

The Christian Arsenal

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SIX SECRETS OF A SATISFYING MARRIAGE HOME IMPROVEMENT

Dr. Ken Culver

Part 1 of 8

Philippians 2:2; Ephesians 4:3

"...live together in harmony and love, as though you only had one mind and spirit between you." Phil. 2:2 (Ph)

God's ideal for your relationships, whether you're married or not is harmony, intimacy, and unity.

One guy said, "When I got married, I started off with an ideal; a few months later it turned into an ordeal; now I'm looking for a new deal."

Good marriages don't just happen.

"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit ..." Eph 4:3

GOOD NEWS: You don't have to change your life completely to make your marriage better. Minor changes will make major differences in your marriage.

1. COMMUNICATION.

"Reliable communication permits progress." Prov. 13:17 (LB)

For progress to take place in your marriage, you've got to talk to each other.

Average couple: talks to each other 4 minutes a day.
 46 hours of television watching per week.
 28 minutes talking, alone together in a week.

One of the reasons we have problems in communication is because men and women communicate differently.

The major reason you have communication problems is you expect your mate to think like you do.

Evaluation:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. CONSIDERATION

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DEFINITION: Paying attention to what people say and feel. Showing common courtesy, treating people with respect.

“Show your love by being helpful to each other.” Eph 4:26 (TEV)

FIVE STAGES OF A MARRIAGE COLD

First year – Baby, darling. I’m worried about that snuffle you have so I’ve called the paramedics to rush you over to Baptist Hospital for a check up and a week of rest. I know you don’t like hospital food so I’m having your meals brought in.

Second year – Sweetheart, I don’t like the sound of that cough. I’ve arranged for Dr. Johnson to make a house call. Let me tuck you in bed.

Third year – You look like you’ve got a fever. Why don’t you drive yourself over to the Medi-Stop and get some medicine. I’ll watch the kids.

Fourth year – Look, be sensible! After you’ve fed and bathed the kids and washed the dishes you really ought to go to bed.

Fifth year – For Pete’s sake! Do you have to cough so loud! I can’t hear the television. Would you mind going into the other room while this show is on? You sound like a barking dog.

Poem: Two young lovers walked down the street.
She tripped and he worried, “Be careful, my Sweet.”
Now, married, they walk down the exact same street,
But when she trips, he says, “Pick up your feet!”

“Wisdom shows itself in being considerate” James 3:17

A mark of being wise is being considerate – That also means when I’m being inconsiderate, I’m being stupid.

Evaluation:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. COMPROMISE

“...love does not demand its own way” I Cor. 13:5 (LB)

The mark of genuine love is unselfishness.

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There is a progression in a wedding: First, you walk down the aisle.
Then, you come to the altar.
Then you hear the hymn.

Aisle - Altar - Hymn (I'll alter him")

FACTS OF LIFE!

- Every marriage has conflict.
- No matter who you are there will be some things you will never agree on.

When two people agree on everything, one of them isn't necessary.

The greater your differences are in a marriage, the greater your potential for spiritual growth and spiritual greatness.

- One of the things you have to learn in the school of marriage is how to compromise.
 - The vacations you take.
 - The way you raise your kids.
 - The way your money is spent.
 - How often you make love and the best time for it.
 - How often you see the in-laws.
 - How you spend your day off.

More marriages die from inflexibility than from alcoholism, abuse or adultery.

Evaluation:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. COURTSHIP

"Let your mate's affection fill you at all times with delight." Prov. 5:19 (RSV)

If there were more courting in marriages, there would be fewer marriages in court.

Part of the problem with romance is that husbands and wives see each other in absolutely the worst part of the day.

- Getting ready
- Rushed
- On the way to work
- At night when there is nothing else to give.

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“Enjoy life with your mate whom you love.” Eccl. 9:9

We need to date our mates.

The problem is that the longer you’re married, the more you tend to share the chores and the less you tend to share the joys.

Before marriage opposites attract.

After marriage opposites attack.

Evaluation:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. COMMITMENT

“I hate divorce, make sure you do not break your promise to be faithful to your mate.” Malachi 2:16 (GN)

TIME MAGAZINE: The United States has gone from the most marrying country in the world to the country with the most divorces in the world and the country with the most unwed mothers.

BABY BOOMER MENTALITY: “I’ve got to do what’s best for me.”

No, you don’t! You have to do what God says is best for you!

It’s always easier to run than it is to rebuild, but it is always more rewarding to rebuild than it is to run.

ENEMIES TO KEEPING COMMITMENT

- Not understanding the meaning of commitment.
Def: being willing to be unhappy until we work it out.
- The myth of incompatibility.

Paul Tournier: “So called incompatibility is a myth invented by jurists in order to make a plea for divorce. It is likewise just a common excuse for people to hide their failings.”

Dr. Paul Popenough: “I don’t believe incompatibility exists, almost any two people are compatible if they try to be.”

OUR MARRIAGE IS WHAT WE MAKE IT TO BE.

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The grass is not greener on the other side of the fence; the grass is not greener on this side of the fence. The grass is greener where you water it.

Evaluation:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. CHRIST

Jesus Christ gives you the power and ability to do the other things when human love wears out.

“Your attitude toward each other should be the same as that of Jesus Christ.”
Phil 2:5

When Christ is in me and Christ is in my wife, Jesus isn't going to argue with Jesus.

Nothing will bring your marriage closer than when you both focus on Christ.

HOW IS JESUS THE CENTER OF OUR LIVES?

- You invite Him to come into your life and you say, “Jesus Christ come in and be the Director and Lord of my life.
- Together you commit your marriage to Jesus Christ and treat each other the way Jesus Christ treats us.
- Get into a church that is committed to building strong marriages.
- Hang out with other couples who are committed to making their marriages work.
 - 83% of all affairs occur between couples when one couple is not satisfied with their marriage.
- Read the Bible together and pray together and memorize some Scripture together.

Evaluation:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Good marriages do not just happen – they are not by accident – they take effort.

TWO COMMITMENTS I ASK YOU TO MAKE

1. During the next several weeks as we go over this series, we're going to commit to working on communication, consideration, and compromise. We're

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going to work on making time for courtship. We're going to work on deepening our commitment.

2. I challenge you to invite Christ into your life and say, "Give me/us the power to do these things."