

FROM THE CREATORS OF FACING THE GIANTS

# FIREPROOF



## SURPRISED BY REMARRIAGE

By Ginger Kolbaba

Some statistics show that 76 percent of second marriages, 87 percent of third marriages, and 93 percent of fourth marriages will fail within five years. While the U.S. Census bureau and the national Center for Health Statistics are a bit more conservative on those numbers, both agree that at least 65 percent of remarriages end in divorce.

If the divorce rate for remarriage is so high, we need to have our eyes wide open to be aware of what obstacles could doom our marriage, and take every precaution to avoid them. The statistics are dismal, but they are simply statistics. We can prove them wrong.

### **The starting point to make marriage last**

In today's culture, many folks believe marriage is in major transition. Doomsayers point to the same-sex controversy, skyrocketing divorce rates, and an epidemic of infidelity as proof that the institution of marriage is in dire trouble. Even Oprah stated on one of her talk shows that "marriage is really changing."

Oprah, I disagree.

Marriages aren't changing. They're the same as they've been since Adam and Eve. Sexual, emotional, spiritual issues — none of these things are new. Americans are just more outspoken about their struggles, more ready to make public their private concerns, more willing to air their dirty laundry.

Throughout history marriage has always been a battleground, and the war has eternal consequences. When marriages fail, our community fails. Everybody is affected: children, extended family, church, neighbors, friends. Yet we can determine ahead of time not to lose the battle. We can make a commitment that we won't repeat the same mistakes in this marriage. That doesn't mean we won't carry scars or grow battle weary at times. But we will be aware of the battles, and we won't go down the same path that led to the destruction of our previous relationship. So how can we better prepare?

### **We can acknowledge the battle**

Before my friend Sherri married Jake, they had several conversations about how difficult they knew marriage would be. Both were products of divorced homes, so they understood the nature of the battle for marriage. "We walked into marriage with our eyes open to the possibility that somewhere down the road, we were going to get hit by hardships and things that would threaten our relationship," Sherri says. The first step is to acknowledge that marriage will be a series of choices and consequences.

### **We can create an easy-to-remember motto**

Janie and Sam's motto is simply "not us." They came up with it just a few months into their marriage. "We felt as though we needed something like a code to remind us of our marriage mission," Janie explains, especially since Sam, along with most of his family, had experienced divorce. "Now every time we enter conflict, especially in the heat of an argument, one of us will say, 'not us.' This lets the other person know that even though one of us is angry, even though we may not like each other right then, we're not going anywhere."

Janie and Sam's motto makes me think of the movie *Moulin Rouge*, starring Nicole Kidman and Ewan



Association of Marriage  
& Family Ministries  
[www.amfmonline.com](http://www.amfmonline.com)

**Official Movie Site:**  
[www.FireprooftheMovie.com](http://www.FireprooftheMovie.com)

**Resource Site:**  
[www.FireproofmyMarriage.com](http://www.FireproofmyMarriage.com)



[www.marriagecomission.com](http://www.marriagecomission.com)

FROM THE CREATORS OF FACING THE GIANTS

# FIREPROOF



McGregor — a quirky musical that takes place in 1899 Paris. Christian (Ewan McGregor) is a young, penniless writer/songwriter who falls in love with Satine (Nicole Kidman), a courtesan who lives at the Moulin rouge. But a duke has his sights on Satine, and trouble brews. Because of the duke's status as a financial backer of the Moulin rouge, Satine feels forced to sleep with him. She breaks the news to Christian, who tells her that he'll write a song for them, and any time anything threatens to come between them, they will sing this song and remember their love.

Cue the orchestra.

Christian sings "their" song right there, right then: "Come what may, I will love you until my dying day." Throughout the rest of the story, that catchphrase becomes their motto as, in the end, Satine chooses fidelity to Christian and refuses to sleep with the duke.

Delia and her husband took a cue from that idea. Both in second marriages, they put together a mission statement about what they wanted from their remarriage. "When we struggle with sexual issues that stem back to my husband's first marriage," says Delia, "my emotions tend to take over and threaten to drown my resolve. It's an emotional struggle — one I have over and over." So she posted their mission statement on her desk in her home office. "One thing that has helped me," says Delia, "is that I try to remember how I felt when my husband and I first created that statement."

### **We can pray about our commitment**

Resolve to commit your motto to God. Marriage — and especially remarriage — calls us to put all our eggs in one basket if it's going to survive. Because of the pain of a failed marriage, it becomes easy to hoard a few of the hard-boiled eggs. But love calls us to give ourselves completely to our mate, no holding back and no holding out.

Remarriage is a unique circumstance, and it proves to us that God alone is the only source of our strength. Remarriage leaves us understanding that there is no one who will never let us down — except for Christ. He is the only one we can cling to; he understands our pain, and he is always on the scene, even when we feel most alone. Ask him to join you in pursuing excellence in your marriage, and to help you stick with it when everything else encourages you to flee.

The apostle James writes, "Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you" (James 4:8, NLT). I also like the Message translation that says, "Say a quiet yes to God and he'll be there in no time."

That's really the secret to figuring out this thing called remarriage.



[www.growthtrac.com](http://www.growthtrac.com)

Reprinted with permission of Growthtrac



Association of Marriage  
& Family Ministries  
[www.amfmonline.com](http://www.amfmonline.com)

**Official Movie Site:**  
[www.FireprooftheMovie.com](http://www.FireprooftheMovie.com)

**Resource Site:**  
[www.FireproofmyMarriage.com](http://www.FireproofmyMarriage.com)



[www.marriagecomission.com](http://www.marriagecomission.com)