

Love
That
Lasts
A
Lifetime

A Manual About Having
A Blessed Marriage!

Rev. Dr. Norman Campbell

LOVE THAT LASTS A LIFETIME!

by

Dr. Norman Campbell

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King James Version of the Bible.

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Especially for my dear wife Elizabeth who
has taught me much about women!

Proverbs 31:29 The Living Bible
*"There are many fine women in the world,
but you are the best of them all!"*

HOW DO I LOVE THEE?

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as men turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, and all my life and if God choose
I shall love thee better after death.

----Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

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Proverbs 30:18 The Living Bible *There are three things too wonderful for me to understand--no, four!*

Proverbs 30:19 *How an eagle glides through the sky. How a serpent crawls upon a rock. How a ship finds its way across the heaving ocean. The growth of love between a man and a woman.*

Proverbs 27:17 New International Version *As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.*

An eagle cannot fly with a butterfly, and a tin saw cannot cut a diamond, so it is that for a person to grow keen and bright and shining they need real love, that is, they need another person, because sharpening is sometimes a painful process and it takes love to temper the pain.

WHAT IS LOVE?

Love engenders respect. There can be no real love where there is no respect

Love is surrender. There is no domineering in love

Love is emotion. There is much that cannot be understood about love

Love is understanding. It seeks to understand rather than criticize.

Love is intelligent. It is entered into with the whole being, & the mind

Love is reciprocal. One sided love will not endure

Love is not egotistical. One wrapped in oneself cannot love another

Love is confidence. Jealousy is out

Love is never old. Always fresh and new

Love is consideration. It seeks to determine and supply the other's need.

INTRODUCTION!

Elizabeth and I have been married now for over 50 years [in 2014] and when we got married we didn't have anyone take us aside and advise us about marriage way back in the early sixties. In fact the minister who married us did not explain that we had to 'buy' a marriage license and it was supposed to be obtained 30 days prior to the wedding, [that's how it used to be in Ireland]. We found out seven days before the proposed date, and of course there was panic. I was able to get a 'special license' from the moderator of the Presbyterian Church, which was my 'religious' background, but we had to have a Presbyterian Minister to do the vows in the Pentecostal Church. We look back and laugh at the things that happened on that day.

Things are much different today, Praise The Lord!

When I advise couples that are about to be married I try to cover as much as I possibly can to prepare them for the reality of marriage. Most times the couples, who are in love, have no realisation of the life-time commitment that marriage really is.

I always warn them that the dictionary is the only place where honeymoon comes before marriage, and sex always comes after marriage.

The difference between courtship and marriage is the same as looking at the pictures in a seed catalogue and what actually grows in your garden.

Less than 10% of marriages are considered truly successful, and of the remaining 90% half of them end in divorce. So very few people find *Love That Lasts A Lifetime!*

After just two years of marriage Elizabeth had our second child, a boy, Ian. When he was in his early teens I remember when his hormones kicked into gear. Girls took on a whole new meaning, they had a new interest and life for him would never be the same again.

Today he is married and has a family of his own, and a successful businessman, he is the owner and manager and trainer of a mortgage management business and a web page business at 48 years old. He began planning when he was a teenager to be a successful businessman by the time he was 30 years old.

So many people go into a marriage thinking it is going to be a bed of roses, or just like the soap operas on television. Like his parents our son has found that there are certain steps to a successful marriage, and it takes hard work. It doesn't just happen. Remember you get out of life what you put in, and the same principle works in marriage, you will get out of marriage in direct proportion to what you are prepared to put into it!

So don't give up on your marriage if it's not all that it should be. Learn that if you will operate in faith and hope and diligence then God can make it all you desire it to be, because God said in:

Psalm 37:4 Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.

2 Chronicles 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His.

When you obey God's Word, never be afraid to trust Him with your future and your marriage!

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Chapter 1

WHAT IS MARRIAGE REALLY ALL ABOUT?

What is marriage really?

Marriage is that relation between a man and a woman in which the independence is equal, the dependence is mutual, and the obligation is reciprocal.

Marriage is a lifelong monogamous relationship both permanent and exclusive. Vows and coition together, constitute the essential elements in a marriage. These two vital elements based on love and loyalty, faithfulness and responsibility, constitute marriage that Scripture declares is, in principle, permanent.

The pattern upon which God built society was the marriage of one man and one woman. This followed a general procedure in that, during various ceremonies, according to the customs of the people, a public covenant was made. This was later followed by a private committal of the persons in physical union. Malachi 2:11-14 expresses the **first** [covenant] aspect of marriage.

Genesis 2:24-25 expresses the **second** [committal] as aspect of marriage.

In this the security and shelter of one's home is left and a new relationship is established - a new unit of society is formed.

'To cleave' is 'to cling to' or 'adhere' and suggests strength and permanency. To all intents and purposes marriage is leaving behind the 'old' and starting 'anew'.

The bond of marriage is more than an outward observance of the publicly entered into covenant. The heart is the place where the standards are kept, because it says in Proverbs.

Proverbs 23:7 "*As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he...*"

The woman has a peculiar responsibility in the guardianship of the marriage relationship, she is the one in whom life is conceived and through her the social unit, the family, is established. It is therefore for her, as well as her husband, to conduct herself, her conversation, adornment and dress, in a manner that will guard the union from intrusion from outsiders.

Marriage is sharing and caring, giving and forgiving, loving and being loved, walking hand in hand, talking heart to heart and seeing through one another's eyes. It is laughing together, weeping together, praying together, always trusting and believing and thanking God for each other.

In a successful marriage you fall in love many times with the same person!

In Thornton Wilder's play *The Skin of Our Teeth*, the character Mrs. Antrobus says to her husband, "I didn't marry you because you were perfect....I married you because you gave me a promise." She takes off her ring and looks at it.

She then says "That promise made up for your faults and the promise I gave you made up for mine. Two imperfect people got married and it was the promise that made the marriage."

The Apostle Paul discusses the subject of marriage for the Christian in 1 Corinthians. 7. There had been some controversy between the Jewish and the Greek philosophers about the importance of marriage. Wanting to keep the church from scandal so hence his words to the Corinthians.

Society is pure and virtuous in proportion as marriage is deemed honourable. Some of the church had tried to discourage marriage, and others thought that when one became a Christian they should divorce a heathen mate. Paul being wise and knowing the evils that abounded in Corinth advised every man to have his own wife and every woman to have her own husband. He did not advocate a Christian divorce a heathen partner. He told them it would be very likely that the Christian could lead the unbelieving partner to The Lord. [1 Corinthians 7:16].

You should study 1 Corinthians chapters 7, 9 & 13 for further good advice on marriage.

Billy Graham tells the story of a modern man who asked the question.

"Why do I need a home? I was born in a hospital, educated at college; I courted in an automobile, married in a church. I eat at the delicatessen from tins and paper bags; I spend my mornings on the golf course, my afternoons at the bridge table, and my evenings at the picture theatre. When I die I will be cremated and be buried in a brass urn. All I really need is a garage."

Tragically millions of people live like this man. Their homes have become nothing more than a parking place for them. Husbands and wives pass each other at their parking places like ships in the night, without any closeness or contact. Unfortunately we are now paying the price for our lives of distraction. Our violent and chaotic society grows out of this discontent. God never intended our homes to be mere parking places for busy bodies needing rest and refuelling.

Rather there is a greater purpose in our homes. If we want to have healthy lives and marriages we must have healthy homes. For us to have healthy homes it is imperative we understand the purpose, provision, permanency and power of God in those homes.

The reason of this book is to help you achieve what God says in His Word the standard for your marriage and home should be.

Married and soon to be married couples will find this advice invaluable, as it comes from thirty years of love, marriage, togetherness in ministry for The Lord.

How much better would many marriages be if husband and wife clearly understood that they were on the same team!

Faith in your marriage is not a shelter against the difficulties, but a belief in the face of contradictions. Remember it is always easier to say the kind thing to you spouse, rather than having to apologise for being unkind.

The song says, *"Love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage"*. Unfortunately many couples put the carriage before the horse!

Psalm 101:2 The Message Bible by Eugene H. Peterson *"I'm finding my way down the road of right living, but how long before you show up? I'm doing the very best I can, and I'm doing it at home, where it counts."*

Eccl 4:9 Living Bible Two can accomplish more than twice as much as one, for the results can be much better.

Eccl 4:10 If one falls, the other pulls him up; but if a man falls when he is alone, he's in trouble.

Eccl 4:11 Also, on a cold night, two under the same blanket gain warmth from each other, but how can one be warm alone?

Eccl 4:12 And one standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer; three is even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.

Proverbs 4:23 Living Bible Above all else, guard your affections. For they influence everything else in your life.

Proverbs 4:24 Spurn the careless kiss of a prostitute. Stay far from her.

Proverbs 3:1 Living Bible My son, never forget the things I've taught you. If you want a long and satisfying life, closely follow my instructions.

Proverbs 3:3 Never tire of loyalty and kindness. Hold these virtues tightly. Write them deep within your heart.

Proverbs 3:4 If you want favour with both God and man, and a reputation for good judgment and common sense, then trust the Lord completely; don't ever trust yourself.

Proverbs 3:6 In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success.

Proverbs 3:7 Don't be conceited, sure of your own wisdom. Instead, trust and reverence the Lord, and turn your back on evil; when you do that, then you will be given renewed health and vitality.

Proverbs 3:9 Honour the Lord by giving him the first part of all your income, and he will fill your barns with wheat and barley and overflow your wine vats with the finest wines.

OLD RECIPE FOR HAPPINESS

Two heaped spoonfuls of patience

One heart full of love

Two handfuls of generosity

One head full of understanding

A dash of humour

Sprinkle with kindness

Add plenty of faith and mix well

Spread over the period of a lifetime

And serve to everyone you meet!

Chapter 2

BASIC STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE!

1. **C**ommitment: To have a successful marriage both parties need to want (not just wish for) this and be totally committed to making it happen. They have to accept responsibility for their part, and do everything possible to make the union successful.

2. **R**ealistic Expectations: Both need to realise that love is a commitment of one imperfect person to another imperfect person. Do not expect the other party to be perfect or base your happiness on that perfection. The reality of life is that happy people make happy marriages, and happiness is an individual choice.

3. **Y**our Commitment To Your Own Maturity: You can't bring old baggage from the past into a new marriage situation; otherwise it will hinder your maturity and growth. Leave anger, fear, worry, depression, hurts of the past behind, and begin to act like a New Creation in your marriage. You may have to resolve some of these things before you begin the new relationship.

4. **Y**our Partner Should Be Committed To His/Her Maturity Also: If your partner is not committed to personal maturity and growth in their life also, true love has little chance of growing, let alone lasting the distance.

5. **B**oth Should Be Committed To Each Other's Maturity: This means each must be totally honest with each other and not play games, manipulate, control, blame or project each other's own unfinished business on the other. Learn to listen to each other's thoughts, and opinions, and accept the other's ideas without criticism and judgment.

6. **B**oth Should Be Committed To Understanding Romance: Often what we think is romantic love really is sexual attraction. That feels great but it isn't love! If sexual attraction is all that there is, the marriage is doomed before it begins.

Cecil Osborne put it this way, "The bumps in my head fit the holes in your head!"

There has to be a flowing together to a unity in marriage. If we don't understand the principle, the thing, which unconsciously draws us together eventually, drives us apart.

Remember this!

That hurt people hurt people!

That only happy people make happy marriages!

That only mature people can have mature relationships!

Chapter 3

AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE!

Matthew 19:4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

Mat 19:5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

Mat 19:6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Mark 10:7 Living Bible therefore a man is to leave his father and mother,

Mark 10:8 and he and his wife are united so that they are no longer two, but one.

This husband and wife relationship has priority in God's view over all others.

There is a leaving and a cleaving!

1. The husband has to 'leave' his father and mother. This original relationship he was in while living at home must now change. The Greek word indicates, *to abandon and forsake*. That relationship was temporary, as he now becomes the head of a new decision making unit.

2. The husband must cleave to his wife in this new relationship, which is more permanent, it is till death us do part! To *cleave* in Greek means *to glue or cement together!*

3. The husband and wife now become '*one flesh*'. The term means singleness of identity! They are partners together in a Covenant with God.

Malachi 2:14though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

Becoming one is a process not an event accomplished at a wedding ceremony. The couple must become one in spirit, soul and body in that order.

- They become one in spirit by worshipping together.
- They become one in soul (mind, will emotions) by communicating with each other.
- They become one in flesh by the expression of mutual physical affection for each other, achieving it's maximum in the sex act.

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Heb 13:4 Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

There Are Enemies To A Good Christian Marriage!

Someone once said that "*while one in three marriages ends in divorce, another third is not so much married as just being in a state of undivorced*"

Many people get disillusioned disappointed, dismayed, disenchanted and dissatisfied with marriage and they live together for sake of the children, or for convenience, but all warmth and love and happiness in the relationship has gone.

There are many foes or enemies to the Christian marriage, we must be able to recognise them and make a real determined effort to conquer them for the sake of our marriages. To do anything

less than attempt this is to forfeit the battle and lose in tears and heartbreak. The wise thing to do is to check God's Word and see what He has to say about them.

Satan The Very First Real Foel

Marriage is the most meaningful and tender of all human relationships. In marriage we open ourselves up to each other as we do to no other person, even our parents. As the marriage relationship matures and trust deepens, then the spiritual awareness also deepens.

Thus the enemy of God and man, Satan has designs to destroy this deepening relationship.

1 Peter 5:8 Living Bible Be careful--watch out for attacks from Satan, your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion, looking for some victim to tear apart.

The Bible has many wonderful examples of eternal truths. One of the most poignant pictures is found in Exodus 17 and is about Amalek. He was an evil marauder who was a nuisance to Israel when they came out of Egypt and were heading for the promised land.

The eternal truth is the story goes beyond the problems he gave the nation of Israel.

Exodus 17:14 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."

Exod 17:15 Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner. (Jehovah Nissi)

Exod 17:16 He said, "For hands were lifted up to the throne of the LORD. The LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation."

Amalek! A Type Of Satan!

Amalek was a type of Satan, who was the archenemy of God and mankind. In this story we see the wiles of the enemy, and how he tries to keep us from the promised land, or the state of happiness God has designed for us in our marriages.

I want you to note that Israel had just come through a period of difficulty, there was no water, and though God had miraculously provided, the people were tired, worn out, frazzled weary, and hardly able to go on another step.

Then right at their weakest point the Bible says in Exodus 17:8 *Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.*

Guard Your Back!

Satan always attacks us at our weakest moments. He will not try to destroy the marriage when in the warmth of embrace or the security of the bedroom. Rather he waits until we are tired out; weary of the pressures of life, exhausted by the demands of work, "Then came Amalek!"

Another striking truth about Satan's devices is also found in this story. Moses recalled in Deuteronomy 25:17 Living Bible "You must never forget what the people of Amalek did to you as you came from Egypt.

Deuteronomy 25:18 Remember that they fought with you and struck down those who were faint and weary and lagging behind, with no respect or fear of God.

Amalek did not attack them head on. Rather, he waited until the old and weary were separated from the main body of people, and then swooped down on them to destroy them.

Satan knows that in partnership and unity there is strength. Therefore he seeks to divide and conquer. He tries to isolate us from our marriage mate by misunderstanding and stubbornness, and if he can do that he can destroy the marriage.

You must realise it today friends Satan is the enemy of your marriage not your mate. He hates marriage and all that it represents, because the tenderness of that relationship opens us up to God.

In addition the sacredness of marriage is related to Christ's relationship with the Church. It is symbolic.

The Bible says in Ephesians 5:22-33 *Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.*

Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.

Ephesians 5:24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

Ephesians 5:26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,

Ephesians 5:27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Ephesians 5:28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Ephesians 5:29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—

Ephesians 5:30 for we are members of his body.

Ephesians 5:31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

Ephesians 5:32 This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Also in this passage in Ephesians Paul cuts right across much of the thinking in today's world. Paul deals with three areas of responsibility, namely, husbands and wives, parents and children and servants and masters. In all three groups God is saying you really can enjoy good relationships if you do it His way.

Submit one to another

Ephesians 5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Submission is not a polluted word even though the mention of the word sometimes causes a reaction. Understanding submission will liberate the wife who follows God's Word. God wants

our submission to Him first through His Word and it is only when submission to man violates His principles that we are entitled to disobey and appeal to a higher law.

In the beginning Adam and Eve were *joint heirs* together, however as a result of the fall Eve was told Adam had to rule over her. However Jesus came to redeem mankind from the curse and its consequences and restore God's original order. Therefore submission being part of the curse in the

Old Testament became in the New Testament God's method of restoring women to her rightful position of *joint headship* with the husband. When a wife voluntarily submits to her husband's headship she puts herself voluntarily and by faith in God's divine order.

Rebellion by a woman causes a man to rule and not lead. Submission to a husband shows submission to The Lord. Remember you have to be under authority to have authority. If a wife is submitted to her husband and he does not treat her as God commands, then he is sinning against God. It is then up to God to sort out the husband.

What does 'submit' mean?

Just remember that Ephesians is written to Christians, and not to the world. To submit means to respect the other person's rights. If you are an employee you are submitted to your boss. It is his position not his knowledge or ability that you are submitted to. In submitting it is recognising that the other person has rights, because of their standing, or by God's appointment. It is all about an attitude of the mind.

In verse 22 it talks about husbands and wives and submission.

Ephesians 5:22 *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.*

This is similar to having a job. You agreed to certain conditions when you accepted the position. During the wedding ceremony you are asked certain questions, like "Will you take...?" Which require answers like "I do!"

This is a covenant or contract before God and in the eyes of the witnesses present who observe you enter into the contract of marriage. In this covenant you make a decision of your will. If you ignore the fact that they say love is blind...and you say I do then you are accepting the Bible criteria if you are a Christian.

