

IS FIGHTING ALLOWED IN A CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE?

By Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott Blog post – November 24, 2021

Many Christian couples are highly uncomfortable with the idea of disagreeing with one another, much less fighting outright. For many people in the church, the idea of conflict in their marriages is crippling. A common question we've been asked is, is fighting **allowed** in a Christian marriage?

The truth is, getting into disagreements and arguments is a common challenge every couple faces. While it's not inherently wrong to fight, it's *how you fight* that dictates whether you'll be able to solve the problem at hand. So, fighting isn't necessarily wrong in a Christian marriage; it's whether you can *fight well*.

DISAGREE, BUT DO NO HARM

You can disagree without being harmful to one another. Getting into a heated discussion doesn't mean that you're doing damage. But being hurtful, manipulative, and cruel will deeply wound your spouse, so it's important to avoid such behaviors.

In and of itself, a fight in any marriage isn't the problem. The problem is whether *mistreatment* is happening. If you respect one another, show love and kindness, and set boundaries around how you're going to handle disagreements, it's easier to keep difficult conversations civil and loving.

A FIGHT CAN SHED LIGHT

As unpleasant as fighting is, it can sometimes shed light on aspects of your marriage (or yourself) that you need to work on. You may discover an issue you've both been avoiding that needs to be addressed. Also, openly disagreeing might help you to solve a problem that has come up before. This clarity can lead to a healthier relationship, which is a tremendous plus.

Additionally, a "good" fight in a marriage can help spouses take a closer look at themselves to see where they may be able to improve their communication skills. Healthy spouses shed light on one another's weak areas, one way or another, forcing each other to take a long look in the mirror and improve on issues that may be leading to disagreements.

OVERCOMING CONFLICT STRENGTHENS MARRIAGES

As Christians, we dream of having strong marriages that honor God and one another. Although we hope to avoid conflict as much as possible, there will be times when we argue or fight. We should always do our best to avoid escalating disagreements as much as possible, so here are some tips for navigating a fight in a healthy way:

- ♥ Show self-control, even in the face of anger
- ♥ Before you speak, consider how your words might do harm
- ♥ Don't attempt to be hurtful to one another
- ♥ Remember that you aren't enemies; you're on the same team
- ♥ Go in with a game plan for how you want to handle the situation