

Beware of These Dangerous Marriage Paradigms

When someone creates a paradigm and questions it, that's one thing. However, when someone creates a paradigm and believes it with their heart, that becomes a whole other matter. As said earlier, Proverbs 23:7a (NKJV) states, "As [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he."

The heart is where we believe. The Bible says, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9, MEV). The heart is actually the most powerful thing we possess. When we believe something in our heart, then our mind, will, and emotions fully support this belief.

Here are some of the top paradigms I see couples have that aren't helpful for their marriage. As I go through these, you might identify with one you're holding onto. That's great if you can see a problematic paradigm. We can't change what we can't see.

1. Marriage is between a man and a woman.

This is by far the most dangerous paradigm for a Christian marriage. This is 100% a secular idea and will ruin the foundation of your marriage. Marriage is between God, man and woman. God made marriage, and He is an integral person in a Christian marriage. If He is not actually enjoyed in your marriage, you have bought into a secular paradigm.

2. Sex is bad and dirty.

Sex was happening before the fall. All mammals were told to go forth and multiply, including mankind. Sex was and is holy in marriage. God is in support of us having a great sex life. Holding onto negative paradigms about sex can cripple any

marriage.

3. Our money is ours.

No, your money is God's. He asks you to give 10% to your local church. Every single couple I've counseled who had significant financial difficulty didn't tithe. If you think all your money is yours, you may suffer financial stress in your marriage. This "mine" mentality can be found in other areas of the marriage other than money.

4. I'm right.

If you buy into the paradigm that you're right, most conflicts or opportunities for growth become about you and you being right, which creates an adversarial relationship with your spouse and any of their great and helpful ideas. Being right is a curse, which limits you from learning from others and cancels the much-needed journey to discover the best solution.

5. My gender entitles me to ...

In Christ there is no male or female (Gal. 3:28). Using your gender for hierarchy or control is not only sad, it's dangerous. Marriage is between three people—the King of kings, God, is the only king in your marriage. All others are servants of Him and each other. For more on this, read my book *Servant Marriage*.

6. I'm here to be served.

This paradigm is fatally flawed. When you're married, you're called into a lifelong service of the other person. How well we serve our spouse, not how well we demand service, will be evaluated by God. This immaturity can rot a Christian marriage from the inside out.

7. I can't be wrong.

Since we're all sinners, we all make mistakes. Humbly

accepting our flaws and taking responsibility when we're wrong is part of our Christian walk toward everyone, especially our spouse. If you haven't asked for forgiveness from your spouse, you may secretly believe you didn't sin and you're not wrong.

8. Never ask for help.

As Christians, we're part of the body of Christ. We're interdependent. My experience is often the wisdom I'm lacking that already exists in someone else. If I'm humble enough to ask for help from another, I'm almost always helped. When someone has a level of pride that says they're supposed to know all the answers, they'll fall hard. This is a dangerous paradigm to live with in marriage.

These are only a few of the dangerous paradigms people have wholeheartedly believed prior to coming to my office. Their hearts believed these as true. Their behavior reflected their embracing these paradigms. Their marriage deeply paid the price for these false beliefs. {eoa}

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