

# When Sinners Say “I Do”

## Lesson 7

1. 2 Samuel 12:1-15 – Nathan confronts David (“Mr. Sin-and-Spin”)
  - a. Two amazing dynamics in this story: 1) God pursued David with a tireless love; and 2) God uses sinners to pursue sinners.
  - b. 2 Cor. 5:18-21 – we have been given the ministry of reconciliation, even to our spouse.
  - c. We must be willing to use relational ties to intervene and help our spouses walk in a manner worthy of their calling.

*How important is this “ministry of reconciliation” to our marriages?*

*What are the situations/issues that would require a “Nathan” in your marriage?*

*What is your role when your spouse needs a “Nathan”?*

- d. “Nathan” must be someone appointed by God, close enough to see the issue clearly, and humble enough to be concerned more about God’s righteousness than other’s opinions.
2. Matthew 7:3-5 – Taking the first steps in confrontation
    - a. This passage does not stop at log removal – it’s the means to a greater end!  
  
*What are the two reasons we must begin with our own log first?*  
  
*What kind of result would you expect if you confront your spouse over a speck when you have a log in your own eye?*
    - b. Self-examination alone cannot produce a sweet marriage, but a sweet marriage cannot exist without thorough self-examination!

3. *Bart is in danger of being “downsized” and he is fretting. Around the house his countenance reveals his anxiety. Vibrant dinner conversation has now been replaced with long sighs and longer silences. His nights are fitful and often he finds himself spending hours staring into the darkness. He imagines all sorts of evil – unemployed, home foreclosure, homeless shelters, rebellious children, etc. What should his wife do for him?*

*“The three qualifications of a good surgeon are requisite in a reprovor: He should have an eagle’s eye, a lion’s heart, and a lady’s hand; in short, he should be endued with wisdom, courage and meekness.” (Matthew Henry, The Quietness and Meekness of Soul, pg. 113)*

4. A good surgeon uses wisdom
  - a. A wise surgeon chooses the right time to confront – not every moment is a “soul surgery” moment.  
  
*Name four of the worst places to “bring up some things” that need correction in your spouse.*

- b. Marriages grow sour (go south) when spouses engage in “soul-surgery” casually and carelessly – “soul-surgery” in sweet marriages thrives on informed consent of the patient!

*What are some ways a spouse can communicate that they want correction, not that they will tolerate it when its absolutely necessary?*

- c. Sweet marriages survive the surgery of reproof by running some diagnostic tests first ...

- Have I prayed for God’s wisdom and acknowledged my need for His help in serving my spouse?

*“In prayer we are reminded of our surgical limitations – we can operate, but we cannot heal; we can speak, but we cannot convict concerning sin. Only God can do that (John 16:8).” (pg. 124)*

- Are my observations based upon patterns of behavior or merely a single incident?

*Why is this important?*

- Am I content to address one area of concern, even if I’m aware of several?

*What is the danger of addressing multiple needs for change?*

*How do we determine the most important need?*

- Am I committed to making incisions no larger than absolutely necessary?

*What are common ways we make larger incisions than necessary?*

**POINT:** To be wise in grace is to see that a well-considered word carefully applied is good medicine. This is a soul you’re slicing open. Go very slowly. Cut very gently.

- Am I prepared to humbly offer an observation rather than an assumption or conclusion?

*Which is more inflammatory – questions or statements?*

- Is my goal to promote God’s truth or my preference?

*What are biblical ways to deal with the preferences we would like to see in our spouse?*

*What should our response be if our spouse never changes to meet our preferences?*