

The One Thing That is Proven to Make Your Marriage A Success

If you knew that there was a 5-minute habit that has been shown to boost the chance of your marriage succeeding to 99%, would you try it? The secret has been around for some time now but has remained largely undiscovered. A 1997 Gallup Poll done by the National Association of Marriage Enhancement (nameonline.net) showed the divorce rate among couples who *pray together regularly* is 1 out of 1,152. That is far less than 1%.

Research by the University of Texas, San Antonio, reported in the *Journal of Marriage and Family* in 2010, studied 2400 couples. They focused on four things: 1) The effect of a couple belonging to the same denomination; 2) Attending religious services together; 3) Shared beliefs and values; and 4) What they did at home in the way of worship activities (i.e. reading the Bible and prayer together). Results were stated in terms of marital satisfaction. As to be expected, the couples who shared any of the four things all reported higher rates of satisfaction in their marriages compared to those who did not. But what is fascinating, is that rates were highest with those that prayed and/or read the Bible together at home.

Only 11% of couples pray together on a daily basis. When people pray together, they have a far greater chance of dealing with problems that cause the marriages of others to crash and burn. Prayer, it seems, rather than the frequency of sex in marriage-- is the most accurate predictor of marital happiness.

You would think that each time these findings were revealed, hundreds, if not thousands of unhappy couples would start praying together every day, right? Why don't we pray? Pride, stubbornness, possibly ignorance. Something happens when a couple will come together once every day, join hands and pray, using simple, everyday language, talking to God as though He were the third party of the conversation.

What does prayer do for a couple and what are the benefits of praying together?

Benefit #1: Prayer humbles each of you. It is hard to be judgmental or wrestle for control of the relationship when you're praying together. Prayer forces us to recognize that God is sovereign, and we are human.

Benefit #2: Prayer helps you reach agreement. Arguments are gradually diffused as you say, "God, we're each looking at this issue differently. But we want Your will. What do You want us to do?" Having prayed together, couples talk—which brings us to the next benefit.

Benefit #3: Prayer is the key to communication. You can pray standing up, sitting down, lying down, or on your face before God. But when you pray with your mate, join hands in an expression of oneness. It's hard to be angry when you vent your emotions openly and honestly before God. Prayer drains the bitterness from your heart, which then enables you to communicate, to talk about what really concerns you and gives your spouse the chance to hear your heart.

Benefit #4: Prayer changes the heart and mellows the spirit. “And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh” says Ezekiel 11:19. What God did for the children of Israel when they called on Him, He does for us when we come to Him in prayer together.

Benefit #5: Prayer results in intimacy and sexual fulfillment that is unique to spiritual union. Research showed that the greater a couple's religious commitment, the more satisfying is their sexual relationship.

Are you brave enough to suggest praying together to your spouse today? Take a deep breath and try it! Try simply praying together for 30-days and you will likely never stop.