

Introduction:

“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.”

-Saint Francis of Assisi

God gives grace through _____.

Discipline – is learning to do, over time, what you can't currently do.

Biblical practices great marriages have in common:

1. Love

2. Hope

Jesus gives hope to His bride, the Church:

¹“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. ²In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴And you know the way where I am going.” ⁵Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

⁷If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.”

⁸Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. ¹¹Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. ¹²Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. ¹³Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.

¹⁵“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

¹⁶I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

¹⁸“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”

John 14:1-21

Hope is a picture of the future that says, what we are doing today is going to produce a better tomorrow.

Principles:

1. Long-term planning provides _____ and _____ to overcome short-term pain and challenges.
2. Great plans provide a specific _____ and create _____ for tomorrow and forever.
3. Hope rises and falls with how we keep our _____.

Practical implications:

1. If you fail to _____, you plan to _____.
2. If you don't have a plan, you don't have _____.

Tools for transformation:

1. Clarity
 - You are a trophy of God's grace – you share hope when you share your brokenness.
 - Assignment: Add 10 years – see the goal, plan to get there.
2. Structure – work together on:
 - Finances
 - Calendars
3. If necessary, get outside help

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Jesus talk about and make such specific promises about the future with those He loved?
2. How did Jesus model “planning” that provided hope and set realistic expectations about future challenges?
3. Which of the principles challenged your thinking and/or practice in planning with your mate?
4. What practical steps do you need to take as a couple to “plan in” daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly activities to renew your hearts and provide hope for your future?
5. Identify “streams” that are polluting your heart and relationship and “streams” that renew them. (Proverbs 4:23)