

TITLE

MARRIAGE THAT WORKS

GOALS

- Realize that our marriage will only work if we live it out according to God's design.

GRAB

What are the things that I did this week that helped in making my marriage great?

GRACE

Read: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28

We need to see an important truth in God's plan in bringing a man and woman together, God intends such a couple to have a great marriage. Let me repeat that: God's intent is for a Christian couple to experience a great marriage! According to God's design, a married couple can look forward to a life of happiness and fulfillment.

But given the world's experience, such a marriage seems to be a pipe dream. There are a lot of marriages that are experiencing great difficulty and marital stress right now. Did God make a mistake in bringing these two people together? No! The fault lies not with God but with man.

Since God is committed to strengthen Christian marriages and has provided everything that we need to make our marriage work, what lacks is our personal actions that we need to live out in forming a solid foundation for marriage. What are those personal actions that we need to develop in our marriage?

1. **Repentance** – Don't look at your spouse's sin, but at your own. The temptation is to always blame the shortcomings of the other person for the state of our marriage. What we need to learn to do is to repent for our own part and leave our spouse to repent for their part.
2. **Forgiveness** – Repentance and forgiveness are two sides of the one coin. When we repent, we look to being forgiven. Now forgiveness is a two-way street. We not only look to being forgiven but we need to forgive as well. Only through forgiveness can we get rid of the poison of resentment, bitterness and anger in our hearts.
3. **Love** – In Greek the highest form of love is Agape. This is the kind of love that we need to give to our spouse. It is love of spouse that does not depend on the other person's lovability or the other person's reciprocating one's love. Rather, it is based on our love for God and God's own love for us. It is a love that is not based on emotion but on a commitment. It is a love that does not come from our own strength but from God.

GATHER

- What are the things that I need to repent on in my marriage? Did I ask for forgiveness for them to God and to my spouse?
- What can I do to show my spouse Agape?

GO FORTH

Go to confession together as a couple. Ask God for forgiveness for all of your shortcomings in your marriage. Then ask your spouse for forgiveness and commit to work hard in your marriage.