
God's Best Way is through Inner-Circle Biblical Relationships

Being Married

Finding Long-Term Stability and Deep Meaning in Marriage

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Please read our article [Successful Couple Dialogue](http://ChristiansTogether.org) at ChristiansTogether.org.

1. **Together adopt God's purpose for marriage**, which is for both of you to help each other enjoy God and be what God wants you to be. Do what He asks of you individually and as a marital team. Let God have His way, and you will have the strongest possible foundation for your marriage. (See *Submit to God Together* at ChristiansTogether.org)
2. **Be committed to what Jesus wants to do with your marriage**, your spouse and yourself. With the help of prayer and the counsel of your closest Christian friends, try to understand how Jesus the potter is sculpting your spouse, and then cooperate in that process of spiritual growth. (See *Together Be Led by Jesus Christ* at ChristiansTogether.org)
3. **Recognize that God has made the two of you a team for His service**. Always be aware of what He might want you to do together for His mission and glory. Know that God has created you to be very different from each other so that your marital team has more assets for His service. (See *Serve God Together* at ChristiansTogether.org)

4. **Let your agape love (self-denial for the good of another) grow and grow.** It is the highest kind of love. Every day should offer you the chance to worship God by denying yourself for the good of your spouse. Rejoice that you can so often reflect God's kind of love (sacrificing His own Son for us was the greatest self-denial ever). (See *Love One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

5. **Be devoted wholeheartedly to one another.** Throw yourself behind each God-given aspiration of your spouse. And avoid competition, for it does not fit well with walking alongside. Remember that you are "one flesh" and that what is done by one of you is spiritually also an accomplishment of the other. (See *Be Devoted to One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

6. **Praise God for the uniqueness of your spouse** and thus grow in your fascination with his or her differences from you. Turn irritation over your spouse's ways (any that are not sinful) into acceptance and later appreciation. Remember that you are not allowed to remake your spouse into an image of yourself; let God be Creator. (See *Accept One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

7. **Learn to "put up with" your spouse's behavior.** Marriage gives you a multitude of opportunities to mimic God's forbearance of our hourly offenses against His holiness. God will love to see you acting like Him — which is great worship. Since we are sinful creatures, nothing is more predictable than that we will sin against each other. As other Togethers will show, "bearing with" does not mean "ignoring." (See *Bear with One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

8. **Don't require an apology every time you are mistreated.** Instead, forgive in your heart often without asking for an apology or even declaring publicly your forgiveness. Be merciful like God is, and thus bring Him visible praise. Let this continual worship overcome any resentment. But, remember that forgiving does not mean you shouldn't help your spouse treat you better, as shown in other Togethers. (See *Forgive One Another Without Being Asked* at ChristiansTogether.org)

9. **Let one another have his or her way equally.** Submitting to each other means being fair and not using power to get your own way. In God's design, you share life together, and one of you does not get to decide alone what that "life" is to be. When you have different interests, instead of arguing, be decent and honorable by alternating choices (the other's way this time and yours next). (See *Submit to One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

10. **Serve one another in self-denying love.** To build a strong foundation for your marriage, this service must be a balanced, two-way street. Favorite ways of helping should not be the determining factors; ask each other what kind of assistance is most appreciated. If either of you feels that the other is expecting too much, invite your closest and most trusted Christian friends to advise you. (See *Serve One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

11. **Live in ever-expanding peace with each other,** not quarreling over things. Instead, dialogue about your different views (asking “Why?” and “What do you mean?”) until you fully understand the other person’s viewpoint. This does not mean you agree with that viewpoint, but for the sake of Christ you prevent the issue from having a destructive effect on your marriage, which is of far greater importance. If you get stuck, that is the time to bring in your closest and most trusted Christian friends to help you find a peaceful resolution. (See *Live Together in Peace* at ChristiansTogether.org)

12. **Be humble in light of God’s perfection,** and do not consider yourself better than your spouse. Any pride in the marriage will be destructive. Be on guard against a poor self-image in either of you that might be compensated for by false pride and an outward expression of superiority. Each of you is greatly loved by God, and an inflated ego serves no purpose. Humility is godly. (See *Be Humble with One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

13. **Become a harmonious team for God** in which you complement each other as you go about life. Discover how you fit together, producing more when you work together using your different gifts and talents. Apply your harmonious relationship to everything from taking care of the home to hospitality to service opportunities outside the home. Fine-tune your teamwork to amaze others and bring praise to God. (See *Live Together in Harmony* at ChristiansTogether.org)

14. **Give each other plenty of mercy (unmerited and unconditional love).** Care for each other deeply, loving sincerely from the heart. Cut each other some slack in your expectations. Understand your spouse’s situations from his or her point of view, not just your own. Avoid judging. Add a lot of gentleness, patience, self-control and the other fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). (See *Show Mercy and Be Compassionate* at ChristiansTogether.org)

15. **Be protectively observant to identify whether your spouse needs something** for his or her health and welfare. This includes such basic needs as

contact with children and extended family members. Plan together how to get unmet needs fulfilled. Do not elevate your own needs above those of your spouse. And do not presume that when you lack such a need, your spouse shouldn't feel one either. (See *Meet One Another's Needs* at ChristiansTogether.org)

16. **Make certain that your spouse is treated well by others.** Do what you can to help your children and any stepchildren treat your spouse with respect and kindness. This intervention might also have to include your spouse's extended family members if they show favoritism toward your spouse's siblings. (See *Treat One Another Equally* at ChristiansTogether.org)

