

## Five Common Marriage Problems

**Marriage problems** tend to run the gamut, but there are some pretty common problems that tend to be issues for the majority of couples. Let me introduce you to the solutions to five common marriage problems...

**\*The first one, you guessed it, is communication problems.**

Ask yourself the question, "Do you feel that your spouse understands and knows you?" Many couples endure a profound sense of being misunderstood, not being liked or not being accepted by their spouse. Often times this problem is largely due to poor communication. Does that ring true for you?

**To have a healthy marriage you need to be a good communicator.**

**\*Second, along those same lines is intimacy problems.**

Ask yourself whether you feel really close, safe and unified with your spouse? What about different areas of intimacy such as emotional, spiritual and physical? Rate those on a scale of 0-10. Zero being I have no sense of closeness or intimacy. Ten being I couldn't feel closer, safer or more unified with my spouse.

**To overcome marriage problems you need to have intimacy.**

**\*Third, one of the purposes of marriage is to meet the emotional needs of the members of the marriage covenant.**

Speaking of needs, do you know what your top 3 emotional needs are? What about your spouse's top 3 emotional needs?

Knowing and intentionally meeting the needs of your spouse is critical to maintaining a healthy, satisfying marriage. It is also critical to affair proofing your marriage.

**To have a great marriage you need to meet your spouse's emotional needs.**

**\*Fourth, ask yourself, "Do you feel loved by your spouse? Does your spouse feel loved by you?"** By the way, did you notice I didn't say, do you know whether your spouse loves you...That's because whether you know it or not, it's important to EXPERIENCE love from your spouse! Not feeling love in a marriage is one of the most dangerous marriage problems out there.

**To have a great marriage you need to speak your spouse's love language...**in other words you need to communicate your love the way your spouse best experiences it.

**To have a great marriage you need speak your spouse's love language.**

**\*Fifth, did you know that 40%-70% of marriages decline in overall marital satisfaction after the children arrive.** Wow! But if you have children, you may have already suspected that. Differences in parenting styles, blended family issues, and simply the added stress of children can complicate your marriage.



## God's Intervention in Christian Marriages

Christian couples understand that they need Biblically sound marriage principles, not just run of the mill marriage advice if they are to fight marriage enemy #1. Sadly, 50% of couples are divorcing. Add to that number those who are separating and not reconciling and the number soars to 66%. Additionally, research shows **only 25% of couples are truly happy**. With numbers like these, we can't deny that couples are in a serious battle for their marriages

Christian Counseling Online was designed with **saving marriages** in mind. Developing a plan for success is a requirement for **saving marriages**. Having a successful marriage first requires you to understand what God had in mind for marriage. If you want to understand the purpose behind an invention you consult the One who designed it, right!

*All things were created by Him and for Him...and in Him all things hold together. Colossians 1:16b-17a*

### **Marriage is God's Creation; therefore He's in the saving marriages business**

On the other hand, if you are trying to use someone's creation/invention for something other than what it was designed for, it is likely that thing will not operate as efficiently.

It is also likely to result in much frustration and conflict, like trying to fit a round peg into a square hole. It just isn't happening. So if you want to have a great marriage you first need to understand what God had in mind.

### **The Creator created marriage for 3 purposes**

Marriage is the creation of God and He created it for very specific reasons...just like He created you...for very specific reasons. Therefore, God is in the business of **saving marriages**. Our lives are more satisfying when we cooperate with God in fulfilling our purposes. Marriage is no exception...

*For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife...Genesis 2:24*

#### **1. Your marriage relationship bears the image of God**

**First**, you already know that men and women were made in God's image (Gen. 1:26-27). But, did you know that together husbands and wives also bear the image of God? They do this by demonstrating love and faithfulness to each other...like God does with us. You see, God covenants with His people, Husbands and wives covenant to each other and God.

