

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.

Contact Us

www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Info@fortifiedmarriages.com

480-699-2515
866-263-5638

PO Box 7385
Chandler, AZ 85246

Married for Life

Fortified Marriages Ministry's Newsletter

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Serving the Lord in Marriage Ministry

Who would have known when we married twenty-five years ago, that one day Carmen and I would be serving the Lord full-time in marriage ministry? Yet, here we are!

We are excited about what the Lord is doing through our ministry as we seek to strengthen marriages and see families become all that God wants them to be. We see a hunger for marriage ministry everywhere we go; from our home church in Phoenix, AZ to California, Indiana, Colorado, even to Nicaragua, Mexico and Liberia, Africa.

Confident of God's calling on our lives, we look forward to what the Lord has in

store for us. We have had the privilege to participate in several workshops and two seminars already this year in Phoenix, AZ, San Bernardino, CA, Ft. Wayne, IN and Managua, Nicaragua. We have a seminar scheduled for California in June and we will spend a week in Liberia in July conducting workshops and seminars.

We are also scheduled to attend five denominational conferences this summer. These conferences allow us the opportunity

to minister to marriages and provide information about our ministry to pastors and church leaders. We look forward to the opportunities the Lord will give us to encourage couples to work on their own marriages and also to equip couples to help other couples.



Carmen & Chris speaking to pastors in Nicaragua.

A Different Model for Marriage Ministry

Equipping couples called to marriage ministry is one important aspect of our ministry. One couple with a passion to build strong marriages can develop a dynamic marriage ministry within the local church when they have good resources and the support of their pastor.

We have a vision of partner ministries throughout the United States, Latin America and even around the world us-

ing Biblical principles to strengthen marriages. Our seminars and workshops are set up to strengthen marriages and also prepare couples for marriage ministry.

We see seven aspects to marriage ministry that will help couples build strong marriages that will glorify God and be a testimony to the world:

1. Pre-marriage training for young adults and students.

2. Pre-marital preparation.
3. Marriage classes.
4. Marriage enrichment events.
5. Parenting classes or seminars.
6. Care-giving for marriages in trouble.
7. Mentoring.

Using this model, any church can build a dynamic marriage ministry that will encourage couples and teach Biblical principles for marriage.

Fortified Marriages Seminars & Workshops Available

Our seminars and workshops have been created to encourage and strengthen couples in their marriage and also to build up marriage ministry within the local church.

- **Foundations for Marriage:** Building the Biblical foundation of marriage and learning skills for a strong, healthy Christian marriage.
- **Oneness in Marriage:** Growing and maintaining intimacy and romance in marriage and learning how to work through the challenges couples experience in married life.
- **Parenting Seminar:** Couples learn how to work together to raise their children to be mature, productive adults who will honor God with their lives.
- **Fortified Marriages Facilitator Certification:** Provides participants with a practical understanding and experience of how to use the *Fortified Marriages Marriage Manual and Workbook* to build healthy, strong marriages.
- **Fortified Marriages Workshop:** Participants learn the Fortified Marriages method of marriage education and discover the resources available to present sound marriage information, skills and principles to couples.
- **Strengthening Marriages in the Church:** Pastors and ministry leaders gain an understanding of the importance of marriage ministry and learn how to begin a marriage ministry in the church.
- **The Importance of Marriage:** Attendees gain an understanding of the Biblical foundations for marriage and its importance to God.
- **One Day You Will Marry:** A workshop to help young people and single adults understand how they can prepare themselves for marriage.
- **The Pastor's Marriage:** Pastors learn about the need to guard their marriage and how they can protect it from the intrusions that happen within the church.
- **Team of Three Marriage Retreat:** A weekend couples retreat to help couples understand their differences and experience working together as a team.

Ministry Update

It is hard to believe that we are already in our second year of official marriage ministry—and already full-time! It is exciting and a little overwhelming at times. This past year we have seen God moving as three marriage classes have completed at LifeQuest church and we have seen classes begin in Phoenix, Colorado, with another to begin soon in Mexicali, Mexico.

We had the opportunity to share

our vision for marriage ministry within the local church to 100 pastors in Nicaragua and at a conference in San Bernardino, CA. Our first Facilitator Certification Seminar occurred in April and we are excited about the possibility of more certification seminars coming in Phoenix and Puerto Rico in the next couple of months.

Please pray for God's work in the following upcoming events:

June 16: Marriage Seminar; Riverside, CA.

June 27-30: Baptist Convention; Washington, D.C.

July 5-15: Marriage seminars and workshops in Liberia, Africa.

July 28-29: Catholic Family Conference; Anaheim, CA

August 8-11: Assembly of God General Conference; Indianapolis, IN

September 3-7: National Baptist Convention; Philadelphia, PA

The Marriage Minute: The Need for Marriage Ministry

We ask pastors and church leaders during our workshop, *Strengthening Marriages in the Church*, "Should the church have a role in marriage?" We know that more than 80% of marriages take place in a "church", but is that the only responsibility or authority the church has? The church does have some duty in this area, but it is the parent's *responsibility* to prepare their children for adulthood – including marriage. But the sad fact is that parents are *not* preparing their children for marriage and very often set a poor example of the marriage relationship for their children.

It may not be the church's responsibility to prepare young people for marriage or teach couples about God's plan for marriage, but if the church doesn't do it, who will? The church is in a position to teach Biblical principles for marriage and challenge couples to live for Christ in their marriage. Many couples today are hungry for solid teaching about marriage – they desire to have strong, growing marriages, but don't know how to achieve it without guidance. The rampant divorce in society today rips apart families and the children, extended family and church suffer as a result. It is time to turn the tide of divorce and the local

church is the best place for a start.

One couple with a passion to build strong marriages *can* make a difference. With their pastor's support, a couple can find the information and training to help them build a marriage ministry in their church. A model is available that will not only strengthen marriages within the church but will draw couples to the church as they seek to find something better than the dysfunctional, hurting marriages so prevalent today. Contact us if you would like to learn more about this marriage ministry model.