

# LOVING YOUR SPOUSE

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **Chapter One**

Spiritual Leadership in the Home ..... 2

### **Chapter Two**

The Significance of Your Spouse ..... 22

### **Chapter Three**

Husbands Are To Protect Their Wives ..... 39

### **Chapter Four**

Dealing with Pressure ..... 57

### **Chapter Five**

Intimate Time ..... 79

### **Chapter Six**

Recognizing, Communicating, and Getting Rid of Fears .. 100

### **Chapter Seven**

Honoring Your Spouse's Presence ..... 117

### **Chapter Eight**

Make Investments in One Another's Lives ..... 136

### **Chapter Nine**

The Proverbs 31 Woman ..... 150

### **Chapter Ten**

The Marriage Bed Undefined ..... 160

LOVING YOUR SPOUSE  
CHAPTER ONE  
Spiritual Leadership in the Home

Introduction

God is into charm. Usually when people hear the word charm, they think about something that has to do with the devil. However, he only counterfeits what is true. Do not spend a lot of time hooting and hollering about what the devil is doing. Everything he does is a counterfeit of what God has set up. The devil has not done anything that he did not learn from God, and he has perverted everything that is good.

Charm actually came from God. It is the ability to woo, love, enjoy, and cause something good to come to somebody. You have heard the phrase “he charmed her.” Does that mean he cast a spell upon her? – No, certainly not. It means that he loved her and wooed her into a place where she could receive something that was a blessing.

God is a God of love. He woos, He charms, and He wants to bless with every good thing that He has in store for us.

Men have often not been taught how to love, be responsible, or care for the godly mate that God has given them. Gentlemen, when was the last time you gave flowers to your wife?

We live in a day and an age where godly role models are hard to find. There are many role models out there, but not too many are of the Lord. It is high time that God’s men stand up and act like men. The days of chivalry are not over. The days of being gentlemen are not over. The days of having protectors are not over. The days of lovers are not over. The days of people caring for one another are not over. I believe those days are just beginning.

God has a plan for these days, and He has given principles from His Word that He wants shared. We have learned these principles about marriage from the Lord. They are proven, and they work. For many

years, as people have followed the principles, God has blessed their marriages and relationships, and He has blessed them personally.

In many respects we live in a backward age. Women often run the households rather than men, which is not the way that God would have it to be. It is not always that women want to lead, but in many instances it is that the guys have dropped the responsibility of taking charge of their homes. Women have had to step forward.

Granted, there are some women who want to run the show. There is a Proverb that says, “A beautiful woman without discretion (doing things that are not appropriate) is like a gold ring in a pig’s snout.”

By the time we finish presenting this Word of God, if you are open to it, you will become such a blessing that you will not even recognize yourself. People will notice what a beautiful thing has happened to you. You will be able to tell them that you have submitted yourself to the will of the Lord and to the Word of God. You will be able to tell them you love God, and God is changing your life. He is making you into a blessing to your spouse, your children, and to everyone that you come in contact with.

God has destined the man to stand up tall in faith in God and lead his wife and children in the ways of God. When he shirks his responsibility and does not take that godly leadership, he causes disaster for everyone. God wants to stop that process in society. He wants to develop godly homes and families where the men stand up in Christ and take their place of leadership and authority (in love) and lead their households in the ways of God.

When the husbands and wives submit one to another as to the Lord as mentioned in **Ephesians 5**, then the blessings come to everyone.

In this chapter we will teach men how to submit to God and lead their households in the way of the Lord, as well as explain the first two traits of a woman.

### Marks of a Godly Man

**1 Corinthians 16:13-14** lists four marks of a godly man:

1. Be on guard (Be alert for spiritual danger).
2. Stand firm in the faith (Be true to God's standards).
3. Be a man of courage and be strong (Be a man and be courageous).
4. Do everything in love.

It takes courage to lead your family in the ways of God. It takes courage to stand up and act like a man when your wife is in your face. It takes courage to do what is right (when everybody else might be going in another direction) and to stand on God's Word, doing what God says to do.

Whatever has to be done is to be done in love because love never fails. This principle is very important.

#### A. The First Trait of a Woman

A woman needs stability and direction. She needs security in her life, and she needs the direction of a spiritual leader. The spiritual leading is what will change lives.

God made man in His image as shown in the book of **Genesis**. He intended that the man lead the woman, that the woman be a helpmate to him, and that they work together side by side as co-laborers with God. The woman is in a place of influence, and the man is in a place of authority.

In society this order has been reversed. Many times the woman is forced to be the leader, even though God never created her to lead. He created her to be the helpmate. That does not mean she is to be the follower, but she is to be the helper. In some matriarchal societies the woman actually does everything while the man is quiet, sits back, and lets her do it all.

God intends for the man to be the leader, to be alert for spiritual danger, to be true to God's standards (what God says), to be a man, and to be courageous. Many men do not know how to act like men because they did not have any good role models.

It takes courage to stand up for your convictions and to hear God. When God gives the husband something, he presents it to his household, and then he leads. Sometimes his wife will get in his face. She will say that he missed God, and that he is not right. It takes courage to stand there in love and woo, charm, intrigue, and move ahead in blessing.

Then there will be order in the marriage. When the husband is out of line with God, he brings his wife into a place where she is not protected or covered. He brings her into a place where she is vulnerable. Compare the husband's protection to an umbrella. We have heard women say that they felt they were getting rained on all the time because their husbands had holes in their umbrellas.

He has holes in his umbrella because he is not actively taking the steps he needs to take to be the leader of his household. There is not a woman alive who does not want that security and stability in her life, where she knows that everything is taken care of in the five areas of blessing: spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, financial, and in relationships. It will come when the man starts to take his place, stand up, and be counted.

A woman's need becomes a weakness when she, out of fear, thinks that her man will not fulfill what is needed to be done. For that reason she tries to take the reins and run the show. She tries to step in and do what is needed to be done because she is trying to make her little world, and everything that pertains to her, secure.

It will not work that way. The woman cannot do it, but God can do it through the husband when he takes his place.

1. An Answer to the Woman's Need –

The husband should take the following action steps:

a) Seek the Lord.

When a man's wife sees him regularly spending time in the Word of God, it will produce a sense of security because she

knows that he is looking to God to try to find some answers and how to do things in their household.

b) Consistently memorize God's Word.

This means that the husband is not only reading the Word of God, but he is starting to memorize it. He is going to put it in his head and think about it. For example, "Yes, my God shall supply all my needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." "Yes, I can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens me." "Yes, love never fails." He gets these things into himself and shares them with his wife. His wife gets encouraged and notices something has happened with her man. He is not just leaning to his own understanding anymore. He is listening to God, he is speaking the Word of God, he is reading it, and he is starting to act on it.

c) Be faithful in prayer.

He is praying, and he leads the household in prayer. When he starts to take the reins and gets his wife and children to pray, then God is able to do something wonderful. The wife feels better and better because her husband is not only saying the Word of God, he is praying and believing God.

d) Attend church regularly.

This is evidence that he is taking the lead in his home because God says "do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is," but get together. So he goes to church. He takes the family to church. The children are overjoyed. They see their dad leading the household in the way of God. His wife sees that God is doing something mighty. She is feeling more secure and stable all the time. When they go to church and hear the Word of God, they are being reinforced. They begin to see the mighty miracles and signs that God does, and the whole family becomes a revival center there at home.

e) Read Christian books about family.

Instead of reading the old stuff he used to read, he picks up Christian family books. He reads about how to make his family even stronger in God. There is not a good family or marriage in God that cannot get even better. God wants to develop them. The husband's actions show that his marriage, his wife, and his children are important. The Lord is important above all, and God is his source. When he is enriching himself and sharing these things with his family, his wife says, "Oh, yes, stability, security; things are happening because God reigns, and my husband is in line with God. That means I am in line with him, and that means the children and I are blessed."

f) Fellowship with sincere Christian families.

Note: sincere Christian families. Many people call themselves Christians, but they are not seeking the Lord. We are talking about people who are actively seeking God, loving Him, sharing about Him, encouraging one another about Him, having fun in the Lord, and believing Him. That kind of fellowship is happening.

g) Discuss spiritual matters. When a husband shares what God is doing in his life, his wife perks up. She sees, yes, God is doing something special.

h) Give to the Lord.

When the man starts giving his tithes and offerings, perhaps the household wonders what is going on. He used to spend his money on other things, but now he is giving to God first, right off the top. This produces stability and security. He is giving because God says to give, and the blessing will come.

i) Communicate.

Is the husband communicating with his wife? When he shares what God is doing in his life with her, an incredible

thing begins to happen. Fellows often do not understand this, but when they are walking with God, it is easy for the wife to come in. God does not give any special promises for the wife to come in. God gave special promises for the husband to come in. The reason you do not see them for the wife is because when the man takes the lead, God causes the wife to come into place, right by her husband's side. It will happen because he is believing God, and God has made a promise to him (found in Psalms) that the wife will become a fruitful vine by his side, and all the children will be like little olive shoots. That is a grand promise for the man who is seeking God with all his heart.

2. Another Answer to the Woman's Need – The husband should have these scripture convictions:

- a) Demonstrate his love for God by loving his wife, children and others **1 John 4:20**.

The godly man is going to learn how to love as well as do what is necessary for his family. He will seek God and seek understanding about how to really love his wife.

Having sex is not really loving your wife. Loving your wife is a full time proposition. It is not just for a few moments or a few hours. Sex does not mean anything to a woman unless it is in a loving, sincere commitment, where she knows her life is secure and stable, and she knows her spouse is not going to run off somewhere else. One of the fears that comes upon a woman is “he-is-here-and-then-he-is-going-to-be-gone.” The loving husband will do everything he can to remove those fears and doubts, to remove those insecurities that try to come in to wreck stability and security in the home.

- b) Avoid actions or activities that might cause the wife, children, and others to stumble. **1 Corinthians 10:32, 33**

The husband will avoid those old activities which would cause fears, doubts, and insecurities to come up. If he knows that she has a problem with jealousy, he will do everything he can to try to help her remove that fear. Jealousy is insecurity. It is a concern that he will look at somebody else more than at her. He does everything he can to cherish her and to cause her to understand that he is not looking at anybody else. He may look, but he is just looking to be aware. (One look is being aware of your surroundings, and two looks is being too aware.) He is going to remove those insecurities; he is going to avoid actions and activities that might cause that to happen.

- c) Purpose to make the home a center of godly learning and living **Psalm 101**.

The whole household will change what they do and what their life is centered around, as it is now centered on God. This produces the stability and security that the wife needs. She sees her husband starting to play with the children, spend more time with her, go out and do special things together as well as thoughtful little gestures. What we are talking about is a lifestyle centered around God.

Here are some obstacles to living a God centered lifestyle:

- Influences like internet and television. Too much attention on TV programs has been the bane of relationships over the years. “Oh, but we spent the whole night together.” What were you doing? – “Watching TV.” The hours go by, you have spent three hours together, and you talked for about 30 seconds when you asked for a sandwich.
- Influence of wrong friends. Many times this produces insecurities because the husband is off with the guys; he is doing the old things he used to do. He is not around the home or his children. He is just doing what he wants to do. It produces more fears, and negative things come in. A guy can get frustrated and not do the commandments of God. It

is important not to hang around people that have a temper or are frustrated because the Proverbs says you pick up their ways.

- Wrong priorities. A man has to change his own priorities to God's priorities: the Lord first, then his family, next the church, and last his job. Then everything goes into place. Bondage to enslaving habits will fall away as one pursues God. When a guy starts to yield his will to God, pride and willfulness will stop. What God says goes, not what he says. Love is the key in whatever he does. Changes are able to happen as the husband realizes that his wife needs stability, security, and direction in her life. He has the key for good to happen, so he needs to say, "Lord, help me. Help me to do what is needed so that she is free from that bondage of insecurity in Jesus' name."

### 3. A Third Answer to the Woman's Trait – The husband leads in love

Now, think about this, fellows. Have you wanted to be the leader of the home, and you wondered why your wife did not follow your lead? The key is love in all things. You must lead by stepping out to do God's principles in love, not for your own gain, but for hers.

The responsibility belongs with the man. You may have thought you would be a great husband if it were not for your wife! The reality is: to be a leader you have to lead.

A young man came up to me one time and said, "Pastor, I want to get married." I looked at him, "Well, that's great. He who finds a wife finds a good thing. It is a great blessing." Then I asked, "Why do you want to get married?" He answered, "Because I want to be the authority of my home." I looked at him and thought, *Oh, boy, here we go.* He wanted to be the authority. He wanted to be the leader. I sat him down and went through these principles with him. By the time we got finished he was having second thoughts about marriage. I said, "No, do not be discouraged by this. God will help you to become the kind of leader someday who will be a great blessing to your wife, and

Lord willing, to your children. You have to want in your heart *not* to be the leader. What you want to be is a servant.”

A great leader is one who serves those he leads. The reason people follow him is because they are loved, cherished, and cared for. When you are doing that as a man, as you lead your household, your wife and children will follow because they know that daddy knows best. I believe in that. I believe that our Heavenly Daddy ultimately knows best of all. When a dad is following the Lord, there is nothing more powerful. The godly woman will rise to the occasion and stand by his side. They will march through this life on earth together. They will see blessings on the left, blessings on the right, blessings falling in front of them, and blessings overtaking them from behind. Still, there has to be an attitude of the heart that says, “I want to serve God, I want to serve my wife and children, and I want to be the biggest blessing I can be to them. I am going to stand before God according to the Word of the Lord, and I am going to present my wife and children to the Lord.”

What a great thrill it will be when God looks at you and says, “Oh, you did fine, son. You did a good job. You loved her. You loved those children.” God knows blessing, and that blessing is passed down from generation to generation. Children who grow up knowing and having the security and stability of a dad who loves God as well as his family have great joy that fills their hearts. It has been passed on to them. Then they start to lead in love too.

What God is calling us as godly men to do is to love. Gentlemen, list ways in which you are demonstrating love to your wife. Ask her to explain which of those things that you do, or do not do, express love to her, and why. Some of the things that you think are expressing love to her may be things she hates (she just may have been being polite and kind to you). Ask her if she feels love when you do those things. Many guys run roughshod over their wives and do not bother to ask them anything. “I am the macho man of the house, and I lead.” (Girls, thank God for your tolerance when we act like jerks.) You see, God has intended us to lead, but sometimes we do not know how. We try and try different things.

I believe you will be amazed when you sit down and do this exercise. There are a lot of fun things that we can do together to stimulate godly growth.

B. The Second Trait of a Woman

The second trait of a woman is knowing that she is meeting vital needs in her husband's life and work that no other woman can meet.

I ask men when they get married, "Why, out of all those millions of gals in the earth, did you choose her? What was it about her that caused you to want to marry her?"

She needs to hear why. She needs to hear what it was – why you chose her rather than any other woman out there.

This is tied in with stability and security, is it not? This is tied in with cherishing. She needs to know that she is important in your life. How can you show that to her?

1. She needs to be *shown* that she meets vital needs

- a. The husband should let her know how important she is to him.

Husbands, if she is important to you, you will praise her more. Do not make her feel like she is just baggage that you carry around, like when you say "Oh, by the way, this is my wife." You can tell a lot about your relationship by the way you introduce her. You can tell a lot about a relationship in the way you talk about your wife in public. A godly man wants to protect and cherish. He is more concerned about promoting his wife than he is about promoting himself because she is the most valuable thing that he has on this earth. She is the most valuable gift that God has given him, and so he loves to talk about her. He loves to share her good qualities with others. He loves to have her around. She has access to him at all times, and he never puts

anybody or anything before her except God (God is number one, and then comes your loving spouse). When a woman knows and feels cherished, she will do anything that needs to be done. She will know that she is God's A-number one blessing in your life. You have made her know that. You have demonstrated it to her.

- b. He should not give his wife's special task to another person.

Fellows, learn wisdom and understanding. If she is number one in your life, then do not give her special tasks (something that she does to minister to you) to someone else unless she has first given you permission. I learned this years ago. Do not ever use something that is special to the one that you cherish with somebody else. If you have a pet name for her, do not call anybody else that name. If there is something special that you do together, do not share it with anyone else.

You want to have some things that are special that you do together. If you have one night a week that you have designated as your time out with your bride, do not let anything else get in the way of it. I mark it in my appointment book, and I scratched out everything an hour on each side of it so I will not miss it. The only way that you relinquish that time is if she gives permission, and that is actually the exception and not the rule. You want to show her that you mean business about this, and that she is the most important thing in your life next to God.

I let my wife choose my secretaries and the people who work around me. I let her give her approval first because in reality they are not just my secretaries, they are hers too. We are a team. People of God will respect and honor that. They will do everything they can to support it because their goal is to bless your marriage.

When you stand with your wife, and she stands with you, nothing in hell can break it up. There is a mighty promise in

**1 Peter 3:7** about the husbands and wives coming together. It says, “Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner, and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.” Men’s prayers are hindered because they are not respecting, honoring, and cherishing their wives, and this causes a wedge in their relationship. Where there is disagreement, prayers are hindered because the man is not dealing in knowledge with his wife. If you know your wife has a problem with something, do not be the fool and continue doing it. You will end up with serious problems down the road when she becomes jealous. This is the scourge of a woman.

Jealousy is the fear of being displaced by another woman, a job, or a mother. How many marriages have been messed up because mama started pulling strings on little Danny boy? There he is, having to choose between his mom and his wife. The man may back out of the whole thing and say, “Yuck, you fight it out. You work it out.” Because a man has a tendency to want to get out of dealing with problems, he is just going to step out of it. However, the moment he steps out of it, the wife says, “He does not put me first in his life. He does not cherish me, honor me, or care for me. He is preferring his mother above me; this just is not going to work.” I am being polite when I say that. Usually all hell breaks loose.

- c. He should share real needs and wants.

A husband wants his wife to see him as a success, so he has a tendency not to share his real traits. He always wants his wife to see him as a success even when he is messing up badly. He does not want her to know it. Even so, if he is messing up, the wife knows it. (The two are one.) His wife can sense it. He comes home distraught, and she asks what is wrong. He says, “Oh, nothing” as he sulks off to his room. What is happening? He does not want his wife to see him as a failure because he needs her respect and honor.

He needs godly support and encouragement because he is often working on not being prideful. He does not want to share his shortcomings and failings because it may not make him look good in front of his wife. Maybe all the people on earth could not care less about what others think about them. However, when it comes to his wife, the husband wants to look good. His tendency is not to share his real needs, but he should.

Share with your wife from your heart. Share your plans and your vision. Your wife needs to be a part of it. She wants to be a part of it. She does not want to be left out. If you share with other people, but not with her, then she feels like she is “leftovers.” She should be the first one to hear your plans and doubts. Never share fears, though, because it produces insecurity, instability and fear. Share anything else you want with your wife. Share your fears with God and with another brother whom you love and trust.

You will win her love by sharing specific failures. A guy can humble himself and share those shortcomings, saying to his wife, “Honey, I need your prayer support. I need you to come beside me. I am having a hard time with this, but with God’s help and with you standing with me we can conquer the world.”

Just think what can happen. Your wife knows that she is included in your plans and that she is special. You can share things with her that you cannot share with anybody else. In many cases, you are wise to share only with your wife because she is for you, not against you. Cultivate and develop that. You may think that she is against you, but she is not. If she were against you, she would be the biggest fool who ever walked the face of the earth. It would be like cutting off her nose to spite her face to be against her husband. Then she would be against herself and God’s plan.

When you learn to cherish those times and share with her, it will be some of the best times you have ever had. You can cry together, laugh together, and bond. It happens through the hard times as well as the good times. The marriage gets even stronger when you have gone through hard times together and when you have stood through hell and high water. You have stood together, so you know that she is going to be right there with you when the dust settles. You will stand together in God.

- d) He should explain needs and teach her precisely what she can do to help.

Often a woman does not know exactly what she needs to do. You need to tell her exactly what to do because you are the leader. You need to tell her what you need, like prayer support.

There may be a dripping faucet in the house, and she comes to you and tells you about it. Then every time you turn around she lets you know about the dripping faucet. Tell her “I do not want to hear any more about the dripping faucet.” She keeps telling you because she does not see you doing anything about it. She figures you are either deaf, dumb, or stupid. You do not see it, or you do not love her or care about her because you are not taking care of something that is very important to her. She lives in that house every day, day in and day out, and has to deal with that dripping faucet. You act like you do not even care. It is not a priority in your life, but it is a priority to her.

So, if you are smart, tell her, “Honey, I cannot do it right now, but I am aware of it. I will get to it.” If she goes, ‘Oh, no,’ you say, “But I will do it. I know about it, and I do not need to hear it anymore. We will do really well together if you do not say any more about it.” Since she needs to know exactly when you will get to it and how you will do it, say, “Why don’t you pray for me right now and believe God I am going to fix

it? Somehow it is going to get fixed.” She needs to know that she is needed more than any other woman in your life.

