

# WHY DO MARRIAGES FAIL?

The following is a summary of a sermon given by Ron Dart

## **1) The first and perhaps the most common reason why marriages fail is that people won't listen to one another and seek understanding.**

There are few very good listeners in the world. Often we'll listen well to a co-worker and not to our wife and hence we take each other for granted. We assume that we know what the other thinks. We make up our minds about the other's motives when conflict arises.

Because of our selfishness and desire to do things our own way we won't listen to preachers or marriage counselors unless it is convenient or it applies to others (How often I have made a point in a sermon and see a husband or wife elbow nudge their spouse in church rather than ask how it applies to themselves). A counselor is trained to listen and help you understand yourself and what you want. This quality is very helpful when it comes to resolving conflict.

God told His people often, "I have spoken and you have not listened. I have sent prophets and you wouldn't listen. I sent my Son and you killed Him". We don't listen in case it infringes on what we want to do or we don't want to see.

## **Most people only hear what they want to hear. Are you the type who tries to practice listening to what others say when you know those things are going to be difficult for you to hear, requiring change on your part?**

Proverbs 18:2 says, "A fool has no delight in understanding but expressing his own heart". Are you a fool who just likes to express himself and are not interested in what your spouse has to say on a subject that you disagree on? Or are you wise, actively listening and seeking to understand your spouse, willing to yield where it will help solve a conflict with your spouse and willing to satisfy your spouse's emotional and physical needs?

## **2) We provoke and allow ourselves to be provoked too easy. Is your partner provoking you because you are not listening just as a child does when he doesn't get the attention that he wants? We try to avenge for our hurts. We return evil for evil rather than trying to do good to them in return and being forgiving. We keep score and don't forgive them.**

If we say we forgive them and don't talk to them for a while then we haven't let it go because we really haven't forgiven them. We need both a spirit of forgiveness and a lot of kind tolerance.

**3) We don't keep our word. We gave our word in our marriage vows to cherish, to honour, and forsake all others. Not being faithful, such as an affair, is breaking our word. A dose of basic christianity is what is needed in most struggling marriages to prevent them from failing.**

So often people in struggling marriages are not even keeping the most basic principles of living like a christian. Go through the Sermon on the Mount and 1 Corinthians 13 about love and see if you really are applying it, not just around church friends but at home with your wife and children.

**4) We engage in name calling and profanity. When we engage in name calling we attack their pride and self-esteem.**

You greatly intensify the hurt inflicted and make it so much more difficult for either of you to yield to the other when needed to resolve a conflict. Ephesians 4:29 says not to let any corrupt communication proceed from your mouth. Get rid of profanity out of your life and especially your marriage.

It is one thing to call someone a hypocrite and it's another to add a profane adjective in front of it. Profanity raises the level of hurt and intensity in a conflict when you really need to resolve a conflict and diffuse that hurt and intensity. Profanity is engaged in when one wants to return hurt for hurt. It is the opposite of what a christian should do, which is to be forgiving and overcome evil with good.

**5) People lie to their spouses. When you lie you destroy the trust between yourself and you spouse.**

If you have a track record of lying how can your spouse know when you are telling the truth and when you are lying when you say something. Lying destroys the trust that is vital in a marriage. Telling the truth always is one of the most basic tenets of christianity in the ten commandments. Christianity should start at home NOT be the last place you practice it.