



Marriage & Family Savers Institute

June 2010

NEWSLETTER



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We pray this newsletter finds you in the best of His care and grace. You'll see that we have changed the format of this newsletter. Let us know what you think. You may, or may not have also received a copy of the **EMPIRE STATE FAMILY NEWS WATCH**, our public policy publication. We're aware that not everyone who is concerned about marriage may be interested in public policy issues so we're trying to be sensitive to those concerns. On the other hand, we do want to encourage everyone to be fully educated and engaged in the issues affecting our children's future. There is a responsibility on the people of God to be the "salt of the earth and the light of the world." Passionate Christianity happens when we take our faith seriously first in our own lives, then in our marriages, our families, our communities and our nation. When we realize it's not about us — it's much bigger! Many of you have expressed a concern for this ministry so I included a "Ministry Update" article. If you still have any questions or concerns please feel free to call or email us. We'll be glad to share more details about the challenges facing us. But we don't want to be distracted from the work God has put before us to work diligently to save marriages and restore families. That is our assignment, and until the Lord reassigns us we will continue as He enables us.

We thank God for you and your faithful support of this work

MINISTRY UPDATE

Toward the end of May we put out a special request for prayer as we were facing a deadline to meet a financial obligation with the IRS. We're so thankful to have received a financial gift that will allow us to request a financial agreement with the IRS, however the future still remains unsure. We're still trying to sell our building to reduce our overhead, but the market has not been favorable. Our comfort is in knowing the One who isn't limited by market conditions.

WE continue to work to advance the vision as we are able, while we pray for God's provision to see the vision become reality.

We have begun producing 3 minute segments of our "Marriage Minutes" for a California Radio station that made the request, so our impact will be, literally, from coast-to-coast.

We have no vacation plans for the summer, but we will try to take some time for ourselves whenever possible.

In addition to our regular counseling schedule we are looking forward to continuing the work of developing community marriage initiatives, training marriage mentor couples, speaking and preaching wherever God provides opportunities, and continuing to be a voice in Albany to protect the institution of marriage.

Our joy is in seeing hearts transformed, minds renewed, souls come into the Kingdom, marriages saved and families restored.

Please keep this ministry in your regular prayers. It's what keeps us going. 😊

TIME FOR SEPARATION?



Earlier this month Al & Tipper Gore announced they were separating after 40 years of a seemingly happy marriage.

A week later, their daughter Karena caught the bug and announced she was separating from her husband. How can this be good? Well, they didn't jump to the "d" word right away, so perhaps there is something to give them credit for. We know God hates divorce, but more often than not people think of the two extremes without considering the third option of separation. Can separation be good? What does the Bible have to say about it?

"Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer." --1 Cor. 7:5

Though Paul was speaking specifically about a sexual relationship in this verse, I believe the principle would apply to the general relationship. You see, sometimes living together causes too much strife to see clearly, and the relationship just goes from bad to worse. In this case, a "time out" may be the best thing

MARRIAGE MENTOR CLASS



Now is the time to enroll in the next Marriage Mentor Training class scheduled to begin in late September. This will be a Thursday night class

taught personally by Bill and Penny for 10 weeks, ending in certification for the Marriage Mentor Couple equipping them to work to save marriages under the leadership of their local church elders. To be eligible the couple should be married for at least 10-15 years and have been through stuff. Ironically the couple who has been happily married without ever experiencing problems may not be the best candidates to mentor couples that are experiencing difficulties.

Developing Marriage Mentor couples is part of the Hudson Valley Marriage Initiative. The goal is to have trained and anointed Marriage Mentor couples in every congregation to minister to those looking for help to prevent marriages from falling through the cracks. We can make a difference, but it must begin in the Church. For more information or to request an application, call our office or send us an email. 😊

"...equipping the saints for the work of the ministry,"

—Ephesians 4:12

SEPARATION From P. 1

that one can do for the marriage. Separation is not necessarily divorce. Yes, it's true, 80% of those who separate end in divorce, but for some couples the separation could allow the circumstances necessary for each one to resolve their own personal issues, to seek the Lord's will, and then begin to re-engage in the relationship with reconciliation as a powerful incentive to do whatever it will take to make things right. As long as a couple can work together on their relationship they should stay together, but if things do not improve, there may come a time when separation may be a viable option to save the marriage. We may have to go back to square one: start dating again, learning how to communicate and learning how to establish a safe atmosphere. Then, slowly, the restoration process can begin. It won't be about fixing a bad relationship; it will be about enjoying a new relationship built on Biblical principles of openness and honesty and mutual submission and respect.

