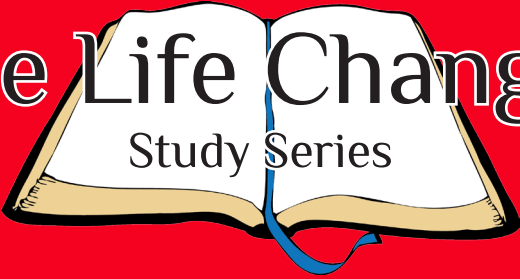


The Life Changer

Study Series



Marriage

Does God care about marriage? Certainly. He created it! You've probably heard, nearly half of all marriages now end in divorce, leaving bitter spouses and confused children in their aftermath. Don't let this happen to you! God has a vested interest in insuring that you have a happy home. Whether your marriage is going through tough times or is experiencing a long season of happiness, God's words about marriage are worthy of our deepest contemplation. How wonderful that the Bible gives us practical advice for marriage. Not only does the Bible tell us how to have eternal life, but how to make our home here on earth happy.



Lesson 18

① Q1. What advice does the Bible give to a newly married man and woman to safeguard their new marriage and at the same time maintain a respectful relationship with their parents? Read Genesis 2:24.

A. _____

Establish your own private home. God's rule is specific: a married couple should leave their father and mother and establish their own home, even if finances require that it be a one-room apartment. Thousands of divorces would be avoided if this rule were carefully followed. In-laws are precious people, but a couple improperly bonds when in-laws are too near and too involved. Both bride and groom must be careful to realign loyalties and give first allegiance to their new spouse.

② Q2. What simple advice does the Bible give to husbands and wives about how to love one another? Read Ephesians 5:25, 28, 33; Proverbs 31:28 and Romans 12:10.

A. _____

Successful marriages do not just happen; they must be developed. Many couples make the mistake of thinking that love is just a feeling. But love is also duty and devotion. Love is greatest when love serves. We will never find real love and happiness if we are only seeking to satisfy ourselves. But we will find them if we focus on giving them to others. To maintain your relationship, spend as much time as possible doing things together. Learn to greet each other with enthusiasm. Relax, visit, shop, sightsee, and by all means eat together. Don't overlook the little courtesies, encouragements, and affectionate acts that make life beautiful. Surprise each other with little favors. Bring flowers home to her, cook his favorite dish. Try to "out love" each other. Don't take more out of marriage than you put into it.

- ① Q3. Should religious life and married life be kept separate? Read Psalm 37:3, 4; 127:1.

A. _____

The greatest thing you can do for your home is invite God to organize your lives and home around His principles of love and unity. The real secret of true happiness in the home is not riches or effort to overcome problems, but rather, union with Christ. Philippians 4:7 says, “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Peace in the home, starts with being at peace with God. Hearts filled with Christ's love can never be very far apart. With Christ in the home, your marriage will be successful. The gospel is the cure for all marriages that are filled with hatred, bitterness, and disappointment. It prevents thousands of divorces by miraculously restoring love and purpose.

- ① Q4. What if my spouse isn't a believer in Jesus? What should I do? Read 1 Corinthians 7:12-14.

A. _____

Your job is to love, serve and enjoy your spouse. Yes, God expects that you would pray for them. Set an example of patience and prayer. Yes, it may be lonely, because your spouse may not wish to read what you are reading or talk about what you are interested in. It may mean you don't share certain habits anymore if your spouse smokes or drinks alcohol. But just as Jesus hung around the “sinful” people without judging them, pray for grace to do the same. Here are five points shared by one believer with a non-believing spouse:

- ① **Live honestly.** In living out my faith in Jesus, I let my husband see me stumble and struggle. He knows I struggle with fear, and that I sin regularly and often, yet he also knows I desire not to.

Most importantly he sees that I trust in Christ for forgiveness. I live honestly in front of him, not trying to appear better than I am. I trust God's grace. That way, he sees that a Christian's life is one of grace alone, rather than living by a set of rigid rules. Any changes in me aren't by my effort, but by Christ living in me.

