



Secrets to a Successful Marriage

Principle number Two

The two shall become one flesh

It is no longer me, but now it is us. This transition can be more difficult than you may think, especially if you have a single social life. You are used to hanging out with your friends and just doing whatever you want to do. However when you get married it is no longer my friends, it is now our friends. Being married and hanging out with single friends may or may not be a problem. If it is a problem for your spouse then it is definitely a problem. When you are hanging out with single friends and they see you call your spouse to see if they would mind if you do something with your friends they are not going to understand that at all. They will see that as weakness and say you are 'henpecked' or you are being controlled. You may have to back off the friendship or end it altogether. You always do what is best for your marriage. You are no longer independent, making your own decisions, doing whatever you want to do, whenever you want to do it. It is no longer doing what is best for me. Everything you do now affects your spouse and family. If you continue living like you are single, you soon will be. For everything you do, you must consider how it will affect your spouse or family. It is no longer what I want to do or what is best for me. It is now what is best for my family. You are now one with your spouse. Be considerate of their lives, their feelings, and their dreams. It is not weak to call your spouse when making decisions that will affect them. It is being considerate and thoughtful of them.

It is very foolish and selfish to try to dominate your spouse. It is a sign of weakness and insecurity. Sometimes in a marriage one spouse feels like they have to be in control of the other and tries to dominate them. This never works out. Marriage is about trusting one another and helping one another be all they can be. It is about supporting one another and empowering one another to be successful in whatever they put their hand to do. Your spouse is not your father or your mother. No one likes to be dominated or controlled. Your spouse will feel trapped if you try and dominate them. It takes great strength to put down your own desires and put your spouse first and it is the only way to have a healthy, happy marriage. *You will always be individuals and that should be celebrated by each spouse.* **But from now** on you must consider your spouse when making decisions and be willing to compromise if that is what is required for your marriage to work.

A Time to Reflect

1. How are your decisions affecting your spouse and family?
2. Do you hear your spouse complaining about you not spending enough time at home?
3. Are you dominating your spouse?
4. Is it safe for your spouse to share their concerns about your behavior with you?
5. Are you celebrating your spouse's strengths?