2. The wife should be *told* she meets vital needs. The husband should write down the needs his wife is now meeting. Here are some examples:
  - a) She is the basis of your most important message. You can draw others to Christ by illustrating how Christian families love one another. Like Christ loves the church, so the husband loves the wife. That is the witness of the gospel on this earth. May God raise up many more families that stand up as a testimony to the world of how God loves His church and how husbands love their wives.
  - b) She provides the potential for power and prayer when you two are in agreement (1 Peter 3:7).
  - c) She is an alarm system against other women with wrong motives. Many times a woman can spot when some other gal is thinking about you in a wrong way. Men just go along, blind to it, but women spot it quickly. Guys, you can spot it when another guy is looking at your wife with other intentions. She can do that for you, and usually she is hotter on this because she is looking for stability and security. There is no way she wants anybody messing around with her guy.
  - d) She is a mirror of your predicted spiritual condition. In other words, if my wife is out of sorts, she is a mirror of my spiritual condition. Guys do not like to hear this one. It is easier to say, “Oh, man, have I got a problem with my wife. She is just not serving God. She is not listening to God. She is as rebellious as hell, and I am having so many problems with her.” Many times her covering is gone, so she is flaking out – and it is not PMS. If your wife is going through something, what are you going to do as a godly man? You are going to pray her through it. There is no such thing as a headache in our house. “Having a headache” does not work anymore. We sit on the edge of the bed and pray that headache away until it goes. That takes a man standing up and taking charge of his home.

A woman can give the joy of a physical relationship without guilt **Proverbs 5:19-20**. The only way a man can have a physical relationship without guilt is through his wife. All other physical relationships are not blessed of God. The marriage bed is undefiled; every other bed is defiled. **(Hebrews 13:14)**

- e) She is a safeguard against making hasty decisions because of her need for security and consistency. When you come up with a “great idea,” she will probably sit there and think about it. Then she will say, “I do not know,” which is caution. You should listen to that caution. Many is the time that God has used caution to allow us to investigate a little bit further before we went into something. The Proverb says “the fool has a hasty spirit.”
- f) She can instill godly attitudes in the children since she is in the place of influence. A husband should make sure that she is covered, blessed, and growing in God. It is his part to lead his family in these things. For example, when you have family devotions, make sure she is there. You are all together when you do them. She will instill your attitudes in the children since you get your attitudes from God. She is not working against you; she is with you.
- g) A wife discerns the real needs of the children because she is around them all of the time. She then communicates those to the husband, and in turn they deal with it together. It says to the woman that she is important in this home; her husband is counting on her to honor God’s standards when he is gone and to teach the children the standards that he set forth from the Word of God. When she grasps that, he should tell her he has complete confidence and trust that when he is gone, the household is going to be under the care of the Lord. It is going to be directed by God. She will communicate to the children the attitudes and values of the Lord which will bless them. When you come home, you will not have hell to deal with. You will have your castle, which will be strong and healthy in the Lord.

### Final thoughts

Your wife needs a place at home that is hers alone. She needs to know how special she is there. So give her the run of the house. Let her fix it the way she would like it to be and use the creativity that God has given her. Let her feel a part of things – that she is not excluded.

You need to talk with one another, communicate, and share. She needs to feel that she is important in your life. The most important blessing that God has given me in this earth is my wife.

I told Diana before we got married, “You are going to be number two in my life.” She looked at me, and her head dropped a little bit. Then she said, “What do you mean?” (In the romance novels and other sick stuff out there, they make it seem like the spouse or loved-one is the most important thing in their lives.) God is the most important one in my life, and my wife comes second. I said, “Love, it is not bad being second to God, is it?”

Your wife will watch you to see if you mean what you say. Ladies are not just moved by sweet nothings because their need for stability and security means that they are going to make certain that what you say, you will do. They want to know that they are who you say they are in your life. You can say a lot of things to her, but she wants to hear that she is important to you.

Men need to lead through serving, not through domination.

I believe there is a major move sweeping across the earth to bond people together in the Lord and to start doing things God’s way.

I had the privilege of being with a couple who had been married for 62 years. During our bible study one of them leaned over to the other and said, “I did not know that about you!” The other one winked and laughed, “Yeah, you do not know everything about me.” God wants to see those kind of encounters because they are a testimony to the glory of God, and they provide security to the children. Yes, we live in a day and an age where everybody is doing his own thing. However, this couple stood for one another and for God, and

something good came about. It was a witness to the world about the love of God in Jesus Christ.

A Prayer for men:

*I have learned, Father, that a woman needs security and stability. Help me to be secure and stable in you that I might be able to lead her in the ways of God. I have also learned, Lord, that she needs to know that she is important to me. Help me to be able to share my innermost thoughts with her and to include her in my life and work, that your plans might be accomplished in Jesus' name. Father, I look forward to learning more about the other needs that my wife has, and, by your ability, I am going to be the best lover that she could have spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and relationally. I am not you, Lord, but you are helping me as I seek You in Jesus' name. Give me knowledge and understanding into what makes her work because I love her in Jesus' name. Amen.*

If this is your heart's desire, watch what God will do. Watch how your bride will respond. She is going to be so excited. I have seen these principles work over and over again, and I know they work because I have worked them. If Jesus does not come back, I am going to go for that 62 years.

When Diana and I got married, I said to my little bride, "This is for life. This is for keeps. I do not plan to go running off with anybody else. I do not have time for that. Do not ever put me in a place where I will have to choose between God and you because I will choose God. I pray that I never put you in a place where you will have to choose between God and me because I know you are going to choose God. We are going to make it through hell and high water."

Let me tell you, hell and high water came. We are still together, however, and going better than ever before. We are going on 44 years; we still have 18 to go. I figure as long as we will serve God, one another, and you. Our children are going to be the heritage of the Lord and the blessing of God.

When you love God more than you love your spouse, you will love your spouse. When you really love God, you will make sure that your mate is taken care of more than anybody else. That should be your first concern. Many people run around looking for a “ministry.” Your first ministry, if you have one, is at home. Then it is anything else that God wants you to do. If you are not taking care of your house, you do not have a ministry out there.

You can practice on your family, and if you mess up, they will not fault you because they are with you. As long as they see you trying to do what is right and trying to do what God wants, they will be overjoyed. Before you know it, God begins to do new things.

LOVING YOUR SPOUSE  
CHAPTER TWO  
The Significance of Your Spouse

I was never taught how to be a godly man or how to love my wife. How does a person love his wife? Usually when guys think about love, they are thinking about sex. However, anyone who gets to know a woman well understands that she does not equate love with sex. (There is a whole lot more to life.) A guy merely sees something, and he is ready to go. A woman does not work that way. It is time that fellows start to learn this. By the grace of God we will apply God's principles if we are going to do well, and we will succeed in God's plan and purpose.

Many years ago I was watching a movie where one fellow was talking to another about problems he had with his wife. He was asking the guy, who was a little wiser, what to do because his wife was looking at another man. The guy basically answered, "The way to handle a woman is to love her, simply love her." However, men do not know what is involved in that.

C. The Third Trait of a Woman.

A woman needs to see and hear that her husband cherishes her. It is not enough to tell her that you love her, although that is a very good start. She needs to see that you love her as well. The seeing is a little bit different to a woman than to a man. She is not saying, "Drop your drawers;" she is saying, "Let me see that you cherish me. Show me that you love me." It is more than a box of candy or a few posies every now and then. Many times guys will do that only because they want something.

Men will do something nice because they want to end up in bed later – and not to sleep. They want to be making love. As we pointed out in the previous chapter, ask your wife if she thinks you are loving her by what you do. When you ask her, I think you will be amazed at what she has to say.

### Submit to One Another

**Ephesians 5** is a section that deals with wives and husbands.

**Ephesians 5:21** “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”  
Fellows often start with verse 20 and leave out verse 21. They skip to verse 22 because it says, “Wives, submit to your husband as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church.”

Many husbands act like they are being run around. In reality, they are shirking the responsibilities of being the head of the house. They neglect to take the place of leadership in their homes, and they yield it to the women.

A woman at first might like it because she is trying to control her little world, and she likes the security of having her world controlled. She is going to try to take the reins. Often a man wants to give up the responsibility, and so he says, “You want it; you can have it. You can take the lead; that’s fine with me.” He does not really want to take the lead because it brings pressure on him. It involves caring for his wife which he really does not want to do. He would rather be out with the boys. He would rather be out doing what he wants to do rather than spending time with his wife and children. When that pressure comes, his tendency is to say to his wife, “I will go; you take care of things, and I will just tend to something else.”

“...Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

### Held in High Esteem

The need of a woman to be cherished is not just to be loved, but to be held in high esteem. She wants to know the man sees great value in her as a person, not just as an object of his affection. She wants to know that he will protect and praise her to others, that he really cares about her, and that he is looking to protect her.

We live in a day and an age where women want to do their own thing – the “I-am-woman” kind of attitude. We work with the ladies too, and we tell them to let the husband be the gentleman. Let him take responsibility. I have told the women, “If the grass is five feet high, and it is his job to cut the grass, do not you dare go out there and mow it. Let him show that he is the leader, that he is the one who is

under God's direction. Do not jump in because of your own fear and insecurity and try to control. You want him to be the way God wants him to be. Trust God enough to let him fail. Things are not going to go down. He will learn that he has to take the responsibility to care for his wife and children."

One example of today's welfare mentality is shown where a woman is sent out to beg while the man sits in the car. What a sad situation. It is time that men stand up, act like men, and be strong and courageous. They need to do whatever is needed to be done, take the lead in God, and see to it that their wives are cherished and cared for.

A wife is of great value as a person, and the husband should want to protect her, care for her, and praise her to other people. He should want other people to think that she is a gem, the most precious thing in his life. She is the blessing that God has given him. Some day he will present her to the Lord with the little ones. He will honor God with that gift and that blessing. It will be an exciting time. I am so looking forward to it.

Your first line of ministry is to your own family and then out to other people. If you are not taking care of your responsibilities at home, you have no ministry out there. God may have called you to do all kinds of ministry, but if you do not take care of your first responsibility at home you have no ministry that is valid in God's eyes.

The first call that God gives is to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. **Ephesians 5:21**. Submission has become a dirty word in today's society, yet it is where the blessing of God rests. Submit one to another. Not just the wives to the husbands but one to another.

If a husband is going to be the leader of his household, he actually becomes the servant of his wife and children, serving them in Christ so that God will be glorified. He is underneath, and he holds everything else up. It is not that he lords over everything, and his wife and children are to be his servants. He becomes the servant of

his wife and children as to the Lord. The wife becomes the servant to the husband and the children.

Nowadays there are a bunch of little King Tuts running around. They are being served by Dad and Mom. The term “serve” should not be for selfish, personal gain or use. To serve means to care. A husband becomes the minister to his wife and children. The wife becomes the minister to her husband and children. A husband becomes the server, or the caregiver, in their lives, as to the Lord. God loves and cares through the wife to her husband, and the husband to his wife and his children.

Something beautiful will happen when Dad stands up in order that the children may have a godly role model. If there is anything that is needed today, it is godly role models – people who are honest and upfront. When husbands mess up, they should ask God’s forgiveness. They should ask the wife’s and children’s forgiveness. They can say, “Pray with me. Let’s get going with God.” They lead their households, and they take their families to church. They read the bible at home. They pray together, and they love on each other.

In our house we used to have a love-time. When somebody in the family needed some love and attention, he or she would call a love-time. We would drop what we were doing and come together to hug each other. Anybody could call it anytime, and we would do it. “...Submit one to another out of reverence to Christ.” It is the model of Jesus.

### Husbands, Love Your Wives

**Ephesians 5:25** “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.” This is how Jesus, married to His church, dealt with His church.

When we say to love your wives, we are not talking about anything for self-gratification. We are talking about giving, caring, responsibility, and commitment, which involves accountability. A

husband is accountable to God first and to his wife second. She is a blessing in his life to help him in his walk with God: “Two are better than one.”

If you are single you can get another friend to help you. If one falls, the other one can pick you up. If one is doing good, you can encourage somebody else. In the Body of Christ, God does not think only of the individuals, He thinks about the Body and how one part affects the other. Likewise, we should encourage one another. When one is doing good, then everybody rejoices. When one is doing badly, then we come around like the antibodies in the body. We get around the disease and crush it. We pull together, and then people are healed, delivered, and set free. Everybody rejoices again.

“...Christ loved the church and He gave Himself up for her.”

I asked a certain man if he understood the following statement I made: “I do not know how you and that gal ever got together.” I remember the look he gave me at the time. I asked, “Did you understand what I was saying? I know it provoked thought. I know it made you a little upset. Maybe you started to question your relationship.” I continued, “I was not against you and your wife. What I was against was the separation between you two. You were not willing to lay down your life for her.” Jesus talks about love like this: “Greater love hath no man than this that he be willing to lay down his life for his friend.” A husband is to love his wife just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her.

When I took on marriage, my old single days of running around were over. I took on the responsibility and the blessing of a wife. “He who finds a wife finds a good thing” the bible says. I took on the care (but not out of fear) to nurture my wife. I took the responsibility of helping my bride flourish and bloom as God has intended her to do.

You can either make or break your wife depending on how you approach her (because of the need of a woman to be cherished). When you cherish her, she is going to blossom, grow, and become something really special in your life. I believe you can cultivate that. I believe it is something that is developed. If you keep beating her

down, and making her think that she is a mindless wonder that is what you will have. If you keep telling her that she is rottenness to your bones (**Proverbs 12:4**), that is what you will have. You can read in the bible about some women being rottenness to their husbands' bones. They are rebellious, independent, stiff-necked, and they fight their husbands on every turn. They demean him as a man and as a leader, constantly picking on him.

God calls us to give our lives for our wives. I was sharing with the young man that when you take a wife, you may think you are committed. You may think that you love her. You think that your relationship is for keeps. Then comes the day-in-and-day-out walk and all the things that happen in life. You come to situations where one wants one thing and the other wants another. You go through different financial decisions involved in marriage. Then you may find that you think perhaps you made a mistake. Next you may get bitter towards her, or you may put her aside. You can be married and live in the same house, but that is all you have – you live together. There is no relationship, no caring or sharing, and none of this cherishing stuff. God wants something different than that.

I was provoking the young man to realize that his heart had been divided. He had not really been there 100% for his wife. Are you willing to give your life up for her? That is what it comes down to when we are talking about cherishing and love. Many people talk about love, but now we are really getting to know what love means. Are you willing to lay down your life for your wife or your husband?

In my first year of marriage, all hell broke loose. However, we had purposed that marriage was for keeps. My parents were divorced so I was determined that Diana and I were never going to see that. Bless their hearts, my parents did not know what they were doing.

You cannot fault your parents. Nowadays people say, "My parents did this, and my parents did that, and that's why I am like I am." That is a bunch of nonsense, an excuse. Sure, there may have been influences, but in Jesus Christ we can break them, and we can stop it any time we want. You can run your whole life as an excuse if you want to, but I do not see that in the bible. Rather, "He or she whom

the Son has set free is free indeed.” We need to deal with the influences. Looking at our parents on both sides, we need to learn from what they did, whether it was right or wrong. We need to receive the blessing and put away the cursing in Jesus’ name. We ourselves make the choices about what we will have and how we will be.

Make a choice whether you are going to go home and cherish your wife, or you are going to be a slob, throwing your stuff around and asking, “Where is my dinner; where is my paper?” She makes a choice whether to say, “Okay, where have you been? You have fifteen things that you need to do around here; get to it.” My wife makes a choice whether or not it will be that way. I make a choice about how it will be. When we both make godly choices, then we have some wonderful times. You can see that when selfishness comes in, people are not willing to lay down their lives for their partners. If you want them to lay down their lives for you, but you are not going to do anything for them, then you will have trouble. “Without pride there is not contention,” the Proverb says.

#### Husband, Give Yourself Up for Her

When cherishing comes from the heart, it will cause certain things to happen. **Ephesians 5:25** says, “He gave himself up for her to make her holy.” The guy may see that there are some things that are not right with his wife. Maybe she is rebellious. Maybe she has some rotten attitudes. Diana will be the first to say that she had been raised in the “I-am-woman” generation, where women are independent. They feel they do not have to have a man open the door because they can open the door themselves. It just so happened I had an old red car, and Diana could not open the door on her side. I had a special way to open it up. (God is really precious and special.)

Women can do all kinds of different things, and God made them a special blessing, but that is not the issue. The issue is whether a woman will let a man do what God has given him to do to be the blessing to her. It does not make her mindless or incapable. Anybody can open a door. It means allowing your husband to care for you and cherish you.

Today many women think that they do not need a man (They can do everything themselves. They can probably do things better than a man). Maybe she *can* do some things better than he can. However, is she willing to let him care for her? Some women think that their husbands will not do it. Not with that attitude, he will not. He has probably tried a few times, and she shut him down. He is not ready to put his hand out there again to get bit.

### The Dream

During our first year of marriage, I had a dream. I will never forget it. Diana was having second thoughts about our marriage. Her second thoughts were causing me to have second thoughts. In this dream I saw what I understood to be the devil. He was trying to take my wife from me. We were on a forest path, and we had been squabbling, so I stepped away from her. As I stepped away, he came and took her by the hand and started to take her away. I looked around and did not see her anywhere. As I searched some more, I saw her going off. He was taking her down a path with roses on both sides (like the old primrose path kind of thing). He was taking her away.

All of a sudden a tremendous yell came out of me, “You cannot have her!” And I went after her. He did not pay any attention to me. He was just going on with her. The next thing I knew she turned around, and I saw her looking at me. It was the kind of look that said, “I am going, but I do not want to go.” It said to me that she did not want this separation. I did not want it either. We wanted each other. I went after the devil and tackled him. He got up and saw that I meant business, but he was not intimidated (the devil is not intimidated by you) – not until I said, “In the name of Jesus.” We wrestled and wrestled, and the Lord brought back the scripture in **Ephesians 6** “We do not wrestle with flesh and blood (we do not wrestle against our spouses), but we wrestle against principalities and powers of darkness” that are trying to take our spouses away from us. We tell them, “In the name of Jesus you have to let go. You cannot have her. In the name of Jesus I am willing to fight until we deal with it. You are not going to win.” Eventually he left, and I grabbed her and held her.

When I woke up, I was holding her. I was crying, “You cannot have her. I am not going to let you have her. I am not going to let you go.” Then I said to her, “God gave you to me and me to you and we are not going to let go.” She started weeping and grabbed hold of me. It takes one to hold and cherish, and then maybe the other one will get the drift. As I saw in the dream, I had turned my back. I had walked away. I said, “I am not going to have this nonsense,” and it gave the devil an opportunity to come in and separate us.

Hear what the Spirit of the Lord is saying. We have to cherish one another and not let go. In the last part of the dream I was taking her by the hand, and we were going down the rose garden path. That is when I woke up holding her.

### Forgiving One Another

Over the years we have had our days, moments, and hours; but that is life. The key that makes a godly marriage different from an ungodly one is something called forgiveness. When you cherish others, you are willing to forgive them, you are willing to let things go, and you are willing to go on with what God has. You are willing to lay down your life for people like Jesus did for His enemies. “While we were yet enemies, Christ died for us.”

I have heard men say, “It would be easy to be a husband if I did not have a wife.” Others say, “I have a rebellious and independent wife.” Since I have followed the principles of God in His Word, rebellion is not a part of my wife’s life anymore. Independence is not there. She is strong, she is strong-willed, but when the dust settles, she is going with God and me, and that has been proven over the years.

In any good, growing marriage there are going to be times when you laugh together and cry together. Those who treat marriage like a dirty old sock need to realize it is something to be cherished. It is a covenant with God and a covenant with your spouse.

### Cherishing One Another

I almost lost Diana 32 years ago while she was in the hospital for bladder repair surgery. During recovery, the blood began running out of her, and they could not stop the blood flow. They were running all

of the heart machines on her, and I was sitting there watching all of it. I finally told them that I needed to have some time, just a moment with my wife. I excused them from the room, stood over her, and put my hands on her chest and lower region. Then I said, "Father, in the name of Jesus I command this blood flow to cease right now. What is trying to take my wife cannot have her; get off of her body and get out of here, now." A few minutes went by and her blood pressure started to go back up. The hospital staff were really blessed when they saw that.

During that time Diana was fading out of this life; she was there, but she was not there. She was starting to drift, but she was praying on the other side as I was praying in the hospital. One thing that we have learned to do over the years is pray together. She prays, I pray, or we pray together. (Sometimes one of us would stomp out of the house. It was usually me; she would stay inside. Then we would run back together and meet each other halfway. I cannot live with myself if I am out of sorts with my wife because I cherish her. I cherish the Lord, and I cherish her. If there is something wrong, I have to go home or make a call and get it straightened out. Usually I would never make it past the end of the driveway. When I would turn around, there she would be. It is so exciting how that worked.) As she was fading out of this world, she prayed, "Lord, if I am supposed to go and you want me, I am ready. I will come, but you are going to have to take care of Randy and the kids because Randy is going to need help with them."

I could do fine with the kids. I would just make them do everything that they were supposed to do. We got along great, but still, my wife knew she was very valuable to me. (I used to tell her I did not need her. I do not really need anybody because I have God, and I figure that God and I are a majority. I have said to her, "I do not need you, but you are a blessing that God has given me." I do not believe in a needy kind of relationship. I do not believe that is of Christ. People are simply blessings in my life.)

As she was fading out of this world, she was praying about God helping me and the kids, and then she went on to share, "but, Lord, I do not really want him to marry anybody else." That is my bride! She

was willing to go if God wanted her, or stay if God wanted her to stay with me. She did not want me to marry anybody else because she cherishes me. Still, we have our times. That is life!

