Overcoming Hurts
Ephesians 4:26-32

Living with the people that we love isn’t always _______. God’s word teaches us how to have _________ lives in spite of our weaknesses. When people ______ God, they find their lives grow richer and better. God’s __________ found in the Word truly leads us to the abundant life. Nothing could be better than to have a happy home filled with ______ and _______. Following the Lord is the way to _____ just such a home. God ________ marriage for the happiness of us all. Sociologist Linda Waite and researcher Maggie Gallagher in their book, The Case for Marriage, declare, “The __________ from four decades of research is surprisingly clear: A good marriage is both men’s and women’s best bet for living a _____ and _______ life.” Men and women in their first marriages, on average, enjoy significantly _______ levels of physical and mental health than those who are either single, divorced or living together. We also need to realize that our ______ affects our marriage. When two committed Christians get married, they are ______ likely to end their marriage in divorce than those who have _____ religious affiliation. Committed Christians who know and love the Lord deal with conflict and offenses __________ than those who don’t have faith in God. Their love for God means that they take their ______ seriously and they strive to work through their __________ rather than give up when times get tough. The love of God opens the door for them to show their love to their spouses in ways that keep the marriage ________ and _______. We can overcome the hurts and offenses of life by following the Lord Jesus.

Our reading today comes from Ephesians 4:26-32. Perhaps your marriage has ________ from years of unhealthy ways of dealing with conflict. We know we can't change the ______, but we can start fresh for the _______. We need to begin by taking responsibility for our ______ in the conflicts. Husbands and wives have __________ experiences, concerns, and perspectives about resolving conflicts. We must _______ to handle our conflicts correctly, so we can keep our marriages healthy. First Peter 4:8 says, “Above all, keep ______ in your love for one another, because love _______ a multitude of sins.”

Every day, spouses need to ________ their love and respect for one another. Saying, “I love you,” “thank you,” “I appreciate you,” and shows them that we ______ by being open and honest. And by listening attentively and carefully we build intimacy and trust into the relationship. Our marriage is what we _______ it. If you feed it with good things, it will _______ happier; but if you neglect your spouse and become selfish, you’ll _______ your home. Ephesians 4:29 says, “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is ______ for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will
give grace to those who hear.” We need to keep thinking of our _________ as more important than ourselves. Read Philippians 2:3-4. To maintain a healthy marriage, we must watch our _________. When you disagree with your spouse, are you being _________? Are you acting as a ____________? Are you trying to ___________ things from your spouse’s point of view? Have you considered that your spouse may be ___________ to something offensive that you’ve done?

Don’t avoid conflict by the _________ treatment. This only makes a _________ barrier. Anger and shouting _______ _______ any opportunity for communication and working through problems. Instead, become an active and empathetic ___________. Work hard at _________ to understand what your mate is saying. Control your _________ and your emotions. Frustration causes much __________ in marriage. Men don’t usually frustrate their wives by what they’re doing so much as by what they _______ to do. Failing to communicate, neglecting the needs of their wives, and indifference are forms of cruelty, and they lead many women to _______ their marriages. Selfish and unfeeling women who ___________ the needs of their husbands, and who put their husbands last in their priorities, and who constantly criticize and complain often alienate their husbands. Neglecting our spouses _______ to great frustration and unhappiness. If the frustration doesn’t stop, life _________ can become unbearable.

Deal with your problems __________, and don’t let them grow. Though every marriage has its bumps and its bruises, don’t let them _________ your marriage. If we allow our unresolved anger to grow, it will eventually _________ into deep wounds and great hurt (Ephesians 4:26-27). Each of us may need a little time to _______ off before we begin looking honestly and fairly at our differences (Proverbs 29:22). Don’t let the sun set on your anger, but _________ your anger before you speak. Let your love for each other _______ _____ the differences between you.

Some people think that manliness or strength of character means never saying you’re sorry, but _________ to apologize is selfish and prideful. Refusing to apologize deeply _________ others and builds barriers between people that take many years to overcome. We all need to be _________ to say, "I was wrong, and I'm sorry. I know that I hurt you and I don't want to hurt you again. Please forgive me." Accept responsibility for your _________. We can’t maintain a _________ relationship with God if we’re unwilling to deal with our sins against our spouses (Matthew 5:23). How we treat our spouses matters to ______! (1 Peter 3:7).

Sometimes it’s better to be defrauded, neglected, and hurt than it is to _________ your spouse for every transgression. “Love _______ a multitude of sins.” God is merciful to us when we ______ mercy. Marriage can be hard and harsh at times; and the real test of love is if it can _______ the tests of the unlovely. Not every matter is _______ confronting your mate over. Sometimes love
means _________ them to be what they are, even when it irritates. Philippians 4:5 says, “Let your ________ spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.” We all need a gentle spirit that’s ________ to let our love cover a multitude of sins and weaknesses. If you’re having problems, ________ on finding a solution to your differences rather than arguing, or accusing, or blaming.

