

FROM THE CREATORS OF FACING THE GIANTS

# FIREPROOF



## 8 WAYS TO CELEBRATE A LONG AND HAPPY MARRIAGE

Written by Carolyn R. Tomlin

Recently, a friend mentioned that she had attended her college class reunion. "I had not seen many of these people in years," she said, "but like me, most of these couples have been married 45 years or more. With today's high divorce rate, I was a bit surprised."

### Covenant Marriage

According to a report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in 1900, there were 709,000 marriages and 55,751 divorces. In 2004, the 2,279,000 marriages resulted in a 3.7 percent divorce rate per 1,000 population (estimates). The median age at first marriage in 2003 was 27.1 for males and 25.3 for females. Not only are there more divorces, but also both men and women marry later than several generations ago. Yet with improvements in health care, the longevity rate rises. This means more couples who stay together can expect to celebrate a golden wedding anniversary and beyond.

Some marriages cannot be measured by the quantity of years, but instead by the quality of the union. One example is that of well-known author C.S. Lewis, who married late in life, and Joy Davidman. Lewis wrote, "H. and I feasted on love, every mode of it – solemn and merry, romantic and realistic, sometimes as dramatic as a thunderstorm, sometimes as comfortable and unemphatic as putting on your soft slippers."

Instead of the 40 or 50 years experienced in many marriages, they had only four years. Lewis died three years after his beloved Joy died of cancer. Yet his writings offer great insight into the true nature of marriage and love.

### Simple Ways to Celebrate

If you're like most senior adults, you celebrate your wedding anniversary, birthdays, Valentine's Day, and Christmas each year. But when you consider the blessings of having a long-time marriage partner, wouldn't it be fun to celebrate more often?

Like other worthwhile things in life, any form of celebration requires some planning. However, senior adults report that those serendipitous occasions often provide the most fun and adventure. Some may be expensive; others may be low- or no-cost.

**Here are some suggestions to make the most of your years as a couple.**

**Plan a vacation together.** Have you dreamed of taking a cruise, a trip to Europe, or a summer excursion to Alaska? Expensive? Yes, but the time spent saving and planning for the trip adds to the pleasure. Difficult? No. Working out the details of travel and sightseeing as a couple could be one of your best investments in the health of your marriage.

**Check colleges and universities in your area for plays, musical performances, and concerts.** Often free or low-cost, these provide cultural enrichment you'll enjoy.



Association of Marriage  
& Family Ministries  
[www.amfmonline.com](http://www.amfmonline.com)

**Official Movie Site:**  
[www.FireprooftheMovie.com](http://www.FireprooftheMovie.com)

**Resource Site:**  
[www.FireproofmyMarriage.com](http://www.FireproofmyMarriage.com)



[www.marriagecomission.com](http://www.marriagecomission.com)



FROM THE CREATORS OF FACING THE GIANTS

# FIREPROOF



**Write a love letter.** Tell your spouse how much he or she means to you and how fulfilled your life has been with him or her.

**Attend a marriage enrichment conference.** You'll return home filled with renewed appreciation for your marriage.

**Surprise your spouse with a spur-of-the-moment event.** Drop by a coffee shop just to talk and enjoy a flavored drink. Grab your umbrella and walk in a gentle rain. Hike through a state park and search for wildlife with your camera. Take turns planning a special surprise – just for the two of you.

**Talk about your life and future as a couple.** Browse family photo albums and revisit those early years of marriage, pictures when your children were growing up, and special keepsakes from years gone by.

**Keep a journal or scrapbook of your celebrations for the year.** Include ticket stubs, restaurant menus, travel brochures, and photos of these events. Place your journal in an area where you'll be reminded of these special times as husband and wife.

**Make prayer and Bible study a time of being together.** Husbands and wives who pray for each other – in each other's presence – maintain a deeper relationship with God. Share your ideas with other senior adults in your Sunday School class and church.

**Become a role model for your adult children and grandchildren.** Could your commitment as husband and wife be the one that becomes the foundation for their marriage?

Carolyn R. Tomlin resides in Jackson, Tenn. She contributes to numerous Christian publications.

This article is from [LifeWay Christian Resources](#) and was first featured in [Home Life Magazine](#)



<http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/>



Association of Marriage  
& Family Ministries  
[www.amfmonline.com](http://www.amfmonline.com)

**Official Movie Site:**  
[www.FireprooftheMovie.com](http://www.FireprooftheMovie.com)

**Resource Site:**  
[www.FireproofmyMarriage.com](http://www.FireproofmyMarriage.com)



[www.marriagecomission.com](http://www.marriagecomission.com)