

*"Making Marriage Work by . . .
Posting a Guard"*
Ephesians 5:15-16, 25-33
Pastor Todd Roberts
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Marriage was created by God as a tangible expression or “object lesson” of the “mystery” of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:32).

Marriage should be valued and cherished because of what it represents not because the state issued you a marriage license or even because of its many benefits.

Marriage is something worthy of protection because of what marriage represents—God and His Church—and God cherishes and guards His Bride, the Church.

“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.”

Ephesians 5:15-16

All married people can guard their marriages by locking the door on these seven enemies.

1. The money trap.
2. The facebook “friend.”
3. The listening ear.
4. The hovering parent.
5. The servant heart.
6. The extra-marital affair.
7. The lustful lifestyle.

Married Couples' Check-Up

Take a few minutes as a couple and talk about these seven enemies of marriage and decide if any changes need to be made.

The Money Trap:

- Do we have separate accounts and is this ok?
- Do we both have full-access and understanding of our financial position?
- Are we a good team in this area making up for each other's strengths and weaknesses?

The Facebook Friend:

- For peace of mind should we have one shared account instead of individual accounts??
- Do we both have passwords and full access to each other's accounts?
- Are there any "friends" that concern us?
- Are we spending too much time on the computer?

The Listening Ear:

- Do either of us confide in someone more than each other?
- Is there someone of the opposite sex that we confide in?
- Do either of us share "intimate details" about our lives that makes the other uncomfortable?
- Are either of us "emotionally attached" to someone else?

The Hovering Parent:

- Is our relationship with each other "stressed" by a parent?
- Do we regularly put a parent's need ahead of each other?
- Is either of us "controlled" by a parent?

The Servant Heart:

- Are we “more available” to others than each other?
- Are we over-committed in work, ministry, school, sports, community activities, or something else?
- Do we regularly help others with things that are chronically neglected in our own home?

The Extra-Marital Affair:

- Has either of us been in “compromising” situations?
- Do we need to set some new boundaries?
- Do any of our activities, interests, or hobbies make the other feel like they’ve been replaced?

The Lustful Lifestyle:

- Are either of us finding sexual fulfillment from any source other than each other?
- Are we hiding any type of activity from each other?
- Do we have unhindered access to each other’s electronic devices?
- Are either of us coercing the other into uncomfortable, questionable, immoral, or illegal activity?

Are there any other enemies lurking near the door of our marriage right now?

The following books are available at the marriage resource table in the Lobby for a suggested donation of \$10.00 each.

***For Women Only* by Shaunti Feldhahn**

What's going on in a man's mind? From their early days, every woman has struggled to understand why males behave the way they do. Even long-married women who think they understand men have only scratched the surface. Beneath a man's rugged exterior is an even more rugged, unmapped terrain. What bestselling author Shaunti Feldhahn's research reveals about the inner lives of men will open women's eyes to what the men in their life—boyfriends, brothers, husbands, and sons—are *really* thinking and feeling. Men want to be understood, but they're afraid to "freak out" the women they love by confessing what is happening inside their heads. This book will guide women in how to provide the loving support that modern men want and need.

***For Men Only* by Shaunti and Jeff Feldhahn**

Women: complicated and impossible to understand? Do you love and want to please the woman in your life, but just can't seem to figure her out? That was before *For Men Only*. Now at your fingertips is the tool that will unlock the secret to her mysterious ways. Through hundreds of interviews and the results of a scientific national survey of women, this book demonstrates that women are actually not random and that they really can be systematized and "mapped." In fact, much to men's delight, this book shows that women are actually quite easy to understand and please—as long as you know what it is they need. This simple map will guide you to loving your wife or girlfriend in the way she needs to be loved.

Beginning today, you may sign up for the Marriage Tune-up. The cost is \$30.00 per couple and more information is available at the marriage resource table in the Lobby.