



Married life, has to be renewed each day... Love isn't easy. It isn't easy. No. But the most beautiful thing that a man and a woman can give each other is true love, for a lifetime.  
~Pope Francis~

**Table of contents**

To love and to cherish—bringing mercy into marriage	2
Controlling The Effects of Media & Technology In Marriages	4
3 Ways Christianity Makes a Marriage Unique	7

## To love and to cherish—bringing mercy into marriage

On their wedding day a bride and groom may have stars in their eyes, but they have rocks in their heads if they think their partner isn't going to:

- ◆ Drive them nuts. Sometimes.
- ◆ Take them for granted. On occasions.
- ◆ Do something that truly hurts them. Once in a while.
- ◆ Husband does it to wife. Wife does it to husband.



### Work in progress

To grow in love is to grow in mercy. God, all merciful, is love (1 Jn 4:8) and — thanks be to God! — a husband and wife were created in his image. But that growth in love and mercy isn't like some

beautiful piece of furniture delivered to your front door and placed in your home.

No, no, no. When it comes to virtues, God can be more like ... Some assembly required. Here's a box crammed with parts, here are the instructions. Now, put it together! (Yes, His helpline is always open.)

How do you do that? The good news: He gives each of you a lot of opportunities to get better at loving and being merciful. The bad news: He gives each of you a lot of opportunities to get better at loving and being merciful. Practice won't make you perfect, but it will make you much, much better.



There are moments — there can be periods — when those wedding-day stars are replaced with long-time-married sparks of anger. Even in a happy marriage. Even in a marriage filled with joy and grace because: A marriage is made up of two imperfect people. (Yes, yes, your betrothed was perfect! But how he or she has changed! Or more correctly, how your perception has improved.) That's why each person, at times, needs to seek forgiveness. Why each, at times, needs to offer it. Enter mercy. Wedding homilists and marriage vows speak of love, honor and cherish, but mercy pops up again and again as the marriage progresses. And with mercy, that relationship does make progress. It broadens, deepens, intensifies.

If love is the engine that drives a marriage, mercy is the oil that keeps its many parts running smoothly. What's in this amazing fluid that goes such a long way on cutting down friction? The glossary of the Catechism of the Catholic Church puts it this way: Mercy is "the loving kindness, compassion, or forbearance shown to one who offends (e.g., the mercy of God to us sinners)." No couple gets very far down the road of life together without one person offending the other. And the other person offending the one. Those unpleasant mileposts can demand loving kindness, compassion and forbearance (that is, patience and leniency). Wonderful in theory. Pretty darned tough sometimes in the real world. And marriage is no honeymoon. It's as real as real can get.

With all that in mind, here are a few points to consider:

### Accountability

Mercy talks, and mercy listens. It's no secret that one of the cornerstones of a happy and healthy marriage is communication. But not all talking is created equal. Sometimes it's so easy. ("That coat looks good on you.") Other times, not so much. Other times, it's saying things that are hard to say or hearing things that are hard to hear. ("Over the last couple of months your drinking has ...")

It's a wonderful, heady feeling to realize that someone who knows you better than anyone else on earth still loves you. Who, despite his or her awareness of your many faults and shortcomings, still truly loves you. But that also means your spouse is the one who can tell you when you've started to go off course. Started to slip here or there. Started to become less like the person God created you to be.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Not that you or your loved one will ever reach that goal in this lifetime, but moving forward in that direction matters. To you. To him or her. To your marriage.

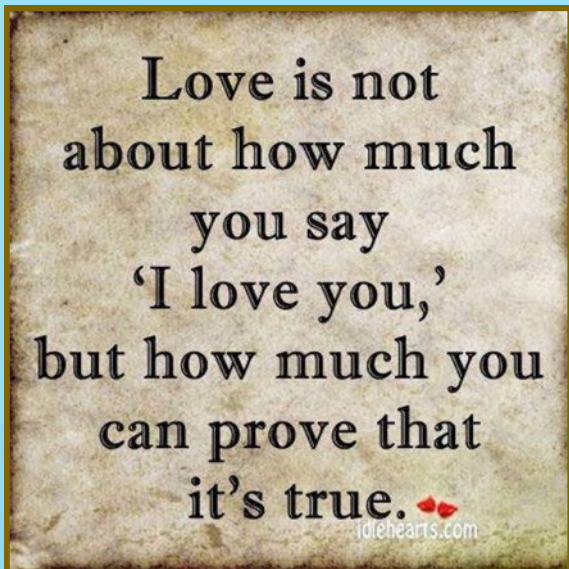
**Outside assistance**

There's a big — and important — difference between being merciful and being a doormat. A misguided sense of mercy can lead to a host of problems in a marriage. Mercy doesn't overlook, ignore or simply dismiss an action or pattern that needs to be addressed.

