

The Journey to Biblical Manhood

Challenge 3: Relationships

68 Words That Guarantee Marriage Success

Unedited Transcript

Patrick Morley

Good morning men. We are going through the Journey of Biblical Manhood, and we are beginning challenge number three, on relationships. Before we get going though, I want us to go ahead and do a shout out. Today's shout out is going to go to eight men that are joining us, they're doing the Bible study at the same time we are on Friday mornings. Pastor Greg Romeo at Kingdom Family Church of Daytona, 51 miles from my house, is the leader of the group. They're doing it on Friday mornings, like I said. They've been meeting now for about three years, but they've just started doing these Bible studies, and Pastor Greg has been very involved doing Man in the Mirror events, and different resources over the last eight years.

I wonder if you would join me in welcoming these men as they begin to join us for the video Bible study, the ... I didn't see a name of the group on there, but anyway. The group that's meeting with Pastor Greg, would you help welcome them.

One, two, three. Hoorah.

Welcome, men. We are honored and glad to have you with us. If you would, turn in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter five. I'm going to go ahead and put up the faith and life objectives for this challenge. You have cards on your tables, if you're online, you can download these. The Christian man is built for relationship. At the end of this leg of the journey, three objectives, I will understand that relationships give me the chance to love others as Christ loves me. If married, I will understand that my marriage is a gift from God that represents Christ's love for the church. That's for the head.

For the heart, I will love others sacrificially. If married, I will make my wife after God my top priority, that's for the heart. Then for the hands, I will maintain moral and sexual integrity in my personal relationships. If married, I will pray with and for my wife.

Those are the things that we'll be taking a look at from different angles here. Hey, you know, how many of you are married? How many of you wish you were single? No. I was thinking about the difference between a girlfriend and a wife this week. Basically, the best part of a girlfriend is she'll still lie to you and tell you what she thinks you want to hear. Once you get married, that goes away.

There're all kinds of challenges, of course, in marriage. But, Genesis 2:18 says it is not good for the man to be alone. Do you remember, everything that God created was good. He created man, and He said, "It is not good for the man to be alone." We are made for relationships. Marriage is one of the principle or

perhaps the principle way that God defeats the problem of isolation that men have. Or, the positive way of saying it is, giving a man the companion that can be a life mate for him, and so I got married. So I got married.

I want us to begin by saying that the title of the message is 68 words that can guarantee marriage success. For those of you who've been around here for a while, you might remember that 68 words sounds familiar, that's the marriage prayer. The marriage prayer, God's plan for marriage success.

I got married. The problem is, I wanted to have a great marriage, but I was clueless about how to pull that off. I got up, I went to work one day, and basically forgot to come home. Then, when my life began to come unraveled, we joined a Sunday school class. The teacher's name was Dan Stanley. I was there, basically I didn't know why I was there, but I thought I was there to meet some sharp young guys who could be investors in my real estate deals. That's really why I was there, or at least why I thought I was there.

We were in one of those old fashioned Sunday school rooms, terrazzo floor, those chocolate milk colored metal chairs, and we were in a circle, and I happened to be 180 from the teacher, Dan, Mr. Stanley. Then maybe, I don't know, 10, 15 young couples seated around in a circle. I was sitting there and I was really laid back in my chair. I do this anyway, but I was doing it that day because I was arrogant and cocky, but I was back like this. I was staring at the floor and the teacher was droning on about something, and I remember I was looking at a little spot on the floor, going over my daily planner, and he read a verse of scripture that I actually heard.

It was like someone had hit me with a taser, like ... How many, 50,000 watts of voltage, and my body turned. I felt myself instantly within seconds, my body turned red hot. I began to sweat profusely. Within a matter of seconds, I could feel that my t-shirt was already soaking wet. I turned beet red with embarrassment and humiliation, and I just knew, I knew, that somehow, the class had found me out, they had told the teacher, and the teacher had implicated me, publicly and embarrassed me in front of all these people and I'm looking at this little spot, and I couldn't, I couldn't look up because I was so chagrined, that all these people now knew what a horrible husband I was and they were all looking at me in disgust, shaming me, full of disdain, hating my guts, wishing that I would go die somewhere.

