



7 DAY DEVOTION SERIES ON
Couples in the Bible

Day 1: Abigail & Nabal

Throughout the next 7 days we will be learning from couples throughout the Bible. The first Biblical duo of our marriage series is Abigail & Nabal.

You might see this couple as a strange choice. Truth be told their marriage was not a stable one. Nabal is described in 1 Samuel 25 as “harsh and badly behaved.” However, Abigail was known as “discerning and beautiful.” She was the peacemaker of her family.

Scripture says we are to “*Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it* (Psalm 34:14).”

Everyone has a bad day, or even a bad season. Marriage brings together two sinful people under one roof. It will not always be sunshine and rainbows, and that’s okay. What’s important is that no matter the day might bring, we must choose to be a peacemaker. Don’t give in to the bickering after a long hard day.

Take a deep breath. Pray. Release the frustration and choose to have a peaceful heart.

Application: Have you and your spouse had an argument or bickering session lately? Take some time to apologize and forgive one another. Discuss how you can bring peace into your relationship. What does being a peacemaker mean to you?

Day 2: Abraham & Sarah

Abraham & Sarah are the perfect example of God's timing. They had their first baby when Sarah was 90 years old and Abraham was 100. I'm sure they would have preferred to have a child many decades prior, but God had a different plan.

I went into my marriage with a lot of ideas about where we would live, work, and raise a family. God had another plan.

The good news is His plan is always better than my own.

Hand all your goals, expectations, dreams and schedules for your marriage into His hands. As long as God is first and foremost in your relationship, the rest will fall into its proper place. Abraham and Sarah struggled with God's timing, but in the end they saw His grand design and knew it was for the best.

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven" – Ecclesiastes 3:1

Application: Make a list of all your goals as a couple. Write down any plans you have with the date you want to achieve them. Once you've made the list, say a prayer over your goals and ask God to bless them, but that His will be done. His plan is always better than our own anyway.

Day 3: Isaac & Rebekah

Isaac & Rebekah's relationship was shaped by God from the start.

Genesis 24 shows a servant sent to search for a wife for Isaac. During his search he prayed "*O LORD, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham (vs 12).*"

He then asked the Lord for a sign, because the servant wanted to be certain that God's hand was at work in his decision. He was sure only God knew the perfect partner for Isaac, so the servant lifted them up in prayer and trusted God for an answer.

Isaac and Rebekah's relationship began with a prayer, and grew into a complex and beautiful marriage that blessed a nation.

How often do you lift your spouse up in prayer? If you are currently unmarried, do you pray for your future partner?

Application: Pray together and for one another this evening. Don't be afraid to be vulnerable and open with one another. Make a list of ways you can be praying for each other throughout the week and check in every few days for updates.

Day 4: King Xerxes & Esther

If you've been married longer than a day you know there is a right and wrong time to talk about finances. The right time would be when you are both calm and well-rested. The wrong time would be after a long day at work while the kids are crying for dinner and you've just discovered the air conditioner is broken.

Esther knew the art of proper timing. She needed to approach the king to save her people, but rather than running right into the throne room Esther fasted. She prayed. She prepared one feast and then another.

Girl knew how to butter up her spouse.

Now, I am not saying we should deceive or swindle our significant other. However, there is something to the art of proper timing. Don't bring up a difficult subject like the holidays or finances right as your spouse is walking through the front door.

Schedule time to sit down together and discuss those more intense topics, that way you are both prepared. Have patience and remember who the real enemy is not your spouse.

“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.” – Eph. 4:29

Application: Pull out your calendars and schedule monthly meetings with your spouse. Talk about how you can prepare for difficult conversations. How can you make those interactions less tense?

Day 5: Lot and Lot's Wife

Lot and his wife are an example of what not to do. They were living in Sodom, which was the most depraved city on the planet at the time. Because of the persistence of Abraham, angels came to Lot and his wife to warn them that Sodom was going to be destroyed by God.

“As morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be swept away in the punishment of the city.” But he lingered.” – Genesis 19:15-16

Lot lingered. He didn't want to leave the city, but the angels were persistent. They came back to usher Lot and his family away from destruction. They warned Lot and his wife, *“Do not look back or stop anywhere... lest you be swept away.”* (Gen.19:17)

We all know what happened next. Lot's wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt. See why they are an example of what not to do?

Both Lot and his wife were hesitant to move forward in what God had for them, even though His plan gave security and hope.

As a couple, how might you be looking to the past? Are there plans that didn't work out or hurts you haven't overcome? Take a lesson from Lot and his wife today. Choose to move forward in what God

Application: Discuss past hurts with your spouse, whether that be hurts they caused or hurts caused by others. Pray together for healing from those past hurts. If it feels too overwhelming, consider making an appointment with a pastor at your local church or a counselor to discuss.

Day 6: Adam & Eve

Adam and Eve had a difficult start as a married couple. You know, after the whole first sin and creating a fallen world thing. Then they got cast out of Eden and had to learn to garden and build a house and clothe themselves.

So, yeah... they had a bit of a rough first year of marriage.

What I find fascinating in the story of Adam and Eve is Genesis 3:6, *“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food... she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.”*

Adam was with Eve the **whole time**. So at no point during the talking snake and temptation that led to the fall of humanity did Adam once speak up and tell his wife that maybe it wasn't a good idea to eat the fruit.

Marriage helps to keep us accountable. You can't hide much from your spouse. My husband knows when I am not getting my quiet time with God or I've spent too many hours on my laptop. I know when he feels overwhelmed at work or needs rest. Our needs are obvious, because we are with each other every day.

Proverbs 27:17 says *“Iron sharpens iron.”* As we run the race together, it is vital we keep one another accountable.

How can you (lovingly) sharpen your spouse today? You are their biggest advocate. Don't be quiet like Adam. Speak up.

Application: Share your personal goals with your spouse and how they can keep you accountable. Write them all down or type them into your phone. What do you struggle with? Be honest with one another and share the burden.

Day 7: Boaz & Ruth

Boaz and Ruth are perhaps the best known couple in the Bible apart from Adam and Eve or Joseph and Mary. There are dozens of things I could talk about in regards to this married couple. However, for the sake of this devotion I want to focus on their first meeting.

Ruth worked hard in the field all day to glean grain, taking only short breaks. She is seen by Boaz for the first time while in the middle of a hard day's labor. When he discovers who she is Boaz tells Ruth:

“My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with the women who work for me. Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the women. I have told the men not to lay a hand on you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled.”

-Ruth 2:5-9

Boaz shows immediate protection for Ruth. This protective and kind nature brought Ruth to her knees. It's overwhelming to experience the love of Christ in another.

Our spouse should feel safe and protected when they are with us. Not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually. Home should be a haven for our family.

Application: Do you feel safe, protected and cared for in your home? Think about the words spoken between you and your spouse. Are you kind and supportive, or short and rude to one another? Use the interactions between Boaz and Ruth to model how you should treat one another.

