

## FORTIFIED MARRIAGES

Fortifying Marriages to Strengthen Families, Churches and the Community



Chris & Carmen Garner  
MA-MFT

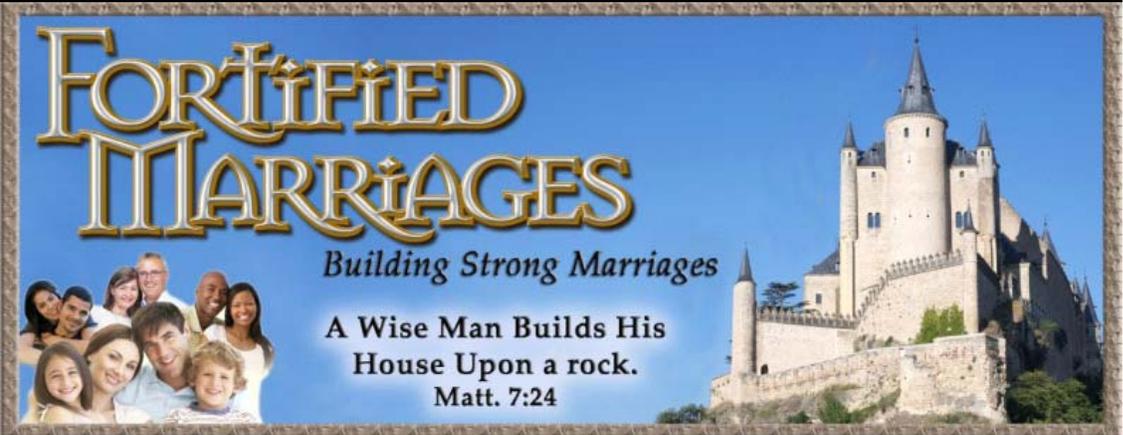
Visit our website

[www.fortifiedmarriages.com](http://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.



### Keeping Romance Alive!

Very often, couples think that romance is only for the newly married and that mature couples grow out of the “romantic stage” or they believe that romance is the “feelings” of love, the feelings that we feel when we are in the newness of the relationship. Both are incorrect—they are myths that tend to keep marriage relationships from being all they can be. Romance is: *the sharing and giving of yourself-the little-and big things you do to say: “I love you” and let your spouse know that he or she is special.* Romance can and should continue throughout your married life, but it requires some effort on your part.

Romance is not a once-a-year box of chocolate you give your spouse on Valentine’s Day. It is an on-going, continual attitude of giving and demonstrating your love to the person you love more than anyone else—the person you committed your life to when you said, “I do.” It is speaking his or her love language, surprising him or her with a gift or a getaway to a romantic spot. It doesn’t have to be expensive; in fact, it doesn’t have to cost anything. A little creativity and thought can bring about wonderfully romantic experiences.



What can you do to keep romance alive in your marriage? First, remember that baby sitters are less expensive than marriage counselors! Make time and take the effort to romance your spouse. Have a date night, spend time together. Speak each other’s love language. Be creative and have fun; romancing your spouse can be a lot of fun! You can find out information about the 5 love languages by going to our website and we have a list of books to help you spark romance in your marriage at Amazon’s listmania, check out the *FM-Romance* list (also a link to the list on our website.)

### Being Creative

Jim and Angie’s lives were extremely busy; a very demanding job, children, ministry; just keeping up with the daily demands was difficult. They weren’t connected and arguments arose quickly and all too easily. Jim, faced with a long day of visiting customers in the mountains came up with an idea. He was able to schedule his meetings for Friday and after making some arrangements, asked Angie to accompany him to his meetings. She hesitated, but the prospect of a drive to the mountains and lunch with her husband sounded positive so she agreed. Imagine her surprise when she found out they not only were having lunch together, but also dinner and spending the night! Jim had found someone to take the kids for the night and had packed Angie some clothes and her toiletries. It wasn’t a lot of time, but the relaxing time away helped rejuvenate their relationship. It just took a little creativity and effort to make it happen..

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## Say I Love You!

When was the last time you said, “I love you” to your spouse? Today? It’s not that our spouse doesn’t know, but we all need to hear it! We were at a conference one time wearing our “I Love My Wife” - “I Love My Husband” t-shirts. A man walked by and commented, “I’m glad you love your wife.” I replied, “do you love your wife?” His response was, “We’ve been married 47 years.” “So, do you love your wife?” “Ask her.” he replied. He wouldn’t say, “I love my wife.” I feel sorry for his wife. Wives (and husbands) need to hear that they are loved. Say it in words, actions, looks, gifts—there are many ways to say, “I love you” to your spouse. The I Love My Wife—I Love My Husband T-shirts are available through our website.



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## The “Feelings” of Love

An article titled, *The Science of Love* discussed how chemicals in the brain react to provide those “feelings” of love and bond humans together. The article reported a study in which a researcher asked people to: *one*, find a complete stranger; *two*, reveal intimate details about their lives to each other for thirty minutes; and *three*, then stare into each other’s eyes for four minutes without speaking. He found that many of these couples felt deeply attracted to each other after the 34 minute experiment. Two of his subjects later got married. Wow! In just 34 minutes, two complete strangers can become deeply attracted to each other! It is an interesting discovery and has ramifications for our marriages.

Two things come to mind as a result of this article: first, a distant or distressed couple can positively change their relationship in 34 minutes, and second, 34 minutes can ruin a marriage and rip apart a family if the time is spent in the wrong place. We need to be on guard against falling into the trap of experiencing intimacy with the wrong person. This study also demonstrates is what romance is about—connecting with your spouse. Romance is not a feeling, but a choice you make to express love to your spouse, feelings will follow the positive actions you take.

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## Action Point: What are *you* going to do?

Will you be purposeful and deliberate about keeping romance alive in your marriage? Yes, it requires some effort, but it didn’t seem like work when you dated your spouse, did it? Talking together, spending time; doing romantic things seemed to come naturally. It may not seem natural, but as you do romantic things, romantic feelings

will follow. Take your spouse on a date, speak his or her love language, do something to surprise him or her. There thousands of ways you can say “I love you” to your spouse and demonstrate that he or she is special. It will help you grow in your marriage relationship and bring the two of you closer together. ***Do something!***



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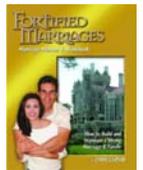
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## Resources Available at [www.fortifiedmarriages.com](http://www.fortifiedmarriages.com)

- Go to the *Resources Available* page to find a lot of great resources, including resources and ideas to help spark romance..
- Click “Manual” to learn about the Fortified Marriages manual and workbook.
- Articles and information are also available to learn more about God’s design for marriage.



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**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 by letting others know about the ministry. More information is available at <http://www.fortifiedmarriages.com/page.php?22>.