

BUILDING *to* LAST

SESSION 6: TELLING THE STORY WELL

If conflict is the necessary discipline that removes hindrances to telling the story well, then communion is the positive graces that make our hearts to hum in love and fellowship.

Communion is made up of the relational graces within the marital covenant: sexual intimacy, communication, friendship, trust, affection, respect. It is the intimate bond of fellowship that flows in friendship and affection between husband and wife.

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (Gen. 2:24–25)

1. Communion is carried along under authority

2. Communion consummates

- *Intended for Pleasure* by Dr. Ed Wheat (available in Crossway Bookstore)

3. Communion of the unashamed

- *The kind of growing couples should see by the grace of God: 2Peter 1:3-8*

CASE STUDY

Case Study: Harry's toys, Carrie's boys

Harry and Carrie have been married for 12 years and have 3 boys (9 and under). Harry is an avid golfer and deeply committed to the game along with his father and two brothers. During warmer months, Harry will often head out to be with his family to golf twice, sometimes three times a week. His devotion to the game and to keeping up his clubs and strategies on YouTube are legendary. He is most excited and engaged with his boys through golf, and decidedly shallow and awkward to engage Carrie in meaningful conversation. He has shown some effort on occasion (more like flashes in the pan) to romance and buy Carrie gifts and is known to busy himself with many a home project, as he calls it "my love language".

Carrie has become concerned over the past 6 years about the lack of depth and friendship that she and Harry share. They very rarely pray together, and the only real Christian thing they consistently do is to attend church with Harry leading the way to their seats. Carrie bitterly blames Harry for his lack of spiritual depth and leadership of the family. She looks at other couples longingly, always taking note of the way that the other husbands seem to love and lead their families well. Whenever Carrie attempts to bring any concerns to Harry, it ends with him becoming cold, silent and distant, at times even shrugging his shoulders. Nothing seems to move him, even Carrie's anger and tears during those conflicts.

About three years before, to avoid becoming further embittered, Carrie prayed to God that she would no longer have the desire to have a godly husband and a great marriage. She decided that she should be content and stop fighting with Harry about his disengagement and dullness. She instead decided to become the best mom that she could be. And for these past three years she has thrown herself into becoming that active, all-competent mother to her three boys. For anyone discerning, you will notice that Carrie's social media posting includes countless photos of her children and their fun and meaningful activities together. Absent has been Harry.

1. What is the devil lying to Harry? To Carrie?
2. Where does someone begin to help this couple take steps in the right direction?
3. What would sweet fellowship and communion do for a couple like Harry and Carrie? What effect would it have on their three boys?
4. Are there any excuses for a believer to be shallow and dull when it comes to Jesus Christ and to fellowshiping with their spouse and other believers?
 - a. What are some baby steps that Harry might take in the right direction for sincere depth?