

mmct communiqué

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QUICK links to features in this issue:

MARRIAGE ON THE MISSION FIELD

Online resources just for missionary husbands & wives

BOOKS ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE



SERMON SERIES ON MARRIAGE

*Tim Keller, John Piper
C.J. & Carolyn Mahaney
Joshua Harris and others*

MARRIAGE COUNSELING FOR MISSIONARIES

This Month's Communiqué Focus:

Member Care Resources for Couples

Dear Friends,

Did you receive the April '08 issue of the **Communiqué**? If so, you might remember that we introduced its contents with this sentence: "There's no shortage of Third Culture Kid (TCK) member care resources for parents who work in cross-cultural settings."

Well, the same can't be said about the focus of this month's **Communiqué**, **Member Care for Couples**. That's because the supply of member care resources *just* for missionary husbands and wives *as couples* is a modest one. It's almost as if the marriages of missionaries are taken for granted. That's a mistake, to be sure, since life on the mission field is seldom a second honeymoon. On the contrary: If a couple is having marriage problems while in their home-country, there's a good chance those problems will be magnified overseas. And even healthy marriages are put to the test when multiple relocations, language learning, living with other couples and singles, host-culture expectations and ministry goals are added to the mix...

That makes the resources for married missionaries referenced in this **Communiqué** very valuable ones; though fewer than those available for TCKs, they're good. Do you know of others? If so, tell us about them. In addition to these, we'll point you to some popular marriage resources which have helped many Christian couples in their pursuit of the Lord's best for their relationships, both on and off the field of service.

Many blessings to you and your teams.

The Mobile Member Care Team

Accra, Ghana



A UNIQUE RESOURCE: In our search for easy-to-access articles on missionary marriages, one stood out among the rest: **Strengthening the Marriage of Missionary Couples**. It's actually a collection of articles published by Christianity Today and available for downloading at a small charge. The five articles included in the package discuss the challenge of married life overseas, survival skills for couples on the field and what to do when husbands and wives disagree about their calling to a missionary career.

Marriage on the Mission Field on the Web: *Online resources for missionary couples are out there if you know where to look. We searched the web and found the following:*



Marriage Missions International notes that “Missionaries and Spouses often have no one they can talk to when they encounter problems or issues in their marriage.” They offer the articles listed below in reply to help missionary marriages. They’ve also put together a collection of articles for pastors and their spouses (one worth special mention: [Is Marriage In Conflict With Your Ministry?](#)) and an extensive collection of general interest articles on marriage, many of which apply to couples serving cross-culturally. Those are listed to the right.

- [For the Spouse of a Short Term Missionary](#)
- [Accountability Questions to Ask Yourself to Stay Pure](#)
- [What Workers Ought to Know About Sexual Stress](#)
- [Emotionally Abandoning Your Spouse For the Sake of Ministry](#)

Also on the MARRIAGE MISSIONS website:

- [Abuse in Marriage](#)
- [Children’s Effect on Marriage](#)
- [Communication and Conflict](#)
- [Communication Tools](#)
- [Emotionally Distant Spouse](#)
- [Emotional Infidelity](#)
- [Marriage and Finances](#)
- [Marriage Stages](#)
- [Gender Differences](#)
- [Pornography and Cybersex](#)
- [Romantic Ideas](#)
- [Sexual Issues](#)

FROM THE MISSIONARY CARE WEBSITE “Cross-cultural living is difficult,” writes **Ron Kotesky** and marriage difficulties make it even more interesting. To make sense of things, he wrote a series of brochures that explore “**Missionary Marriage Issues**” based on the two marriages of William Carey.



NOTABLE FINDS AROUND THE WEB

- ~ [You’re Called But Your Wife Isn’t](#)
- ~ [My Husband Wants To Be a Missionary](#)
- ~ [Marriage with Missions in Mind](#)
- ~ [The Art of Compromise](#)
- ~ [Bonds and Boundaries in Marriage](#)

- [Hubby’s Away](#)
- [Keeping Romance Alive](#)
- [Enjoy Marriage](#)
- [ABCs of Communication](#)
- [Love That Builds](#)
- [Marriage Erosion](#)
- [Perfect Ending](#)
- [Strong Wife, Quiet Husband](#)
- [Healing Encouraging Words](#)

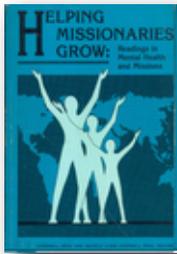


Peter's Wife

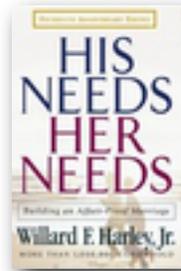
Help and encouragement for women living cross culturally.