So, we should be praying for the Gore family, that they find Christ through their trials, while at the same time taking a sober look at our own relationships. If you know of someone talking about divorce, remind them of the third option—separation. It could be the best thing they can do for their marriage. But like any worthwhile project, it will require work and selfless love and a determination. to give oneself to a greater cause—the cause of Christ!



DON'T THROW IT AWAY

—Family Life—

What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.
Mark 10:9 NASB

Research has shown that about two-thirds of all divorces today are occurring in low-conflict marriages. That is, they're ending without a death blow like infidelity or physical abuse. Instead, a couple simply accumulates enough disagreement and disharmony that they begin believing that the best option for doing away with the headaches is just to do away with the marriage.

If you know people in that situation, urge them to fight for their marriage. Tell them not to quit without taking another lap around the track—without stopping to realize that the best marriage to be in is the one they already have.

I received an email not long ago from a radio listener who was convicted by an interview he had heard on one of our broadcasts. He and his wife were divorced, and he was close to marrying another woman. He wasn't sure what he should do. I couldn't get away from his message. I read it and reread it. Finally, I just sat down to call him, and asked, "Is there any possibility of reconciling with your wife before you move on to remarriage? Look, you're still going to be married to an imperfect person, even if you swap one spouse for another. Only now you're going to be bringing all that divorce baggage into your new relationship."

One researcher told me that if a couple can find as little as 20 percent of their marriage that they would call satisfactory, they have a better than 90 percent chance of making their marriage better in two years—if they stick with it, if they keep fighting, if they don't give up and throw in the towel too soon.



Testimony: A New Perspective.— by John & Mary (Not their real names)

I have been married to my wife for almost 17 years. It took me that long to realize how important she is to me. Over the years, I have taken her for granted and sometimes felt like we did not belong together. That is until I really believed that she is God's gift to me. I realize that she was hand picked just for me by God and she deserves to be treated as such.

Over the years, I have taught myself a lot of bad habits. I am impatient, not a good communicator, and often, a control freak. That is changing. I know that it is not going to happen overnight but the realization of who my wife is and what our marriage means to us as Christians helps to bring me back to reality.

Once I learned that sex with my wife is an act of worship it helped me to deal with the toughest part of my struggle. I only want to share something that special with the one God chose for me. This realization-or truth-helps me with any issues of sexual immorality.

I can go on and on about the revelation I have had over the past few months; however, I pray that God continues to give me insight and to correct me when I am out of line. I want to be perfect for my wife and I want her-us- to be happy and grow old together.

I learned one more really important thing. I have to forgive myself. If I keep holding on to the same junk, I am bound to keep making the same mistake. There is no such thing as a generational curse that cannot be broken with God's help.



LAWS OF CHANGE

Michael M. Simone, D.Min.

The last thing we want to hear in the counseling room from a new client is, "Well, that's who I am; I can't change." As believers, we understand that change is what the Christian walk is all about. The reality is that everyone changes every day. They may become more hardened in their old ways, or they may intentional learn new ways, but the one thing that will be constant is change. (How's that for an oxymoron?)

But even good change can be difficult, and if we are to reap the rewards of positive change, we'll need to be aware of these four rules:

1. **Pace:** Each person has a speed for change that's wired into their hearts. Some are fast changers; others are more slow. Respect for pace is essential.
2. **Free Will:** Each person decides when and how much to change. Change cannot be forced.
3. **Vulnerability:** Each person decides how much to reveal in the process of changing their heart and soul. Personal disclosure can be scary. Respect for vulnerability is key.
4. **God's Grace:** God's love and grace surrounds each life experience, even hardship and failure. We must let His love flow through us into the heart of our partner as we both struggle to change day by day.

