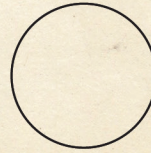




SEEK GOD



FIGHT FAIR



All married couples fight. That's a fact of life, but to have a long and healthy marriage you must learn to fight fair. This week you will read about and discuss with your spouse ways you can fight fair.

Day 1: Proverbs 18:1-13

When it comes to fighting within your marriage, it's not if you will fight, but how you will fight. You must learn to fight fair. In fact, God has given us rules about how to fight fair in the Bible. One of the most important rules is to always stop and listen carefully to your spouse during an argument.

Talk: Recall your first fight and discuss how your fights have changed since then.

Pray: Ask God to grow your ability to listen and to instill patience within you.

Do: This week, take turns listening to one another. Allow your spouse to share whatever they want and listen without interruption as they share.

Day 2: Ephesians 4:25-32, James 3:1-12

God's Word tells us that the tongue is a powerful weapon. In fact, the tongue is described in Proverbs as being as sharp as a double-edged sword. As a result, you must guard your words faithfully when you fight fair.

Talk: Compare how each of your families dealt with conflict while growing up and share how that shaped the way you handle conflict.

Pray: Ask God to give you the right words to say to your spouse when you fight fair. Ask Him also to help you speak life-giving words to your spouse at all times.

Do: Express your love to your spouse by writing a note of encouragement and sending it to them via letter, text, or email.

Day 3: Ephesians 5:21-33, James 1:19-27

In order to fight fair you must handle your anger righteously. Reacting with only your emotions will escalate your fight. Instead, be slow to anger as the Bible says in James 1:19 because it will lead to resolution and healing.

Talk: Discuss with your spouse the best way and time to approach each other when addressing an issue in your marriage.

Pray: Ask God to reveal to each of you times where you haven't fought fair and to help you restore any damage to your marriage caused by these fights.

Do: Create a simple list of ground rules based upon what you've learned from God's Word to use when you fight. Keep this list in a place where both of you can see it to remind you how to fight fair.

Day 4: 1 Peter 3:8-12, Romans 12:9-21

Married couples that fight fair work towards resolution. Couples that do not fight fair press for victory. When we confront each other, we should always confront to bring about healing and never to win.

Talk: Recall one of the silliest things you've fought about in your marriage. Why do you think couples so often fight about silly things?

Pray: Ask God to reveal your faults when it comes to fighting with each other and ask Him to help you improve in those areas.

Do: If you've recently experienced something good in your marriage, then be intentional today about celebrating it. Feel free to be creative in how you celebrate. If you feel you have nothing recent to celebrate, then celebrate something good from your past and talk about how that moment affected your marriage.

Day 5: Matthew 18:21-35

When you fight fair, you both must be willing to apologize and forgive each other. By doing so you will be able to quickly put the hurt behind you and move towards a resolution and restoration.

Talk: Discuss some of your recent fights. Apologize to each other for your unfair words and actions. Take time to forgive each other as well.

Pray: Ask God to help you forgive and to have a heart of forgiveness.

Do: Show how much you love and appreciate your spouse by doing something special for them today.