

Mens day Aug 2018

As all of you know My name is Gene. I've been coming to this church for a least a couple of decades and got to know most of you as my brothers in Christ. And you bring great joy into my life.

A little about my history; I came from a family of nine, 4 brothers and 5 sisters. There were many things as a child that we don't control, such as things in parents' relationships. And we learn a lot by watching our parents, so you see from an early age I knew my parents were not always getting along or a relationship not of God's blessing. I saw three different step fathers in my 11 years and as a child you really don't understand what's happening, but somehow you manage to deal with all your emotions that come with it. My dad was never a part of my life due to his friends, and lifestyle.

Mom, on the other hand, always made us attend church, maybe from a young age I knew it would be alright, and so we were always attending sunday school. God always watched after me and protected me. And of course I believe my prayers were heard.

At the age of 09 my mother seemed to try to make it on her own. Her first job made it possible to bring stability back into our home. What I can remember is the freedom I experienced having just my Mom who loved us so much she gave us her all.

But those times were not easy, things got a little tough, so my brother and I worked a plan to help with some of the expenses, I was 09 years old. We decided to buy a lawn mower and mow lawn for 5 dollars a yard. We used to kid around and call ourselves "boys with lots of Cash."

But that wasn't always the truth.

There was one time when this very old lady had us do her front yard and backyard, and it looked like it hadn't been done for years and the grass was about 4 feet tall. And she had us pull all the weeds which to a 09 year old were thousands, but we did it because we knew we were going to be rich that day, 8 hours of work, should be a very good pay day. (you would think). When we were done she pulled out her coin purse and she gave us a quarter and told us boys ``you be sure to split it amongst the two of you." What does a 09 year old boy say to an adult? I remember when we left her home we said to each other, "now we know a tightwad."

But at the end of the day we gave our Mom whatever we made to help out with whatever needs she had.

As a teen I work as a box boy at a grocery store, (16) some of you may even remember the name Alpha Beta, and also at a Hotel doing banquets at the Ramada Inn.

Now speed it up a little.

My first car was a candy apple mustang, 1965 which I bought in my highschool years, for 250 dollars.

Well I'll tell you, being in highschool at the age of 16, this car opened many opportunities. "I'll leave it at that."

Graduated 1975 and joined the Army.

And here's where my life really began.

I tell myself, What did I just do? This drill sergeant had an unusual choice of words, would yell all the time, and somehow he never had time to sleep. He would wake up at 4am to run, it seems like 10 miles everyday. The funny part of it was that they trusted us with live weapons knowing we really didn't like him that much.

In 1978, I met a young lady I liked and asked God if this was the woman who would be my wife, I knew I prayed many times for his acceptance. And I promised God I would honor these vows. (Guys what did I just do) I did something I knew better, I never make a promise I can't keep.

In Ecclesiastes, it tells us to be careful when you make promises to God. Don't let your feelings speak too soon. God is in heaven and you are on earth. So you need to say only a few things to him. ( i think I spilled my guts out that night). And yes This saying is true.

And then I realized if I really wanted this marriage to work I would have to study what God's marriage vows mean.

And I learned that marriage was a gift from God, I learned it is part of God's plan for creation that man and woman should live together. (Wow! God even plans our marriage, how can you not take this seriously when this was God's plan from the beginning. Where husband and wife support each other, where relationships are built on love, and of course faithfulness.

But I also learned you first must have a relationship with God, and that believing in God is one thing, But having a relationship with him is another. If you don't have a relationship with God, your relationship with your Wife will suffer.

And I also know that our God is a jealous God, like a spouse who doesn't want to share his or her spouse Partner. (and i know we men know what they are capable of.) don't put them to the test.

Now I believe God wants our loyalty. (God wants us to be loyal) meaning giving and being supportive, understanding, encouraging, concerned, helpful and kind to your spouse.

In a marriage there is an expectation that you will be totally committed to your spouse, Jesus said that a husband and wife become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. How can you fight yourself? Who argues with themselves? Who can be abusive to himself?

We as men must walk in obedience and keep our Lord's Promise, The vows we made to God.

I remember the Pastor in one of his sermons, (you know they say you only remember 10 percent of what is preached) he said of his wife, "If you cook dinner, I'll wash the dishes." That says a lot to us guys.

We can't expect our wives to do it all: raise the children, clean the house, do the dishes, clean your clothes, take out the trash, water the lawn, cook and then wash the dishes. And God knows who in that household even does the lawn. We can't just lay around saying we're tired after working just 8 hours. We have to be a Partner with our spouse. You see our wives get tired too.

Marriage to me is a commitment to be willing to do whatever it takes to make your marriage work, and yes there are going to be many times you're just not going to get your way. And guys that's o.k. It's easier to be committed to your relationship when it's going well. Sometimes we have to let it go.

One of the hardest trials in my relationship would fall into the area of controlling our anger, we both want to be right. Some of you may have experienced this yourself. But what does God say on this matter.

You say to yourself, if only my spouse wouldn't be so angry. Or it's her fault, sometimes I feared my marriage wouldn't survive. But I never forgot my Vows to God, I never forgot to pray for my wife and to ask God to show me how to love her that is pleasing to her and to God.

One thing to remember, and this is so important guys, be careful who you turn to for advice. There was a time in my relationship when we just couldn't see beyond tomorrow. We needed to get away, I decided to tell my brother in law that we were thinking about separation for awhile, and to my surprise his advice to me was to be sure you split everything 50/50. No sympathy there, I should have known better. I later took advice from the church Elders which helped me get back on track.

Proverbs 18:22

He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.  
Now if you are married you know it is impossible to count all the blessings your wife has shared with you that God has given her.

How many can say that because of their wife, he is a much happy man?

How many of us have experienced the joy God intended for their marriage?  
How many of us love sharing God's word with his wife?  
It doesn't have to be hard, when you learn to put God first in your marriage.

What I've learned about true happiness in a marriage.

1. Never bring up mistakes of the past.
2. Never go to sleep with an argument unsettled.
3. At least once a day, try to say something favorable to your spouse.
4. Rejoice in every moment that God has given you together.

And recite 1 Corinthians 13 4:5 together.

Let's talk about what marriage means. Think about this verse when there is trouble in your marriage.

Love is Patient

Love is Kind

Love is not jealous or boastful or Proud or Rude.

Love does not demand its own way

Love is not irritable and keeps no record of when it has been wrong.

My wife and myself have been together for 40 years. And I try to be the husband she needs without having to cause stress or hurt in her life. A relationship made with the blessing of God. In closing I just want to say a couple of pointers. Marriage takes work, be a good listener, communicate, take responsibility, never take her for granted, and never use the D word.

Thank you.