



# THE INSIDE RUNNING

People go through different stages of human relationships – single, married, divorced or widowed. Even committed Christians are not always immune from experiencing the various stages multiple times, as remarriage becomes more common.

Featured speaker Martin Steel talks about being welded together in a strong bond. While most of us seek that “two become a lifelong one-flesh” relationship, this can be harder to build and maintain than one expects. Books, courses and counselling can all give us tools to help us succeed.

Marriage is a wonderful tool for helping us make attitude adjustments. A sense of entitlement seldom works – one needs to be a giver, not a taker. Coming into what Willard Harley (*Fall in Love, Stay in Love*) calls an “enthusiastic agreement” on a decision is really the only robust way forward in a successful marriage.

Emotionally focussed therapy (*Hold Me Tight*, by Sue Johnson) views the love relationship as an attachment bond. This helps make sense of our desire for close friendship, companionship and support from our spouse. It follows that marriage ideally should be a place where we are safe to be vulnerable. This is an illustration of how marriage reflects the relationship with Christ.

Whether you are married or single, we all face challenges in life. May God be your strength as you minister to others.



*John*  
John Subritzky

## Strengthening Marriage

November 2011

### Being the shadow of God

By Tim Sisarich

I've just joined a gym. My wife has been very gracious with her *cuddly* husband over the last few years. I've had plenty of excuses – I run a very busy ministry, it's hard work coming home to a full house of kids who all want my attention, blah, blah, blah...

She never nagged, harped on or even looked at me, wishing for the former Tim Sisarich who didn't scare little children when he took his shirt off! But she is so excited now that I'm doing something about my health and the way I look. Why? Because she loves me and cares for me. She wants the very best for me. She wants to see me free to be able to play with the kids and clear-headed in the work that I do. She wants to see me healthy.

I've been contemplating a bit about this whole thing, actually, and I realise that what God has given me in my wife Jesmae is a shadow of Himself. Despite the fact that she could easily pull *that* card on me, she doesn't because she loves me. She extends me grace. In fact, as far as I'm concerned, she is a great reflection of God's grace and compassion for a man who doesn't always deserve it.

While she is by no means perfect, through my wife I can get a glimpse of the very heart and nature of God Himself. A glimpse that says, to quote the Crystal Lewis song:

*"Come just as you are, don't you hear the*

*Spirit call? Come just as you are, come and see Christ my King. Come and live forevermore. Life everlasting, strength for today; Taste the living water and never thirst again."*

This grace and mercy is unique to Christianity too – a fact that was highlighted in a very tragic way through a documentary I saw recently. It was about life in India's largest jail. One scene from that doco stuck in my mind. The Hindu prison manager was talking to a man



who appeared to have been unfairly tried and grossly over-sentenced. In response to a request for leniency, he told the prisoner that the sentence would stand because, "We're all called to pay for our sins, if not from this life, then a previous one".

I don't know about you, but my sins in this life alone are enough to drown me. If they were to follow me around like a ball and chain, I may as well just toss it all in now. But you will never hear God utter the words, "Hey, how could you have done that to me after all I've done for you? You're going to pay for that!"

In fact, it's quite the opposite as the Psalms tell us that we are blessed because, by the single act of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, our sins are covered.

I have often heard it said that we can forgive, but God doesn't give us amnesia to forget. Well, let me take that burden from you, for that's not what

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God had in mind when He told us that all who call on the name of Jesus Christ will be forgiven. The language here is that of a transaction taking place, so the sin no longer belongs to us. In effect, a better way of expressing it may be to say that we have actually forfeited our sin or our hurt and our pain. It all now belongs to Christ.

So, as you turn the page, why don't you take a moment to think about the way you're treating your wife. Are you still holding a card up your sleeve to pull out on her when she mucks up *again*... when she hurts you *again*... when she misses the mark *again*? (Which, by the way, is the literal translation of the word *sin*.) Or are you too being the *shadow of God*?