At times it can rightfully and wisely call for professional help. A case of the sniffles? Maybe a nice bowl of chicken soup. A ruptured appendix? Much more sophisticated and professional care. A series of spat or a developing pattern of underappreciating each other? Perhaps a date night or setting up those evenings on a regular schedule. A larger and more complex problem — infidelity, addiction or abuse? Assistance from those educated and trained to help couples and individuals.

**Called to mercy**

Mercy is always a choice — an action based on free will. Just as God will never force someone to be merciful, neither can one spouse force the other to act that way. Yes, over time, being merciful can seem like an automatic response, but that's only because — as the years have passed — a person learns to offer mercy with grace and



speed. It may appear effortless, but each time, whether for a small misdeed or large offense, mercy demands an action. Or, rather, four actions.

Being merciful is making the decision to be *kind, compassionate, patient and lenient.*

In *Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis' message announcing the Jubilee of Mercy, the Holy Father wrote:

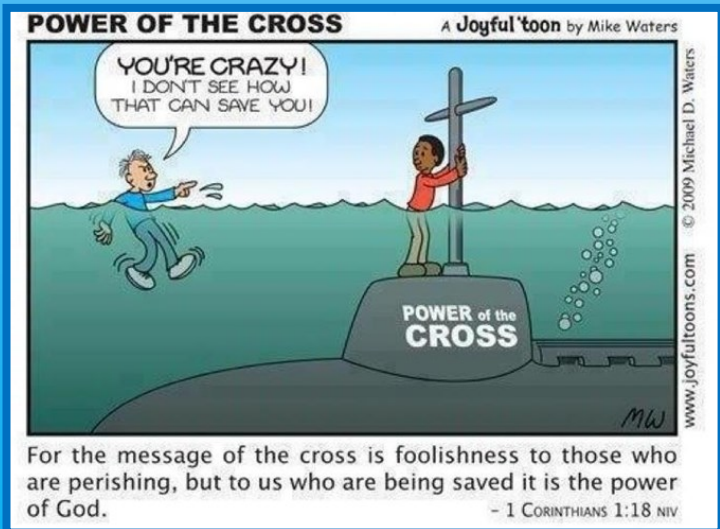
"As we can see in sacred Scripture, mercy is a key word that indicates God's action toward us. He does

not limit himself merely to affirming his love, but makes it visible and tangible.

"Love, after all, can never be just an abstraction. By its very nature, it indicates something concrete: intentions, attitudes, and behaviors that are shown in daily living. The mercy of God is his loving concern for each one of us. He feels responsible; that is, he desires our well-being and he wants to see us happy, full of joy, and peaceful. This is the path which the merciful love of Christians must also travel. As the Father loves, so do his children. Just as he is merciful, so we are called to be merciful to each other" (No. 9).

So you are called to be merciful to that wonderful, amazing, loving — and imperfect — person you married.

**Adapted from:** <https://www.osv.com/osvnewsweekly/article/tabid/535/artmid/13567/articleid/19557/to-love-and-to-cherish-bringing-mercy-into-marriage.aspx>



# Controlling The Effects of Media & Technology In Marriages

by Debby Sotunde

For you to be able to control the effect of Media & Technology, you must realise that media steals your time, it invades your mind, and also affect your expectations of your partner.

## Examine Yourself

- ◆ How much time do you spend online? Do you spend equal, or more time, offline with your family?
- ◆ Do you notice that you are quick to go online when things are not going well at home, whether in your marriage, or with your kids?
- ◆ Do you intentionally seek out affirmation from others by what you say online?
- ◆ Have you formed unhealthy relationships with others you have met or known online?
- ◆ Is TV, radio or newspaper your place of solace?

## Influence Of Media and Technology

In marriage, the negative and positive effects of Media and Technology (M&T) always go together. How to avoid the former, and get the benefits from the latter, is the great challenge.

## FOUR LAWS OF MEDIA

- ◆ What does the technology make better ?
- ◆ What does the technology make outdated?
- ◆ What does the technology bring back , that had been made outdated earlier?
- ◆ What does the technology cause when used to extremes?