Peter’s Wife “is a place for women working outside their home culture to connect, encourage and help one another.” In addition to the marriage-focused articles listed to the left, [archived](#) articles can be found on a range of topics including Life Overseas, Overseas Service, Emotions, Children and Single Women.

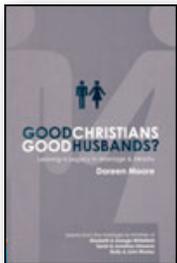
Books on Marriage Here's a sampling of popular books for Christian couples. All but the first are of general interest, and even that one covers other topics in addition to its three papers on missionary-marriages. Some of these books are available from our library. To borrow one, send **an email to MMCT** with your request; be sure to tell us where you are and how to get the book to you from Accra.



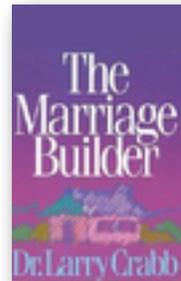
Helping Missionaries Grow contains fifty articles on missionary adjustment and growth, including three on missionary couples: *Stress Factors in Missionary Marriages*, *Mid-Life Transitions* and *Resolving Conflicts in Christian Marriage*.



His Needs, Her Needs By identifying and meeting each others most important needs, husbands and wives will deepen their love and desire for each other.



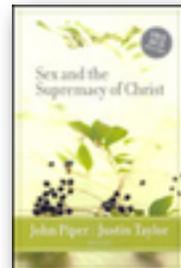
Good Christians, Good Husbands? is about the marriages of John & Molly Wesley, George & Elizabeth Whitefield, and Jonathan & Sarah Edwards. J.I. Packer calls it "a wise book on the problem of combining ministry and marriage to the glory of God and the good of all concerned."



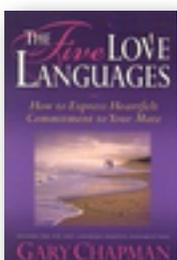
The Marriage Builder Our deepest needs cannot be satisfied by a marriage partner. The Lord, rather than our spouse, satisfies those needs and frees partners for "soul oneness," a commitment to minister to our spouse's needs rather than manipulating them to meet our own needs.



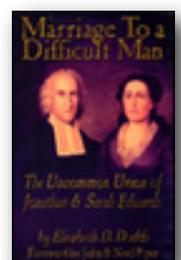
Marriage Takes More Than Love The difference between smooth sailing and shipwrecks in marriage lies in what couples do about rough weather. This book "shows how to make choices that are in your best interest and those of your spouse and God."



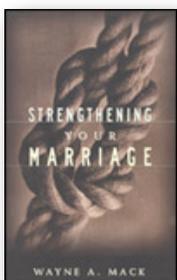
Sex and the Supremacy of Christ encourages readers to fight for marital intimacy as it was meant to be, enjoying what God made good while striving against contemporary distortions.



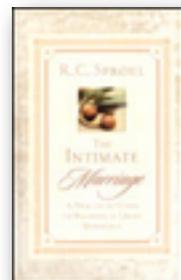
The Five Love Languages Author Gary Chapman identifies five love languages (Words of Affirmation, Quality Time, Receiving Gifts, Acts of Service, and Physical Touch) and illustrates each with real-life examples from his counseling practice.



Marriage to a Difficult Man is a convicting classic on the domestic life of America's most famous theologian, Jonathan Edwards, and his wife Sarah with many contemporary applications for couples in ministry.



Strengthening Your Marriage offers practical information on marital roles, communication, finances, sex, child raising, and family religion -- for couples and member care providers.



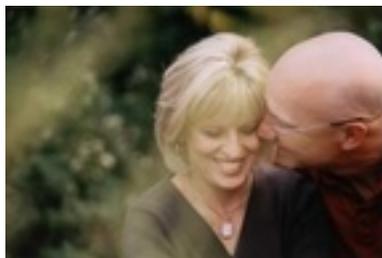
The Intimate Marriage is a book that shows how marriage prospers when grounded in the wisdom of God. The author explores communication, roles, anger, sex, divorce, and more, sharing first what the Bible says about each of these and then offering practical lessons from his own marriage

Audio Resources on Marriage

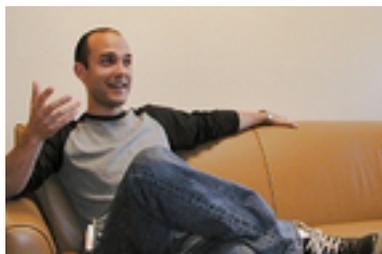
Lock the door, get your iPod, plug in two pairs of headphones (you'll need a 'splitter'), find a godly speaker teaching about a vital topic, and what do you have? You have an instant mini-retreat. Here are some thought-provoking audio messages on marriage to encourage the hearts of missionary husbands and wives and strengthen them in their commitment to each other.