- 2 **Honor your marriage.** I'm careful not to talk negatively about my spouse to anyone, and when he's home, he's my priority. This often means passing up social events I dearly want to attend. I seek opportunities to enjoy my spouse and build him up, convinced he's God's gift to me.
- 3 **Pray, pray, pray.** Prayer is my link to God's presence, power, wisdom, and comfort. My favorite scripture that I use when I pray is Ezekiel 36:26; that God will take my spouse's heart of stone and replace it with a heart of flesh. Another favorite is Isaiah 30:21: "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'" Although it's hard to pinpoint specific answers to prayer for my partner, I've seen his attitude toward spiritual things change drastically over the years. We often talk openly and freely about God.
- 4 **Find a support system.** Surround yourself with other believers who'll pray with and for you. Also, study the Bible with a friend or small group. Attend church as often as you are able.
- 5 **Never give up hope.** God offers everyone the same gift of salvation and eternal life. Some choose to accept it, and others don't. But all who accept the gift do so in God's timing, not ours. God knows what He's doing.
- ? Q5. What if my spouse wants to divorce me because of my faith? Read 1 Corinthians 7:15-17.

A. _____

Obviously divorce is a last resort. It needs to be the choice of the unbelieving spouse. The Scriptures say the aim is that "God has called you to peace." Be willing to sit and share your convictions with your spouse and tell them of your love for them. They may not understand or even be willing to listen to your new faith. But let them see your joy in God and delight in His laws. Your first and highest loyalties must be to God and his righteous commandments.

② Q6. How are my thoughts important to my marriage? Read Exodus 20:17 and Philippians 4:8.

A. _____

The wrong kind of thinking will destroy your marriage. The devil will trap you with thoughts like these: "Our marriage was a mistake," "She doesn't understand me," "I can't take much more of this," "We can always divorce if necessary," "I'll go home to mother," or "He smiled at that woman." Stop thinking thoughts like these or your marriage is gone, because your thoughts and senses govern your actions. Jealousy and blame are two tools Satan loves to work with. Avoid things that diminish the seriousness of impurity and unfaithfulness as seen on TV, or hearing by gossip, or reading in novels. Thoughts uncontrolled are like an automobile in neutral on an Istanbul hill. Anything can happen, and the result is always disaster.



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



It was about a half kilometer walk from the Metro to Fatma's house and Ekrem walked the distance this night without thinking much about it. His mind was full of many other thoughts.

It had been nearly four weeks since Ekrem's auto accident. It seemed a miracle that his head was healing so well, and he praised God for the recovery that he had made. Ekrem hadn't been able to attend the

Bible study during that time, but each member from the group had visited him at different times and prayed with him. He and his wife Filiz heard the doctor's comment that they were surprised that his head had healed so quickly, and they felt sure it was because of the prayers of their friends.

If his recovery seemed miraculous, he was beginning to think the accident itself was a peculiar gift of God. From the time of his accident something began to spark in Ekrem's and Filiz's marriage that wasn't there before.

For years he had not enjoyed being around his own wife. Filiz's sarcasm and constant criticism pointed toward him made life unpleasant throughout their sixteen years of marriage. By her looks and words he constantly felt disrespected. For example when they would be with friends or Filiz's family, she would speak about him like he was a failure. It was true that he had a hard time maintaining steady work, but nonetheless, it was shameful for a wife to belittle her husband like she was in the habit of doing.

This created another problem in their marriage. Filiz's bad words made Ekrem rarely treat his wife with love. He didn't feel like being tender or sympathetic with her because she seemed like all thorns and no rose.

Though Filiz had developed a thorny exterior she did have feelings. She never spoke it but Ekrem's lack of love made her angry. Ekrem resented having married such a hard woman, and she felt it and life became all the harder.

Truly she was hard. When Filiz got the call that Ekrem was in the hospital, she immediately ridiculed him to her neighbor, "He is so stupid. He has always been a rotten driver now we won't have a car."

So the years of their life were filled with many loud fights, cutting words and threats against one another.

But the accident had been good for Filiz.

Arriving at the hospital, she found her husband in such critical condition he couldn't even talk to her. He had tubes coming in and out of him, and his face was bruised and cut. She had prepared to enter the room and make a witty cutting remark like, "You'll do anything to get out of work wouldn't you." But when she entered he wasn't even conscious. She sat next to his still form. The silence began to penetrate her hard heart.

Soon a nurse came to change his bandages. It shocked Filiz to see the extent of the cuts and bruises on his head. Feliz watched as the nurse cared for him in an especially gentle way. Watching this other woman's hands so gently help her husband pierced Filiz's heart, not with jealousy but with remorse. Here was this simple women, a total stranger, acting more kindly toward her husband then she had ever been! As she watched this nurse change her husband's head dressing with sympathetic gestures, Filiz realized what she had lacked. (To be Continued)

- Q7. What are some destructive behaviors that the Scriptures tell us to avoid when relating to our spouse? Read Colossians 3:19 and Proverbs 21:19, 27:15.

