

## **COMMITMENT – The Heart of Marriage**

Most researchers and writers agree that commitment is the key to a successful marriage. Psychologist, counsellor and author, Neil Clark Warren writes

*“Marriage can be so difficult and requires so much toughness that, as a society, we ask persons entering marriage to take some hard-hitting, heavy duty vows. We know how easy it will be for them to give up along the way, to claim that they didn’t know marriage would be so demanding. We gather into small or large groups just to hear them take these vows, and the people who are already married know that there are going to be times when these newlyweds will have to refer back to their vows – with the future of their marriage hanging in the balance.”*

The commitment of marriage, however, is not just about our wedding day. Scott Stanley, author of *The Power of Commitment* reminds us

*“Commitment is not about making a choice once and for all, on one day at the start of a marriage; it is about making many right choices every day and every week and every month. For example, there are many opportunities you will have in a life together where you can choose to give to your mate with the kind of love that propels a marriage beyond mere stability to dynamic vitality.”*

Commitment must lead to action. The kind of action which creates “dynamic vitality” in marriage is described by Bill Doherty in his book “*Intentional Marriage*.” To Doherty, being “intentional” means being conscious about making your marriage a high priority and developing habits, rituals and skills which cultivate commitment and connection. Continually developing and refining the skills which support a happy and healthy marriage is an important factor of commitment. Doherty believes that committed couples

*“think about their relationship, plan for their relationship and act for their relationship, mostly in simple everyday ways and occasionally in big splashy ways.”*

Commitment means a willingness to accept both the stronger and weaker characteristics of a spouse.

Benjamin Franklin had some good thoughts on this – *“Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, half shut afterwards.”*

### **Three great reads on the topic of commitment:**

[Scott Stanley and Gary Smalley;](#)

[William J Doherty;](#)

[Neil Clark Warren](#) [Lawrence J. Crabb](#), [Kevin Leman](#), [Les Parrott](#), [Leslie Parrott](#), [Gary Smalley](#),

[Becky Tirabassi](#), [Roger Tirabassi;](#)

*The Power of Commitment*  
*Intentional Marriage*

*Bring home the Joy*