

Succeed:

Achieve the desired aim or result.



All of us want to succeed at what we do, and no one enters marriage convinced they are going to fail, yet nearly half of all marriages do fail. When we enter marriage, do we even have a desired aim or result for our marriage? Do those of us who have been married five, or ten, or thirty years know what it would mean to have a successful marriage? Someone once said that if you aim at nothing, you are surely to hit it; it seems that for too many of us, that would describe our marriages - aiming at nothing.

To succeed, you must first have a desired aim or result - what is *your* goal for *your* marriage? I am going to push you to search out a goal that is more than 'stay married for life.' I know of people who have been married for more than 50 years, yet no one would say that they would want a marriage like those marriages. Think about it; what does the Lord want of you? We know from Matthew 22, that the greatest commandment is to love God and the second is to love others. Micah 6:8 tells us that the Lord requires that we are "to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." And Ephesians 2:10 says that we are "created to do good works." But what does this mean for our marriage? For success?

It means that God has a plan for you (Jeremiah 29:11). He has a plan for your marriage - God desires success for your marriage. Please understand that one goal of marriage is *oneness*. While we will not in this lifetime achieve complete oneness, success in marriage would be growing in oneness - seeing *growth* in oneness with your spouse. As a couple, Carmen and I believe God's purpose for us is to be used to touch lives; to encourage, challenge and build up the body of Christ - and specifically, couples. For us to succeed, my wife and I need to be growing in oneness and to be used of the Lord in the lives of others. What would be *your* measure of success?

Success requires effort. Whether it is career, ministry, finances, sports, or life in general; success doesn't happen without effort. Succeeding in marriage also will not happen without effort. You must work at your marriage! Carmen and I work at remaining connected and reconnecting when we drift apart. We also work at being used by the Lord in the lives of others - we make ourselves available to others. I would challenge you first to decide what success means in your life; to have a vision or a goal for your life, and then to make the effort to achieve that vision or goal. The Lord your God is with you - you *can* achieve God's plans for you!

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Articles to Check Out:

8 Keys to a Successful Marriage by Vernard Gant - www.familylife.com

Ten Secrets to a Successful Marriage by Mitch Temple - www.focusonthefamily.com

How to Succeed in Marriage by Kevin Thompson - www.kevinathompson.com