17. **Out of love, speak up to help your spouse.** You are living primarily for the Lord, so you need to speak up after you have planned a loving, careful way to do so. Do not be afraid to bring up things for your spouse's good because of his or her defensiveness or anger. If needed, pray about it for a while and seek the help of your Christian friends to know what to say and how to say it. (See *Speak to One Another Truthfully and Helpfully* at ChristiansTogether.org)

18. **Help place courage into your spouse** for whatever he or she is asked by God to do. Your spouse will greatly appreciate your encouragement when he or she succeeds at being a better husband or wife, father or mother, employee, etc. or does some difficult act of love for someone. (See *Encourage One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

19. **Make sure that honor is given to your spouse when it is due.** People who receive honor are encouraged to keep on doing things for God's glory. Arrange for celebrations of one kind or another whenever your husband or wife accomplishes something difficult. Be an advocate whenever your spouse is overlooked, since he or she should not have to ask for recognition. Help others give thanks to your spouse on occasion. (See *Honor One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

20. **Hurt with your spouse.** Have empathy and feel real sorrow. People cherish those who stand by them in their pain. Insensitive words, such as telling your spouse to "get over it" so you can hurry on to your next activity, will build loneliness and resentment. (See *Hurt with One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

21. **Be a great support for your spouse when life is painful.** After sharing the hurt, add comforting actions and words, but not yet counsel. Hugging, holding, sitting with, and getting food and drink for your hurting spouse are acts that

console. Saying things like “We will get through this” (note the word we) and, “God will carry you through this pain” are words of comfort. (See *Comfort One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

22. Help with the unpleasant and sometimes overwhelming consequences of each other’s sins. Mistakes are natural products of our fallen nature and, at times, require help to clean up the mess and make things right again. Instead of being full of pride and feeling disgust, roll up your sleeves and help correct the situation. Don’t judge. Instead forgive, comfort, encourage and do anything else necessary. Carrying one another’s burdens of sin is a great privilege because it is so like Jesus paying the penalty for our sins. (See *Carry One Another’s Burdens* at ChristiansTogether.org)

23. Help each other when disappointment in God or doubts about spiritual life in Christ arise. Restore faith by reviewing scriptural truths that apply to your spouse’s situation. Notice over time what kinds of things seem to knock the faith out of each of you. After faith has been restored, continue the process of building up your spouse’s faith in that area. (See *Restore One Another in the Faith* at ChristiansTogether.org)

24. Be the main person to help your spouse see and take on assignments from the Lord. Don’t let your spouse miss out on rewards in heaven. Because of your long-term relationship, you can be patient in helping your spouse recognize and eventually respond to opportunities to do her or his part in the work of God. (Read *See That Each One Does His or Her Part* at ChristiansTogether.org)

25. Watch carefully for Satan’s attacks on your spouse, your marriage and your family. Whenever necessary, warn your spouse against temptations and encourage strong resistance. Take the time to know in detail what is going on in your spouse’s life. Show deep interest out of love, seeing where he or she is vulnerable to evil. Especially watch for those subtleties that are somehow hidden from your spouse. (See *Warn and Admonish One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

26. Join your spouse in facing temptations, because if your partner faces them alone, the odds are that he or she will give in to those allurements. There are many ways of facing temptation together other than ineffective, accusatory confrontation. One of them is bringing the consequences of specific temptations to light with a comment here and there, thus avoiding a defensive or defiant reaction.

(See *Battle Temptation Together* at ChristiansTogether.org)

27. **When you see evil attacks on your spouse, jump in** and stand up to the devil with your partner. Always bring Jesus into the battle with faith and prayer, and then go on to defeat Satan. In this way you will help God humiliate this renegade angel who brought sin to heaven before mankind was created. When necessary, involve other Christians. (See *Stand Up to the Devil at One Another's Side* at ChristiansTogether.org)

28. **Let nothing other than your love for God** get in the way of your love for your spouse and family. When you are required on occasion to risk or let go of something dear, die to yourself and take the risk or relinquish. There are a few times when you have to let go of cherished activities, financial security, hard-earned reputation, safety, comfort and pleasure for a critical need of your spouse. (See *Die for One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

29. **Pray for each other, both privately and together.** Knowing each other closely opens up many specific prayer concerns and requests. No one else may know of those prayer needs. Let your love for your spouse express itself in prayer, seeking God's critical intervention. (See *Pray for One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

30. **Since marriage is meant to last until death, help each other** run the long, often tedious race of the faith. This involves helping each other develop an ever-closer relationship with God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It involves taking biblical truths and putting them into practice more and more. This is a long process, so it needs to be run together. As in a relay race, the stronger person will lead for a time, and then the other will be stronger and take up the pace. (See *Run the Full Race Together* at ChristiansTogether.org)

31. **When trouble and hardship come for God's glory** and for strengthening each of you and your marriage, stick together through it all. Face it with your combined faith and trust in the Lord. Suffering is described in Scripture as good, but you need each other's help to consider it positively and to persevere. (See *Endure Trouble and Hardship Together* at ChristiansTogether.org)

32. **Make sure your spouse is not ensnared by overwork,** excessive commitments, dangerous relationships, and many other traps. Look closely at each other's life and identify any lurking or present dangers. Use each other to lay plans

for avoiding pitfalls. Keep each other safe. (See *Look Out for One Another's Good* at ChristiansTogether.org)

33. **Don't passively allow your spouse to be mistreated** — not by children, relatives, neighbors, friends, church members or yourself. Speak up on your partner's behalf. Allow no one but God to judge your partner without your objection. Whenever possible, turn mistreatment into something helpful for your husband or wife. Expect those outside of the faith to mistreat your spouse at times, and do what you can to make the situation right. Help each other be strong and not care too much about unjust criticism. (See *Forbid Mistreatment of One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

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