



The Art of Spousing

10 Ways to Avoid Misunderstanding with Your Spouse

Misunderstandings are normal and even healthy in a relationship, so it's important to address and discuss them. This episode provides ten ways to avoid misunderstandings as well as a discussion on the significance of body language, shared calendars, practicing patience and praying together.

1. On a scale of 1-10, what's your comfort level handling misunderstandings? Take a few minutes to discuss why your comfort level is at that level. Which 2 of the 10 ways to avoid misunderstandings are at the top of your list as ways to improve communication with your spouse?
2. What is your tendency in misunderstandings - to blame, complain, or defend what was said or done? How can you cultivate a culture of accountability and mutual understanding in your relationship so you're receptive to feedback from your spouse when these tendencies emerge?
3. Discuss how body language and tone of voice have impacted communication with your spouse. How can being mindful of these forms of communication improve conversations with our spouse? What would it look like to identify when it happens in conversation in a respectful way so you can avoid miscommunication?
4. How do cell phones, computers, and schedules/calendars impact communication in your relationship?
 - What specific steps will you take to ensure misunderstandings don't occur or grow when texting or emailing?
 - Discuss how clarity around your work and family calendars could reduce the misunderstandings in your relationship and collaborate on ways to communicate individual and family events and calendars.

Marriage Challenge: If you have not prayed together as a couple, commit to making it a part of your relationship.

- Keep it short - start with 5 minutes together

- Keep it simple - begin with gratitude to God and let the conversation grow as you open up more and pray for personal needs
- Keep it supportive - be encouraging toward each other and your relationship as you share needs
- Keep growing - start with 5 minutes and as you become comfortable with prayer, let the conversation build. Some topics include:
 - Praise God for something he has done
 - Praise God for Jesus' sacrifice
 - Ask God to help with a problem or to help a friend or loved one
 - Ask God to provide for your health or finances
 - Ask God to help you grow in your relationship with him and to give you a desire to read the Bible.
 - Ask God to help you love your spouse like he does.