

## 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.

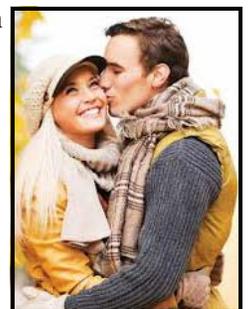
### Love: Giving as Christ Gave

Too often, Christmas, and even lives, and marriages have become about the individual and what he or she can receive. People search for love, not to give love, but to be loved. But the Bible is clear about love, stating, "This is how we know what love is; Jesus Christ laid down his life for us" (1 John 3:16). God not only told us what love is, but He demonstrated love; God, the Father gave his only begotten Son - Jesus, the Son, gave His life for us. Jesus came to earth, not to receive the adoration and praise He richly deserved as the God of the universe, but to die a horrible death so that we can have eternal life through Him.

Living to be loved is a miserable way to live life, yet, we see this time and time again in our ministry; husbands or wives crying out to be loved. This is not what the Lord intended for the marriage relationship. In Ephesians, Paul wrote that husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her. If husbands and wives loved each other as Christ loves them, there would be far fewer marriage problems in the world today!

Loving one's spouse means giving to him or her; dying to self on a daily, even moment by moment basis. It is not, as one man complained, "rolling over" and giving a spouse whatever he or she wants. It is having a Christ-like attitude of doing nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but considering others better than ourselves. (Phil 2:1-8). Love is humility; giving grace, mercy, compassion, kindness, gentleness, patience, and forgiveness. This is how God want us to love on a daily basis. Give to your spouse, not just material presents that are quickly forgotten, but give love daily.

*We wish you God's blessings as you celebrate Jesus' coming to earth to give His life for you.*



### Giving as a Way of Life

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is all about giving - God giving to mankind. Christians are to give: give the Gospel to the lost, give to help the needy, give to demonstrate love. Giving should be a way of life for Christians; as author Kenn Kington wrote, "Success in life is not in what we get, it is in what we give. Things we obtain, power we possess, fame we achieve will never fill that lasting need we can only find in giving."

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

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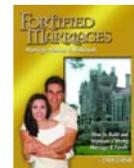
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Website: [www.fortifiedmarriages.com](http://www.fortifiedmarriages.com)

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

- Go to the *Resources Available* page to find a lot of great resources.
- Boundaries, Communication, and Conflict Resolution resources are available also.
- 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.



*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.*

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### An Attitude of Giving Changed a Relationship

Ron and Sally’s relationship was a in trouble. Both worked so hard to get *their* needs met, yet, neither of them felt fulfilled in the relationship and wondered if they were “meant to be together.” Ron didn’t see a problem with remaining connected to female friends through Facebook - ‘they were just friends!’ Sally’s insecurities, not only in her relationship with Ron, but from her parent’s divorce and previous failed relationships kept her clinging to Ron and demanding that he meet her needs. Ron saw Sally as “needy” and he refused to give up his “friends,” telling Sally she needed to accept him for who he is. They were both so focused on their own needs and problems, neither could (or would) look at the other’s needs.

During one meeting, I asked Ron if his “friends” were more important than Sally. He quickly answered with an emphatic “no” and I asked why he would put them before “the love of his life.” He started to argue, but then he realized what he was doing. “How would it hurt you to give up those friends?” I asked. He stated it wouldn’t hurt him - that he saw the point. He could give to his wife by giving up the friends that caused her so much heart-ache. When he told her this, she told him that she didn’t really have a problem with him being “friends” with some of the people, but it was the way he communicated with them. Both began seeing ways they could *give* to the other and it transformed their relationship. The more one gave, the other looked for ways to give back. Instead of working to get needs met, they worked to meet each other’s needs and their marriage relationship blossomed.



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

Do you have an attitude of giving? A Christ-like humility that looks to the needs and betterment of others, rather than to yourself? It is not easy to “crucify” the flesh daily to live the giving life, Christ demonstrated for you, but it *is* possible with His strength and guidance. *Give* grace,

mercy, compassion, kindness, gentleness, patience, and forgiveness to your spouse, children, and all those you come in contact with. You may not feel like it, but as you walk in obedience to Christ, you will experience great blessings and rewards!

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