Biblical Marriage: Roles and Decision Making

We are going to spend several months studying biblical marriage. Tonight will be a quick introduction on why God created marriage and what it is intended to be.

Biblical Marriage

- The purpose of biblical marriage is to accomplish God's purposes by…
  - Mirroring God's image (Gen 1:26-27)
    - to reflect, magnify, exalt, glorify God
  - Completing each other (Gen 2:18)
    - to provide companionship, encouragement, strength
  - Multiplying a Godly legacy (Gen 1:28)
    - One of the primary ways to fulfill the Great Commission and accomplish God's purposes

We are not professionally trained counselors. We are here to discuss biblical principles and wisdom we can derive from Scripture to define roles and make decisions.

Here is what we have turned marriage into: our comfort, our happiness, our needs,

to be holy and more like Him. A place of submission.

Are you spiritually, emotionally, and physically heathy.

Broken sinful people trying to make marriage work.

Very pro counseling. Bringing in baggage.

Honor one another.

You have grown up in a world that expects everything to be fixed. No pull yourself up from your bootstraps. Balance between this and sweep under the rug. Not everything is going to be fixed. We are too fragile. Own your own stuff.

We don't want to sacrifice anything. Our focus is not near enough on God's purpose for marriage.

Ephesians 5:15-18

- Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Definition of a fool – Someone who knows the difference between right and wrong but does not care!!

Face up to, embrace, and accept God's plan (God's will for your life). Stop playing games. You know what is on the other side. Face up to God's will for your life. (which is always in the context of His Providential and Moral Will)

Quit playing so close to the abyss. Many times we live as close to sin as we can get without actually sinning, which is very dangerous. We need to quit flirting with disaster.

We need lane assist to help us not get distracted from our pursuit of God and we need guardrails to protect us from disaster.

Finish verse

Ephesians 5:15-18

- Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

The principle of having personal lane assist in our lives comes from Ephesians 5:15-18 Before we read these verses, it is important to understand that Paul was talking to a culture that was actually more corrupt and immoral than even our country today. In the preceding verses he is pleading with the Christians in Ephesus to not be immoral, impure or greedy. He says you are Christians, so live like it, but warns them that there is darkness all around them. Because of all of the darkness, he then says, "Be very careful, then, how you live - …"
We also live in dangerous times. Therefore, we must be careful. If you don't think times are dangerous, just look around. 50% of all marriages end in divorce, true for Christians and non-Christians. Is that what you want? Bankruptcies are at an all-time high. God is being taken out of schools. NYC just ruled that churches can no longer meet in schools. We are raising a morally bankrupt generation. Pornography is out of control. All of these things distract us from our ultimate goal of glorifying God. Of being devoted followers of Jesus.

