

## Seven Glues for Your Engagement and Marriage

Barbara and I want to get real practical with you. Married couples who come in for biblical counseling have none of the following seven glues. To keep from isolating yourself from your mate when you are married, you need the seven glues that will glue you and your future mate tightly together. Couples with teachable and humble hearts who practice these disciplines **do not break up**. They have disciplined themselves in obedient surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ. They have chosen to hold fast together and let nothing get in-between them. Nothing!

### First Glue-

#### Hold Hands Everywhere

Some people think this concept is shallow and silly. It does not matter what they think. It works! We teach couples to hold hands when walking, shopping, and sitting in church, even attending funerals! Remember God has called you and your mate to be as one. Show it. Some folks give Barbara and me a second glance at the grocery store. We keep reminding ourselves that not only is this good for our marriage but on-looking couples might start holding hands as well. We are learning that leadership is modeling and modeling is everything. A few years ago, Barbara and I were near the front row participating in our church's worship service. We almost always hold hands and when some of our children would sit with us, we made sure that Barbara and I were together, side by side.

This particular Sunday after the service was over, a young teenage girl about 16 came over to us and said something that quite honestly we did not expect. "You don't know me," she said, "but I have been watching you two from a distance for many weeks now. I hardly know anything about you except for one thing: Someday when I have a husband, I want a marriage just like yours!" Barbara and I were both humbled and grateful to God that He had burdened our hearts to hold hands and hold fast our love for God and, thus, for each other.

When you hold hands, you are telling the world:

- You are in love.
- God was right in bringing you two together.
- You are fulfilling God's plan by filling each other's gaps. You need each other's strengths and weaknesses.
- You want to honor God by your commitment to each other.

Ecclesiastes 4:9,10 reads, “*Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!*”

## Second Glue-

### Same Bed Time

Obviously, this is something to aim for after you are married. One of the questions we ask married couples the first or second counseling visit is, “Do you both go to bed together at the same time?” One mate for a host of reasons is usually dead exhausted at 8:00 PM. They have been with takers all day long and their adrenaline reserves are utterly depleted. The other mate tends to look forward to the later hours. Perhaps he is a night owl, likes to unwind in front of the TV with his remote securely in his hand.

We have found that married couples care for each other better and are less likely to get involved in sin via the movie channels or the Internet when they go to bed together. We have also found that nothing good happens after midnight. With the average person needing somewhere between 7 and 8 hours of sleep per night, going to bed together at a reasonable agreed upon hour works best. If one wants to sleep right away but the other needs to unwind, make use of such things as earplugs, sleep eye masks, and small, clip on reading lights. Remember if the devil has a middle name it would probably be “Isolation”. Going to bed together at the same time promotes oneness, togetherness, and marital love.

## Third Glue

### Cuddle-pray at Bedtime

Couples that sincerely pray to the Lord out loud together on a daily basis remain strong in their love for God and each other and they finish well in life. Barbara and I strongly recommend that you begin this practice of praying out loud together while you are engaged. Then by the time you get married, it will be a discipline already established. If you are already married, a good time to start is tonight. Our experience has shown that about 95% of Christian couples do not pray together out loud on a regular basis. After you are married, it is good to pray out loud together during meals at home and at restaurants. It is also wonderful to pray with your children at bedtime.

The kind of praying that we see lacking in Christian marriages is where the husband and wife privately pray together out loud on a daily basis away from the dinner table, perhaps in their own bedroom, in the car, or while taking a walk outside.

