

The logo for 'HOME IMPROVEMENT' features the word 'HOME' in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. Below it, the word 'IMPROVEMENT' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letter 'O' in 'IMPROVEMENT' is replaced by two interlocking circles, resembling a chain link or a stylized infinity symbol. The background of the logo is a light blue grid pattern.

How To THRIVE

Thrive at FCC is the ability to grow a healthy Christian life, with a focused emphasis placed on the physical, SPIRITUAL, EMOTIONAL,

and RELATIONAL aspects of each of us.

Spiritual health is to learn to stay CONNECTED to Jesus and engage in the spiritual maturing process (DISCIPLESHIP). (John 15)

Emotional health involves CULTIVATING the mind and heart as the center from which love and HEALTHY emotions flow. (Proverbs 4:23)

Relational health is not about the NUMBER of connections we have but about the depth and QUALITY of those relationships. (Proverbs 13:20)

Series Lessons

Without a clear understanding of your DESTINATION, you will never ARRIVE.

God has designed each of us for RELATIONSHIP, first with himself and then with EACH OTHER.

MARRIAGE is one of God's greatest gifts of COMMON GRACE.

¹³ And this second thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. ¹⁴ But you say, "Why does he not?" Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. ¹⁵ Did he not make them one,

with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So, guard yourselves in your spirit and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. ¹⁶ "For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, cover his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So, guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless." Malachi 2:13-16

The Decay of Marriage

The U.S. Divorce Rate

40-50% General Population (Lifetime Risk)

35% Self-Identified Christian

25% Weekly Churchgoers

Young Adult Christians

Nearly 25-30% of young adults are cohabiting.

In 2002, only about 41% of U.S. evangelicals had ever cohabited.

By 2022, that number grew to 56%, according to the Institute for Family Studies.

Average Age for 1st Time Marriages.

The median age at first marriage is approximately 30-31 years for men and 28-29 years for women in the United States, which is up from around age 23 for women and 26 for men back in the 1990s.

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.
Hebrews 13:4

The Destination of Marriage...Is NOT

_____ ONENESS _____ - God _____ DOES _____ this.

¹⁵ Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union?

Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. Genesis 2:24

Becoming SOULMATES - Does not EXIST.

"But if you do marry, you have not sinned, and if a betrothed woman marries, she has not sinned. Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that." 1 Corinthians 7:28

69% of conflicts in marriages are perpetual.

HAPPINESS - Too often confused with "feeling in love."

The Destination is...

FRIENDSHIP – she is your **companion** and your wife by covenant.v1

"Happy marriages are based on a deep friendship... mutual respect for and enjoyment of each other's company."

— Dr. John Gottman, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*

"Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children..." Titus 2:2

Mutual ATTENTION and AFFECTION.

Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.v14

"The determining factor in whether wives feel satisfied with the sex, romance, and passion in their marriage is, by 70%, the quality of the couple's friendship." — John Gottman

The Danger to Marriage

#1. DRIFT - Emotional Withdraw

So, guard yourselves in your spirit and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth v15

The Gottman Institute found that emotional withdrawal—not conflict—is the top predictor of divorce.

The Four Horsemen of Divorce

Criticism- Attacking your partner's character.

Contempt- Speaking with disrespect, sarcasm.

Defensiveness- Refusing to take Responsibility.

Stonewalling- Shutting down emotionally.

So, guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless. V16

"The opposite of love is not hate; it's indifference." — John Gottman

And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. V15

According to the Gottman Institute, a strong friendship is what makes romance, trust, emotional intimacy, and conflict resolution possible in marriage. Without it, couples drift into parallel lives or constant negativity.