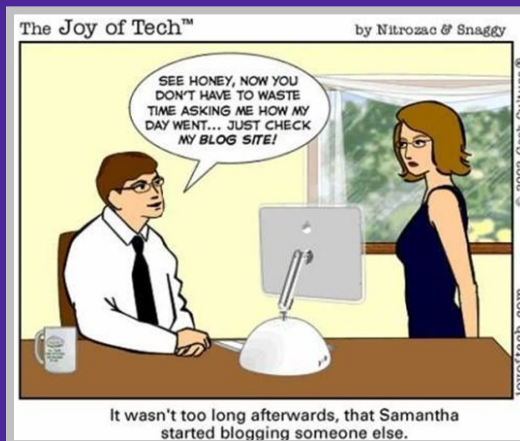


*"It was bad enough when the grand kids knew more about technology than me."*

## Positive and Negative Impacts of Media on M&T

### POSITIVE IMPACTS OF M & T

- ◆ It enhances your ability to stay continually connected to your spouse throughout the day or when you are not around.
- ◆ It can relieve the stress of loneliness i.e. watching TV for entertainment, reading magazines etc.
- ◆ It stores and retrieves part of our story that may be previously unknown i.e birthday parties, birth ceremonies, baby videos recorded etc.
- ◆ It is a huge mountain of knowledge if well utilised and maximized i.e. using hubpages.com to write informative articles such as this, getting information on how to influence in a positive way etc.



*It wasn't too long afterwards, that Samantha started blogging someone else.*

### NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF M & T

- ◆ Media contends and steal our time if not properly utilized i.e. wasting lots of time on social media, having unnecessary chats on mobile phones etc.
- ◆ It invades our mind; our mind takes in information from various sources on the internet, and this can easily affect our behavior and thoughts in negative ways.
- ◆ It impacts on your expectations of your spouse, i.e you know both positive and negative characteristics of your spouse; however you can feel that the person you are chatting with on social media is nicer and better than your spouse, because you can only see their positive side.
- ◆ It makes you prioritize social media relationship over the real life relationship

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

- It evades attachment and connection, face to face contact, touch, genuine relatedness and depth of connection.

**Impacts of M & T on Children**

The negative impacts of M&T on children cannot be overemphasized. They are as follows

- It can create addictive tendencies in children. Some children cannot do without playing computer games; they prefer these to studying or doing their home work.
- It increases the risk of lesser physical and human interaction; children no longer have desires such as going to the playground to be physically active, or play and interact with their friends.
- They can absorb messages and doctrines from different cultures and people.
- It increases the risk of unstable emotional behavior.
- Cyber bullying; children can be bullied using media, which can affect their self esteem.



Children can also source information for their homework and projects.

**FACTS ABOUT MEDIA**

- Facebook has over 1.15 billion users
- Google has over 343 million users, about 67% are male
- There are over 3 million LinkedIn company pages
- Over 16 billion photos are uploaded on Instagram
- Twitter has over 500 million active users
- Over 1 billion unique monthly visitors on YouTube

Source: Google 2013

**Bonding in Marriage**

Before the advent of media and technology, spouses bonded and had fun together, without letting anything come between them. They travelled, had dinners together, they interacted more, they cuddled and hugged each other.

If there can be rules concerning media in the home such as, no taking of calls when eating as a family, no switching on TV until after homework has been completed, finding time to communicate with each other daily etc. the negative impact of M&T will be reduced

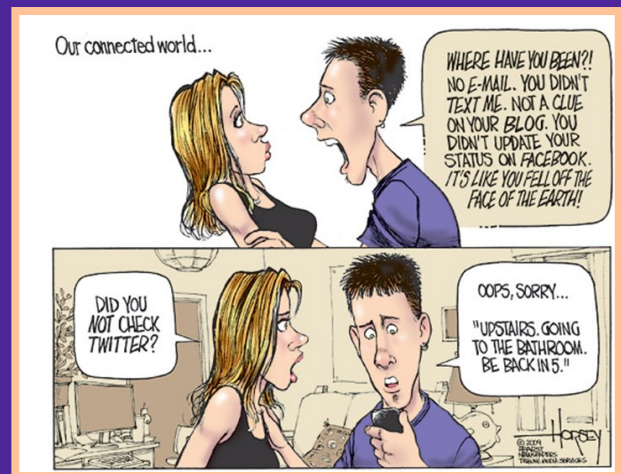
Adapted from: <https://pairedlife.com/relationships/Media-and-Technology-In-Marriage>