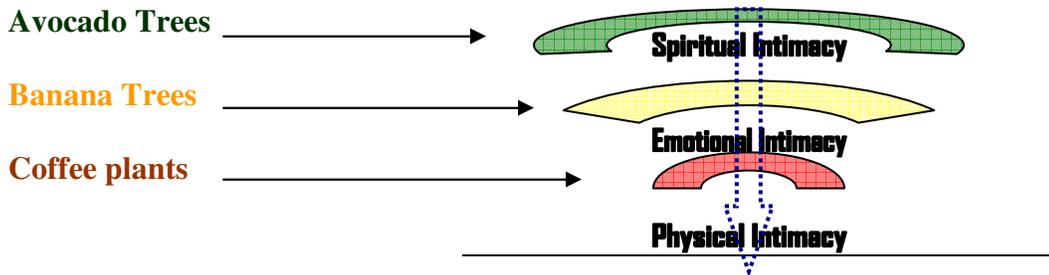
In Christian marriage, the most important level of intimacy is your **prayer life** with God and your mate. Barbara and I model and teach bedtime **cuddle-praying** for those couples already married. We start out in the middle of our queen-sized bed. I wrap my arms around my lovely wife, Barbara, and then I pray a short prayer to the Lord out loud something like, *“Lord, thanks for this day and your blessings. Please watch over us, our home, and our kids and their homes. Thanks for Barbara and please bless her tonight.”*

Barbara then prays out loud something like, *“Well Lord, please give us good rest, we’re beat. Help us to shine your truth and love to each other, our family, and to everyone. Watch over Jim and his doctor’s appointment tomorrow. Please also encourage Mike and Carol since Mike just lost his job”*. Some nights the prayers are much shorter if we are both exhausted. After this short prayer, and a few minutes of just holding one another, I roll over on my left side and she usually holds me. Eventually we separate to our respective sides of the bed. We have missed a few nights and sometimes only one person prays. Ninety percent of the time, we both pray out loud in **cuddle-praying**.

Intimacy in marriage is like the three interdependent layers of rain forest foliage. Imagine for a moment you are in one of the lushest rain forests in existence. In studying the various layers of forest foliage, you discover three canopies of plant life. You will commonly find the tall **avocado** trees providing cover at the top, **essential** in distributing rain and sunlight to the lower two levels. At the middle level you might find the shorter **banana** trees designed by God to provide the right covering for the lowest level. On the floor of this amazingly fertile place, you can find coffee plants growing providing rich **coffee** beans.

The three levels of rain forest are unique and interdependent. If the top canopy is destroyed, the remaining ecosystem will be severely stressed and much life will perish. The pounding sunlight will destroy the middle and lower levels. The direct, torrential rains would also cause massive erosion and much of this beautiful habitat would be lost.

Often if there is a deficiency or problem at the ground level, then just look up, way up. The reason for the ground problem may very well be found by studying the top level.



## **Intimacy in marriage has everything to do with prayer.**

**The highest level of intimacy established in marriage is “spiritual intimacy”.** This is why Satan attacks first and foremost at this level. He knows that if a Christian married couple prays out loud together, much of his wicked efforts will fail. He and his demons especially hate it and tremble when you pray **out loud**. He cannot read your mind but he has to listen to your voice. If you are drifting from your Lord, you will find it difficult to pray out loud with your mate.

Ephesians 4:26,27: reads, “*In your anger do not sin’: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.*” If you go to bed angry, he won’t have to hear you two praying out loud to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Lord Jesus. If this does not happen, then while you slumber, the devil, will be establishing strongholds of wickedness. Then he will move in to further isolate you two.

**The next or middle level of marital intimacy is “emotional intimacy”.** If you are humble and honest before God, possessing a clean, forgiving heart, God will begin to bless your emotional relationship with you and your mate. One rule Barbara and I live by is the **Ten Minute Tiff Rule**. When you have a spat or heated disagreement, agree with God as your witness to come together and resolve the tiff and forgive or ask forgiveness within 10 minutes. Sometimes you need a little time to cool down, collect yourself, and experience the gentle nudge of your loving Heavenly Father. Ten minutes is plenty of time to deal with it and get over it.

Remember, you are on the same team! Some couples have never resolved or reconciled their tiffs. We met with one wife recently who slept in a separate room for a week because she and her husband were still stewing in the juices of grudge holding, resentment, and unforgiveness. It is time to choose to no longer be offended!

Ephesians 4:29-32 reads, *“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”*

The final level of marital intimacy is **“physical intimacy”**. When you and your mate unconditionally give yourself to one another in marriage and bless one another in this way, God is pleased and glorified. Barbara and I spend almost no counseling time on sexual intimacy. Why? It is because sexual intimacy is just like the ground level of the rain forest. When you address the problems in the top and middle levels, the ground level issues become resolved.