This is repeated in v33 as *Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife [see] that she reverence [her] husband.*

Submit in v22 is replaced by *reverence* in v33. Reverence means respect!

J.B. Phillips translation puts it this way, "Adapt yourselves to your husbands" This is good because there is a lot of adapting in a marriage situation. It's all about two different personalities learning to adapt to each other under one roof.

God goes on by Paul and gives a great illustration in Vs 23-24 so you will be under no illusions about this whole marriage thing.

5:23 *For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*

5:24 *Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so [let] the wives [be] to their own husbands in every thing.*

Christ is the Head of the church and the church respects Him. The same relationship is to be present in your marriage. God never tells you to do something that is impossible for you to do. So when God says it is possible to live in harmony in marriage then it is possible. Ephesians is really the practical instructions on how to do it.

God is a God of balance so do not think this is a one sided issue. Paul continues in v25. *Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*

*Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,
27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

Christ's love for the Church is a sacrificial love, not counting the cost. His love is a protective love, as He intercedes for the Church to The Father to protect us from the enemy. His love is also a providing love, meeting the Church's every need along life's way. His love is a permanent love; it never varies, remains steadfast, and is never shared with another. This is how husbands ought to love their own wives.

If these two people would do these two things, that is the wife respect and submit to her husband and the husband love and cherish his wife there would be no marriage problems and break ups. When the husband is told to love his wife it is not teenage puppy love, or macho sexual love. It is a deep emotional feeling that one has for the other, when one is

not present the other 'feels' that something really is missing in their life.

Dr. Young's Literal translation goes like this:

Ephesians 5:23 because the husband is head of the wife, as also the Christ [is] head of the assembly, and he is saviour of the body,

24 but even as the assembly is subject to Christ, so also [are] the wives to their own husbands in everything.

25 The husbands! love your own wives, as also the Christ did love the assembly, and did give himself for it,

26 that he might sanctify it, having cleansed [it] with the bathing of the water in the saying,

27 that he might present it to himself the assembly in glory, not having spot or wrinkle, or any of such things, but that it may be holy and unblemished;

28 so ought the husbands to love their own wives as their own bodies: he who is loving his own wife--himself he doth love;

29 for no one ever his own flesh did hate, but doth nourish and cherish it, as also the Lord--the assembly,

30 because members we are of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones;

31 'for this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife, and they shall be--the two--for one flesh;'

32 this secret is great, and I speak in regard to Christ and to the assembly;

33 but ye also, every one in particular--let each his own wife so love as himself, and the wife--that she may reverence the husband.

Jesus was willing to die for the Church are you husbands willing to die for your wives?

Also in Corinthians Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:3 *But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*

Eugene Peterson puts it in *The Message Bible* like this, "In a marriage relationship, there is authority from Christ to husband, and from husband to wife. The authority of Christ is the authority of God. Any man, who speaks with God or about God in a way that shows a lack of respect for the authority of Christ, dishonours Christ. In the same way a wife who speaks with God in a way that shows a lack of respect for the authority of her husband, dishonours her husband. Worse, she dishonours herself - an ugly sight, like a woman with her head shaven."

Headship is not dictatorship! Headship is to provide protection and blessing for the wife and family, and that brings peace for the husband.

I believe in Christian marriage, I have seen enough of the other kind to know it is fraught with problems. A marriage must be based on God's Word otherwise it is doomed to failure.

Just remember that marriage needs warm hearts, not hot heads!

During the wedding ceremony the father of the bride normally gives away his daughter. What he actually is giving away is his spiritual headship over to the new husband, who is becoming his son in law.

Headship means a power of love not a love of power!

Mankinds Own Habits Are A Foe!

The second enemy to a lasting love relationship in marriage is man's own habits. Satan uses these traits in our lives to destroy us.

He used Eve's curiosity to get her to taste the forbidden fruit.

He used Adam's deep attachment to his helpmeet to draw him away from God.

Let me tell you his devices have not changed, and as such there are some obvious things he will use to divide a home. These are the tools of his trade. Be wise today and note them and do not be deceived by them again.

Jealousy!

In the Bible's most poetic book Song Of Solomon 8:6 *Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame.*

God knew the nagging heartbreak of jealousy.

That is why in the Old Testament He set up an elaborate system of ceremonies to determine infidelity. We don't know how it worked but we do know that the purpose was to deliver the injured party from the spirit of jealousy.

Numbers 5:14 *And the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled: or if the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled:*

Solomon said that jealousy was cruel as the grave!

Immature people can play on one another's jealousies, and in so doing they destroy that vital part of marriage called 'Trust!'

It is not possible for trust to grow in flirtations and innuendoes, so repent of it, if it is causing a problem in your marriage, and let God be God!

Envy!

Closely tied to jealousy is envy!

The writer to Proverbs was correct in saying in Proverbs 14:30 N.I.V. *A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones.*

The culture of this world is: get all you can, can all you get, then sit on that can so no one else can get it! It's a grab, get, acquire and obtain type of world. People want new homes, new cars, new jobs with more money etc. But the simple truth is relationships are more important than things.

Heb 13:5 *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

Conversation means manner of life, or lifestyle!

Envy has brought bondage to many couples financially, by getting over committed to banks and finance houses, to the point where relationships are broken down.

In seeking riches, don't lose the things that money cannot buy!

Proverbs 15:27 *A greedy man brings trouble to his family, but he who hates bribes will live.*

Contention!

It is easy to become contentious and bicker. It is especially a temptation to a wife, because most of her work is in the home, and she sees all the things that need to be done.

Most husbands don't see broken screens or peeling paint. They are away at work and don't live with the irritation of the incomplete house. The wives see it every day, and often from sheer frustration there is a temptation to nag or be contentious.

Proverbs 19:13 Living Bible *A rebellious son is a calamity to his father, and a nagging wife annoys like constant dripping.*

Proverbs 21:9 Living Bible *It is better to live in the corner of an attic than with a crabby woman in a lovely home.*

Proverbs 21:19 *It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.*

Proverbs 27:15 *A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.*

If wives could learn to treat their husbands like a champ, he would never end up as a chump!

Men can be contentious also.

Often the nagger in the family is the man! Regardless of who is to blame, nagging destroys a marriage.

The Children of Israel were contentious and nagged God about their conditions.

Psalm 106:13 Living Bible Yet *how quickly they forgot again! They wouldn't wait for him to act*

Psalm 106:14 *but demanded better food, testing God's patience to the breaking point.*

Psalm 106:15 *So he gave them their demands but sent them leanness in their souls.*

In a marriage, nagging may get you what you want, when in sheer frustration your mate does what you ask, but there is a great price to pay. The leanness of soul breeds

bitterness and resentment.

Proverbs 18:21 *there is death and life in the power of your tongue and those that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*

If a man does not treat his wife like a thoroughbred, she may turn out to be a nag!

Slothfulness!

It takes work to make a marriage work!

Ecclesiastes 10:18 *By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.*

Eccl 10:18 Living Bible Laziness *lets the roof leak, and soon the rafters begin to rot.*

This refers to natural things like the home we live in, but also it refers to our spirit house, our bodies.

The simple truth is unless the house is kept in good repair it will fall down. The law of this earth is decay not evolution! Everything wears away, even relationships, unless they are brightened with interest, and deepened with devotion.

The law of gravity still works all the time trying to pull everything down, so we must keep our marriage bright and work to keep it new. Don't waste time on useless pursuits, put that valuable time into you marriage relationship.

Psalm 127:1 *Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*

Psalm 127:2 *It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.*

Chapter 4

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

A critic of Dr. Billy Graham once asked, *"If Christianity is valid, why is there so much evil in the world?"*

The great Evangelist replied, *"With so much soap in the world, why are there so many dirty people?"*

Christianity like soap must be applied personally if there is to be a difference in our lives.

If God's principles for marriage are to make a difference in our lives it will be because we have applied them personally where we are and in our own situation.

What this means is that we may have to change our very thinking process and get a new mind-set, to conform to His mind!

Today many people teach and talk about "The Power of Positive Thinking!" or PMA ["Positive Mental Attitude!"] The Eastern religions push the power of meditation and thought control. These statements have a ring of truth to them because the Bible says in Proverbs 23:7 KJV *"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he....."*

The Word of God makes it clear if we are to have healthy marriages and healthy lives we must think right.

Proverbs 18:14 *"The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity"*

In other words the way we think will affect our health.

Proverbs 12:18 *There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.*

Attitudes Make The Difference!

Your attitude more than your aptitude will determine your altitude!

Whether your marriage grows or deteriorates is determined by your thought life! Jesus taught very carefully on the importance of proper thinking.

Matthew 5:27 Living Bible *"The laws of Moses said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'*

Mat 5:28 But I say: Anyone who even looks at a woman with lust in his eye has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

God's Word never just tells us what not to do, it always tells us how to right the wrong and build effective and meaningful relationships.

All through the Bible we are given hints on how to talk and think right.

Perhaps the most comprehensive Bible Book on the mind-set of the believer is Paul's letter to the Philippians. It would be good for you to spend a month and study this letter of Paul to the Church at Philippi.

Phil 2:3 Living Bible *Don't be selfish; don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself.*

Phil 2:4 *Don't just think about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and in what they are doing.*

Phil 2:5 *Your attitude should be the kind that was shown us by Jesus Christ.*

Phil 4:8 *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things.*

Paul also said in Corinthians:-

2 Corinthians 10:4 *The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.*

2 Corinthians 10:5 *We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

In The Sermon on The Mount, also known as The Beatitudes Jesus talked about life in The Kingdom.

Life is a learning experience, just as marriage is also. When we enter into marriage, we bring in with us our vastly different backgrounds, attitudes, ideas, theories, etc. So our attitude must be flexible enough to be able to develop together a meshing of two backgrounds into a lifestyle that is compatible to a totally new family unit!

God has designed the functions for each mate, and we can't assume the responsibilities of each other because we are not equipped for it.

We must accept our mate as God's Masterpiece!

Ephesians 2:10 N.I.V. *For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

Workmanship means masterpiece!

Ephesians 2:10 Living Bible *It is God himself who has made us what we are and given us new lives from Christ Jesus; and long ages ago he planned that we should spend these lives in helping others.*

To accomplish this we must be open hearted and open minded.

This is what Jesus meant when He said, Matthew 5:3 *"Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven!"*

Marriages are built on failures as well as successes. There will be disappointments with jobs, trials and failures on projects, perhaps financial difficulties, sometimes bitter disappointments because duty comes before pleasure.

In all of this God wants us to be compassionate to each other and treat each other as we would want to be treated. Don't criticise your mate, but build confidence in them.

There is a law of the Kingdom which states:-

Matthew 7:2 *For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.*

Mat 7:3 *"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"*

Mat 7:4 *How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?"*

This is more than a mere endurance of one another in painful times, but a nursing of illnesses, ministering to broken spirits, mending the heart breaks of our mates as much as is possible, and not being self centred.

All of this brings us to what is the most important of our attitudes love!

Love Is Of God!

Paul in his writing in God's Word under the inspiration and direction of The Holy Spirit in Corinthians says:-

1 Corinthians 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

1 Corinthians 13:2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

Love suffers long! It endures, it resists the temptation to jump the fence and seek new pastures. The grass isn't always as green as it seems on the other side of the fence. Love will still be there when the bloom of youth is gone. It will still be there when the family have left the nest to form their own families. Nothing can quench the flame of love because it endures.

Love is kind! There are so many hurts in this old world.

Someone once said, *Take the world as it is, not as it should be!*

Love softens the blows of life with kindness! Love knows there are enough hurts in the world already and seeks to be part of the answer not part of the problem!

Love envieth not! There are advantages in being male and also in being female. However love seeks those advantages, rather than complaining because the mate is better off. Love doesn't strive for self-centered fulfilment, but seeks to give rather than get. Love is content, not always striving for more but is satisfied with what it has.

Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up! Love does not insist on it's own way. It does not seek to exert it's authority over the other, but accepts roles and the responsibilities as given by God. Love is not self-centered but seeks to bring out the best in the other.

1 Corinthians 13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Love does not behave itself unseemly! You can always count on love; it is always consistent and never acts out of character. It can always be trusted on business trips and holidays. Others might let you down and disappoint you but love is always there, always the same. God is love and God never changes.

Love seeketh not her own! Many enter marriage wondering what it can do for them. They want fulfilment rather than seeking to fulfil. They want strength rather than wanting to give strength. They want love rather than wanting to give love. Not so with real love, it wants to give, not that it might get back but for the sheer joy of giving.

Love is not easily provoked! Love does not lose its temper quickly. It takes a lot. It's only the unloving that replies, "I don't have to take that!" Love never speaks like that! Love is often

taken advantage of. Jesus was crucified, because God so loved the world, He gave! Love doesn't fly into a rage, but understands that others have difficulties also.

Love thinketh no evil! Love is not suspicious. It does not question every movement when the other party is away. It does not feed from the lower carnal nature that seeks to divide marriage. It thinks right about itself and it thinks right about it's mate.

1 Corinthians 13:6 *Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;*

Love rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth! Love is not a rumour monger. It does not have the time to hear and devour things that seem so attractive to those who live in the carnal realm. Love finds happiness in that which is pure and good; that which heals rather than breaks, that which lifts up rather than pulls down.

1 Corinthians 13:7 *Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

Love beareth all things! Even the agonies involved in aging. When body and face and strength begin to fade, love is still there. Nothing, absolutely nothing can quench the flame of love.

Love believeth all things! Love is gullible because it is so honest. The person who truly loves can be betrayed very easily. Because love chooses to believe in truth rather than be suspicious.

Love hopeth all things! Love is optimistic. It doesn't have misty optics. It believes Romans 8:28 *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

Love dares to believe, in the midst of a world of doubt, that for those in Christ, everything will turn out all right!

Love endures all things! There it is again, it endures, and it never fails. Paul was right when he added:-

1 Corinthians 13:8 *Love never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*

1 Corinthians 13:9 *For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.*

1 Corinthians 13:10 *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*

1 Corinthians 13:11 *When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.*

1 Corinthians 13:12 *For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

1 Corinthians 13:13 *And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.*

Love does not use the "silent" treatment! Refusing to communicate is revenge. If we take revenge into our hands, we hinder God's work.

Proper Communication Is So Important.

Every time we speak there are at least six possible messages involved:-

1. What you mean to say!
2. What you actually said!

3. What the other person hears!

4. What the other person thinks they hear!

5. What the other person says about what you said!

6. What you think the other person said about what you said!

1 Timothy 1:5 *The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*

1 Tim 1:6 *Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk.*

1 Tim 1:7 *They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.*

1 Tim 1:8 *We know that the law is good if one uses it properly.*

1 Tim 1:9 *We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for law breakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers,*

1 Tim 1:10 *for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers--and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine*

1 Tim 1:11 *that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.*

1 Tim 1:12 *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service.*

1 Tim 1:13 *Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.*

Proverbs 26:20 *Living Bible Fire goes out for lack of fuel, and tensions disappear when gossip stops.*

Where Did This Woman Come From?

Woman was not taken from man's head to be lorded over.

She was not taken from his feet to be walked upon.

She was taken from his rib to be part of him.

*She was taken from his side to be near his heart,
so he could love and cherish her.*

*She was taken from under his arm so he
could protect her and lead her.*

Woman means a man with a womb!

You may well have a successful marriage outside of Christ but you will never know the ecstasy, the deep spiritual satisfaction, the joys of a marriage that is cantered on Christ.

Let Him be the partner in your marriage and home, you will never regret it.

Beatitudes For Married Couples

*Blessed are the husband and wife who continue to be affectionate,
considerate and loving all the days of their life together.*

*Blessed are the husband and wife who are as polite and courteous to
one another as they are to their friends.*

*Blessed are the husband and wife who have a sense of humour,
for this will be a handy shock absorber.*

*Blessed are they who love each other more than any other person in the world, and who joyfully
fulfil their marriage vow of a lifetime of fidelity as husband and wife.*

*Blessed are they who thank God for His blessings, and who set aside time
each day for the reading of His Word and prayer.*

*Blessed are they who never speak harshly to each other and who make
their home a place of mutual encouragement and love.*

*Blessed are the husband and wife who can work out their problems
without interference from relatives.*

*Blessed are the husband and wife who dedicate their lives and their home to the advancement
of Christ and His Kingdom.*

Chapter 5

HELP! NOW I'M A HUSBAND!

The Bible has some interesting ways to obtain a wife!

All these are of course Old Testament stories, while real, are not so acceptable in society today.

1. **F**ind an attractive prisoner of war, bring her home, shave her head, trim her nails, and give her new clothes.

Deuteronomy 21:11 If you notice among the captives a beautiful woman and are attracted to her, you may take her as your wife.

Deuteronomy 21:12 Bring her into your home and have her shave her head, trim her nails

Deuteronomy 21:13 and put aside the clothes she was wearing when captured. After she has lived in your house and mourned her father and mother for a full month, then you may go to her and be her husband and she shall be your wife.

Deuteronomy 21:14 If you are not pleased with her, let her go wherever she wishes. You must not sell her or treat her as a slave, since you have dishonoured her.

2. **F**ind a prostitute and marry her!

Hosea 1:1 NIV The word of the LORD that came to Hosea son of Beeri during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the reign of Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel:

Hosea 1:2 When the LORD began to speak through Hosea, the LORD said to him, "Go, take to yourself an adulterous wife and children of unfaithfulness, because the land is guilty of the vilest adultery in departing from the LORD."

Hosea 1:3 So he married Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.

3. **F**ind a man with seven daughters and impress him by watering his flocks.

Exodus 2:16 NIV Now a priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came to draw water and fill the troughs to water their father's flock.

Exod 2:17 Some shepherds came along and drove them away, but Moses got up and came to their rescue and watered their flock.

