



Freedom

Fellowship Church

Question: "What are the biblical solutions for solving marriage problems?"

Answer: Marriage is the most intimate relationship two human beings can experience, second only to a relationship with God. Marriage brings out the best and the worst in most people, as two separate individuals struggle to live as "[one flesh](#)" ([Matthew 19:6](#); [Mark 10:8](#)). At the root of most marriage problems is selfishness. When one or both partners choose to live as though his or her needs deserve top consideration, conflict results.

There are specific verses that address behavior of both husbands and wives. Some of those are [1 Peter 3:1-8](#), [Colossians 3:18-19](#), and [Titus 2:3-5](#). Although not addressing marriage directly, [Philippians 2:3-13](#) is an excellent recipe for resolving marriage problems. This passage tells us to adopt the attitude Christ demonstrated when He set aside His rights and privileges as the Son of God and came to earth as a humble servant. Verses 3 and 4 say, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." When that exhortation is applied to marriage, almost any obstacle can be overcome.

Certainly, seeking [counsel from a pastor](#) or Christian marriage counselor is a biblical thing to do ([Proverbs 19:20](#)). Getting counseling is an excellent way to clear misconceptions about marriage roles, to see a situation from another viewpoint, and to distinguish between God's standards and those of the world.

[Ephesians 5:21-33](#) gives specific instructions for both husbands and wives. A husband is to love his wife "as Christ loves the church and gave Himself for her" (verse 25). Such self-sacrificing love creates an atmosphere in which a wife can more easily submit to her husband's leadership. When a husband is committed to demonstrating love for his wife, and a wife is committed to graciously allowing her husband to lead, the marriage will work.

It is also wise to pay close attention to the verses just before the specific marriage instructions. Verses 18-21 say, "Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ."

Notice all the commands that *precede* the marriage instruction. All Christians are to

- refuse to get drunk
- be [filled with the Spirit](#)
- encourage each other
- sing hymns and songs of praise
- have an attitude of continual [worship](#)
- live in a spirit of [gratitude](#)
- submit graciously to each other



We miss vital truth when we skip straight to the marriage instruction without applying the practical guidelines in the preceding verses. When each spouse applies those truths to his or her personal life and strives to make his or her relationship with the Lord the primary focus, marriage problems take a back seat. When two committed Christians purpose to seek God's heart and follow His will no matter what, there is no problem that they cannot work through.