

Spiritual Tip

Three Reasons We Need To Walk with Others

By Rick Warren

The Bible often compares life to a walk, because life is a journey; we're not sitting still. Throughout the New Testament, we are told to walk in wisdom, love, light, and obedience. We're told to walk as Jesus walked. We're also told to walk alongside other people. Here are three reasons we need to walk with other people:

- **It's safer.** Have you ever walked alone at night through a dark alley or down a lonely country road? It's a little scary. But if you have another person with you, you feel safer.
- **It's supportive.** Life is not a 50-yard dash; it's a marathon. Walking with other people gives you the energy to keep on going until the end.
- **It's smarter.** You learn more by walking with others than by walking alone. If you're walking alone in the wrong direction, you may never realize it. But if you have a friend beside you, one of you is likely to recognize you've veered off the path and need to find the right direction.

We also learn some important lessons when we walk alongside other people. We learn how to get along and cooperate with others.

We also learn how to love. Genesis 2:18 tells us, "It is not good for the man to be alone" (NIV). God hates loneliness, and community is God's answer to loneliness. When we walk alongside other people, we find a community where we learn how to love.

Walking alongside other people also teaches us hospitality. The Bible says in 1 Peter 4:9, "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling." What's your grumble? What's your excuse for not opening your home to friends?

Maybe you've said, "My home is dirty!"

Well, clean it up!

Or perhaps your excuse is, "My home isn't big enough."

Can you put three people in it? Jesus says, "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20).

Everybody has a longing for belonging, because God made us for relationships. When we walk alongside other Christians in community, we find that longing satisfied.

Talk It Over

- What excuses have you used to avoid practicing hospitality? What do you need to change about your attitude?
- Who are the people in your life alongside whom you can walk? With whom can you learn to walk like Jesus?

Marriage Tip

Romance Your Wife With Rituals

By Bill Farrel

"I wish you were more romantic." Ever heard those words? If you're like most husbands, I'll bet you have. Probably more than once. Those words are about as pleasant as "You need to go to the dentist."

Let's face it. Most of us have only a vague idea what romance really means to our wives. Besides, who has time to be Romeo when the kids have soccer practice and the demands at work never let up?

Fortunately, romancing your wife isn't as complicated — or as time-consuming — as we make it out to be. In fact, I've stumbled across something that eliminates the guesswork and stress: Romantic Rituals.

What is a Romantic Ritual? It is a simple act you do on a regular basis to let your wife know how much she matters to you. Creating a Romantic Ritual is one of the best ways to touch your wife's heart while you work a job and raise a family.

My wife, Pam, and I have done one such ritual since the early days of our relationship. Before we eat a meal, we pray together, and right after we pray, we kiss. It doesn't take much effort, but it conveys to Pam that she is special to me.

This simple act has an even bigger impact when I do it in public. She gets the message that I delight in her and want others to know it.

Other examples of romantic rituals I have been told are:

- "We say, 'I love you,' every time we hand car keys to each other."
- "We kiss any time we hear running water."
- "I bring her coffee in bed every morning with a note that says, 'I love you.'"

Of course, these rituals do not replace taking your wife on a date or surprising her with flowers, but they create the type of environment that regularly affirms your love.

How do you find a ritual that will work?

Step 1: Choose an activity that you do often, such as getting the mail, walking through the front door or washing the dishes.

Step 2: Add a romantic element, such as a kiss, a note or a statement of affection.

Step 3: Commit to do it no matter how you feel or how your day is going. The power is in the consistency.

If you happen to get a great idea for an over-the-top romantic surprise, take advantage of it. But while you are waiting for that inspiration to hit, build a ritual that gives your wife the romance she craves.

This article originally appeared in the January/February 2010 issue of Thriving Family magazine. Copyright © 2010 by Bill Farrel. Used by permission. ThrivingFamily.com.

Parenting Tip

The Famous Stanford Marshmallow Study

By Mike Brescia

A common question that we are asked weekly by clients is "When should my child start setting goals?" This question indicates a complete lack of understanding of what a goal actually is. Goal achieving is something that is, or should be, going on every hour of your life.

Here's a story that will help me explain...

In the 1960s, Psychologist Walter Mischel and his staff wanted to know to what extent the ability to delay immediate gratification might influence later educational and life success.

The study involved 400 four-year-old kids. (Look for videos on the Internet – Ed.)

Each child was put in a room by themselves with a two-way mirror and filmed. On the table in the room was a marshmallow. The researcher then told each child that, "I've got to leave for about 10 minutes. You can eat this marshmallow now if you want. Or if you wait till I get back, you can have two marshmallows when I get back."

Some of the kids where pretty determined to wait; one child actually licked the table all round

the marshmallow but avoided the marshmallow itself. Some could wait a few minutes only. Others gobbled it down immediately.

The researchers continued to track these 400 children throughout their school careers and into early adult life.

The results were dramatic.

"Those who had deferred eating the marshmallow for 15-20 minutes in order to get the bigger prize just a few minutes later were:

- * **more socially competent, personally effective, self-assertive and better able to cope with the frustrations of life.**

- * **They were less likely to go to pieces, freeze, regress under stress or become rattled and disorganized when pressured.**

- * **They embraced challenges, and pursued them instead of giving up even in the face of difficulties.**

- * **They were more self-reliant and confident, trustworthy and dependable**

- * **They took initiative and plunged into projects**

- * **More than a decade later, they could still delay**

gratification in the pursuit of their goals."

According to their parents' evaluations, the children who had waited were academically superior, could better put their ideas into words, use and respond to reason, could concentrate better, make plans and follow through on them, were more eager to learn.

This simple little marshmallow test of the ability to delay gratification has shown to be a better predictor than IQ what future SAT scores will be. In fact, the kids who could wait just 15-20 minutes scored, on average, 210 points better on their SATs than the "instant gratification" group. 12-14 years LATER.

You see, discipline is not factual knowledge... it's who you are. You can't get discipline from a book. Most of those preschoolers couldn't read a lick.

There is a Chinese proverb that says "If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will escape a hundred days of sorrow."

In **The Road Less Traveled**, M. Scott Peck writes, "Discipline is the basic set of tools we require to solve life's problems. Without discipline we can solve nothing. With only some discipline we

can solve only some problems. With total discipline we can solve all problems."

Sadly, today's society is set up to give us what we want now. We're told at every turn that we deserve more now. Take it. Don't wait. Screw patience.

Does this all mean that if we don't have self-discipline by the age of four, we're doomed to a life of mediocrity and failure? No, of course not, but it is one of life's most important abilities to develop.

**Compliments of the District 1
Marriage and Family Ministry,
FFWPU**

For more:

Marriage Tips, Resources, or copies of these Sunday Inserts visit:

www.TheMarriageLibrary.com

Archives: username: Member
password: 20112011