### Be There for Her

The bible says, “He gave himself up for her to make her holy.” Men, that means you have to stand in there for your wife, you have to pray, you have to forgive. That means you have to be there. She may want to talk about something. She may want to share what is down in her heart. Half the time she does not even know what she wants because she works differently than we do. Many times she works by her emotions, feelings, or perceptions. A man works by his intellect. A guy thinks, *Oh, man, there she goes; she is flipping out again.* He does not understand that she may be making a scene because she wants attention, and that is the only way she can get it. It is negative attention, but it is better than nothing. She is really saying, “Honey, just spend some time with me. Just hold me.” But a man begins lecturing. He says, “You should have done this; you should have done that.”

I am learning to forget the “should have’s.” Just sit there and hold and cherish her. It tells her that she is important to you. That fact changes her and makes her holy, “cleanses her by the washing with water through the word to present her to himself as a radiant church.” **Ephesians 5:25.** You can tell a whole lot about your spiritual condition by how radiant your wife is. If she is not radiant, it signifies what is going on in your relationship. Some people will say, “That’s her problem.” Yeah, it is her problem, but I learned this one from the Lord: “Son, if you talk about your wife, you talk about yourself.” He also said, “If you stab your wife, you stab yourself (The two are one).” If you cherish her, then what does that say about you? – You cherish yourself.

### Husband, Love Her As You Love Yourself

The Lord goes on “...In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies [as themselves]. He who loves his wife loves himself.” He cherishes his wife, and he cherishes himself. It is better to have your wife well cared for and be a blessing than not to have her well cared for and end up to be a cursing. It is much more

wonderful to be happy, doing things together, than it is to be grumbling, griping, fighting, and throwing pans.

We had a hole in one of our old houses where Diana had thrown a can of soup at me. I always thought she was a lousy shot, and I could dodge it, but then I found out that I was the cause of it. I did tell her afterwards, "Love, there are better ways to handle things than throwing stuff at me." You learn such things as you go. Thank God it was not a knife. Some people are throwing knives at each other. Think about this: you can work for years building up a person, which causes blessing, but in five minutes your mouth can destroy everything that you worked for. Because you know your spouse really well, you know just how to push those buttons (for blessing or for cursing). You can cut her right down to the quick.

#### A Vital Part of Your World

My wife sacrifices a lot for the Word of God. She sacrifices every time I have to be away to deal with different situations. I always tell her, "Love, you are going to have one of the biggest rewards in heaven when you stand before God. He is going to bless you." I have her taking care of things on the Homefront while I am out running around doing what God has given me to do. She does a mighty job. When I come home, I know the place is in order.) A wife needs to know that she is a vital part of your world. As God started to bring Diana back that Tuesday afternoon in the hospital, I made a few phone calls. I do not think I had missed a Tuesday night service since I started them. I said, "I cannot come tonight. You will all have to take the service and do what you do." We have trained people to be a blessing that way. Thankfully, I can call on quite a few. I know that the Spirit of God will move, and God will do exactly what He wants to do. He always has, and He always will. It is exciting what the Lord does when you love Him. He loves to do things for people.

I leaned over to Diana that afternoon and took her hand as she was still coming back. I said, "Love, God wants me to stay right here with you tonight. I am not going to church. I told everybody to take it and run with it with God. My first priority is right here with you."

For two years she talked about that. It was one of the best things that I have ever done in my life. I listened to the Spirit of the Lord, and He said, "Here is your ministry, son; this is where I want you. I want you here by her side."

Before the surgery, the Lord had given me a word. He said, "I want you to hover over the nest." I understood, when all the dust settled, what he was talking about. A thief tried to come and take my wife. But as we were right there, no thief could come. Jesus was there with me. We are a majority.

Diana remembers what happened, and she tells people about it, and it was such an easy thing to do. She knew that she was a priority in my life.

### Delight in Her, Not what She Can Do

Husband, your wife needs to know that your delight for her goes beyond what she can do for you. My wife often talks about all the things that she does for me. For example, she sews and makes her own clothes; she saves a fortune. She is thrifty; she will shop all day long and only buy for others. She manages things really well, and she takes good care of me. I could boast about her all day long, about what a blessing she is.

One day I came home and the clothes were all washed, and ironed. I just looked, smiled, and said, "Thank you for doing the wash." She came over and gave me a big hug and kiss. I thought, *what is the deal?* She does these things, and I appreciate it. I told her, "Love, I could get a maid to do all these things." I am not into soliciting prostitutes so that is the one area that she alone can service. I told her, "I could get a maid to come in and clean the house and do all these things. I appreciate them, but I can get somebody to do them. I married you to be my wife." I tell her that because I delight in her, not in what she can do. Make the distinction. She needs to know that you cherish her not because of what she can do for you, but you cherish her as God's special gift in your life.

### Qualities of Attraction

She needs to hear you rehearse the qualities that attracted you to her and how God led you in the process. If you tell her what attracted you to her, it works better than singing. She wants to know these qualities are still important to you whether it is two, five, nineteen, or twenty years later.

List the cherished qualities and personality traits that first attracted you to your wife. After you make your list, then tell her about it. It is very important to her because there are millions of women on the face of this earth. Why did you choose her? There was some reason. I believe it was God leading you.

### Love, Respect, and Honeymoons

Ephesians 5:29 says, “After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church – for we are members of His body. ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.”

It is essential for the husband to love his wife and the wife to respect her husband if their relationship is going to be blessed God’s way. He must purpose in his heart that this is a must in his life. He must love his wife as he loves himself. He needs to cherish and care for her. I have never seen a man yet who did not look out for his own things.

Men, your wife is the blessing that God put in your life. She is more valuable than anything that you have on this earth – your most cherished blessing. She is not an option; she is a blessing. If you pray, God will show you how to express love and devotion to your wife.

Diana and I are on a continual honeymoon. I figure I am going to ride out the rest of this life like that. I believe it is the only way to do it. I am on a honeymoon with God and a honeymoon with my wife. My children have seen these things, and they have grown to love,

understand, and appreciate the principles. The blessing has gone on to them.

You break the will of a good horse, not its spirit. In the same way, you do not break the spirit of a good woman. I think women will understand and appreciate what we are talking about. Sometimes when a woman is bucking up, the guy has a tendency to try to demolish her. Either that, or he leaves, which has the same effect.

What she does not need is you walking out the door. Rather, she needs you to come back and sit down, put your arms around her, pray, hold her, and not let the devil have an opportunity. It has to be a commitment in your heart that says, "I must do this because I love God, and I cherish my wife more than myself." The bible says, "As yourself." I believe the call of Christ goes beyond. More than yourself. Jesus loved us so much more than Himself that He died for us on the cross. He was willing to take all the suffering and shame. Knowing that He loves us has changed us towards God. It has made us love Him and want to do His commandments. Why? – Because He has demonstrated how He loves us.

When a man demonstrates love to his wife, then he might as well begin to thank God for the honeymoon because it has begun. Dying to self-works for God, and it works for your wife.

Now girls, do not think, *oh yeah, that is just what I wanted to hear*. I never used to let the women listen in when I was talking about this to the men. Ephesians 5:33 continues... "And the wife must respect her husband." Respecting is like cherishing, and what a man needs is respect. He does not need love as much as he needs respect. It is very important to understand. He needs to know, like God, that he is praised, respected, and honored in his home. I encourage you, this is a lifetime proposition.

A growing marriage is one where the husband and wife will stay together and be blessed. Marriage often starts out like a river rushing down from the mountains. As the river gets older it starts to wind around more slowly like, for example, the Mississippi River. The marriage is alright as long as it is moving. If it stops moving,

everything gets green and stinky like a stagnant pool. There are some marriages like that – kind of green and stinking. Some people are merely co-inhabiting. They are not really growing together and not much is happening.

God would have it us do something about it. What we need to do is get back into the flow of things. This is something like renewing your faith about health, where you have to keep those bible passages about health in front of your eyes. Other times you have to keep the Word about finances in front of your eyes. Do the same thing for the marriage commitment. You have to protect and cherish it. Do whatever it takes. If it means fighting the devil for her, fight the devil for her. Do not fight her; love her. That is the key.

### A Practical Solution

Years ago the Lord taught me something I could do for my wife when she was out of sorts, and I was out of sorts. Husbands, you can do the same: Go up to her and hold her. Now, she may buck you and kick you or maybe try to bite you, you never know, but just hold her while you pray in tongues. Ask God to forgive you both. It is not just your wife. Do not think that only she has the attitude because “the two are one.” God taught me that years ago.

I used to say she had the problem, and that did not work. She got more upset and would throw something else at me. That girl, I love her. She is full of zest. I would not have it any other way. I would not want her to change one bit. God made her that way. She is one of the most truthful, honest, and genuine people that I know. There are no facades and no phoniness. She just puts it right the way it is. It was one of the things that I appreciated and loved in my bride when I first met her because I do not like game-playing. I like things “right the way it is” and away you go.

Never say to your spouse, “You have the problem.” You say, “Lord, forgive us both.” Then tell the thief to get out of the house. Hold on to her, pray over her, love her, and do not let her go when you are having those problems. Hang on. Now, gals, you may need to do this too because sometimes the guy is upset or flipping out. It works for you too because the two are one. Grab ahold of him, start to pray

in tongues, and before long he might come to his senses and start praying with you. When both are praying, then the devil is out of there, and he has no chance in your home.

LOVING YOUR SPOUSE  
CHAPTER THREE  
Husbands Are To Protect Their Wives

Many times we were not taught what we needed to be taught in the area of relationships. (Having a baby does not automatically equip you to be a good parent. Simply getting married does not show you how to be a loving spouse.) It does not take more than a few weeks after you are married to realize that there is more than meets the eye in regard to life, blessing, and how to get along with somebody.

To make your life more blessed and to improve your relationships, I am presenting marriage relationship principles that work. These are from my personal life as well as from the lives of others who have put together good marriage materials. I know they are good because they are based on God's Word, and they are consistent with what we should do in our daily lives.

Review

In the previous chapter we looked at Ephesians five. We noted that the husbands and wives are to submit to one another. The wives are to submit to their husbands as to the Lord and respect and honor them. The husbands are to love their wives as they love themselves and be willing to lay down their lives for them. Love and respect should be cultivated. God's blessing is able to work when there is such a commitment. "Without a shadow of turning" I am to love my wife, and nothing in hell is going to separate us. I will stand in and do whatever is needed so that she might be blessed the way that God intends her to be.

Here is a little caution to the women regarding this topic. Normally I just share the needs of a woman with the fellows because I do not want the wives to use what they are learning against their husbands. That is not to be done. Still, it is important that the ladies learn about the needs of their husbands, and the guys learn about the needs of their wives in order to meet each other's needs. When you put the two together, then lives are truly blessed.

The worst thing a wife could do to her husband is to take the things that he is supposed to be doing and shove them under his nose. Likewise, the worst thing a husband could do is take the things that a wife needs to do and shove them under her nose. Each has to do what each has to do. Each has his or her part. When you do your part, then you allow God to come alongside to help you and your spouse, and blessings are able to come to pass. Therefore, heed the caution that we are sharing.

We know that these principles will grate on or irritate your flesh (the sinful nature). It will scream out, “No, no, no, no way,” but your spirit will be saying, “Yes, that’s the way to do it.” You need to learn to put down the old flesh because it wants to be comfortable. For you to be comfortable means your spouse has to be the way you want him or her to be. That is the way of the old self, not the new one. Our new natures say that we will do what God wants us to do for our spouses, and hopefully they are going to like it. If they do not like it, they should tell us (husbands and wives should talk about it).

#### D. The Fourth Trait of a Woman

The fourth trait of a woman is to be protected in the areas of her limitations or weaknesses.

We live in a day and an age where women are saying, “I am woman, and I do not have any limitations.” Have you run across that yet? The Word of God speaks to us in 1 Peter, chapter 3, which was given by the Holy Spirit and to the people (like Peter). He wrote what he had received from God. He told them something very important about women in this chapter. Verse seven says, “Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.”

God says the women are the weaker vessels, yet they are out there asserting themselves. Why are they weaker? It is obvious they are physically weaker. Then again, you run across some women who are pretty strong. What is verse seven dealing with? It is not dealing with physical limitations.

Eve was tempted and gave in to the devil. She gave in to the demonic temptation, and she fell first. Then the man came along, she handed him the fruit and said, “Eat it. It is good.” He ate it just because she said to eat it! Who was the weaker one? As you can see, we are not talking about spiritual weakness when we say women are the weaker partner because Adam and Eve both violated the commandment of God – Eve by the temptation of the devil, and Adam by the influence of his wife.

### Areas of Weakness

Men and women think differently. Women are more susceptible to their emotions while men are not usually moved by emotion. Ask any woman and she will verify what we are talking about. It is not that men are insensitive or uncaring, but they predominately operate by their intellects. Women operate more by their feelings, and that is why it is very difficult for men to understand what is happening with women or why they act certain ways. Men do not necessarily see any reason for what is going on or the logic of it. In addition, women look at short term goals whereas men look down the road to long range goals. Often a woman does not understand why it is not a priority for her husband to fix the faucet when it is a priority to her. Simply put, the man is not looking at what is right in front of him in the here and now.

Women are subject to fear because their worlds are centered around their little nests, so to speak. Whether in nature or in humankind there is a “nesting instinct” to have a comfortable and stable environment. Again, the greatest need of a woman is to have stability. This need is met when she is given affection, attention, and consideration from her spouse. Having this shows her that she is important and needed by him. God made her that way, and it is not necessarily the weakness that we are dealing with.

A wife has been called to be a helpmate or helper, not to be the one in charge, or the one to carry all the responsibilities. She is called to be by her husband’s side. This is very important. When she has the urge to make things secure by taking over, then it puts her in a place of weakness. When she starts to move out of her role as a helper

and move into the place where she will be the leader, then weakness comes. This is the general tendency with women. I think every woman down in her heart will acknowledge it. Her mind or flesh may buck up against it. She may say that if her husband were not such a flake, she would not have to take so much responsibility.

It is true that when a husband neglects his responsibility, his wife has a need to take it. It should not be that way. When a wise woman understands God's principles, she will learn as we stated before, that if her husband's responsibility is to mow the grass (and the grass is five feet high), she will not dare go out and mow it. She will not even hire somebody else to mow the grass because it is his responsibility. Many women have neglected to do God's directive (allowing the man to take the lead) by going out and doing something in his place. She will do it for him because she thinks he is *not* going to do it.

A classic but extreme example of this kind of woman is Jezebel. When Ahab wanted a particular vineyard, and he could not have it because the owner did not want to deal with him, Jezebel took it into her own hands. She went out and had the guy killed. Then it became government property, and Ahab took over the vineyard. Ahab was not somebody to be looked up to. He was a weakling, a wimp of a man. He is an example of how *not* to be. Think about it. We as men have to learn to stand up, take responsibility, take charge, and protect our wives the way that God would have us to.

In days of old the knights were bold. When the dragons came, chivalrous men in shining armor rescued the damsels in distress. There are times when every woman down in her heart knows that she would like somebody to be there to help her in her time of distress. She needs to know that her husband understands her and protects her where she has weaknesses or limitations. If she is being real, she will admit that she has areas of weakness. There are some things we all do well; there are other things that we do not do so well. The wife needs to be protected and helped in those areas.

Past events will affect lives. For example, if a woman came from a broken home or a poverty background, it will affect her. Husbands, if your wife has come from that kind of a background, she is going to be

tainted in a certain way, and she will have to deal with it. She can overcome, but be aware that such a background may cause weaknesses. A woman might be afraid that her spouse will run off and leave her like her dad left her mom. If her mother ruled the roost, she learned that. If the dad was laid back or a do-nothing couch potato, that is all she knows. She only knows the examples that were in her life as she was growing up, for better or for worse. We cannot fault her parents because parents just do what they know to do. However, God has a higher, better way. This way has proven to work for those who are really serious about getting God's results.

Are you interested in getting God's results?

### What the Husband Needs to Learn

We do not purport to know all the answers. We are growing in these ways of God too and moving along. Diana and I are going on 44 years together so that is a good indication. We know some others who have been married for up to 53 years, which is a miracle nowadays. We talk about and see physical and emotional miracles, signs, wonders, and healings, but there are miracles of relationships too. These are the miracles we want you to see in your home. God is able to do it. We want to see miracles in your relationships with one another.

If a wife has not had much education, she might feel insecure about it. Other times she might be dealing with a physical handicap or past failures. When people have failed in a certain area, things come back up in their lives from time to time to haunt them. Maybe she feels uncomfortable in meeting new people.

The husband needs to learn how to protect his wife in these areas. Before he steps in, he has to first know his wife, though. A husband should know what inferiorities, insecurities, or limitations she feels. He should talk, share, and observe. Then he will be able to tell very quickly how this works.

When Diana and I first got married, I would bring a bunch of people over for dinner and think nothing of it. I was kind of spontaneous, and I would go with the flow. Diana was very prim and proper in her own

way. She is a bundle of fun, but she has to have everything just so, whereas I am more “and away we go....”

I would peek my head in the front door and say, “Hey, I am home, I am home.” She would be all happy about it, but then I would open the door further, and there would be all my friends. I would say, “I brought a few friends over for dinner,” and she would look at me with a questioning look. She would be cool until later. Then I learned that she did not handle those kinds of situations in the same way that I would. I would think, *Oh, shoot, we will just order out. We will get some Kentucky Fried or something. It is no problem.* But see, she likes to set the table, do all those nice little things, and have everything just right. But I was “Let’s just do it, you know.”

I am still learning that one after 44 years, but I am getting a little better because I work at it. (Take the time and consideration to learn the things about your wife that are special and precious.) I think it is great that my wife likes to do special things for dinner.

I appreciate that she is the way she is. At first, I did not appreciate it because I did not understand. I grew up in a household where people came in off the streets. I mean, it was like a soup kitchen. People came from all over the place, and they would just drop in. It was different with her. Everybody has different backgrounds and different ways of doing things. It takes a little while to learn all her ways and then start to think about them and be considerate about them.

What I needed to learn was to protect my wife in that area of weakness. I learned to call and say, “Hey, I would like to bring some friends over.” I learned to set things up so it was not just sprung on her. Since that was how she felt about it, we would plan it, write it on the calendar, and plot it out. It worked great. In fact, she became my social director. I do not do anything socially except she first plans it. I got smart about this finally. I said, “Gosh, I am not even going to plan this. I will just tell anybody that wants to do anything, contact Diana and let her work it out. Then she can have it ready to go. All I have to do is show up and eat the chicken.”

In another example, I either had a tendency to forget to introduce her or I introduced her 20 times to the same people. I am using that as a simple example. There are thousands of other kinds of workings. But do protect your wife. One thing you want to do is make sure that when you are in a new environment, you keep her close by your side so that you can protect her.

### Let Him Protect

Some women take it wrong when we talk about protecting them. They think, *what do I need to be protected for?* God built the need to protect in the man. Since it is a need in him, do him a favor. Allow him to protect you. Allow him to bless you. You might think, *He cannot even take care of himself.* You would be surprised how he feels when you take him by the arm as you are walking along. Such a little thing does wonders for a guy. Have you ever noticed he stands up taller and straighter? In essence you are saying, "You are my guy." That gives him the opportunity to say, "Okay, I will take care of you."

Many women have said, "He does not take care of me." Perhaps he does not take care of you because you do not let him. You are too busy trying to do everything. Let him take care of you and let him fail. Women often do not want to let the guy fail. If he fails, then the woman's sense of security goes "down the shoot." Therefore, they scramble to do what they can do, but they do not realize they need to allow him to take his place of responsibility and allow him to take charge. Once he starts to do that, ladies, you will get everything that you ever dreamed of. God will bless you and help you because the need for respect and honor is built in the guy. When he knows that you are counting on him, it will do something inside of him. He is going to stand up.

A lady wants her man to be aware of her needs and have the wisdom and courage to provide firm, loving direction so she will not fail. God has put the desire in a woman to be a blessing to her husband. In addition, she wants to be a blessing in her own right as a person before God, and she wants to be a blessing to the children and to the community of which she is a part. She does not want to be seen as a failure.

When I would bring my whole crew home for dinner, and Diana had only prepared enough for myself and the children, how did that make her look? She compensated very well, and she would hurry and throw in something else, but it is was not the same as being prepared for guests. It made her to look like a failure. If you are protecting your wife, you do not do that. You cover for her. You make her look good. You actually help her to be covered so that she does not fail.

A woman wants to know that her husband is aware of her needs and has the wisdom and courage to provide for those needs. Give loving, firm direction so she will not fail. I do not have that kind of wisdom in myself; no man does. It comes from God alone. This is why verse seven is very clear, “Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives...” Consideration is so critical. We need to become aware of what her needs, weaknesses, and shortcomings are. What does she feel insecure about?

### Different Backgrounds

Diana came from a home where they did not have much money. In fact, they lived on a year’s salary that is sub-welfare nowadays. Yet, they never took a nickel of welfare money nor begged, and they never lacked for anything. They were contented and happy.

