

# Catholic

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## BIBLICAL WISDOM FOR MARRIAGE ROADMAP FOR A LIFETIME OF LOVE

BY DR. MANUEL AND KAREE SANTOS

**T**wo or three generations ago, lifelong married love was commonplace. Now it may seem to some to be barely possible. Although Jesus described marriage as an unbreakable bond planned by the Creator from the beginning of time (see Matthew 19:3–8), many of us struggle to make married love last.

Fortunately, we don't have to rely solely on our own strength or cleverness. Jesus promised that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20).

A sacramental marriage gathers us together in God's name, and he will not fail to help us. He gives us grace through the sacraments and wisdom through the Scriptures. In fact, the Bible gives us a kind of roadmap to a happy marriage and shows us how to infuse our imperfect human love with the power of the divine.

The Bible teaches us how to choose and cherish a spouse, connect in prayer, bring balance to our lives, be fruitful, and pass on our faith to future generations.

### Choose and Cherish a Spouse

*"I have called you by name: you are mine." – Isaiah 43:1*

Marriage is a vocation, a calling from God. Our vocation is God's specific plan for us, conceived in love from all eternity. By finding and embracing our vocation, we set our feet on a path to heaven.

Because marriage is a vocation, choosing to get married involves not just a decision but a discernment. Amidst all the feelings of romance and passion, we still have to ask: *Will this person stay with me through thick and thin? Does this person inspire me to be better or tempt me to be worse? Does this person draw me closer to Christ?* Prayer will help us to discern. A still, small voice in our heart will tell us if this person is meant to be ours for a lifetime.

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