

FORTIFIED MARRIAGES

Fortifying Marriages to Strengthen Families, Churches and the Community



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MA-MFT

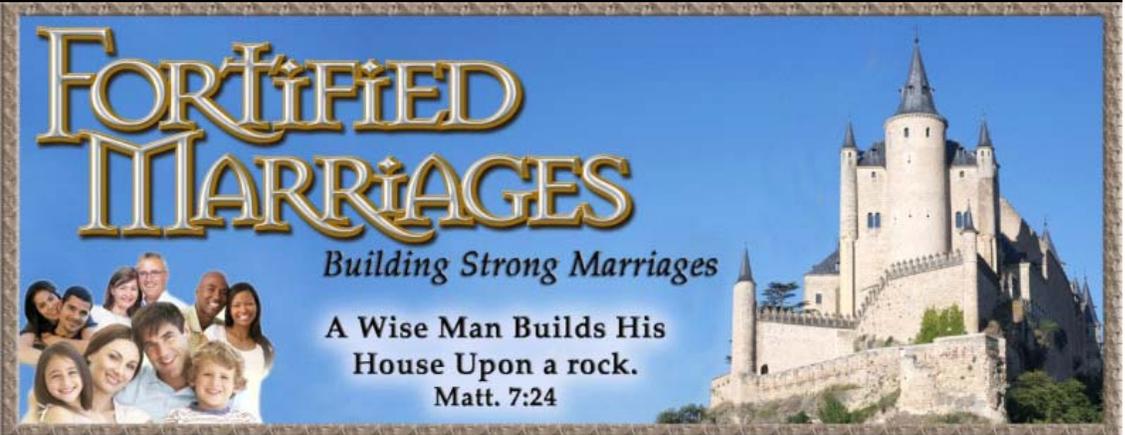
Visit our website

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



Marriage is *Not* a Private Matter

God created mankind for community. In Genesis 2:18, He said that that is not good for man to be alone and throughout the Bible, we see God’s very nature imprinted in the social structures He created. God is community - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - three in one. Marriage is the first of God’s social structures and as the foundation of society, the most important of God’s social structures. Marriage was not created as a private institution; by it’s nature, it affects multiple generations and the community at large.

Yet, today, many would tell us that what happens within a couple’s marriage relationship is no one else’s business. Family, friends or the church have nothing to say about what they do in their marriages and whether they remain married or divorce. This view may be cultural, but the culture is contrary to what the Bible teaches about the community of believers. Throughout the Bible, the individual affected the community as a whole and God often held the community liable for the behavior of an individual. Could it be that lack of testimony of the church today arises out of the unwillingness of the church to confront the sin in families today? Spousal or child abuse, addictions, or sexual sin occurs too often among members of the church with no confrontation. Do we not read of the confrontations Paul had with the believers in Corinth over many of these same issues?



It is time for the Body of Christ, the Church, to stand up for the holiness of marriage. We must demonstrate God’s design for marriage and be a testimony of His wonderful love, grace and reconciliation. How can Christians protest homosexual marriage when their own marriages do not reflect God’s plan for marriage? God’s plan is not for some long dead culture, it is for today! No one wants to wade into the mess of a dysfunctional marriage, but to see a couple surrender their lives and marriage to Christ and then watch God’s redemptive work in the marriage is an incredible blessing, but the church needs to be willing to wade into the mess. Not just church leaders, but the whole church - the Body of Christ. We all have a responsibility to speak out against sin and confront problems we see in people’s lives. Of course this must be done in humility and love, but how can we claim to be a community of believers when our lives are kept private? It is not God’s design!

“Marriage is a public good, not just a private relationship. We have a public stake in healthy marriages and two-parent families. Our society suffers with the collapse of the relationship of the couple who brings a child into the world.” - Bill Doherty

You Don't Have to Be Alone

Too many couples today attempt to work through problems alone. They don't want to "air their dirty laundry" before others and unfortunately, many don't make it. We are created for community! If you are experiencing problems in your marriage, go get help! See a pastor, counselor or a couple in your church you respect and ask for help. If you don't ask for help, you cannot receive it. Many of the couples we've counseled have told us that they thought they were the only couple with the problems they were experiencing. Part of the healing process was to realize that they were not alone!



Stand Strong for Marriage



The divorce culture does not work; all research points to this fact, and while divorce will happen, it is not good for husband and wife, children, family or society. Even Augustus Caesar, at the time of Jesus, saw this fact and made an effort to strengthen the family. The effort did not last and the collapse of the Roman Empire was partially due the disintegration of the family. Our society faces this same problem and the Church needs to stand strong for marriage. It is incumbent on us all, not just pastors and ministry leaders, to first strengthen our own marriages and then in community encourage others to live out God's plan for their marriages. It does not require a "position" or a "degree" to do this. Encourage your church to take a stand for marriage and to sponsor marriage enrichment. If you sense a couple has problems, ask if you can help and provide information that will help them move in the right direction. We all need to work together in this area.

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

Do you view marriage as a private matter? If so, please consider the fact that, Biblically, we are to live in community and that, in reality, the Christian life is not a private matter. If not, what can you do to strengthen marriages? Does your church actively promote healthy marriages? Is

there a couple or couples you can encourage? There are many things you can do to stand strong for marriage. Pray about what the Lord would have you do to; whether it might be to support marriage ministry or actively promote marriage in your church and community.

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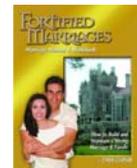
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Resources Available at www.fortifiedmarriages.com

- Go to the *Marriage Resources* page to find many great resources.
- Article; Marriage is not Private Matter: www.marriageemissions.com/divorce-is-not-a-private-matte-marriage-message-190.
- 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>.
