

## **Resources on Marriage – Recommended Readings with Summaries**

Books reviewed by Catherine Monnin. Recommendations made by Pam A. Ecrement, LPCC-S, IMFT.

*Sacred Marriage: What if God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy* by Gary Thomas - Starting with the discovery that the goal of marriage goes beyond personal happiness, Thomas invites the reader to see how God can use marriage as a discipline and a motivation to love Him more and reflect more of the character of Christ. A companion to this book, *Devotions for a Sacred Marriage: A Year of Weekly Devotions for Couples* by Gary Thomas, includes 52 devotions to encourage you to build your marriage around God's priorities. Thomas teaches spiritual formation at Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon.

*The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God* by Timothy Keller - Based on the acclaimed sermon series by New York Times bestselling author Timothy Keller, this book shows everyone--Christians, skeptics, singles, married or those about to be married--the vision of what God intends for marriage. Today's culture would have us believe that everyone has a soul mate; that romance is the most important part of marriage; and that your spouse is there to make you happy and reach your potential. Keller dispels these myths and clearly teaches a Biblical understanding of marriage. Very helpful for all who want to know God and love more deeply in this life.

*The Marriage Builder* by Larry Crabb - Psychologist Larry Crabb argues convincingly that the deepest needs of the human personality--security and significance--can only be met by God, not by our marriage partner. This frees both partners for 'soul oneness', a commitment to serve rather than manipulate each other. Good practical advice from a best-selling author.

*The 5 Love Languages* by Gary Chapman - In this international best seller, Dr. Gary Chapman reveals how people express love and receive love in different ways. His research shows that there are 5 different love languages, namely: quality time; words of affirmation; gift giving; acts of service; and physical touch. Learn the love language of you and your spouse in order to communicate more effectively.

*A Celebration of Sex: A Guide to Enjoying God's Gift of Sexual Intimacy* by Doug Roseneau - Roseneau is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, a licensed psychologist, and a Christian sex therapist. For decades he has used his training in theology and counseling to help Christian couples enrich and reclaim God's wonderful gift of sexuality within marriage. Includes detailed techniques and behavioral skills for intimate companionship. An excellent tool as well for premarital education.

*Love Talk Starters 275 Questions to Get Your Conversation Going* by Les and Leslie Parrott - Literally, 275 questions to get a conversation going between you and your spouse. Some questions are just for fun, some help understand your spouse's life, and others drill down to more serious topics.

*Love Talk: Speak Each Other's Language Like You Never Have Before* by Les and Leslie Parrott - Want to move your conversation from good to great? Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott, co-directors of the Center for Relationship Development at Seattle Pacific University, effectively share what they have learned from years of teaching on relationship building. Very readable and full of application.

*Love List* by Les and Leslie Parrott - The Parrotts' suggest 2 things to do on a daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis to create greater intimacy in your marriage. Complete with self-assessments which help put the lists into practice.

*Pillow Talk for Couples: Drawing Closer Before the Lights Go Out* by Les and Leslie Parrott - The Parrotts' suggest that when couples spend time in bed talking about their day and plans for tomorrow, greater emotional intimacy can grow. Book includes meditations, quips, quotes, and discussion starters. Very readable and practical.

*Relationships: An Open and Honest Guide to Making Bad Relationships Better and Good Relationships Great* by Les and Leslie Parrott - This book is useful for building friendships of all types; good chapter on cross-gender communication, friendship, and dating.

*The DNA of Relationships for Couples* by Greg Smalley, Robert S. Paul, and Donna Wallace  
*The Wholehearted Marriage: Fully Engaging Your Most Important Relationship* by Dr. Greg Smalley and Dr. Shawn Stoeberl - Authors teach that learning to re-energize your marriage happens when we learn to fully engage our hearts. Book includes how to overcome past life circumstances; reconnect with your desire to live life fully; and trusting God to help every step of the way.

*The Necessary Nine: How to Stay Happily Married for Life* by Dan Seaborn, Peter Newhouse, and Lisa Velthouse - A male perspective clearly comes through in this clear, concise and often funny book on marriage. Includes core skills with checklist vital for healthy marriage.

*The Second Half of Marriage* by David and Claudia Arp - Whether you are transitioning from a child-focused marriage to a more partner-focused marriage or learning to adjust to changing roles with aging parents, this book helps to build a marriage that will last beyond raising children and building careers. Includes exercises to help identify your own marital challenges and potential strategies for success.

*52 Dates for You and Your Mate* by David and Claudia Arp - The Arp's list a wide-range of date ideas to introduce some fun and creativity into your relationship; from a "formal-dinner-in-the park date" to a "Home Depot" date to a limo date, the opportunities are endless.

*This Momentary Marriage: A Parable of Permanence* by John Piper - Piper asks "How clear and well-focused is the portrait of Jesus that our marriage is displaying"? His aim is to enlarge your vision of what marriage is...and to point us to the display of the covenant- keeping love between Christ and His people. Thought-provoking and very focused on both the here and now as well as eternity.

*Your Time-Starved Marriage: How to Stay Connected at the Speed of Life* by Les and Leslie Parrott

*Intimate Allies: Rediscovering God's Design for Marriage and Becoming Soul Mates for Life* by Dan Allender and Tremper Longman

*Covenant Marriage: Building Communication and Intimacy* by Gary Chapman

*The Marriage You've Always Wanted* by Greg Smalley

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