Exod 2:18 When the girls returned to Reuel their father, he asked them, "Why have you returned so early today?"

Exod 2:19 They answered, "An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds. He even drew water for us and watered the flock."

Exod 2:20 "And where is he?" he asked his daughters. "Why did you leave him? Invite him to have something to eat."

Exod 2:21 Moses agreed to stay with the man, who gave his daughter Zipporah to Moses in marriage.

Exod 2:22 Zipporah gave birth to a son, and Moses named him Gershom, saying, "I have become an alien in a foreign land."

4. **P**urchase a piece of property and get a wife as part of the deal.

Ruth 4:5 NIV *Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the land from Naomi and from Ruth the Moabitess, you acquire the dead man's widow, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property."*

Ruth 4:6 *At this, the kinsman-redeemer said, "Then I cannot redeem it because I might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it."*

Ruth 4:7 *(Now in earlier times in Israel, for the redemption and transfer of property to become final, one party took off his sandal and gave it to the other. This was the method of legalising transactions in Israel.)*

Ruth 4:8 *So the kinsman-redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it yourself." And he removed his sandal.*

Ruth 4:9 *Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion and Mahlon.*

Ruth 4:10 *I have also acquired Ruth the Moabitess, Mahlon's widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from the town records. Today you are witnesses!"*

5. **G**o to a party and hide. When the women come out to dance, grab one and carry her off to be your wife.

Judges 21:19 NIV *But look, there is the annual festival of the LORD in Shiloh, to the north of Bethel, and east of the road that goes from Bethel to Shechem, and to the south of Lebonah."*

Judg 21:20 *So they instructed the Benjamites, saying, "Go and hide in the vineyards*

Judg 21:21 *and watch. When the girls of Shiloh come out to join in the dancing, then rush from the vineyards and each of you seize a wife from the girls of Shiloh and go to the land of Benjamin.*

Judg 21:22 *When their fathers or brothers complain to us, we will say to them, 'Do us a kindness by helping them, because we did not get wives for them during the war, and you are innocent, since you did not give your daughters to them.'"*

Judg 21:23 *So that is what the Benjamites did. While the girls were dancing, each man caught one and carried her off to be his wife. Then they returned to their inheritance and rebuilt the towns and settled in them.*

Judg 21:24 *At that time the Israelites left that place and went home to their tribes and clans, each to his own inheritance.*

Judg 21:25 *In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.*

6. **H**ave God create a wife while you sleep!

Gen. 2:19 NIV *Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.*

Gen 2:20 *So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.*

Gen 2:21 *So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh.*

Gen 2:22 Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

Gen 2:23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

Gen 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

7. **A**gree to work seven years, get tricked into working a further seven years and end up marrying the sister.

Gen. 29:15 NIV Laban said to him, "Just because you are a relative of mine, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me what your wages should be."

Gen 29:16 Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

Gen 29:17 Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel was lovely in form, and beautiful.

Gen 29:18 Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, "I'll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel."

Gen 29:19 Laban said, "It's better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me."

Gen 29:20 So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.

Gen 29:21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to lie with her."

Gen 29:22 So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast.

Gen 29:23 But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and gave her to Jacob, and Jacob lay with her.

Gen 29:24 And Laban gave his servant girl Zilpah to his daughter as her maidservant.

Gen 29:25 When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn't I? Why have you deceived me?"

Gen 29:26 Laban replied, "It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one."

Gen 29:27 Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work."

Gen 29:28 And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife.

Gen 29:29 Laban gave his servant girl Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her maidservant.

Gen 29:30 Jacob lay with Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years.

8. **C**ut the foreskins off 200 of your future father in law's enemies.

1 Sam. 18:27 NIV *David and his men went out and killed two hundred Philistines. He brought their foreskins and presented the full number to the king so that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.*

9. **W**ander around in the wilderness a bit you will find someone. It's all very relative of course!

Gen. 4:16-NIV *So Cain went out from the Lord's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.*

Gen 4:17 *Cain lay with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son Enoch.*

10. **B**ecome the emperor of a huge nation and hold a beauty contest then marry the winner.

Esther 2:3 NIV *Let the king appoint commissioners in every province of his realm to bring all these beautiful girls into the harem at the citadel of Susa. Let them be placed under the care of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women; and let beauty treatments be given to them.*

Est 2:4 *Then let the girl who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This advice appealed to the king, and he followed it.*

11. **W**hen you see someone you like go home and tell your parents to get her.

Judges 14:1 NIV. *Samson went down to Timnah and saw there a young Philistine woman.*

Judg 14:2 *When he returned, he said to his father and mother, "I have seen a Philistine woman in Timnah; now get her for me as my wife."*

Judg 14:3 *His father and mother replied, "Isn't there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me. She's the right one for me."*

12. **D**on't be too picky. Quantity instead of quality.

1 Kings 11:1 NIV *King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter--Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites.*

1 Kings 11:2 *They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love.*

1 Kings 11:3 *He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray.*

<p>ALL THE ABOVE ARE OF COURSE FOUND IN THE BIBLE BUT THEY ARE IN THIS MANUAL ONLY TO LIGHTEN YOUR DAY AND MAKE YOU SMILE!</p>
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Men are to be the leaders in the family and 'set the pace' spiritually as well as every other way for the family unit.

Some men unfortunately tend to see themselves as 'lion tamers' rather than husbands and fathers, and they come into marriage with a whip. Being the 'head' in the family does not mean that he is the exclusive decision maker or that he is always right in any discussion he may have with his wife.

Jesus said in Matthew 20:25-28 Living Bible *But Jesus called them together and said, "Among the heathen, kings are tyrants and each minor official lords it over those beneath him.*

Mat 20:26 But among you it is quite different. Anyone wanting to be a leader among you must be your servant.

Mat 20:27 And if you want to be right at the top, you must serve like a slave.

Mat 20:28 Your attitude must be like my own, for I, the Messiah, did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give my life as a ransom for many."

Why do men marry?

Dr. Clifford Adams in his studies over 30 years of counselling men and women found the following answers to the question he asked thousands of couples.

According to his survey he lists these six reasons in order that men give as their reasons to marry.

1. Companionship
2. Sex
3. Romantic Love
4. Desire For Children And A Home
5. Need Of A Helpmate
6. Security.

You may find the results surprising seeing men marry first of all for companionship. This should not really surprise you seeing that God said in the beginning it was not good for man to be alone, He recognised man's need of a helpmate.

Understanding that it is both healthy and normal for a man to want a wife, the husband should then ask himself what does God expect of me as a husband. God's Word is very clear on the issue and states quite categorically in Ephesians:-

Ephesians 5:25 Living Bible *And you husbands, show the same kind of love to your wives as Christ showed to the Church when he died for it,*

Paul then gives some detail as to how a husband should love his wife as Christ loved the church and died for it!

Ephesians 5:26 *to make her holy and clean, washed by baptism and God's Word;*

Ephesians 5:27 *so that he could give her to himself as a glorious Church without a single spot or wrinkle or any other blemish, being holy and without a single fault.*

Ephesians 5:28 *That is how husbands should treat their wives, loving them as parts of themselves. For since a man and his wife are now one, a man is really doing himself a favour and loving himself when he loves his wife!*

Ephesians 5:29 No one hates his own body but lovingly cares for it, just as Christ cares for his body the Church, of which we are parts.

Ephesians 5:30-31 (That the husband and wife are one body is proved by the Scripture, which says, "A man must leave his father and mother when he marries so that he can be perfectly joined to his wife, and the two shall be one.")

Ephesians 5:32 I know this is hard to understand, but it is an illustration of the way we are parts of the body of Christ.

Ephesians 5:33 So again I say, a man must love his wife as a part of himself; and the wife must see to it that she deeply respects her husband--obeying, praising, and honouring him.

What Paul says is most significant, he says the husband must give love and consider his wife as an extension of his own flesh. Just as we husbands do not harm our own bodies then we must not harm or hurt our wives. He goes on to emphasise that this is a very healthy thing to love our wives because it really is self preservation.

Men are to love long enough that they are willing to lay down their lives for their wives. Love that is this deep and divine lets the wife be submitted and secure in that love, and the act of submission is then never a problem for the wife. The only time a wife has problems with submission is when her husband does not love her and does not obey the Word of God.

Marriage is not just the matter of finding the right mate but also being the right mate. In fact God felt so strongly about it in the Old Testament He said in Deuteronomy: 24:5 N.I.V. *If a man has recently married, he must not be sent to war or have any other duty laid on him. For one year he is to be free to stay at home and bring happiness to the wife he has married.*

This law was given so newly married couples could develop trust and tenderness in each other.

It emphasises the importance of developing right relationships in marriage. God wanted the husband to really grow in a meaningful and lasting relationship with his wife.

The way you look at her is important, because speech is not the only method of communication. A facial expression can speak 'volumes'. If your face is not in harmony with your words, you wife will feel rejected, because she will know when an attitude is genuine.

It Is Important For A Husband To Keep True To His Own Wife!

He is not to stray into any other relationship, even in his thoughts! God's Word is direct in this matter to husbands!

The Living Bible puts it this way:-

Proverbs 5:15 Drink from your own well, my son--be faithful and true to your wife.

Proverbs 5:16 Why should you beget children with women of the street?

Proverbs 5:17 Why share your children with those outside your home?

Proverbs 5:18 Be happy, yes, rejoice in the wife of your youth.

Proverbs 5:19 Let her breasts and tender embrace satisfy you. Let her love alone fill you with delight.

Proverbs 5:20 Why delight yourself with prostitutes, embracing what isn't yours?

Proverbs 5:21 *For God is closely watching you, and he weighs carefully everything you do.*

Husbands Should Live Joyfully With Their Wives!

This is important because joy releases strength!

Ecclesiastes 9:9 KJV *Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.*

Marriage Was Designed For Men!

God ordained marriage because He knew it was not good for a man to be alone. A wife is a man's reward for his earthly toil.

God intended that marriage be a blessing and a stabilising factor in man's life. The restraints it puts on him are for his benefit as well as the benefit of his family.

Nehemiah 8:10 KJV *Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry: for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*

Galatians 5:22 KJV *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*

Gal 5:23 *Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

A Husband Should Understand His Wife's Needs!

God's Word is clear and concise when it comes to sexual responsibility. Paul says by God's Spirit:-

1 Corinthians 7:3 N.I.V. *The husband should fulfil his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband.*

1 Corinthians 7:4 *The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.*

1 Corinthians 7:5 *Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

The Life Process!

To disregard God's Divine principles will result in harm for ourselves. God made man and woman to live and be together in marriage, this is called The Life Process. Woman was made out of man, and man comes out of woman. It is the eternal life process.

Not a Weapon or reward!

God created us with sexual drives and needs. It is not proper that husbands or wives should use this intimate part of marriage as a weapon or a reward.

This is one of the most difficult areas in any marriage, the physical love or sexual side of it. I believe that sex should not be used as a reward or a weapon. The problems in most cases arise because a man reaches his peak of sexual desire somewhere between eighteen and twenty five years of age. The woman on the other hand reaches her peak of sexual desire in her early thirties. *This difference was designed by God so the woman could have the greater biological control during courtship.*

All these things like the other areas of marriage, require that we *learn to love*. The wise woman can do much to make this learning process as comfortable as possible.

It is important to remember that sexual love is a very private and personal part of marriage and not to be shared with anyone else other than your mate.

Men of course should not share details of the intimate side of their marriage, even in a joke but The Word says in:-

Hebrews 13:4 N.I.V. *Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.*

Physical love between two people in marriage is a sacred thing, and once those details are shared with another that sacred relationship is broken.

The wife should be the woman of your dreams, not your worst nightmare!

This whole area of sex is so over rated by the media and movies today, the world has taken a God given joy and made it dirty and cheap.

I wonder how many men have a bath or a shower before going to bed at night, or do they just tumble in with the filth of the day still on their body. Wives expect their men to help keep the bed clothes clean by having good hygiene habits. Even more so if the man expects to make love to his wife.

If the man smells of stale sweat and motorcar fumes, it's little wonder the romance goes out the window. A man is turned on by what he sees but a woman is turned on by what she smells. Men do yourself a favour and get some nice cologne that she likes.

Chapter 6

MEN AND WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT!

Men and women are different!

Not better than one another, not smarter than one another, not superior to one another, not more intelligent than one another, just *different!*

We must remember that there are differences between the sexes, but we need to understand that there is really little difference in intelligence, it can go either way depending on the individual's background and education.

Both men and women have sensitive egos, both appreciate respect and resent being used by the other. As well both have a basic need for freedom and self fulfilment.

Marriage relationships do not have to be a struggle but when men and women do not understand each other then there is tension, often resentment and conflict and eventually divorce.

Most time the people involved *do love their spouses* but they do not know how to handle situations when their spouse sees things so differently from them.

Elizabeth and I are two different people and see life from a different perspective. We have different values and needs, but in this marriage we compliment each other.

Men and women are functionally different, if they were not then they would have no need of each other. God designed us so that neither is complete alone but together we make up a whole. Since each has it's own God ordained function, which is necessary for the completeness of the marriage; then rivalry over their comparative importance is really pointless. God does not value one above the other and neither should we do that.

It is important that when we enter marriage that we understand these two differing views.

So many people are frustrated in their marriage they love their spouses but don't know what to do to improve the situation when it is stressed. If you can begin to understand the *differences* then you are well on your way to working out the problems.

Without this perception that men and women are supposed to be different, because that is how God made us, we will always be at struggling with each other. We become angry and frustrated with our spouses because we have failed to understand that we are functionally different.

Men assume!

Men expect their wives to feel and act like they feel and act about certain situations. Many times we husbands *assume* that our wives will behave and react in certain ways because that's how we would react and behave in the same situation. Not better than one another, not smarter than one another, not superior to one another, not more intelligent than one another, just.....*different!*

Men make this mistake all the time, and expect and assume that their wives will think, act, communicate and react the way they; the men do. As a result our lives are filled with conflict and friction instead of love and peace and joy.

Falling in love!

Falling in love is always something wonderful and marvellous and mysterious. It always feels like it will never end and is really touched with the eternal. However as the problems of life crowd in on our existence we find we are sometimes not as happy and as much in love as we once thought! The enchantment of love seems somehow to fade into the background in the light of daily grind and problems, and sometimes we wonder if we made a mistake in getting into this marriage at all, because we thought we were destined to live happily ever after.

Even with the best intentions and the most loving motivation, the differences still can cause problems if not properly understood with a clear awareness. Somehow men expect women to act like men and women expect men to act like other women. When intercommunication breaks down, suspicion creeps in then rejection and wrong thoughts filter through.

Complaints:

Women express that *men won't listen* as their most frequent complaint, whereas men complain that women are *always trying to cause them to change*.

She says that he ignores her when she speaks to him.

He says that he listens to what he needs to hear and offers the solution, which she rejects.

She tells him he is not listening!

He says he is now confused because he is listening.

Men generally are more interested in *things* and *objects* than people and feelings. Results are more important than people.

Women generally are more *people* orientated than *result* orientated, they are more concerned with their expression of *love* and *caring* than the *things*.

When a woman is trying to cause her man to improve, he feels that she is trying to *fix* him, hence he receives the message that he is *broken down*. What the woman does not realise is that her caring attempts to help have actually caused him to feel embarrassed.

When a man comes home and his wife wants to *share her feelings* about her day, many times he *thinks* he is helping by *offering her a solution to the problem as he sees it*. He feels he is being approached for a solution to the problem rather than being the problem himself.

Stress.

Men and women cope with stress differently. Men tend to become *more concentrated and withdrawn* whereas women become *more dismayed and emotional*. In this season man's need to feel good is different to the woman's need to feel good. He feels better by *solving* the problems whereas she feels better by *talking about* the problems.

When a man gets upset he never talks about what is bothering him, he goes quiet and goes to his quiet place to try to find a solution to the problem. When he comes up with the answer he feels much better and comes back into circulation again. If he can't come up with a solution he will try to forget about the problem by reading his newspaper or watching TV news. He is trying to clear his mind of the thoughts about the problem.

When the woman is stressed about her day, her method of finding alleviation is to talk! She will seek out a trusted friend and talk in great detail about all the day and it's problems, when she shares all these details she feels much better and finds relief, this is her way. The woman under stress is not immediately concerned about finding solutions, to her problems but seeks the relief by expressing herself and being understood by another.

A man under stress tends to concentrate on the problem and forget others, whereas a woman under stress tends to magnify and be alarmed by the problem.

A woman under stress usually *needs* to talk and a man usually *resists*. He does this because he *assumes* that she *thinks* he is responsible for her problems. The greater the amount of problems the greater the amount of blame he feels. What he fails to realise because he is a man and does

not understand a woman's need to talk, is that the more she talks the better she *feels*. If he would only *listen* instead of trying to *solve* the problem she would be fine!

When men become depressed they go off to be alone!

When women become depressed they look for someone to *talk* to and *discuss* their depression!

Men are energized and approved when they *feel* needed! Not to be needed is a disaster for a man!

Women are energized and approved when they *feel* respected and loved! Most men are blissfully unaware of the importance to a woman of the love and support of someone who cares. Basically women will be happy to know that their needs *will be* met. When a woman is overtired, flustered, dismayed, upset and feeling hopeless, what she really needs is some togetherness, she does not want to be alone. She needs to feel loved.

The man's greatest dread is that he is *not good enough* or that he *is incapable*. Therefore he finds it hard to listen when she is unhappy or disappointed because he *feels* like a failure!

Same words! Different meanings!

When a man's instincts tell him it is best to be alone when he is upset, he cannot understand the way a woman thinks. She may be saying "*Leave me alone!*" with her mouth but her heart is saying "*Hold me I'm afraid!*"

Most marriages today would really need an interpreter because neither party seem to understand what the other is really saying. This leads to misunderstanding and anger and eventually breakup.

