

Materialism:

A preoccupation with material objects or comforts



The “experts” say that finances are the number one reason for divorce. While our 25 years of counseling experience might cause us to differ with that conclusion, there is no doubt that money and possessions can profoundly affect a marriage. Scripture has much to say about money and possessions and while people often say that *money* is the root of all evil; 1 Timothy 6:10 actually says that the *love* of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Jesus, and the Bible overall, focus on the heart - where is our heart at? Are we preoccupied with material objects or comforts? Or are we focused on the Lord our God? Matthew 6:21 tells us that where our treasure is, there is where the heart is. Preoccupation with the material things will cause problems in our marriage and in our lives - it is following after the flesh rather than the Spirit.

Christians will say they put God first, but do they really? If someone was to look at your checkbook or budget, what would they find? That the Lord is first in your life or comforts and things? What about your daily life? Do you spend more time pursuing stuff or Christ? Yes, we must work to provide for our family and yes, having nice things does not mean we are ungodly, materialistic, heathen. Again, it is a matter of the heart; is God truly first? Or is our life sole about us? Are we reflecting Proverbs 12:9; pretending to be somebody with our big house, expensive cars, and the trappings of wealth? Or are we reflecting 1 Timothy 6:6; being content with what we have and pursuing godliness over the comforts of life?

The preoccupation with material things will cause problems in marriage. Proverbs 15:27 tells us that; the greedy bring ruin to their households. Materialism is selfishness and selfishness will *always* damage relationships! Research shows that giving, being unselfish, brings about happiness and contentment. The Christian life is to be about *others*, not *self*! You’ve seen the news; very wealthy “stars,” whose personal lives are a mess as they squander millions of dollars. But materialism is not only a problem of the rich, often those who do not have the money, live like they do, trying to purchase happiness through the things they buy, but cannot afford, not realizing that debt is bondage. Money is not the answer in life - Jesus Christ is!

Honestly examine your spending; do you have a “preoccupation with material objects or comforts?” Or are you truly living out your Christianity, working together as husband and wife for the things of God - seeking *first* His kingdom and His righteousness?

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

Financial Resources: www.fortifiedmarriages.com/marriage_resources.aspx#9

Article to check out: *The Truth About Money and Relationships* by Rachel Cruze

Book to check out: *Money and Marriage God's Way* by Howard Dayton