



LIFE-TRAC Family NEWS

BUILDING GOSPEL-CENTERED HOUSEHOLDS



2.5 Minutes With Greg

Greg McPherson, Founder/Director of Life-Trac

Why do Christian Marriages Divorce?

Have you ever pondered that hard question? Wouldn't you think that Christians would distinctly stand out with a low divorce rate?

As I consider this question my thoughts run something like this: Maybe couples are operating with an incorrect definition of what a Christian marriage is or how a Christian lives. I wonder if they are wrestling with biblical truth. Perhaps they just don't think it is that big of a deal to daily examine their attitudes, thoughts and actions in light of God's principles and the attitudes of Christ - especially as it relates to their marriage.

The first assumption of a "Christian marriage" would be both spouses are Christians! Both have been saved from their sins by God's grace through placing their faith in the work of Christ on the cross. But we dare not assume!

Listen to the words of Jesus found in Matthew 7:21-23, *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"*

Jesus is talking about two kinds of people: false disciples (vs. 21) and false prophets (vs. 22). I want to focus on the first group...false disciples. Here Jesus is describing people who are living their life with an incorrect - or better stated - "unbiblical" definition for true Christianity. People who think they are Christians, but in truth -- are not.

Jesus then illustrates with this well-known parable, *"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does **not** do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."* Matthew 7:24-27 (emphasis added)

Jesus is clear: there is only one foundation upon which to build a marriage or a life; any foundation other than Christ will not hold up. The evidence of a true believer is whether they obey the words of Jesus.

For a Christian marriage to survive and thrive, it must be built on the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you are not acting upon the words of Jesus, you may not be a believer! If you are not daily applying the words of Jesus to your marriage and family, you may not be a Christian. If this is true for you, you should consider salvation today. Repent of your sin (rebellion against God) and place your faith in the grace-filled work of Christ on the cross. His work on the cross accomplishes the forgiveness of your sins and the justifying of your life before a Holy God. You are forgiven! Rejoice in God's grace and mercy.

One final thought, no one considers divorce on their Wedding Day...but, put a few years of marriage and life on hearts that are *not* daily practicing the principles of God and the attitudes of Christ and you have all the makings for your marriage heading towards a painful divorce. You and I must be building our lives on the ONLY sure foundation Jesus Christ.

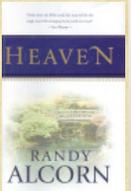


Candy's Turn

Candy McPherson, Co-Director

HEAVEN
By Randy Alcorn

My family and good friends know this about me: for the last 2-3 years, there is ONE book – out of the scores I have read in the last 2 to 3 years - that I want everyone else to read! The book is *Heaven*. I cannot emphasize enough how this book has totally changed my everyday thinking and perspective.



Most of us have failed to explore the Bible's magnificent teachings on this subject. Consequently, we do not have our theology of Heaven firmly rooted in our minds and hearts. We have let the world's view - harps and clouds (ugh) - distort God's revealed truth to us. We have fallen for the myth that Heaven will be boring. Perhaps we've even thought: *"Is Heaven just, like, uhh, one long sing-along church service?"* And then we sigh and feel guilty because we aren't more "spiritual".

Well, this book definitively answers the question, *"Will Heaven ever be boring?"* along with scores of other questions. Have you ever wondered any of the following: *What's the difference between the "present" Heaven and the eternal Heaven? Will the New Earth be like Eden? Will there be animals? What about our pets? Will we create art and music and culture? What will travel be like – will we explore space; will we travel in time? What is life in the present Heaven like for our loved ones that have died? Do people in the intermediate Heaven see what is happening on earth? What will our daily lives be like?*

My favorite two chapters are entitled: *"Will our dreams be fulfilled and missed opportunities regained?"* and *"Reorienting Ourselves to Heaven as Our Home"*.

Oh, friends, this book is EXCITING!! As a pastor and professor, Mr. Alcorn makes his case very carefully and biblically. Yes, the biblical doctrine of Heaven is about the future, but make no mistake: the understanding of this doctrine has tremendous benefits for us here and now.





MEET.....Dan and Candra Fisher from Olympia, WA

Years married? 34 years this May.

We Met: At college, California Lutheran Bible School. First impressions of each other were NOT favorable; I thought she was stuck-up; she thought I was a sissy.

One of the ways we are different: We only get to pick one? We are SO different - across the board in everything! Candra is random; Dan is organized. Candra loves to spend money freely on other people; Dan is the saver. Candra - social; Dan - introvert. Candra - artistic; Dan - uncreative. The list is endless.

One of the ways we are similar: That's easy - our passion to do ministry together. Through the years, whatever ministry in the church we're involved with, we do it together.