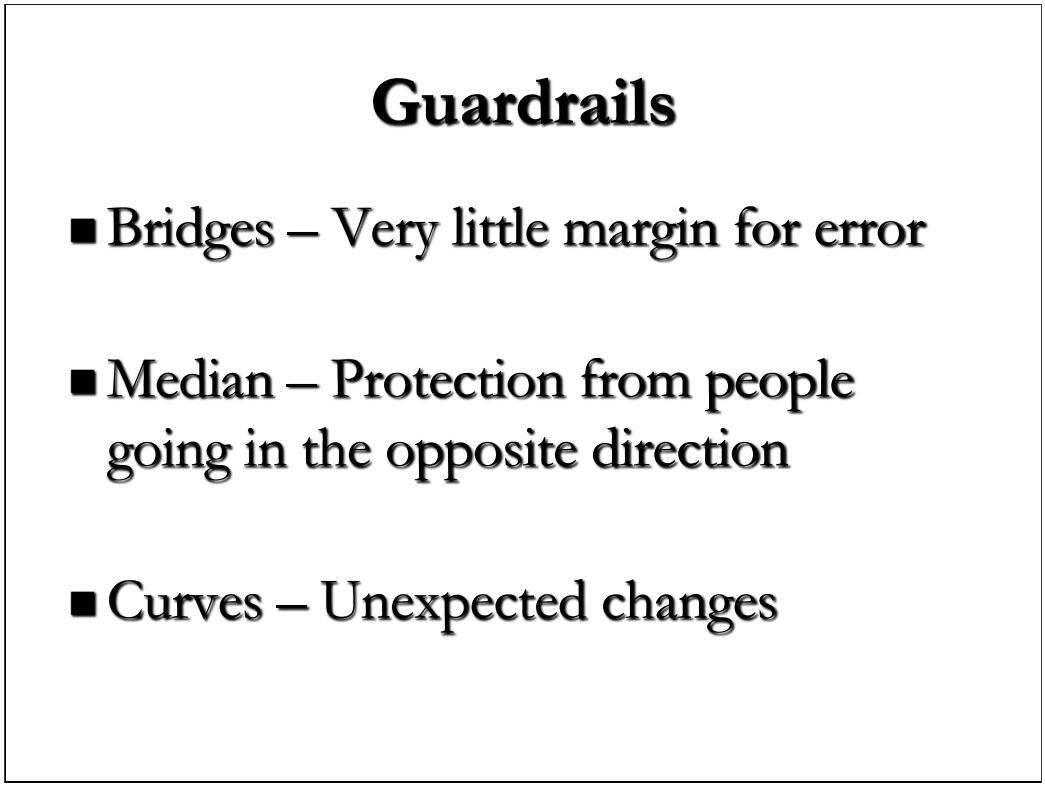
So what does it mean to be wise? All wisdom comes from God. Wise is knowing what the Bible says and obeying it. Sometimes this is very clear. Other times we need wisdom to know how to act and what to do. Wisdom includes knowing where we are most at risk and taking precautions against these risks.

Stay on Course

- "Nobody plans to mess up their life. The problem is that most people don't plan to not mess up their life."
  - Andy Stanley

This is what it means in Ephesians when Paul tells us to walk as wise. We need to plan to not mess up our lives.
Personal Lane assist are meant to help us listen to the still, quiet voice of the Holy Spirit. But it is actually bigger than not messing up our lives. It is about glorifying God and living for more than just this life.

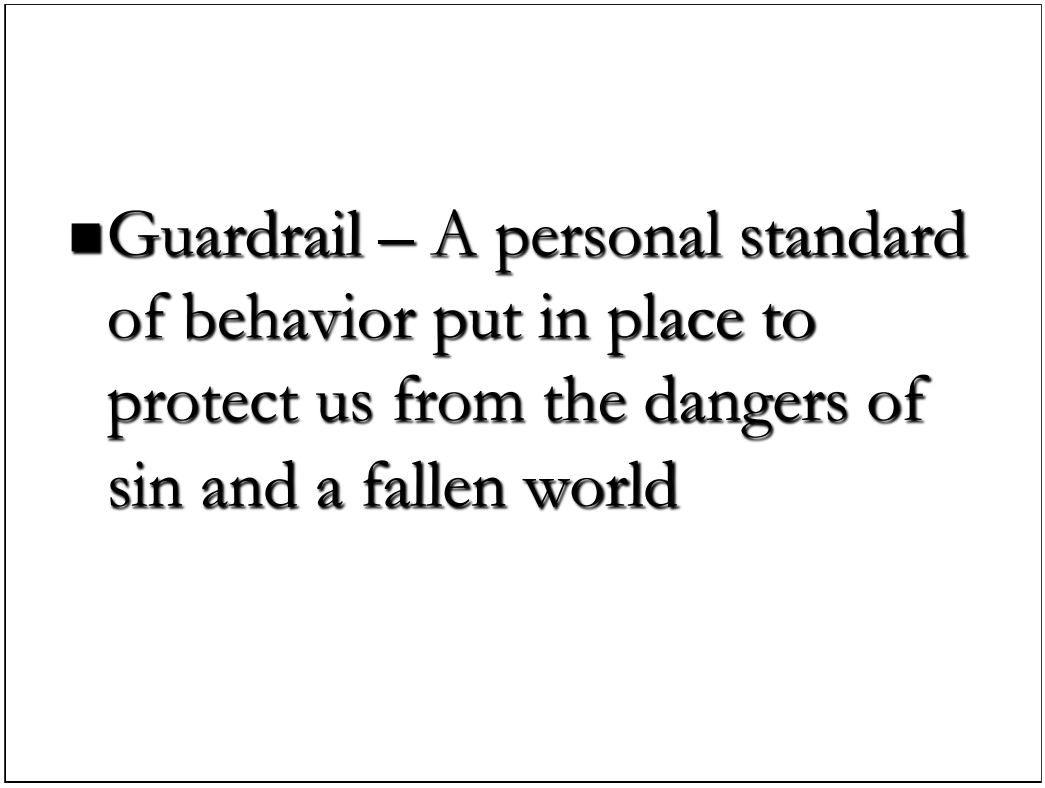
Guardrails help us plan not to mess up our lives and stay focused on glorifying God by being His devoted followers.



