

FORTIFIED MARRIAGES

Fortifying Marriages to Strengthen Families, Churches and the Community

Our Purpose

To be used by God to fortify marriages. To make a difference in lives, marriages and families.

Our Vision

To see marriages become healthy, productive, able to withstand the storms of life and used by God to strengthen other marriages.

Our Mission

To provide direction and education with resources and training to individuals, couples and churches in order to help them define and build a solid foundation for a Christian marriage.

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Married for Life

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Strengthening Marriages

There are many hurting marriages in the church today. We want to see marriages become strong because we know the heartache and pain of an unhealthy marriage.

Any marriage can become strong and healthy; we have experienced God's work in our lives and marriage as He transformed our marriage into a dynamic, growing relationship. Through the years, we have seen this transformation in many other marriages also.

We have a *passion* to be used by God to strengthen marriages. It's not something we do in our spare time or as a hobby—it is our life.

God began moving us into marriage ministry eleven years ago when a friend challenged us to begin a couples study in our home. The Lord used this study to strengthen our marriage and teach us about ministering to couples.



Chris & Carmen at the Smart Marriages conference in Atlanta.

The Lord led us into new and exciting areas when we were asked to begin marriage classes at our church. This led to the formation of a marriage workbook which became the *Fortified Marriages Manual and Workbook*. We incorporated as a non-profit marriage ministry in January, 2006 and the Lord has begun to spread the Fortified Marriages Ministry throughout the US and with the publication of *Matrimonios Fortalecidos*, into Latin America as well.

It has been an incredible adventure and we are excited about what the Lord has in store for us as we continue to move forward with the calling He has placed before us..

Marriage Manual & Workbook

Why do we need another marriage book? Hundreds of marriage books are available today, yet divorce continues to tear families apart at an appalling rate. Today, more people read marriage books than ever before and marriages still deteriorate and dissolve. Why is this? Because books can't change lives or repair marriages, only God can. When a couple begins to

communicate, work together and allow God to work, their marriage *will* change and improve.

Fortified Marriages builds a strong foundation and presents God's principles for a healthy marriage. Excellent for individuals, couples or small groups, *Fortified Marriages* will help you build your marriage on a solid foundation.

You Can Help!

Please pray about supporting our ministry. There is great opportunity to minister to marriages today and with your assistance, we can make a difference. The Lord has opened the doors in several different areas, but a lack of resources keeps us from responding to many opportunities. Tax deductible donations can be made via our website or by sending checks made out to Fortified Marriages.

Ministry Update

Beginning a new ministry is a wonderful blessing and a lot of work! The Lord has blessed us with many gifted and talented friends and family to help make this ministry a reality. A lot of prayer, time, energy and money has gone into this ministry. In addition to ministering to couples locally, we have participated in:

Effective Families conference in Puerto Rico

Smart Marriages in Atlanta, GA

Association of Marriage and Family

Ministries conference in

Scottsdale, AZ

Church of God of Prophecy conference in Nashville, TN

God has blessed our ministry this year as we saw *Fortified Marriages* go to 19 countries and 33 states. Marriage classes and studies began in Arizona, Colorado and Arkansas. An Arizona radio station aired an interview in August—the word is getting out!

Coming soon

Marriage Seminar at River in the Desert Community Church in September.

Two new marriage classes beginning at our church in October.

National Association of Marriage

Enhancement Conference: We will lead a Workshop in October

We hope to participate in several marriage, small group and church conferences next year. Additionally, we are praying about the possibility of marriage seminars in:

Puerto Rico

Nicaragua

Peru

Mazatlan, Mexico

Anchorage, Alaska

We know the Lord has even more in store for us and are excited about what He is doing to strengthen marriages and bring couples together. Please pray for us!

Information & Articles about Marriage

Visit our website for marriage articles and information. Many of the marriage resources available today can be found at our site: www.fortifiedmarriages.com. We continually update the site with news articles, marriage articles, new resources,

conferences and seminars, and *The Marriage Minute*—a short message to challenge all of us to continue the work building strong dynamic marriages. Please send your suggestions and additional resource information to us—we

would love to hear from you and always are open to posting information that will strengthen marriages. Please pray for God's direction for our lives, marriage and ministry as we continue to respond to God's leading.

The Marriage Minute: You are Different!

When dating and *falling in love*, couples tend to focus on their similarities. Usually, those similarities are few, but as it is often said, *love is blind*. Once married, couples begin to see their differences and they become points of contention in the marriage relationship. All couples face some basic differences:

Genders: Male and female; biologically, there are great differences.

Genes: Parents give their children a set of genes unique in history. Those genes will bring about physical, emotional and social differences.

Backgrounds: Social, economic, cultural, and geographical environment causes differences.

Personality types: Usually, couples will have very different personalities.

Differences cause division between husbands and wives and can lead to conflict and at times, even death of the marriage. What can you do about your differences?

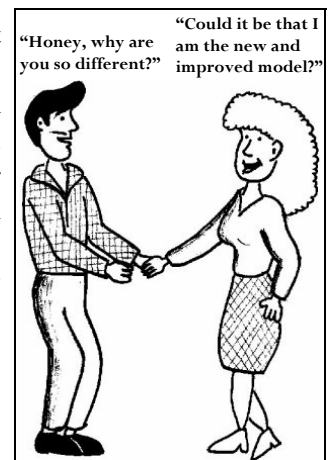
Recognize your differences: Learn your spouse.

Work to understand your differences: It is your lifetime assignment to gain understanding to know your spouse.

Learn to appreciate your differences: As Ruth Graham says, "If you were exactly alike, one of you would be unnecessary."

Utilize your differences:

God created you just as you are and the two of you are better than one alone. When you work together, your differences fill in each other's weaknesses rather than being points of contention.



It is important that couples utilize their differences to strengthen their marriage and better meet the challenges of daily life together.