Of course, the class had no idea what was going on, and the teacher went on to speak about other things. It was the first time in my life that I had ever experienced what I have come to understand as the conviction of sin. The conviction of sin. I want to read with you together the text that the teacher read, that I that day heard, that led to me experiencing the conviction of sin, which eventually led to me becoming a Christian.

Ephesians chapter five, verse 25. "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." This is a summary of what the Bible teaches about how to be a godly husband, how to have a godly marriage. In other sessions that we have taught over the years, I have gone much further into detail about what it means to love your wife the way that Jesus as the Christ or the Messiah loved the church as its Prophet, Priest and King. I'll give you later maybe a couple of resources if you're interested in going deeper in that, you can find it in the chapter on Marriage in the Man in the Mirror, same thing.

What I want to do today is, I want to tell you that if we were to take Ephesians 5:25 and amplify it, you've heard amplified Bibles and so forth, that's where you take part, a phrase or something and then embellish it if you will to make the meaningful more full and more robust and more understandable.

That's exactly what the marriage prayer does. The marriage prayer takes and makes practical application of Ephesians 5:25. On your tables, you have marriage prayer cards. I'd like each of you if you don't mind, to pick one of these up, hold your hand up if you do not have one and we'll make sure you get one. Anybody not have a copy of the marriage prayer card? Okay. The reason I want you to have this in your hand, because you're not going to be able to write down the big idea today, because I have gone for a world record big idea today.

The big idea, the title of the talk is 68 words that can guarantee marriage success, and guess how many words are in the big idea? 68. There's the big idea. It's the marriage prayer. Nobody's ever had a bigger big idea than this.

Now, how many of you have memorized the marriage prayer? Raise if your hands if you're married, if you've already memorized the marriage prayer. Raise your hands. Three, four, okay. For those of you who have not previously memorized the marriage prayer, I am going to offer you \$100 for the first person who does. The first person who memorizes the marriage prayer who has not already memorized it, I'm going to give you \$100. My money, personal money, ain't no widows and orphans money, this is my money. All right?

Now, there's a caveat. There's a caveat. Because, I'm going to give you \$100 for memorizing the marriage prayer, and then you're going to offer this \$100 to the next guy who is willing to memorize the marriage prayer, and over the next 50 years, I want to see this \$100 bill go through hundreds and hundreds of men's hands. Of course, it'll only be worth \$10 in today's money by then.

All right? We'll come back to that \$100 challenge here at the end. That's where we're going with this thing, all right?

Now, the marriage prayer says this: "Father, I said to death do us part. I want to mean it. Help me to love you more than her and her more than anyone or anything else. Help me bring her into your presence today, make us one like you are three in one. I want to hear her, cherish her, and serve her, so she would love you more, and we can bring you glory." I've had more fun in my own marriage with this than I can shake a stick at. It has absolutely transformed, revolutionized my marriage.

Belief determines behavior. How many times have you heard me say that? Belief determines behavior. We behave based on what we believe. Believing that this is either what you do already believe or what you want to believe, that's a pretty good starting point. Then, what you will find is you believe this or you begin to believe it more and more, that you will see your behavior begin to confirm to your belief. This is, behaviors conform to beliefs. That's what you've heard me say about Andrew Carnegie here before, the older I get, the less I listen to what people say, I just watch what they do. That's because what they do, their behavior reflects what they actually believe, who they really are and what they think.

I watched as this prayer transformed my beliefs. I knew it was transforming what I believed about my wife, because I saw it working out in my behavior. Silly examples. Big examples, but silly examples. Like,

for example, we have one of those trash cans, I'm not sure ... It sits in a cradle and then you push the drawer in, and then it looks like it's not there, and then you pull the drawer out and there's the trash can. Thought it was pretty cool.

