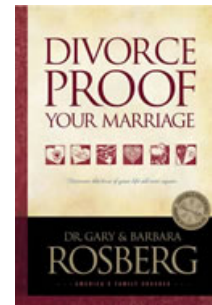


“6 Keys to a Better Marriage Today”

by Jim Burns, Ph.D.



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Whether you’ve been married six weeks or 26 years, you know that there’s more to making a great marriage than having “the ultimate wedding.”

Time was when society as a whole understood this fact. Wedding ceremonies were simple. Marriages weren’t always flashy or fancy, but they lasted. They weren’t subject to the emotional mood swings that so easily crush them today.

When you were growing up, divorce was a rarity. It only took place under the most dire of circumstances. (Think back to your childhood and adolescence. How many of your friends grew up in what were considered “broken homes?”)

Then, the sexual revolution took place. Men and women gave up on the “traditional family” in record numbers . . . both in society at large and in the Church as well. Soon the divorce rate in both areas had grown to a staggering high of around 55%.

These days, however, that rate is coming down. Folks are getting married again and staying married. They’re putting a bit more thought into what marriage means before walking down the aisle. (In fact, the average age for first-time brides is now 25; for first-time grooms, it’s 26.)

More than likely, these newlyweds grew up in divorced homes. They know the pain and frustration of having two sets of parents . . . of shuttling back and forth between two homes a couple of times a week . . . of wondering if there was something they could have done to keep their parents together.

Well, in addition to putting a bit more thought into marriage than the generation before, this new wave of newlyweds is also doing what they can to stay together. As psychologist Dr. Gary Rosberg says, these folks are serious about wanting to make their unions “divorce-proof.”

If you’re the parent of a teenager, this revelation is good news on two different levels. First, with regards to your own marriage – who among us isn’t interested in strengthening

the bonds of holy matrimony? Second, though, think of the impact this wave is having on your kids. You and I were never taught how to “divorce-proof” a marriage. We were simply told that marriage was forever . . . and that is was wrong to divorce. (Talk about sound if not overly simplistic advice!)

Now, we have the opportunity to be the transitional generation . . . to teach our kids what a “divorce-proof” marriage is all about.

Dr. Gary Rosberg and his wife, Barbara, have identified a number of key biblical principles they feel are key if a marriage is to truly be “divorce proof.” And following these guidelines will not only improve your relationship with your spouse today . . . doing so will also establish a pattern your children can follow for their relationship with their future spouse as well.

I call these principles, “**6 Keys to a Better Marriage Today.**” If you want to strengthen your union right away, start showing your spouse . . .

1. **Forgiving Love** Because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross, all of our sins have been forgiving. The *Forgiving Love* He has shown us is essential in a marriage. It offers a fresh start after one spouse hurts or offends another. Without forgiveness, no marriage will ever last.
2. **Serving Love** Do you know your spouse’s deepest needs? Loving him or her with a servant’s heart is the best and quickest way to find out. Serve one another in love (after all – the Son of Man did not come to be served but to *serve*).
3. **Persevering Love** Marriage is a marathon – not a sprint. Are you in it for the long haul . . . or do you have the tendency to “bail out” when the going gets tough? *Persevering Love* sustains us through the trials of life (and trials are what makes any marriage real).
4. **Guarding Love** In other words, let him or her know that you’ll do anything to keep the marriage together (as long as its legal and moral, of course). The modern culture isn’t all that keen on marriage -- even though it’s the backbone of society. *Guarding Love* protects your heart and the heart of your spouse from the threats to your marriage . . . and believe me they’re out there!
5. **Celebrating Love** That’s right – celebrate your marriage! What a gift the two of you have been given. *Celebrating Love* equips you to maintain a satisfying emotional, physical and spiritual connection with your mate . . . so celebrate it!
6. **Renewing Love** No marriage will survive if either or both spouses constantly challenge its integrity by threatening to leave. The fact is, *Renewing Love* enables both husband and wife to regard the marriage covenant as unbreakable (just like God does). So share this gift with your spouse every day. Rejoice in the fact that you’ll be together forever . . . “for better or worse!”

These six vital expressions of love will make your marriage better. They’ll also help you teach your children how to understand what biblical love and marriage are all about.

Love takes time – any good relationship does. So stay the course . . . keep praying . . . and start “divorce-proofing” your marriage by loving your spouse!

(Excerpted from the book, [Divorce-Proof Your Marriage](#) by Dr. Gary and Barbara Rosberg. Click [here](#) for information on how you can pick up a copy of this practical publication.)