You will typically find guardrails in the most dangerous areas.
Bridges – very little margin for error
Medians – protection from people going in the opposite direction
Curves – unexpected changes

Have you ever noticed that guardrails are on usually on drivable parts of the road? They are placed just inside the danger zone. The actual danger zone is on the other side of the guardrail. The guardrail is there to protect you from the danger that is on the other side. No one argues with the guardrails we see on our roads. And many are extremely thankful for those guardrails.

Guardrails protect us from the danger on the other side. Typically needed to protect us from careless behavior or from dangerous situations. They are more forceful than lane assist. It is a bit harder to ignore them. They pretty much make us to change our direction. And if we don't have them, the consequences can be really bad. Let's watch a couple of examples of this.



These need to be personal standards of behavior that you are so committed to that you feel guilty when you violate them. These are not sins. They are to help you walk wisely. These guardrails are not for everybody, they are for you. And, if you ignore them, you may endure significant damage that comes from sin.

Let give you a really practical example of a guardrail. My wife Susan is a very loyal friend. So much so that she has a friend named Heather that she has remained very close to even though they have not lived in the same town since they were 8 years old. Heather had one sibling who was her younger sister, Jen. Jen seemed to have a lot going for her, but she got hooked on drugs as a teenager and could never get free. In fact, drugs led to her death at 20 years old. As you can imagine, this had a huge impact on Heather. Heather was wise enough to know that addictions like this tend to run in families. Furthermore, none of her kids have ever taking anything stronger than over the counter pain medications, even though two of them have had ACL surgery. Extreme, maybe. Did Heather and her family have to endure more physical pain, yes. But you know what is really painful, watching someone you love kill themselves because they are addictive to heroin. Heather does not want to see anyone else in her family go through what Jen went through. Wise, I think so. Does this mean that we all should take a vow to never take an addictive prescription drug? No. But for some of us who are more prone to addiction, it would certainly be wise. You get the point. If you never take anything addictive, it is really hard to get addicted.

Think about lane assist. Gently nudges you back into your lane when you start to veer out of your lane. Guardrails block you from potential danger.

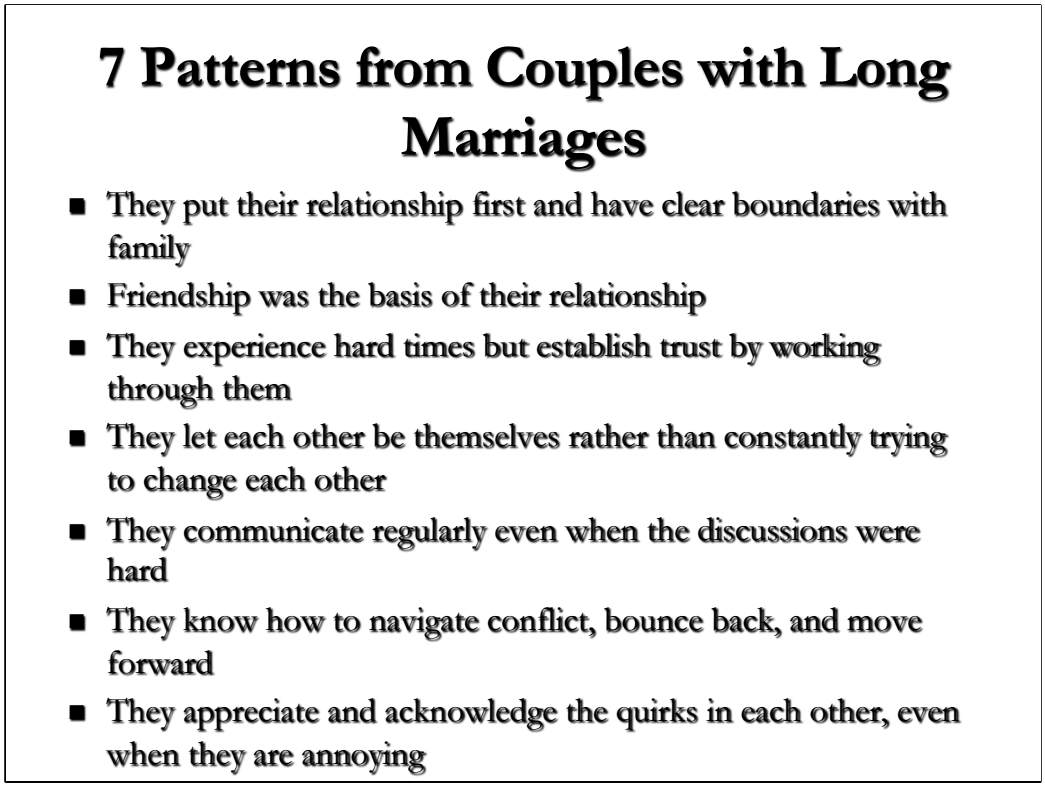
What is your greatest regret? It probably could have been avoided if you had appropriate guardrails in place.