No matter how troubled, frustrated, or angry we become, we must ________ our tongues. Spoken words can cut and bruise the ________, and they are not easily forgotten. If you say something that cuts and hurts, __________ for it immediately. Using the word “divorce” can break a person’s heart. This word wounds, rejects, and abandons hope for a continued relationship. Spouses who use such words plant the seeds of hopelessness and failure. If there’s physical abuse, unfaithfulness, or drug or alcohol abuse, then seek help to keep your marriage alive. Everyone in an argument needs to step back in _________ and ask, “Is winning this argument really worth losing my spouse?”

When you love and respect your spouse, you want to build them up and _________ them. You want them to know that you _________ them and are _________ to have them as your partner in life. Just as we ought to encourage our _________ family (1 Thessalonians 5:11), so we ought also to encourage our spouses and to _________ them of our love. If someone verbally attacks, or criticizes, or blames you, don’t respond in the ________ manner (Romans 12:17, 21). Think of the wonderful _________ of Jesus found in 1 Peter 2:23. Even while __________ on the cross, Jesus didn’t verbally abuse or threaten anybody. Your spouse might get angry with you, but you don’t have to respond in the same way (1 Peter 3:9). Choose to respond with gentleness (Proverbs 15:1).

There’s no greater ________ in a relationship than to apologize and to forgive. When you’ve done something ________, apologize immediately. When your mate has penitently asked your forgiveness, then by all means _________. Forgiveness means that ________ you’ve forgiven your mate, you _________ bring up the transgression again or hold it against them. Forgiveness opens the door to reconciliation, which means that we become “__________” again. When God forgave us, He never again counted that sin against us (2 Corinthians 5:19). Psalm 103:12 says, “As far as the east is from the west, So far has He ___________ our transgressions from us.”

We have to ________ the temptation to start figuring out ways to hurt the one who hurt us. We must not ________ everyone we know that he or she said or did something to offend us. We should never bring up our spouse’s faults in front of _________. Holding a grudge _________ any opportunity to grow beyond a problem. Read what the Bible says in Ephesians 4:31-32.

Forgiving our loved ones is not just God’s ___________. It’s God’s ______! When we fail to forgive our spouses, we _________ ourselves (Matthew 6:14-15). Instead of being haughty
when we approach our loved ones who’ve hurt us, we should __________ ourselves and approach them ________ (Galatians 6:1).

When we decide to forgive, we’re _______ to begin a more healthy method of resolving conflict. Here is what __________ happen between Christian husbands and wives. When a spouse is truly hurt and needs to deal with an offense, he or she needs the __________ to gently and humbly tell the one who offended, “I was hurt when you said this or did this.” They need to explain ______ hurt them and _____ it hurt. In response, the other spouse needs to say __________ and penitently, “I’m sorry I hurt you; please forgive me. I will make every _______ never to do this again.” Once a sincere and penitent apology is given, the offended spouse needs to say, “I __________ you, and I will ________ bring this situation up to you again.” This process of ______ with conflict is vital, because it ______ the door to reconciliation. The promise not to repeat the offense and the promise not to hold it against the offender gives a ___________ to maintain the relationship. This is how _______ treats us and how He wishes us to treat one another.

Once the fires of marriage begin to __________, it’s easy to take our spouses for granted and become complacent. People ______ being as kind and courteous as they ought. They may ______ their spouse’s needs and selfishly ______ their own desires. In the end, someone gets devastated. I hope you aren’t listening today with a _______ heart. I hope that your marriage is everything that you ________ for. But if you’re broken hearted, you may be asking, “How do I forgive this _______ wound in my life? How do I stop ________ these offenses against my spouse?” How did Jesus forgive you of ______ you have done to Him? Can you recall the ______ sins you have ever committed, the sins of which you’re most ashamed? When you became a __________, Jesus forgave them. Can you recall the _______ sins that you’ve ever committed, things that you don’t think are so bad but which offend God? When you became a Christian, Jesus _________ them, too. Every one of those sins – big or small – brought and still brings spiritual ______ if not forgiven. Where would we be without the ______ of Jesus? His forgiveness and His grace is a __________ to us. If the Lord Jesus could forgive us, can we not ________? Forgiveness is _________ than forgetting, because forgiveness offers the hope of reconciliation.

Forgiveness brings reconciliation, making friends _______; and Jesus bore the cross paying for our sins so that we might be forgiven and may be able to be a _______ to God. God wants us to remain ______ to Him, so He made the ____ possible through the blood of Jesus for us to be forgiven. To become a Christian you must __________ in the Lord Jesus with all your heart. Out of love for Him, you must _______ of your sins by turning away from all evil and turning to what is good. Upon the confession of your faith, be ________ into Christ. In baptism, the blood of Jesus will ______ away your sins. Get right with God today!