

365  
DAILY

DEVOTIONS  
FOR COUPLES

INSPIRATION FOR THE MARRIAGE  
YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED

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Week 1  
Monday



*Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received  
in the same year an hundredfold:  
and the LORD blessed him.*

GENESIS 26:12 KJV

When God told Isaac to take his wife and make his home in Gerar, Isaac obeyed, even though he was afraid for his life. In return for his faithfulness, the Lord blessed Isaac, increasing his investment a hundred times over in one year.

What is God telling you and your spouse this year? Would you rather live somewhere else, do something else, even be someone else? Do you want to argue the point or pretend you didn't get the message, or are you willing to trust God's guidance and faithfulness? On this first day of a new year, take time as a couple to discuss where you think God wants you to be this year and what you hope He will help you accomplish in the next 365 days.

*Father, we ask Your guidance for this new year,  
confident that wherever You send us,  
we will be protected and blessed.*

Week 1

## Tuesday



*Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner."*

GENESIS 2:18 NRSV

Whatever this year may bring, you do not have to face it alone. You have a partner and a helper to rejoice with and receive strength from in good times and bad.

This gives you an enormous advantage: What one of you cannot do, the other can; what one of you fears, the other does not.

To make the most of this advantage, you need to remember that you are partners in life. This means that sometimes you will lead and sometimes you will help. Both roles are equally important, and each member of the team will play both roles during the year.

Listen to your partner, discuss every decision together, and give thanks for the varying abilities you bring to your marriage. You will prosper as a team.

*Lord, we realize that we are stronger and smarter when we work together on a problem. Please remind us of this anytime we are tempted to "take over" or impose our own ways on each other.*

*Help us use our own particular talents to grow as a team.*



*There is no fear in love,  
but perfect love casts out fear.*

1 JOHN 4:18 NRSV

Since none of us is going to reach perfection during this lifetime, on occasion we will experience some fear in our relationships. For most, these fears will be minor: spending a little too much for an unnecessary luxury, gaining a little too much weight, making a decision without consulting the other, and so on. Actually, we don't fear our spouses' reactions as much as we wonder what they will think of us. Will they trust us as much as before?

Learning to work as a team and trusting the other member takes time. As the years go by, we become more attuned to our partners. We discover what bugs them and what doesn't, and out of love—not fear—we adjust our actions. In time, there will be no fear between us, only patience and understanding.

*Father, help us in this job of removing fear  
and uncertainty from our relationship.*

Week 1

## Thursday



*Did the contempt of families terrify me,  
that I kept silence, and went not out of the door?*

JOB 31:34 KJV

Let's face it, not everyone in your family is going to love your spouse immediately. Most of them will accept your choice, but one or two may not be much more than civil, considering her or him “beneath you” for one reason or another.

Avoiding those critical family members because of fear or anger serves nothing. It is better to show up at family events and keep on smiling, even if you're seething inside. With time, your spouse will prove to be “good enough” through the strength of your marriage, shared family experiences, and any children you may be blessed with. We cannot demand acceptance from anyone; we have to earn it, one day at a time.

*Father, give us the patience we need to  
become valued members of our spouse's family.  
With time, they will realize how good we are for each other.*



*“You have persevered and have patience,  
and have labored for My name’s sake  
and have not become weary.”*

REVELATION 2:3 NKJV

**M**arriage is hard work, especially when it’s new. Who would have thought that squeezing the toothpaste in the middle could be the basis of a two-day fight? Or that such a buttoned-down husband would be incapable of putting his dirty shorts in the hamper? How could such a lovely woman go to bed in flannel, even in summer? The list goes on.

If you can get over these little problems, you will have the foundation of a strong marriage. Still, patience and perseverance are required: You need to come to acceptable compromises without becoming weary and, at the same time, keep working on the little issues that drive you crazy.

*Lord, we are determined that our marriage is  
not going to suffer because of petty annoyances.  
Remind us of this promise when we disagree,  
and show us how we can overcome our differences.*

Week 1

## Saturday



*“Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?”*

AMOS 3:3 NKJV

**H**ow long has it been since the two of you took an old-fashioned walk? Not a power walk, a jog, and certainly not a run, but a leisurely, rambling walk, just for the fun of it.

Granted, the weather may not be perfect for walking, but that only means your walk will be more private. If there's a thunderstorm or blizzard raging, head for the nearest mall, with no shopping allowed.

Remember, not every activity requires a goal, and not all of our leisure time should be productive. What about just getting out of the house to admire God's world and spend some time with the one you love? Hold hands, bump shoulders, giggle a lot, and talk about your hopes and dreams. Just the two of you.

*Father, help us realize that being together without purpose can be a wonderful experience that draws us closer.*



This weekend, instead of spending your precious free time doing chores you couldn't get done during the week, why not reestablish some family bonds? Are you connected to the Internet? If so, it takes only minutes to compose a message and send it off to every family member who has an e-mail address.

For some reason, people who would never write a letter or pick up the telephone will immediately return an e-mail message. You will be amazed at how many replies you will have waiting for you the next time you check the mail. If you don't have everyone's electronic address, begin to build your family address book this weekend and share it with other family members. The technology for keeping in touch is available. Use it to strengthen your extended family.

# Monday



*Avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.*

TITUS 3:9 NIV

Before falling in love, couples seldom have the time to discuss their stands on all possible “issues.” Life simply doesn’t work that way. We generally check out the most important qualities for compatibility—religion, political beliefs, personality—and leave the rest for later. This is not necessarily bad, because if you dig deeply enough, you could spend your life looking for the “perfect” spouse.

You’re not perfect, after all, and sometimes you and your spouse will disagree. The book of Titus tells us that some of these disagreements just aren’t worth fighting over. When, after a few minutes of discussion, it becomes obvious that neither of you is going to change the other’s mind, you both have to back off and agree to disagree.

*Lord, we realize that any two people will sometimes disagree. Please teach us to recognize the point at which further discussion becomes “unprofitable and useless” and have the sense to back off.*



*O God, you know my folly; the wrongs I have done  
are not hidden from you.*

PSALM 69:5 NRSV

**E**xactly how much does your spouse need to know about your past? What should you confess to before and during marriage? Unfortunately, no one has compiled an up-to-date list. Certainly, you must admit to any sin that might put your partner in moral or physical danger, but how “big” must a wrongdoing be to qualify? Even if you decide on total confession of all your past sins, you still have to make judgment calls. What about that crush on your sixth-grade teacher? Or the quarters you lifted from your mother’s purse? Or the other person you once thought of marrying?

God knows every wrong you have ever committed, confessed, or hidden. If your conscience is burdened, ask Him for guidance on what you need to reveal. Trust Him to indicate what needs to be shared and what would be better left unsaid.

*Father, we all have our little secrets.*

*Help us to identify those we need to share with each other  
and those that would only hurt our partner.*

## Wednesday



*Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*

MATTHEW 10:16 KJV

Not everyone you meet as a couple will have your best interests at heart. Some will pretend to be friends with ulterior motives in mind, some will be cheats and liars, and still others will try to corrupt your relationship. But notice that Jesus did not say to isolate yourselves from the world. You should get out there and live your lives, using wariness, good judgment, and intelligence in your dealings with the world's wolves.

At the same time, you are to remain as harmless as doves, never lowering yourselves to the level of the wolves and never striking out in retaliation. As a Christian couple, you may become a target, but no one says you have to stand there and wait for the bullet.

*Father, our lifestyle is not that of the world, and we may find ourselves in conflict with others because of our faith. When we do, give us the wisdom to avoid being hurt and the strength not to hurt in return.*