

Liz and JC Wedding Remarks

3/21/15

Intro

- I thought, “What do I have to say that would benefit everyone here, especially JC and Liz?”
- What can I, who have never married anyone before, nor ever been married myself- what can I possibly say that would be worth five minutes of your time?
- And the answer is nothing. So, instead, I decided to **defer to the professionals.**
- So, last night at the rehearsal dinner, after everyone was a few drinks into the evening, such that no one should be held accountable for what they said, I posed the following question to the married friends and family of this marvelous bride and groom: What is one tip for marriage that you would like to share with JC and Liz as they head into a life together?
- These are the answers I got. So, here they are, the top ten tips for marriage from your friends and family who adore you and wholeheartedly support you in the vows you are about to make.

Tip #1- Always keep sense of humor

- A number of people that I talked to offered the following **first** tip: “Always maintain a sense of humor.”
- Specifically, this is what your loved ones said:
 - Grace Anne, the sister of the bride, said it’s better to laugh than to get mad.
 - Barbara, the mother of the groom, and Monica, the step-mother of the groom, said “You have to be able to laugh together.”
 - Greg, the father of the bride, accentuated the point by saying, “Besides having a common life of faith in God, a sense of humor is the most important ingredient for success in marriage. When you run into rough spots, a sense of humor allows you to see the bigger picture, and especially the amusing side of human nature. With a broad view like this, you can avoid the trap of taking things too personally, and see the situation as a result of the human condition.”
- So, tip number one, from a host of your loved ones, is “Always keep a sense of humor.”

Tip # 2- Greg and Ann Arnold- Take your vows seriously.

- Humor is so important because it allows you to get through tough times. But perhaps the most important thing that you can do, according to Greg and Ann, the father and mother of the bride, is to “Take your vows seriously.” This is tip **#2**.
- What they both communicated was that marriage can be extremely difficult at times. The vows that you will make today are commitments to stand by each other through anything that comes along. And the beautiful thing is that your resolve can bear fruit in tons of strength, trust, and endurance.
- In my dad’s words, “Keep in mind that divorce is never an option. That way, you’ll be looking a lot harder for solutions to problems as they come along.”
- This tip is so important, that you can perhaps see the rest of the tips as supplementary advice. All of the other wisdom from your loved ones is meant to aid you both in your resolve to love and serve each other through your vows, to be there through thick and thin.

Tip # 3- Never Stop Dating

- Marriage, of course, though, is not only constituted by difficult times. A number of people recommended that you maintain the freshness of dating throughout your relationship. The **third** tip, from Leighton and others is “Never stop dating.” Leighton said, “keep getting to know each other because the person you marry is always changing. Your journeys now involve both of you, so it’s good to know whom you’re travelling with.”
- For example, Leighton advises, have dinner together with candles, buy flowers on random occasions, etc..
- Monica, the step-mother of the groom, said, “A couple should have one date night together, at least every month, and hopefully every week.”
- I should add here a complementary tip from one of Liz’s friends. “Always keep it tight.” This friend has an arrangement with her husband that if she exercises consistently and stays in shape, she gets to do more shopping. While you two might not strike that exact deal, I guess the point is that the wooing and mating rituals shouldn’t stop with marriage. Never stop wooing and dating each other.
- “Never stop dating,” or as Ann, the mother of the bride said, “Keep the love alive.”

Tip #4- John- Stay best friends.

- In addition to staying in love, John, the father of the groom, gives this fourth tip to JC and Liz: “Stay best friends.”
- I should add here a complementary tip from Claire, one of Elizabeth’s friends: Find one or two hobbies that you share in common and can pursue together. For example, Claire and her husband are into running and fitness.
- I think that the point from John and Claire is find stuff that you like to do, prioritize your friendship by doing these things together, and no matter how busy you get with other things, work on your friendship and keep it thriving.

Tip #5- Leighton- Know that there's more to your marriage than just you two.

- Counterintuitively, one of the best way to keep your marriage healthy is to focus outside of it. Leighton gives this tip number **five**: “Know that there’s more to your marriage than just you two.”
- He continues, “We were designed with a purpose, and we should seek to know what that purpose is.”
- The idea is that you two have a mission now that is bigger than yourselves. Your main task in life now is to love and serve each other first, and then to let that love and service flow over into the lives of the people around you, especially children, if you are blessed with them.
- Just like the best way to be happy, counterintuitively, is to think about other people and not yourself, the best way to have a happy marriage is to think about how it will serve the people around you. Especially your siblings!

Tip #6- Monica- A couple that prays together stays together.

- According to Monica, one of the best ways to keep up the generosity and perspective in a marriage is prayer. She advises in tip number **six** that “A couple that prays together stays together.” She warns that when prayer stops, everything can be a lot more difficult.
- Monica gives this example (and she actually asked for me to share this): She was married for ten years to a man with whom she prayed every night. As long as they prayer together, the marriage went well, but when they stopped praying together, the marriage suffered harm, and eventually dissolved.
- She recommends simply coming before God together at the end of the day and speaking out loud the prayers that are in your hearts, such as thankfulness for a good day at work, or prayers for a colleague who is having a tough time.
- So, tip number six from Monica is “A couple that prays together stays together.”

Tip #7- Communication is key.

- Besides communicating to God through prayer, communication with each other is obviously all-important.
- I am going to lump multiple people's tips into one tip number **seven**. The tip is that "Good communication is paramount." Here are some of the helpful ways the advice was put:
 - Ann, the mother of bride, said, "Together, you can get through anything."
 - Mrs. Hahn, the mother of Elizabeth's friend, said "Always talk it out; always communicate in a reasonable tone and listen really well to each other.
 - Brother in law Leighton advises to "Talk about the hard issues with each other."
 - And finally, Bill, a friend of bride from Crested Butte, said "Don't be afraid to cry with each other."

Tip #8- Find Ways to Compromise

- The next two tips are meant to aid good communication.
- Tip number eight, from John and Monica, is “Find ways to compromise.”
- Here are John’s words: “Find ways to compromise. Think of each others needs and talk about them. Don’t let the little things turn into big things.”
- And from Monica: “You have to be able to compromise.”

Tip #9- Always keep your cool.

- One of the other most often repeated pieces of regarding communication was to “Always keep your cool,” which is tip number nine.
- Here are your loved ones’ particular words:
 - Patti and Bill, Liz’s friends from Crested Butte, said “Don’t go to bed angry.”
 - Jordan, the boyfriend in law, said, “Stay calm no matter what situation presents itself.”
 - And Monica helpfully advises to “Be able to know when not to open your mouth and argue, when to take a deep breath and go for a walk. People say things that they don’t mean when they are worked up. And once you say something, you can never take it back. You can apologize and regret it thoroughly, but once you speak it, it’s out there. Better to remain silent when necessary.”
- Tip number nine is “Always keep your cool.”

Tip #10- Krista- Go into marriage with both eyes open, but after marriage, keep one eye closed.

- And finally, for tip number 10, JC's aunt Krista repeated the words of a Greek priest. She said, "Go into marriage with both eyes open, but after marriage, keep one eye closed."
- She continued, "You're gonna have to overlook a lot of stuff and let a lot of stuff go."
- In other words, mercy means everything in a marriage. With everyone--spouses, friends, coworkers, and the people we meet on the street--we can choose to look at them in a positive light, or instead focus on their faults. In marriage, it is absolutely essential to see the best in each other, to practice mercy constantly, and to let a lot of stuff go.

Thanks!

- Thanks so much for all of your contributions, and for your attention.
- Now, we'll proceed with the exchanging of rings and vows.