

FORTIFIED MARRIAGES

Fortifying Marriages to Strengthen Families, Churches and the Community



Chris & Carmen Garner
MA-MFT

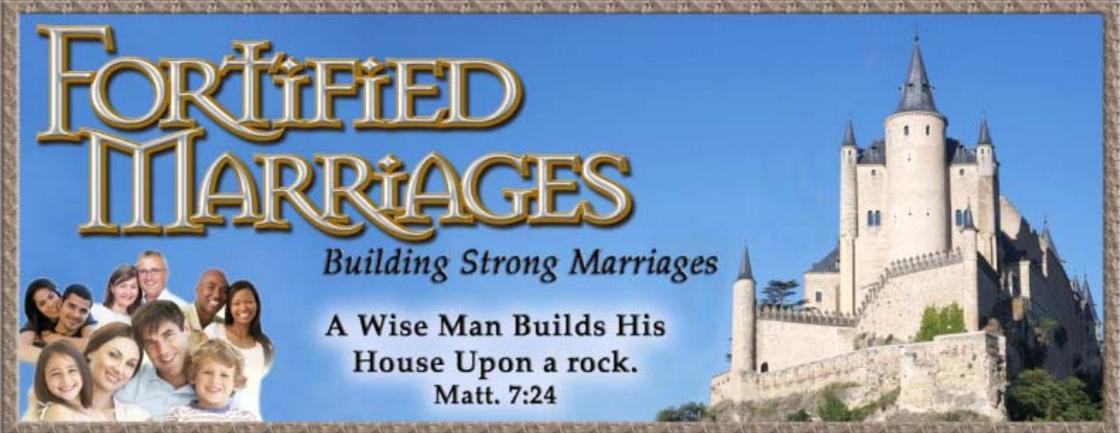
Visit our website

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-deductable and make the ministry to couples locally and internationally possible.



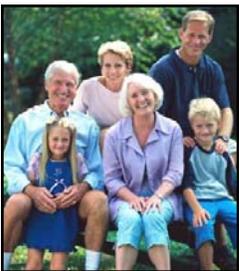
Parenting is a Joint Responsibility

God’s plan for parenting is that two parents; husband and wife, *together* raise children. Malachi 2:15 states that God made a man and woman one for the purpose of bringing up Godly offspring. The goal of parenting is God dependent, healthy adults. Children need both parents involved in their lives; parenting requires that husband and wife work as a team to raise their children. Both parents should share the work and responsibilities of helping children grow and mature.



Parents today face diverse sets of circumstances as they attempt to guide their children. Divorce and remarriage, the ‘yours, mine and ours’ syndrome, or children living far away from one or both parents make parenting today more difficult. In addition to these challenges parents today face the busyness and the demands of extremely fast paced lives, as well as their own problems and needs. Parenting can be difficult and frustrating as couples attempt to handle it all. This is all the more reason that couples must work *together* as they strive to fulfill their parenting responsibilities.

Whether your children are young or are married and have children of their own, you are a parent and have responsibilities for your children. Parenting in either case requires the investment of both parents; it is a joint responsibility. Too often, couples get into the mode that parenting is for one or the other, not both. This especially can be seen when the wife remains home with the children and the husband works outside the home. Many assume it is the wife’s responsibility to take care of the children. Often this is the case even if the wife works outside of the home and is not what God intended in the Christian family.



God uses the differences between husband and wife to provide the balance children need to grow up emotionally healthy and secure. It is imperative that couples communicate and use their differences to effectively parent their children. It means that they *collaborate* (to work jointly, cooperate) in discipline, spiritual guidance and support of their children. Together husbands and wives can better maintain healthy boundaries when dealing with their adult or younger children. Couples who utilize each of their strengths and abilities parenting children have a better chance of fulfilling the goal of bringing up Godly offspring.

“The relationship between a husband and wife is the foundation on which kids build their sense of security, their identity, and learn to relate to others.”

~ Jay Kesler

Changing the Household Climate

At one time, Rick and Janine's home life could best be described as absolute chaos. A *blended* family, that was not blending well, they each had children of their own, and one small child between them. Married for two years, making it to a third year was not looking hopeful when they came in for counseling. Their complaints centered around the children and the chaos they experienced; attempting to attend their children's activities, two children having nothing to do with a third and one child having virtually nothing to do with anyone in the family. The fighting and arguing was endless and both Rick and Janine were floundering as they attempted to deal with all the problems they faced.



Discussion with this couple found that they frequently argued in front of the children and at times those arguments would erupt into screaming matches. They rarely agreed about how to handle situations with the children and getting children to and from activities was a challenge; they could not agree how to meet the demands they faced. They were focused on changing their children and the situation, but not on changing themselves. Counseling helped this couple understand boundaries (taking responsibility for their own behavior) and begin communicating better, and as their relationship became more healthy, they found that the children became less of a problem. They stopped arguing in front of the children and over time, the children argued less frequently with their parents and among themselves. As they learned to work together and became consistent in handling problems, the children settled down and the whole climate of the household changed - and they made it to their third anniversary and continue to improve!



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

Do you work together parenting your children? Are both husband and wife jointly involved in the responsibility of bringing up Godly offspring in your household? Is there chaos and drama in your lives and family? Or do your children or adult children cause division between you?

Work *together* as a team to meet the challenges you face as parents. Develop *unity* in your parenting; provide consistency and a positive environment for your children to grow in, and maintain healthy boundaries. Rise up to the challenge of parenting, rather than allowing the challenges to get you down.

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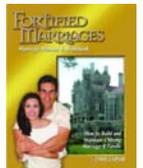
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Resources Available at www.fortifiedmarriages.com

- Go to the *Marriage Resources* page to find many great resources.
- Parenting resources and information are available.
- Boundaries, Communication, and Conflict Resolution resources are available to help in all relationships.
- Learn about the Fortified Marriages manual and workbook - a great resource to help build strong marriages.
- 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.

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>.