Our biggest argument took place: Let's change it to our "longest-running" argument, definitely about the teenage and college years of parenting. It's funny, when the girls were young; we studied and read books, and came to agreement pretty easily on what our plan was. But when the teen years hit, we now realize (looking back) how ill-prepared we were. Whatever the issue - boundaries, discipline - you name it - we were divided. So naturally, the girls pitted us against each other. Our marriage suffered.

Our advice to other couples: Work on your marriage forever - from pre-marital days until the day you die. Pray together. Have an understanding of what a Covenant means. We were also blessed to have 3 or 4 people of influence around us early in our marriage who drove home the same point:

"Divorce must never be considered; take it off the table as an option." That has helped us get through the tougher times.

How Life-Trac Family Ministries has helped us: We were introduced to Life-Trac in 1992 when we attended our first Marriage Encounter weekend. We didn't come with an urgency or crisis; we came with the idea of giving our marriage a jump start and boost that all marriages need from time to time. We wanted to become closer - and we got what we came for! That weekend totally refreshed our marriage. 14 years later, after the kids had left home, we came again, and got just as much out of it.

How we help the marriages around us: Several ways: 1) Through the years, the Lord has called us to establish marriage teams at various churches. It is a joy to come alongside marriages and families, training and teaching marriage enrichment classes and retreats.

2) For many years, we have also invested in the marriages around us by sending several different couples to Life-Trac's Marriage Encounter. We love the opportunity to do that because not only have we seen marriages refreshed, we have seen some marriages actually *saved from splitting up* - couples who are now thriving. Praise God!

3) We also have supported Life-Trac financially for many years. We support our local place of worship and we also feel it is incumbent upon us to support Kingdom ministries where we (and others) have been fed and changed.

4) Another thing we intentionally do as a couple is to not act like our marriage is perfect! We don't want to fall into the trap of pretending to be something we are not; we have agreed to be transparent about the struggles we have had in the past, so that God can use us to encourage other couples.

MARRIAGE IS FOR THE BIRDS IS BACK!!

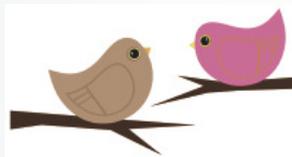
A SEMINAR ON *Romance AND Intimacy* IN THE CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

For many years, Greg and Candy taught this popular seminar on marital romance and intimacy. LoveBirds is returning for one day this spring in Snohomish. People have asked if it was ever going to be given again, so here it is for one more time.

Some of the topics covered include:

- 7 Reasons Why Your Wife Retreats When You Advance
- The Vital Biblical Foundation for Romance and Intimacy
- Critical Differences Between a Husband and Wife (*that affect the bedroom*)
- How To Be a Lover Your Wife Can't Resist
- Why an Affair Is Tempting - and How to Keep Yourself True
- The Dangers of Rejecting Your Mate

Greg and Candy handle this sensitive topic with dignity and respect. You'll leave with a new understanding and greater appreciation for the intimate side of the marriage. **Come Join Us!!**



Date: Saturday, May 22
Time: 8:45 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Place: Snohomish Community Church
Cost: *Early-Bird registration*
 - \$45 per couple
 (received online or postmarked by May 2)
Standard Registration
 - \$55 per couple

For more information or to register, go online at www.lifetrac.org or call 509-782-3206



MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

Regardless of whether you've been married 5 years or 50, your marriage will benefit from a *Marriage Encounter* weekend. How's that for a guarantee? Many husbands and wives say it was the best weekend of their married lives; others say it was like falling in love all over again.

NOW DOESN'T THAT SOUND REFRESHING?

If you've always wanted to attend, why not make this the time. The next one is filling up quickly, so register soon.

Date: Nov. 12 - 14
Time: 7 pm Fri. evening through 4:30 pm Sun. afternoon

Place: Leavenworth

Cost: \$45 deposit confirms your registration

To Register: online at www.lifetrac.org or phone (509) 782-3206

Pre-Pair for Marriage

"HAPPILY EVER AFTER". That's what we all want, right? Well, contrary to what the fairy tales tell us, there is a great deal of difference between *getting* married and *staying* married!

At the *Pre-Pair for Marriage* seminar you will learn what Cinderella and Prince Charming never told you, including:

- 3 CRITICAL things every couple must do the first year of marriage
- 4 mandatory character qualities found in every successful marriage
- The 5 top enemies of your marriage

Marriage, by God's design, is to be a life-long commitment. Get prepared now to make your marriage last a life-time.



Date: Sat. May 29
 Sat. Oct. 9
Time: 8:30 am to 5:00 pm
Place: Life-Trac Center, Cashmere
Cost: \$115 per couple

To Register: online at www.lifetrac.org or phone (509) 782-3206