#### **2. You were designed to experience and share God's love and faithfulness**

**Second**, one reason God created marriage was to meet human needs. Needs for food, shelter and clothing as well as needs for love, acceptance, intimacy, and faithfulness. In that way marriage is a picture to the world of how God provides for His people. Therefore, God is for saving marriages...afterall, they have His image stamped on them.

Marriage is God's conduit for LOVE. It was designed to be a safe harbor where a man and a woman can be totally naked and unashamed. A place where they could experience the unconditional love and acceptance of God through each other.

#### **3. You were designed for Kingdom work**



**Third, marriage is one of the ways God expands His Kingdom and accomplishes His work in the earth...**He commanded men and women to go forth and multiply, be fruitful and take dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:28).

Unfortunately, it is very difficult to do as God commanded when you are at odds with your spouse. Conflict drains our emotional and creative energies. Sadly, many husbands and wives feel like they are sleeping with the enemy instead of with their comrade in arms...

Marriage was designed with unity in mind. When a husband and wife are on the same page, so to speak, they are reflecting the unity of the Godhead. ***For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh (Genesis 2:24).*** Unity is so important that Jesus told us it would be a great sign testifying about God...

*May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me...John 17:23*

## Develop Goals for Your Marriage

Finally, your saving marriages plan needs to include specific goals. Written goals are powerful...they help move a plan into motion...

Keep in mind, your goals need to be consistent with God's purpose for your marriage. Your goals will help you stay on track and give more purpose, meaning and direction to your marriage and family life....

You may want to have goals in the following areas...

- Spiritual (we will study and pray together regularly...)
- Parenting (we will always be unified when disciplining the children...)
- Finances (we will decide on a budget and stick to it...)
- Health (we will exercise regularly and eat right...)
- Communication (we will speak lovingly and respectfully to one another...)
- **You Need to Commit to God's Way**

First, you need to decide, once and for all, are you going to commit to honoring God through your marriage. Are you going to close all exits and do it God's way? Are you going to trust His word, His plan and His design? Okay, if you answered yes, let's move on to...

- **Confess Your Sins One to Another...**

If you're making a plan to improve or save your marriage you need to start out on the right foot...Get right with God and your spouse first!



One way to do this is by following the Biblical mandate of confessing your sin to each other...

*If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9*

Confession of sin can be a turning point in our lives. It means we are in agreement with God about our sin and we are choosing to turn away from it (by His grace.) When we do this, God's word promises to give us the power to accomplish that.

Some of the things you may want to consider confessing are...

- The ways in which you have not trusted and honored Him
- The ways you have not obeyed His word.
- The consequences to you, your spouse and your marriage of your rebellion

*What does the Lord require of you but to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8*

Exercising humility is a crucial part of any saving marriages plan. Making confession of sin a regular part of your marriage will keep you humble and help to maintain emotional intimacy. Apologies go a long way in keeping our hearts pliable and loving towards our spouse and God.

- **Meet the Needs of Your Spouse...Intentionally!**

The next step in the saving marriages blueprint is making a plan for knowing your spouse's most important needs. You also must become intentional about meeting those needs. **Your spouse will (most likely) feel connected and in love with you when you are meeting his/her most important emotional needs.**

- **Pray for Your Spouse**

**Pray that God would show His love and faithfulness to your spouse through you.** Prayer is one way we experience the personal relationship with God through Christ. It is also where we avail ourselves to the grace of God. **Therefore, your plan for saving marriage must include fervent prayer for your spouse and your ability to love them.**

- **Be a Safe Spouse**

A marriage that reflects God's image is a safe marriage. God is our refuge, therefore your marriage should be a refuge for both you and your spouse. A safe relationship is one where both husband and wife feel accepted even if there are disagreements. A plan for saving marriages needs to include a plan for safety. **Neither spouse should ever have to worry about the proverbial nuclear bomb being dropped on them!**

That's why a plan for saving marriages must address conflict. Your marriage can be free from condemnation, contempt, critical attitudes and defensiveness...it's your choice!

It can be a place where **you are quick to take responsibility for your own actions and slow to point your finger of blame...it's your choice!**