When a woman says "*I feel like you never listen to me!*" She does not expect the word *never* to be taken literally. She uses the word *never* as an expression of her frustration.

Women use generalizations, allegory and rhetorical overstatement when speaking from a frustrated standpoint.

WOMEN SAY THINGS LIKE *We never go out!*

What she really means is! *I feel like we should go out and do something together! I love being with you, why don't you take me out for a meal, it has been a time since we went out together!*

MEN RESPOND WITH *We went out last week!*

What he hears her say! *You are not caring for me, you really are a disappointment, and we never do anything together anymore, because you are lazy, unromantic and just plain boring.*

WOMEN SAY THINGS LIKE

You always ignore me!

What she really means is! *Today I feel like you haven't noticed me, you haven't really spoken to me all day. I feel like I'm a nobody around here, and nobody seems to care about me. You think more about your computer than you do me! Please give me a hug and a kiss and let me know everything is all right.*

MEN RESPOND WITH

I notice you all the time!

What he hears her say! *I can't get the attention I need, because you don't look at me any more, everything is hopeless and it's all your fault!*

WOMEN SAY THINGS LIKE

I'm so tired, I need a rest!

What she really means is! *I have had such a busy day, I need to have a rest before I can do anything else. I am so thankful I have your support. Please hold me and assure me that I am doing a good job as the wife and mother in this home.*

MEN RESPOND WITH

That's silly, you slept all night!

What he hears her say! *I do everything and you do nothing, you really should be doing more, don't leave it all to me. I wish I had a 'real man' to live with, I made a mistake in marrying you.*

WOMEN SAY THINGS LIKE

The house is always a mess!

What she really means is! *Today I feel like having a rest, even though the house is a mess. I am frustrated because I need a rest. I can't tidy it all by myself, would you please help me!*

MEN RESPOND WITH

You cleaned up last week!

What he hears her say! *This house is a mess and it's all your fault. Why do you leave it all to me to do the cleaning. I just get it tidy and you mess it up again, you are a lazy so and so, help me clean up or clear out!*

WOMEN SAY THINGS LIKE

No one listens to me anymore!

What she really means is! *I am afraid I am boring you, perhaps you are no longer interested in me anymore? I seem to be a bit sensitive today, but you know what time of the month it is, please give me some special attention today I need to know you really do care.*

MEN RESPOND WITH

I am listening to you right now!

What he hears her say! *I give you all my attention, but you are not listening to me like you used to. You have become a boring person to be with. You are a disappointment to me, you are careless and selfish*

WOMEN SAY THINGS LIKE

You don't love me anymore!

What she really means is! *Today I feel like you don't love me anymore, I am afraid I have pushed you away! I know you really do love me, but today because I am feeling insecure, would you please tell me you love me and just hold me a little to reassure me.*

MEN RESPOND WITH

Of course I do, I'm here!

What he hears her say! *You don't love me anymore, I have given you the best years of my life, and yet you do nothing for me anymore. You really have used me up, you are selfish and cold. You are only concerned about doing what pleases you and nothing you do is to please me. I was a fool to love you like I did!*

WOMEN SAY THINGS LIKE

You are always in a hurry!

What she really means is! *I feel rushed today, but I don't want to rush about. Our life is always hurried. I know it's not your fault, I don't blame you. I know you are doing your best to get us there on time and I appreciate how much you do care.*

MEN RESPOND WITH

No I was relaxed last Thursday!

What he hears her say! *You are always in a hurry, you are really irresponsible!. Why do you have to wait to the last minute to do everything. I am never happy when we are rushing around, trying not to be late. You ruin things for me every time. I am more relaxed on my own!*

WOMEN SAY THINGS LIKE

I'd like you to be more romantic

What she really means is! *Honey you have been working very hard, let's take some time off just for ourselves. It's great just to be with you alone without the kids around, and no pressures. You are so romantic when you want to be, why not surprise me with some flowers and a meal out tonight.*

MEN RESPOND WITH

I am so.....romantic?

What he hears her say! *You don't satisfy me anymore. I am not tuned on to you. You need to take some lessons on romance. I feel unfilled, you should be more like other men!*

A 'literal' translation of the woman's words can easily be misunderstood by a man who does not understand how his wife thinks. His responses can lead to more arguments!

I don't feel like you hear me at all! Of course I hear you just said,

and he repeats it word for word! He thinks he has heard if he can repeat the words.

Men and women talk the same words but use these different languages and they fail to understand each other, this leads to pressure and tension.

A woman asks *"What's the matter dear?"*

He says, *"I'm OK!"*

She says, *"I know something's wrong, what is it?"*

He says, *"I'm fine!"*

She says, *"I know something is wrong, I can tell. What is it?"*

He says, *"It's nothing!"*

She says, *"Are you sure? I want to help you!"*

He says, *"It's no big deal!"*

She says, *"But something is bothering you, we should talk!"*

He says, *"It's no problem!"*

She says, *"But it is a problem, I want to help you!"*

When he faces a problem he wants to be *quite* and think it out by himself, but *she* always wants to *talk* about it and bring it out into the open.

MEN SAY THINGS LIKE "I am OK!"

What he really means is! *"That I can deal with this by myself, if I want your help, I will ask you at the time I need it! At the moment I can deal with it by myself!"*

WOMEN RESPOND WITH "But it is a problem, I want to help you!"

What she hears him say! *I am OK but really I am denying my feelings refusing to acknowledge I have a problem. I am not willing to share my upset feelings with you because you do not care! I need you to continue to ask me questions so we can get to the bottom of this together.*

Women need to realise that a man will only ask for help or seek advice after he has done all that he can do alone. For him to receive assistance or aid too soon he loses his sense of power and self confidence. A man reacts to pity, so don't ever pity him or make fun of him, he gets hurt easily.

Everyone needs to learn to listen and not blame or interrupt.

The words, *"It's not your fault!"* can work wonders in another's life.

Primarily men and women need different things in their lives.

Women

Men

She needs *Caring*

He needs *Trust*

She needs *Understanding*

He needs *Acceptance*

She needs *Respect*

He needs *Appreciation*

She needs *Devotion*

He needs *Admiration*

She needs *Validation*

He needs *Approval*

She needs *Reassurance*

He needs *Encouragement*

Sometimes a man thinks because he has met all his wife's needs in the area of love that that is it, and from then on she should know that she is loved and if anything changes she will be informed.

Men and women have different needs.

The male sex drive is more urgent, more focused on intercourse and orgasm and is less easily distracted than the female.

When God made us he gave man about 20 times as much testosterone [male sex hormone] in their blood as women. A woman can be turned off by a wrong word, but a man still wants sex even after a major row.

Men who are successful in life produce more testosterone whether they just win a game of golf, or make a major score in the share market, their level of male hormone will increase, and they feel more sexy and confident.

First thing in the morning men want to make love, when all the wife can think about is getting the kids breakfast and ready for school, the large amount of washing that has to be done. The man's testosterone level peaks in the morning it is almost double what it is later in the day. Most men like *the morning glory*, while wives prefer the intimate *evening shade*.

To many men it's just *bang, bang, thank you ma'am!*

Men usually go to sleep *immediately* after sex while the wife lies there looking at the ceiling or searching for some magazine to read until she is ready to sleep. It is not that man is selfish and insensitive, it's just within about half a minute of an orgasm man's endorphins are released from his brain into his bloodstream and they just put him to sleep. In the woman the release of endorphins is much slower whether she has reached orgasm or not, it takes up to 20 minutes for her to get the same sleepy effect.

The man needs to fight the urge to sleep and stay awake or at least half a wake for a little after play with *intimate* cuddling and kissing and as her endorphins are released then she will drift off to sleep.

The Husband Must Assume His Role!

He must flow in the Divine plan of God as the head of the home. This is not because he is any better than the wife, but simply because someone has to be in authority, and God has planned that it be the man because he is to be the protector in the family, and because God created man first and therefore established a line of command.

1 Tim 2:12 KJV *But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*

1 Tim 2:13 *For Adam was first formed, then Eve.*

1 Tim 2:14 *And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.*

In this life we are all responsible to someone. We are in the chain of command in our work, in every day life. As householders, if we have a mortgage we are responsible to the bank that holds the mortgage.

We may be responsible to a boss, or supervisor. The fact remains that every man and woman is under subjection. This does not mean that those in authority are any wiser or any better than we are. It simply means that for any society to survive someone has to be the leader and be responsible. That is why we have a Prime Minister in Australia, and a President in United States of America, and Royalty in many other countries including the United Kingdom.

God sets the husband as the head of the house and insists that he assume this role. This does not mean that he will 'Lord' it over his wife but treat her the same way Jesus treated the church and was prepared to die for it.

RReal Leadership Is Humility.

Remember the example Jesus gave in John's Gospel.

John 13:12 KJV *So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?*

John 13:13 *Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.*

John 13:14 *If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.*

John 13:15 *For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*

John 13:16 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.*

John 13:17 *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*

Matthew 20:26 KJV *But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;*

Mat 20:27 *And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:*

Mat 20:28 *Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

Thus when the husband assumes the role of leadership in the home it must be with the same attitude that Christ had to the church.

The Husband Is To Be The Provider And Protector!

The Bible makes some strong statements to those who refuse to fulfil their role.

1 Timothy 5:8 Living Bible *But anyone who won't care for his own relatives when they need help, especially those living in his own family, has no right to say he is a Christian. Such a person is worse than the heathen.*

This is mature language, but we must remember that God created husbands and fathers to be miniature representatives of Himself at the local home level. They are to reflect the God type of life into their families. Unfortunately many people have a distorted image of God as Heavenly Father because of the image their earthly fathers have provided.

God planned that the husband be the protector of the wife, he is the shepherd of the family protecting the sheep in his care.

1 Peter 3:7 Living Bible *You husbands must be careful of your wives, being thoughtful of their needs and honouring them as the weaker sex. Remember that you and your wife are partners in receiving God's blessings, and if you don't treat her as you should, your prayers will not get ready answers.*

As men we have been told we have to be good providers, and as a result the major part of our energies are taken up with that area. Sometimes our very existence is justified by what we do rather than what we are. We should be transformed rather than just being busy!

It is an awesome responsibility to be a husband and father, to have to nurture, protect as well as correct our family. We have to remember that our wives cannot become our glory unless we become conformed to the glory of Jesus and The Father.

Husbands Are To Be Givers In The Family!

It only takes a few days into a marriage for a new bridegroom to realise his will be a life of giving. He may have entered into the marriage for what he could get, but he soon learns that true happiness can only be his as he learns to give. This is what Jesus teaches.

Matthew 10:39 Living Bible *"If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give it up for me, you will save it."*

The way to find life in your marriage is to lose it in the service of you mate. You can fall in love with your wife all over again have a brand new love affair with her if you will walk by God's Word. Learn that love is giving rather than receiving!

Maturity is not something that comes with age. It is a character trait, and can be acquired early in life. Evidence of maturity is shown in consistency in a variety of circumstances.

Priceless Gifts To Give To Your Wife!

- * Hug her in front of the children!
- * Bring her flowers *just because!*
- * When she is speaking to you *stop* and *listen!*
- * Treat her nicely just as you did when courting her!
- * Make the bed in the morning when she is in the shower!
- * Tell her something nice you thought about her this week!
- * Insist the children treat her with respect!
- * Give her a love note or poem on the monthly anniversary of your wedding!
- * Ask her advice about important decisions you have to make!
- * Tell her how sexy she is especially when you have been married for a few years!
- * Take her shopping and buy her some lingerie!

Chapter 7

WIVES CAN BE ROMANTIC TOO!

What is a woman?

*She's an angel in truth, a demon in fiction,
A woman's the greatest of all contradiction;*

*She's afraid of a cockroach, scared to death of a mouse,
But she'll tackle a husband as big as a house.
She's faithful, mysterious, keen sighted and blind;
She's crafty, she's simple, she's cruel, and she's kind.
She'll lift up a man; she'll cast a man down.
She'll take him apart and make him a clown.
You'll fancy she's this, but you'll find she is that;
She'll play like a kitten and bite like a cat!
The woman was made to be wife and mother.
The man was made to be husband and father.
The biological assignment was basic and simple.
Eve the childbearer and Adam the breadwinner.
[Author unknown.]*

In the beginning of the last chapter, I pointed out what Dr. Clifford Adams said about men's reasons for getting married, remember they were:-

1. Companionship
2. Sex
3. Romantic Love
4. Desire for Children and Home
5. Need of a Helpmate
6. Security.

In the same research, Dr. Adams also questioned the women on their reason for marrying. Their responses were a little different:-

1. Romantic Love
2. Security
3. Companionship
4. Desire For Children And A Home
5. Sex
5. Community Acceptance

In explaining the different motivations for marriage, Dr. Adams suggests, "A woman is much more romantic and places a greater emphasis on romance than a man. She associates love with a dashing knight on a white horse who is going to carry her off and live happily ever after. Whereas a man wants a pal, or a buddy, someone he can go places with and do things with. Someone to talk to and share his highs and his lows."

Regardless of whether we accept the results of Dr. Adams long and intensive survey or not we must recognise that much of the tension in marriage comes because husbands and wives look at marriage and life from two entirely different viewpoints.

Headliners or Fine Detail People?

Women really are fine detail people, they want all the details now, and are prepared to sit for several hours to hear all the information and satisfy their need to share in all those details.

Men however are entirely different, they are basically headliners, and they want the important points and let them get on with whatever they were doing before.

I have a 24 year old single daughter who when she was a student at TAFE, used to come home after a long day at school, I was happy to hear If it was a good day, did the car go all right, any major problems I should know about? No! Great! The whole matter is over in 25 seconds. Now as a man I was satisfied that all is well and I don't need to worry.

A man's life revolves around major decisions mostly in his employment and minors really annoy most men. They hate to sift through small matters but would rather get to the meat of the matter.

On the other hand Elizabeth would sit down with Naomi and spend probably 30-45 minutes getting most of the details about who said what to whom, and what was their reply. How many people were in class and what clothes did they wear etc. etc.

For a woman it's not what you say but how long it takes to say it!

Women have great need to communicate verbally, they enjoy talking about little details that men have no interest in at all. It is all these details that add interest to clothing, furnishings and even the children's behaviour.

Men And Women Are Different!

Elizabeth and I are two different people and see life from a different perspective. We have different values and needs, but in this marriage we compliment each other.

Men and women are functionally different; if they were not then they would have no need of each other. God designed us so that neither is complete alone but together we make up a whole. Since each has its own God ordained function, which is necessary for the completeness of the marriage; then rivalry over their comparative importance is really pointless. God does not value one above the other and neither should we.

It is important that when we enter marriage that we understand these two differing views.

Paul says in Ephesians

Ephesians 1:16 KJV. *Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;*

Ephesians 1:17 *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:*

Ephesians 1:18 *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,*

Ephesians 1:19 *And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,*

Ephesians 1:20 *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,*

Ephesians 1:21 *Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:*

Ephesians 1:22 *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,*

Ephesians 1:23 *Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.*

In v18 eyes of your understanding being enlightened means having the eyes of your mind enlightened that you may know.

The human brain is a fantastic piece of equipment, better than the most modern computer and when God made it, He made it with two distinct sides with differing abilities. There is the logic side and the creative side.

As a general rule men use the logic side and women the creative side. That is why as a general rule women should choose the curtains and fabrics etc. in the home, because God planned that they would normally spend much more time there than the men. On the other hand the man has abilities in logic, which normally outweigh the wife. The female however has the ability to use both side of her brain more so than the male, because at birth boys have a chemical reaction in the brain that girls do not have. It does not mean as some women have suggested that men are brain damaged.

To a man, this means when a woman is using both side of her brain at one time the man has difficulty understanding what she really is talking about, because it is not logical to him.

God planned that both husband and wife should work together using both their abilities to make a complete harmonious unit called the family.

The Greek word that Paul uses for the eyes of your understanding is *dianoia*.

Dianoia is the creative side of the brain. Paul says we should start to think like our Father God, The Creator of heaven and earth. It is not a question of the man being right or the woman being right, most times they are both wrong, only God is right every time!

Dr. Adams in his study asked the women what they expected of their husbands and they replied:-

1. That He Would Be Kind And Understanding.
2. That He Could Be Romantically Affectionate
3. That He Could Be A Good Father For The Children
4. That He Would Be A Good Provider

He Is Not To Be A Prisoner!

Do not make your husband a prisoner of your expectations! Don't be discouraged if he doesn't measure up to them. A man likes to feel that he is his own person and making the decisions, and if the wife will be sensitive about her expectations and surrender them to God. She should observe Philippians 4:6-7 and not be anxious, but lets her needs be known in prayer, then that removes the pressure from the husband, and releases him to do what he should. He needs this

freedom, and at the same time the wife will experience freedom to enjoy of giving true appreciation.

When the good Doctor asked the men the same question they responded:-

1. She Should Be A Reasonably Good Housekeeper
2. She Should Be A Reasonably Good Cook
3. She Should Be An Interesting And Exciting Sexual Partner
4. She Should Be A Good Mother For The Children

The husband must lead his family in love and not be a tyrant; this in turn frees his wife to get on with her God given responsibilities.

The wife will be the 'completer' of her husband, she is absolutely essential to him.

Genesis 2:18 N.I.V. The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Gen 2:21 So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh.

Gen 2:22 Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

Gen 2:23 The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman' for she was taken out of man."

Gen 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

Help Him Express Himself!

A mature wife will help her husband express himself, and the mature husband will look beyond his desires to bring out the best in his wife.

Male and female have been created by God and are different, but equal, complimentary not competitive, each is incomplete in themselves but totally fulfilled in the other. Wives are to be a helpmeet not a hindrance.

What Does God Expect Of The Wife?

To be wise we must also look to God's Word to see what He says about wives and their responsibilities.

