

Not Getting What You Need From Your Spouse? Marriage Expert Shares Help and Hope

“One sinner marrying another is a setup for pain.” Those surprising but wise words come from Dr. Carol Peters-Tanksley, a practicing OB-GYN who also has a doctor of ministry and has ministered to thousands through the years. In her many conversations with husband and wives, she shares with host Marti Pieper on the *Hope for Your Marriage* series on Charisma News, she hears one common complaint: “I’m not getting from my spouse what I need.”

But, Dr. Carol says, there is hope. Since, as she says, “no other human being can give you everything you need,” the key is to focus on your own spiritual maturity. “The more you grow and the more you become a resilient, built-up and mature human being, the more you will have to give to your spouse. Marriage is not so much about being happy—although in a godly, healthy marriage where both people are committed and loving, there is much happiness ... I truly believe marriage is about learning to love well. And that includes finding healthy ways to get your own soul filled up so that you have something to give to your spouse.”

But how can couples achieve that filling and maturity? Dr. Carol offers three practical tips. First, she says, “Learn to feed yourself. God makes mental, emotional, spiritual nourishment available, just like He makes physical food available. Just like God makes fish swim in the ocean and grain grow in the field, but He doesn’t bake your fish and put it on your plate or hand you a sandwich, you have to learn to find what you need and decide to take it into your being. It’s the same with the soul nourishment we need. It’s out there. Some of it you will get from your husband or wife. Some of it,

you will need to look to other godly, health sources—but learn to feed yourself.”

Second, Dr. Carol says, “Study your spouse. That is a lifelong journey. Continue to learn what makes your spouse tick. What are their dreams, hopes? What is their baggage from the past? Where is God working in their life? What are the places where they need healing? How does God see them? And therefore, who has He called you to be to them? So continue to study your spouse.”

And the third of Dr. Carol’s top tips is simple but profound: “Stay on your knees. ... Two sinners, married to each other, are a setup for pain—unless God is the glue holding you together. You absolutely need His intervention to truly have the kind of intimacy and relationship that He designed for you and that you desire. God is a God of intimacy, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, intimate in Himself. And He designed marriage, the intimacy in marriage, to be a picture of the intimacy He experiences. ... So stay on your knees in that journey.”

To hear more of Dr. Carol’s wisdom and hope for your marriage, listen to this podcast.