

Subjects for Understanding

Life And Death Feelings

Purpose of Presentation: There are certain subjects that we have very strong feelings about, either consciously or unconsciously. Not knowing or understanding how our spouse feels about these subjects can cause misunderstanding and then lead to spiritual divorce. How we feel about death and how we feel about life are the two subjects for understanding that we are going to explore in our talk. The purpose of this talk is to try to determine how we feel about these two subjects and to share these feelings with our spouse.

Preparation for Meeting By Presenting Couple

Method: A. Do your personal reflection and dialog on the following questions. Only the first question will be phoned to the couple before Image. Later, at the Image meeting, the second question will be used as the dialog question for the evening. The remaining questions may be given to the couples at the end of Image meeting for their personal use in dialog for the subsequent weeks. (Note: Only one dialog question will be used to phone to the couples before the Image meeting.)

1. If I had complete control over my life in the next month what would I do?
 2. What would I like to do in the next month if I knew I had only one month to live?
 3. How do I feel about my death?
 4. How do I feel about life and what are my reasons for wanting to go on living?
- B. Using the following outline, write out your talk. Use the feelings you discovered in your dialog. We stress the importance of dialog and feelings.
- C. Use as examples your own feelings on life and death. Remember that we are not attempting to define what correct attitudes are on life and death, but are merely attempting to explore our own feelings on the subject and to share these feelings.
- D. Remember the most important point of the talk is you and what you share of yourself and your feelings. If you are open and honest, your talk will be great!

The Meeting

Dialog and Sharing Question: What would I like to do in the next month if I knew I had only one month to live?

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 30: 19-20.

Outline of Talk

- I. Introduction (2 min. each)**
- A. What is the purpose of this talk to me? Why talk about death? Why talk about life and death together? How do I feel life and death are related?
 - B. How do I feel about examining my feelings on life — anxious, serious, fearful, joyful? How do I feel about examining my feelings about death — threatened, philosophical, frightened, maudlin, negative?
- II. Body (6 min. each)**
- A. How do I feel about life — my life? Am I happy with my present life? Would I like to be doing something different with my life? If I had a choice with no constraints, what would I want my life to be — what would I want to do? How would I like to live — married, single, with children or without, rich or poor, doing what? Do I feel I'm missing out on something? Do I feel things are too hard in my life? What would I like changed in my life?
 - B. How do I feel about death? Do I have bad feelings about death? What are they — fear, anxiety, tension? Do I resist the thought of death? What would my feelings be if I knew I was going to die tomorrow? Would I be afraid? Would I be sad? Would I be angry? How would I feel toward God?
 - C. How would I feel toward my life if I knew I only had a short time to live? Would I be happy with my present life? Would I like to be doing something different with my life?
- III. Conclusion (2 min. each)**
- A. How have my feelings toward life — my life — changed when I consider life in the face of death? Do I feel differently about what my life has been thus far? In what ways do I feel the same about my life? In what ways have my feelings changed when I consider my life in the same context as death?
 - B. Do you think death is the termination of life? Do you think death is a time of judgment on one's life? Do your attitudes about death affect your attitudes about life?
 - C. How have my feelings toward what is important and of value in my life changed when I consider life as having an end? Does facing death make me feel differently about life? How has my ideal "game plan" of life changed? With only a short time to live do my feelings about priorities change? By this mental exercise have I finally discovered what is really important to me? How do I feel about this discovery? What are my feelings about the various facets of my life now?