while some of the women are at retreat and you can be great peacemakers when they get back and show what you learned in Sunday School.

Connectivity

- * Closeness
- * Openness
- * Understanding

We've discussed becoming connected to our wives through Closeness, Openness, and Understanding. There is a fourth principle that may be the most important as it brings the actions of all the other three together. That fourth principle is...

PEACEMAKING

- ✦ Without peace she...
 - ✦ won't feel close
 - ✦ doesn't feel you're open
 - ✦ thinks you don't understand

If there is a rift, conflict or sense of tension then the two of you are not fully at peace.

Without peace in your relationship she won't feel close and doesn't feel that you're open, and will think that you don't understand

By being the peacemaker in the relationship you will then exhibit all the other three principles through this one action. You will need the attributes to become a peacemaker. You will have to become close to her and open up as you apologize and show your understanding as you do those things

God intended some conflict to exist in marriage

1COR 7:3-4

Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

1COR 7:28

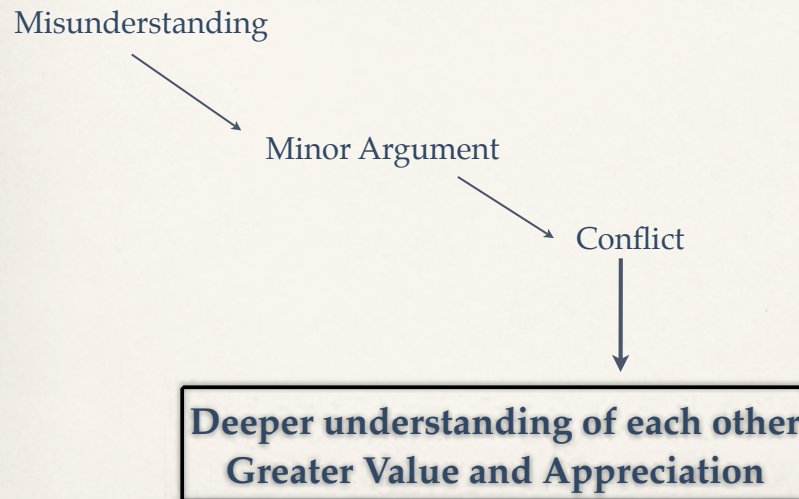
If you marry... "you will have trouble in this life."

Believe it or not, conflict is biblically based and ordained by God. It was meant for us to go through conflict so that through that we can become one flesh.

It is not too different than what Jim has been discussing in our testing from God. This is along those same lines whereby we get tested and by working through that testing our faith is strengthened.

The same can be said of conflict. By experiencing conflict and working through it we become stronger and more loving toward our spouse.

A Degree of Conflict Can Maintain Passion

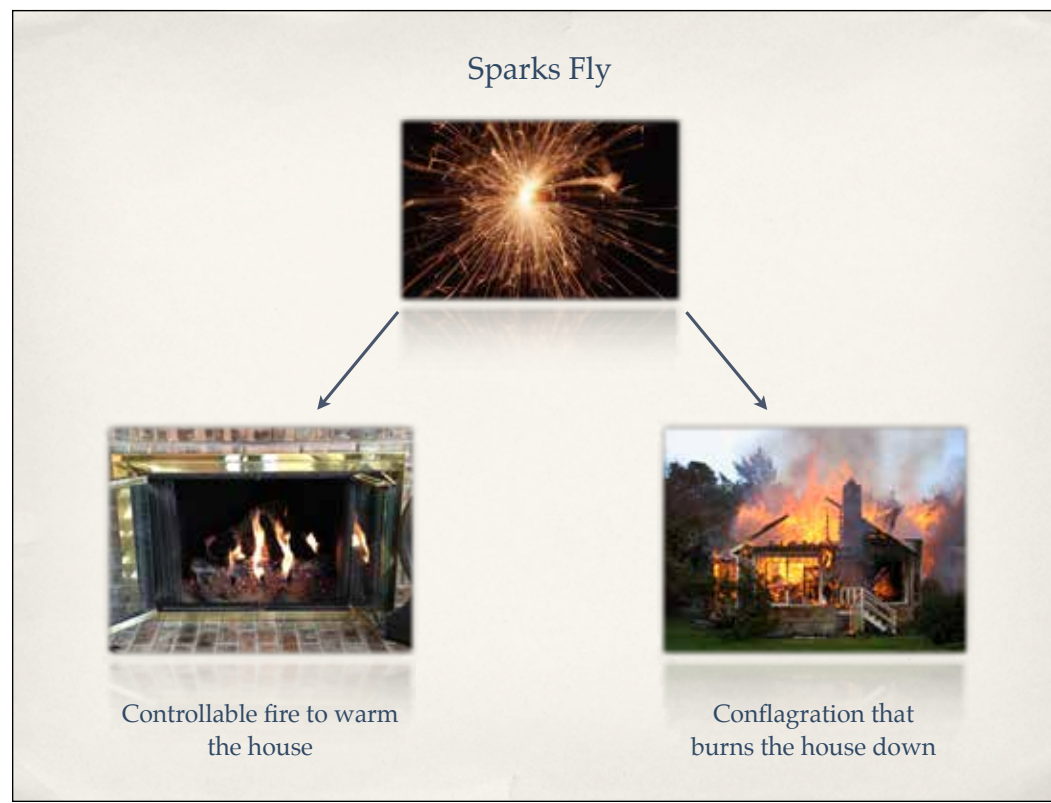


This is an example of how we come into conflict and what is on the other side

Misunderstanding can lead to a minor argument.

