

# STAYING CONNECTED AS YOU RAISE YOUR CHILDREN

Apostolic Christian Counseling & Family Services  
877-370-9988 [www.accounseling.org](http://www.accounseling.org)



## Season of Parenting

### •Infants

- Opportunity: Work together.
- Challenge: Physical demands of infant.

### •Young Children

- Opportunity: Model relationship principles of respect, honesty and encouragement.
- Challenge: Busyness

## Season of Parenting

### •Teens

- Opportunity: Open dialogue and maintaining relational connection.
- Challenge: Supporting each other through decisions that require discernment rather than black/white solutions.

### •Adult Children

- Opportunity: Shift from authority to friend.
- Challenge: Isolation

## Vision of Marriage

### Contract

- Based on leverage.
- Continues if it is mutually beneficial.
- Focus on Specific Actions.

### Covenant

- Based on Commitment.
- Lifelong commitment.
- In this together.

Viewing Marriage as a contract will help perpetuate myths:

- "if it is hard it must be wrong"
- "if you find the right one, it will be easy"

## Covenant Allows For Friendship

- Covenant is built from trust.
- Becoming one flesh requires vulnerability. Viewing marriage as a contract prohibits vulnerability.
- Covenant Focus:
  - What can I do.
  - Focus on blessing the other.
  - In this together.
  - Enjoy serving.
  - Focus on the benefit of the other.

## Vision of Friendship

*Colossians 3:12-14 "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. 14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."*

First things first.

- Your identity lies outside of marriage and parenting.
- Value and worth do not come from our circumstances.

## Vision of Friendship

*Colossians 3:12-14 "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. 14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."*

General relationship principles foundation for marriage relationship.

Pursue a friendship with our spouse.

- Support each other.
- Goal of liking each other.

## Barriers to Friendship

### Barriers

- Time
- Overwhelmed
- Unaware
- Communication is Hard.
- Different Roles

### Move toward Friendship

- Simplify Life.
- Start one thing today.
- Be honest and vulnerable.
- Identify 3 Green Topics.
- Connect through the day.

## Work Through Challenges

- The marriage relationship will naturally move toward isolation if not actively fighting for connection.
- Move toward acceptance of your spouse and your children so you can meet them where they are.
- When Triggered: Do the Next Right Thing.
- Build positive story of your spouse and children.

## 4 Questions to Discuss

1. What season of parenting are you in and what are your "opportunities" and "challenges"?
2. What are you doing that helps you stay connected as a couple amid demands of parenting?
3. In what ways could your relationship grow?
4. What are 3 barriers to friendship in your marriage?
5. What are we running toward? What is your hope for the future?