It has a little plastic bin that you have to pull out, and we put a plastic liner or a paper bag in there, inside the garbage pail, if you will. Then when I make coffee, I use Splenda ... I used to use Splenda. I use honey now. One of our guys got me on honey, I love it. But the Splenda packets, you take them, you tear them open, you put it in the coffee mug, and then you throw it in the trash can. My aim is not always that good. Sometimes, it goes into the garbage bag, but sometimes, it would slide between the garbage bag and the plastic pail, go down in that little area around there.

I wouldn't think a thing of it, because I'm married, and that's what women do. A meaningful division of labor. I take care of the outside, she takes care of the inside, that's her job. I don't go after that. Guess what? I started praying this, I want to hear her, cherish her and serve her so she would love you more, and we could bring you glory. One day, just one day, out of the blue, I opened a Splenda packet, put it in the trash can. The little tiniest piece slips over in between the plastic bag and the vinyl of the trash container.

Next thing I know, I'm digging out the whole trash bag and bending over and putting my hand into that, all the juice from the fruit juice and orange juice and stuff, that yucky stuff, and reaching down and getting that little thing and putting it in the brown paper bag and then putting the brown paper bag into the vinyl trash container.

I'm thinking to myself, what just happened? What just happened here? I said, I've been transformed. I've been changed. If you want to, and we all, is there anyone where who doesn't want a great marriage? Whether you're married now or not now, is there anyone here who doesn't want a great marriage? Hey, it's not good to be alone.

We all want a great marriage. This is, back to what I said, this marriage prayer, this is God's plans for marriage success. Pray this marriage prayer, and by the way, memorize it and I give you \$100. Be the first one to do it and I'll give you \$100. Now, I'm going to talk about three reasons that I'm not divorced.

First, and foremost, is that I realized that my wife and I are really the only two people who are in this thing together. Have you realized that yet? Do you know that yet? Hopefully, you do. It seems so obvious now, but it did not seem so obvious at the time. It seemed like that I had lots of people that I was in this deal together. Until that fateful day when I had such a problem, such an overwhelming problem, when I asked my closest friends to pray for me about this problem, and after 10 days, none of them had bothered to check in with me to see how this crushing potentially devastating problem had worked out.

I called them and I said, "Hey, I know you're really concerned of me." "Oh yeah, I've been meaning to call you." I've been meaning to call you. Bam. If you have not yet figured it out, you and your wife are absolutely the only two people who are really in this thing together. Everyone else, everyone else, everyone else is going to phase in and out of your life. As I like to say, even your children, hopefully.

The first reason I'm not divorced is, is I figured out that my wife and I really are the only two people in this together. Second ... And as a result of that, I made her my top priority after God but before all

others. Second, I stopped trying to control my wife. Well, almost. No, I've stopped trying to control my wife. It's interesting because I didn't have any mentoring or tutoring in this, or discipleship, that I understood at least at the time, or maybe I just thought I was smarter than the people who were trying to disciple me. Oh, by the way, that is a bit of an issue sometimes, thinking you're so much smarter than the person who's trying to help you. You may be smarter, but maybe not on that issue, and there're some other things that could be said another time about that.

But, I just am selfish. I'm still selfish, but I wanted someone who would be basically my soulmate and my servant. Someone who would make my life easier. It's always just a ... I think, I'm even thinking as I'm talking right now, I probably just need to confess that I was a controlling person. Now, I was not a crass controller, I was a very refined controller. I was diplomatic about it. Some guys are not very diplomatic about trying to control their wives.

But, I was very diplomatic and refined. I began to encourage my wife to lose 20 pounds. I encouraged her for several years in different ways, always uplifting ways, all the positive benefits to her of her health and all this, to lose these 20 pounds. One day, she says, "I just don't feel safe with you anymore. After 27 years of marriage, I just don't feel safe with you anymore."

I'm a smart guy, right? I see the problem, I'm going to fix it. Turn it around, get this back on track, and a couple, weeks from now, it'll be like it never happened before. Not so much. I did turn it around, and I developed this idea that ... I don't know exactly when it got to the final form, but you've heard me say this perhaps before, and this is the solution, this is the reason I'm not divorced, because I've stopped trying to control her, and this is the idea that I use as my governor, my whatever.