As you bless one another during intimacy, your act is a testimony of how good God is to you. Your sexual intimacy is a way of saying “Thank you.” to God. As a couple, frequently, act out your gratitude to God.

## **Fourth Glue**

### **Insist on the Weekly Date**

This Glue is plain and simple. Always plan and have your weekly date. Barbara and I on Fridays will often schedule in a lunch at Moy’s Chinese restaurant in Elkhorn. We take a good hour and sometimes an hour and a half to eat, relax, and unwind from the intense pressures of counseling and ministry. We always hold hands. We laugh and chat with the wait staff.

We guard this time. Only required trips, illness, or emergencies will keep us from our special time together. If Friday is a wash, then we pick Thursday or even Saturday AM to go out and get some good, hot coffee, bacon, eggs, hash browns, and toast or biscuits. Stop drooling and make plans. If you do not make such plans and guard them, the urgency of other good activities and demands will rob you. In time you will drift apart.

## **If nothing is planned, well, guess what results.**

We met one struggling couple with 5 children. During 17 years of marriage since their brief honeymoon, they had not scheduled any sort of over night get away for just the two of them. They were good people and wonderful parents but they were toast! They were exhausted and snipping at one another. You see, because of their love for their kids, they became what we call the **“Parent-Centered Marriage”**. We train couples to be **“Marriage-Centered Parents”**.

What often happens over the years is Dad gets caught up in his work and hobbies while Mom pours her life into her beloved children. The job and the kids get most of the attention but the marriage slowly dissolves. When the kids all finally leave the nest, Mom and Dad look at each other as strangers. Divorce often results. You must decide upon a stubborn unyielding resolve to become Marriage-Centered. You will most likely receive flak from some family members and maybe even from some people in your church. They may think you are being selfish or egotistical. Take it like good soldiers. God will be very pleased and He will bless you down the road. If you do not cultivate and tend to your marriage like good gardeners, weeds of isolation, disinterest, and affairs usually result.

## **Fifth Glue**

### *Return Blessings*

Nothing is more repulsive to one’s flesh then to show kindness and favor toward someone who has hurt or betrayed you. This fifth Glue is just as difficult as the third Glue: **Cuddle-praying**. Many movies have the theme of revenge. Payback is a central theme in most cultures. Unfortunately it is also a favorite pastime in marriage.

God’s Word is quite clear. Read what the Apostle Peter wrote:

*“Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.”*  
(I Peter 3:8,9)

Note the following:

- You were called or commanded to return blessings. God has ordered you!
- He wants you to inherit blessings, not curses. Disobedience brings curses. Obedience brings blessings. It is your choice. What do you want?

Some mates return insults immediately with yelling, door slamming, throwing things, name calling, and even hitting which is illegal and a criminal offense. Immediate insults also include giving the “silent treatment” or taking off to go to a bar or on a spending spree.

Other mates return insults in a quiet, delayed manner. They will appear forgiving, yet a week, or even a month later, they might inflict their strike when least expected. “Honey, I am sorry that you will need to cancel your hunting trip, but I am just not feeling very well...” Nice effect! It always boils down to this:

**Will you obey God or your flesh?**

Let us say your husband comes home exhausted and preoccupied with struggles at work. He more or less ignores you, and he plops down in front of the T.V.. You could say to yourself, “Well, bucko, two can play this game!” or you can obey God and receive a blessing later by doing a quiet, loving, and an undeserved act of kindness. This might look like, “Honey, I bet your day was draining and difficult. Here is your favorite soda and some chips. Sit up a bit and I will rub your shoulders to help you relax.” Now don’t let your motive be to get a blessing back from him. Rather seek only to please God. Remember, He promises you will inherit a blessing.

Learn to bless your mate. Show grace and mercy to your mate. Remember that grace is giving to someone that which he or she does not deserve and mercy is withholding that which he or she does deserve.