What does He expect of them in a marriage?

Proverbs 14:1 Living Bible A wise woman builds her house, while a foolish woman tears hers down by her own efforts.

The wife should be intertwined with her husband.

Regardless of what the women's libbers think or say, the woman is deeply entwined with man and man with woman.

God's Word clearly says:-

Genesis 3:16 N.I.V To the woman he said, *Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.*"

Paul also takes this thought of our lives being entwined when he says:-

1 Corinthians 11:7 *But a man should not wear anything on his head (when worshipping, for his hat is a sign of subjection to men). God's glory is man made in his image, and man's glory is the woman.*

1 Corinthians 11:8 *The first man didn't come from woman, but the first woman came out of man.*

1 Corinthians 11:9 *And Adam, the first man, was not made for Eve's benefit, but Eve was made for Adam.*

1 Corinthians 11:11 *But remember that in God's plan men and women need each other.*

1 Corinthians 11:12 *For although the first woman came out of man, all men have been born from women ever since, and both men and women come from God their Creator.*

1 Corinthians 13:7 Living Bible *If you love someone, you will be loyal to him no matter what the cost. You will always believe in him, always expect the best of him, and always stand your ground in defending him.*

Pprivate Relationships!

It is important for women also to remember that sexual love is a very private and personal part of marriage and not to be shared with anyone else other than your mate. It is possible for a woman if she is with other women to perhaps let slip some intimate details of her marriage, but the Bible says:-

Proverbs 11:22 Living Bible *A beautiful woman lacking discretion and modesty is like a fine gold ring in a pig's snout.*

Hebrews 13:4 N.I.V *Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.*

Physical love between two people in marriage is a sacred thing, and once those details are shared with another that sacred relationship is broken.

You should be the woman of his dreams, not his worst nightmare! Your husband should know that you really *need* him. Unless he knows you need him he will not recognise his own worth, will not know how to love himself and will not know how to love you to the greatest extent.

Wives Need To Emphasise The Inside!

Wives have a deep influence on their husbands, and often they do not realise how much they do influence their men. God's Word declares:-

1 Peter 3:1 N.I.V. *Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives,*

1 Peter 3:2 *when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.*

If the wife's influence is to be great then her priorities must be right, the Word says:-

1 Peter 3:3 *Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes.*

1 Peter 3:4 *Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.*

1 Peter 3:5 *For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands,*

1 Peter 3:6 *like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.*

The wise wife while not neglecting the outward appearance should give attention to the inward appearance. Husbands do appreciate wives who take care of their outward appearance for their own husbands. The wife who has a proper balance in her life (Proverbs 11:1) will not be concerned with age, because she has love and security from her husband and her Creator.

The Godly Woman!

The world of literature and magazines is filled with descriptions of good women, but I want to give you God's definition of a good woman!

Proverbs 31:10 Living Bible *If you can find a truly good wife, she is worth more than precious gems!*

Proverbs 31:11 *Her husband can trust her, and she will richly satisfy his needs.*

Proverbs 31:12 *She will not hinder him but help him all her life.*

Proverbs 31:13 *She finds wool and flax and busily spins it.*

Proverbs 31:14 *She buys imported foods brought by ship from distant ports.*

Proverbs 31:15 *She gets up before dawn to prepare breakfast for her household and plans the day's work for her servant girls.*

Proverbs 31:16 *She goes out to inspect a field and buys it; with her own hands she plants a vineyard.*

Proverbs 31:17 *She is energetic, a hard worker,*

Proverbs 31:18 *and watches for bargains. She works far into the night!*

Proverbs 31:19 *She sews for the poor and generously helps those in need.*

Proverbs 31:20-21 *She has no fear of winter for her household, for she has made warm clothes for all of them.*

Proverbs 31:22 *She also upholsters with finest tapestry; her own clothing is beautifully made--a purple gown of pure linen.*

Proverbs 31:23 *Her husband is well known, for he sits in the council chamber with the other civic leaders.*

Proverbs 31:24 *She makes belted linen garments to sell to the merchants.*

Proverbs 31:25 *She is a woman of strength and dignity and has no fear of old age.*

Proverbs 31:26 *When she speaks, her words are wise, and kindness is the rule for everything she says.*

Proverbs 31:27 *She watches carefully all that goes on throughout her household and is never lazy.*

Proverbs 31:28 *Her children stand and bless her; so does her husband. He praises her with these words:*

Proverbs 31:29 *"There are many fine women in the world, but you are the best of them all!"*

Proverbs 31:30 *Charm can be deceptive and beauty doesn't last, but a woman who fears and reverences God shall be greatly praised.*

Proverbs 31:31 *Praise her for the many fine things she does. These good deeds of hers shall bring her honour and recognition from people of importance.*

Superwoman?

She sounds a bit like Superwoman, but she is God's description of how a wife should be. Each day, God is changing every one of us from glory to glory to be more like Jesus, so we can better fill the role he has called us to.

This description in Proverbs 31 may seem beyond you right now. After all you don't have any servant girls or do you?

What about all those modern day appliances you have in your home, as servant girls!

She exercised!

Proverbs 31:17 KJV. *She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.*

The Proverb says she is organised in her budgeting, and she is a good home maker, she is able to manage the household and all its details, etc.

It is a happy man who has a wife that fits God's description. However we must remember that we are all growing to perfection.

We can grow better in an environment of love, tenderness and trust. Wives need to hear words of appreciation. God created them with this need.

The wise husband will deeply love and respect his wife and help her to be conformed to the image of Jesus, as Romans 8:29 suggests.

There can be a danger in marriage if either partner demands satisfaction from the other and their expectation is not of God. Neither has the right to *demand* satisfaction from the other, as both must give voluntarily. Love is the key, putting the other's needs before your own, and then your expectations will be according to the Word of God.

First Four Minutes In The Day!

Do you realise that the wife's attitude during her husband's first four waking minutes in the morning sets the tone for his entire day? The atmosphere for love in the evening can be set at breakfast time!

Some tips to please a husband!

1. Become intimately acquainted with your husband. Know what makes him glad and apply it, know what makes him sad or mad and avoid it. Be aware and comfort him when he's sick or tired. Get close to him when he feels lonely. Encourage him.
2. Fit into his plans. Pray and trust God to direct him. Be his supporter even if you think he's wrong. Be wise hold your advice and observations until asked for them.
3. Know what's different about your husband and minister to his personal differences. When you know what makes him happy and what gives him pleasure - do it! Don't criticize him for his characteristics recognise that they are what make him your very unique husband.
4. Constantly be his affectionate wife. Read up on Song of Solomon. Sex and affection is not the same thing. Be affectionate verbally as well as physically. Develop personal habits and
5. Manners to please him. Dress to please him. Build him up, never tear him down.
6. Always remember that problem not worth praying about is a problem not worth worrying about.
7. Satisfy his sexual urges and he won't be tempted to look elsewhere. [Read the tragic story of David and Michal in 2 Samuel 6:16-23].
8. Don't lose your temper, use a soft answer. Have a controlled tongue. Proverbs. 15:1, 13:3, 16:2.

HOW TO PRESERVE A HUSBAND!

*Select one fresh from the market
 Not too green, but tender and healthy.
 Handle gently because they bruise easily.
 Sweeten with smiles, blend with patience,
 humour and a pinch of mischief.
 Do not beat!
 Preserve over a steady fire
 of warmth and affection.
 Like fine wine they mellow with age.*

*Do not pickle or put in hot water
as this makes them bitter.
Serve with sugar, spice
and tender loving care.*

Chapter 8

THE TWO NOW BECOME THREE OR MORE!

While the idea of having children is a factor in marriage and the avoidance of the temptations of unattached affections is another, the major factor is the love and increasing enjoyment of the company and mutual interest and fellowship of two people, which leads to a point where physical life can only have full meaning and expression in continuing in the presence of each other and making the relationship permanent and full.

Love is selective and increasingly engages one's attention to the person loved; others being thus excluded. It affects the whole personality -one's spirit, manner, emotions, and conduct, especially where it is reciprocated.

Love flows from the heart, but it is not above reason. It carefully and intelligently leads and guides to a single and lasting choice. They two become one flesh. Not the fusing into one physical being or the absolute adoption of each other's thought life, for in these the husband and wife remain distance, and it is indeed these facts that make them attractive to each other.

Flesh describes man in his relationship with the entire natural world. When Jesus became flesh, He partook of human nature with its earthly dependence. It is in this area that husband and wife are united to find their firmest expression of physical life, personal commitment and lasting companionship. They 'know' one another and have an appreciation of each other hitherto unknown. Loving And Caring For Children Honours God!

God ordained family order when He made covenant with Adam and Eve. The covenant contained two independent provisions.

They were descendants and dominion. Two people alone could not take dominion in the earth; it would require some more descendants.

For we who are believers, having children is the response to God's command in Genesis 1:28 K.J.V. *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

Psalm 127:3 Living Bible Children are a gift from God; they are his reward.

Psalm 127:4 Children born to a young man are like sharp arrows to defend him.

Psalm 127:5 Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them. That man shall have the help he needs when arguing with his enemies.

In this Psalm children are called a heritage from The Lord. This means that children belong to God; they are only 'ours' in a secondary way.

God gives children to parents in the sense that a wealthy man entrusts his fortune to his heirs. When a couple enters into a marriage they make themselves available to God to love, serve and sacrifice for the next generation.

Psalm 128:1 Living Bible Blessings on all who reverence and trust the Lord--on all who obey him!

Psalm 128:2 Their reward shall be prosperity and happiness.

Psalm 128:3 Your wife shall be contented in your home. And look at all those children! There they sit around the dinner table as vigorous and healthy as young olive trees.

Psalm 128:4 That is God's reward to those who reverence and trust him.

Psalm 128:5 May the Lord continually bless you with heaven's blessings as well as with human joys.

Psalm 128:6 May you live to enjoy your grandchildren! And may God bless Israel!

How Do You Train Your Child?

As parents we have a huge responsibility to train our children in God's ways. We are to bring up good children in a bad world.

Proverbs 22:6 N.I.V. *Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.*

This verse has had many interpretations from various ministers and leaders, mainly talking about discipline and the rod of correction. But most have misunderstood the message that it gives. The verb *Train* in this verse has a very special meaning in the Hebrew language. In our Western minds with its modern ideas we think of discipline, as many others have done and suggested.

However in the ancient Hebrew language and to the Eastern mind, the word *Train* denotes the action of the midwife who would dip her finger in oil and rub a little on the tiny palate of the newborn baby, causing the baby to have a desire to suck.

Thus the verse literally means *"Create a taste for God in the heart of your child, and when he is old nothing else in life will satisfy that hunger."*

A modern translation of the verse says, *"Train your child how to receive the blessings of God and when he is old, he will still remember how!"*

What a difference it would make to Christian families if they had understanding of this simple little verse. Instead of always 'correcting' them we could train them to receive the blessings of God, by loving them and providing a climate of love and security for them to grow up in.

A child raised in this type of setting is much more likely to keep on with The Lord in later years and then in turn train their children the same way.

When our children were small, if they asked for anything, Elizabeth and I would never tell them *"We can't afford it!"* But we would say to them, *"You can have anything you can believe God for!"*

Then we would pray and put our faith with their faith and believe with them!

The Skateboard!

One time when our son Ian was about ten years old, skateboards had become popular in Australia, and they cost about \$50:00 initially. He came to me and asked if he could have a skateboard. My response was, *"Son you can have anything you can believe God for!"*

We then prayed and agreed for the skateboard. A few weeks later I felt impressed to go to the K-Mart Store.

When we arrived at the store, there was a demonstration of skateboards going on in the lobby outside the store. Several American guys were demonstrating with the boards and when the demonstration was over, a lady from K-mart switched on a flashing red light and spoke over the microphone, *"For the next five minutes all these skateboards used in the demonstration will be sold at \$5:00 each."*

Ian looked at me and said, *"Can I borrow \$5:00 Dad?"*

I gave him the money and he was one of the first in line to get a skateboard for \$5:00. So God wonderfully answered his prayer, by getting K-Mart to invite skateboard manufacturers from America to come to be in our area and demonstrate them just when we would be there.

Ian of course has never forgotten the lessons he learned as a child and has continued in them and used the principles to get cars, a beautiful wife and children and all those things he desires. He now trains his children the same way.

Children's Age Levels Are Vital.

If you are the parent of a younger child still at school, from kindergarten right through to college, the first five minutes you spend with that child when it comes home from school will be the most important in its day. As a parent it is essential to take the time to do it!

Ages For Training Your Children!

At different ages, children have different needs as their learning levels for different things are developed, therefore we should be careful to teach our children truths about God from the very beginning. No child is ever too young to learn. However it is true that we should not teach eschatological dissertations to a four year old. But we should begin at birth and let our little ones know that they are a very special gift from a loving Heavenly Father and that they are a very unique and special creation, and that there is no one else like them in the entire world.

Those who have studied children's development for many years suggest that there are certain concepts that can best be taught at various age levels. Wise parents will recognise and take advantage of the tender times and realise that it involves age-level understanding. These times prepare the child for maturity and provide a security and bonding with the parents.

The following age levels are suggested for certain training.

Birth To Two Years:-

This the time when basic trust is learned. It is important to hold the baby often and lovingly. Comfort should be maximised and fear minimised. The baby can sense even from birth that father and mother are people to be trusted, so the foundation for learning is laid here. If the child is abandoned or abused at this time those fears and scars will follow. Remember the baby is helpless and cannot verbalise. It is our responsibility to help develop this trust.

Three Years:-

At this age the child acquires a sense of autonomy, at the same time it begins to face doubt and shame. The baby begins to break away from total dependency on the parents, and begins to do some things for himself. This can be a trying time for the mother,

because the baby has totally depended on her for the past two years, now he wants to start to make his own way. He will be learning more through attitudes than teaching at this time. Remember it is God's plan for the baby to grow and establish himself as an individual. He is not merely an extension of his parents, he is a totally separate human being, who is in their care for a season and will eventually leave them to commence another family. His success or failure in the new family will largely depend on how his parents trained him in the early years.

Four To Five Years:-

This is where he finds his sense of initiative overcomes the sense of guilt. He begins to intrude into other people's space. He starts to develop other friends outside the family, with neighbouring children etc. This is the beginning of a life-long learning of how to get along in a crowded world. Sometimes this is called the golden age of learning because at no other time is the child more ready to learn and relate cooperatively with others. More is expected of him in family and in his world. This is the great age to teach responsibility to him.

Six To Eleven Years:-

During these years the child acquires a sense of industry and fends off the inferiority. He becomes more self assured and assertive. In a way he is pressured to become part of the adult world, and assume more responsibility. Before a person can become a good parent he must learn to be a good worker, so this is the time for developing the skills of industry and doing thing with less supervision. This is the training period for the future and the child begins to compare his parents with other adults. This is a healthy time as his world begins to enlarge and broaden.

Twelve To Fourteen Years:-

This is where one's identity is acquired with the need to learn fidelity. Important physical changes are taking place in the child at this time; this thrusts them into a preoccupation with their body and physical appearance. Sometimes at this age the child starts to look for a special friend of the opposite sex to have as a real friend.

The teenage years can have traumas: they get concerned about their lack of good looks, lack of good friends, lack of intelligence, lack of money etc. Peer pressure can cause problems. Teach them to stand, and know what they stand for!

Fifteen To Eighteen Years:-

At this time the young person acquires a sense of intimacy and avoids isolation. There is a need to learn to love and to be industrious. By this time it is essential to have discovered one's identity and reason for being and so avoid the frustration about these areas.

The college years can be difficult if the parents have not properly trained the child. Parents need to stand by their children and help them with the problems they face, but you must also know when to stand back. This is the period when they go through de-parenting. Parents are not as important as they used to be in their lives.

Let them know you are still available if they need you.

Eighteen Years To Adulthood:-

These years are generally the years of decision-making. At this time the decisions are generally made about one's faith, employment and life-time partner.

The growing up process is as difficult for parents as it is for children, each is learning as they go. Sometimes the child thinks his parents are too strict, and the parents think they give too much; so a sense of balance is important. This comes out of the earlier training relationship.

What God Holds Parents Responsible For!

There are three things that God holds parents responsible for:-

1. **T**eaching: When God chose one man to be the father for his people Israel, he selected Abraham. God gave His reason for this in Genesis:-

Gen 18:19 N.I.V. *For I have chosen him, because he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.*

God chose Abraham because He knew he would be a good parent and teach his family about a Loving Heavenly Father.

Sometimes parents think that as soon as their children are "off their hands" that the responsibilities are over, however God says in Exodus:-

Exod 10:2 Living Bible *What stories you can tell your children and grandchildren about the incredible things I am doing in Egypt! Tell them what fools I made of the Egyptians, and how I proved to you that I am Jehovah."*

Then also in Deuteronomy He says:-

Deuteronomy 4:9 Living Bible *"But watch out! Be very careful never to forget what you have seen God doing for you. May his miracles have a deep and permanent effect upon your lives! Tell your children and your grandchildren about the glorious miracles he did.*

God's Word plainly tells us we are to teach our children, and the best way is by example.

Deuteronomy 6:6 Living Bible *And you must think constantly about these commandments I am giving you today.*

Deuteronomy 6:7 *You must teach them to your children and talk about them when you are at home or out for a walk; at bedtime and the first thing in the morning.*

Deuteronomy 6:20 *"In the years to come when your son asks you, 'What is the purpose of these laws which the Lord our God has given us?'*

Deuteronomy 6:21 *you must tell him, 'We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with great power*

Deuteronomy 6:22 *and mighty miracles--with terrible blows against Egypt and Pharaoh and all his people. We saw it all with our own eyes.*

Deuteronomy 6:23 *He brought us out of Egypt so that he could give us this land he had promised to our ancestors.*

Deuteronomy 6:24 *And he has commanded us to obey all of these laws and to reverence him so that he can preserve us alive as he has until now.*

Deuteronomy 6:25 *For it always goes well with us when we obey all the laws of the Lord our God.'*

It's not enough to tell your children how to act; you must show them by your example.