I let you be you and you let me be me. I let you be you and you let me be me. I don't try to control her anymore. I started just applying this. She's not responding. She's not responding. Doesn't she understand, I'm changed. I'm a new man. I've been transformed. What's her problem? The problem is, is that I had so damaged her, that it was not something that was an easy fix. It took about three years, three years, one day I was sitting there and I started this deal of rubbing her feet with some lotion, and we're sitting there one day, I'm rubbing her feet with some lotion, and out of the blue, she says, "I feel safe with you again. I just wanted you to know that. I feel safe with you."

Three years. First reason I'm not divorced is that I realize that we're the only two people in this together, the second reason is that I stopped trying to control her. The third reason is I started praying with and for my wife. The interesting thing about praying with and for my wife, we've always prayed with each other, it's one or two minutes in the morning tops, but it just sets the day in motion, and then hearing each other pray to our God gives us an insight into each other that we would otherwise probably never have. At least not that profound of an insight.

Then the idea of praying for her, and her praying for me too, but I'm much more diligent about praying this prayer, perhaps because I need to pray it more than she needs to pray for me. This idea that I pray with and for my wife. What's the prayer that I pray? It's the marriage prayer. It's the big idea today. Father, I said till death do us part.

I pray it a little differently than it's written up here. I say, "Father, I said till death do us part, I mean it." I don't say I want to mean it because I don't have to say that anymore. Then, I say, "I love you more than her, and her more than anyone or anything else." I don't say, "Help me to love you more than her,"

because I do love you more her and her more than anyone and anything. I've changed it up a little bit in my own mind.

Help me to bring her into your presence. Help me to bring her. Ephesians 5:25. Help me to bring her into your presence. Make us one like you're three in one, that intimacy, that companionship. I want to hear her. I want to hear what she's saying. I want to cherish her. I want her to know that she really is more important to me than anyone or anything else. I really do want her to see that I love her the way Christ loves His church. Then to serve her.

I want to pick up those little – I actually want to, using this as a metaphor for every other little trivial thing I can do, I want to pick up every little Splenda packet that I can see. So that she will love God more, and so that we can bring him glory.

Then finally. What about reversing past mistakes? The best predictor of future success, it says, I heard a lot of people in my day and some have worked out great, some of them've been average and some of them've been failures. I have come down after 45 years of hiring and sometimes, even having to let people go, not very often. I've come down to a single, a single overarching idea, and that is that the best predictor of future success is past success.

When we're looking to bring someone on, we're basically looking for someone who has a pattern of success doing something, really anything, but a pattern of success over an extended period of time. Now, we're talking about marriage and you're thinking, "Yeah, I don't have that pattern of success of my future. If the best predictor of my future marriage success is my past marriage success, I may not be in very good shape." I want to share an idea with you that struck me this week, that I think could be revolutionary, and that is if you don't have your own marriage success, imitate someone else's. Find somebody who has been successful in marriage and ask them to adopt you, to mentor you, to disciple, to take you under their wing, to show you the ropes.

How many of you feel like you could actually help another man by showing him the ropes because you have figured out marriage success? Raise your hands. Do it, now. Raise your hands. Raise them up. Leave them up. Look at all these guys. Look at all these guys who have figured out how to have marriage success. They're not saying they're perfect, because they're not. I'm not, nobody is. How many of you guys would like to have some guy be your mentor, to disciple you into biblical marriage, to help you towards marriage success? Raise your hands now, raise them. Raise them up.

All you other guys are just happy being mediocre? Raise your hands. Come on, do it, take a chance. Do it, be vulnerable, be transparent, raise your hands. All right. Now, you guys at your tables, you have some mentors and you have some mentees. You guys get together, okay? You guys get together. All you table leaders today, and online too, I'd like you to do the same thing, specifically at your table, ask, who would like to have somebody spend a little time. Just get together one time, that's all you have to do. Just get together one time, and just listen out and then maybe you might get together again after that, maybe not, but this is one meeting.

