



Common Mistakes Married Couples Make – Part 2

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Abstract:

A marriage must be nurtured to grow and flourish. Love may bring you together, but it is the rules of successful marriages that will protect that love from going sour. For a relationship to be healthy, you need to avoid common mistakes couples make. This paper and its companion paper summarize the top twenty common mistakes people make. For convenience, the mistakes are arranged in alphabetical order.

Keywords: Common mistakes, errors, Christians, believers.

INTRODUCTION

There's no such thing as a perfect marriage. No matter how great a relationship may look on the outside, every couple has struggles because every person makes mistakes. We make mistakes because we are imperfect. Our happiness in life does not depend entirely on having a close relationship, but it is definitely enhanced by having bonds that are both healthy and close. Every marriage has highs and lows. Every couple makes mistakes throughout the course of their marriage. How the mistakes we make in marriage are addressed is key to improving your relationship.

In this paper, we have identified additional ten common mistakes that married couples make:

11. Money Matters
12. Nagging and Criticism
13. No Goals & Plans
14. Over commitment
15. Prayerlessness
16. Selfishness
17. Taking each other for granted
18. Too Many Children
19. Unforgiveness
20. Worldliness

We will go over these mistakes in the next section.

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DIFFERENT KINDS OF MISTAKES

11. Money Matters: A common mistake that most married couples make is not being entirely open to each other about their financial situation or issues. It is no secret that conflicts, especially about money, put a huge strain on any marriage. In addition to emotional, physical, and spiritually connecting with your spouse, being in unity financially is also very important for a healthy relationship. Not discussing finances with your partner is a major relationship mistake. Husband and wife spend money without consulting their each other. Knowing that money problem is one of the main reasons in divorce, we cannot overstress how crucial it is to be transparent and honest with each other financial matters. A husband and wife should know exactly how much money they are making, spending, investing, owing, lending, or borrowing. Lack of transparency in this area can lead to lack of trust and conflict. You should regularly talk about your monetary issues and reach a mutual agreement together [1]. Being in a team or partner with your spouse, you should always consider their opinion when making a decision, especially ones regarding the family, money, career, or other major life direction. A lack of financial intimacy can lead to divorce. Figure 1 shows a couple working the financial matters together [2]. Figure 2 show how couple should save for different reasons [3]. As Lee Jenkins says [4]:

The Wrong Attitude: "What's mine is mine, what's yours is yours."

The Right Attitude: "My money + your money = our money"

The Wrong Attitude: "What my spouse doesn't know will never hurt him/her."

The Right Attitude: "Big financial secrets can ruin a marriage."

The Wrong Attitude: "Our financial life is great! We'll just cross our fingers and hope it stays that way."

The Right Attitude: "God is great! His grace is sufficient; but we still need to plan for emergencies."

12. Nagging & Criticism: To nag is to bug or make a big deal out of doing something small. Nagging is endless scolding, complaining, and faultfinding. It may also be regarded as constantly criticizing someone. When you complain about or say something over and over again, then it becomes nagging. Nagging can occur in the workplace or at home. If you find yourself repeating something to your husband multiple times, you are engaging in nagging behavior. While most women do not like to nag, unless they feel unheard, overworked, or taken-for-granted, nagging indicates trouble in the relationship. Nagging is a disguised form of controlling someone's behavior. Nagging in a marriage is a common problem. It is poison to a marriage. It is one of the most common relationship complaints couples express. It is never an effective way to communicate your needs or requests. It can be harmful to a relationship and it often produces negative results. It causes vexing and irritation to both partners. It should therefore be treated as a mistake and should be avoid as much as possible [5].