I became a blessing in their lives. When I would come over, they felt like they had to feed me. I guess it was the way I stood there. Her momma made great grilled cheese sandwiches and French fries. I loved them. Then her dad would come home and make me a burger. I just had to stay around long enough for both. They were so precious and sweet.

When I went over to Diana’s house for the first time, I was dressed kind of like I am now. Her dad was just as happy as he could be. He was telling me jokes. Diana still loves to tell jokes, and I know she got it from her dad. You know, people are the way they have been brought up. We had a grand time together, and so her mother said to Diana, “You invite that guy back.” I went back over, but this time I had my backward collar on. (I came from a Lutheran church background where the minister wears a collar.) Her dad did not say

more than a few words that day, and the only thing he said to me was, “Father, would you like some peas?” He did not tell any more jokes either. That time Diana’s mom said, “Now, you really invite that guy back. I have not ever heard your dad be so quiet.”

Since Diana came from the kind of background that she did, it has been a blessing to me in many ways. For instance, she makes many of her own clothes, she budgets well, and she shops carefully and prices everything. She is a good steward, and in that respect it has been a great blessing. On the other hand, coming from that background made her think that she had to have some money in her wallet in order to feel secure. That fear was there. I came from the “oil cruse and flour bin” place where God will supply whatever we need. One time she asked, “You mean when I go to the grocery store they will just hand me a loaf of bread?” and I said, “Have you ever believed God for that?” I was kind of obnoxious at first because I did not understand what she was talking about. I came from the place where I had never lacked for any good thing because I believed God’s Word and His promises. Thus, I had to deal with her insecurity, and I still deal with it, but she is learning, yes, God does what He says He is going to do. I have to deal in knowledge, honoring my wife. Now, she is a mighty woman of faith related to finances.

I am not going to fault her for that area of weakness. I will honor her by coming in, protecting, and bringing the Word of God into the situation, which is going to deal with the weakness. “My God shall supply all our needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” When? – When we are giving our tithes and offerings, and we are believing God for increase. God is going to make a way.

We are building up that area of weakness concerning finances. “Live with your wives considerately and treat them with respect as the weaker partner.” (“Honor them as the weaker vessel” it says in the King James Version.) Once you know what the weakness is, you have to deal with it. It will not be too far that you have to look.

### What We Bring into the Relationship

I always give Diana full freedom to share about me, so I am taking full freedom to share about her because it helps people. When she was growing up, she felt her brother was shown partiality. He was younger. It seemed like she was always getting the backside of things. Perhaps you can relate to that. Were your siblings shown partiality? They would always get praised and you would get some kind of negative word or put down. They were permitted to do certain things, but you were not allowed to. They were trusted, and you were not trusted, yet they were the ones who were doing things that were not trustworthy. You were doing the good things but being slighted.

We all carry experiences like that into our relationships. Many times we are carrying things that have happened in our families. (When you marry somebody, you marry the family as well. You get the whole bunch of them, and they get the whole bunch of your bunch. I recommend that couples live 600 miles away from any in-laws for the first few years of marriage. This gives them a chance to get established, grow, and settle together. Relatives tend to “get in there.” Bless God for our families, but there are as many negative as there are positive incidents that have happened with relatives).

The night I asked for Diana’s hand in marriage, I waited while her mother went back to get her dad, but he did not come out for 30 minutes. I think he went into shock or something. Since Diana had been raised at home, and she never left home, she had always been protected by her parents. (I believe in that very strongly. We live in a day and an age where kids are left to run anywhere. That is not God’s order. The bible clearly teaches that the woman is to be under her dad’s covering until such time that she takes a husband. Then she is under the husband’s covering, and the dad hands her to the husband. The dad comes out of the place of protection to be in a place of counsel and blessing to the husband and wife. He is not to run their home, but to be there as a source of encouragement in God for them.) When Diana’s dad finally came out, he said he thought it would be good for us to marry. I think he liked me. (It is important that your in-laws like you. It makes a big difference. Do not think that they do not have to like you. Do not kid yourself. You will have to deal with in-laws down the road. Many times the wife will treat her husband just like she treats her dad. The guy will treat his wife just

like he treated his mom. Then you get moms and wives together, and that makes for a fun scene.)

Diana's dad came out and said, "Okay, that's fine. You can marry Diana, but you go ahead to St. Louis, and Diana can stay here in Delaware." I said, "I do not think that kind of marriage is going to last very long. I do not think that kind of marriage will work too well." Finally, he reluctantly consented for me to take her along. That man cried when we pulled away with the U-Haul because in his own way he cared for Diana, although he did not really protect her in the way that I know how (because I have learned a few things). I do not fault him for that. At the time he preferred her brother over her, and we had to do some major work together to get over it, but that man cried when she left with me for St. Louis. Parents often want to do what is best, and they do the best they know how to do.

What is your wife's area of limitation? What is it in her that needs to be protected? Give her a place of honor and do not hold things against her. She cannot help who her family was. You did not have a choice about which family you were born into either. However, God can make the best of every situation.

My wife has a lovely mom. She has a lovely dad. I respect and honor them both immensely. I have the privilege of keeping her as my bride, the fruit of their labor. To me it is very exciting. You want to grow to cherish your in-laws. Certainly there were some things that needed to be adjusted, but it is the husband's place to take that role, to cherish his wife, and to cultivate and bring out God's best in her.

The point is, she had developed certain qualities because of her upbringing. I thank God she is not a demanding wife who says, "I have to have this, and I have to have that," and "Why are not you doing this for me?" I thank God that she learned to be content with what she had.

Granted, she thinks birthdays and anniversaries are important. We need to learn those dates, men, and we need to make sure that those

are very special times for them. It is part of protecting, loving, and caring for them.

Because of her upbringing, Diana decided one year that she would like to change her birth date. Her birthday comes soon after Christmas (she would always get a blouse or something for Christmas and the matching skirt for her birthday). She made a proclamation. She would move her birthday to July fifth. That was fine with me because I could not care less what day birthdays are. It does not mean that much to me; it is just another day. You thank God for every day and you go along. Still, like other women, she was concerned about these special times. I figured, okay, you want your birthday on July fifth, I will make a proclamation too that your birthday from now on, henceforth, forevermore is July fifth. So we changed her birthday.

That year July fifth came and went. Sometime in December she gave me a strange look one day. I knew something was going on. It was so precious. She came up to me, and she was just grinning. (You know when somebody gets delivered how good they feel and how happy they are.) She had gotten delivered. She said, "You know, I went the whole year without my birthday," and she was laughing about it. It was exciting to watch the freedom that had come into her because when she was growing up she had always felt like she was being neglected. Things were not made special for her. Many times people feel that way even if it is not always the case. Parents are not necessarily showing partiality one above another, but the child may feel they are.

When you marry, remember your wife developed different attitudes and behaviors as a result of her upbringing. You have to learn the wisdom that comes from God to deal with them. Spend much time praying, "God, give me the wisdom to understand what is going on." Sometimes you do not understand, especially during the monthly cycle. Guys do not relate to it at all because they often have not the slightest idea what is going on. How can she be so happy one minute and the next minute feel down, or how can she say, "Let me out of here!"? Her body is going ya-ya-ya-ya-ya, and her thinking is going

awry. A guy does not even begin to understand or appreciate what the lady is going through.

I told Diana to put a red star on the calendar when it was “going down” so I could make sure I knew. Guys, it is not the week when it is happening that is the problem; it is the week before. I had to learn that so I could deal with it.

It is a man’s responsibility to protect his wife during her monthly time. The best way to cover her is in prayer. In addition, be considerate and love her even more because she cannot help it. Her system is going through change. Nevertheless, there was a point when I said, “You cannot let everything go when your time comes. You are going to have to take authority too. You need to take authority over your own body and mind. In the name of Jesus Christ we will do it. We are a team, and we do not have to have this messing up our relationship.”

Many times women think, *I can just let things go*. No, you cannot, and a wise, loving husband is going to firmly say, “Knock it off. In the name of Jesus we are going to take charge. We will not let fears and emotions run wild. In the name of Jesus we will deal with it together now in love. We are going to get with the Word of God, prayer, and the things of the Spirit.”

### Giving Attention

Men, she may sometimes act out of line to see what you will do. I remember a time in our lives when we were going along fine. We would be talking, we would be enjoying life, and the next thing I knew... “ROAR.” Then she would pick and pick at every little thing. I could understand a little picking because I am not perfect by any means, but I was not as bad as I was being made out to be. I got by myself to take charge of it. My wife was a blessing, and I could not figure out what was going on. Why was she acting like that? We would be going along great and then, all of a sudden, this would happen. As I prayed, the Lord said, “Negative attention.”

She had a way of showing affection by coming along and sticking her thumb in my ribs or twisting my arm. She would rub my hair while I

was driving, and I would say, “Honey, I love that, but I cannot stand it while I am driving.” Then she would do it some more. Sometimes she would get romantic as I was walking out the door for the day. I said, “I cannot do anything; cut it out. I am walking out the door. You know I have to go.” My thought was, *she does not really want to do something. She is just messing my mind around*, so one time I called her on it. However, that girl knows responsibility. She knows all the things I have to do, and when I have to do them, so I knew she did not really want to do anything.

God showed me which actions were negative attention. I looked at her once and said, “Honey, you do not have to throw a scene to get my attention.” Many people figure a little attention or negative attention is better than nothing. It really was not necessary for her to do those things because I believe in showing positive attention. Men, we need to show positive consideration, praise, and thanks: “Thank you for doing the laundry, thank you for washing the dishes, thank you for keeping the house clean, thank you for being such a wonderful wife.” It is amazing what will start to happen.

The reason for her behavior finally dawned on me after I prayed and God showed me about the negative attention. I sat down and watched her, and sure enough, she was always poking me or doing something. When I walked in the house, I began wondering what in the world was going to happen next. There was never a dull moment, which was a great blessing.

We had an apartment in St. Louis when we were first married. I will never forget that place. Our tables were boxes, so we covered them with fabric. We did not have a whole lot because we were just starting out. You could roll a marble down one end of the apartment, and it would roll back the other way. It was very strange. There were big bay windows from which you could see a beautiful view of the garbage can outside, but beyond it were the forest and trees. It was really nice. However, I kept having this feeling that something was looking at me. I would be in the shower, and I would feel that way. (I have this thing about privacy. When you are doing private things you should have some privacy.) I gazed out the window, and there was a

squirrel lying on a branch looking at me. All in all, it was a wonderful place. So many good things happened there.

Diana would play a game, and sometimes I had to go along with it. When I came home, I would have to search for her, like Hide and Seek. Again, it was her need for attention. It came out in blessing as well as in weakness. So, I would hunt and seek. Once she was not even home, and I was hunting, seeking, and trying to find her.

Another night I came home and began searching for her. I checked under the bed. I had my back turned to the bay windows which had some curtains in front. Before I knew it, she came flying over my back. I thought it was a burglar or something, and I flipped her across the room. When I looked at her, I realized she was naked. Since I have this privacy thing I was thinking, *my gosh*. I was not thinking about all the stuff she was going through to make me happy. What I was thinking about was the fact that her butt had been in the window, and anybody in town could have seen her.

I love that girl, and here I was telling you about her being the prim and proper one, was I not? You would never find me with my naked butt out on the window sill.

Now think about this. People need a little spontaneity and a little spice in their lives. There she was, thinking about surprising me. She could not have cared less if anybody was out there seeing *all* of her, but I was thinking about protecting her. Your wife may act out of line to see what your response is going to be. *Do you care about me?*

### No Compromise

We have to know our wives so well that we know when to be firm and when to be lenient. I told her very firmly, “Do not you ever do that again.” Many guys make the mistake of telling their wives, “Go ahead and do whatever you want.” That is the worst thing you could tell them. It makes their world very insecure because they want to please you. They want to do things for you. They want to be a blessing to you, and if you just throw open the boundaries, it is like telling a child, “Go do whatever you want to do.” Children need

boundaries. Wives need boundaries. Godly men need boundaries. We all need boundaries, so do not just give them whatever they want whenever they want it.

Many times your wife will test you. You are here to shape your wife into God's image and to help her to grow in God. You are not here to service her flesh, desires, or whims. You are here to help her to become the godly woman that God has intended her to be. As godly men and women, you will raise up godly children who are taught in the ways of God and grow in those things.

Sometimes one or the other will know what is right, but both need to know what is right. When God says, "The road is straight and narrow," that is exactly how I read it. The road does not deviate to the left or right but goes straight ahead. Likewise, we are not going to compromise God's principles. Some men compromise for their wives. Just think what might have happened if Adam had stood up and said, "Forget it, Eve. You ate of the fruit, but I am not going to because God said, 'Do not touch the thing.'" It takes somebody to stand up in God and lead the household in the ways of the Lord.

I remember when we first learned about God's principle concerning the Sabbath. After a couple weeks of observing it the way God says to (out of love for God), Diana came to me and said, "Randy, this is going to take a major adjustment in our lives." I agreed, "You are right. You are really right." The worldly and the fleshly influences had to die. We were going to love God first before anybody else. Most people do their own pleasure on the Sabbath. They mow the grass and do lots of other things. God says, "Love Me this one day. Just set aside this one day and love Me in it. Take 24 hours and put aside the world. Put aside your pleasures. Put aside all your work and the other things that you do and devote one day to Me." That is all God says. Devote it to Him and love Him in that day.

It was a major adjustment when we first got ahold of it, but we both had to make the adjustment, and the children grew up in it. We learned to stay with whatever else might need adjustments – while respecting one another or talking to one another, because we were setting an example for the children. Many times we messed up, and

we messed up badly, but we asked God's forgiveness, and we asked one another's forgiveness. That set a good example. Then the children knew we were real. We were not phonies who said one thing and did another. When we did wrong, we asked God's forgiveness, we asked their forgiveness, and we sought to go back and do what was right. That creates a genuineness that is going to be a blessing.

Giving your wife everything she wants produces insecurities in her. It will be evident after awhile. She wonders, *what is going on; why is he doing this?*

We are to honor our wives by protecting and helping them with those areas of need. It does not take long to find out what those areas are. Then we can pray. We can bring the Word of God into the situation. We can encourage them to believe God with us. You cannot believe God for them per se; they have to believe for themselves. That is why it is very important that you two come into agreement to want God. If the husband does not want God, there is a promise in 1 Peter 3:1, "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 behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives." This verse is dealing with respect and honor.

Fellows, get serious. Seek God about what is going on. In what area does your wife need protection? She may not think it needs to be protected, but you will know.

Women, let him protect you, and watch what it does to him. He will protect you even better. It is not that he is trying to isolate you or that he does not trust you. When he wants you around, it is because he wants to protect and love you.

Our lives are to be adventurous. Our marriages are to be adventurous too. We believe that God has a good plan to bless our marriages, but we have to work hard at it. Some days we do better than others. I find that next to Jesus I have to constantly keep my mind on my relationships – Jesus first and then keep an eye on my

spouse. It is not because we do not trust. It is because we do trust, and we do care. I think that is the way it works.

## LOVING YOUR SPOUSE

### CHAPTER FOUR

#### Dealing with Pressure

In the last chapter we described how godly people can have fun in marriage and enjoy one another; and it is okay. I have been around many people over the years. Some know how to have fun, and some do not. Some people try so hard to be Christians, and others just seem to act that way naturally in the Spirit. I have often wondered about it. I think some do not know how to let down and be themselves. I have discovered that many people do not know themselves or who they are in God. They have all these inaccurate ideas about being a Christian. I think they are downright Victorian and prudish in many respects.

#### Unhindered Prayers

We noted how important it is for the man of the household to pray. We encourage the women to pray also. In this book we are addressing the man specifically, but we find that both men and women need to be praying in order for God's best to come about in their relationship.

“Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life so that nothing will hinder your prayers.” **I Peter 3:7**. This verse repeats the phrase “in the same way.”

The passages with “in the same way” come after chapter two of **I Peter**, which is dealing with how Jesus trusted God. Verse 21 and following, “To this you were called because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps. He committed no sin and no deceit was found in his mouth. When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.”

Many times husbands or wives feel that they are not being treated fairly. We need to learn the principles of our Lord Jesus Christ who,

when He was suffering for us, maintained a respectful attitude towards authorities. He did not insult those who were insulting Him. He did not threaten them, calling down the legions of heaven. He did not spit on them when they spit on Him, nor did He return railing for railing. Instead, He entrusted Himself in faith to His heavenly Father, knowing that His Father would eventually judge everything justly and in so doing He was taken care of.

**I Peter 3:1** "...Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands." Insecurity and fear rise up, as we have mentioned before, and they cause the woman to want to step out and take charge, to defend herself and the children, to go out and seek to do the protecting instead of the man rising up and taking his place and doing what needs to be done.

**I Peter 3:7** "...Husbands, in the same way be considerate..." This is consistent with the Word of God in **Ephesians 5**. The wife is called to submit herself to her husband as to the Lord, honoring him and respecting him. The husband in turn is called to love his wife (**Ephesians 5** says, "Submit yourself one to another" and so submission is a one-to-another kind of thing). The woman has a part in that submission. Her part is to respect and honor her husband as to the Lord. The man has a part in submission as to the Lord in that he in turn loves his wife as he loves himself. In other words, look out for somebody other than yourself.

Men, be understanding of your wife's feelings. Be understanding of what she is going through. The only way this can happen: "As you live with your wives, treat them with respect." Treat her with respect as you desire to be respected. A person who is respecting others will receive respect in like kind. A person who is considerate, loving, and thoughtful will in turn receive the same.

Husbands often say, "Well, my wife does not respect me. She does not honor me." The first thing I ask them is, "Are you considerate of her? Are you loving her? Are you kind? Are you compassionate? Are you thinking about her needs as much as you are thinking about your needs?" Usually the answer is no because this is a natural thing. When you do respect, your woman is going to respond in kind.

She is going to be everything you ever dreamed of when you are the Prince Charming. Charming is not a witchcraft term. It is a godly term, and it deals with wooing, loving, respecting, honoring, and caring. When a man is doing that, he does not have to think twice about being respected and honored. He just walks along with his head high and his wife will be right there by his side, proud to be with him because she knows she is protected, cared for, and loved.

Involved in this is more than giving a few posies and maybe some bonbons. It is something called prayer. I like the King James Version that reads “Husbands, dwell with them *according to knowledge*, giving honor unto the wife as the weaker vessel...” I like that rendering because it shows something that is very important in understanding her needs – gaining knowledge and insight into what is going on in her life.

We work side by side, loving, caring, encouraging, and building one another up in God and praying together. I stress that you are to pray together because it is vital in understanding many things that go on in your lives. If you would sit down and pray, God would show you things. He says, “Call unto me, and I will answer you, and I will show you great and mighty things, things you know not of.” **Jeremiah 33:3**

#### E. The Fifth Trait of a Woman

The fifth trait of a woman is to be honored and protected against pressure. Scripture commands us to dwell with our wives according to knowledge, giving honor to them as unto a weaker vessel.

Men are called to be strong, watchful, and courageous. We are to look out for what is going on, and then be the knights in shining armor who protect our households. We protect our wives and children from spiritual problems, and from mental and emotional stresses that try to come in. That means that we have to be alert and “on the wall,” watching. We need to be standing ready to slay the dragon when the stinkin’ thief tries to come into our homes and mess with our wives, children, finances or relationships. God has put us right there with our wives and children to deal with these things. We are to take the responsibility and be accountable in God to stand up in the name of Jesus, saying, “No, thief, you will not put your hands on my house,

my wife, my children, myself, finances, or relationships that belong here in the name of the Lord. You will not have a place here.”

We have to raise the standard of the Lord Jesus Christ in our homes, stand up and be counted in God, let things fall where they will, and keep those pressures off of our wives and children. The pressures try to come on a continual basis because we live life, and events change every day. It is time that we as God’s men rise up for the occasion and take the place that Jesus Christ has given us in our homes.

There will be opportunities. I look at pressures as opportunities for God’s men to rise up, take our places, and deal with what comes. It will enable our wives to be even more certain that we are godly men when they see us rising to take authority and lead our homes. We may not have all the answers. God knows we do not have all the answers. That is why He says, “Call to me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things, things you know not of.” Anybody in relationship knows that you do not have all the answers concerning your spouse or children, or even within yourself, unless God shows you. We need to take our place and ask God.

Here are a few areas to be considered in order to honor your wife and protect her against pressure:

## 1. Boundaries

Opportunities come, and they are opportunities to honor our wives by providing loving and wise boundaries for her. Many times a woman does not understand this. She thinks that when a man is setting boundaries, he is infringing on her freedom and life. When he says, “No, I do not think you should do that; I do not think you should go out shopping at night,” or “I do not think it is wisdom to go there when it is raining. I do not want you out driving.” The woman thinks, *what does he think I am... incapable?* What he is doing is taking this opportunity and in his own way he is honoring his wife by protecting her. The wife needs to allow her husband to set those boundaries and work the plan that he is seeking to work. Often she will come against him, so then he may back off and let her do what she wants to do. You

know, down the road that woman will not benefit from it because she is not allowing her husband to do what God has called him to do. After awhile, she will not be honored or protected by him. He will go right out the door and on his way because apparently she does not need him.