This is what I want you to do. Do this at your tables. Table leaders, ask your guys who would like to have a little help. Who would like to hear from somebody who's been about to figure all this out, and then ask who it is that has it all figured out, and then get them together. One time, that's it.

Okay. Now, we're going to do the questions guys, and then we'll come back and have a little feedback. There are three questions, same format as always. Reflection, knowledge and application. Go ahead and take about 20 minutes or so, and then we'll come back and talk about it.

First time visitor, we want to welcome you this morning. If you are here for the first time, would you raise your hand and let's just see here. Where else, over here ... All right. Let's welcome our first time visitors, guys. All right, you men here for the first time, I'd love to have a chance to get to know you, greet you. If you'd come to this card table in the front right hand corner, have a chance to shake hands and talk a little bit.

First timers up there, second timers, just stay where you are at your tables. Great.

Okay, men. Let's discuss these questions. I don't think that let us pray thing is going to work anymore. Oh, the loudness. Brian has a new thing for two, three weeks. All right. What we're doing, we are just taking a few minutes just to see what kinds of, some of the answers, what kinds of answers you came up with to some of these questions as a group. If you would like to be a spokesman for some of the things that were said at your table, or yourself, that'd be fine.

What one thing most attracts you to your wife or girlfriend and why.

Audience: My wife hears from God.

Patrick Morley: Your wife hears from God. Wow.

Audience: She's spoken more [inaudible 00:31:24] into my life than anyplace else in my life.

Patrick Morley: How about that.

Audience: She's the finest person I've ever met in my life.

Patrick Morley: Wow. Let's get your camera on his face directly. We'll send a copy of this to his wife. You're golden.

Audience: I'll get that \$100.

Patrick Morley: You're golden, yeah. I feel the same way.

Audience: Can you repeat them I can't ... Can you repeat them, I can't hear him.

Patrick Morley: Yeah. First of all, his wife hears from God, and speaks into his life and she's the finest person that he's ever known. Good summary?

Audience: Yep.

Patrick Morley: Great.

Audience: Hundred bucks.

Patrick Morley: All right. If you want to give him a hundred bucks, it's fine. Everybody favor of him giving the hundred bucks, raise your ... You decide to do with what ... I'll decide what to do with my \$100 and you can decide what to do with your \$100. All right. Anybody else, Andy?

Andy: Yeah. You talked about companionship.

Patrick Morley: Companionship.

Andy: Companionship is so much stronger than anything else. You can laugh with her, you can just hang out with her, all day long. That's a place that makes a difference.

Patrick Morley: Wow. Just the whole idea of being a companion. It's interesting, sex is great, but sex actually makes up such a small part of a marriage. It's overwhelming.

Audience: Yeah, but it's still good.

Patrick Morley: Yeah, it's good, I understand. Yeah.

Audience: [crosstalk 00:32:57]

Patrick Morley: Yeah. All right. Good, okay. Second question. Ephesians 5:25, that's our marching order. Which phrase or idea in the marriage prayer most captured your attention today and how is that reflected in our text of the day, Ephesians 5:25. Anyone?

Audience: And gave himself for her.

Patrick Morley: And gave himself for her. Amplify a little bit? That's the phrase that caught your attention, all right, and gave himself for her. How's that reflected in the marriage prayer?

Audience: I think if your wife believes you're willing to die for her, she won't have as much struggle submitting to you.

Patrick Morley: Yeah. All right. Gave himself for her. That might relate to the phrase, for example, to want to hear her, cherish her and serve her. For example. That's good. Excellent. Okay. Yep. John?

John: Picking up on what you just said, that was [inaudible 00:34:01] you talked a lot about what it sort of looks like often we think we're serving-

Patrick Morley: What serving looks like, you thought about this. We talked about that.

John: It may not be what she perceives [inaudible 00:34:12] so you may still be missing the mark. Understanding how to hear and serve her is really important.

