

Three Marriage Bugs and How To Fix Them

Checking for Termites

Ephesians 5:15-21¹

The Termite of **Presumption**

The Termite of **Foolishness**

The Termite of **Ignorance**



Photos courtesy US Department of Agriculture <http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/br/fullstop/>

Termite Facts:

1. Just because you can't see termites doesn't mean that they aren't there.
Termites are small creatures that look much like ants. They measure from 0.1 to 0.5 inches in length.
2. They rarely break through the surface of the wood, preferring to hollow it out.
But they can really chew: Worker termites are equipped with saw-like mandibles for ripping into wood. They have been documented to chew through soft metals such as lead or copper, stucco, plastic, neoprene, rubber and even swimming pool liners.
3. They are industrious. Although I have not been able to verify this, it is commonly reported that they are the only insect that never sleeps. Perhaps their life-cycle is so short that they do not need to sleep.
4. Unless one is diligent about checking, one may never know he has a problem until well after serious damage has been done.
5. Homes damaged by termites each year: 600,000. By fire: 365,000.
6. Cost of termite damage each year: Two billion. This figure is double that of damage caused in a normal year by storms. The average annual damage in New Orleans alone from termites is \$300 million.
7. There are some 3,000 species of termites world-wide; 47 in United States.

¹ All scripture are from the New American Standard (Updated Version), used with permission.

8. Termites form huge colonies of up to 1.5 million members. They are highly organized, and like ant colonies have kings, queens, nymphs, workers and soldier termite members. Termite colonies mature in five to ten years.

9. Why are termites so successful?

- a. Hard to detect
- b. Extremely active during life-span.
- c. Huge, highly organized colonies

10. It is unlikely that termite damage to one's home is covered by homeowner's insurance.

Chuck Swindoll has written effectively on this subject in his article, "Termites in your troth." It is not the big blowouts that affect your marriage so much as the little leaks . . . the little termites that never sleep, the nagging, unresolved problems. While this is not at all a recapitulation of his work, his illustration about termites is herewith credited.

Here then are three marriage bugs; termites and how to fix them.

I. The termite of **Presumption: Eph 5:15-16:** Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of [redeeming] your time, because the days are evil.

A. Be careful how you walk.

Careful: The Greek here means "exercise extreme caution."

Walk: That is to say your manner of life. Be careful about how you live, your marriage, your relationship with your family.

B. Two reasons given for being extremely careful as to how you discharge your responsibilities as husbands and wives:

1. You are to make the most of your time.

a. Once lost, time cannot be redeemed. Squandered time is irretrievable. That is why we are to make the most of it.

b. Everybody gets the same amount from prince to pauper. In this respect we are all created equal.

c. You cannot add to it. Nobody has yet discovered the fountain of youth. Our days are literally numbered. God has determined in advance how long we will live. As we read in Psalm 139: 16 "And in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them."

d. But you can redeem time. It is possible to make the most of each day that God has given us upon this earth.

2. The days are evil.

a. Many facets of society today conspire against the home.

It is difficult to manage a home on one income.

Schools do not promote family values

Our income tax structure penalizes marriage

Our entertainment industry for the most part portrays the home as laughable, and marriage between one faithful man and one faithful woman as antiquated.

b. Evil men and imposters are proceeding from bad to worse.

C. The termite here is Presumption:

1. You've been married so long that you just presume everything is ok.
2. But have you checked?

D. The Fix: Remember from where you have fallen and do the deeds you did at first. (Revelation 2:5).

1. Remember how you used to take care of your first car?
2. Remember how you used to take care of your wife?

D. As an example I reprint here a very well know illustration, existing in several versions, but usually known as "The Seven Ages of the Married Cold."

Year One. "Sugar dumpling, I'm worried about my baby girl. You've got a bad sniffle, and there is no telling about these things with all the Strep going around. I'm putting you into the hospital this afternoon for a general checkup and a good rest. I know the food is lousy, but I'm having the food catered in from Rosinni's. I've already got it all arranged with the floor superintendent."

Year Two. "Listen darling, I don't like the sound of that cough. I called Doc Miller to rush over here. Now you go to bed like a good girl. Please? Just for daddy."

Year Three. "Maybe you had better lie down, sweetheart. Nothing like a little rest when you're feeling punk. I'll bring you something to eat. Hey, where's that left-over soup anyway?"

Year Four. "Look dear, be sensible. After you feed the kids and get the dishes washed, you'd better hit the sack."

Year Five. "Why don't you get yourself a couple of aspirin?"

Year Six. "If you would just gargle or something instead of sitting around and barking like a seal, I would appreciate it."

Year Seven. "For Pete's sake stop sneezing. What are you trying to do give me pneumonia or something?"

II. Termite Number Two: **Foolishness. Eph 5:17a** "So then do not be foolish."

A. Marriages are attacked by the foolishness of man.

1. **Anger. Proverbs 12:16** "A fool's anger is known at once, but a prudent man conceals dishonor."
2. **Adultery:** One who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense.
Proverbs 6: 32-33
3. The foolish woman tears down her house with her own hands.
Proverbs 14:1

The wise woman builds her house,
But the foolish tears it down with her own hands.

B. *Foolishness* in the Greek: Stupid, ignorant, egotistic, rash, or unbelieving:

- C. **The fix:** Get wisdom by exercising humility and the fear of the Lord.
1. “The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor and life.” **Proverbs 22:4**
 2. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. Fools despise wisdom and instruction.” **Proverbs 1:7**

III. Termite Number Three: **Ignorance. Ephesians 5: 17b** “But understand what the will of the Lord is.”

A. We are to understand what the will of the Lord is.

1. Ignorance of the will of the Lord raises havoc in the family.
2. There are too many calls on our time and energy.
 Camps, sports, parties, movies,
 Music, private lessons, hobbies, driving lessons
 Invitations for many good things
 Invitations for many not so good things.
 Invitations for some bad things.
 Work, volunteering, church functions, school activities,
 Friendships, recreation, mission trips, sightseeing trips,
 Clothing, shopping, studying, school
 Exercise, devotions, prayer, Bible studies
 Computers, e-mail, voice mail and snail mail
 Doctor’s appointments, dentist, podiatrist and chiropractors

3. There are hundreds of voices pulling us in thousands of ways.

4. And then there is the “Still Small Voice.”

Isaiah 26:3 “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee because He trusteth in Thee.”

Psalms 55:22 “Cast your burden on the Lord and He will sustain you. He will never suffer the righteous to be moved.”

B. **The fix:** Be filled with the Holy Spirit.

“Who is the man who fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way he should choose. **Psalms 25:12**”