These 3 Common Lies Ruin Christian Marriages

Is your marriage turning out as you thought it would? Probably not. What you believed about marriage before saying “I do” has been seriously altered by reality. And some false beliefs about marriage can make your journey together much harder and more painful than it needs to be.

What word comes to mind when you think about marriage in emotional terms? Difficult? Disappointing? Easy? Violent? Frustrating? One-sided? Happy? The word or words you think of may give you a clue to what you believe about marriage, and that can be very enlightening.

Here are three false beliefs about marriage you may unconsciously think are true. But these are beliefs you need to guard against if you want to make your marriage successful.

1. **You think marriage is primarily about you.**

When have you been happiest and most fulfilled in your marriage? If you’ve had any really great moments, they almost certainly did not occur when everything was focused on you. Instead, it may have happened when the two of you were focused on something or someone outside yourselves and working to accomplish a goal together. It may have been when you had to sacrifice something precious for the sake of your marriage or risked a very hard and vulnerable conversation together.

Marriage is really not all about you.

- It’s not about getting your spouse to meet your needs; it’s about doing what you can to meet your spouse’s needs.
- It’s not about getting the kind of marriage you think you want; it’s about looking with truth and honesty at

your spouse as another human being and making decisions accordingly.
- It’s not about looking inward for your source of fulfillment even as a couple; it’s about joining your lives together to make something even greater that can benefit others in a bigger way.

When you realize marriage is more about your spouse (and others beyond yourselves) than you, you can see reality more clearly, give of yourself more wisely, and find greater joy in building something together.

2. **You think marriage is about making you happy.**

It’s not if; it’s when problems come. And they will come. Your spouse will disappoint you. Financial problems or illness or infertility will take up residence in your home. Your children will take more out of you and your marriage than you ever expected. Dreams will be broken. Some of your needs won’t be met. You will feel a failure as a husband or wife in some way.

If you don’t believe me, ask any couple who has been married more than a few months or certainly a few years. Life happens. My marriage to Al included an enormous amount of suffering, and yet our marriage was very happy. I wouldn’t trade a moment of it for anything. But if I had based my decision to get married on what would make me happy, I would have been sorely disappointed.

If you want to get married in order to be happy, stop right now. Oh, marriage is one of the best gifts God gave to human beings. And chances are good that you can experience a huge amount of happiness. But the combining of two people into one is painful. The result is worth it. But only if you accept that you will have to grow and change and hurt and learn and fail and get up again and bend and be stretched farther than you ever thought you could.

If you let Him, God will use your marriage to make your

character what He wants it to be. And you will find more fulfillment than you ever thought possible in the process.

I invite you to give Him that chance.

3. **You think you know how to have a good marriage.**

How much time did you spend preparing for marriage? An afternoon in a pastor's office? A two-hour seminar such as the state of Texas offers to engaged couples? A couple of hours reading a Christian marriage book?

We spend years preparing for gainful employment, but too often, we think we should just know how to do this thing called marriage. I don't think there's any other single area of life that determines one's happiness or misery more than the quality of your marriage, yet we spend so little time in marital preparation or continuing education.

At whatever stage of marriage you are, you can learn more. Here are a few ways:

- Read a Christian book on marriage every year.
- Listen to podcasts or media programs on successful marriage.
- Study your spouse. Continually strive to learn what makes them tick.
- Attend a marriage seminar or retreat regularly (every year or two).
- Read the Song of Solomon again. Read it in a different version than you're used to.
- Pray. Every day. For your spouse, for yourself and for your marriage.

Only God knows best what your marriage needs. Be voracious in your appetite to hear what He has to say about your marriage. He has an opinion. And He has a purpose for you together. Continue to seek His input.

Let me encourage you to stretch your thinking about marriage and invest in what it takes to make yours the kind of marriage God wants for you.

Question: Have you had any false beliefs about marriage? You can leave a comment by clicking here. {eoa}

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