

Bible Reading Discussion for Couples

Taken from *Bible Study in Duet* by Charlie and Martha Shedd

“Isn’t it sacrilegious to mark in a Bible?” Surprising how many times we are asked this question. For us the answer is a resounding “No!” The Charlie-Martha Bible study method is based on three specific marks:

CANDLES

ARROWS

QUESTION MARKS

Each morning as we read our Bibles individually, we underline and mark.

When we come to an entirely new thought, new insight, new light, we underline and put a candle in the margin – a candle for new light.

When we read something we don’t understand, have doubts about, something we can’t believe, we underline and place a question mark in the margin.

Then there are the places that conflict us. These make us realize we are not what we should be. Here we underline and use an arrow in the margin. (We do not place arrows for each other. We allow each the dignity of discovering his/her own sins.)

CANDLE New light
 Fresh thought
 Something we’ve never seen before
 Exciting

QUESTION MARK
 I do not understand
 Vague
 Whatever could the meaning be?

ARROW This convicts me
 Points to a flaw
 There is a weakness in me here
 I am a sinner

Then once each week, sometimes more often, we sit together and share our marks. Straight out of God’s Word comes the impetus for talk, talk, talk.

So Where Do We Begin?

If one of us has a mark at the first verse in Chapter 1, we begin there. A candle? “This is a new thought to me. What do you think?” Perhaps it’s Chapter 5 before we come to a mark. Or there may be four marks in Chapter 3. At the same verse one of us may have a question mark; the other, a candle. Here we help each other.

If we both have a question mark, we go to our commentaries. What does the commentary say? Biblical scholars give us more inspiration for talk, talk, talk. Yet this we learned early in our pilgrimage: What the Lord says to us is more important than what He says to the scholars.

That being true, we discuss our questions for our own conclusions before we go to the wise men.

Candles for enlightenment

Question marks for further study

Arrows for self-analysis

For us, Bible study in duet provides a context for developing a caring friendship – to become more and more spiritually one.

If communication (real depth communication) is the key to marriage at its best AND if it is true that God instructs and guides out of His book then this has to be one no-fail method for a no-fail marriage.

Why? Because by this system two great things are happening – We are sharing* our discoveries with each other and with the Lord. But this is only half of the miracle. He is sharing Himself with us.

* Sharing is the key word. Our dictionaries define *sharing* as: “Giving and taking”...”enjoying together”...”exchange of ideas”...”developing with another”...”accepting”...”sharing the good and the bad.”