

Bonding to the Max

By Harold & Bette Gillogly

Want to start a revolution...in your marriage? This study will help. We encourage you to go through this as a couple, and then start reading God's Word and praying together regularly. We guarantee it will revolutionize your marriage!

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly [easily] broken. Eccl. 4:9-12

► Sharing the Word Together

1. Read through the following Scriptures with your mate and answer this question as you read each passage: How does reading God's Word together benefit you and strengthen your marriage? Every time you find an answer, circle the phrase or word. *The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the Lord are sure, and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. (Psalm 19:7-11)*

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man [and woman] of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom.... (Colossians 3:16)
Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your

mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. (Joshua 1:7-8)

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. (Psa 1:1-3)
Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. (Acts 17:11)

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Rom 15:4)

He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it." (Luke 11:28)

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. (1 Thess. 2:13)

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Heb 4:12)

2. Here are some Pointers on How To read together:

- Read out loud to each other. You don't both read at the same pace, so reading silently doesn't work too well.
- Stop and talk about anything that grabs you...that is, anything that God is impressing on YOU. This is not the chance you've been waiting for to tell your mate how they are going to have to change.
- Talk about how you can apply the Scripture to your marriage and family. Be specific.

• Determine any changes you need to make. Be honest. God wants to work in your lives and in your marriage and family.

• Pray for God's help in making these changes. Only He can give you the power to change. He's just waiting for you to ask.

► Praying Together

1. Read through the following Scriptures with your mate and answer this question: How does praying together benefit you and strengthen your marriage? Again, look for the answers in these Scriptures, and circle the words and phrases that apply.

On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God.... After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. (Acts 4:23-24,31)

Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them. (Matthew 18:19-20)

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:6-7)

Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (James 5:13-16)

Bonding to the Max (cont²)

"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." (Matt 26:41)

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. (Rom 8:26-27)

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel. (Eph 6:18-19)

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. (Col 1:9-12)

Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. (Col 4:12)

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and

will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2 Chron 7:14)

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. (Col 4:2a)

2. Here are some Pointers on how to pray together:

- **Pray Conversationally.** You two are having a conversation with God. That's what prayer is. So pray like it. One of you starts praying about a subject for a few sentences, then the other picks it up for a few more. You know, just like a real conversation. If you pray for ten minutes straight, your mate will probably be snoring, so don't hog the conversation.

- **Pray Scripture.** Stop right now and practice by finding Philippians 4:6-7 in the Scriptures above. One of you can start praying this Scripture by saying something like, "Lord, You've told us not to be anxious about anything, but to pray and petition you for the solution. So we ask You to solve this problem...." The other can pick it up, "And Lord, we want to thank You that You are in control...." Bring each phrase into your prayer as you go. Now try it again with Colossians 1:9-12.

- Be close enough to **hold hands and touch.**

- **Use a Prayer List.** Keep it handy while you are praying. This helps you pray specifically. And be sure to leave a space after each request on your list for noting God's answer.

- **Read and discuss** some good books on prayer. Rosalind Rinker's Prayer: Conversing With God is out of print, but can still be ordered on amazon.com. It's a great book to teach you how to pray conversationally. Another good book on prayer is Dutch Sheets' Intercessory Prayer.

- Some things may require **fasting and prayer.** Matt. 17:21 declares, "But this kind does not go out except

by prayer and fasting." There are some things you will be praying for that are so important, you will want to fast as well as pray over them. People have written whole books about this, so we obviously can't go into it fully here. But we would recommend that you do a word study on fasting in the Bible. Get a concordance, and look up the context of every mention of fasting. And remember, food isn't the only thing you can fast.

► **Covenant together to do it.**

1. Plan. Make a definite plan to start reading and praying together. Decide when and where you're going to do it. And what resource are you going to use? We recommend **Experiencing Oneness** (naturally) as a resource to start with, because it is a Bible study on marriage issues and it is written interactively. It will also help give you a jump start on praying together.

2. Accountability. Make yourselves accountable to one another. Don't play games. Be up front about this. "Honey, if I'm not rolling out of bed by 6:00, get a cold wash cloth!"

3. Make a Covenant and keep it! This is serious. Reading God's Word and praying together is important enough to covenant with one another to do it. If you are serious about this, pray the couple's prayer together and start a revolution in your marriage.

► **Couple's Prayer of Commitment**

O God, we want to grow in spiritual intimacy and to be Your team. We commit ourselves to spend regular time together in Your Word and in prayer. Help us be faithful in this commitment, and show us how to be accountable to one another to do it. Make us a strong, three-stranded rope that will never break. We ask this in the strong name of Jesus, Amen!

Growing Toward Oneness Marriage Ministries provides books, CD's and other marriage resources and services to enrich your marriage.

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