Women are very capable. There is no question about it in a man's mind. He is not seeing her as someone who is incapable. What he is doing is asserting the position that God has given him. He is looking out for her best interests and what is best for the home. When a wife is operating in a selfish mode, the man will either squash her, or he will allow her to do anything she wants, which produces insecurities within her. People need the boundaries which God has set in place. The kind of permissive attitude in the world today allows and cultivates rebellion and independence, which are not godly qualities and which never promote God's blessing.

A husband should seek to honor his wife. He should be looking out for her by providing loving and wise boundaries. For example, men, your wife needs sleep. She needs rest after she works hard. Many times she is at home and working out there in society. It never used to be so.

Often we do not encourage a wife to work outside the home because she is then placed under an authority other than her husband. If she is having a little difficulty with her husband's authority, she may find it easier to please the person at work. The next thing you know, her affection is alienated, and her life takes another course. We have seen this happen many times over the years. The fellow at work seems more affectionate and understanding. I am not even talking about the mushy, gushy kind of stuff. I am talking about his understanding of where she is at, what she is feeling, and what is going on in her life. There will always be somebody out there who seems to be more understanding than her spouse. Then she has a tendency to go with it. She looks at her husband, and then she looks at the other man and says, "Okay." Independence and the "I am going to take care of myself" kind of attitude is fostered. Before long the woman is thinking, *what do I need you for?* She says to her husband "You are such a downer; you are telling me I cannot go here

and do that.” Do you know why the husband is saying it, and why he keeps getting stronger about it? – Because he sees an attitude of independence or rebellion developing. He starts to clamp down a little harder. If he allows independence and rebellion to rise up, then he will have such a conflict at home that somebody or something is going to have to give.

Somewhere we have to put our rights and personal wills down and bring God into the situation. “Be submissive one to another as to the Lord” is what we are dealing with. Somewhere in this God has to reign. The man yields his rights as a man, and the woman yields her rights as a woman, and they say, “We are going to do it God’s way.”

I can tell you this will work because these are God’s principles. Nevertheless, let me tell you, your flesh is going to scream. You will go through withdrawal symptoms because that old self wants to have control. It wants to have the last word (and the last word is not “yes, dear” – as in a godly home). The last word really should be, “I am going to love you as to the Lord, and I am going to set down the boundaries God would have for us and our home. We will have boundaries according to the Word of God. We will search the Word of God together, and we will find out what God says. We will set up our household the way He wants it set up.” When you do that, some beautiful things can happen.

## 2. Sleep

What about this not getting enough sleep? If people do not get enough sleep, they get a little irritable or short. The next thing you know they start to do what Galatians 5 talks about: “biting and devouring one another.” When a man makes sure that his household is bedded down at the proper time and getting adequate rest, he is caring for them properly. If people are sick, it is often because they are violating God’s health principles. We all need to get proper rest, exercise, diet, relaxing time, and working time. You need all of those things to have balance in your life. If people violate the principles and fatigue sets in, then it is the woman who becomes vulnerable to problems. Therefore, a husband should want to protect her, make

sure she gets enough rest and is cared for, that she gets a break and has time for herself.

### 3. Space

We all need some time for ourselves. I am not an advocate of married couples being together at all times. I believe if you want a healthy marriage, you need to give each other a little space, a little time alone with God, a little time out doing something that you want to do, including friendship kinds of things.

Still, in marriage everything revolves around the home and the Lord. You do not want to make it a priority to go out and do all those other things. Many women just like to go out and do their own thing. Many guys like to do their own thing. Such behavior will not bless the marriage because it fosters independence. We are talking about a little space, a little time out.

How many men really appreciate and understand what is involved in taking care of children and all that goes on at home? At one time when our children were growing up, I was praying about this situation: when I came home each day, Diana looked a little tired. I thought, *this is not good*. She did all the wash, cleaning, cooking, and took care of the children. With little kids, every time you clean one room and go to another room, the first room is messed up again. I prayed about the fact that Diana looked tired, and the Lord told me to give her a day to herself – a day that was all hers to go out and do what she wanted to do. However, Diana was not the kind who would take a whole day. She would go for only a few hours. Because we worked together, did not take advantage of one another, and loved one another, she just enjoyed the fact that I offered to do this. She would go out for two or three hours or so. Then she would come back, and she would see me exhausted and frayed.

I began to realize the Lord was showing me all that she goes through: all the pressures at home and what went on in taking care of little children. I really appreciated her and thanked God for her even more as the days went by because she was so loving and considerate of me during that time too. I took care of the children while she was

gone, but I am not made for that, and no man is made for that. There is no such thing as a Mr. Mom. God never intended or made them. I believe a liberal, independent, rebellious society has created Mr. Mom because the woman has gone out and does not do what God created her for. In **Titus 2** it says, "The woman is to take care of the home, the husband, and the children." This is God's order, not mine. Do not start throwing anything at me. See **Titus 2**. Read it sometime and you will see for yourself. You will understand it is the way God intended it to be.

Nobody ever teaches you how to be a husband or a dad. I was new at that, and she never took advantage of me as I was trying. I thank God that we have a lot more going for us than we did years ago. God is moving and teaching us, and I thank the Lord for the privilege to share anything that might help you as well. I have been married 44 years, and I am excited about what God is doing. I have a blessing for a wife, a blessing for a son, a precious daughter, son-in-law and daughter-in-law, and blessings for grandchildren. I have watched the blessing of God on their lives, and I know the principles work. I set the boundaries, though. The bible says you need to be firm, you need to be firmly loving. When you are, God is going to honor it. Insist that God's principles are to be the reigning force in your home, in your marriage, and with your children. Do not compromise the principles that you know are true.

So, my wife never took advantage of me, and I am very thankful for that. I would breathe a sigh of relief every time she came home on those days. I love my children, but when they would mess their pants, I would have to take them out and hose them down. People might say, "Oh, how unloving and unkind." Well, it was the quickest way I knew to clean them up (they have loved water fights ever since)! I do not think it harmed them one bit. We would just have a good time.

People can get rigid and think you have to do things a certain way, but if you are firmly loving with people, whether it is your spouse or your children, they grow to love it and expect it. Let's say your children reach into the cookie jar to grab cookies when you told them, "No cookies before dinner." They have it up to their mouths when

you walk into the room, they shove that cookie behind themselves and stand there hiding it. You know they have it, and you know that they were told not to eat cookies before dinner. If they know that they should be disciplined, but you do not discipline them, you are not doing them a favor.

In the same way, do not allow your spouse to start to compromise the principles in the Word of God, or worse yet, start to compromise the principles yourself. Many times your wife starts to compromise because you do. You need to get before God and ask Him about it. I do not believe in trashing my wife. She is a blessing, but I know that when she gets out of line, then I have left a door open somewhere, and I have to find out what it is. I pray and seek God, and He shows it.

#### 4. Frustration

Many pressures come against wives during the day, one of which is getting frustrated. They get frustrated because they do not have clear direction from their husbands. I think that is one of the biggest problems that I faced over the years. I did not state directions clearly as to what I wanted to do. It caused my wife to try to figure it out herself. Sometimes she did not figure it out the way I thought she should have, and then I would snap at her a little bit. You know just a little bit, not a whole lot, but enough that said to her, “Why don’t you do it yourself?”

I thank God for a very outspoken (but not rebellious) wife. We have been working on this for years, and I believe our latter years will be better than our former years. There is not a marriage that does not have to work on this part of their relationship. Set the boundaries and many times your wife will try to push you a little bit. It is not the time, necessarily, to be pushed. There is a time to say, “Hey, I love you. We agreed that we would go this way.” That is why you have to agree on some things. You have to set the standards. People cannot follow the standards and abide by the boundaries if you never set them. They need to be what you agreed to according to God’s Word. There is plenty in the Word of God to show how it works, and there is flexibility.

When pressures come and build up frustration in a woman, eventually the frustration will come out. It may be that she is frustrated because she told you about something that was going on in the house, maybe a leaky faucet or something with the children. You did not appear to be taking care of it. The pressure builds and builds in her, so we need to be sensitive to that. She is trying to please her husband. She is trying to help him. She is trying to be a helpmate. How can she be a helpmate if he has not given the proper instruction, leadership, direction, or follow through?

God is saying to us that we need to sit down and take the time to talk. This is probably more important than anything else. More important than the World Series, a football game, or work is giving some clear direction to our families as to the way we will go. Then they are able to fit into it, and we can start to work together in the process.

#### Variations on the Theme

Diana knows I like chocolate chip cookies. She makes them in many different ways. (Variety is important in a relationship too.) There are certain varieties that I like better than others. Soft chocolate chip cookies or crispy chocolate chip cookies? Made with oatmeal, whole wheat, white flour, or lots of sugar? People have different tastes. You will find out that your spouse likes things one way, and you may like things another way, not to mention your children. When you are living in a household, there will be all kinds of different preferences, which can produce pressure because each one wants it done a certain way.

I do not know what happened to this one particular batch of cookies because I had never seen them made like that before. Usually they are kind of round and nice; these were flat. Those flat cookies turned out half burned, but they were the best ones I had ever tasted in my life. Later she asked me, "How do you want them made?" The kids said, "Oh, I like them like this, dad, I like them like this," and everybody liked them a different way. I said, "Do you think you could duplicate the batch that turned out flat and crunchy? Those were marvelous."

She was asking, “How do you like this done? What do you want me to do?” If I do not tell her what I like and what I want, then how can she please me? How can I honor her by saying, “This is what I like, and you did this so well. Please do it again. Do you think you can duplicate them?” That is how it works.

I think every man should read books about leadership and start to develop the qualities that God wants in us because we are in a place of authority. Our wives are in a place of influence. Together great and wonderful things can happen when we work as a team to the glory of God. I read one book about leadership that said a great leader has a high tolerance for experimentation, which means that he is open to change. He is open to trying things in different ways, the reason being he wants to get the best results. I find that this works in the home as well. I have some ideas, Diana has some ideas, and we put them together to come up with something new. Christians have not really grasped this. God has some marvelous ideas for us to discover together. We pray that together you get God’s ideas and what is best for you and your home.

I am teaching principles, and these principles are God’s principles. They work. We can give you recommendations, but there will be variations on the theme in your home. This means that you will work things out a little bit differently, but it will all come out in the wash. For example, the people in your house may like peanut butter cookies. We have got to set the direction, guys, so that the family can follow and work together.

I am a visionary, and Diana is a very practical, detailed kind of person. You put the two together and some beautiful things happen. Often a husband and a wife are totally opposite in the way they do things and the way they think, and yet they complement each other. Each one is adding another dimension to the home, so we need to appreciate that. I ask for Diana’s thoughts, and then I give my thoughts. Together we seek God’s thoughts. God’s thoughts are much better than ours, so we often just forget ours. We go with what He comes up with. Sometimes you will find that your thoughts were God’s thoughts, and other times you will find that both of you will be in complete agreement on something.

The first time our ministry was receiving offerings for some land, God gave me an amount to give. He told me to give everything we had. We had been saving up. I said, "Father, You will have to talk to Diana about this one," because this was everything we had. Three days later I walked in the house, and there was Diana sitting at the table with a big smile. She said, "I know." I asked, "You know what?" She answered, "I know what God told you." This is very fascinating because I never told her that God and I talked about it. In fact, I was not about to venture forth on this one.

The lady talks to God. It is a great joy to a guy when his wife talks to God. It is a great joy to a wife when her guy talks to God. It is an even greater joy to God when He finds that they are both listening and will do what He says. She continued, "I know what happened. God told you to give everything we have." I exclaimed, "Oh, Lord" and fell on my face. I was simply amazed. Many times gals do not think that their husbands are talking to God, and the husbands do not think the wives are talking to Him. We just take for granted that neither one of us is talking to Him. That day I saw that He was doing something beautiful in our home. He was binding us together in one of the most important issues we had struggled with – finances. As I mentioned before, Diana came from a family that never really had much, and I came from a place where God was going to supply all my needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. I did not have any trouble stepping out in faith and spending something, whereas she was doing her best to conserve and save.

Something very special happened when I saw that Diana listened to God. I grew in respect for my wife because she submitted to His leading in my life. It is a hard thing when you are trying to lead, and the person whom you are supposed to lead does not follow you. It is very difficult for a husband when nobody follows. When you pray, and you get something from God, you have to trust that you got it from Him. Then it takes somebody who will stand with you to move ahead. Sometimes you miss it, sometimes you do well. Sometimes an adjustment occurs as you are going through the process. God starts to show a little more here and a little more there.

When she said, “I know what God told you. He told you to give everything that we have,” she had already accepted it, I could tell. She never said another word except that there was one condition, she would write out the check, and so I let her write out the check. Why? – The two are one. You stand together. What I do, she does; what she does, I do. Forget this women’s rights nonsense. Forget this macho man’s rights nonsense. How much better to learn to flow together and work as a team? It takes putting down what you want or think you should be doing. You are not single anymore. You are married. Remember that. You have responsibilities to one another. You cannot let past situations in your life run what you do today because you have to move ahead.

### God Gives a Name

Diana was about seven months pregnant with our second child, and everything was going along great. You would never know she was pregnant. She ate properly and did all the right things. I would watch the little elbow come running across the belly. At night I had Diana turn the other way because I woke up when the baby kicked, but I would always feel for her. Then I figured out that it is pretty hard for a lady to sleep when she has a basketball in her belly. I was trying to be more considerate of her, but I had to work at it because it takes a major adjustment in your life to do it. You can start to be more considerate about other people and more concerned about them than you are about yourself.

We were about seven months along, and she said, “Randy, don’t you think it is time to think of a name for the child?” Women are concerned about those kind of things, and she had been thinking up names ever since she found out she was pregnant. I figured, *gosh, we still have two months to deal with this. I do not need to think about it right now. It is no big deal. What does it matter?* She was thinking about all the practical things (the tests showed that it was going to be a girl), and so she was trying to get everything in order. Our first child was a girl, and Diana was getting everything together and thinking of names. I told her, “I will ask the Lord for a name, okay?” I was learning not to “lean to my own understanding” anymore. I wanted what God wanted, so I asked Him for a name.

In the Bible God gave a name to everybody, so I figured I would ask God, and He would give me one. Two days later while I was sleeping, the Lord spoke to me. I thought the voice of the Holy Ghost was loud enough to be heard on the entire block. He said, "YOU SHALL CALL HIS NAME JESSE." That was it. God is to the point. He does not mess around when He is talking. I thought Diana heard it, and I thought it woke up everybody in the house until I looked around and saw her sound asleep. I went, "Love, Love, wake up, wake up." "What do you want?" she asked. I told her, "I have a name. God gave me the name." About two in the morning. God talks to me in the morning. He got me up, and I was running around ready to go. It was two o'clock in the morning, and I had a name. She asked, "What is it?" And I answered, "God said, 'You shall call his name Jesse'." She looked at me, "Jesse. I don't like the name. But it is a girl." Then she rolled over and went back to sleep.

For two months that became a major source of contention in our home. She said, "We will probably name her Jessica. No, we will call him Eric." We went on that way for a month or so. I decided to forget it; I was not even going to bring it up anymore. Other people had their opinions too. Guys, you have to protect your wives and children from the opinions of everybody else. (In-laws, out-laws, everybody.)

One-time Diana's daddy came over and said, "Do not you think Randy ought to be cutting the trees?" Note, this was pressure coming on my wife from her dad. Then I came home, and I was kind of tired. She said, "Why don't you cut the shrubs and the trees?" I looked at her and asked, "Where did that come from? Who have you been talking to?" She answered, "My daddy was over here and he said that you ought to cut them." I did something maybe I should not have done, but I will tell you why in a second. I replied, "You tell your daddy if he wants my shrubs and trees cut, then he should come over and cut them."

Now I am going to tell you why that was not the way it should be done. (However, it worked. She told him, and it was the last I heard about the shrubs and the trees.) I want to show you there is a better way to do it. He was bringing pressure on her, right? You want to

protect your wife from this pressure. When I came back with my comment, it brought pressure on her from her dad *and* from her husband – the two most significant influences in her life. That girl is iron, but she went back and told him and that was the end of it. I should have told him, “If you want to cut my shrubs and trees, I just sharpened the hedge trimmer. It is all ready to go if you want to come on over and help. That would be great.” Get the pressure off your wife; she does not need it.

Diana was an office manager years ago. She ran five stores and did all the accounting and book work for them. She is very skilled in managing things, so I figured that she could take care of the checkbook. I managed where the funds would go, and she would do the books. Every time I sensed her getting nervous (you know, when you see that what is coming in is less than the figures going out), I knew the pressure was getting to her a little bit. The guys need to do the book work if it is going to bring pressure on their wives. You do not need that pressure in your household. There will be a sense of strife because of the security need that is in women.

My wife is a great bookkeeper, and besides, I hate to mess with it. I have other things to do, and I trust her implicitly. She does exactly what I say to do and how I say to do it. However, pressure would come on her. When the pressure would come, I would react, and I would tell her, “Come on, Honey, do you want me to take the checkbook? I will do it; do not worry about it. I will take care of it because I do not want you under this pressure and stress.” Right away she would say, “No, I will do it. I will take care of it.” We would get into the faith promises about finances and the multiplying of the loaves and fish. We would build up her faith, and then she would be fine doing it. As soon as I felt the pressure on her, then I would take it back for awhile. Then she would get through that and we would be fine.

Now, back to the baby. Do not forget the baby. The pressure was on. I keep telling Diana that we prayed, and God gave the name. What can you do when God gives you the name? I mean, you cannot disobey Him. And so, we just let it go. Nine months came along, and we went to the hospital. Diana handled herself

marvelously. It was incredible. Just a blessing to watch because we believed she did not have to be under the curse of painful childbearing anymore. We are under the blessing in Jesus Christ so we have to appropriate that. (We learned a lot the second time around.)

Everything was coming along really well... and out squirts Jesse. Because the cord had been wrapped around him three times, all the heart monitors showed him to be a girl. A beautiful little guy, a fire hose let loose, and everything was being sprayed, and it was a wonderful time. Diana looked so good; they did not even have time to get any tubes into her. She had that baby, and she was out of the delivery room, and she was glowing. It is really precious when women are happy about the baby, and they receive it with joy. It just warms a husband's heart to see that. I get so excited when families have babies "in the hanger." I know they are even more excited when they get out on the flight deck.

I kissed Diana goodnight and whispered in her ear, "I love you. Thank you for being a wonderful wife to me and the mother to my children." I added, "By the way, what would you do if you asked God for a name and he said, 'You shall call his name Jesse'?"

She called me up in the morning. Bless her heart. I thank God I can always count on her. She will follow my lead and go with what God gives me. Even if I am wrong, she will follow my lead. I think that makes a big difference because it gives me the courage to fail and the courage to succeed. I just have to step out and do it. When she called me in the morning, they were feeding her wonderful food. This is what she said, "Randy, I love you, and I am sorry for giving you such a hard time with this. I know God gave the name; we will call him Jesse Eric."

She came into submission. See, the woman signs the birth certificate and puts the child's name on it. Some rebellious women might think it is one in their favor that they get the authority to sign the certificate. However, in the bible the men always named the children. The names came from God, they would pray, together they would come in agreement on the name, and God would bless it accordingly. Again,

it is the team work concept. Forget this “I am woman” or “I am man” stuff. We work together as a team, and we lay down our lives and rights to one another.

This was an example of pressure being applied. Sometimes women are too trusting of others. They do not see everything as it is because they have big hearts and they want to help everybody. They want to do good. There are users and abusers out there, though. Some ladies have a heart for the vacuum cleaner salesman, which brings pressure. There are things like that, and so we have to protect our homes.

### Rules of the Home

People used to drop in at our house all the time. (You do not just drop in on people. You call at least.) We made a rule in our home that we would not allow any men to drop in when I was not there. We used to have guys stop by all the time. I set down the rules, with Diana in agreement, and we follow those rules. You wonder sometimes whether people are dense or stupid. After some of them came to the door, and she told them in a nice way, “I am sorry, my husband is not home,” some still kept coming. When that would happen, I would talk to the person, “Hey, why don’t you get a life?” I am an “upfront” person and, in love, I was telling one guy, “Why do you keep coming to my house when I am not home? If you want to see me, make an appointment; call the office. I will not do counseling at my home anyway.” Everything needs to be done decently and in order to protect people from undo pressure and nonsense.

One time I came home after my wife had been talking with a neighbor. The neighbor had come over and said, “You know, my husband and I were thinking that it is a pretty sorry thing that Randy is never home to play with the children. He is never out in the yard playing ball with them or playing games.” When I got home, Diana had one of those looks on her face. (You get to know those looks.) I asked, “What is it?” And she answered, “Why don’t you play more with the kids?” (This kind of talk settles in on you.) I asked, “Who have you been talking to?” and then I went on, “Let me take a guess.” A wise husband is not only aware of what is going on around his

home, he is aware of what is going on around his neighborhood. He is watching and praying and looking at the influences that are around.

One of the things we teach the women in the women's series is to stay away from rebellious, independent women who are undermining their homes and their husbands. They are bad influences. They will cause ideas to come into your mind that you do not want there. Many a marriage has been messed up because "somebody" was hanging around. The bible says, "Evil company corrupts good morals." You may have heard, "Well, they are not evil, they are nice people." If they are rebellious towards their husbands, they are rebellious towards God; and if they are rebellious towards God, they are evil people. They can be as nice as they can be. They can even make chocolate chip cookies, but you do not want that influence around your house.

I said to Diana, "Let me tell you," and I told her who the person was. I said, "I want you to stop a minute and think about this." A wise leader, a wise husband, is going to lay out the facts. I continued, "Do you ever see those neighbors playing with their children out in the yard? Do you ever see them going on outings with their children or doing anything with their children?" She replied, "Well, now that I think of it, no." I asked, "What do you think was happening through that woman?" The thief had come to steal, kill, and destroy. They were "well meaning" people, but let me tell you, they were ignorant, and they were being used of the devil to undermine my home. I am not going to let anybody undermine my home and mess with my wife's thinking.

I spent more time with my children than most people, and quality time is far better than sitting at home every night watching television. Think about it. We have to watch the pressures that try to come in when we deal with our families.

## 5. Clothes and Jewelry

Sometimes women wear things that are considered improper. We teach the women in their series that they need to dress as their husbands like because the woman is to the glory of the man. (Many

women have never read **1st Corinthians 10**). Many say, “I will dress the way I want to dress.”

Women dress to please whoever makes comments about the way they look. So when they get a compliment about something, they will take it and go with it. Who should be the one complimenting his wife?

My taste and Diana’s taste are not the same. I used to buy things for her, and after I brought them home, she would thank me and take them back. Girls, never be unappreciative of what your husband gets you. He is getting something that he thinks is a blessing for you (and something he likes, normally), and he would like to see you in it. It may be the ugliest thing you ever saw. Sometimes we do better than other times as to what we pick out, but you know, I quit buying stuff for Diana for awhile. I did not want to get her something she did not like. I got what I liked, thinking that she would like it. However, I had to make some adjustments. I would just give her money; that is the way it would end up. I would give her a card and some money to go out and buy herself something.

Interestingly, she did not like me to get just a card, put a nice little note, and give her some money because that did not show that I was really into it. I was not taking the time to pick something out. When Diana was growing up, her dad would always get some money, put it in an envelope, and give it to her mom. She would go out and buy something.

I was a little frustrated about it, and I think she was probably more frustrated because guys do not deal with frustration too much. They just shine it on. After awhile they go on their way, but a woman carries it. I figured since she did not like everything I got, why should I go out and get something she did not like? That is the kind of frustration we were experiencing, and so I started to pray about it. I wanted to take the lead in my home. I knew this was a source of frustration to her, and I wanted her to be loved and cared for. I wanted her to like something that I got her.

When we first got married the Lord told me not to buy her any jewelry for a time because there was a certain worldly appeal for her. So I

did not buy her anything. It probably hurt her a little bit because she liked nice things. Most women like earrings, diamond rings, and other jewelry. They like adorning themselves, but God wants the inner beauty to be more important than the outer beauty. **1 Peter 3.**

Then one Christmas season, God said to me, "I want you to buy your wife a ring." At first, I said, "I bind you in the name of Jesus. Get away from me, Satan." I was still thinking that God was doing a perfecting work in my wife, and He did not want her to have any jewelry. (Many gals would have bucked it, but she had yielded to that decision. Many women would have gone out and bought something for spite, but she did not.) God was doing a work in her heart, and He was changing her. God told me to go out and buy a ring.

The Lord said to get her a black opal ring, so I went shopping. I must have gone to 50 stores and looked around. Finally, I was down in Redlands and the Lord had me go up a little alley, and there in the alley was a little shop. I walked in, and there it was. I knew it was the one. It was a big black opal. It had a gold strap across with a little diamond in there. To me it was big bucks. God said, "That's the one." I looked at the price tag and I said, "Yep, I am sure that's the one." When I go shopping the most expensive item catches my eye; then I have to think about buying it. I did not have to think about buying this one because God said, "That's the one." I bought it and wrapped it up in a little package and put a bow on it.

After I gave her all her other gifts for Christmas, I gave her this last gift. I pulled it out, and she stared at it. I will never forget that when she opened it up, she started to cry. It was so exciting because God had done a work in her heart. He is not against rings and jewelry. What He is against is the worldly attitude that you "have to have" them and your heart is on them rather than on the inner beauty that God desires: reverence, respect, and honor for God and your husband. God wanted to reward that.

She has learned, too, not to ask me for things anymore. She lets me pray and knows God picks out "good stuff." Another time I was back east, and God told me to buy her a dress. I was thinking that I just did not seem to make it when it came to picking out dresses. He

said, "When you get home, I want you to get her a dress." I got home, and everybody was happy to see me and everything. About a day or two later she said, "I have something to show you." I think she was a little hesitant to show it to me, actually. That is why she waited a couple of days. She brought a dress out of the closet, and I said, "That's the one." She looked at me and asked, "What?" And I replied, "That's the dress." She came out with, "What do you mean that's the dress?" I said, "That's the dress God told me to get you. Thank you for buying it for me." It was so exciting. I was walking into a new dimension, friends. God loves to do these nice things, but when you are demanding them, He is not going to give them. God will harden the man's heart until you develop the qualities that He is looking for, girls.

In the same way, God wanted me to learn to rely on Him to know how to care for my wife, how to help take the pressure off of her, how to bless her, and when to bless her. These things take praying and sensitivity.

6. There are many other things that we need to watch out for, like whether our wives have poor eating habits or are not taking care of themselves. If they look a little shabby, or start doing some primping, it says there is something going on. We need to be sensitive to that.

7. Self-criticism

When we first got married, Diana was always telling me jokes and putting herself down. I said, "Honey, I do not want to hear you talk about yourself that way anymore." She replied, "Well, if I do, then people will laugh. They will feel better about themselves if I draw attention to myself." I insisted, "No, I do not want you to talk about yourself that way anymore because you are God's child. You are very precious to me, and you do not need to make fun of yourself." She would often talk about her little chicken legs and other things. I said, "Your legs are fine." At one time she started working out and firming everything up, but she forgot that when you work out you have to eat more. She would work out and everything was firm, but she got *real* chicken legs, so I was getting after her. I said, "Honey, you

have to eat when you are working out. It is great you are working out, but you have to eat. You cannot just go along that way. You have to take care of yourself.” I talked to her about calcium, the need for iron, and building up her system, doing the things that needed to be done.

When a guy is doing such things, he is protecting his wife. He is looking out for her. He is not working against her. He is not picking on her. If there is a weakness after an illness, we have to protect, we have to be there, and we have to help with our presence.

## 8. Dwelling on negatives

Bring the positive into your home by speaking faith. You have to take the Word of God and say, “Honey, sit down here with me. Let’s pray. Let’s look at the Word of God. Let’s do what God says. Yes, if God took care of the people with the loaves and the fish, He will take care of us. If He fed Elijah by having the birds bring food in, so be it. God will take care of us and look out for us. He will supply for us. He will help us, but we have to trust Him.” Men, take the spiritual lead in the home and protect your wife.

When she expresses weakness during the monthly cycle, do not counsel her. Guys always get into a counseling mode. Usually men tend to run out of the house, but if they happen to stay, they go into this counseling mode. They will try to tell their wives, “Okay, you should be doing this, you should be doing that, and you should not be doing this and that.” Guys, do not get into it. What you want to do is express verbal assurance of your love, that you will stand with her and help her, you will pray and ask her what she needs. Be there for her in the name of Jesus.

LOVING YOUR SPOUSE  
CHAPTER FIVE  
Intimate Time

F. The sixth trait of a woman is to have an intimate time of conversation on a *regular basis*.

When you want to have a regular time of conversation with your spouse, it needs to be arranged when the children are either tucked in, or they are somewhere else. We have to take that time, and, by so doing, we make it an opportunity for an intimate time of conversation. I find that when the children are running around, it is pretty hard to talk intimately. With little ones, you spend a lot of time caring for them. Therefore, you really have to plan for those intimate times. Do not be afraid to get a babysitter and go out at least once a week on a little date. Set it aside on a regular basis. It should be a priority in your life. Then the children know that it is a priority. It is mom and dad's date night, and they are going out on the town, and they are going to have a good time with each other.

The children will enter in, and they will get all excited about it. When they get older, they will have a date night with their spouses. It is very exciting. Keep marriage fresh, moving, and blessed. During the week you often see each other only for a little while. You get up in the morning, look at each other, say hello, get breakfast, and out the door – one running this way and the other running that way. In addition, as children get older, they go off to school or take part in other activities.

Nowadays it is hard for many people to even sit down together at the dinner table. It used to be dinnertime was when people had conversations with the family, but today most people's schedules have become too hectic. You do not even have time to talk and share. Most dads spend about five minutes a day of quality time with their children. It is a sad commentary, is it not? That is in regard to the children, let alone with their wives.

Wives need an intimate time of conversation on a regular basis. Communication is a must trait of a woman. Communication – to commune, to share together, to have oneness in spirit. We need to plan regular times for this kind of conversation to take place.

### Winning Your Spouse Over

**1 Peter 3:1** and following says, “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 behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.”

Note here that the wife can win her husband over to the Lord without saying a word. This is God’s promise. How? – As he beholds her purity and reverence. Another version puts it, “her respect for him in her life” – respect for God and respect for her husband.

She has this trait to communicate, but, interestingly, God will not use that communication to win her husband over. He will use the attitude of respect, reverence, and honor toward her husband, as to the Lord.

The wife needs this intimate time of conversation on a regular basis. This is true of all women whether they are married or not; they need to talk.

They have a desire to share the things that are going on in their lives. They want to know what their husbands are involved in and what they are interested in. It has been said that a person uses 60 thousand words in a day. The husband uses 40 thousand while he is out on the highways and byways. He has 20 thousand when he comes home. His wife uses 20 thousand at home and has 40 thousand to share when he gets there. This has caused conflict because he often does not want to talk when he comes home. Besides, he likes to talk about what he likes, and he is not really interested in what his wife wants. This is something that guys have to work on. Of course they want to talk about themselves. Who is the most important person?

As a husband grows in God, this will change. He will start to be more interested in his wife than in himself. He is to love the wife as he loves himself. If the husband is not in the Lord and does not believe

the Word, God will use the reverence, respect, and honor of the woman toward him as to the Lord. That will turn his heart to the Lord. In the same way, if a wife is not submissive to the Word of God and she is rebellious, independent, and “doing her own thing,” God will win her over as the man talks to her. The man uses conversation, but the woman is not to use conversation to win her spouse to the Lord. However, to deepen the relationship, conversation is vital. We need to establish time for that.

Action Steps for Intimate Times:

1. Make A Plan

Plan regular times for you and your wife to have intimate conversation. If you have not had any, plan one. Thus saith the Lord. Plan one now. Get that down on the schedule and make it a priority.

I have a really interesting schedule because it has lots of variables. Many times my schedule is shaped as the day goes on. Therefore, I have to put a time for my family (for my wife and for each child) in my appointment book. I do not schedule anything else during those times. If anything else comes up, God and the Holy Ghost have to take care of it. Once you set the times, then it gives your wife the confidence that her man is interested in her, and wants to share with her. He wants that time with her and he wants to hear what she has to say. She looks forward to it. She actually gets very excited. She may not let on, guys, but she is excited about it. She may not let on because she is wondering, *is he going to disappoint me here? Is he going to be busy with something else?*

Husbands, has the phone ever rung while you were making love, and you got up to answer it? We are going to get downright intimate about this. We are talking about what the priority is to you. If you do not watch it, you could cause your marriage to go into shock. What is your priority?

There are some married people who do not even want to be intimate. Let me tell you, if you want to have problems in your marriage, play

“el Frigidaire” awhile. Your spouse is going to look someplace else. *Oh, that godly man would never do that.* Well, you are pressing him. You are putting temptation in his path. It says in **1 Corinthians 7:4**, “Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves in prayer.” We are talking about intimate times and conversation. The Lord had me throw that one in there because people need to have more intimate times, not just for personal gratification, but for mutual gratification in God. That is what communication is all about. Communing, coming together, having oneness in spirit, sharing hopes, plans, dreams, and praying together.

One of the finest things that a couple can do is pray together: ask God’s blessing, get His direction, and seek Him about things that come up during the day. Come together and pray together.

You do not have to let your kids run your life. We used to tuck our babes in at seven o’clock when they were young. There was none of this staying up till nine or ten o’clock stuff. Every night after seven o’clock was our time to talk and share, and we would have a lovely time. Do yourself a favor — get those children in bed. They may say they do not want to go to bed, but they will. You have to train them right. Start when they are little and when they get older, they will walk in those ways.

If you train them correctly, you will not have to put up with any nonsense. You will have times of sharing, which will bless everybody. You just tell the children, “Go put your little head down in that bed. In Jesus’ name go to sleep. God watches over you. Daddy and mommy are going to take time to talk, and we are going to share and pray. We will bless each other and bless God together.” They will grow up to understand and appreciate that, and they will do it too. They will know that mom and dad want time with each other, just like they want time with you, and then give them time.

Because I set up special meetings and appointments with each member of my family to talk about things, it makes it official, and they look forward to it. I would have something to ask them, and they would have it ready. When we got together, we talked about it. It

was a really exciting time. How much more so with your spouse. Set up those regular times.

List places your wife likes to go and have intimate conversations during those times. It might be a breakfast. It might be shopping. Personally, I used to hate shopping. (The other day, I went into shock when I saw how much a gallon of milk costs. However, my wife loves to go shopping in different places, even though she hardly ever buys anything. It has always amazed me. She goes shopping, and she looks at everything in the stores. It is incredible how many stores you can go through, look at everything, and not buy anything.)

I have the mindset that when you go shopping, you know what you want, you find it on sale, you get it, and you get out of the store as quickly as you went in. You find it, you buy it, and out you go.

## 2. Spend Time Together/Do Something She Enjoys

I found that as I prayed, the Lord taught me about communication. You have to spend time together in order to communicate. Find something that she likes doing, whatever it might be, and do it.

One day we kept asking each other “What do you want to do?” One said to the other, “What do you want to do?” And the other one said, “I do not know. What do you want to do?”

I have found, guys that you have to take the lead in your house. I got so tired of doing the “What do you want to do” game. Each of us was trying to please the other, and we would end up doing something that neither one of us wanted. Somebody had to take charge and say, “Okay, this is what we are going to do,” and then do it. I prayed, and I asked myself, *what should we do?* I thought, *she likes to go shopping, so we will go shopping.*

We spent the whole day shopping. We went to every store and looked at everything in the mall. “Shopitis” usually came on me about half an hour into the shops. All of a sudden my whole body would go limp, I would get a pounding headache, and I would have to rebuke it

there in the store. I did not know what it was, but I called it shopitis. God delivered me of it so now I can just keep shopping. It was a major spiritual battle because to do something that you do not like to do requires the Holy Ghost. If you love someone, you will go out and do it. People might say, "Oh that's crazy, man. What are you talking about?" I am talking about the fact that there were a thousand other things I would have enjoyed doing more than shopping. However, I love my wife, and shopping is something that she likes to do, so I figured by God's sufficient grace I was going to go do it.

We talked, we shared, and I looked at everything she was looking at. Usually I would kind of stand at the front of the store and wait. This time I got into it; I went out there and looked at things. (If you get me in a store, it could get expensive because I like to buy rather than just look.) You know, I actually enjoyed the day immensely because she enjoyed it immensely. She did what she always did. She never bought a thing for herself. She bought me three pairs of pants. What do you do? You go, you talk, you share, and you have fun together. We went out to lunch then, and it was a grand time.

Have you been in a place where you asked, "What are we going to talk about?" I think that indicates a time for a change. I think it is the time for a refreshing of the Holy Spirit or a renewal to come upon you, where you start to get mushy about being together. A good place to start is "I love you," and "I am so happy to be here with you" even if it is talking in the parking lot. Something special starts to happen.

Our lives are always involved with people, so we have to plan these times. I think anybody with a lot of children has to take the time. Write down a good day of the week for you. Check it out with your spouse, set it aside, and do it every week.

Another place for intimate conversation might be at home. We recommend it *not* be in front of the television. When you talk to each other while the TV program is on, it is not real intimate conversation. You will not even remember what you talked about. This is the kind of conversation in front of the TV: "Will you get me a soda?" or "I would like a sandwich." "Pop me some corn, please." That is

conversation, but it is not intimate. “Will you change the channel, please?” That is not causing any growth.

### 3. Avoid Distractions

Take a moment and think about some of the distractions that you have noticed when you were trying to have an intimate conversation. Purpose to avoid them. Here are a few distractions that hinder intimate conversation:

#### a) You have your mind on other things

For example, after you get up in the morning, you get the paper and begin reading. Then your wife tries to talk to you. As you are considering what you will be doing during the day, someone else interrupts you. Whether it is your wife or children, you get distracted.

When you talk to people you should look at them. Nevertheless, you can look right at somebody and be distracted. You can look at people and not be aware that they are there. Your wife notices, guys. She knows whether she is a priority or just someone with whom you are co-inhabiting. You might have to say, “Excuse me, honey, I am really sorry. I am distracted right now. I want to pay attention to what you have to say, but now is not a good time.” Better yet, forget what you are doing and make her the priority. If you make her the priority, she will not be concerned about it after that.

I told Diana years ago that she was second to God. Then as time went on, I started putting a few other things in between. There was number one, God, one and a quarter, one and a half, one and three quarters, and then Diana. Other things started to creep in there. I had to put those other things down and make a commitment.

#### b) Phone calls

Here you are, you are having your intimate conversation and the phone rings. There is a time to unplug the phone. (Jesus never had phones in His day, and He got along really well.) Do yourself a favor; other things can wait. Unplug the phone or let the message machine pick it up. Do yourself a service; make it a priority.

We found that every time we had devotions at home, the phone would ring. It did not ring once either. It usually rang once for Erin, once for Jesse, twice for me and once for Diana. Right while we were trying to have those times, distractions would come.

#### c) Being late for appointments

Have you been late for an appointment with your spouse? Or you did not show up at all? Did you forget about it? Do not be late for appointments. This distraction can ruin your entire evening. All it takes is a phone call to say, "Hey, I am on my way. This came up. I am on my way."

#### d) Talking to friends

You go out on the town to have your intimate conversation time, and the next thing you know, you run into 20 friends. It does not matter where I go, I run into somebody I know, and I have not yet figured that out. We have been in other cities, and we run into people that we know. We end up talking and sharing with them, and there goes our intimate conversation time. Instead, say, "Hi, glad to see you. How about we get together some other time?" Be cordial, be friendly but then say, "Hey, I am on a date with my wife. See you." What a blessing that is to her. She will be greatly encouraged because you did not go with the distraction; you went with her, and the blessing is able to come.

#### e) Looking at other women

There you are out on your nice intimate dinner. You are having a conversation. You are supposed to be looking right at your wife and talking to her, but instead you are looking around. All of a

sudden the waitress wants your phone number. I know, girls. It is incredible how many times this happens: As a man's wife is looking at him, he is looking at somebody else.

I know you may find this difficult to believe, but many times the guy is not really looking at women. Put away the jealousy nonsense. If he is a jerk, let him be a jerk, but do not enter into it. Let God deal with him. If he is looking at somebody else, he is playing the fool. Act like nothing happened and go on loving, and let him be the jerk. God will deal with his heart.

Guys, keep your focus where it belongs. When you are out, you are out with your wife. You are on the town with your wife. You are not on the town with somebody else's wife, and you are not single. You are not to be looking at anybody else because they should not interest you. Your wife is your blessing. Get smart. Your blessing is not out there somewhere else. You need to cultivate the blessing where she is.

Girls, getting jealous can ruin your evening. Do not waste your good time. You might say, "He is the one who is ruining it," but what is the difference? Whether one wrecks it, or the other one wrecks it, it is all over. What do you want?

Women have to understand that guys have this thing about looking. They look around. Should they be looking around? I tell them, "One look is being aware of your surroundings. Two looks is being too aware." Guys look around and that can be to the woman's benefit too. As stated previously, many times the guys want to protect their wives, and so they want to be aware of what is going on in their surroundings.

However, there are many women out there, so when you are being aware, look at what is around you, and then look back to where you belong. When your wife is watching you, she knows when you are looking and when you are not. I am telling you, girls, when he is looking elsewhere, do not enter into it. Be smart. Just take him by the arm, or if you are out there dining and he is looking around, just grab his hands and squeeze them a little bit.

Let him know you are there. It is amazing what can start to happen. Do not squeeze him too hard, just enough to let him know that you are there. He would rather be with you than with anybody else. He will come to his senses at that point even if he is being strange. He will come to his senses, he will catch on, and he will get going because he does love you. That is why he married you.

Of all the people in the world, your spouse chose to marry you. That says that he cares about you more than anybody else. He could have married anyone else in the whole world, but he chose you. Cultivate that thought. Forget jealousy and continue the intimate time. Both parties have to work on this. Intimate means the two are communing, working together (communication), and coming together.

#### f) Lack of manners

This can be a great hindrance to intimate conversation. Many women have not been introduced to others (especially other women) by their husbands. Did they feel left out? I forgot to introduce Diana one time. I said, one time. That is all it took.

One reason was I could not remember certain people's names. It is pretty hard to introduce your wife to someone whose name you have forgotten. That got me into all kinds of trouble. I have come to a place now where I say, "I am sorry, I forgot. What is your name?" They will tell me the name, and then I say, "Okay, I would like you to meet my wife, Diana." And everything is really good. You should say, "Thank you for being so gracious to me. I just forgot your name," drop it quickly, and away you go. Not to introduce your wife is bad manners, and it causes a problem in the relationship.