Say you have a nice boat that you are securing in the water to a sturdy pier. If you only tie one end of the boat to the pier, the other end will probably be tossed around by the wind and waves. It is always best to tie both ends of the boat securely.

Here is a quick exercise:

Place your fiancé or mate directly in front of you. Now apart from Jesus, you know what he deserves! But you, by a choice of the will, bless him with your **left hand on his right shoulder**. Think of this as issuing the **same grace** that God issues to you. You are going to give to him that which he does not deserve and can never earn such as affirmation, kindness, forgiveness, and support.

Now, you further bless him by placing your **right hand on his left shoulder**. Think of this as issuing the **same mercy** that God issues to you. By a sacrificial act of your will (faith), choose to withhold from him that which he does deserve apart from Christ such as rejection, criticism, or a cold shoulder. You deserved Hell. Jesus gave you Heaven instead. Do the same for your mate.

Do now what comes natural. Use both arms and slowly pull him close and hold him safe and secure. Tell him how much you love him. After doing this, simply reverse roles and have your fiancé initiate the “**blessing Glues**” of grace and mercy. This shows how God loves you and how you must love each other.

The worst thing a couple can do is leave conflicts unresolved. Decide right now that no sun will ever set on your unresolved conflicts and anger. We recommend a three step approach in dealing with your conflicts. As soon as God convicts you (gets through your tough hide of pride), do three things:

- **Pursue** the offended person.
- **Admit** your failure.
- **Request** their forgiveness.

The sweetest, yet rare occurrence is when both of you meet each other mid way in the hall as a result of God’s conviction upon your own heart. Wow! That would be cool! If both your hearts are soft toward God and each other, God will reinstate intimacy.

## Sixth Glue

### Establish Talk Times

It is vital to establish regular, disciplined talk times during your engagement. Gearing up for your wedding and for your marriage is both fun and highly stressful. It is essential to establish talk times once you are married as well. For some couples, once a week will do. Others need a sharing debriefing time every day. One married couple we know lights a candle and takes the phone off the hook for 10 minutes every eve when both get home from their daily activities. Others go for walks or lunch or breakfast dates. These talk times like the weekly date must be guarded jealously and insisted upon.

One older couple that had 12 children knew they would not survive without close, loving, honest, and supportive communication. Each evening when both returned from their jobs, they would light a candle and place it on the kitchen table. The kids playing rambunctiously in the background knew that this was “Mom and Dad’s Time” and they had better respect it. This husband and wife just took turns sharing their **Low Point** and then their **High Point** of the day respectively. While the one was sharing, the other just listened and comforted and affirmed. They did not try to fix one another or correct one another. They just loved through quiet, tender listening.

During one of these daily talk times, a couple of the kids upstairs started yelling and making all kinds of racket. Mother stopped the talk time session for just a second and she called out to them, “Is there any blood?” There was no answer, so she and her husband continued their talk time. After all, this was “their” time!

## Suggested Talk Time Questions and Ideas

*Remember to listen more, and talk less.*

*God gave you two ears and one mouth.*

1. Thinking back, what was the most uplifting, memorable time of our relationship?
2. When do you feel loved, valued, or respected by me the most?
3. What has been the most treasured gift that I have given you and why?
4. If there is one thing that I do, a priority that I uphold, or an attitude I express for which you are thankful or proud, what is it?
5. What is your greatest wish, dream, or hope?
6. What is your deepest fear or worry?
7. Please share with me your greatest need right now.
8. What, could I do to be more considerate so that you would feel more loved, valued or listened to especially now during our engagement?
9. What area of my life do you see as needing work?
10. What is one thing you'd want God to do for our friendship and relationship?
11. Share one thing that is draining, bothering, frustrating, or discouraging you.
12. Share one thing that is bringing you hope, fulfillment, and joy.
13. Share one thing that you are wishing for, dreaming for, or praying for.
14. What was the most discouraging thing (low point) about your day?
15. What was the most encouraging thing (high point) about your day?