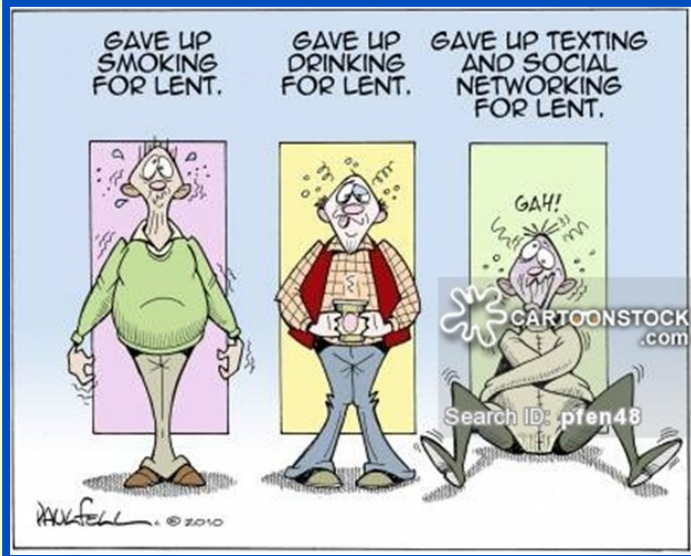
**The Positive Impacts of M&T**

If children are encouraged to channel their energy into using media positively,

such as studying biographies of great persons, watching programmes on how items are invented and such, it can have a beneficial influence.

- Let them know that if media is properly utilized, they can also be innovative, by engaging in such activities as creating applications, games etc.

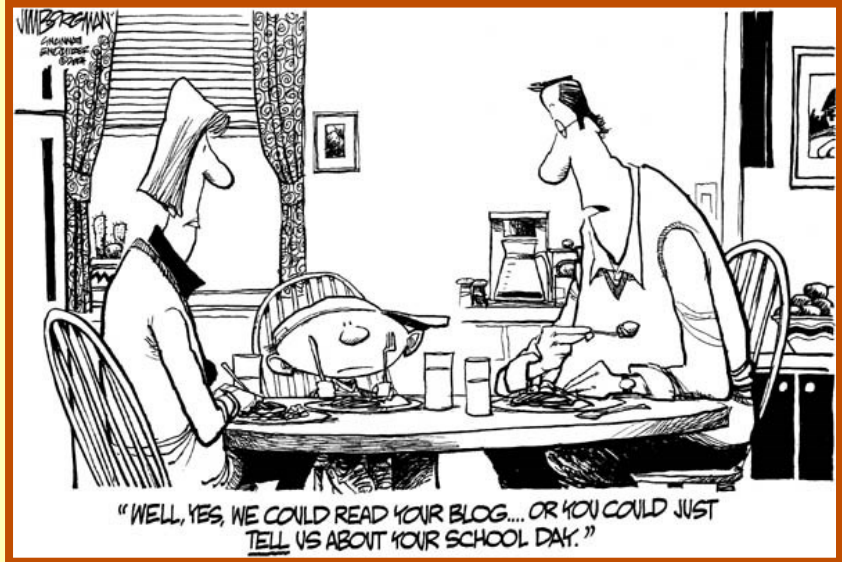




Pray, hope, and don't worry. Worry is useless. God is merciful and will hear your prayer.

Padre Pio

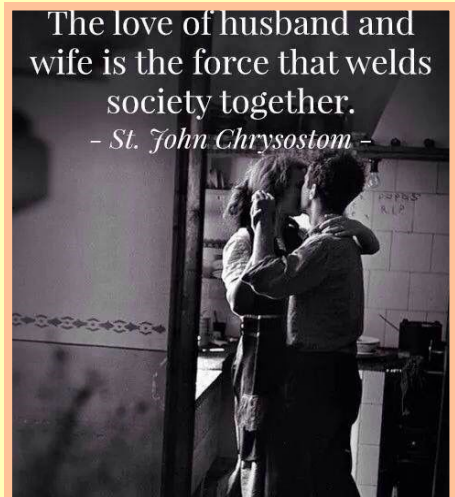
meetville.com



Never talk down about your relationship on Facebook. Don't let people know when your home isn't happy, that's when outsiders think they're welcome in

Julia Turner Creation

IF YOU DON'T WANT TEMPTATION TO FOLLOW YOU, DON'T ACT AS IF YOU'RE INTERESTED..



### 3 Ways Christianity Makes a Marriage Unique

As young newlyweds, we discovered that having little money and unstable jobs led to regular fights. Add to that a bride who desperately missed living with family close by, and it was a recipe for disaster. Without meaning to, we swiftly fell into a pattern of thinking of what we wanted first, never what God wanted for us and our marriage.

Marriage from the gospel has three important components:

**1. Selfishness must be replaced with service.**

“Every single sin flows from the reservoir of self.”

How true is that? Even as Christians, our wants and needs are at the forefront of our minds. But God has called us to put others first. We must replace our hearts of selfishness with hearts for service for our spouse.