A. _____

Remember that criticism and nagging destroy love. Stop criticizing, nagging, and faultfinding. Your husband or wife may lack much, but nagging won't help. Don't expect perfection, or bitterness will result. Overlook faults, and hunt for the good things. Don't try to reform, control, or compel your partner--you will destroy love. Only God can change people. A sense of humor, a cheerful heart, kindness, patience, and affection will eliminate two-thirds of your marriage problems. Try to make your spouse happy rather than good, and the good will take care of itself. The secret of a successful marriage lies not in having the right partner, but rather in being the right partner.

- ② Q8. What does the Bible say about the destructive nature of anger and what to do about it? Read Ephesians 4:26; James 5:16; Philippians 3:13 and Ephesians 4:32.

A. _____

God uses the marriage relationship to make us more like Christ. One of the biggest lessons we learn from Christ is to forgive. While on the cross Jesus prayed for His tormentors, "Father forgive them." To remain angry and upset over hurts and grievances (big or little) is dangerous and not like Jesus. Unless quickly solved, even little problems become set in your mind as convictions and attitudes adversely affecting your whole philosophy of life. This is why God says to let anger cool before going to bed for the night. Here are three important rules that work equally well in marriage, friendship and parenting:

- ① **Be big enough to forgive.** Extend the forgiveness God has given you to others (Matthew 6:12).
- ② **Be brave enough to say with sincerity, "I'm sorry."** After all, no one is perfect, and you are both on the same team, so be honest to admit a mistake when you make it. Typically the sooner we can recognize our fault the better.
- ③ **Be humble enough to accept someone else's apology.** Sometimes we are just evil enough that we wish we could use another person's faults against them again and again in an argument! If someone has apologized, we must forgive and forget.

- ② Q9. Is divorce a solution for most marriage problems? Read Matthew 19:4-9.

A. _____

The ties of marriage are meant to be indissoluble and indestructible. Even in situations of adultery divorce is permitted, but not demanded.

Why? Because forgiveness is often better than divorce in the case of a moral fall. Marriage is for life. God so ordained it when He performed the first wedding in Eden. Thoughts of divorce as a solution will destroy any marriage. Divorce is destructive and almost never a solution to the problem. Instead, it creates much greater problems.

① Q10. What does the Bible have to say about sex outside of marriage? Is it allowed if someone intends to get married? Read Hebrews 13:4 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

A. _____

Everyone knows that adultery is a sin (Exodus 20:14). Some people believe that sex by single individuals before marriage is permitted by God. Sex before marriage, premarital sexual “play,” or perversion through pornographic images are all considered fornication. The Greek “ pornos ” is broader in meaning than the word “ fuhus ” that the translators used and is distinguished from adultery in these texts because both are mentioned separately. God says these are sinful and destructive. These acts leave a person defiled and must be repented of to be in right-standing before God. All sexual sins are really sins against one’s own body and mind. They are detrimental to the future happiness of a person whether married or single. If someone loses their virginity before marriage they have deprived the future spouse of that purity. Many women have been promised marriage only to be abandoned after they have given themselves sexually. “ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins ” (1 John 1:9).

① Q11. What does the Bible have to say about sex in marriage? Read 1 Corinthians 7:3-5.

A. _____

Sex was created by God. It was intended for good, and the pleasure of a husband and wife. Spouses should not withhold sex from a partner to get revenge or to manipulate the partner. Likewise a husband should not

compromise his wife's spiritual, physical or mental health by demanding sexual abuses that destroy a love for holy things and weaken vitality. Marriage gives no license to sexual excesses. Degrading, twisted, or intemperate sex acts destroy love and respect for one another. A temperate sex life is recommended by the Bible. Overdoing or underdoing in anything weakens the mind, body, conscience, and the ability to love and respect one another. Don't let intemperance wreck your marriage.

② Q12. How does the Bible describe true love? How can you make it your daily goal to live by these principles? Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

A. _____

Love is not a sentimental impulse, but a holy principle that involves every phase and action of life. With true love, your marriage cannot fail. Without it, it cannot succeed.

② Q13. How can proper habits help a marriage? Read 1 Timothy 5:8 and Proverbs 31:10, 13, 15, 27.