Jesus did not just come to die He could have done that in one day. Rather He came to live among men, to walk with men and talk with men and show them by His example how to live their lives.

2. **D**iscipline: Every child has lots of energy and emotions. The parent's role is to help that child get control of himself to the point where the emotions and energies are not destructive but constructive.

Discipline is not punishment but putting the child in proper control of himself. There is a big difference between punishment and discipline.

Punishment is getting even because we have been offended or hurt.

God disciplines His children but He does not punish them.

Proverbs 13:24 N.I.V. *He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.*

Proverbs 19:18 Living Bible *Discipline your son in his early years while there is hope. If you don't you will ruin his life.*

Proverbs 23:13 KJV *Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.*

Proverbs 23:14 *Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.*

Proverbs 29:17 N.I.V. *Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul.*

2 Timothy 3:16 N.I.V. *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,*

God uses His Word to correct us, and we should be able to discipline and correct our children with words rather than the rod, if we do it properly. Our personal experience has been that we only ever used the rod on each of our children one time!

After that we used words, because they knew we meant what we said. So many times as we travel around churches we hear parents telling their children not to do this or that and it goes on and on and the child completely ignores them. This is because they have a double standard. At home the child obviously does what it wants, with no discipline, and then at church it still does not want to be told what to do.

The parents do not want to discipline the child in front of other Christians so they face a dilemma.

You must learn that if you do not start early and get the child to respect the rod, and have a holy fear of being disciplined because mother and father really mean what they say and will not repeat it several dozen times. If you leave it until the child is teenager, you have left it too late and you will have troublemaker on your hands.

Someone has said it should be done in the high chair not the electric chair!

3. **G**iving: There are no financial rewards for being parents, in fact being a parent costs you something. Fatherhood cost God His Son.

Paul says in Corinthians:-

2 Corinthians 12:14 N.I.V. *Now I am ready to visit you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you, because what I want is not your possessions but you. After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.*

2 Corinthians 12:15 So I will very gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well. If I love you more, will you love me less?

When you decide to be a parent, count the cost, you must be prepared to give everything you have. To do any less would be inadequate.

That does not mean you give the child everything he wants.

When I say, parents are to give, I mean they are to be selfless, and share their very lives with their children, and teach them all the time.

You know the old story about the hungry man. If you give him a fish you can feed him for a day, but teach him to fish and he will never be hungry again!

Don't discipline your child because you are angry or frustrated, don't get into the habit of nagging your child, Paul says in the letters to the churches:-

Ephesians 6:4 Living Bible And now a word to you parents. Don't keep on scolding and nagging your children, making them angry and resentful. Rather, bring them up with the loving discipline the Lord himself approves, with suggestions and godly advice.

Colossians 3:21 Living Bible Fathers, don't scold your children so much that they become discouraged and quit trying.

Preparing Your Children For Life!

Launching children on the road to life is not without it's anxious moments. Children will repeat what they experience in the home. You must not give them a double standard. There should be no hypocrisy in the home. Say what you mean and mean what you say. Establish your life and marriage on God's Word and stay with it seven days a week, and then they will know what is normal!

The things a child needs most are the following:-

1. Love
2. Security
3. The Sense Of Belonging
4. Acceptance
5. Truth
6. Freedom From Fear
7. Accomplishment
8. Respect (both ways)
9. Responsibility
10. No Extremes (love or control).

Remember that God did not make you to be a robot, so don't expect your children to be robots when you speak. They, like you have a free will, and this includes the right to ask questions. This is part of their growing up program. God gave children an inquisitive mind so they could learn and be prepared for their life here on earth.

BEATITUDES FOR PARENTS

Blessed are the parents who make their peace with mud and spilled milk, for of such is the kingdom of childhood.

Blessed are the parents who refuse to compare their children with others, for each is equally precious.

Blessed are the fathers and mothers who have learned to laugh, for it is the music of the child's world.

Blessed are parents who can say no without anger, for comforting the child is the security of a firm decision.

Blessed are the parents who are teachable, because knowledge brings understanding and love.

Blessed are the parents who love their children in the midst of a hostile world, for love is the greatest of all gifts.

CHILDREN CAN BE FUNNY

They say the funniest things. Some school-teachers must agree with that, because they keep journals of amusing things their students have written in papers. Here are a few examples:

When asked the following questions about love and marriage children replied: -

WHAT IS THE PROPER AGE TO GET MARRIED?

"Eighty-four! Because at that age, you don't have to work anymore, and you can spend all your time loving each other in your bedroom." (Judy, 8)

"Once I'm done with kindergarten, I'm going to find me a wife!" (Tom, 5)

WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE DO ON A DATE?

"On the first date, they just tell each other lies and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second date." (Mike, 10)

WHEN IS IT OKAY TO KISS SOMEONE?

"You should never kiss a girl unless you have enough money to buy her a big ring and her own VCR, 'cause she'll want to have videos of the wedding." (Jim, 10)

"Never kiss in front of other people. It's a big embarrassing thing if anybody sees you. But if nobody sees you, I might be willing to try it with a handsome boy, but just for a few hours." (Kelly, 9)

IS IT BETTER TO BE SINGLE OR MARRIED?

"It's better for girls to be single but not for boys. Boys need somebody to clean up after them!" (Lynette, 9)

"It gives me a headache to think about that stuff. I'm just a kid. I don't need that kind of trouble." (Kenny, 7)

WHY LOVE HAPPENS BETWEEN TWO PARTICULAR PEOPLE

"No one is sure why it happens, but I heard it has something to do with how you smell. That's why perfume and deodorant are so popular." (Jan, 9)

"I think you're supposed to get shot with an arrow or something, but the rest of it isn't supposed to be so painful." (Harlen, 8)

"One of the people has freckles and so he finds somebody else who has freckles too." (Andrew, age 6)

ON THE ORIGINS OF LOVE

"One of the Greek lady gods got a crush on one of the Greek man gods. He tried to hit her with lightning and thunderbolts, but he just couldn't get her away from him. After a while, they became the first married gods." (Robbie, 8)

ON WHAT FALLING IN LOVE IS LIKE

"Like an avalanche where you have to run for your life." (Roger, 9)

"If falling in love is anything like learning how to spell, I don't want to do it. It takes too long." (Leo, 7)

REFLECTIONS ON THE NATURE OF LOVE

"Love is the most important thing in the world, but baseball is pretty good too." (Greg, 8)

HOW DO PEOPLE IN LOVE TYPICALLY BEHAVE?

"Mooshy ... like puppy dogs except puppy dogs don't wag their tails nearly as much." (Arnold, 10)

"When a person gets kissed for the first time, they fall down and they don't get up for at least an hour." (Wendy, 8)

CONFIDENTIAL OPINIONS ABOUT LOVE

"Love is foolish ... but I still might try it sometime." (Floyd, 9)

"I'm in favour of love as long as it doesn't happen when 'The Simpsons' is on television." (Anita, 6)

"Love will find you, even if you are trying to hide from it. I have been trying to hide from it since I was five, but the girls keep finding me." (Bobby, 8)

"I'm not rushing into being in love. I'm finding fourth grade hard enough." (Regina, 10)

ON THE ROLE OF GOOD LOOKS IN LOVE

"If you want to be loved by somebody who isn't already in your family, it doesn't hurt to be beautiful." (Jeanne, 8)

"It isn't always just how you look. Look at me. I'm handsome like anything and I haven't got anybody to marry me yet." (Gary, 7)

"Beauty is skin deep. But how rich you are can last a long time." (Christine, 9)

WHY LOVERS OFTEN HOLD HANDS

"They want to make sure their rings don't fall off because they paid good money for them." (Dave, 8)

"They are just practising for when they might have to walk down the aisle someday and do the holy matchimony thing." (John, 9)

THE PERSONAL QUALITIES NECESSARY TO BE A GOOD LOVER

"One of you should know how to write a check. Because, even if you have tons of love, there is still going to be a lot of bills." (Ava, 8)

SOME SURE FIRE WAYS TO MAKE A PERSON FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU

"Tell them that you own a whole bunch of candy stores." (Del, 6)

"Don't do things like have smelly, green sneakers. You might get attention, but attention ain't the same thing as love." (Alonzo, 9)

"One way is to take the girl out to eat. Make sure it's something she likes to eat. French fries usually works for me." (Bart, 9)

HOW CAN YOU TELL IF TWO ADULTS EATING AT A RESTAURANT ARE IN LOVE?

"Just see if the man picks up the check. That's how you can tell if he's in love." (John, 9)

"Lovers will just be staring at each other and their food will get cold. Other people care more about the food." (Brad, 8)

"It's love if they order one of those desserts that are on fire. They like to order those because it's just like how their hearts are on fire." (Christine, 9)

WHAT MOST PEOPLE ARE THINKING WHEN THEY SAY "I LOVE YOU"

"The person is thinking: Yeah, I really do love him. But I hope he showers at least once a day." (Michelle, 9)

HOW A PERSON LEARNS TO KISS

"You learn it right on the spot when the gooshy feelings get the best of you." (Doug, 7)

"It might help to watch soap operas all day." (Carin, 9)

WHEN IS IT OKAY TO KISS SOMEONE?

"It's never okay to kiss a boy. They always slobber all over you...That's why I stopped doing it."
(Jean, 10)

Chapter 9 LOVING ON INTO THE SUNSET!

Seventy Or Eighty Years?

Psalm 90:10 N.I.V. The length of our days is seventy years - or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.

Most Christian people when they reach later years start thinking in terms of this verse, and make preparations for retirement and even death. But God had been speaking to the Children of Israel who were rebels at this time and He 'pulled' them back to seventy or eighty years from what He ordained in Genesis.

Gen 6:3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

As We Grow In Years, and we become grandparents it does not mean that love ceases, or that physical activity in the bedroom is over!

There is the story told of an old Negro preacher who said:-*"Maybe I ain't what I ought to be, but praise God I ain't what I used to be, and I ain't yet what I'm going to be!"*

When we are born again, our experience is one of maturing as a person, as a mate, as a family member and most importantly as a child of God.

We don't grow into the Kingdom of God. We are born into it by the new birth, but there is still much growth needed in our lives.

If your family life is not what it ought to be, just remember that it's not what it used to be and it ain't yet what it's going to be!

Views Change With Age!

As we grow older in years, we see things differently than when we were young. We now have grandchildren, I look at the little guys, and they really can do anything they want.

Their granddad is not the same dad he was to their dad. My life's experiences have deepened and I see things more clearly than I did twenty five years ago.

When I married Elizabeth *I loved what I could see, but now I see what I love!*

Love! This is an interesting word! It is estimated that in the English language there are almost five million words, but the majority are technical words. Each industry has it's own technology, and words. The technical words make up most of the five million.

We have one word for love in English and it is love! I love pie, I love my car, I love my dog, I love football etc. We use the same word all the time.

However in the New Testament there are four different words in Greek to describe all these loves!

1. Phileo (pronounced fil-eh' o) - this is companionship or friendship love. It is the love we feel for friends.

2. Storge (pronounced stor 'gy) - this is family love. Respectful love for members of the family.

3. Eros (pronounced ear' os) - this is sexual love; mutual desire between a husband and a wife. This love is blessed of God and is found in Song of Solomon.

4. Agape (pronounced ag-ah' pay) - This is Divine Love, the God type of love. It is a self giving love. The word Agape is used 116 times in the Greek New Testament.

To the men I want to say, *"Do yourself a favour and love (agape) your wife!"*

The Octogenarians!

In Exodus there is a wonderful story of some older people who won the battle through their intercessory prayers, and they were all octogenarians (eighty year olds).

Exod 17:8 N.I.V. *The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim.*

Exod 17:9 *Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands."*

Exod 17:10 *So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill.*

Exod 17:11 *As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning.*

Exod 17:12 *When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up--one on one side, one on the other--so that his hands remained steady till sunset.*

Exod 17:13 *So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.*

Exod 17:14 *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."*

Exodus 17:15 *Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner.*

Exod 17:16 *He said, "For hands were lifted up to the throne of the LORD. The LORD will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation."*

This is a wonderful illustration of a marvellous ministry that is open to older people, that of intercessory prayer. Moses, Aaron & Hur were all eighty year olds, but they controlled the fluctuations of the battle. They were on the mountaintop overlooking the battle, Joshua was in the valley below in the thick of the fight.

Intercessory Prayer!

When the battle went good for Israel, Joshua knew that Moses was in intercessory prayer and his hands were raised, but when the battle went against Israel, Joshua knew, without looking up that Moses had stopped raising his hands. When Moses grew tired the other two, Aaron and Hur held his hands up.

The power of spiritual warfare is the intercessory prayer which is uttered on the mountain top (represents the throne room or the presence of God). The battles are always won from that position. No point fighting if you don't pray. The older people have a great responsibility to undergird with prayer the younger who do battle with the enemy.

The Word of God has some interesting things to say to grandparents:-

Psalm 71:18 N.I.V. *Even when I am old and grey, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come.*

This verse depicts a grandparent who was dominant in faith. As they look back over their life, they recognise God's care from birth and all through their life. It really is a prayer for help with a note of confidence. It should be the true desire of the aged, to have the ability and time to minister to the young. They have spent a lifetime proving God, and they have many things to say to those just starting out to face life. Being a grandparent is the most wonderful time for an older person.

Before you become older, you should make preparation for your later years.

Develop the habit of daily reading, as this stimulates mental abilities.

By the time you are 45 years old you should already have decided about your future. Do not leave it to your family to make decisions when you are older, because their decisions may not be what you want.

Arrange to sell your home and buy into a retirement home, so you can fellowship with other people your own age. Most retirement homes have really good conditions today. Some of the nursing homes are not as comfortable.

If you make plans early, then you will not put pressure on others and yourself later.

Don't Hoard!

Don't hoard belongings and possessions. Give away a lot of what you have, to the needy.

The Bible says in Proverbs 19:17 *He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward him for what he has done.*

Make A Will!

Make a will and be specific about who gets what, so there will be no arguments after you pass on.

Look on retirement as a further phase of your life, as a new beginning. Face the prospect of it squarely and early, and set in motions plans to make it enjoyable, fulfilling and useful. The process of aging is gradual but retirement can come suddenly. Yesterday you were a worker, today you are older and retired and you really have no choice in the matter.

When you retire often it seems you get many messages of your 'old' work mates who are dying. It seems that more and more 'old' friends are passing on.

Some verses seem to be less theological and more a reality.

Hebrews 9:27 KJV. *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

Remember that God has a plan for your life, and it includes your senior years. God does not know age as we seem to know it. It's never too late to get on side with God's plan for your life.

Caleb!

Caleb when he was 85 years old was as strong as he had been at 40.

Josh 14:9 Living Bible *Moses told me, 'The section of Canaan you were just in shall belong to you and your descendants forever.'*

Josh 14:10 *"Now, as you see, from that time until now the Lord has kept me alive and well for all these forty-five years since crisscrossing the wilderness, and today I am eighty-five years old.*

Josh 14:11 *I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent us on that journey, and I can still travel and fight as well as I could then!*

Josh 14:12 *So I'm asking that you give me the hill country that the Lord promised me. You will remember that as spies we found the Anakim living there in great, walled cities, but if the Lord is with me, I shall drive them out of the land."*

Josh 14:13 *So Joshua blessed him and gave him Hebron as a permanent inheritance because he had followed the Lord God of Israel.*

God Promised Restoration To The Older Folks.

Joel 2:25 N.I.V. *'I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten-- the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm -- my great army that I sent among you.*

Joel 2:28 KJV *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:*

God here promises to restore the lost years. Peter picks up these thoughts in the book of Acts when he said on the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:17 Living Bible *'In the last days,' God said, 'I will pour out my Holy Spirit upon all mankind, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men dream dreams.*

God promised to pour out His Holy Spirit on all flesh, young and old, and He would affect all flesh so that young men would have visions and old men would dream.

Abraham!

When Abram was 75 years old, God called him to leave town and move to another place that he had never been to before. But on top of that when he was almost 100 years old and his wife was 90 years old, God did a supernatural miracle. He by-passed all human and biological laws and gave them a baby son, when Sarah's womb was dead and Abraham was too old to father a child.

Think of the trauma the call of God would have caused Sarah. Ur of the Chaldees where they lived was a very modern place at that time and they had to leave their very palatial home and go on the road because God said so. Then 25 years down the track God tells them they are going to have a baby. What a situation to be in. However remember the point of the story is to do with obedience. Even though they were older, every family in the whole world would be blessed because of their obedience and faithfulness.

Do And Do Not!

There are some things "to do" and some things "not to do" as grandparents!

Do!

- * Understand the importance of meaningful work. If there is anything to keep a person feeling young it is to do meaningful work.
- * Look to the future and continue to grow. Those who believe their best days are yet to come, and look forward to them, can find vitality and longevity.
- * Be courageous. Have the courage to accept change and challenge, and the courage to build new relationships.
- * Cultivate positive life patterns. The ability to develop patterns continues into your later years. Therefore to be effective the older person will build into their lives, the habits and thought patterns they want to carry on into their senior years.
- * Learn to fight back. Develop the ability to think young and healthy, and therefore fight against old age and sickness. Vibrant people have learned the 'fight back' principle.

* Keep a sense of humour. If you are to live to full effectiveness you must be able to laugh at yourself, at the foolishness of the world around you. It's good to laugh even when it isn't funny.

The Bible says:- Proverbs 17:22 N.I.V. *A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*

A good sense of humour will keep you healthy and make aging so much easier.

