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Religious commitment, rather than mere religious affiliation, contributes to greater levels of marital success. Barna Research
Evangelicals who attend church regularly divorce at a rate 35 percent lower than secular couples. In contrast, nominal evangelicals, who rarely or never attend church, have higher divorce rates than secular couples. W. Bradford Wilcox

Isolation....

Isolation is a disease that afflicts every marriage at some point. A husband and wife slowly drift apart in ways they don't even recognize at first. **Signs of isolation include the following:**

- A feeling that your spouse isn't hearing you and doesn't want to understand
- An attitude of "Who cares?" "Why try?"
- A feeling of being unable to please or meet the expectations of your spouse

- A sense that your spouse is detached from you
- A refusal to cope with what's really wrong: "That's your problem, not mine."
- A feeling that keeping the peace by avoiding the conflict is better than the pain of dealing with reality

Isolation is like a terminal virus that invades your marriage, silently, slowly, and painlessly at first. Marriage can eventually be crippled by boredom and apathy,

and could even die from emotional malnutrition and neglect. **Some steps to overcome isolation in marriage:**

- Learn God's plan for marriage.
- Reaffirm your commitment.
- Deal with your selfishness.
- Begin to pray with your spouse.
- Develop your relational skills.
- Spend focused time together.
- Attend a marriage conference.
- Start/attend a couples' Bible study

[From FamilyLife www.familylife.com]

Our story

We were like a lot of people who grew up in the 50's and 60's. We both grew up in church in a middle class family. It was an era when **"all good families go to church."**

With that culture came a lot of complacency - life was not as polarized as it is now. In that church attendance, we did not really see how the Bible made a difference in our every day life - in our homes, in our relationships. **We saw the Bible more as a book of rules and history.**

When we married, **we did not see church or our spiritual growth as a priority.** We would go to

church occasionally. We also did not understand the concepts of **"oneness"** or of marriage being a **picture of Christ and the church.**

In our late 20's, **we came to the end of ourselves.** Life was not turning out as we had planned.

We were broken. Our faith became the foundation on which we built the rest of our lives - **together.** We changed the direction of our lives **together.** We began to grow spiritually **together.**

Shortly after that growth began, **our family expanded,** we had our first child. We knew that our skills and knowledge for parenting and

marriage were **far from what God wanted for us.**

Then, our quest and our passion was to know how to live the Christ-life as a married couple and as parents. That was 35 years ago.

In this journey, we have not always done it right. We have struggled with parenting and marriage - **but we have grown together and we did not give up!** We still have disagreements but we do not let them divide us.

If Christ can work in us and through us, He can do it in you too ... if you let HIM!