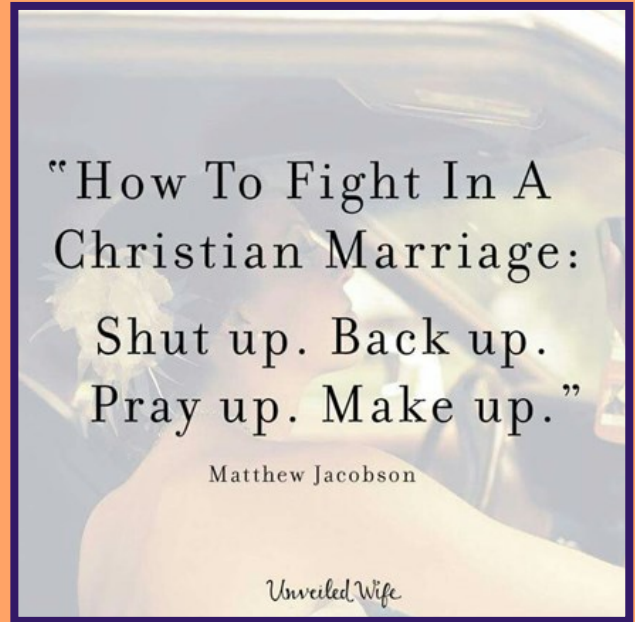
*“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”* **Philippians 2:3-4**

**2. Laziness must be changed into action.**

When problems arise in marriage, many of us are quick to sweep them aside to be dealt with later. We become lazy, telling ourselves that dealing with the problem would only make matters worse. It is far more comfortable to remain stagnant than initiate a painful change. But God has called us to be engaged in our marriage, taking action when issues arise.

We are to become “what Jesus is about: pursuing Christlikeness by means of painfully putting sin to death.”

*“Work hard and do not be lazy. Serve the Lord with a heart full of devotion.”* **Romans 12:11**



**3. Self-righteousness must be transformed into humility.**

“Self-righteousness is that devilish mindset that we possess merit in ourselves, that commends us before God and men.”

Most of us don’t think of ourselves as self-righteous, though we take on this quality every time we want to be “right.” We feel attacked when our spouse comes to us with concerns, so we respond by playing defense attorney. We name ourselves the victim, hurling evidence that asserts our innocence at our spouse. This is not the way that God intended our marriages to look.

“This is to be contrasted with the gospel which teaches us that we have already been sufficiently attacked, critiqued, and judged. The cross *is* the verdict. We are guilty. But the beauty of the gospel is that while we were infinitely sinful we were also unfathomably loved. This brings humility and assurance”.

*“He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ‘Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax*

*(Continued on page 8)*

collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get. But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me, a sinner! I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.” **Luke 18:9-14**

Dear God, We praise you for your love and faithfulness. We thank you for immense grace. We thank you that you give us the power to love well. Thank you for my spouse. Thank you for the gift of marriage. Thank you that you’re for us; that you fight for us. Thank you that you are Redeemer, and you have good in store. We confess, some days, marriage gets tough, and we blow it – again. We ask that you would make us more like you. Please fill our marriage and lives with truth and cover it with blessing. Amen.

Adapted from: <http://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/christian-trends/3-ways-christianity-makes-a-marriage-unique.html>



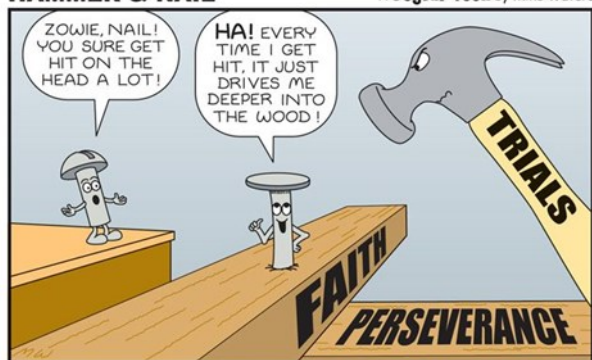
If there were cellphones at the Red Sea

*When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer.*

*~ Corrie Ten Boom ~*

**HAMMER & NAIL**

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. — JAMES 1:2-3 NIV



**Feast of Sts. Anne and Joachim**  
Patron saints of married couples,  
parents and grandparents  
Feast day 26<sup>th</sup> July

God of our fathers, you gave Saints Anne and Joachim the privilege of being the parents of Mary, the mother of your incarnate Son. May their prayers help us to attain the salvation you have promised to your people. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen