

A 3x4 grid of colored squares. The top row consists of four squares: light green, red, dark blue, and orange. The middle row consists of four squares: orange, a white square containing the text 'Celebrating the Best in Marriage' in red italicized font, another white square, and olive green. The bottom row consists of four squares: purple, orange, purple, and dark blue.

*Celebrating the  
Best in Marriage*

## About Us

Brian & Iris Gooding  
Married for 41 years  
Five children  
Eleven Grandchildren  
just moved to 7th home



Iris has had a variety of  
nursing jobs  
Brian was a bank manager



For the past 14 years we have  
been pastors – in Troon and  
now in Callander

*Celebrating  
The Best  
in Marriage*



the  
marriage  
course



MOT TESTING STATION

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So....

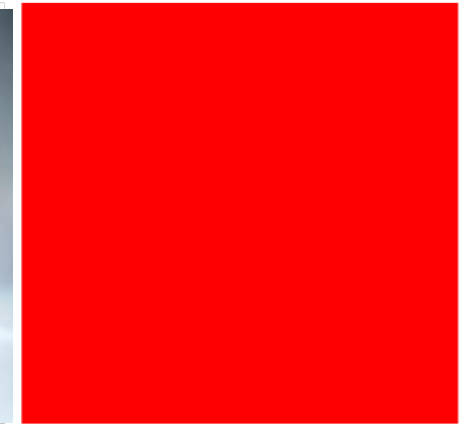
What is the best  
in Marriage?



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The Best  
in Marriage*

So....

What is the best  
in Marriage?



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in Marriage*

God's View  
*and the*  
Importance of Marriage

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Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.

Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

*Ephesians*  
*5:21-33*

God's View  
*and the*  
Importance  
of Marriage

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*The Best*  
*in Marriage*

In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies.

He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church - for we are members of his body.

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”

This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

*Ephesians*  
*5:21-33*

God's View  
*and the*  
Importance  
of Marriage

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*The Best*  
*in Marriage*



There is no  
relationship  
between  
human beings  
that is greater  
or more  
important  
than marriage  
*Tim Kellor*

Marriage  
no sooner  
Instituted  
than it  
was  
Attacked  
*Mark Dricoll*

God's View  
*and the*  
Importance  
of Marriage

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**Marriage is honourable and holy.  
It is founded in the loving nature of God.  
It is part of God's purpose for humanity  
and was established by Him for the  
comfort and happiness of man and woman  
and for the welfare of society.**

**He brings man and woman together in such  
a way that forever after each is incomplete  
without the other.**

**It was made special by our Lord Jesus'  
Presence at a marriage in Cana of Galilee  
and it is used in the Bible as a picture of the  
union between Jesus Christ and His  
Church.**

**God's View  
*and the*  
Importance  
of Marriage**

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Pastorally –  
Thinking About  
Marriage Proactively

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## **Wanted: ordinary couples**

Supporting marriage is a job for ordinary couples.

This very ordinariness can be a hard idea to accept. Yet if you've been married a few years and had your share of ups and downs, if you care that other peoples marriages matter, if you can sit down with a couple and talk about marriage - both theirs and yours - then you can be a good enough mentor or support couple.

That's all. No other" qualifications are needed. If you can learn a few practical skills on top, you can be a truly excellent support couple. In particular you don't need to have a perfect marriage. People who come across as too good to be true are usually exactly that. You need to have a good enough marriage that is sometimes joyful and exhilarating; sometimes mundane and workaday, and sometimes downright disappointing and painful. You're still married and you've survived. Your story acts as a powerful reminder to younger couples that marriage is not always a bed of roses. And when it's not, you don't have to give up.

What

are the

Most Difficult Seasons

in a

Marriage

?

Pastorally –  
Thinking About  
Marriage  
Proactively

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What are the Most Difficult  
Seasons in a Marriage?

..

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Pray about Marriages –  
personal and collective

So often the really important  
issues get missed at church  
prayer times because  
“it is very personal”.

Pray for marriages that  
haven't got problems  
and  
for the marriages that do

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Thinking About  
Marriage  
Proactively

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Not just at the Wedding Time  
*don't leave them to cope alone*

Hospitality – keep in touch

Establish relationships and so  
remove barriers to confidential  
discussions

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Marriage  
Proactively

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the  
marriage  
course

Marriage  
Enrichment  
Course

NOT for Problem Marriages  
All Ages and Stages

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Thinking About  
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Proactively

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# The Five Love Languages

Words of Affirmation

Kind Actions

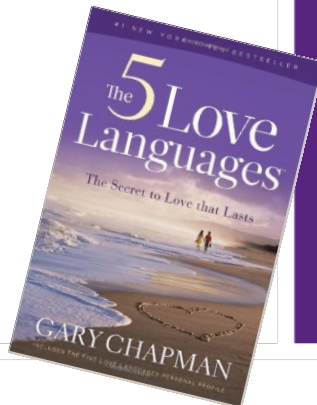
Quality Time

Thoughtful Presents

Physical Affection

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Saving  
Marriages

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Gary Chapman, The Five Love Languages

Be Aware of Couples  
in Times of Stress

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Marriage  
Proactively

Support Them

Pay for a Meal Out

and  
Act as Child-Minders

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Pastorally –  
Preparing in Advance

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From the Pulpit:

Counter Cultural -  
lifelong  
heterosexual  
Godly Order

Christian Lifestyle –  
sex  
family

finance  
priorities  
where is God?



Pastorally –  
Preparing in  
Advance



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In Sunday School etc

Reinforcing value of family

Christian behaviours etc

Supporting Mums and Dads

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Preparing in  
Advance

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In Youth Group etc

Romance Academy  
Girl's Group

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Preparing in  
Advance

Marriage!!

We have got to get beyond  
“How far is too far”

Talk about future life.....

“No Sex Before Marriage”  
is NOT God depriving us  
but  
God Really Blessing Us!

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in Marriage*

Engaged Couples.....

Pastorally –  
Preparing in  
Advance

Role model marriages

Pastoral Guidance

Pre-Marriage Course

Communication / Conflict / Forgiveness  
In-laws / Finances / Love languages  
Marriage Time / A Christian Home  
Who Empties the Bins?

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Pastorally –  
Church Structures that  
Support Families



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Church Service Times –who do they suit?

Crèches

Involvement of “Newly Weds”

House Groups

Child Minding

What about mixed marriages?

A Time to Serve and a Time to Be Served



Pastorally –  
Church Structures that Support Families



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# Relationship Hierarchy

God

Pastorally –  
Church Structures that  
Support Families

Spouse & Family

Church & Ministry

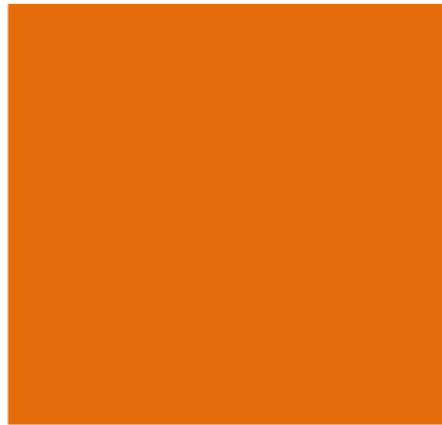
Secular work

Hobbies, interests etc, etc.