## Seventh Glue-

### Serve in Church Together

Remember, when God has you married, then He intends to shine His truth and love to others through the oneness and togetherness of your marriage. If you are living together and unmarried, this is actually a curse against the Gospel of the Lord. He cannot and will not shine His love and truth through sin. Then the devil's plans are further enhanced. If you are living together, confess this as sin against God and His plans to redeem the lost. Then repent by moving out and remaining pure and holy in heart and action.

Barbara and I encourage you, if possible, to not just go to church together, but also to serve together. We know in some cases this will be difficult but we find it a great way to be together and to be a witness as a team. We recommend you serve God together just like you should take vacations together and sleep in the same bed together.

We are all for some time away from each other like ladies night out or the men going golfing. What is frustrating to us is to see a tired married couple barely getting any quality time together all week and then we separate them even further when they get to church. It amazes us to see so many couples drive to church in different cars!

If possible, we urge you to serve as a team. If I am asked to teach a class, Barbara will be there in the front row praying for me and encouraging me onward. I will have her speak now and then as well. Later on in the year, if the church asks her to teach the Kindergarten class, she will teach and I will be her assistant.

We know there are exceptions but we believe you should strive to serve together. This way you grow in love and strength being with each other and others will see Christ's love and kindness in your united service. We trust that God will bless you as you implement these Glues into your marriage.

Online giving to our ministry: <https://give.ccci.org/give/View/0139150>

Please pray many will be encouraged and equipped by [www.marriageanchors.com](http://www.marriageanchors.com)

### **Jim and Barbara Grunseth**

#### **Staff #0139150**

Jim and Barbara Grunseth  
Campus Crusade for Christ Staff (CRU Chicago)  
Full Time Field Staff



Jim and Barbara's prayer:

**That God would enlarge our borders and help us to encourage, strengthen, and equip marriages and families to bring the light of Christ to the nations.**

Jim and Barbara's passion:

**To help marriages, families, and individuals find lasting hope and a future in the Lord Jesus Christ.**

### **Personal biography**

Jim and Barbara have 7 children between the ages of 28 and 36. They also have four precious granddaughters and three fine grandsons. Jim has been a full time staff member with Campus Crusade for over 31 years. He graduated from West Point and has a Masters degree in Counseling-Psychology from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He is also an Army veteran and an ordained minister.

Barbara has taught over 13 years as a K-6 teacher at Faith Christian School, Williams Bay, WI. She is a graduate from The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee: Deaf Education. She has been a Mentor of MOPS {Mothers of Pre-Schoolers} in this area for 7 years.

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Jim and Barbara serve with CRU Chicago (Campus Crusade for Christ). Their team serves greater Chicago and southeastern Wisconsin where they take part in holding large events called **Straight Talks**. Here, hundreds of men and women are exposed to the Gospel which includes follow up Bible Studies. They place a strong emphasis on evangelism and systematic discipleship.

In addition to serving with CRU Chicago, Jim and Barbara are helping to fulfill the Lord's Great Commission by winning people to saving faith in Christ and then training them to win, build, and send others into the world. They love to mentor marriages, families, and engaged couples as well as individuals one to one.

Barbara often ministers to people with Jim. An increasing number of younger moms are coming to her for biblical mentoring as well. Jim and Barbara's **First Priority** is to have:

**Undivided love for Jesus and His Word. Psalm 86:11**

They speak at Christian marriage and family conferences, retreats, camps, and churches when given the opportunity.

To order our book **I'm Getting Married!: Preparing your Heart for a Lifetime** go to: <http://www.campuscrusade.com/imgettingmarried>

To order our book **Remember the Rowboats: Anchor your Marriage to Christ** go to: [http://www.amazon.com/Remember-Rowboats-Anchor-Marriage-Christ/dp/1934327409/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1367252076&sr=1-1&keywords=remember+the+rowboats](http://www.amazon.com/Remember-Rowboats-Anchor-Marriage-Christ/dp/1934327409/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1367252076&sr=1-1&keywords=remember+the+rowboats)

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<http://marriageanchors.com/2012/05/18/your-anchor-dont-leave-port-without-him/>

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Note: The material in this E Book was adapted from our book, **Remember the Rowboats: Anchor your Marriage to Christ.**