#### g) Hygiene

When you are going on your special time out, and you smell like you just finished working, that is a turn off. Nobody wants to be around you. When you go out with the one you love and cherish,

you should want to look your best. You should present yourself in a good way. Ladies, when you were dating, did you go out with curlers in your hair? Guys, you probably dressed up a little bit to go courting. Did you put on a little “smellem”? Did you put on a nice clean shirt? You probably looked good.

You want to look your best for your spouse or the friend you are going out with. Looking nice says that you care about them, and you care about yourself. Women wonder why their guy looks at other gals who are dressed like they just came out of a fashion magazine. When he goes home and looks at his wife, is she in curlers with stuff all over her face, and running around in a sweatshirt? Then he looks out there and those other women look good. It makes a big difference.

In the same way, guys, I am working on getting my chest out of my drawers. We have to do something with that. I am working on it. My wife looks good because she takes care of herself. I have got to somehow get my chest back up.

It makes a difference if your wife knows that you are working on a change and that you are doing something about it besides sitting down and eating your big baked potato and your nice juicy dinners. My wife used to say that my problem was not eating at home, my problem was eating out. When I went out, I would eat everything I did not get at home. As long as your wife knows that you are working on it, it means a lot to her. You are not doing it for the babe down the block; you are doing it for her and for yourself. What kind of guy wants to run around looking like some kind of squash?

If you are out drinking, what is the beer going to do to you? Not only will it damage your body, it will deposit right there in your liver. You can always tell a beer belly from a food belly (figure that one out). All your wife knows is that you have the belly. It is a distraction. She is doing her best to be pretty for you and dress up. It means a lot to a guy when he comes home and sees his wife all fixed up for him. In the same way, it means a lot to a woman when her husband takes the time to do a little grooming to

make himself presentable. How many girls want to go out with a slob? Any guys want to go out with someone who is a mess? One hair flying over here and another hair flying over there. Here a hair, there a hair.

Think about it. We are God's people, His sons and His daughters. We need to do something with our temples. This is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and it belongs to God and to your spouse. We want to present ourselves becomingly in the same way that we brightened up the church building with a little paint, color, and banners.

#### h) Distracting music or surroundings

Have you gone out for a nice intimate time, and the music was so loud that you could not even talk to each other? When you want to have an intimate time, do not choose a noisy place. I have also been to dinner where I could not see my food, let alone my spouse, across the table. In fact, it was so dark in one place, a guy we were with put horseradish sauce on his baked potato by mistake. Personally, I like to look at my wife. I do not like it dark because I cannot see her, and I believe seeing has a lot to do with communication. The phone is great, the next best thing to being there, yes, but it is much better to be in person to talk, no matter where you go. You want to be able to share and not be interrupted.

Have you had a waiter come to your table 100 times while you were talking? I learned something a long time ago that works great: I tell the waiters that everything is wonderful, thank you very much, and we will see you in about 25 minutes, which tells them that everything is fine. They are trying to be courteous and do what they need to do, but just tell them, "I am on a date with my wife. You have done everything just perfectly, you did an excellent job. I would appreciate it if you would just leave us alone for half an hour or so." It is beautiful what can happen. Your wife looks at you, and she is thinking, *that is my guy. He loves me, he cares about me, and he wants to talk with me. This is our time.* She looks forward to it, so do not miss it, and do not be late.

i) Bringing up unpleasant subjects is another distraction

There you are having a great conversation – until you ask her why she did something stupid the other day or that she made a fool of herself somewhere. When you bring up unpleasant things, like she has a pimple on her back, you are bringing up something inappropriate, and it is in bad taste. When you brought up her dumb mistake, that was the end of the good time, was not it? Other unpleasant subjects include a problem you are both dealing with. The next thing you know you are both stressed, thinking fear or worry. Do not share anything but pleasant conversation.

4. Learn What Your Wife Enjoys Sharing

What things does your wife look forward to sharing with you? This is something that you need to gain knowledge of. Have you asked your wife what she likes to share? The more you ask, the better it gets. She will start to open up to you. The following are some things your wife may look forward to sharing with you:

a) Events of the day

This is important to her. When you come home, she is interested in telling you everything that happened during the day. Guys work on headlines, and gals work on the small print, so they are interested in telling you every detail about everything that happened with everybody, every phone call, everything the dog did; she wants to tell you everything. Because women are like that, it is all or nothing with them. They are so excited when you want to listen.

Wives need to understand this: Normally men are good for only about 30 seconds. Once they have the headlines that is all they need because that is how they think. They are not interested in all the details. That is the specialness to the gal, but to the guy, he just looks at the headlines and says, “That’s it; okay, that’s what is happening. What is next?” And the women sit there and say,

“Well, I have all the rest to share.” The guys say, “I am not interested in that; what is the next thing that happened?”

Understand, events of the day are important because those are all the things in her world, all the things she wants to share with you. We need to be more understanding and courteous; we need to sit down and take the time. Not say, “I have five minutes. What happened?”

#### b) Needs and activities of the children

A wife will want to sit down and talk about all the needs that the children have and all the activities that they are involved in, again, going into all the details. Sometimes they are looking for direction. Sometimes they are pointing things out to you. When they tell you all these specifics, they are informing you, so that you have the information that you need to make the decisions in their lives and the lives of the children. They are being thorough. If you just shine it on, push it aside, and say, “You take care of it,” then you are neglecting your responsibility as the head of the home.

Interestingly, in God’s order (shown in 1 Corinthians 11), the children are not under the mother, they are under the dad. The wife is there to lead the children and help them follow dad’s direction under God. It is very important that we let the wife do that, as well as cultivate it, because she is the key to the household. She is the spiritual barometer as to whether life in the home is bliss or hell. We always tell the women that they are the ones who determine whether the children will be submissive and honor dad, or they will be disrespectful and disobedient. Women set the tone. It is amazing what can happen in a home where the mother is honoring God and her husband. Then the children will fall right in line. They will look to dad like he is a superstar. Dad will stand there and say, “Great, you are doing a good job with the children.”

Then the wife asks, “What did I do?” She helped them to honor their dad and honor God. She makes a big, big difference.

c) Her ideas on home improvement.

Your wife wants to share her ideas on home improvement. How many guys have gone in and set up their houses the way they wanted it to be? Even though the house is the man's castle, and he is the king of the house, he has to come into balance. A guy, if he is smart, will not run roughshod and do everything his own way. Who has to live there all the time? His wife.

The first time we set up house, I chose everything. I did everything. Some have seen how wonderful my taste is. I have a flare; it is flamboyant, but let me tell you, my wife has better taste. The next time around we gave away a lot of the furniture, and whatever was shoddy, we ditched. I let her pick out the colors and make all the choices, and we did everything differently. She was so happy that she started to ask for my opinion. That has to be a miracle. Have her get involved because you are a team.

d) Enjoyable past memories

She does not want to talk about the times when things were not so good. In Ephesians 4 it says, "Let your conversation be edifying to the hearer." Edify means to build up or encourage. You want to talk about the times that were fun. You want to talk about things that were joyful. You can talk about the times when God saw you through because it builds you both up in God. When people always dwell on and talk about negative things, before long, who wants to talk anymore? Everybody is kind of sad, broken, discouraged, and defeated. God is not glorified, and nobody is happy. Your wife wants to talk about the good, fun memories.

When Diana and I were coming back from our honeymoon, she was happy and excited; it was really sweet. She said, "You know, Randy, that was the best honeymoon I have ever been on." I pulled off to the side of the road, stopped, and looked at her, "How many have you been on?" She laughed, "I was just thinking up something nice to say." You know that was so sweet. Think about it. When you get together, you want to have nice things to say and happy memories. I do not care what you have done in your life,

there are some happy memories you can think of. I will never forget what Diana said; she was thinking up something nice to say. I am kind of hard to talk to in many respects, yet I am easy to talk to. You want to be genuine with people, and you want to be genuine with each other. Sometimes you do not even have to talk.

Your wife likes you to be there with undivided attention. Whether you say something, guys, or you let her say something, whether you just sit there together and hold hands or maybe go for a walk, it is the idea of being together and sharing. That is where the blessing is.

#### e) Spiritual lessons and insights

We are the priests of our homes, fellows. I am here as a pastor to help you in the process of leading your home in God. I stand together with you in the Lord, and I am here to assist you to lead your home in the ways of the Lord and to take your place.

One thing you have to know. If you are going to be the leader, you have to lead. You have to be the one to set this down, “We are going to have devotions now. We will have a sharing time together. We will have a prayer time. We are going to have a singing time to God.” You do not always have to do all the lessons. You can let your wife do some. The children love to do it. They love to read, and they love to be involved. You do it together, and you will see some beautiful things happen. You have to lead in setting the times, for these are intimate times of conversation between your family and God.

Your wife will love it because she loves God, and she wants you to lead the home in the ways of God. She loves it when you pull out your bible and share something with her. When you are together, just the two of you, you can share something from the scriptures. She will want to hear it. Why? – Because she loves God. My wife loves hearing me read from the bible.

When a wife thinks she is more spiritual than her husband, she has a problem. When she does not like her husband to read from

the bible, or she does not like to pray together, she has a problem. She needs to do something about it. She needs to get with the program.

Wives, if you have a husband who does not do those kinds of things, and maybe he feels funny about doing it, pull out the bible and give it to him, "Honey, I would just love to hear you read something to me from the Word of God." It is better than those sweet nothings. You want to hear something that will bring life so that you can be an encouragement. You are not taking the lead. You are encouraging him to take the lead, and you are doing it in such a respectful, loving way that he will say, "Oh, gosh. I do not know where to look, but I will look at something." Then he opens it up and reads something. There are many good daily devotional books out there. You cannot go too far wrong with any one of those. We have some we recommend, but just get something. It is just a little thing, but when you do it every day, beautiful things take place.

#### f) Clothes she makes or buys

Many times guys do not want to hear about clothes. On the other hand, this is something that gals like to talk about. You have probably wondered why she wants to talk about it, or you got depressed or anxious when she started talking like that. Did you get excited when she started talking about clothes? Here is a tip, guys: always make sure your wife has good underwear. Seriously. I am not talking about the skimpy kind (you do not know if there is anything there or not). It is very important. You want to make sure your wife is cared for. You want to make sure that she has good clothes.

When she starts talking about making something, or going out and buying something, many times she is thinking that she should save you some money. She wants to look good, but she is trying to save. Diana makes things, but many times she can buy it for less. People can make or buy clothes that look good, and it does not have to cost a fortune. Some wives do not want to go out to buy for themselves because they are concerned about finances

too. They will not use the money for other items of the household on themselves. Most ladies have that inside of them. They will usually buy something for you, something for the children, but they might not get themselves anything.

When you have your night out, when your wife talks about these things, you should talk about them too. Bring them up and ask, "How is your underwear?" Your wife might look at you, "Why are you talking about that?" "I am caring for you. I want you to have nice things." Now, do not say, "Pastor Randy told me to ask about your underwear." Just make sure you talk to her about her clothes. If need be, go look in the drawer and see what she has. Take care of her. Look out for her. If she wants to buy something special, set money aside so that she can get a nice dress every now and then. Bless her that way. God has made us to be blessings one to another. When she starts talking about making or buying clothes, get involved in it. Get in the process. Pray about it and see what the Lord has. It is amazing what you can come up with.

#### g) How your wife feels

I think this one is vital. This one is very, very important. Often your wife will not tell you what she really feels. She will tell you what you want to hear because she is trying to respect and honor you. Other times she knows if she says what she thinks, then you will have a big fight. She needs to share how she really feels about things. Guys, you need to hear what she has to say because her input is very important in making decisions. Many times all she wants is to say what she thinks and feels. She is not really concerned about whether you will do it or follow it. She wants to be able to be free to say it.

We teach the women that there is a proper way to approach a guy. Do not come off with, "You are a jerk, and I am going to tell you the way it is." He will not listen to you because he does not get into all that, and he is not interested in what you have to say when you come in with that kind of attitude. If you have an attitude of respect and honor like, "Honey, I have a question about this," or

“This is how I feel about it,” he will respect and honor you. Many times he will actually seek your input. Do not get offended if he seeks your input and then does not do what you say. He is getting the input.

Your wife has to have the liberty and freedom to say, “Yes, this is what I feel and this is what I think,” and she knows it will be received. However, it is the husband’s responsibility to work it out between him and God. The wise wife says, “Okay, I gave my input. Now this is between you and God. You guys go talk and work it out.” It is exciting what God can do then.

So fellows, when she wants to share her innermost feelings, do not stop her. Do not quench her or cut her off, thinking, *she does not really have anything that will help here*. It is like quenching the Holy Ghost. When you break the spirit of somebody, then they are not much good anymore. They end up getting bitter and resentful. They hurt. Different people react differently. Some fly off the handle and go crazy, shouting and screaming. Others withdraw inside, and there begins to be a distance between you. Do not let that happen. Say, “What do you think about this, Love? I would like some input,” or “I am working this through, and I would like to know what you are thinking about this.” Get her ideas and respect them, whether you think they are “off the wall” or “right on.” Respect what she has to say and, above all, respect her.

### Some General Principles

I have been trying to interweave the traits of the woman and the traits of the man together so that the two perspectives will be understood. Usually guys do not really want to talk a whole lot, but women want to talk more. Some men are different. I am just teaching general principles. Apply it to your situation.

The guy who does not talk at all often frustrates his wife, but it is not that he does not love her or care about her. It is not that he is not interested in her. He just does not talk. You could ride in a car with me for a hundred miles, and I might say four words. Can you believe it? It is true. I am a very quiet and reserved person. You would

never know it when I get up to speak in church and the Holy Ghost comes on me.

There are many guys like that, ladies, and so I want to encourage you. It is not necessarily that they do not like being with you or being around you, they just do not talk much. You might say, "Yes, they do. They get together with the guys and they talk all the time." What do they talk about? Boats, cars, sports, computers, whatever they are into. This is why guys have to learn to talk with the ladies about things that the ladies are interested in.

I find that when the gals get a little more interested in the things that guys are interested in, then the guys think, *here she is at the football game with me*. Then she asks, "Why is that guy running that little ball across that thing there?" He looks at her and thinks, *Are you stupid?* He might not say it, but some guys might say it. Sometimes they think it, but then it catches him, *She is here because I am interested in this, and she wants to be interested in what I am interested in*. So, he will say, "Let me teach you about this; let me show you about it." He begins to think, *my wife wants to hear what I have to say*.

Many guys do not think their wives want to hear what they have to say. Therefore, they do not venture out and say much. If you have seen where the wife does all the talking and puts down her spouse, you will see the guy just go off to another room. He will go where he can get some peace and quiet. When he talks, he does not want to talk about problems. He does not want to talk about screaming kids, dirty diapers, or dripping faucets. He does not want to talk about the grass outside (which is four feet high) that he has not mowed.

Women often do not know what guys want to talk about any more than the guys know what gals want to talk about. We have mentioned before some of the things a woman wants to have a conversation about, but women need to learn what guys want to say too. For blessing, talk about what the other spouse is interested in. It takes time to find out. It takes caring and loving. It is the bottom line to everything: preferring the other person more important than yourself. Many people do not get that far because they figure the spouse does not want them around or the spouse does not like them,

so they go out and do their own thing. That is why you have many messed-up marriages.

Are you willing to make a commitment to get involved in your spouse's life? You may not be interested in Monday Night Football, but he is. Get out the popcorn, get some sodas and make it into a nice party time. Do something with it. Dress it up. Make it fun, the way you girls know how to do it. The next thing you know he wants to know what you want to do. It is amazing; you get all your needs met when you are more concerned about meeting the other person's needs. Then God can take care of everything.

LOVING YOUR SPOUSE  
CHAPTER SIX  
Recognizing, Communicating, and Getting Rid of Fears

Communication

It is especially important to minister to a woman in the area of her fears through communication.

As we were pointing out in the previous chapter concerning conversation, the fellow may seem to be a little insensitive, disinterested, or uncaring toward his wife, when it is really not the case. It is just that he has a different need working in his life. A guy likes to talk about what he likes to talk about. His wife might not be interested in it. A gal wants to talk about what the guy might not be interested in. Have you ever had a conversation with someone who could not wait for you to finish what you had to say so he could go on with something else? I have to laugh about that.

The Lord saved me from the faces of people many years ago. If I watch them while I am giving a message, sometimes they do not look too interested. Still, I cannot go by what they look like. They might actually be very interested, but they might not like what they hear. Maybe they are dealing with something else while they listen. If they start to shake in the chair, I will not mind. I know what God is doing, and it is good.

One of the most important goals every couple should have is the ability to communicate their innermost thoughts and desires to one another, to have real communication. You can talk about the weather or the ballgame all you want. You can talk about what happened during the shopping outing, but you need to get right down to the intimate sharing of your heart and innermost thoughts. You need to have the ability and freedom to be able to share them. I believe people need to know that they will be accepted and received, not judged and criticized, when they share.

Unfading Beauty

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:3 addresses women, “Your beauty should not come from outward adornment such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes.” It needs to be noted that it is not wrong to wear jewelry and fine clothes. Some Christians have gone to extremes, saying that in order to be holy you cannot add anything to your outward appearance. Let me tell you, ladies, if you want an interested husband, you had better do a little bit of adornment. Many times he sees women dressed up and looking good all day long, so you do not want to look like the back side of a fence. It is important that you look your best as to the Lord.

Nevertheless, your beauty should not come from outward adornment. We are talking about a different kind of beauty. Anybody can dress up and do something with the outside. There is a Proverb that says a gold ring in a pig’s snout is like a beautiful woman without discretion, which means there are some gals who look really good until they open their mouths. Then one quickly sees that there is no beauty there. It is only on the outside. There is an old expression that beauty is more than skin deep.

The scripture says, “...Instead it should be that of your inner self.” The inner self is something that God wants to develop. Guys need to help bring out the blessing of inner beauty that is in the women God has given them.

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:4 “It should be that of your inner self, the *unfading beauty...*” Many women are working on their outward appearance because it is fading. The more it fades, the more they do, which is why the cosmetic industry is one of the most lucrative industries in America. Millions and millions of dollars are spent each year on outward adorning (painting the barn).

The scripture refers to the unfading beauty of a gentle and a quiet spirit. Some gals think, *Okay, I will just sit here and look pretty and not say anything.* That is not what it means. 1<sup>st</sup> Peter says that women will not win their husbands over to the Lord with talk but by their behavior. Having a gentle and a quiet spirit is the key to inner beauty, and God is looking for it to be developed. It has to be

developed because it just does not come naturally to people. Let's look at what is involved.

### A Gentle Spirit

To continue... "...the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight." Who would not want what is of great value to God? Look through the bible and find what God says is of great value to Him. In 1<sup>st</sup> Peter He says this gentle and quiet spirit is of great value. This type of spirit is not a domineering spirit. This is not the kind that tries to run roughshod over a man or is independent, rebellious, and discontented. This is not an aggressive, abusive kind of a spirit. This is a gentle spirit. Some men will do one of two things with an aggressive, abusive woman. They will either beat her up, or they will leave. God never intended the woman to be like that. He intended her to have a gentle spirit.

However, submission is not being a doormat. In fact, the whole concept came, I believe, from gals who had an independent, rebellious spirit and did not understand what submission was. It is joyful and blessed, where in love and trust for God, the spouse submits herself to her husband.

Note, the bible also says, "Submit to one another" – the husband submits to the wife and the wife submits to the husband. Together they become a team, molded in God's grace, goodness, mercy, and blessing.

Women who have a very aggressive kind of a nature, when used improperly, can quickly destroy a relationship. They have a tendency to want to take over and run the show. Such people have a difficult time submitting because they have a difficult time trusting. Have you felt it was easier to do stuff yourself rather than to trust somebody else to do it? In the same way, it is very difficult for this kind of woman to allow her husband to take his place and be the overseer and leader of the home. She does not trust that he can lead. She does not trust that he knows how to lead, and she feels that she knows better.

When she approaches a man in an aggressive manner, he is either going to back off, saying, “Okay, you want it, you can have it. Do it,” or he will basically bring pressure on her, which she will not like. He is going to say, “No, you cannot do this.” He will start to put restraints on her, in which case, because she does not have a gentle spirit, she is going to rebel more. The next thing you know, you have World War III going on in the kitchen, the bedroom, the bathroom, the living room, and out in the yard. The neighbors will wonder, *what is going on?*

Have you ever heard such arguments? There are doors slamming and people yelling at each other. I happen to believe it is actually a blessed marriage “in process.” We have to learn that nobody does it right all the time. There are times when all of a sudden we change. I propose to you that the reason a gal finds it difficult to have a gentle spirit is because of fear. We will be looking at how that works.

### A Quiet Spirit

The second quality of beauty is a quiet spirit. It does not say a quiet mouth. I always point this out because God has good words to share through the lady who is walking under the direction of the Spirit of God. She can be a marvelous blessing to her husband and a great joy and source of encouragement. On the other hand, the Proverbs says that “a woman can be a rottenness to his bones.”