Marriage As... *New York Magazine* described Dr. Timothy Keller as “the most successful Christian evangelist in New York City.” More than a pastor, he sees himself as a missionary to the city and is committed to “entering the culture's stories and retelling them with the gospel.” His sermon series, “Marriage As...” is available for downloading and includes “Marriage as Ministry Power,” “Marriage as Commitment” and “Marriage as Friendship.” Many missionaries hunger for solid spiritual food; Dr. Keller’s sermons satisfy that hunger.



C.J. and Carolyn Mahaney have shared their lives as well as their **“Sex, Romance and the Glory of God”** message at many churches in the USA. It can be downloaded for free from [The Bible Church of Little Rock](#) together with eight other messages touching on marriage by C.J. and Carolyn (to find them, type “Mahaney” in the “speaker” search field). The Mahaney’s serve with Sovereign Grace Ministries in its mission to establish and support local churches.



Purity Joshua Harris, author of the book *I Kissed Dating Goodbye*, is now the author of five other books and the senior pastor of Covenant Life Church in Gaithersburg, Maryland. His six-part sermon series called “Purity” includes messages on “God’s Plan for Sex,” “Resisting Lust,” and “Holiness and the Media.” All can be downloaded from the Covenant Life website.



Marriage by Grace Stu and Ruth Ann Batstone lead seminars on “Marriage and Intimacy by Grace” for World Harvest, a mission headquartered in Philadelphia, PA. Some of their marriage material was recorded at a church retreat and is available for downloading. Topics include: Marriage is a New Way of Seeing, Married to Mr. and Mrs. Always Right and Enhancing Sexual Intimacy in Marriage.



Marriage, Christ, and Covenant: One Flesh for the Glory of God John Piper, the preaching pastor at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is guided by the maxim, “God is most satisfied in me when I am most satisfied in Him.” His series on marriage referenced above includes topics like Staying Married Is Not About Staying in Love, Marriage: Forgiving and Forbearing and Pursuing Conformity to Christ in the Covenant of Marriage.

Counseling Centers for missionary couples

“When they arrived, they said they didn’t know if they could stay together much longer, let alone return to their mission field.” Missionaries aren’t immune from the worst that can befall any couple. That’s why the Lord has moved many in his Body to establish counseling ministries that serve missionary couples.



ALONGSIDE is a Christian counseling ministry in **Richland, Michigan**. It’s “geared to the unique needs of Christian leaders, including missionaries. At an Alongside retreat, you’ll find a safe place where professional counselors can help as you seek healing and renewed strength for ministry.” While marriages aren’t the sole focus of their retreats, the issues addressed are fundamental to all healthy marriages. “Our program is usually a catalyst for much growth, and if you do not grow together, you are more vulnerable to ‘growing apart!’” according to the ministry’s website.

Where can missionaries go for confidential marriage counseling? They’re welcomed with open arms at **EMERGE** in **Akron, Ohio** where specially trained therapists minister to their unique needs every year. The Broken Heart Fund underwrites mental health care for full-time ministry families so that no one is turned away because of inability to pay for services. Inexpensive, lodging is offered on a space-available basis for out-of-town ministry families.



BUDAPEST CARE CENTER in **Hungary** offers counseling for Christian workers from **Europe, Russia and Central Asia**. Their primary work is short-term intensive counseling and “marriage conflict is one of the concerns that bring people to the Center seeking help.” Services are provided in English and Hungarian and are free of charge.

The Budapest Care Center



TUMAINI COUNSELING CENTRE in **Nairobi, Kenya** has provided counseling services to missionaries from about 160 different mission organizations serving in **East & Central Africa and beyond**.



MARBLE RETREAT is an interdenominational Christian counseling provider in **Colorado** serving Christian ministers who are burdened and troubled. Their mission is to bring healing, hope and restoration those they serve through Christ-centered brief intensive counseling. “If you are married, we insist on spousal participation. We also ask that you be in a place of readiness for the tough work of self-disclosure and self-awareness.”



Barnabas Zentrum in **Baden, Austria** serves Christian workers from **Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East**. It’s primary ministry is as an interdenominational personal and marital retreat center for pastors, and missionaries. The atmosphere of Barnabas Zentrum provides a place of solitude and confidentiality in which such issues as marital crisis may be worked through.

Other Counseling Centers

France [Entrepiéres](#) provides counseling and a place to rest for French speakers.

France [One Another Ministries](#) provides counseling in French and English

Germany [Jochen & Christine Schuppener](#) counsel missionaries in Kaufering, Germany

Switzerland [Ernst & Jacqueline Gassmann](#) of OM counsel missionaries in German or English

Thailand [Chiang Mai \(Cornerstone\) Counseling](#) serves missionaries in Thailand and throughout Asia

United Kingdom [Wayne Platt](#) is located in Wales and provides counseling in English