13. No Goals and Plans: The happiest people are those who live with purpose. Not having goals in life and plans to achieve them constitute a common mistake married couples make. Without a clear vision and purpose in life, we drift on the ocean of life. We lose focus and bypass the real issues of life. A couple that lacks family goals and priorities cannot be fully committed to each other. Commitment has no meaning without goals. Besides obedience to God, goals are motivation to the long-term commitment that a happy, successful marriage takes. Husbands and wives should support themselves in achieving

their career goals. They also need to have common goals like buying a house and saving for children's education, among others. The goals could also be financial or spiritual. Having common goals as a husband and wife encourages commitment by giving you direction and purpose in life. Marriage goals will help your marriage to thrive and contribute positively to the health of your marriage. They also help you to keep your marriage a top priority and are a great way to grow your marriage. They give your marriage a better chance of being happy and fulfilling. In the pursuit of your goals, you will spend more time together, have more conversations, and create more intimate moments. Just as your daily goals keep you moving from one task to the next, marriage goals will infuse your relationship with passion, commitment, and vital momentum. While a goal is what you believe you need to be, a plan is what you need to do to be what you need to be. Goals are destinations, while plans are journeys to reach the destinations. Planning is figuring out how to achieve your goals. A wise man once advised: "Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established" (Proverbs 16:3). Having goals and plans is not enough, we must have priorities [6].

14. *Overcommitment*: This is plaguing our society and our marriage is unfortunately the first casualty. Experts have cited overcommitment as one of the top five relationship killers. Overcommitment is obliging to do more than one is capable. It may be regarded as a set of attitudes and behaviors that reflect a person's excessive striving for approval and appreciation. It may be over-involvement with family of origin. It is the inability to withdraw from obligations at work. Overcommitted individuals are doing way too much, trying to handle a hundred things at once. They are very ambitious and tend to exaggerate their efforts while at the same time over-tax their resources. You may be a superman or a high-achieving woman. You may not be a good material for marriage. Overcommitment, busyness, time pressure, is a killer of marriages and is therefore a mistake to be avoided [7].

15. *Prayerlessness*: They say the family that prays together stays together. Prayer is the divine rule for living. Prayer is the first sign of spiritual life, and also the means of maintaining it. Prayer is the key to the problems of our day. A prayerless Christian is a weak believer because prayerlessness is the absence of the work of the Holy Spirit in a life. It is easy to let things, legitimate and right in themselves, so engross our attention and preoccupy our minds that prayer is given little or no attention. Even the apostles had to guard themselves at this point (Acts 6:2). Prayerlessness may manifest itself in our routine life or even in our spiritual service. Prayerlessness is disobedience to God. To fail to pray is to disobey the Lord's command that we watch and pray (Matthew 26:41). It is to leave God out of our existence and depend on our flesh [8]. Setting aside time for prayer every day and making that prayer time part of your schedule can help you avoid this serious mistake of prayerlessness. Husband and wife should find a regular time to pray together. The prayer time also provides a forum for sharing your beliefs with each other. This sharing broadens the common bond that exists between a couple. Failure to pray together is a mistake because prayerlessness give no room for God to reign in the marriage. And we can nothing without Him (John 15:5). A typical example of a family that prays together is shown in Figure 3 [9].

16. *Selfishness*: Selfishness is being concerned excessively or exclusively for oneself or one's own advantage, pleasure, or welfare, regardless of others. It may be regarded as excessive concern for one's profit or pleasure. Selfishness is the trait that leads people to frequently act in their own interests without any regard for how their actions could impact others. Selfishness is the opposite of altruism or selflessness. It is the tendency to prioritize one's own interests and needs over those of others. Although we are all selfish to some degree, we can recognize people who are selfish and self-centered. Many of us are more refined in our selfishness. We see a horrific display of selfishness everywhere. The world we live in today is fixated on the idea of being selfish, especially as shown in the social media

channels. Selfishness goes against our universal ethical grain. People have learned to believe that putting their needs ahead of others is an act of selfishness. Men have been taught that selflessness is the ideal of virtue. In some cases, people benefit materially, socially, or emotionally from their actions. Being selfish is a mistake because it is a major challenge in marriages, friendships, workplace, and even in the church.

17. *Taking Each Other for Granted*: One of the worst mistake a married couple could make is not expressing your gratitude and appreciation toward one another. Such couple often takes each other for granted. Sometimes, couples get so comfortable with one another that they stop noticing and appreciating all that their partner does for them. The risk here is getting so used to all the good things your partner does that you begin to take it for granted. Being taken for granted is neither healthy nor proper because it makes people feel unappreciated, undervalued, and hurt. It can take a serious toll on your marital happiness. When your wife cooks a delicious meal, do not take it for granted. Thank and appreciate her. When your husband works hard and makes enough money to pay for the rent or mortgage, thank and appreciate him. Taking it for granted is a mistake. Always make sure your spouse always feels loved and appreciated. You should truly appreciate and express how “special” she or he is to you. Marriage becomes a beautiful bond between two people who adore and cherish one another. From time to time, it is a good practice to reflect on what life would be like *without* your partner.

