

THE
10 COMMANDMENTS
OF MARRIAGE

*Practical Principles to Make
Your Marriage Great*

REFLECTING ON YOUR RELATIONSHIP

ED YOUNG

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COMMANDMENT 1

THOU SHALT BE SELFLESS

1. In what specific areas of your relationship with your spouse (or loved one) do you find yourself behaving or thinking selfishly?
2. What specific symptoms of selfishness can you identify in yourself?
3. What kinds of expectations do you have for your marriage and spouse? How can you begin communicating those expectations to him or her?
4. Take the love test of 1 Corinthians 13. Ask yourself if you're patient, kind, boastful, etc., to your spouse. In what areas do you need to improve?

COMMANDMENT 2

THOU SHALT HAVE NO STRINGS ATTACHED

If you are married:

1. On whom did you depend most before you married?
2. How has marriage affected that prior relationship?
3. Describe the greatest bond between you and your spouse.
4. What specific strings do you need to cut in order to intensify the bond between you and your spouse?

If you are contemplating or preparing for marriage:

1. On whom do you most depend right now?
2. How do you foresee that relationship changing once you are married?
3. Describe several areas of your lives where you and your beloved have grown together during courtship.
4. What strings do you need to cut as you prepare for marriage?

COMMANDMENT 3

THOU SHALT CONTINUALLY COMMUNICATE

1. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being nonexistent and 10 being excellent), rate the communication in your marriage.
2. How are you and your spouse at communicating your feelings and needs to each other?
3. Describe some hindrances to communication in your marriage.
4. What is your spouse's love language? How fluent would your partner say you are in his or her language?

COMMANDMENT 4

THOU SHALT MAKE CONFLICT THY ALLY

If you are married:

1. How has a conflict resulted in strengthening a weak point in your relationship with your spouse?
2. Are you a peacemaker or a prizefighter? Explain.
3. How do you need to change to make conflict an ally rather than an enemy?
4. How did your parents handle conflict when you were growing up? How has that pattern affected you?

If you are contemplating or preparing for marriage:

1. What conflicts or tension do you have in your relationship? (If you believe there are no conflicts, perhaps you or your beloved are not being open about your attitudes, preferences, or feelings.)
2. Do you express your disagreements to each other? Why or why not?
3. Discuss with your beloved those things that create tensions. Ask him or her to do the same.
4. Together, plan strategies to deal with conflicts in the future. Gottman's seven positive strategies may provide a good framework here.

COMMANDMENT 5

THOU SHALT AVOID

THE QUICKSAND OF MATERIALISM

1. What is the driving force of materialism in your family?
2. What purchase are you currently considering that you do not need?
3. What percentage of your income are you giving to the church?
4. How much is your current credit card debt? Noncredit card debt? What steps are you taking to get out of debt?

COMMANDMENT 6

THOU SHALT FLEE SEXUAL TEMPTATION— ONLINE AND OTHERWISE

1. Write your definition of sex. Would your understanding of sex be more in keeping with designer sex or cultural sex?
2. What rooftops tempt you most? What is your flight plan from this temptation?
3. What grade would you give the intimacy (sexual, emotional, and spiritual) in your marriage? What is one thing you and your mate can do to improve your grade?
4. Is your marriage built on the rock or the sand? Explain.

COMMANDMENT 7

THOU SHALT FORGIVE THY MATE—

490 TIMES AND MORE

1. In what specific areas of marriage do you have the most trouble obeying Jesus' command to forgive "seventy times seven" times?
2. List some of the little foxes that you need to forgive.
3. What usually blocks your willingness to forgive?
4. Why would God, who is perfect in holiness, allow you into His heaven, even though you have wronged Him with your sin?

COMMANDMENT 8

THOU SHALT ROMANCE THE HOME

1. How important is it to you to work on making your marriage a happy, passionate, loving one? Explain.
2. In what stage of marriage are you today? What steps do you need to take to move on to the next stage?
3. Do you consider your marriage a loving, passionate one now? Explain. What can you do to make it so?
4. In what areas of MATURE love are you strong? Explain. Where are you weak, and what can you do about it starting today?

COMMANDMENT 9

THOU SHALT BEGIN AGAIN AND AGAIN

1. What three things would you do differently if you could start your marriage over?
2. Which of the six steps to beginning again does your marriage need the most? Explain.
3. Would you consider your marriage warm and loving, hot and cold, or dry and barren? In what ways?
4. Have you hugged your husband or wife today?

COMMANDMENT 10

THOU SHALT BUILD A WINNING TEAM

1. If your marriage were indeed a college football team, where would it be ranked?
 - We're in the top five, vying for the championship.

 - We're in the top ten, thrown for a loss once in a while, but we're a winning team.

 - We win some, we lose some, but we could be a lot better.

 - We're losing more than we win; we don't let the Coach lead us in the day-to-day part of our marriage.

2. In what areas does your teammate need some coaching? What about you?

3. How do your family and friends provide fan support for your marriage?

4. What is the greatest strength of your marriage team?