

# INTRODUCTION

Many of us desire a good marriage and it will indeed be a blessing to be married to someone willing to pursue a similar or very related passion in this life. Such a nice desire and indeed very noble. Yet we can't ignore the reality that marriage is challenged by so many factors in today's culture and difficult circumstances. It has become a matter of how well we can stand in firmness against all these odds. What surprises us are the numbers that undeniably define the hunger to build a strong marriage, despite having a good amount of reliable resources of support available today. As per the latest statistics and rates studies from the CDC and Pew Research Centers;

- The USA has a 2.4 divorce rate per 1000 total population for the year 2022. It's an improved rate compared to 4.0 in 2000 but the 2.4 rate is still considered a high rate compared to other countries (excludes data from California, Hawaii, Indiana, Minnesota, and New Mexico)<sup>1</sup>
- As per the PEW Research Center, out of a sample of 4752 individuals, the divorce rate for Protestants (identified as non-Catholic Christians) was approximately 51%, and it is the highest among other religious groups <sup>2</sup>

We could have fallen on those rates when we faced a very challenging situation that shook our marriage and family relationships. We're thankful that God intervened and saved us from any future damages we could have taken, which will hardly impact our three children. Since then, our life journey has changed, but along the way, we've collected a lot of learnings and genuine realizations. Like the surprising discoveries of how our past life circumstances and established behaviors significantly impacted our marriage. As well as understanding the authenticity of Christian living, and the continuous redemptive journey with Jesus Christ.

Despite today's blessings of available resources and easy access to information, we realize that there's still a high need for restoration, relearning, and living a life that genuinely rejoices God. We're not your typical literature experts backed up with strong theological

education. We're regular individuals who experienced real-life challenges and our willingness to share this story is to show that Jesus Christ is alive and transforming people. Since it's a co-authored book, you will see a lot of pronouns;

- I (name) - means that a particular portion is shared by such a person
- We (Rey & Annie) - means we're putting emphasize that a particular story is our experience and may not apply to others
- We, Us - welcomes readers who find great similarities in such experiences

May our collected testimonies, and acquired learnings from gifted speakers, teachers, and authors that are parallel in Biblical truths may serve an encouragement to any individual or married couple. May the shared truths speak strongly that you could also take that step in making bold changes, and together let's continue collecting testimonies that Jesus Christ is alive and transforming lives and marriages.

**“Welcome to the ‘Couple’s Journey.’”**

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<sup>1</sup> CDC. National Center for Health Statistics.(March 13, 2024) Marriage and Divorce. [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

<sup>2</sup> PEW Research Center. (June 13, 2022). Religion in America: U.S. Religious Data Demographics and Statistics. Pew Research Center's Religion & Public life Project. [www.pewresearch.org](http://www.pewresearch.org)