18. *Too Many Children*: The number of children you have directly affects the population of the country you belong and your financial status. If every couple in a nation decides to have one child (or none), the population of the country will diminish with time because the death of two individuals will be replaced by one person. This is the strategy used by nations to decrease population. China did just that some years ago. If every couple in a nation has two children, the population will remain the same eventually. That is family typically shown in Figure 4 [10]. If every couple decides to have three or more children, the population will increase. This is the policy adopted by nations who have just gone through civil war and experienced drastic decrease in population. Such nations often encourage having many children through many incentives such as tax breaks and subsidies. When a nation asks its citizens to have many children without compensation, the families may become impoverished. The money they should have saved for rainy days or retirement is used in raising the kids. Some families even take the pride in sending the kids to the best elementary school, the best high schools, and the best colleges/universities. This is well and good provided their future savings is not as stake. About 40 years ago, almost half of the American mothers had four or more children. Having a lot of kids is not a wise choice in today's society. It is considered a mistake because a couple may later regret it and the kids may not appreciate all you have done for them. The kids may consider your sacrifices as not enough [11].

19. *Unforgiveness*: As long as we live in this imperfect world, interacting with imperfect people, you are bound to offend someone or someone is bound to offend you. When someone offends you, you have a choice to either forgive or not forgive them. Unforgiveness occurs when you choose not to forgive and be kind to the person who has offended you. It is either doing nothing about the hurt or attempting to punish the transgressor somehow. Unforgiveness is having a grudge against someone who has offended you. It is not having the willing heart to forgive others. One cannot forgive unless unforgiveness has occurred. Unforgiveness is a reaction to a transgression. It is a “cold” emotion involving resentment, bitterness, anger, fear, and perhaps hatred. Unforgiving people are their own worst enemy. Negativity cancels out creativity. No good can come out of unforgiveness. It is an enemy of your marriage. It comes in many forms and can manifest as a critical spirit, or bitterness, or wrath, or even irritation. Unforgiveness is the root of many things that separate us from God and others. Someone has said, “Marriage is the university of all offence, do not marry if you cannot forgive.” Marriage needs never

ending forgiveness and repentance. The importance of forgiveness in marriage cannot be overstated. Forgiveness is part of the process of restoring hope in a troubled family. The ability to forgive and seek forgiveness is often rated as one of the most important factors that make a relationship last. Unforgiveness is the problem, while forgiveness is the solution. In a marriage, forgiveness is a must. Unforgiveness is a serious mistake that can ruin the marriage [12].

20. *Worldliness*: We live in a world driven by worldliness, materialism, and consumerism. Worldliness is a man-centered way of thinking. It is to be secular, unspiritual, materialistic, and irreligious. It is the mind-set of the unregenerate. Worldliness is a dangerous problem for Christians [13]. A believer gradually backslides and gets involved with the things of the world. We should not follow the world because the world is in decay and doing so makes us an enemy of God. A Christian declares war against God by being friendly with the world. Anyone who belongs to the world does not belong to God. Paul said, "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? (2 Corinthians 6:14, 15). James says, "You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God" (James 4:4). James calls out a challenge to people who have turned their hearts away from God and fallen in love with the world. Christians commit spiritual adultery when they try to please God, but they still have an affair with the world. We have three enemies that try to turn us away from God—the world, the flesh, and the Devil. John said, "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them" (1 John 2:15). We cannot be a friend of God and of the world at the same time. The two are mutually exclusive. One is either a friend of the world or a friend of God. There is no middle ground [14].

CONCLUSION

There are many factors that go into building long-term relationships to ensure that they endure long-term. Avoiding these common mistakes mentioned in this paper can help your marriage to stay healthy and happy for years into the future. If you want your marriage to last and be successful, avoid these mistakes. More information about common mistakes married couples make can be found in the book in [15-18].

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Figure 1 A couple working on their financial matters together [2].



Figure 2 How couple should save for different reasons [3].



Figure 3 A family that prays together [9].



Figure 4 A family of two kids [10].