

DIVORCE-PROOF YOUR MARRIAGE

Intro.

I. Your marriage cannot be any better than the two people who make it up!
a. Marriage is a relationship between two people. Your wills are involved.
b. Marriage is a covenant relationship between two people. God's will is involved.

c. Marriage is a covenant relationship between two people and God Almighty. God is involved.

d. When our wills and our lives conform to God's will for our lives we will have the happiest marriage and it will be divorce-proof.

II. Marriage destroyers are always sins of attitudes and actions. Sin is a transgression of God's Will. I John 3:4. Most problems in marriage are sin problems. God alone has the solutions. Conformity to God's will solves these problems and preserves the marriage relationship.

Dis.

I. THE BEST WAY TO DIVORCE-PROOF YOUR MARRIAGE IS TO CHOOSE WISELY BEFORE MARRIAGE.

a. Consider the following "Before you say I do."
1. Moral character. Ethics/ values.
2. Religious beliefs.
3. Compatibility (likes/dislikes) personality.
4. Love/Commitment. Not lust, but mature love.
b. You marry a person not an ideal. Get real. Be honest. Take a good, long, look and evaluate the person.

II. EIGHT ESSENTIAL QUALITIES THAT WILL DIVORCE-PROOF YOUR MARRIAGE.

a. Love. Husbands must love their wives (Eph. 5:25) and wives must love their husbands (Titus 2:4). This is a mature, responsible, spiritual love. I Cor. 13:4-8. Love is the bond. Love is dynamic not static and should grow into a full, powerful, mature love. When we act because we love, we do not feel resentment. When we act because another demands from us, then we feel resentment. Act for the good of your spouse because you want to (you love) not because you have to.

b. Commitment. What God has joined together. Matt. 19:6. A commitment to God and to another human being. Commitment involves the will and the desire of the heart. A commitment to God's word will help keep the marriage together through good times and bad times. We do not run at the first sign of a problem. Commitment and faith go hand in hand. Commitment to the marriage is essential. From the first this commitment must be strong and unwavering. We do not get married with the notion that if it does not work out, we will abandon the marriage.

c. Trust. Trust is confidence in the other person that they will always do the right thing. (Of course, we know that they are not perfect, but they should be striving for

perfection (the image of Christ). Trust is knowing that one's spouse will be loyal and faithful to the wedding vows. Trust is based upon integrity.

d. Integrity. Consistency of convictions based upon truth. I will walk in integrity means that I will walk in harmony with the convictions that I have established upon the truth of God's Word. The opposite of integrity is duplicity. Hypocrisy will destroy a marriage.

e. Respect. "Cherish" is the value we place upon another. Respect in marriage shows up in communication (the substance of the communication and the means of it (how it is expressed). Respect is seen in how we treat another person, how we speak about them in their presence and in their absence. Respect is given and earned. It is given as a result of position (the husband is the head of the wife—Eph. 5:23, 24) and it is earned through godliness. When we **devalue** our spouse we begin a journey on a downward spiral of **disrespect** that will lead us to **despise** them and **divorce** them.

f. Purity. Godliness, holiness. Freedom from sin. John 8:32, 33. Denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Pursuit of the lusts of the flesh will lead to divorce (fornication, drug and alcohol use, gambling, reveling, and such like (sinful conduct). You cannot take fire into your bosom and not be burned.

g. Maturity. Marriage is for the spiritually mature. Wise in the ways of God. Spiritual not carnal. Have their senses exercised to discern good and evil. The spiritually mature can tell the difference between right and wrong. Not narcissistic, not selfish.

h. Forgiveness. Two imperfect people who live together will trespass against each other from time to time. Forgiveness is essential to divorce-proofing your marriage. Forgiveness is an important step in reconciliation. The whole process involves: **acknowledgement of sin, godly sorrow, repentance, forgiveness, confirmation of love, oneness again.**

Conclusion.

You can divorce-proof your marriage, but it will involve a heart change in God's direction and a response of faith to His word. You must commit to developing a Christ-like character! Will you take these important steps to preserve your marriage? You decide.