



## Secrets to a Successful Marriage

### Principle number Three

## Change Yourself

**A great secret in marriage** is laying down your own desires, wants, needs, dreams, and life for your spouse. If each of you understands this, your marriage will be heaven on earth. If you violate this principle your marriage will be hell on earth.

***Matthew 7:1-5 "Judge not, that you be not judged. "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you. "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck out of your eye', and look, a plank is in your own eye? "Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye.***

I used to pray: "Father in heaven, please change my wife." I would tell him all her problems and faults and how she was treating me so bad. One day as I was praying this way, I heard the Lord say these words inside of my heart. "You have enough problems of your own to worry about your wife's problems". When I heard those words I was shocked. In my mind I was the one who was trying to make my marriage work. I was to one who was making all the sacrifices and the compromises. I was certainly not the one who needed to change.

After counseling with couples for over thirty years this is the case, most of the time, in the minds of both spouses. They both believe they are not the problem but the problem lies in the spouse.

Those words from God change my life, which in turn, changed my marriage. That very day I made a life changing decision. I made a decision to accept my wife the way that she was. I no longer judged her or condemned her. I just simply accepted her, unconditionally. My decision transformed my marriage. I had so desperately wanted my wife to accept me the way that I was that I could not see that I did not accept her the way that she was. I tried to mold her into the image I thought she should be. I even used the scriptures in my attempt to change my wife. She would have no part of me changing her. Once I started accepting her the way that she was she began to accept me the way that I was. It was amazing and really quite simple to do. I just refused to correct her and condemn her. I just respected her as an adult and made a decision to

help her and assist her anyway that I could. Over the years she has been very successful in whatever she has put her hand to do. She could always count on me being right beside her, helping her anyway that I could. I realized I could not change my wife but I could change myself. When I made the change the whole marriage changed for the better. This is a great principle, if you want changes in your marriage be willing to make the changes in your own life. Be willing to become a servant and make yourself last and God will exalt you and He will make you first.

### **A Time to Reflect**

1. Are you asking God to change your spouse?
2. What are your spouse's strengths?
3. What changes could you make to help in your marriage?
4. What's more important to you, to be happy or what's fair?
5. What could you do to help your spouse be a success?