

We've Got Issues 6

"Protecting your Marriage"

Every marriage starts out good! But every good marriage bumps into something bad.

Often times it is a huge crisis, a major illness, fertility problem, or the loss of a child. These things can be a major shock to a marriage, but there are also these things that sneak up on a marriage that we don't even realize they are here like: boredom or busyness or some pain from the past.

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Protecting your Marriage!

1) Issues that Threaten our Marriages.

a) Addictions

- i) We live in a world that celebrate excess.
- ii) Marriage killing addictions

I recently read an article that listed the top 10 addiction in America. Here are the top 3:

(1) Prescription Pill Addictions:

(a) Prescription Pill Addiction:

Nationwide, deaths from prescription drug overdoses are the second-leading cause of accidental death behind car accidents. In some states, prescription overdoses are the leading cause of accidental death.

- (b) Did you know that TN is rated #1 in the nation for the largest pain med addictions in the nation, per capita?

(2) Pornography:

- (a) 57% of pastors say that addiction to pornography is the most sexually damaging issue facing their congregation (Christians and Sex Leadership Journal Survey, March 2005).
- (b) According to divorce records, the Internet was a significant factor in 2 out of 3 divorces in America in 2003. (American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers in 2003 - divorcewizards.com).
- (c) Nine out of Ten children between the ages of 8 and 16 have viewed pornography on the Internet (London School of Economics).

(3) Cyber Addiction: The book "Addict Nation" suggests Cyber-addiction is perhaps the most complex societal infection America is facing today because the nature of the Internet affects us all in some way.

There is e-mail, texting, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Skype, Facetime, Google, iTunes, Snap Chat, quick downloadable videos and uncountable chat rooms.

The Internet acts as a porthole most of our addictions.

When you add food addictions, alcohol, shopping addictions, and gambling addictions... you can see why marriages in America are falling apart. America is filled with people who are addicted to drugs, hooked on sex, and drowning in debt?

b) Adultery

i) The 5th commandment says "thou shalt not commit adultery" Ex. 20:14 KJV

Whenever God gives us a negative He always has a positive purpose behind it. He always has a reason. His purpose is usually not to cause pain but for your protection. When you play by God's rules you win.

Look at: Hebrews 13:4 Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous

ii) Nothing destroys a family faster than adultery. Even the mention of this word causes some of us pain and the memories of shame in a room like this.

God is not kill-joy. God invented sex. Like anything it must be controlled. All God's gifts have limitations on them.

Like Water – You can't live without it. But, too much of it and you can drown.

Fire – it can either warm you or burn you. It's how you handle it.

c) Unresolved Arguments

When disappointment settles in a marriage hope is lost and apathy and/or arguments settle in. (Unresolved Arguments can stack up)

Anger grows, argument increase, damage occurs and before the damage is healed more arguments occur on top of the others that were not resolved and partners become miserable and get hard toward one another.

Jesus said divorce happens because of the "hardness of hearts" (Matthew 19:8).

2) Protecting Your Marriage

Commit to Your Faith

a) Commit to your Covenant.

i) Marriage is a **faith covenant** between you, your partner, and God.

Malachi 2:14,15 You cover the Lord's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. **14** But you say, "Why does he not?" Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. (broken faith with your wife... acted faithlessly)

Men - the OT and the NT tells us the way we treat our wives greatly affects God's favor on our own lives.

1 Peter 3:7 Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

ii) Recommit to the Faith Covenant of your Marriage.

(1) Give it back to God.

this takes faith: believe that He can heal, deliver, and give you a fresh start. Perhaps even more faith than you started the marriage with.

(2) Take the walk of death.

In the Old Testament when two entered into a covenant several things happened.

(a) The exchanged Robes, Belts, Weapons, and Names.

(b) Then the 2 covenant partners stood facing each other on opposite ends of a bloody animal sacrificed that was cut into pieces. And at the right time in front of loving witnesses, they walked among the pieces. They took the walk of death.

My life is not my own, I will live with you until death separates us.

Jn. 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

One more interesting not here. God took the walk of death when He cut covenant with Abram...God put him asleep and God sent the fire of His presence to walk among the pieces. (Ge. 15)

(3) Love and Respect your spouse unto the Glory of God.

Ephesians 5:31-33 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." **32** This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. **33** However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

find out what this means together and commit to it!

b) Guard your Companionship.

Work on your friendship and:

i) Guard against Outside Relationships.

(1) Don't Start Anything.

Be Aware of Emotional Adultery.

A mutual attraction, intimate conversation about your feelings, a gentle squeeze of your arm, a meaningful glance, and eventually you are being led down a path you never intended to walk.

(2) Listen to Your Spouses Advice.

If your spouse questions your relationship with someone of the opposite sex pay attention, they may notice someone coming on before you do before you do.

(3) Tell On the Other Person.

If someone begins to quietly come on to you, rat them out! Tell your partner that very day, don't wait until tomorrow to see if it happens again, tell your spouse before you go to bed.

Get it out of the dark and into the light of you best level of accountability.

(4) Don't Spend Time Alone With The Opposite Sex.

One Senior Pastor to some young pastors in training: "*He who meets another woman alone in private hath no brains!*" Don't place yourself into a situation where there is temptation or where temptation can be acted on.

(5) Drink From Your Own Spring.

Proverbs 5:15 NLT Drink water from your own well— share your love only with your wife.

(6) Get Control Of Your Thought Life.

Long before an affair happens physically it happens mentally.

This is why Jesus told us in Matthew 5:28 NLT But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

(7) Magnify the Consequences

Recognize That You Will Get Caught.

Remind yourself of the devastation that is caused by sexual sin. The shame lingers for so long. The sense of loss to everyone is enormous.

Proverbs 6:26s "An adulterer will prey upon a man's precious life, he will be reduced to a crust of bread."

Here are three reasons to be faithful to your husband or wife:

(1) You love Jesus

(2) You love my wife (or husband) and kids.

(3) You fear the judgment of God. The Bible says, "Adulterers and fornicators God will judge" (Heb.13:4).

ii) Maintain Your Marriage Resource:

(1) A growing relationship with your spouse will reduce the pull and attraction of adultery. 1Corinthians 7:3 NKJV Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband

(2) His Needs, Her Needs by Dr. Willard Harley gives the 5 top needs of most men and the 5 top needs of most women.

(a) MEN:

- (i) Sexual Fulfillment
- (ii) Recreational Companionship
- (iii) An Attractive Spouse
- (iv) Domestic Support
- (v) Admiration

(b) WOMEN:

- (i) Affection
- (ii) Conversation
- (iii) Honesty and Openness
- (iv) Financial Support
- (v) Family Commitment

c) Commit to your Communication:

Great Communication is all about having a heart for your spouse.