A. _____

Good work habits help a home run well. God says in 1 Corinthians 14:39-40 that “everything is to be done decently and in order.” Orderly times for work, sleep, and socializing bring happiness to a home. The Bible also encourages us toward good habits of cleanliness. Cleanliness and order also contribute toward positive mental health. Laziness, disorder, and dirtiness are the devil's weapons to destroy your respect and affection for one another, and thus ruin your marriage. Neat, modest attire and clean, well-groomed bodies are essential for both husband and wife. The meals should be wholesome, attractive, and served on time. The home should be clean and orderly, because this brings peace, calmness, and satisfaction to all.



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



Ekrem arrived at Fatma's apartment an hour late for the Bible study. He had been working long hours to earn extra money he lost during the time of his accident. But he was glad he could still find time to meet with the group. As he entered the apartment, he noted who was present at the group by looking at their shoes gathered in the entryway. When he entered the living room everyone stood to their feet and kissed him. Filiz had come early and had spent the afternoon cooking with Türkan. Ekrem sat next to his wife, she smiled at him warmly and said, "I am glad you made it. The study has been really good."

Ekrem thought to himself how different that greeting was from what he had experienced so many times over the years of his marriage. He felt so respected and so encouraged. Mehmet was leading the study that night and he had Ekrem read out loud Proverbs 5:18, "May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth." Ekrem reached out for Filiz's hand. She let him hold it, and all the group was surprised for a moment as they hadn't seen affection displayed between them before. God was at work.

? Q14. How should we communicate with our spouse? Read Proverbs 15:1 and Titus 3:2.

A. _____

Determine to speak softly and kindly. Force yourself to speak softly and kindly to your spouse. Silence, when one is attacked, is often the best method to cool wrath. Decisions made when angry, tired, or discouraged are unreliable anyway, so it's best to relax and let anger cool. And when you do speak, let it always be quietly and lovingly. Harsh, angry words crush your spouse's desire to please you.

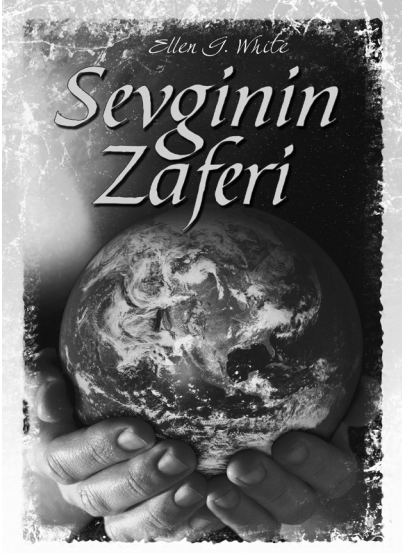
Good marriages rarely just happen. They are made by conscientious dedication of the marriage partners. Won't you commit to making the

changes necessary in your life to make a happy home for your spouse? This will call for sacrifice and self-discipline on your part which isn't always easy. God will give you the victory if you ask Him. He desires for you to have a happy home.

Call to commitment through prayer.

Notes

SEVGİNİN ZAFERİ



Kötülüğün kaynağı, henüz çözülememiş bir sırdır. Neden kötülük var? Nereden geliyor? Kötülüğün bir sonu olacak mı? Bunlar yanıtlanması gereken çok önemli sorulardır.

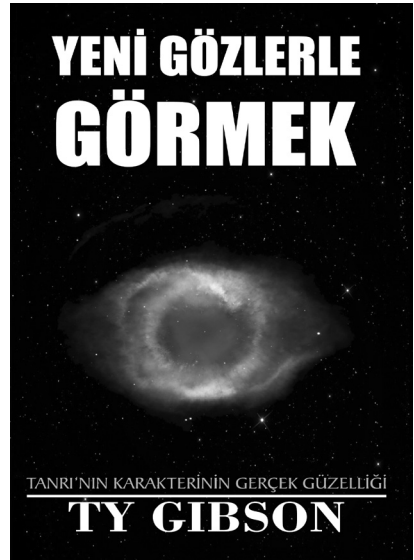
Büyük mücadele, görünen dünyayı, görünmeyen dünyadan ayıran perdeyi aralamakta ve bu dünyanın tüm sakinlerinin dahil olduğu doğüstü savaşı gözler önüne ermektedir.

Kitap, uğrunda savaştıkları şey için çok önemli olan iki tarafın, iyinin ve kötünün arasında geçen evrensel savaşın nasıl başladığından ve nasıl sonlandırılacağından bahsetmektedir. Geçmişten, şimdiki zamandan ve gelecekte söz etmekte, çok dokunaklı bir ricayla ve ciddi bir uyarıyla sona ermektedir. Bu kitabı okurken, sanki Tanrı ile röportaj yapıyormuş hissine kapılacaksınız.

