

Influence



To affect someone in an indirect way.

There are several ways to look at influence in marriage. One is the way husbands and wives influence each other. Then there is the influence of outside factors; such as society, friends, and other people. Finally, there is the influence individuals and couples have on others. Influence should be positive in any of these aspects of influence, but too often is negative. We need to guard our marriage; to protect it from the negative influences around us, but also to be a positive influence on each other and those around us.

To positively affect our spouse or anyone else for that matter; our children or others; we first must walk closely with Jesus and be guided by the Holy Spirit in our words in actions. Clothing ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience (Colossian 3:12) will go a long way to influence others positively. Too often, like the Pharisees, we become judgmental and critical, thinking that we are helping others and influencing them to change. It didn't work for the Pharisees and it won't work for us either.

We also must guard our marriage from the negative influences of the world and those who would influence us in wrong directions. Every marriage will experience periods where we are not doing so well. Seeking godly help is a good thing, but we must be careful about who we talk to during those times. We need to talk to someone who will stand for our marriage during those seasons. Or perhaps, we can be that safe place for someone else who is experiencing a tough season in their lives and/or marriage. We also must guard against those influences of social media and society's penchant for taking the so-called easy way of dealing with problems, rather than working through the difficulties we face.

So, do you have healthy boundaries to guard against negative influences in your life and marriage? Do you seek to be a positive influence on your spouse, children, those you come in contact with by exemplifying the love of Jesus Christ?

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

The *Fortified Marriages Manual and Workbook* is a great tool to help couples grow closer together.

Article to check out:

Do These 12 Influences Improve Your Marriage? by Kirsten Samuel - kirstendsamuel.com