

## #5 Your Marriage as a Lighthouse

Every marriage is a lighthouse. Every marriage emits a light of influence and revelation whether we realize it or not. If you have children, your marriage is the only school of marriage your children are likely to attend, and it will have a powerful influence on their understanding and expectation of marriage. The brightness of your light reveals the health and heart within your marriage, and those closest to you and those who spend substantial time with you, are under the influence of your marriage.

A marriage's lighthouse also has the capacity to reach far beyond the immediate family. Just as a lighthouse serves as a beacon to lost ships and sheds light over dark, troubled waters, your marriage can be a beacon of hope to others and bring light to those in peril. A marriage is never about just two people. Our government, society and culture guard and protect the institution of marriage, and at nearly every wedding those who gather believe that not only will the marriage be wonderful for the couple, but believe that the marriage will make the world a little better place, too. It is daunting and exciting to consider how your marriage can have a positive impact on the world, or your corner of it.

You may remember a lot of things about your wedding day – but it is likely that, after your vows were said, you recall very little about the ceremony. In the Episcopal wedding liturgy, prayers are offered for the newlywed couple after they make their vows, including these words:

*Make their life together a sign of Christ's love to this sinful and broken world...*

*Give them such fulfillment of their mutual affection that they may reach out in love and concern to others.*

If you have children, what do you think your children have learned about marriage from your marriage? What do you want them to know and hope for their own marriage?

What do you think your children, or those closest to you, have learned (or are learning) from your marriage about:

- affection
- conflict resolution
- decision making
- stewardship
- gender roles?

If you have grandchildren, what are you teaching your grandchildren about marriage in the golden years? What would you want to teach them?

What do you want to maintain or change about the dimension of service and outreach to others in your life together?

What ship a sea now needs the guidance from the lighthouse of your marriage?

