

Your Family Compass!

We saw a refrigerator magnet that read, “Marriage is when a man and woman become as one; the trouble starts when they try to decide which one.” It is easy in marriage to drift different directions, instead, we encourage couples to decide together the direction they want their marriage and family to go. In this way, everyone is pulling in the same direction.

In our book, ***The 10 Best Decisions a Couple Can Make***, we walk couples through three simple activities that bring unity: creating a family mission, motto, and moniker.

The most time consuming activity but the one that will produce the ability to make clear decisions, is creating a marriage mission statement. Ours reads:

We, Bill and Pam Farrel, have a desire to fulfill the Great Commission through using our skills in professional ministry, with a focus of using the communication gifts God has given us. We are committed to personal discipleship as a lifestyle. We want our home to be an oasis where those who enter can see Christ at work in our marriage and family and where they can find hope. We, the Farrels, are committed to fun and friendships. We value people more than things. We prefer memories over material goods. We are committed to raise our children in such a way as they have the opportunity to know the benefits of personally knowing Jesus and walking with Him. We are committed to helping them discover their talents and equipping them to help fulfill the Great Commission and to have fun and a fulfilling life while doing so.

(If you have trouble with this, we offer a set of questions to answer that will walk you through writing a marriage and family mission statement in ***The 10 Best Decisions a Couple Can Make.***)

Next, you want to come up with a marriage and /or family motto. Ours came from a prayer we prayed when we were engaged, then we adopted to guide us in our parenting. We simply claimed Psalms 84:11, “No good thing does God withhold from those that walk uprightly.” Our summary of this principle is in 1 Sam. 3:20 says . . . “those that honor God, God honors . . .” which became our marriage and family motto.

Lastly, take these values and principles to the graphic level and design a family crest or moniker. On military uniforms, on private school jackets, you will usually see an emblem that depicts the values of that institution. On our family crest are three L’s down the center stand for *Learner, Leader, Love God*. Each year from the time our oldest was four, we have had a “Learner and Leader” Day. That’s the day we negotiate privileges and responsibilities, select one leadership trait to focus on for each son each year and we give a gift that applauds the uniqueness (passion, bent, calling, platform) we see God building in each of their lives. (More details on how to do a Learner / Leader day and other parenting tips are in our book: ***10 Best Decisions a Parent Can Make (Harvest House)***).

We want our sons to be known as:

Learners. Those who want to compete in life so they are willing to do the hard work to learn and become excellent.

Leaders: In their sphere of influence using their own unique leadership style

Love God: We want them to own their own faith.

The cross with the star rising from it represents that we want them to seek God’s vision for their life. We want the source of all their hopes, dreams and desires to come from God’s heart.



The two interlocking hearts represent integrity and commitment. When a Farrel says something we want it to be truth and we want to be known as a family that keeps all of our commitments, especially the marriage covenant. Inside the ring is inscribed the verse and phrase we used as the motto.

For our twenty fifth wedding anniversary, we gave our sons a ring with a family crest Bill and I designed. We wanted the boys to have an heirloom that could be passed down from generation to generation that would symbolize the values the Farrel family stands for.

Now you try. What do you want your family known for? What are your core values, those 3-4 traits you want your children, grandchildren and great grandchildren to possess? See if you can draw a symbol to explain your values, write a mission for your marriage, and then summarize it into a phrase or motto.

Creating a moniker can be as simple as designing a crest or emblem with symbols that show your core beliefs. Invite your family into a discussion to decide what words or symbols to use.

Place a symbol for each word/trait in each section of the crest below, then post this in your home.

Each day we choose to live the legacy we want to leave.

You'll see decisions, planning, and unity will come easier. Your love will become a light to all those around you as your energies are focused.

