

Senior Pastor

By Brandon Lemons, Senior Pastor

The Priority of Marriage

As a pastor, I often think about the importance of setting a good example in the way I live. So what was I thinking a couple of weeks ago when I decided to skip the weekly Bible study I attend and encouraged my wife, Shelly, to do the same?



Please listen carefully, because I don't want to encourage everyone to start randomly skipping valuable opportunities for spiritual growth. Yet on that night, there was a more important priority: investing in our marriage. It is so easy to let the busyness of life slowly erode the togetherness of marriage. When a couple is dating, engaged, or newly married, they often can't imagine anything better than spending time with their significant other. Yet as time passes, the prevailing trend is that husband and wife settle into the routine of marriage, and many factors make it increasingly difficult to find quality (and quantity) time together. Even church can get in the way. And on this particular Wednesday night a couple of weeks ago, after many nights full of ministry and having an emergency cancel our scheduled "date night," we realized that we needed to prioritize our marriage by spending time together.

The reason I'm writing this is to remind all of us of the importance and priority of marriage. If you are married (or may be married in the future), it is vital to recognize that a healthy marriage doesn't just happen; it takes work, grace, and intentionality. We must make choices that prioritize our marriage and show our spouse that they are valuable to us. In doing so, we are not only going to enrich our marriage and our own life, but we will give our children the best gift possible (besides pointing them to Christ): their parents' healthy marriage. That's right – children desperately need to know that their parents love one another.

And for those of you who aren't married, I encourage you to do everything you can to encourage the marriages around you. I often say in premarital counseling that if you want an easy life, stay single; marriage is hard work, but it is also full of countless blessings.

So Shelly and I had a wonderful evening together as we shared a nice dinner, took a walk together, talked, and watched a fun movie. Did we miss being at our Bible studies? Yes, we did (I especially missed mine because they were having a brat fry that night!). But it is important to intentionally prioritize marriage. And don't worry, we didn't skip the Bible study we had two days later! One of my constant prayers for Friedens Church is that we will be a place that always encourages and empowers couples to grow in healthy, Christ-centered marriage.