Minor argument will lead to a conflict.

Working through the conflict together can deepen their understanding of each other and as that understanding is deepened we get a greater sense of appreciation of the other and see greater value in the relationship and in the other person.



Another way of looking at this is that when there is conflict, sparks can fly. Depending on how these sparks are handled will determine the outcome.

They can become a controllable fire that can warm the house. OR

They can become a wildfire that burns the house down.

We all must realize that sparks are going to be there, it is how we control them that will determine the outcome

Work it Out

- * When conflict exists she will recognize it sooner than you
 - * will feel rejected in a way you won't
 - * like Judah in exile - ISA 54:6
 - * "grieved in spirit" and "rejected"
- * Needs it resolved to be "connected"
 - * as before FACE to FACE = HEART to HEART

Husband and wife can both work this out but we need to know how our wives see and feel the conflict in ways that we don't.

She will recognize this much sooner and feel it deeper than you will

In Isaiah the prophet speaks of Israel's separation from God in terms of a husband and wife and in 54:6 he states that she is deserted, grieved in spirit and feeling rejected

She needs the peace or resolution to feel connected and the only way to do that is to work it out face to face. This then becomes one of those situations where she feels your heart as you are coming near to her.

This is a very precious and powerful thing for her

Principle for Dealing with Conflict

1COR 7:3-4

Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

- * Your body belongs to the other
- * Sexual relations prevent falling into temptation and immorality outside of marriage
- * Each has different needs

Conflict is not a sign of a bad marriage but running from it can lead to that and to the uncontrollable fire.

Paul states in Corinthians that our bodies are not for ourselves but for the other. He is writing this specifically because some in Corinth thought that celibacy was the ultimate in a Christian marriage. He specifically refutes that and encourages sexual relations between husbands and wives to prevent temptation and immorality outside the marriage. This is to cement that bond so when conflict exists, it is harder to tear that bond apart.

This verse also speaks to different needs of the two individuals. Each should not act independently of the other and should act together to solve the conflict.

- ❖ God let's us have conflict so that working out the tensions will deepen the relationship

EPH 5:21

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ

- ❖ It is also shows devotion to Christ

Another reason to pursue the resolution of conflict has to do with our desire to show reverence to Christ. Paul lays this out in 5:21 which is the beginning of the section that we have been alluding to over all these weeks.

She Won't Just "Drop it"

- * She needs to resolve conflict
 - * Conversation is what brings peace to her
- * Just "drop it" to her means you're still angry
 - * she can't feel peace
- * "I'm sorry, will you forgive me?"

She needs to resolve conflict with open, understanding dialog. Conversation is what brings peace to her.

Men tend to want to just drop it and move on. It is how we frequently deal with other men but it will not work with our wives and it should not be practiced that way either.

When you say just "drop it", your wife thinks that you are still angry with her and that things are unresolved and therefore she can't feel peace.

Learn to say "I'm sorry" and to ask forgiveness. The proportion of blame is not important, it is important to ask forgiveness of ANY of the blame that own. The issue is Love and Respect, not the amount of guilt that exists

Hard for a Man to say “I’m Sorry”

- ✦ He needs to mean it
- ✦ Saying sorry doesn’t mean he will lose respect
- ✦ 1PET 3:8 - *To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kind hearted, and humble in spirit.*
- ✦ Humbly expressing sorrow for what you did can melt your wife’s heart.

Elton John I don’t think is a Christian but he certainly has the right words in this song

You need to mean it when you say “sorry”. She will know and sense if you really mean it.

You will not lose respect by saying you are sorry.

Peter tells us how to act towards our wives. This verse comes right after 3:7 where we are commanded to live with our wives in an understanding way, which we spoke about a couple of weeks ago.

Melt her heart with humble expression of sorrow.

Short Course on Peacemaking

1. Have absolute confidence in the power of your loving demeanor

- ✦ PROV 15:1 - *A gentle answer turns away wrath...*
- ✦ Loving demeanor during conflict will touch the deepest part of her heart
- ✦ Make “giving in” sincere

The key here is your demeanor and your heart. She knows and can feel your sincerity.

Be sure that when you “give in” you are sincere. She will know if you are not and you will have gained nothing, and maybe worsened things

Short Course on Peacemaking

2. You will make peace with her when you don't blame her but instead confess your part of the blame

- * JAM 5:16 - *Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.*
- * Admit when you are wrong, try to understand her point of view
- * Women are wired for equality
- * Since men are Christ figure she will trust you and your words when you are sincere.

Women are wired for equality and because of that, when you apologize for your wrongdoing they will frequently meet you halfway with her wrongdoing as well. This will lead to that heart to heart conversation we spoke about earlier.

Since men are the Christ figure in the relationship, when you offer sincere words of apology, forgiveness, and love she will trust your words and trust you and you will once again be soul mates and experience the connectivity that God intended for marriage.

She will feel at peace with you when...

- * you let her vent her frustrations and hurts and don't get angry and close her off
- * you never nurse bitterness and always reassure her of your love
- * you admit you are wrong and apologize by saying, "I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?"
- * you understand her natural desire to negotiate, compromise, and defer, and you meet her halfway.