



The Gaps in Marriage

1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Luke 6:31

About Marriage: Falling in Love. Staying in Love.

We all know what's required to fall in love . . . a pulse. Falling in love is easy, but staying there, that's something else entirely. With more than a thousand matchmaking services available today and new ones springing up all the time, finding a romantic match is easier than ever. But staying with the one you've found seems to be the real challenge. Is it possible for two people to fall in love and actually stay there? Absolutely. That's what this series is all about.

Today's Bottom Line: Staying in love requires we believe the best.

Review

The questions that started us off was, "Can two people stay in love forever?" Yes, if they are willing to make love a verb – mutually submit.

All of that would be a whole lot easier if we came into the relationship with hearts full of good things . . . but we don't. Most of us are full of something, and through these things, we've discovered the importance of guarding our hearts.

Introduction

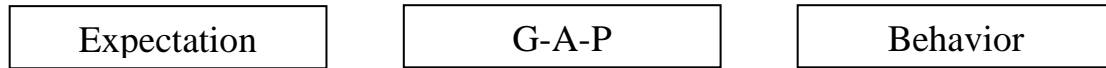
Today, I want to talk about a choice you make every day about love. It's a choice you are not aware of, but after today, you will be.

We're concluding this series with a fill-in-the-blank question every in-love couple gives each other every day.

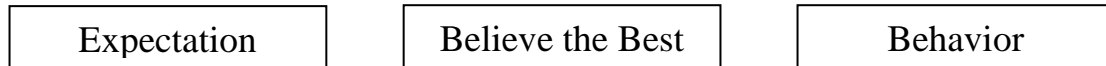
Struggle

In every relationship, there are unexplainable gaps between what we expect and what they actually do – between our expectations and their behavior.

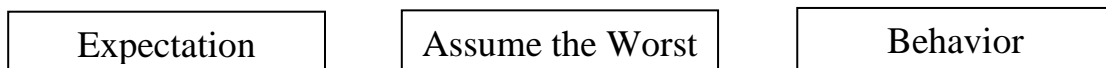
We place something in those gaps:



We either fill the G-A-P by believing the best:



Or, we fill the G-A-P by assuming the worst:



Truth

1 Corinthians 13:4-7, “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.”

To stay in love, you must CHOOSE to believe the best.

Give the benefit of the doubt.

If you go negative, you are undermining your own relationship.

Your spouse doesn't want to disappoint you.

Application

When you discover your optimism was not founded on reality, then have a conversation, but even then, choose to believe the best.

Conclusion

Can two people fall in love and stay together? Yes.

If they make love a verb.

If they are willing to mutually submit.

If they are willing to keep watch over their own heart.

If they are willing to believe the best and refuse to assume the worst until it's impossible to do otherwise.

Here's Jesus' summary statement of the whole thing:

Do to others as you would have them do to you.
– *Luke 6:31*

Next Steps

- Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- Believe the best.
- Have a date night this week.