* Start to view your later years as vibrant, rich full years. Because people are living longer due to healthier lifestyles etc. there is much more opportunity to enjoy a rich full life at this time than ever before. Seniors can live victoriously if they will enjoy life and walk by The Word in spite of the circumstances.

* Increase in love and patience and grace as the years roll by and be a joy to your families so they want to be with you.

* Learn to be a blessing to all instead of a burden to family and friends.

* See death as an adventure. For the Christian death is a doorway to eternal life. It is not to be feared, but anticipated, by having a wholesome attitude, which is based on faith and a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Do not!

* Do not see yourself as old, sit down and expect to be attended.

* Do not interfere in your children's and grandchildren's lives.

* Do not think you have all the answers and must speak on every subject.

* Do not try to straighten out everyone's problems, even if you see how!

* Do not be moody but thoughtful!

* Do not be nosy or bossy but helpful.

* Do not think that your lifetime of experience is to dominate conversations.

* Do not give an organ recital every time someone asks "How are you?"

* Do not hold grudges, the only person you hurt is you.

* Do not try to 'buy' your family's approval.

Elizabeth and I have talked together about our respective grandparents. Both of us have memories of them from the 1940 - 50's as much older people, even though they were probably just in their sixties. Grandmothers dressed in black, looking old, talking old, acting old, grandfathers with walking sticks talking about the old days.

We want to enjoy our grandchildren and want to be part of their lives, and help them grow up.

Exodus 10:2 Living Bible *What stories you can tell your children and grandchildren about the incredible things I am doing in Egypt! Tell them what fools I made of the Egyptians, and how I proved to you that I am Jehovah."*

Deuteronomy 4:9 Living Bible *"But watch out! Be very careful never to forget what you have seen God doing for you. May his miracles have a deep and permanent effect upon your lives! Tell your children and your grandchildren about the glorious miracles he did.*

Deuteronomy 6:2 Living Bible *The purpose of these laws is to cause you, your sons, and*

your grandsons to reverence the Lord your God by obeying all of his instructions as long as you live; if you do, you will have long, prosperous years ahead of you.

Deuteronomy 6:3 Therefore, O Israel, listen closely to each command and be careful to obey it, so that all will go well with you, and so that you will have many children. If you obey these commands, you will become a great nation in a glorious land 'flowing with milk and honey,' even as the God of your fathers promised you.

Job 21:8 Living Bible They live to see their children grow to maturity around them, and their grandchildren too.

Job 42:16 Living Bible Job lived 140 years after that, living to see his grandchildren and great-grandchildren too.

Psalms 17:14 Living Bible Come and save me from these men of the world whose only concern is earthly gain--these men whom you have filled with your treasures so that their children and grandchildren are rich and prosperous.

Psalms 103:17 KJV But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

Psalms 103:18 KJV To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

Psalms 128:6 Living Bible May you live to enjoy your grandchildren! And may God bless Israel!

Proverbs 13:22 Living Bible When a good man dies, he leaves an inheritance to his grandchildren; but when a sinner dies, his wealth is stored up for the godly.

Proverbs 17:6 Living Bible An old man's grandchildren are his crowning glory. A child's glory is his father.

Isaiah 59:21 Living Bible "As for me, this is my promise to them," says the Lord: "My Holy Spirit shall not leave them, and they shall want the good and hate the wrong--they and their children and their children's children forever.

Jeremiah 29:5 Living Bible "Build homes and plan to stay; plant vineyards, for you will be there many years.

Jeremiah 29:6 Marry and have children, and then find mates for them and have many grandchildren. Multiply! Don't dwindle away!

1 Timothy 5:4 But if they have children or grandchildren, these are the ones who should take the responsibility, for kindness should begin at home, supporting needy parents. This is something that pleases God very much.

Remember as you get older you will have much more time to spend with the grandchildren, however do not ignore or forget to spend time with your mate. Your husband or wife is still the primary relationship in your life next to The Lord, and you should spend time with them.

Don't omit to do thoughtful things for that mate, buy her a bunch of flowers, or cook him his favourite meal. Be a wonderful example to your family and friends, and those who live around about.

You will not know, this side of heaven how many people you have influenced by your attitude to your mate. It's not the things that you tried to do in public where others would see you, but what you thought they did not see that will influence them the most.

God has special rewards for husbands and wives who honour marriage and their partners.

If every person who gets married, did so with God's principles in operation in their lives then our society today would not be in the mess it is in. You can change the direction of your marriage, by changing your attitude to your mate.

With every pleasure that marriage brings there is an equal and corresponding responsibility that we have to live up to.

It has been said that you should not marry someone you can live with but you should marry someone you can't live without!

It has also been said that marriage is an educational institution; in which a man loses his Bachelor's Degree and acquires his Master's.

Chapter 10

POWER FILLED PRAYER SUGGESTIONS!

These prayers are suggestions of how you could pray about various aspects of your marriage, and relationships.

Once you realise that the unity in the church will never go beyond the unity of the homes and families who make up the congregation of the church, you will get a desire to pray Power Filled Prayers based on The Word. As you release the power of His Word by your prayers, He is watching over it:-

Jeremiah 1:12 N.I.V. The LORD said to me, "You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled."

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.



New Creation Marriage:-

Father, in Jesus' Name, it has been written in Your Word that your love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and so because You are in us we say that love is reigning in us. We believe that this great love is making us perfect unto every good work to do Your will. We live and conduct our lives and marriage honourably. We esteem it worthy and precious. We commit ourselves to live in harmony, mutually delighting ourselves in each other, being the same mind and

spirit. We believe and confess that your attributes and abilities are being demonstrated through us daily. We acknowledge that our marriage is a Covenant marriage and as Covenant partners with You, we keep our Covenant vows.

You said you have set life and death before us (Deuteronomy 30:19) we choose life that we and our seed may live.

We believe you go before us in the power of Elijah, and You are turning the hearts of fathers to children, the disobedient to wisdom of the just (Luke 1:17).

We believe that no evil will befall us or come near our dwelling (Psalm 91:10).

We believe a father gives his sons honour and riches, but only The Lord gives a prudent wife (Proverbs 19:14).

We believe that our house is built by wisdom and established by understanding, and by knowledge all it's rooms are filled with beautiful treasures (Proverbs 24:3, 4, 6).

We confess and believe that wicked outlaws will not lie in wait outside our home and will not spoil our resting place (Proverbs 24:15).

We believe and confess that we shall live joyfully all the days of our lives together and enjoy each other (Ecclesiastes 9:9).

We believe that You, Father have joined us together so there is no other person who can put us asunder (Mark 10:9).

We believe that we do not own our own bodies but that they are for each other's enjoyment (1 Corinthians 7:3-5).

We believe that marriage is honourable and the marriage bed undefiled (Hebrews 13:4).

We declare that our marriage is 'off limits' to Satan and he is under our feet (Luke 10:19), and we stand against his wiles by wearing all Your armour (Ephesians 6:11).

We believe our union is a special experience, blessed by Father God and we want our marriage to be an example to others, as to how You God intended that a marriage should be in this life. We believe, receive and it experience it now; in Jesus' Name.

For Your Children:-

We shall command our children and our household and they shall keep the way of The Lord, to do justice and judgment (Genesis 18:19).

We believe that You Father do not hide your face from us when we pray, but that you incline your heart towards us, and that you answer speedily (Psalm 102:2).

We will train our children in the way they should go and they will keep with The Lord because they know how to receive His blessings (Proverbs 22:6, Deuteronomy 11:19, Joel 1:3).

We will not provoke our children to anger but treat them as God would and encourage them with love and nurture (Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21).

We believe that our children shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth trouble, because they are the seed of the blessed of The Lord and their offspring with them (Isaiah 65:23).

We believe that all our children shall be taught of The Lord and they shall have great peace (54:13).

Our confession is that our children shall be great and mighty, honoured everywhere, and prosperous. They shall make wise decisions in life (Job 5:25, Psalm 112:2).

We confess and believe that God Our Heavenly Father has given our children one heart and one way that they may fear Him for ever, for the good of them and their children after them (Jeremiah 32:29).

We believe we receive 'yes' answers to our prayers:-

2 Corinthians 1:19 N.I.V. *For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me and Silas and Timothy, was not "Yes" and "No," but in him it has always been "Yes."*

2 Corinthians 1:20 *For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.*

An Excellent Prayer!

An excellent prayer to pray is found in Paul's Epistle to Ephesus in the New International Version of The Bible, you can put your child's name into the prayer:-

Ephesians 1:16 *I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.*

Ephesians 1:17 *I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.*

Ephesians 1:18 *I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,*

Ephesians 1:19 *and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength,*

Ephesians 1:20 *which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,*

Ephesians 1:21 *far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.*

Ephesians 1:22 *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,*

Ephesians 1:23 *which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.*

The principle will work for your partner if you pray for them also.

You can pray with a certainty that God is watching over His Word to perform it in your life, and the lives of your children and grandchildren.

Jeremiah 1:12 N.I.V. *The LORD said to me, "You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled."*

Remember this!

Marriage is!

It is never being too old to hold hands

It's remembering to say, I love you at least once a day

Is never going to bed angry

Is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives
Is standing together facing the world
Forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family
Is speaking words of appreciating and remembering to demonstrate them
Is having the capacity to forgive and forget
Is giving each other the atmosphere in which to grow
Is finding room for the things of God's Holy Spirit
It is a common search for the good and the beautiful
It is not marrying the right partner
It is being the right partner!
1 Corinthians 13: 4-9

Young's Literal Translation

*4 The love is long-suffering, it is kind, the love doth not envy,
the love doth not vaunt itself, is not puffed up,
5 doth not act unseemly, doth not seek its own things,
is not provoked, doth not impute evil,
6 rejoiceth not over the unrighteousness, and rejoiceth with the truth;
7 all things it beareth, all it believeth, all it hopeth, all it endureth.
8 The love doth never fail; and whether [there be] prophecies, they shall become useless;
whether tongues, they shall cease; whether knowledge, it shall become useless;
9 for in part we know, and in part we prophecy;*



1997

APRIL

30 DAY MARRIAGE MENDER

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THIRTY DAY MARRIAGE MENDER

This is a 30-day Marriage Mender to help stabilise and strengthen your marriage in these days when Satan is out to wreck marriages and families. There is a daily scripture and power thought, a short prayer and a good confession. Take a mender each day for a month and let God do something special in your marriage life.

DAY 1: LOVE AND RESPECT.

Ephesians 5:33 NIV *However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.*

In this day of strained marriages, what wonderful counsel! The question is asked, why only the husband is told to love his wife, while the wife is told to respect her husband.

When the first man and woman sinned, the blessings of the Garden of Eden *turned* into curses. Man, instead of cultivating a garden in paradise, was to continue to cultivate, but by the sweat of his brow and the ground would produce thorns.

Woman, instead of having the joy of bringing a life into the paradise of the Garden, would bear children with great pain and have a strong desire to control her husband.

Man is motivated by his work, and is very self centered.

Woman desires a safe place for her children and for that she needs control.

Hence, the man is to love the woman, *as himself* neutralizing his selfish nature.

The woman is to respect and to trust her husband and not try and control him.

If your marriage doesn't have this balance, it can be yours in Christ today.

Obey His Word and gain the blessing.

Prayer: Father, help me to love and respect, as I need to do according to your Word. Lord take away my selfishness and replace it with your life. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive your help to love and respect so that our marriage may be based on God's Word every day.

DAY 2: THE EXAMPLE OF LOVE.

1 Corinthians 13:8 New Century Version *Love never ends....*

I like the way New Century Version put this, *Love never ends...*

If more people believed this when they got married, there would be fewer marriages ending in divorce. Marriage is as someone has said the chief cause of divorce.

When a person becomes angry or confused, he has a tendency to try to force or drive, rather than to lead with love.

You may be trying to force your mate into changing instead of loving him or her into changing.

The word charity as used in the King James Version in this verse means love, a giving love. To love like God loved unconditionally.

When we think of charity, we think of giving.

Sometimes in a marriage if we look real closely at ourselves, we might see that we have slipped out of an attitude of giving love into one of a driving, forcing, *you-will-do-it-or-else* kind of attitude.

Prayer: Father, help me to lead my mate with love. Help me not to drive or force, but to love and lead by setting the example I should. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive love into my heart, the giving kind of love to help my mate.

DAY 3: HELP NOT CRITICISM.

Proverbs 4:24 New Century Version *Don't use your mouth to tell lies; don't ever say things that are not true.*

In Ephesians 5:3-14 the Apostle Paul made it clear that Christians were to live moral lives, and that they were neither to participate in evil nor to speak of it. In a practical sense, we as believers are not to sin, but we should walk wisely because wise walking in God's Word produces the means by which moral living is carried out. Wise living puts a safety fence around a pit and warns us to stay away.

I have found that most people spend more time complaining than helping.

If you will be honest with yourself, you may find that you are complaining all the time about what your mate is doing wrong, instead of helping him or her to do it right.

Many times people find themselves spending more time helping strangers than to their own family. You must take time to work with your own loved ones. Take time to teach and help each other.

Even ministers fall into this trap. A pastor may help or teach others, but does he take the time to minister to his own wife or children?

I hear many men say. *I wish my wife knew the Bible like so-and-so's wife does.*

My question to them is: *Have you taken the time to teach your wife, or do you only complain?*

Prayer: Father, help me to take the time to teach my own family, not to grumble or complain, but helping them through their weaknesses. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive wisdom, love, and patience to help my mate to grow, to learn and understand.

DAY 4: A WORD FITLY SPOKEN.

Proverbs 25:11 NIV *A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.*

Proverbs 25:11 New Century Version *The right word spoken at the right time is as beautiful as gold apples in a silver bowl.*

When dealing with others, we must remember that a right attitude often makes the difference between success and failure.

Someone has said *that it is your attitude; not your aptitude; that determines your altitude.*

People can feel what comes from your spirit; whether good or bad, love or hate.

Think before you speak.

Is what you are about to say to your mate a *fitly spoken* word?

Is it in the right attitude?

What you say, and how you say it, may well determine whether you convince your mate you are sincerely trying to help him or her to overcome a weakness.

Prayer: Father, help me to have the right attitude toward my mate. Help me to choose fitly spoken words, words of love and kindness. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive by faith help from God to have the right attitude to my husband or wife. I receive the right words to say to him or her to overcome weaknesses, without causing anger or hurt.

DAY 5: TROUBLE NOT YOURSELVES.

Proverbs 11:29 *He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind.*

When two people are joined together in marriage, the Bible says that they become one flesh. (Gen. 2:24.) When you fight against your marriage partner, you hurt your own self.

You will never win by taking the world's attitude of *I'll get even with you*. You must understand that if you hurt your companion, you are destroying part of yourself.

As a result of fighting and bickering, homes end in divorce, and the family gains nothing, but rather, it loses everything.

Prayer: Father, help me not to trouble my own house. Help me to love my mate. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive help from you, Lord, to be more considerate of the one I have married; I will not be the cause of trouble.

DAY 6: FORGIVE AND FORGET.

1 Peter. 4:8 *And above all things have fervent charity (love) among yourselves; for charity (love) shall cover the multitude of sins.*

Today why don't you do something new to show your mate that you really do love them, how happy you are to be with them, how much you really care about them.

For a real breakthrough to come in your marriage, you must learn to *forgive* and to *forget* all of your partner's past failures and mistakes.

We sometimes find this hard to do because there are some things we simply don't want to forgive and forget.

Somewhere we have received the mistaken idea that we need to hold on to our mate's past failures and mistakes to use as a weapon against him or her in time of argument.

No marriage will ever succeed until the partner's learn to forgive as Christ forgave.

How did he forgive? He forgave and forgot!

Remember, *Love never fails*. The weapon with which you are going to win the battle is not a carnal or fleshly weapon, but rather it is with love that you win the victory.

Prayer: Father, help me to forgive and forget as You do, so that there may be healing in our marriage and room in our hearts and minds for a fresh start. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive help to forgive and forget so that God may bring healing to our marriage.

DAY 7: UNDERSTANDING YOUR PARTNER.

Proverbs 4:7 NIV *Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.*

Because I have pioneered and pastored several churches, I have been pastor to many people who considered their marriages and their mate should be perfect, while they treated that partner more like a slave than a lover.

You must understand that your marriage companion is not perfect, cannot be perfect, and will never be perfect.

Don't try to make your companion live up to a standard that he or she can never reach; because after all, you are not perfect either.

Prayer: Father, give me understanding. Help me to understand that my wife or husband can never be perfect. Help me not to try to force him or her into a mould that it is impossible to live up to. In the name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive understanding from God. I receive wisdom from God. My own eyes are open to the fact that I am not perfect and my mate is not perfect either.

DAY 8: BY FAITH, NOT FEELINGS.

2 Corinthians. 5:17 NIV *For we walk by faith, not by sight.*

At this point your flesh (your feelings) may not be happy at the decision you have made to forgive and forget by faith.

You cannot build a marriage on feelings. It must be built on the Word of God. You can never build a strong marriage on feelings.

A marriage is a lifetime commitment. You need to commit yourself to win over the devil, and to save your marriage.

Prayer: Father, help me to put away my childish feelings and build my marriage on the written Word of God by faith. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I will work to make my marriage a better marriage. I confess that God is helping me to overcome my childish feelings.

DAY 9: THE POWER OF PRAYER.

James 5:16 KJV *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

There is nothing that can take the place of praying in faith on a daily basis for the person you are trying to win. When a person prays, he gets God involved on the scene.

Sometimes we don't pray for our marriage partners as much as we think we do. We may pray many hours for everybody else, and everything else, forgetting to spend the needed time to pray for our own husband or wife, the one with whom we live the most intimately and upon whom we depend every day.

Prayer: Father, help me to spend time in prayer for my husband or wife. Help me to reach down in my heart and pray in faith for him or her. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive help to pray for the one I love, and faith to stand with him or her.

