

OVERCOMING JEALOUSY IN MARRIAGE

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Prov 27:4

4 Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?

NIV

To be jealous is to have feeling or showing fear or ill will because of possible or actual loss of rights or love. To be jealous is natural, for all have the capacity to be jealous. No one will like to share his or her lover with another. Everyone wants to protect their relationship from intruders or those who are capable of taking their place in the relationship. But when it becomes too much, it gives too many problems.

1 John 4:18

18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

NIV

True love trusts. Perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with torment or punishment. There is no fear in love because love trusts, and fear is the opposite of trust. If you truly love your spouse, you will trust him or her and will not be afraid of your partner cheating on you. Let your love be perfect and complete.

Jealousy is rooted in fear built on negative thoughts and wrong analysis of the things seen and heard. Many times we think we understand what is going on, and we read meanings to things that don't matter and are not real. Once a misinterpretation has taken place, one's attitude and actions automatically change in reaction to the presumed fact. Fear is deadly and torments the one that is nursing the fear. He or she is dying inside on a lie that is assumed to be truth.

Jealousy is such a strong force that when it has taking hold of a man, it is difficult for the person to listen to the partner, or accept the truth as presented by the accused. It is important to note that many quarrels in the home are rooted in an unfounded allegation or presumption spoken and not yet spoken out about an affair. Sometimes the fear may be with genuine evidence. But most times, it is without proof – It is only an imagination of the mind.

Many feel insecure in their marriage. This insecurity makes them become suspicious of their spouse. Jealousy increases insecurity in marriage, for it fills one's mind with fear, and this stirs the person each time he or she sees the spouse chatting and laughing with someone of the opposite sex. It makes the person to want to know everything the spouse discusses with such people. It breeds quarrels in the home because, consciously and unconsciously, the

spouse is accused of unfaithfulness, being too free with people of the opposite sex, or always with a particular person, even when they have no foundation or basis.

Jealous people most of the time are not satisfying their partner in many ways. Rather than make up for their deficiencies and please their spouse, they resign to false accusations of unfaithfulness presuming that the reason for all the complain is because of another woman or man outside. They quarrel and fight rather than work on themselves and become better. Do not allow jealousy to control you and motivate your words and actions against your spouse, otherwise your hands will be full of trouble.

Phil 4:8

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-think about such things.

NIV

Fear is a mental problem. It is a mental state – a condition of the mind. Jealousy is fear arising from the thoughts of the mind concerning your spouse. The above scripture charges us to think only on those things that are true, noble and honorable for a child of God, those things that are right, pure, lovely admirable, excellent and praiseworthy. Are you really sure that what you are thinking about your spouse is really true? Do you have proof that he or she is flirting or having an affair? Is it right to think of your partner as unfaithful to you when there is no evidence of such happening? Is it lovely to do so? Can you lift up your hand and praise God while you are doing so? If you cannot, then don't think such thoughts. If you can control your thoughts about your partner, jealousy will be controlled.

WHAT YOU MUST KNOW ABOUT JEALOUSY IN MARRIAGE

1. It is built on fear.
2. It is a product of negative thoughts – wrong imagination, wrong analysis of things seen and heard.
3. Jealousy breeds distrust and provokes the innocent to anger. No one loves to be accused of what he or she has not done.
4. To be suspicious of your partner is to live in fear, and fear will torment your mind and make you miserable and angry with your spouse, and this will in turn put your home under unnecessary pressure and stress.
5. To be suspicious of your spouse is to display your lack of trust for him or her. Suspicion is a signpost that you don't trust your spouse.
6. Suspicion creates tension in the home.
7. Suspicion can backfire. And when it backfires, the innocent that is accused, is pushed to do what he or she is accused of doing.
8. Jealousy has destroyed many marriages. Don't let it destroy yours. It is the root of many quarrels in homes.

REMEDY

1. Have faith in your spouse.

The Bible has told us that there is no fear in love, and that perfect love drives out fear. If you truly love your spouse therefore, have faith in him or her that he or she will not be unfaithful. It is not right to marry the one you can not trust. Since you trusted your spouse enough to marry him or her, keep trusting till death separates you.

2. Don't be bothered about knowing everyone your spouse discusses with and what they discussed.

Trust is the word. Be at peace with yourself over your spouse's movement and associates, so you won't die of high blood pressure or heart attack. You can't follow your spouse everywhere he or she goes. You can't know all the people he or she sees. You can't know all the things he or she discusses in a day with every one he or she meets. If your spouse can trust you that you are, and will remain faithful, why can't you trust also? Worrying yourself about these things will weigh heavily on your mind, destroy your peace and affect your marriage.

Don't make your spouse peace-less and uncomfortable around you. Don't turn your spouse into a liar because of your numerous questions. Relax and trust your spouse. When you see your spouse talking and laughing with someone of the opposite sex, don't be upset and troubled.

3. Lift your spouse up to God regularly in prayer.

When there is a proof of an affair with another, bear in mind that only God can keep one free from an illegal affair. Making trouble and noise will not do it. You need to pray for one another regularly to make your marriage effective and successful. If your spouse is having an affair in truth, quarrelling and fighting about it will not change anything, but drive him or her away completely into the arms of the other person. When there is proof of an affair, I want you to know it is a battle of love and faith, which will require intensive prayers, forbearance and forgiveness on your own part. Quarrelling does not change anyone, only God changes people. Appeal to God to change your spouse. While you pray, you must love your spouse as if there is no problem at all. See it as a competition with another to win the heart of your spouse. Put in your best in loving and caring for your spouse as you did when you first met and won his or her heart to marry you. Pray and love your spouse no matter the bitterness you may feel. Look up to God.

4. Improve the quality of your character and contribution to your marriage by making sure that all areas of complain are looked into.

That your spouse's complains are becoming too much is not a sign that he or she has found another outside. Rather, it is a call to change and make the home more conducive for your spouse.

You cannot be fighting your spouse over a supposed affair that does not exist when you are not meeting up to his or her expectations at home. That will be double injury which will definitely push your spouse to think of quitting the marriage as it comes to an unbearable point. Work on yourself. Think improvement and measuring up, and not making excuses or pointing accusing finger.

Pleasing your spouse should be your priority and not jealousy. Satisfy your spouse sexually. Make sure you are not the one pushing him or her outside through sex denial. Make sure your house is always tidy and conducive for your spouse. Deal with the nagging habit and constant quarrels. Work on your communication skills and improve in your manner of speech. Make sure that your words are such that edifies your relationship. Look into the areas of complain and make sure improvement is made daily.

5. Accept and believe your partners explanations until proven otherwise.

I want to believe you did not marry a liar. If you can say, "I did not marry a liar", then it will be wrong of you not to believe your partner's explanations to your jealousy motivated questions. But if you married someone you knew before marriage lies a lot, your case is a much difficult one, because it will be difficult for you to know when he or she is telling the truth. Never the less, you must make yourself believe your spouse is telling the truth until proven a lie.

Learn to trust, and then trust. You can't love the one you are not able, and unwilling to trust. Love is not complete until there is evidence of trust. There is no fear in love. Perfect love drives out fear. Through your perfect love for your spouse, drive out the fear called jealousy, and you will enjoy marital peace and happiness.