

FORTIFIED MARRIAGES

Fortifying Marriages to Strengthen Families, Churches and the Community



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Visit our website

www.fortifiedmarriages.com

to find out more about the ministry and how you can get involved.

The website also has a great deal of marriage resources and links to other marriage organizations available.

Donations are tax-deductible and make the ministry to couples locally and internationally possible.

También disponible en español

Peace in the Home

The home should be a place of peace, a refuge from the chaos in the world, yet far too many homes are not peaceful nor a place of refuge, but rather, chaotic. Too many *Christian* homes are battlefields; places of conflict, strife and discord. God’s design, His plan for the home is that it would be a place of refuge and peace where husbands, wives and children are recharged and ready for the challenges they will face. Interestingly, Proverbs, chapter 17 addresses this issue and provides wisdom about how to bring about the peace God wants for every home. Verse 1 begins the journey; “Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting, with strife.” Wealth and abundance don’t bring peace and too often can bring just the opposite. There is nothing wrong with wealth; but it is a matter of focus, what is more important? Wealth? Or peace in the home?

Verse 14 points out a reason for strife in the home; “Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.” So often, we argue about inconsequential things! Yes, we must address sin and wrong behavior, but how often do we launch into arguments that are, really, about nothing. One spouse said something wrong, or there was some perceived slight that set a spouse off. There are many things we can overlook to avoid arguments. Verse 19 continues this thought; “He who loves a quarrel loves sin; he who builds a high gate invites destruction.” Arguing for arguments sake is sin! How often do we just pick a fight with our spouse or our children? We criticize them for something they do, or wear or think and the peace is broken, the argument is on and the day is ruined. Or there is the person with the ‘high gate’ - the defense of hiding in silence and not addressing issues that need to be addressed. Ignoring conflict is not the answer either.



Verse 27 provides the answer; “A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even-tempered.” Conflict is inevitable, but is it done in a caring way? We must keep our emotions under control and use words to build others up, not tear them down (see also Ephesians 4:29). We achieve peace in the home through calmness and a careful choice of words. Verse 28 concludes the chapter; “Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.” There are times when we just need to be quiet! Often, waiting to address a problem will allow us to address it in a more productive way. Romans 12:18 admonishes us to live at peace with everyone, as far as it depends on us. An unhealthy argument cannot take place without our participation. If we follow the leading of Proverbs 17, we can make our home a peaceful refuge.



Peace is not absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.
Ronald Reagan

War & Peace

Couples usually participate in counseling when the pain and discomfort are so great that it is either seek counseling or split up; praise God some choose counseling! Often, a couple launches into argument and at times they become so engrossed in the argument they forget that we are present. One or the other will notice us and shocked, they apologize for arguing in front of us. It is insightful for us, as counselors, because we experience their interaction and then we can assist them in changing their interaction so they may experience healthy conflict. But first, we have to get them out of the battle mentality. One couple we counseled seemed stuck as enemies. There was so much anger in their relationship; the wife even admitted she had considered physical violence against her husband. Pain and hurt was not addressed in healthy ways, but in very hurtful and damaging ways. It was like World War I with each side in their trenches and unwilling to consider that their spouse was the person they had committed to loving until death parted them.



As each began letting their guard down just a little, they realized that their spouse was not the enemy and they were able to begin rebuilding their relationship. It took a while, but as they laid aside their anger and began dealing with the issues in healthy ways, they began to connect and begin working together. Rather than their home being a war zone, it became a haven of peace. Was it easy? No, but it began as one spouse and then the other began making steps toward the other.

Finding Peace in Your Marriage Relationship

“If you are looking for someone to meet your needs, make you happy, and make your life worthwhile, you will be greatly disappointed, quickly discouraged, and basically unhappy the rest of your life. But, if you will just be the person God has made you to be, and find out how you can give your life to someone else by meeting their needs and making them happy, you will discover fulfillment, joy, and peace in ways you can’t even imagine.” ~ Kenn Kington

Action Point: What are you going to do?

Do you seek to make your home a place of peace and a refuge? Or is it a place where you let it all hang out? A place where you don’t guard your words or actions and allow things to escalate into battles? You have a choice! You can continue fighting and quarreling with your spouse and children, or you can seek to make your home that refuge that will strengthen and rejuvenate yourself, your

spouse and your family. Stop the bickering and unhealthy arguing - don’t participate in it. Work to answer softly and speak in ways that will build your spouse and children up rather than tear them down. Learn to just shut your mouth when speaking will not accomplish anything positive. Remember Philippians 4:13, you can do everything through Him who gives you strength.

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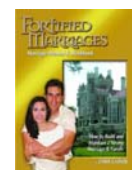
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- The Fortified Marriages website has many great resources.
- The Fortified Marriages manual and workbook is a great small group resource to help build strong marriages.



Articles to check out: 10 Little Things to Bring Peace into Your Home
forthefamily.org/10-little-things-bring-peace-home

Building Your Dream Home: archive.constantcontact.com/fs085/1101824917326/archive/1110291112545.html

Chris & Carmen present a variety of seminars and workshops to help couples grow in their marriage and work together as a team. Contact us for more information about sponsoring seminars at your church.

Fortified Marriages Ministry is a 501(c)3, non-profit organization seeking to build strong marriages to withstand the storms that will come. Please consider partnering with us to affect marriages and help couples leave a Godly legacy. Ministry partners may donate to the cause of building strong marriages, become monthly contributors, pray regularly for the ministry, or let others know about the ministry. More information is available at <http://www.fortifiedmarriages.com>.