DAY 10: THEY TWO SHALL BE ONE.

Ephesians. 5:31 NIV *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.*

Most people spend so much of their time earning a living that they forget how to live.

Yes, we do need to work, but we also need to spend time with our families. This is vitally important to a healthy home and marriage.

We need time together, to get to know the needs of each other. We need to fulfil that deep desire in the heart of our marriage partner that can only be filled by us alone.

There is a certain fellowship I can share with my wife that she cannot get from anyone else. God ordained this, as it was He who joined man and wife together.

Prayer: Father, help me to take time to love my wife or husband, and help me to take time to share with him or her. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I confess that every day I desire my mate more and more, and I will take the time to share with him or her.

DAY 11: COMMITMENT IN MARRIAGE.

1 Peter. 5:8 KJV *Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*

There must be a strong commitment to build a marriage because the devil has come to destroy. He tries to divide a house against itself, because he knows it will not stand if the members are not united as one against him.

We must understand that we have to work harder than the devil. We must cast down the works of Satan in the Name of Jesus.

Prayer: Father, help me to stay committed to working harder at our marriage. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I am being committed to being the partner in this marriage God planned me to be.

DAY 12: FIRST THINGS FIRST.

Matthew. 6:33 *The Message Steep your life in God reality, God initiative, God provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday concerns will be met. Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow.*

I hear this statement spoken nearly every day of the week. *I don't have time.*

Perhaps you have said it yourself thousands of times. *I don't have the time to spare for my family.*

You will never have time; you will have to make the time. The devil knows that if he can get you to neglect your family long enough, it will fall apart.

I learned a number of years ago that if a person doesn't take the time needed for his family, it will never come.

If you will ask God, He will help you to find time. It will seem as if more hours have been added to the day, or your work will be done faster, or you will see that other things are just not that important.

Prayer: Father, help me to manage my time, so that I can be with my family as I should. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I have time to be with my family, to set the example and show the love that I should.

DAY 13: SAY THE GOOD WORD.

Proverbs 12: 25 KJV *Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.*

New Century Version *Worry is a heavy load, but a kind word cheers you up.*

Who do you remember and appreciate the most?

Isn't it the person who tries to build you up and not tear you down?

We all need to be built up, not brought down.

Everyone needs to be encouraged.

We all need to be commended.

This principal will go a long way towards building up a great marriage.

Many husbands and wives are too busy criticizing each other. Soon, so much criticism turns into hate and rebellion.

Your words of encouragement will create a closer unity in your marriage. It will take time, but if you will begin to speak words of encouragement and commendation, through patience you will begin to see the Holy Spirit at work in your marriage.

Prayer: Father, help me to build up my marriage, and not to tear it down by speaking words of discouragement. Give me words inspired by the Holy Spirit to speak to my mate. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I will speak encouraging, inspiring words to build up my marriage.

DAY 14: HAVE PATIENCE.

Hebrews 10:36 KJV *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*

New Century Version *You must hold on, so you can do what God wants and receive what He has promised.*

The Message *But you need to stick it out, staying with God's plan so you'll be there for the promised completion.*

You may discover at this time there is still a lot of work to be done in your family, even in your own self.

This is nothing to get discouraged about, rather rejoice that you see the truth and are willing to change. Sometimes, if you will look closely, you will find that your patience with your family is shorter than with people outside of your home.

This should not be. If there is anyone we should love, have patience with, be willing to teach and work with, it is our own family. If you can be kind to others, you can be kind to your own family members.

Put Philippians 4:13 to work: *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

Prayer: Father, I repent of my lack of patience, of not trying as hard to work with my own family as I do with other people. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive strength to be the person that I should be to my family. I can be kind and patient, because I receive strength to do it from Christ.

DAY 15: PRAY IN THE SPIRIT.

Jude 20 KJV *But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.*

The Message *But you dear friends, carefully build yourselves up in this most holy faith by praying in the Holy Spirit, staying right at the centre of God's love, keeping your arms open and outstretched, ready for the mercy of our master, Jesus Christ. This is the unending life, the real life.*

The greatest thing you can do for your marriage and family is to pray for them in the Spirit.

If you do not know how to do this, then you need to receive the Baptism in the Holy Ghost. Ask God to fill you with His Spirit with the evidence of speaking with other tongues.

Romans 8:26 states *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

We do not know how to pray at times, so we should allow the Holy Spirit to pray through us. He knows how to pray and what to pray for to meet your need.

Prayer: Father, help me to pray in the Holy Spirit each day for my family. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I will pray in the Holy Spirit, and let Him use me, as He desires each day.

DAY 16: THE SOURCE OF LOVE.

Romans 5:5 KJV *And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

You may say, *"I find it hard love my husband or wife."*

It is good though that you admit to a wrong in your life, but through God that situation can be changed.

Love is in your heart. You may not feel it, but it is there nonetheless. It may be suppressed, but you can activate it by confessing that the Holy Spirit has put love in your heart.

Prayer: Father, help me to have a new love in my heart for my mate and family. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I am receiving new love from God in my heart for my mate and family. I confess that it is beginning to flow all through our house.

DAY 17: GET IN AGREEMENT.

Amos 3:3 KJV *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*

A lot of problems in marriage can be worked out if only the couple is willing to talk and then really listen to each other.

A husband and wife should always be willing to talk things out. But it is not enough just to talk; they must be willing to listen to each other, keeping an open mind about what is said.

I have seen people whose minds were already closed before I talked to them. This can only block the working of God. It is important to learn to listen, and then be willing to pray and to follow the leadership of God's Holy Spirit in your marriage.

Prayer: Father, help me to be willing to talk and listen to my wife or husband, and then help me to seek Your face in prayer and to be willing to do whatever you show me to do. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive wisdom to talk, to listen and to pray that there may be a sweeter relationship in my marriage than ever before.

DAY 18: SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION.

Proverbs 10:32 NIV *The lips of the righteous know what is fitting, but the mouth of the wicked only what is perverse.*

One thing that many married people fail to do is to look for new ways to improve themselves, their mate and their marriage.

When a couple first meet, they go out of their way to be nice and polite to each other. But after they have been married for a while they begin dropping their guard. They start taking each other for granted. They forget to compliment each other.

A lot of hard work goes into making and keeping a home (caring for children, earning the living, washing dishes, mowing the grass, cleaning the house, keeping the cars clean and in good running order, doing the laundry, etc.). You should learn to appreciate all of the things that your mate does for you and compliment him or her on it.

Prayer: Father, help me to appreciate my wife or husband for all the good things he or she does for me. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive help from God to appreciate my mate more and to show my appreciation by complimenting him or her daily.

DAY 19: FRIENDSHIP IN MARRIAGE.

Mark 5:19 KJV 19 *Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.*

A person's best friends should be in his own home. Far too many married couples fail to learn how to be each other's best friend.

But friendship must be developed.

Proverbs 18:24 KJV *"A man that hath friends must show himself friendly."*

Do you know how to win new friends? The Bible says that you must *show yourself* friendly.

Too many people are *takers* and not *givers* even in marriage. Don't look for what people owe you when you should be looking for what you can give them.

I have found that couples that not only love one another, but who also are each other's best friend, invariably have a marriage that is strong and enjoyable. They are able to confide in and have confidence in one another. They enjoy each other's company.

Prayer: Father, I ask You to help me not only to build love in our marriage, but also friendship. Help me show myself friendly toward my mate (call his or her name in prayer). In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I will be a friend with my partner, showing love and confidence in him or her.

DAY 20: MAKING DECISIONS TOGETHER.

Mark 3:25 KJV *If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.*

The Message: *A constantly squabbling family soon disintegrates.*

New Century Version: *A family that is divided cannot continue.*

Married couples need to make decisions together as partners, understanding that major decisions will affect the whole family.

Resentments, even hatred, will sometimes build up in one of the partners because he or she is left out of decision making. Some husbands and some wives, for example, will go out and buy things on credit, not consulting with their mate first, not thinking whether they can afford what is being charged or not, getting the family into debt. Such actions can only lead to arguments and bitterness.

Too many couples will not spend the time needed together in prayer before a decision is made.

If family decisions are based on the Word of God, they will be good for the entire family.

Prayer: Father, help me to take the time to involve my companion in my actions. Let us pray about the decisions we make. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I confess that we pray and make decisions together, as we work together to build a better marriage.

DAY 21: JEALOUSY.

Proverbs 6:34 KJV *For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.*

Proverbs 6:34 NIV *for jealousy arouses a husband's fury, and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge.*

New Century Version *Jealousy makes a husband very angry, and he will have no pity when he gets revenge.*

Song Of Solomon 8:6 N.I.V. *Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame.*

Jealousy is a rage. Husbands and wives need to beware of this dreadful enemy. Do not let it into your lives. Learn to trust each other, have faith in each other. This will build a stronger marriage.

I have seen men and women destroy beautiful marriages because of a jealous heart. Satan will talk to a person and put thoughts in his or her head that are not so. I have seen men get mad if they saw their wives talking to another man, even though the conversation was purely innocent.

My wife knows that as a minister I have to talk with other women all the time, even though there is a trust there, and I refuse to meet with any woman to give her advice privately unless my wife is there also. As a minister's wife, she has to deal with all kinds of people, so we have both learned to trust each other, knowing that our work is for the glory of the Lord.

Prayer: Father, help me to rebuke the enemy of jealousy and to cast it out of my heart. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive help to overcome jealousy and strength to place trust in my mate.

DAY 22: SETTING THE EXAMPLE.

Romans 15:1 KJV *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves*

Romans 15:1 NASB *Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.*

In a marriage, the stronger should set the example for the other to follow.

From my years of experience in counselling other people about their problems I have seen that many times in a marriage there is one partner who tries hard; while the other partner does not seem to really care. If this is your case, you must not give up. You just realize that you are fighting a spiritual warfare with the devil. God is on your side, you can win, but you must be willing to obey the instructions of God and pay the price for a better marriage. Part of that price is setting the example for your mate to follow.

Prayer: Father, help me to set an example for my marriage. Help me to pay the price to build a better marriage. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive the grace and faith to follow the instructions of God, to set the example, and not to please myself.

DAY 23: CASTING DOWN IMAGINATIONS.

2 Corinthians 10:5 KJV *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

We sometimes think that power comes through self-promotion, but Jesus made it clear that this was not so. He made it abundantly clear to His disciples that the power and authority of His kingdom was based on having a servant's attitude.

The harder I try, it seems the worse our marriage becomes. So why try?

If this expresses your feelings, you must cast such thoughts down. They are from Satan. The devil wants to build up in your mind the imagination that you cannot win, that there is no hope, no use in trying.

This is a direct attack upon the Word of God by the enemy. God said, *"Love never fails."*

If God has said something, you can count on it, it works.

Numbers 23:19 NIV *God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfil?*

20 *I have received a command to bless; he has blessed, and I cannot change it.*

God has commanded blessing on your marriage and you cannot reverse it.

You can deny it.

You can refuse it.

You can ignore it.

You can disbelieve it.

But it won't go away because He has *commanded* it.

Keep on fighting the good fight of faith. You can take your marriage out of the hands of the devil. You can win because God is on your side.

Prayer: Father, help me to cast down imaginations, and to take on the mind of a winner. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I confess that my marriage is free from the power of the devil. We are winners.

DAY 24: FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT.

1 Timothy 6:12 NIV *Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

Anything worth having is worth fighting for, and every marriage is worth having. But wishing and hoping and daydreaming will not get the job done. By using your faith, praying in the Spirit, and not giving up, you will see results.

If you think that the devil is going to sit still while you build a marriage that will glorify God, you are wrong. If my wife and I had not been willing to pay the price for success in the early years of our marriage, we would not have a marriage today. The devil threw just about everything he had at us, but praise God we were more than conquerors through Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:57 KJV *But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Corinthians 2:14 NKJV *Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.*

Prayer: Father, help me to use my faith; help me to take authority over the enemy who is trying to destroy our marriage. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I have power and authority over the enemy through our Lord Jesus Christ.

DAY 25: ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE.

Philippians. 4:8 KJV *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

Find the good things in your marriage and mate look for the best and not the worst. You may say *But there is nothing good in the person that I have married.*

Sometimes through a period of time, a person begins to see only the negative side and not the positive. You will usually find what you are looking for, if you look long and hard enough. If you look for faults, you will find them, because no person and no marriage is perfect.

Begin to look for the good things in your marriage and mate. The more you look, the more you will find.

Prayer: Father, help me to look and think on the good things in our marriage. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I can, through Christ, overcome a negative life and look at my mate and marriage through the eyes of love.

DAY 26: THE GOD-KIND OF LOVE.

Proverbs 18:24 KJV *There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*

God sees deep down on the inside of us. He sees all of our mistakes, all of our faults. But He still loves us and wants our fellowship.

This is one of the greatest revelations I have ever received. God knows all about me, but He still loves me and wants to fellowship with me. It goes even deeper than that.

Romans 5:8 KJV *While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

If Almighty God, a perfect and upright God, so loved us, knowing all about our sins and faults, how much more should we be willing to love and forgive one another?

Husbands and wives need this God-kind of love in their homes.

Prayer: Father, help us to have Your kind of love for each other. Help us to have the God-kind of love. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I confess that God is filling our hearts with His God-kind of love for each other.

DAY 27: THE UNDEFILED BED.

Hebrews 13:4 KJV *Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*

The Message; Honour marriage, and guard the sacredness of sexual intimacy between wife and husband. God draws a firm line against casual and illicit sex.

The marriage bed has been ordained by God to enrich the love and fellowship of each marriage. But many marriages are destroyed or never have the rich enjoyment that God has intended, because people sometimes think sex is something dirty.

Yet it was God who created and ordained sex, and He reserved it exclusively for husband and his wife who are married together.

A couple can never be at perfect peace unless there is a good sex life between them. There is a hunger in each heart that can only be filled by this part of marriage.

Prayer: Father, help me to yield my life to this part of Your plan for a man and wife; help me to fulfil the need in my husband or wife's life. Help us close the door to the devil so that he cannot take advantage of a weak link in our relationship. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I enjoy the sexual relationship that God has ordained between my wife, and me and a deeper desire grows daily between us.

DAY 28: RAVISHED WITH LOVE.

Proverbs 5:18-19 KJV *Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.*

19 *Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.*

New Century Version: *be happy with the wife you married when you were young. She gives you joy, as your fountain gives you water.*

She is lovely and graceful as a deer. Let her love make you happy; let her love always hold you captive.

These are instructions from God concerning the sexual relationship in your marriage.

Notice these words: loving, pleasant, satisfy, ravished.

Obviously sex plays a great part in a marriage, whether a person wants to admit it or not.

Learn to be concerned about your mate's sexual need. It is our responsibility to fulfil that need always and at all times.

You may say *But he or she will take advantage of me.* No, your submission will cause your love for each other to grow; and where love grows, fellowship and consideration will also grow.

A husband and wife must learn to satisfy each other by their love for one another, and sex is one way in which that love is nurtured and increased.

Prayer: Father, help me not to have the wrong attitude about our sex life, but let this be a pleasant time of fellowship together. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: We receive help from God to build a better sex life in our marriage.

DAY 29: DO NOT DEFRAUD EACH OTHER.

1 Corinthians 7:4-5 NIV *The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.*

5 *Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

It is unscriptural for a husband and wife to withhold sex from each other. The Word of God says that they should refrain only with consent, and then only for a time of fasting and prayer. Afterwards they should come together again so that Satan will not tempt them.

I have counselled with couples who were using sex as a weapon against each other to get even about something. Such people always end up in arguments and with heartaches. Look at sex in the marriage as pure and undefiled. Work together to build a healthy sex life.

Prayer: Help us to love each other, to fulfil each other's needs as You have commanded. Help us to build a better marriage. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I confess that God is involved in our marriage, working out His glory in us through Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour.

DAY 30: WISDOM IS THE FOUNDATION OF MARRIAGE.

James 1:5 KJV *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.*

Proverbs 4:5 KJV *Get wisdom, get understanding; forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.*

Proverbs 4:7 KJV *Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.*

Proverbs 16:16 KJV *How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! And to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!*

Proverbs 17:16 KJV *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?*

1 Corinthians 1:30 KJV *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*

Jesus is the Anointed and the Anointing. He is the wisdom of God, and He is your wisdom, you need Him in your marriage every day to keep on course.

We must understand that marriage must be founded upon the Word of God. It must be built upon a proper relationship between the marriage partners and with God.

Don't give up on your marriage. Get God involved in your problems.

He has the wisdom you need, and will give it to you. He will not hold back anything from you.

You must remember that God wants to help you and your marriage to be a total success.

To pull your marriage out of difficulty will take time.

You must be patient and let God help you each day.

Prayer: Father, I ask You to give me wisdom and insight about how to build a better marriage each day. In the Name of Jesus I pray.

Confession: I receive wisdom from God each day of my life to help me build a better marriage.

These Thirty Marriage Minders have been compiled from experience as a husband, father, minister, etc. Many other sources too numerous to mention have been examined, least of all God's Word, which is the Maker's handbook for your marriage.

FINAL WORDS

We trust that this book has helped you in your family situation, or helped put you on the right course in your marriage.

The intention has been to simply share out of our experience and give relevant Scriptures for the different responsibilities of members of the family before God.

Commitment is the key to a successful marriage.

If you would like this taught as a seminar in your church, talk to your minister and if he agrees then he can write to us at the address given.

Your marriage and family are important to us, if we can help with prayer or advice any time, please write to us. We will take the time to pray and reply to your correspondence.

We have other teaching manuals available on the web page www.familyfaithcentre.org

You can contact us by e-mail: drnorm@familyfaithcentre.org

You are blessed and you are loved in Jesus' Name.

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THE END

of this manual but we pray the beginning of a good marriage relationship for you and your spouse!