This is what lane assist and guardrails do. Remember these are personal. They become legalistic when you impose your lane assist and guardrails on others.

Four Principles to Guide Roles and Decision Making

- The husband's authority is never used to please himself, but to serve the interests of his wife
- A wife is not to merely be compliant but to use her resources to empower her husband
- A wife is not to give her husband unconditional obedience, that is reserved for the God
- Assuming the role of headship is for the purposes of ministering to your wife and family

From Tim Keller Meaning of Marriage



Give personal examples

1. They do what is best for their marriage regardless of what their families think or want (Setting boundaries for holidays and vacations)
2. Friendship
3. My depression, Susan menopause, parent issues initially with my mom and then with all of our parents in the past year
4. We have been greatly helped by the Enneagram and Love Languages. We don't all respond the same way to criticism. Some get mad some get sad some get defensive some get nervous some have a combination of these. Don't be so defensive. Must have a high level of trust. Be able to talk about frustrations without rushing each other. It is not trying to fix each other it is trying to help each other be more like Christ more unified more engaged. Be part of the solution. Perspective and expectations and grace. Don't require more of people than what they can give. The answer is we finally did a better job seeing from each others perspective and we loved each other and cared about each other enough to give and compromise. Love Languages and Enneagram really helped us. How can we compliment and not compete. Lots of compromise and give and take

5. Regular communication
6. For us goes back to issues with parents
7. Me getting up during dinner. Susan sleeping issues. Me being excessively early. Susan needing more down time. Good time to discuss capacity light bulb going off

Our Tips

- Most of the issues you will struggle with are not black and white
- Principles are your guide, but wisdom is needed for the gray issues
- It will not look the same for all of you
- Most deep marriage struggles come down to being legalistic, manipulative, and selfish instead of wise, loving, and unselfish.

1. The black and white issues are clear in Scripture

Wisdom is knowing where you need to change and when you don't. It depends. It is not black and white. Talk and find compromise.

Example of capacity. My schedule and my capacity is bigger than Susan's and that created a lot of stress and pressure in Susan. Took us a long time to figure out. Makes her feel like she is doggy paddling and can't keep up. Not everyone is wired the same. My energy and checking boxes can cause us to do a lot of good things that are not the best things. Relationships suffer. A lot of give and take both ways. I'm a 3 she is a six. Susan needs to support me but not help me beyond her capacity. There will be some crash and burns (life dips) but Susan has to not feel responsible for that. She will help clean up the mess but not feel responsible for the mess.

What is wise loving unselfish. Most issues have selfishness at the root.

Family Man I choose Us

- Worksheet #1
  - What do appreciate most about each other and why?
  - What are your two biggest assets as a couple?

- Answers must be written down
- Don't send us your answers, but do text us and let us know when you have shared your written answers with each other and discussed them