

The Journey – Part Four - Refresh
by Lloyd Biddle

Times of Refreshing

*"He brought me to the banqueting house,
And his banner over me was love.
Sustain me with cakes of raisins, refresh me with apples,
for I am lovesick."*

Song of Solomon 2:4-5

Refresh - R is for refresh. With the very busy, even too busy, lives that many Americans live these days, it is important to take periodic breaks from the day-to-day hustle and bustle and spend quality time alone with your spouse.

Close your eyes for a minute and think about a specific time in your marriage, a romantic time. For some of you it may have been your honeymoon or an anniversary, maybe a birthday or Valentine's Day. For others of you, it may have been this morning. Most married couples I know do not create enough of these kinds of moments and memories. Their jobs, kids, hobbies, or aspirations absorb their lives. Typically, it is a combination of all these things. According to national statistics on family life, one of the most common times people get divorced is after their kids move away from home. I believe couples are more vulnerable to divorce during this time, if they have not cultivated the habit of refreshing their marriage.

Many couples do not prioritize highly enough time spent alone with one another. And when I say time alone, I mean time alone. No kids, no work, no distractions.

What are some ways we can do this?

- Quarterly weekend get aways;
- Anniversary vacations for two;
- Regular date nights, when you get the neighbors, grandparents, or a babysitter to care for your kids;
- Daily couples' devotionals;
- Couples' prayer time;
- Periodically, locking your kids out of your bedroom and
- One on one conversation - excusing the children so you can catch up with what is going on in one another's lives.

Times of refreshing allow a couple to stay connected physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually. Every marriage needs this. As you and your spouse celebrate romantic love this Valentine's Day, renew your commitment to regularly set apart time for each other. You will be very glad you did!