

Helping Troubled Marriages: Healing and Hope

Marriage breakdown is common. The divorce rate, even amongst Christians, is high. All couples struggle. There are often battles for control. Intimacy too often turns into intimidation. Many young people from broken homes are cynical that marriage is a good thing. How can pastors and counselors and youth leaders help build strong foundations and good communication? How do we help couples to enjoy gender difference and understand biblical principles of love, respect, submission, and service?

Richard Winter is one of the leaders of the European Christian Counselors Network. He is currently Professor of Practical Theology and Director of Covenant Seminary's counseling program in St Louis, USA. He is also a Psychotherapist and Counsellor who was trained in Medicine and Psychiatry in England before being on the staff and a director of the English branch of the L'Abri Fellowship for 14 years. He has served in a variety of pastoral and teaching leadership roles in the church. He is the author of *When Life Goes Dark: Finding Hope in the Midst of Depression*, IVP 2012; *Perfecting Ourselves to Death: The Pursuit of Excellence and the Perils of Perfectionism*, IVP, April 2005; *Still Bored in a Culture of Entertainment: Rediscovering Passion and Wonder*, IVP, 2002; *Choose Life, A study of abortion and other reproductive technologies* (Out of Print), and professional journal articles. He is married, with four children and eight grandchildren.

A. Insights from Common Grace Wisdom

B. John Gottman and *The Science of Trust*

1. "Masters" and "Disasters"
2. Nurturing Friendship and Intimacy
3. Managing Conflict
4. Building Love Maps
5. Creating Shared Meaning
6. Rebuilding Trust

C. Sue Johnson: *Hold Me Tight* and *Love Sense*

1. Identifying “Demon Dialogues” or “Defensive Dances”
2. Naming the Cycle
3. Naming and revisiting “raw spots”
4. Fears and Longings
5. Repentance and Forgiveness
6. “A Secure Base and Safe Haven”

D. Holy or Happy?

1. Ephesians 5:21-33

Suggested Reading:

The Science of Trust, John Gottman, 2011

Hold Me Tight. Sue Johnson, Little, Brown and Co, 2008

Love Sense, Sue Johnson, 2013

Safe Haven Marriage, Archibald Hart and Sharon Morris May,

Sacred Marriage, Gary Thomas, Zondervan, 2000

The Meaning of Marriage, Tim and Kathy Keller, Riverhead Books, 2011

Counseling Couples in Conflict, James N. Sells and Mark A. Yarhouse, IVP, 2011