All for  
God

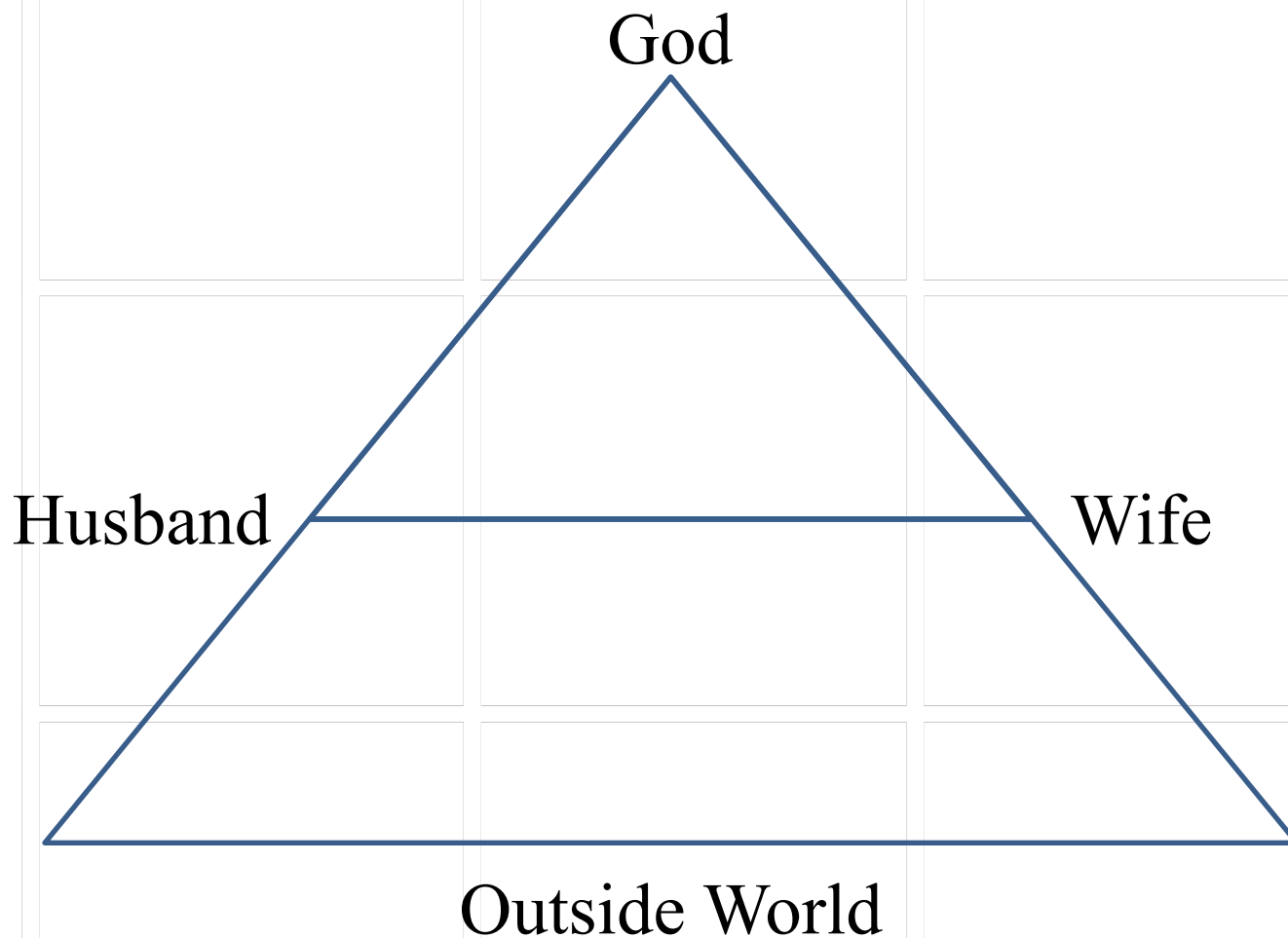
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Pastorally –  
Saving Marriages



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It is Often a Spiritual Problem



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Saving  
Marriages

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# STOP! Four bad habits to avoid

Don't...

**S** - SCORE POINTS: Don't defend yourself by changing subject, "You did this" ... "Well, you did that". Stick to the issue, "You did this"... "So what I did really upset you"

**T** - THINK THE WORST: Don't assume people are out to get you, "Flowers? What's he done wrong?"..."She's being nice? What's up?" Think the best, "He's being thoughtful" ... "She's just being nice".

**O** - OPT OUT: Don't walk away from difficult issues, "I'm not talking about it any more... It's a closed issue." Take time out to cool down "This is not a good time to talk. I'm really tired..." Then come back and discuss it "... But I'd really like to talk tomorrow before work".

**P** - PUT DOWN: Don't insult, "You idiot," roll your eyes, or belittle, "You shouldn't feel like that." Put downs kill relationships.

Pastorally –  
Saving Marriages



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## Most Common Causes

Drifting Apart

*so Easy & So Common*

Infidelity

*the way of the world*

Attrition

*long term physical or mental  
abuse, infidelity or addiction*

*Saving the Marriage is  
Something Only God Can Do*

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Saving  
Marriages

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## In Closing

“There are all too many Harrys and Kates out there for whom the pain and hell of family breakdown is so utterly avoidable. Great marriage and relationships can be learnt.”

*Harry Benson,  
“Mentoring Marriages”  
Monarch Books*

Thinking  
About  
Marriage  
Proactively

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