

STRENGTHENING OUR MARRIAGES

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None ought to think that they are immune to the possibility of divorce. Many people have been stunned, even shocked, to have a mate announce, “I want a divorce.” You may be quite content with your marriage, but that doesn’t mean that your mate shares your contentment. Here are some things that every husband and wife should do to strengthen their marriage against the ravages of divorce.

(1) *Center your life in God (Mt. 6:33).* Make obedience to his will the top priority of your life together. Remember the words of Ecclesiastes 12:13, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” Take time to pray together. Do those things necessary to grow spiritually and become a stronger Christian. The fact is that the more you become what God wants you to be, the more you become what your mate deserves, and the stronger your marriage becomes.

(2) *Communicate with your mate.* It involves listening as well as talking. There should be kind communication. Once a psychiatrist asked a couple, “What do you have in common?” The wife was not the kindest of communicators and she answered, “Just one thing: neither of us can stand the other!” Often we lose control and say things we regret later. Proverbs 15:1 says, “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.” Let’s try the soft answer instead of the hard words that stir up anger.

(3) *Commitment is the key.* God hates divorce (Mal. 2:16), and allows it only on the basis of fornication under the law of Christ (Mt. 5:32, 19:9). One who is motivated by the spirit of reverence or respect for God, will be faithful to their marriage vows and will not have the possibility of divorce in the back of their minds as a possible future option. A wise and loving father wrote this to his daughter soon after her marriage. He said, “Likely you have already made this commitment (if not you should today): I am married to Bobby for life. I will never consider breaking my vows, God being my helper. I will overcome every obstacle. I will survive every problem. I will never allow myself to consider the possibility of another mate while my husband lives. If my marriage fails, it will be in spite of me and over my strongest efforts.” Perhaps if all marriages began with this type of commitment, this type of reverence for God and His marriage law, the statistics would not show nearly one out of every two new marriages ending in divorce. Our society today needs a good dose of Matthew 19:6, “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”