

## FORTIFIED MARRIAGES

Fortifying Marriages to Strengthen Families, Churches and the Community



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

### Love Your Lover

“I am my lover’s and my love is mine” - the Song of Solomon is a book of romance and love. The tender words of love between the king and his wife can be an inspiration to us today. Yes, you probably don’t want to tell your wife that her teeth are like a flock of sheep, or her hair like a flock of goats. The point is that romance can and should continue throughout married life.

Romance is “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.” Doing those *little* and *big* things to demonstrate your love not only will increase *love* in your marriage relationship, it will strengthen your marriage and fulfill the Biblical mandate to love in actions and truth (1John 3:18). Feelings of love don’t just happen, those feelings come when we do loving things; when we put thought and energy into *loving* someone. Couples today, can and in fact, *must* carve out time from their busy schedules to love their spouses. Without cultivation, love will wither and die in the marriage relationship and without some major change or intervention, the marriage will also wither and die.

You can begin today! It doesn’t require money, a great deal of time or ingenuity to begin loving your lover. Give your wife a hug and tell her how much she means to you. Or cuddle up next to your husband on the couch and tell him how much you appreciate his hard work for your family. You can tell your children (in front of your spouse) that you have the best husband or wife in the whole world. Pick some flowers, buy a small gift, go for a coffee date or for a walk. Talk about the good times you’ve had in the past - that vacation where everything went wrong. (for us the story of a mouse “flying” across the hotel room). There are many ways you can demonstrate love for your spouse, but you have to do *something*. Do not put it off and don’t do some lavish thing on Valentine’s day and think you have done your duty for the year. Loving your lover is year-round, life-long project.



### Learning to Love

John was harsh and at times, downright mean, not just to his wife Anne, but to everyone. He had a warped sense of humor that tended to be mean spirited. It was *just the way he was*, but Anne was tired of it and after twenty-nine years of marriage, she was ready to walk away. Instead, she asked John to go to counseling with her - it was counseling or she was leaving. Shocked, he agreed to counseling and learned that his wife did not feel loved but felt unappreciated, disrespected, and dishonored.

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John did learn about boundaries and gained some communication skills in counseling, but the primary change was in his attitude. He did not want to lose his wife and was willing to change to save his marriage. The transformation bordered on the miraculous. As John sought to love his wife as Anne needed to be loved, their love blossomed and they felt connected and happy. For the first time in their marriage, Anne told her husband what she wanted and told him when he was out of line. She felt free to express herself and began returning the love he was showing to her. The change in their marriage is a testimony of what God can do and we praise God for the work He is doing in their lives.



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## Speak Your Spouse's Love Language

Dr. Gary Chapman wrote a book, *The Five Love Languages*, and in it, he proposes that people usually feel loved in one or two of five ways: **Physical Touch, Quality Time, Acts of Service, Gifts, or Words of Affirmation**. While all may speak love to each of us, one will stand out as *the way* we feel loved. Very often we express love through our own love language; i.e. my love language is Physical Touch and so for years I expressed love to my wife by touching her. But her love language is Acts of Service and she didn't really feel loved until I began purposefully doing things for her. I still don't understand it completely, but my wife feels very loved when I sweep the porch or clean the kitchen. I may not understand it, but I do it because that is what makes her feel loved. Discover your spouse's love language and begin to speak it to him or her. More information can be found at; [www.5lovelanguages.com](http://www.5lovelanguages.com).

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

Are you willing to take the time to demonstrate love for your spouse? Whether you feel it or not, will you begin doing loving things for him or her? One person can change a marriage. It may require going for counseling, like John and Anne or it may mean expressing love in little ways;

speaking your spouse's love language, sending a card, or leaving a love note for your spouse. Don't let your marriage get stale or worse to the point that one or the other gives up. Show love to your spouse in little and big ways and watch your marriage blossom!



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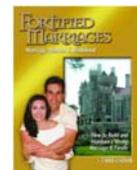
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## Resources Available at [www.fortifiedmarriages.com](http://www.fortifiedmarriages.com)

- Go to the *Marriage Resources* page to find a lot of great resources including romance resources and a downloadable document; 50 ways to love your lover.
- Boundaries, Communication, and Conflict Resolution resources are available also.
- 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.*

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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 help build strong 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/find\\_out\\_more.aspx](http://www.fortifiedmarriages.com/find_out_more.aspx)

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