

Inviting Heaven into Your Marriage

H. Wallace Goddard
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1st Session: Higher than Commitment: The Power of Covenants

A. Commit time and talents

- Each of us can bring our whole soul as an offering (Omni 1:26)

B. Commit thoughts and feelings

C. The 3-way covenant: Husband, Wife, and God as a vital partner in any healthy marriage

2nd Session: “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34-35)

A. The core command: Love as He loves

B. Be as wise as serpents (Matthew 10:16; D&C 111:11)

C. By kindness and pure knowledge (D&C 121:42)

3rd Session: Looking on Your Partner with Compassion

A. Jesus went the extra mile so that His compassion would be fully informed (Alma 7:11-12, Hebrews 4:15-16).

B. He asks us to follow His example:

“...lift up the hands that hang down...” (D&C 81:5; see also D&C 82:19; 108:7).

C. Bring compassion to marriage

UNHELPFUL responses:

- Giving advice: “What you need to do is . . .”
- Talking about your own feelings and experiences instead of theirs: “That same thing happened to me. . . .”
- Making their pain seem unimportant: “Everyone suffers. What makes you so special?”

HELPFUL ways of showing understanding:

- Acknowledge your partner’s feelings: “I can see that you feel strongly about this.”
- Invite more discussion: “I would like to understand. Please tell me more.”
- Acknowledge that your partner’s pain is real for him or her: “You must feel awful.”

4th Session: Putting Off the Natural Man: Turning Challenges Into Blessings

The Prophet Joseph Smith stated, “The nearer we get to our (H)eavenly Father, the more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls; we feel that we want to take them upon our shoulders, and cast their sins behind our backs” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 241).

A. Yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit: being open to your partner

- Mosiah 3: 18-19
- The test of edification: D&C 50:23-24

B. The rights of the Priesthood can only be handled upon principles of righteousness (D&C 121:36-46) as also our marriages should be (see also “The Family: A Proclamation to the World”)

- Satan’s predictable negativity/fight pattern: the cascade of accusation and contention (Mosiah 2:32; 3 Nephi 11:29).

C. All things work together for good to them that love God

- Make creative (vs. destructive) use of differences.
- Acceptance and celebration
 - 80% positive; dealing with the other 20%
- Find a common purpose.

Essential reading: D&C 121

Recommended reading: John Gottman’s *7 Principles for Making Marriage Work*