



Believe in Your Friend's Marriage

By: Deb Weakly

What do you do when your friend experiences difficulty in her marriage?

She might call you to vent about her husband's selfishness, or she might be a wreck after finding flirty texts on her husband's cell phone. In any case, friendship has the power to help your friend to keep going and believe in her marriage, or it can contribute to making their marriage worse.

As Christ-Followers, our friendships should reflect the love and commitment of Jesus, and we should do what we can to encourage each other to keep trying in our marriages instead of giving up.

I believe marriage is worth fighting for, so here are some thoughts on how we can encourage each other's marriages:

- 1. Pray!** Pray with her and for her. Pray silently as you are talking together, and ask for the Holy Spirit to anoint every word of your conversation. Encourage her to pray daily for her husband and their marriage.
- 2. Remind her that she is not alone, God is her helper, and the battle belongs to the Lord.** God hates divorce and wants her marriage to work. He still delights in doing miracles and bringing hope to hopeless situations. God heals all wounds!
- 3. Become a patient listener.** Take the time to listen to your friend and don't judge her or her husband. It's so easy to be critical, but remember we all sin and need Jesus to help us to have a successful marriage.
- 4. Encourage your friend to look inside her own heart, and pray for God to reveal anything that needs to change.** Help her to remember that marital discord involves both parties, and God can help her change the things she might be doing which contributes to the problem.
- 5. Help her to see the good in her man.** Try to give a different perspective on her husband's motives or actions. Was he tired, did they just have a new baby, or has she hurt him recently with her words?
- 6. Offer to help with the children so she and her husband can have alone time together.** They may need a date night, or they may need childcare so they can go to counseling. Both are important, and it will help relieve their minds to know the children are lovingly cared for.
- 7. Expect storms.** We are sinners saved by grace and everyone has flaws. Only Jesus is perfect. Encourage your friend to see her husband's weaknesses as an opportunity to partner with God in prayer and show him the unconditional love Jesus shows us each day. If you don't think you can say this to your friend, pray this over her!
- 8. Keep it positive.** Sometimes opening up to a friend can feel awkward after the storm passes and her marriage improves. Encourage and tell her everyone goes through seasons of challenging times in their marriages and there is no shame in having difficulties.
- 9. Speak forward into her life.** Help your friend to remember the legacy that a strong marriage leaves for her children. Remind her it is not a sprint, it is a marathon! Stay the course- there are blessings in store for her perseverance & commitment!
- 10. Most importantly, stick it out with your friend, every step of the way.** Don't give up if the going gets tough. Stay in it with them. Keep praying and keep encouraging them to keep working at it. No marriage is hopeless, even if it feels like it. God can restore, and He often does His greatest work through intense trials.