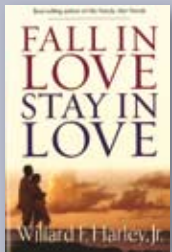
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## Recommended Summer Reading:

### The Five Love Languages Men's Edition

– Gary Chapman Available from PK

**I Promise** – Gary Smalley Available from PK



**Fall in Love, Stay in Love** – Willard F. Harley Jr  
Available from PK

**Cracking the Communication Code**  
– Emerson Eggerichs

**Red Hot Monogamy**  
– Bill & Pam Farrel

**Hold Me Tight** – Sue Johnson

**For Men Only** – Shaunti & Jeff Feldhahn

**Growing Great Marriages**

– Ian & Mary Grant

## Selflessly Loving Her Will Make You Happy

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.* Ephesians 5:25-28, NIV

He who loves his wife loves himself. Why? Because you were made to love God and others, and when you do this you are

doing exactly what God made you to do. The most "selfish" thing you can do as a husband is to sacrificially lay down your life for your wife. This will bring you the greatest joy.

The beauty of God's plan is that your sacrificial love will also help to make her holy. Your wife is not always right and you are not always wrong - it will usually be a combination of both. Emotions can be a righteous reaction to circumstances or a manipulative attempt at control - and everything in between.

What God wants is for us as men to be less worried about who is right or wrong and how we can win, and more worried about how we can help our wife become everything He wants her to be.

The Big Idea is this: **Your wife's heart is a treasure, and God has entrusted it to you.** When a woman is not OK, she wants her husband to recognise it, then pursue her and listen to her heart. She wants us to honour her emotions.

Treat your wife with dignity and respect. Listen to her heart. Serve her and lead her to a greater love for Christ and for you. This is what marriage is all about.

*Excerpted from "Honouring Your Wife's Emotions" by David Delk*



## What's on the DVD

### FEATURED SPEAKER:

#### Martin Steel - "Welded Together":

Martin speaks about becoming one in marriage. What does it take to remove the "burrs" that prevent you coming closer together? How your friends can help you on your spiritual journey of transformation and how your heart can be renewed towards your wife. 30 min

### BONUS FEATURES:

**Achieving Goals:** Rugby coaches Ian Foster and Pat Lam, and Springbok Pierre Spies talk about achieving goals. 2 min 45

**Sexual Addiction:** Doug Weiss tells how addiction happens as the brain gets chemically

imprinted by sexual activity. 2 min

**PK Music:** How Great is Our God and Glorified at *Game On* Wellington. 9 min

**Pastor Appreciation Month:** Gary Colville describes how he has been impacted by his congregation expressing thanks to him for his ministry. 2 min

**Break Free 2012** PK Men's Event Promo 1 min 15

**Alpha: The Marriage Course** Promo 2 min

**HUMOUR CLIPS:** Rugby, Aussie Values, Who's Driving? Soccer Hollywood 5 min

**DVD ROM:** Access these using Windows Explorer on a PC. For video instructions on how to open the DVD ROM go to the *WiseChoices* page at [www.promisekeepers.org.nz](http://www.promisekeepers.org.nz)

**ARTICLES:** including Building Romance Into Your Marriage, The Heart of a Remarried Husband, Wouldn't You Be Happier If Your Wife Lost 20 Pounds? Plus other articles.

Also:

- Book extracts from several great marriage books
- Report: 21 Reasons Why Marriage Matters
- Weekly Studies for Men's Groups
- *Game On* Photos and Comments from Dunedin and Tauranga
- Study Questions for Martin Steel's message
- Family related website links

**MP3s:** including -

- Martin Steel • Geoff Wiklund – Single Focus 2012
- PKNZ Classic – Ropati Amosa – Fire Up Your Marriage, 2004
- PKUSA Classic – Glenn Wagner – Marriage

**IPOD VIDEOS:** Martin Steel, PK Music and Humour



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A Promise Keeper is committed to building strong marriages and families through love, protection and biblical values.