Güzel olduğu kadar şok edici bir yolculuğa çıkmaya hazırlanın. Okuduktan sonra artık aynı kişi olmayacaksınız.

YENİ GÖZLERLE GÖRMEK

Pek çok şeyi görebilmek için, kişinin gözleri açık olmalıdır. Fakat Allah ile öyle değil. Gözlerinizi çok fazla açarsanız ya da çok fazla yakından bakarsanız, O'nu gördüğünüzü düşünürken aslında O'nu gözden kaçırabilirsiniz. Pek çoğumuz tam da bu hatayı yaparız. Allah'ı görmeyi umarak insanlara bakarız. Dinlere bakarız. Hatta aynaya bakarız. Kaçınılmaz olarak da hayal kırıklığına uğrarız, zira İlahî Kişi'nin daha güzel bir resmini ummuştuk. Sayısız insan Allah'tan dönmüştür, çünkü O'nu bir kişide ya da bir toplulukta gördüklerini sanmışlardır... ve açıkçası gördüklerinden hoşlanmamışlardır. Elinizde tuttuğunuz kitap Allah hakkındadır.





EN ZENGİN MAĞARA ADAMI

Milyoner bir baba ile gösteri dünyasında çalışan bir annenin oğulları olan genç Doug Batchelor, paranın satın alabileceği her şeye sahipti. Mutluluk hariç her şeye. Uyuşturucu kullandı, okulda kavgalar çıkardı ve intihar düşüncesiyle hayaller kurdu. Kendinden tiksinen ve hayatın hiçbir amacı olmadığına inanan Doug, yaşayabileceği tüm eğlence ve heyecanları yaşamayı kafasına koydu.

Arayışı sona ermeden önce dağlarda bulunan bir mağara, evi oldu. Babasının sahip olduğu yata, jete ve havayolu firmasına rağmen, Doug kendini çöp tenekelerinde yiyecek ararken buldu.

Doug'un aradığı mutluluk sürekli kendisinden kaçıyor, ta ki bir "arayışçı" dostun mağarasında bıraktığı tozlu bir kitabı bulup okuyana dek. Bundan sonra olanlar ancak mucize olarak açıklanabilir.

BİNLERCESİ KIRILACAK

Franz Hasel, 40 yaşındaki bir pasifist, ön cephelerde köprüler kuran Hitler'in seçkin birliği 699. İstihkâm Bölüğüne atanmıştı. Dinî inancı üstleri tarafından pek hoş karşılanmamıştı. Kendisiyle "havuç yiyen" ve "İncil okuyan" diye alay edilmesine rağmen sonunda birliğinin saygısını kazanmıştı.

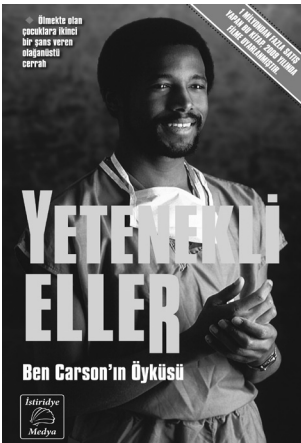
Çevrelerindeki binlerce insan savaşın dehşetine kurban giderken onlar meleklerin kanatları altındaydılar, hatta bazen gerçek anlamda. Bu, ne pahasına olursa olsun imanlı kalmayı seçen ve yüce Tanrı'nın gölgesinde sığınmak bulan çaresiz bir ailenin yürek parçalayan gerçek öyküsüdür.



YETENEKLİ ELLER

Dr. Ben Carson, beyin cerrahisindeki umut olmayan yere umut getiren yeniliklerle tüm dünyada tanınmaktadır. Yetenekli Eller'de, Detroit'in kenar mahallelerindeki çocukluğundan başlayarak, otuz üç yaşında Johns Hopkins Sağlık Kurumları'nda pediatrik beyin cerrahisi şefliğine uzanan ilham verici macerası anlatılıyor. Sizi, sayısız hayat kurtardığı ameliyathaneye götüren Ben Carson, görünürde imkânsız olanı başarmaya çalışan herkese örnek oluyor.

Etkileyici vaka tarihçeleriyle dolu olan bu çoksatır kitap, Ben Carson'un zorlukların üstesinden gelme çabasının ve onu günümüzün en büyük hayat kurtarıcılarının biri yapan iman ile dehanın dramatik ve ayrıntılı öyküsünü anlatıyor.





Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:1-5)



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and a product of Istiridye Medya.