

THE EPOCH TIMES

LIFE &

TRADITION

ALMOS BECHTOLD/UNSPLASH



Marriage
is the adventure
of a lifetime.

RELATIONSHIPS

How to Make the Most of Your Marriage

Tips on keeping the fires of love alive

JEFF MINICK

One of the biggest days of your life has come and gone.

You've stood up before a group of people and taken vows you've sworn to uphold. Perhaps you followed up that event with a gala, an evening of dining and dance, or perhaps you left some clerk's office in City Hall and drove back to your apartment. Perhaps you then headed out for a week at Martha's Vineyard or a weekend in the mountains.

Whatever the case, you're now married. In the words of yesteryear, you've plighted your troth to another. You've promised your beloved to honor a union of flesh and spirit, to stick together in the good and bad seasons of your love. As the traditional words put it,

you've vowed to be wedded, "to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow."

Flash forward 10 years. You and your spouse have three children under the age of 8, you're having trouble making the mortgage payments, and your mom is unloading advice on you about marriage and childrearing like some longshoreman unpacking a container ship out in Los Angeles.

Some folks warn, "Old age isn't for sissies." The same might be said about marriage. If we let it, marriage can be one bumpy old road.

So how can we keep that road smooth and in good repair? How do we honor those vows, keep the fires of love alive, and get the most out of our marriage?

Reverence

Most of us know O. Henry's short story "The Gift of the Magi" about a poor couple at Christmastime. Della sells her beautiful hair to buy Jim a platinum fob chain for his treasured watch, and Jim sells his watch to buy his young wife a set of combs for her hair.

The story ends, "And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures of their house. But in a last word to the wise of these days let it be said that of all who give gifts these two were the wisest. Of all who give and receive gifts, such as they are the wisest. Everywhere they are the wisest. They are the magi."

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ART EXPLORATION FOR THE YOUNG AND YOUNG AT HEART

Courageous Hearts, Soaring Toward Eternity

A reflection on Bram Stoker's novel 'Dracula' and Isaac Levitan's painting 'Above the Eternal Tranquility'



A portrait of Isaac Levitan (1893) by Valentin Serov.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

ANDREA NUTT FALCE

Autumn in America is a fine time to contemplate change and the unchanging. The moody month of October ushers in colorful leaves, clear skies, and crisp breezes. Early evenings give way to scampering feet and wildly costumed kids in the frightful pursuit of candy! It's almost Halloween.

This time of year scary stories lure us in, and they can be captivating. Is it the

heart-palpating effect? Perhaps it's the intrigue of a spirit world just beyond our immediate detection, or simply the age-old struggle between malevolence and righteousness that resonates. Whatever the reason, what better way to prepare for Halloween than by revisiting one of the most spectacular spooky classics of the English language, "Dracula."

Bram Stoker's 1897 novel "Dracula" is one of the first and best of all vampire

tales. The story unfolds through journal entries from a group of English men and women, one American hunter, and the Dutch professor Abraham Van Helsing. Stoker introduces brave and insightful characters, especially Mina and Jonathan Harker, Dr. Seward, and Dr. Van Helsing. Among them, the old stalwart, Van Helsing, might just be the best.

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—Paul Skousen, professor and author

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