

What If Changing Your Marriage Means Changing Your Mind?

I'm not particularly fond of "pat answers" when it comes to marriage. You know ... those easy and pithy words of advice that we often toss around in the Christian community. While I can catch myself giving them in my counsel to others, I usually regret doing it.

"Just pray more."

"Forgive and forget."

"Have sex even if you don't feel like it."

"Don't go to bed angry and everything will be OK."

While these principles are rooted in truth, they can be disastrous if they aren't partnered with the work of the Holy Spirit and a fundamental desire to see our hearts changed. And while we can have 20/20 vision when noticing the ways our spouse needs to change, we can often go blind when looking at ourselves.

When our marriage isn't firing on all cylinders, perhaps what we need most is a shift in the way we think about our struggles. That's why I'm so thankful for Sheila Wray Gregoire's new book.

In *9 Thoughts That Can Change Your Marriage*, Gregoire (a friend who is perhaps the most respected blogger and speaker on women's issues in Canada) tackles marriage issues from an entirely different direction. Here's how her publisher puts it:

When you've put into practice all the usual advice, but your

marriage still falls short of the intimacy and joy you want, what then? Are patience and perseverance your only hope for a better relationship?

Author and speaker Sheila Wray Gregoire says, “Absolutely not!” The solution to a happier relationship is not found in being a more patient, more perfect wife, but in taking responsibility for what you can do—and especially for how you think about your marriage. She challenges you to replace pat Christian answers with nine biblical truths that will radically shift your perspective on your husband, your relationship, and your role in God’s design for marriage, including:

- My Husband Can’t Make Me Mad
- Being One Is More Important Than Being Right
- Having Sex Is Not the Same as Making Love

With humor and honesty, Sheila invites you to believe that God wants to bring oneness and intimacy to your marriage—and challenges you to partner with Him in that process by changing the way you think.

Jenifer and I love Sheila because she speaks openly and honestly about the struggles that we all face in our marriages. Her new book takes a revolutionary (and truly refreshing) look at the fundamental dynamics that can make any marriage rich and satisfying.

But don’t just take our word for it. A few other people we highly respect have said great things about the book, including Shaunti Feldhahn, Shannon Ethridge, and Gary Thomas. You can find their reviews and endorsements at .

If you are going to read one book to improve your marriage this fall, I would strongly encourage you to make it 9 *Thoughts That Can Change Your Marriage*. It’s just that good.

Find out more about Sheila at her website at or her blog at .

Adapted from , a ministry founded by **Barrett and Jenifer Johnson**. After serving in the local church for 25 years, Barrett and Jenifer launched INFO for Families as a ministry designed to encourage people through speaking, personal coaching and resource development. Barrett served for 15 years in youth ministry before serving for 8 years as the Family Minister at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Atlanta, one of the largest churches in the South. He has degrees from Texas A&M University and Southwestern Seminary, but he and Jenifer have received their best education through the no-holds-barred nature of everyday family life.