

DAY ONE What's Your Foundation?

marriage factoid

-- Nearly nine in ten Americans will get married at some point in their life.

-- The average first marriage age is 25 years for women and 27 years for men.

-- Nearly two-thirds of all first marriages will succeed in lasting a lifetime.

take a note

Faulty Foundation

A shallow foundation for a marriage that rests on emotionally-based reasons that are unable to support a couple through trying times.

Separate Foundations

Two different foundations that result when a couple possesses conflicting definitions or reasons for their marriage. Over time, the gap between the two foundations becomes more obvious, and the impact on the quality of the relationship more severe.

Couples decide to get married for a variety of reasons: they love each other, they want to spend the rest of their life together, they are best friends, and/or they want to start a family together.

Marriage is something many couples want, but do they know what marriage really is? In a day and age when one out of three first marriages ends in divorce, couples must have a common definition of marriage, agree on its purpose, and know the fundamentals to keep it healthy.

Everyone knows couples who have walked down the aisle and become husband and wife. How many of them are still together? Of those who divorced, how long did their marriages last? What contributed to the breakdown of their marriage?

Chances are these couples were doomed to fail from the very beginning, but not because they were victims of bad luck, the divorce curse, or random acts of unkindness. In many cases, couples build their marriage on either a *Faulty Foundation* or *Separate Foundations*.

A *Faulty Foundation* lacks the depth that can sustain long-term conditions. The reasons for marriage cited at the top of this page can act as a couple's marriage foundation. Unfortunately, they can also become a couple's reason for a divorce. The couple may "fall out of love," drift emotionally apart, head down opposite career paths, or experience trauma with their child (illness or death).

Separate Foundations result when the couple possesses conflicting definitions of marriage. Many people define marriage as a lifelong commitment that withstands the ups and downs of life. Others believe marriage to be a relationship that is valid only as long as love shall last. Still others believe marriage should be whatever whoever wants it to be for however long they think it should last. When a couple believes different ideas about marriage, they have laid *Separate Foundations*.

The ***Foundation for a Lifelong Marriage*** raises the standard to a higher level. It brings out the best in the couple and motivates the husband and wife to strive for their personal best. It is an indestructible foundation that breeds confidence in both the man and the woman.

The Chief Builder and Architect of marriage created three ingredients for the *Foundation for a Lifelong Marriage*: ***God's Four-Fold Vision for Marriage***, a ***Five-Dimensional Love***, and a ***Covenant Commitment for Marriage***. Each ingredient displays God's purpose and His divine intentions for marriage.

■ ***Do you have concerns that your marriage could be built upon a Faulty Foundation or Separate Foundations? Why or why not?***

■ ***Share ingredients you think are important for the foundation of your future marriage.***