Patrick Morley: Understanding how to hear her and serve her, because the way that, if I understand you correctly, the way that she wants to be served and the way that we try to serve, may not be lined up. It's good to make sure they're lined up.

Audience: IE the 5 love languages.

Audience: Yeah, exactly.

Patrick Morley: Yeah, the five love languages, which we've taught here before by the way. Yeah, that's good. If you don't have, if you haven't looked over those five love languages, at least look at the table of contents. It's pretty intuitive, you can figure it out.

Okay. Anybody else? Yes, Jim?

Jim: Till death do us part.

Patrick Morley: Till death do us part, okay.

Jim: Because when I looked at this, as fellow believers, a lot of what comes after that, I could say to a lot of the men or other friends that I have are Christian brothers and sisters. But I'm not sure that I could mean it with them to say till death do us part.

Patrick Morley: All right. He's just really, Jim was just focusing in on this till death do us part thing. I have probably, besides Jesus Christ, I've probably taught more and written more on marriage than any other topic because you have your relationship with Jesus, you have your relationship with your wife, and then you go way way down in the outline, your relationship with your kids, and then way down there underneath my feet somewhere is the relationship with everybody else.

It is the singular most sublime and unusual relationship in all humanity. I've written three books on it. The Marriage Prayer, which we're looking at here, David Delk and I wrote, and incidentally if you wanted more information, you can go to themarriageprayer.org, there's plenty of stuff there. Then Devotions for Couples, which 120 little two page chapters, you can do together with your wife or by yourself, or she can do it without you too.

Then Understanding your Man in the Mirror, which you can get at no cost if you go to our website, you can get it at no cost, you can download that for free. Then Chapters and Man Alive, with the 10 deposits that you can make in your wife's emotional bank account. In the chapter, or two, in The Man in the Mirror, where we unpack this prophet, priest and king thing, and a love and submit marriage looks like and so forth.

Yeah, I wanted to work those resources in somewhere in this thing. You can check those out. All right. The biggest thing that I've left out today, the one thing that didn't make it in today that I ... You can't say everything every time, would've been this commitment to the institution of marriage, or to death do us part, that it's more important to be committed to the institution of marriage than it is to be committed to your wife. Not that it's not important to be committed to your wife, that's pretty important, but it's even more important to be committed to the institution because if you're not committed till death do us part, then what's the moral glue that holds you in place when you're just not getting on?

Okay. Anybody else on this one? Keith.

Keith: You talked about helping bring her into Your presence today, and if we're not in God's presence, then we missed the mark. We've got to learn to surrender first via Christ, so that we can bring her in.

Patrick Morley: Right. Help me bring her into Your presence today, but you can't do that if you're not there yourself. Leading a surrendered life. Great. Last one.

Audience: Supplying our needs. God says He'll to supply all your needs according to His riches in glory. If you know how to get good gifts for your children, how much more the heavenly father, but not just physical needs but her emotional and spiritual needs. But, really trying to seek out what she needs and take care of those needs with earnest and love.

Patrick Morley: All right. As the husband, being the conduit to meet her needs, because that helps fulfill the scripture that my God will supply all of your needs and often through the husband. Does that get the idea?

Audience: Yes sir.

Patrick Morley: Okay. Beautiful. That was very nice. Try to remember that, probably won't, but try to. Okay. What are the past mistakes that you'd like to reverse, and have you caught the vision for how the marriage prayer captures God's plan for marriage success and how it can help you reverse those past mistakes, and are you willing to begin or continue to pray the marriage prayer on a regular basis. Okay, who has something on this one?

Okay. It is eight o'clock, so we're going to pray the marriage prayer together, as we close out today, and that will be the big idea for the day. Let's say this together, let's begin now.

All Together: Father, I said till death do us part, I want to mean it. Help me to love you more than her and her more than anyone or anything else. Help me bring her into your presence today. Make us one like you are three in one. I want to hear her, cherish her and serve her, so she would love you more and we can bring you glory, in Jesus' name, amen.

Patrick Morley: Thanks, have a great weekend, men.