What kind of a woman would be a rottenness to his bones? The aggressive, independent, rebellious, non-submitted woman. Rottenness to his bones – outspoken, belittling, demeaning, always criticizing and judging. No guy wants to live with somebody like that. “It is better to live in the wilderness than in a mansion with a raging woman.” **Proverbs 21:19**. Why does she rage? Because she is not getting her way. If she does not get her way, she will cause all hell to break loose in the place. Do not tell me that type of lady is a blessing. I can guarantee you that no man on the face of the earth sees any woman like that as being a blessing.

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:4 says to have a quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight. Any woman who says she is a Christian wants to have that because God says it is of great worth in His sight. If you do not

want it, then there is something wrong with your walk with God. A quiet spirit is a spirit that is at rest, a spirit that is at peace. Even though things might be raging all around, you know that God has everything under control, and He will work it out. He will work through your husband, and somehow He will do it. You might not know how or what He is going to do, but you know He will do something. God will use your husband for good things for His glory and for your good.

You can rest and be in a comfort zone even when things are breaking out all around you. In this kind of life, the woman trusts that her husband is following the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd will work it out even if the husband is not following Him. This is God's order and God's principle. The wife is called to submit to the husband as to the Lord. When the woman comes under God and under her husband, she brings her husband under God. In God's order a woman needs to be by her husband's side, not in front of him.

If he does not believe in God, yet she is submitted to God and to him, he comes under God's control and influence. God is going to look out for their home.

Good things happen when people live God's way. Still, there are those who try to do things their own way because they learned it from their mother or grandmother. They need to be taught otherwise. Some women just go along, saying, "Yes, I love the Lord," but then they whip their husbands like they are little boys, or they talk to them like they are children. He is not a little boy. He is the head of your home. Would you talk to an employer like that? Or to anybody else? Think about it. Have a little respect. That is all a guy wants. A little bit of respect, a little bit of honor.

The quiet spirit can give respect because it is at peace, and there is no fear. God's perfect love casts out all fear.

### Trust in God

"For this is the way holy women in the past put their hope in God. This is how they used to make themselves beautiful." **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:5.** Sarah was so beautiful that when she was 90 years old, the Pharaoh wanted to take her into his harem. Let me tell you, there was

something going on with that lady. Pharaohs could have any woman they wanted. It says, "This is how they used to make themselves beautiful." How? By putting their hope and trust in God and being submissive to their own husbands. Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him her master. (The King James Version says that she called him her lord.) When I have shared this information in the past, I have seen women actually grinding their teeth (and I could hear the grinding sounds). Sarah called him her lord or master. "God is my master," I have heard some women say, but He surely was not. I say, "If God is your master, then your husband is. God says this is the way it is supposed to be done."

On the other hand, I have seen guys who acted like jerks. They took what I am teaching right now and said, "See there. Come on, lady. Get with what God says. I am the lord of this house." I would like to say to such a man, "You are a jerk." Do what God says, which is love your wife. Then you do not have to play the macho man. You will know, and she will know that this is God's way. If it were not for the grace of God, you would not be anything. It is a privilege to be the head of the house, and that means you serve everybody in that house. You do not run around like King Tut thinking you rule the roost because it does not work that way. The wives may do what you say, but they are just bearing every minute of it. The time will come when everything will explode. However, if you love people, let me tell you, they will be your friends for life. Faithful for life. Good to you for life. They will get you your slippers without being asked, just because they care about you. A spiritual principle is if you care for them, they will care for you. You get her slippers, and she will get yours.

God asked Cain, "Why are you so upset? Why are you angry?" Many husbands are upset and angry. Many wives are upset and angry. God told Cain if he did what was right, there would be no problem. If a wife does what is right before God, she does not have to be angry, frustrated, or fearful anymore. God will take care of things. "That which I feared the most is that which came upon me."  
**Job 3:25.**

Women, if you want a hard-headed, hard-nosed husband, then start fearing that you will have one. If you want a flaky husband, start

fearing that he is a flake. Deep down in your heart you are already thinking that way. Something in people causes them not to be certain about others. They have such thoughts as, *I know what I think, but I do not know what they think, and I do not know if I can trust them.*

If you are really honest with yourself, you do not even know what you think. You cannot even trust yourself. The only one you can really trust is God. When you are able to trust Him, then you will be able to trust somebody else. You know that ultimately God is in control of everything, and He will look out for you. “You are her [Sarah’s] daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.” **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:6**

### Spiritual Barometers

Women are the spiritual barometers in the home, and they stand in a place between the husband and the children. They have the ability to cause the entire household to go up, down, or around and around by what they do and say.

When women are fearful, they feel intimidated. They can act jumpy, frustrated, anxious, or nervous, which sets things in motion. The gentle and quiet spirit can be tossed around. Isaiah says, “Oh thou tempest tossed” – tossed to and fro. They do not have any peace at that point because their anchor and roots are not down. They are being swayed, and there is much uncertainty.

It is important that a man help a woman with these insecurities, become a stabilizer in his home, and deal with situations when they come up. Often the woman takes the lead because she is insecure and afraid. Even when she has a lot going for her, or she is brilliant, with many gifts and talents; if she is moved by fear, she is going to have problems. God says fear is what attacks women most. Security is their need and anything that attacks that security will produce fear. A woman thinks about children, husband, future, and home sometimes even more than a man does. Those are all part of her nest, or part of what affects her life. She also has to deal with her own fears within. *Am I a good wife, am I a good mother, am I a help to my husband?* These things attack her.

## Why a Woman Does not Share Her Fears

Look at some reasons why a wife does not share her fears with her husband.

1. She may feel guilty about having fears.
2. She may hope that they will pass.
3. She feels rejection from her husband. If a woman feels rejection, she is not going to share her innermost thoughts. Many is the time when a wife starts to open up, but the guy interrupts with, "What is your problem anyway? That's no big deal." Right away she clams up. She tries to share something else another time, and he says, "What are you, an idiot or something? Are you some kind of an emotional basket case?" She closes up some more. If he says, "I thought you were a Christian. Christians are not supposed to have fear," she closes up even more.

God wants wives to share their fears with their husbands to get rid of the fears. God wants that to be done. God does not want men to share their fears with their wives, though, because it produces more fear or insecurity in them. Long after a man works through the fear, his wife is still carrying it. Those fears are the way the thief gets to the woman, and by so doing, he is trying to get to the man.

It is amazing how that works. Adam was tempted, not by Satan, but by the woman. The woman was not tempted by the man, she was tempted by the devil. He was using fear (of lesser knowledge) to get to her. He was basically saying, "God is hiding something from you," which is mistrust. How many ladies have thought that about your husband? *He has something going on, and he is not sharing the whole thing.* If you listen to that temptation, before long, it hooks you, and then what are you going to do? You bring it in on yourself.

Ladies, have you ever had a bad dream about your husband, after which you slugged him? It happens, does not it? Something was playing on your insecurities and fears, and your husband did not even know what was going on.

4. A woman does not share her fears because she desires to reduce her husband's burdens. If he is having a hard time, she

is not going to dump more on him. She does not want him concerned about that too.

When things are not going well, that is the time the man needs to share with his wife in order to help her. He needs her right there with him. The two working together in agreement can move all kinds of mountains. You might be having good times, you might be having hard times, but you are together in the good times or hard times. Your prayers will be blessed.

5. Another reason the wife does not share fears is that she knows her husband does not have all the answers, and so why ask or talk about it? It is just going to add more frustration.

Our goal is to train men to be counselors as they take the lead in their homes. They are to take the time and sit down with their families. They do not have to say much. To begin with, all they have to do is sit there.

#### The Husband is to Help Remove Fears

Here are a few things that a man can do to help remove some of his wife's fears.

1. Become aware of his wife's fears.

Realize she has them. She may put on airs, she may be a very self-sufficient kind of a person, a very strong and intelligent person, and a very witty and charming person who is able to handle many situations. Still, she has fears, and her husband needs to become more aware of them. He does not need to make more fears, though. She does not need to be afraid that every time they get together, he will play analysis with her. She does not need that, but she does need to have him be aware that she needs some help. What we are talking about is simple caring. Learn to care for your wife, and be aware of what is happening with her at that time.

She may have:

- a) An insecurity about her husband dying. What is going to happen to him?
- b) A fear of getting old, or maybe not being as appealing or attractive as she once was. There are different fears that a woman has with getting old. One fear may be that she is becoming unattractive to her husband.

Girls, I will give you a little tip. If you seek to be attractive to your husband, you do not have to be afraid of being unattractive. Ask him how he likes you to wear your hair, and what kind of clothes he likes on you. If you appeal to him, and this is part of what we teach, if you want to be attractive to him, that is who you dress up for. Many times a woman will dress up for anybody who says nice things about what she wears or how she looks. Guys, you had better be the first one on your block to compliment your wife because she will hear it from somebody.

Will anyone admit to getting jealous? Men, when you married your spouse, you chose her out of all the other women on earth, so she must be pretty special. What is the problem if somebody else thinks she is special? The fact is, she *is* special. Someone will be attracted to her. Are you going to put a bag over her head all day long? You cannot live like that; you do not want to live like that. If you love your wife, show her off. She is a blessing. Do not hide her in the cellar.

My wife lets me run around anywhere I want. She knows I will run back home. She has trust, not fear. Perfect love casts out all fear. I trust my wife and she trusts me, and we are going to do everything we can to build and maintain that trust.

The time comes when women start to see a few lines or gray hair. If they have done something to their hair, that is not a problem. It is no big deal. Just do not get caught up in trying to be beautiful. Beauty is not outward but inward. As women grow in God they will be beautiful even when they are 75. I know some women 75 or 80 years old who are attractive. They are ladies. They carry themselves as godly

women should, and they are presentable inside and out. You like listening to them because they are gracious and kind, and they have good things to talk about. It is delightful to be around them. Women can be that way, and they really are that way. They need to see themselves that way.

My wife is better today than the day we married. I think it is exciting because I am seeing her inner beauty grow and grow. Quite frankly, I think she looks better today than she did when we married. Now I am working on me. Inward for the guys too, but the outward sure helps.

You represent Jesus Christ in this earth, and you want people to know that. Do, act, and look the best that you can.

- c) A fear of ill health. Maybe some relative has had cancer or heart trouble, and she is afraid that something will happen to her. She thinks about these things. We need to be there when those thoughts come. In addition, she might have guilt and bitterness caused by what she did in the past, and it has bothered her over the years. These are fears.
- d) A fear of failing as a wife or mother. She feels that she is not the best, that she is not doing things that she should, or she is not doing the best that she could. She needs to be reassured. Reassurance does away with many fears. Learn how to reassure with, "I think you are better than you were when we got married. What a wonderful job you are doing with the children. What a blessing you are to me." When your wife hears those kind of things, it reassures her, and it takes out some of the fears that come. "Oh, you handled that great with little Henry. You did such a fine job." I trust my wife with my children. She will do what I would have done if I were there. When a husband and wife have different standards and values, it can wreak havoc on the children. When there is consistency, you check in together and stand together. Amazingly, beautiful things happen with the children.
- e) A fear of being displaced or left out. She wants to be important to her husband. She wants to be right there with him, and she wants to be included. A man should never give another gal a task that his wife should be doing. Give her the first option on

- everything. In fact, what I have always done over the years is let my wife select the women around me in the work area. She is their boss, not me. You want some of this wisdom because you do not ever want her to feel that she is being displaced. Again, it is her need for security.
- f) A fear of being socially awkward. Many times a gal just feels a little uncomfortable when she goes out. Guys, you need to protect her, be there with her, and help her through it. If she feels uncomfortable about something, do not say, "What is your problem?" Understand her. She wants to be a reflection, a blessing for her husband, and a blessing to other people.
  - g) A fear about educational deficiencies.

## 2. Work to allay her fears.

- a) During times of conversation, choose one of the fears and ask how she feels about it. Talk to her, and let her talk. Do not put her down or judge her. Do not step in, cut her off, and be critical because you are looking at it from a different perspective than she is. She will give an initial response, "Yes, I have this fear about going out in public," or "I have a fear of driving, of being socially insecure," or, "I will not be liked or accepted; maybe I will say or do something that is inappropriate." After the first answer, ask, in addition, "Do you have any more feelings about it?" Go a little bit deeper into it. Take each fear your wife expresses and ask God for wisdom to resolve it. Say, "We will pray and ask God for wisdom in resolving it. He will show us what to do and how to do it."
- b) Find scriptures that deal with fear. God's perfect love will cast out fear. We should be acting in love now.
- c) Study together and memorize the scriptures you found. Help her in this process so she does not feel she is out there by herself. The two of you are one, so if she has some fears, then her husband will step in there with her. "We will deal with that fear in the name of Jesus, and we will get delivered from it, and we will win." See it as "we," guys, not "my wife has this

problem.” I have learned this: if my wife has a problem, I have a problem, so we will deal with it as quickly as we can.

Diana always tells people that if they do not see her up in the prayer line, it is because Randy got her while she was in the laundry room or kitchen. We pray, we deal with stuff, and we knock it out of there because we do not want it. It upsets our lives.

- d) Husbands, think about and discuss what action steps you can take. Sit down and talk about it. You can work out something to do together. Maybe you can go out driving together a few times if your wife is afraid to drive. The best way I know to deal with a fear is confront it head on. Look it right in the eye. Here I come in the name of Jesus!
- e) What can you do to help her take action? First encourage her to take the steps that she has to take. You have to lead. If there is a problem, let's deal with it. Let's lead. Let's take those steps. You want to encourage her in the process. Again, give support, not criticism.

Here are some ways a woman looks at a situation:

1. Everything is first looked at through her emotions. For example, if she is dealing with fear of driving, when she gets in the car, she feels panic. It is important, then, to be a good listener. This takes practice. Just work at it. There may be no logical reason for the panic whatsoever; it just comes over her.
2. She looks at things through her mind. Her thoughts are based on what she feels at that point, so is she rational? Not necessarily. What is she thinking when she starts to panic? The thought comes in that something will happen to her on the way.
3. Next, she will come into the picture. The will is what a person wants. What does she want when she is panicking? She wants to be normal and drive like anybody else. Still, when she is behind the wheel and the panic comes upon

her, she is thinking that she will crash or somebody is going to crash into her. What is her will at that point? Is she thinking, *I should not be like this?*

4. Some people just pull over and park the car. A solution is to start singing praises to God. That is responding by her spirit with what she knows God wants. Note, she catches it on the fourth step.

The first step was responding with her emotions, the second step was responding with the mind, the third was responding with her will, and the fourth was responding with her spirit. This can happen in 30 seconds. All four can happen in 30 seconds, bing, bing, or in 30 minutes, or in 30 years. She mixes these four areas so that it appears she is contradicting herself. In addition, she is concerned about what other people think, which makes it even worse.

### The Four Aspects Scenario

Ladies, understand how this works. Let's say someone is criticizing your husband. You are concerned about what people are saying about him, and you feel angry (an emotional response). (Anger is a secondary emotion.) People think he is still a bum because they do not know that he has changed. They do not know what you know—that Jesus changed his life. Anger comes up in you because they do not know the truth about him.

Why do you care what anybody thinks? The only one you should really care about is God. People have opinions all the time, and some are very verbal about their opinions. However, Jesus did not receive praise *or* criticism from people. Think about this: your friends will love you no matter what you do because they are really with you. On the other hand, your enemies will talk about you no matter what you do. You cannot convince them of anything good because they are only thinking evil of you. People believe what they want to believe.

What happened in your mind when they started talking about your husband? You probably thought about telling them to shut up and come over and see for themselves. When you told them he was a

Christian, perhaps they said, “Well, they are all alike. I do not believe that God changed him.”

Do you know in your spirit what God wants you to do about the whole thing? Does He want you to give Him glory? Does He want you to avoid them? Perhaps you want to avoid them now, which means you have started to go by your emotions again.

A guy has problems with this scene because he sees his wife move from the spirit back to her emotions, where she wants to avoid the people, which shows her will is in action. She wants to avoid them because she does not want to hear what they have to say – her mind is working now. She does not want to hear what they say because it is not the truth. Besides, God does not want her listening to evil reports. Now she has gone back to operating out of her spirit. You see how it works.

God wants you to pray for the people who upset you. “Pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you that you may be children of your heavenly Father.” **Matthew, chapter 5.** God wants you to be aggressive towards them in love. Love, encourage, and talk with them. Then go on about your business. You do not have to prove anything to them about your husband.

People make the mistake of defending their spouses. Guys try to stick up for their wives, and gals try to stick up for their husbands. I told Diana, “You do not have to stick up for me. God sticks up for me. All you have to do is love me, love the kids, and be a blessing to people, but you do not have to care one bit about what they think of me. I do not care one bit about what they think of me.”

Do good to people. If you know you are doing good and seeking to be kind and generous, then if they have a problem, it is their problem, not yours. They would need to honestly come up with some concrete evidence that you had violated them in some way.

I would be the first one, if people have problems with me, to tell them to come talk with me. We would sit down and resolve it right away. If it is just something in their minds like, *you did not look at me or talk to*

*me when I came in*, that is in their brain. I am sorry, I have a lot of things to do, people to see, and places to go. God may not have me talking to you for now.

Get away from the emotions that say, “I have to convince them that my husband has changed.” You do not have to convince them. Let them watch him. Let them listen to him. Let them be around him, and they will know soon enough.

This is an example of how a woman goes in and out of her emotions: from the mind to the will, to the spirit, back to the emotions, and then the will. She mixes the areas.

### Kinds of Fear

Fears come into your thoughts all the time, and they take on many forms. For example, some people are afraid of getting too close. I go by the open book policy of life. Whether I am out in public or at home, you will see I am the same. I am no different except that I am probably a little quieter at home.

When I was being “attacked” by my kids, I would get noisy. They loved to call out, “Let’s jump on Dad,” and I would get a little excited. I might let out a yell and go running off. It was fine when they were little, but when they got older, they could take me down. I had this thing ever since I was little about being smothered, but I was delivered of it. When my head was covered, I felt smothered. All of a sudden all the air went up into me and closed in. Then a tremendous strength would rise up. Even if there were five people on me, I was going to fight them – not to hurt them, but to breathe. It was self-preservation that came.

I know of cases where kids did not want to go to school because somebody was going to start a fight, or they *thought* somebody was going to fight them. Many people only threaten. I have never had to fight anybody in my life, and I am not going to start now. If they want to hit on me, that is their business. That kind of fear grips people, holds them, and makes their lives uncomfortable. God can deliver them of it.

Guys, do not talk about your fears to your wife and do not talk about them to another gal. God forbid. It would bring even more trouble because then you have to deal with your wife knowing that another woman knows about your innermost fears. You want to share your fears with God and maybe another guy you trust, a buddy in the Lord.

Gals, you want to talk those fears out. Guys, when they start to share (we teach them and encourage them to share those things with you), do not put them down. This is a very cherished and privileged opportunity to be the minister of your home.

I have thanked God over the years for the thousands of people with whom we have been able to share and to see them get the help that God had for them. It has been a precious opportunity.

LOVING YOUR SPOUSE  
CHAPTER SEVEN  
Honoring Your Spouse's Presence

G. The seventh trait of a woman is to know her husband is aware of her presence.

In this study we have been explaining the principles of God mainly for the men but also for the women. We are mixing and matching. What is good for the goose is good for the gander.

When you get married, the two are one; and God is with both of you. He has things that he wants both to benefit from. Marriage should be an ALL-WIN situation, not that one wins and the other loses.

I do not believe in losing in marriage. We are in the business of getting marriages and homes fixed back up the way God would have them to be. I thank the Lord we have had the privilege to see many marriages strengthened, helped, and encouraged over the years.

Many times people buck up against the principles of God, and when they do, it is unfortunate. However, if somebody is willing, God is willing. He would put Humpty Dumpty back together again if people were willing. That is why we work with husbands and wives. I teach one thing to the guys, and another thing to the gals, which are totally opposite, in order to get them to move together. People have a tendency to be selfish and self-centered, and that is a very sad thing when it comes to marriage.

A key verse for marriage is in the book of Philippians, chapter 2.

“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should not look

only to your own interests, but also to the interest of others.”

### **Philippians 2:1-4**

We believe this scripture is a key to marriage – marriage to the Lord and marriage to the husband or wife in God’s plan.

Let us examine the scripture phrase by phrase:

- “If you have any *encouragement* from being *united* with Christ...” The key to any godly marriage is that we are united in Christ. Encouragement means being united with Christ and united with one another.
- “If any *comfort* from His love...” If you have anything at all going with God, let this attitude and heart be in you. Likewise, if you have God in your marriage, then let this be your attitude. God’s love will comfort a husband. God’s love will comfort a wife.
- “Any *fellowship* with the Spirit...” Fellowship. Coming together. Working together. Camaraderie. A husband and wife work together side by side, hand and hand, complementing one another.

How opposite are husbands and wives! One may love to have fun, and the other is as serious as the day is long. (One can learn to have fun, and the other can learn how to be serious.) God knows they both need to learn what the other has, but, still, they are two different people. My wife Diana loves to crack jokes. Folks love her. I, on the other hand, have a difficult time remembering jokes. In fact, she thinks I pray that she will forget them. It is fun what God does to complement us. He uses opposites to encourage and appreciate the gift of God in one another.

- “Any *tenderness* and *compassion*...” God is talking about relationship with Him, but it applies directly to marriage too. There needs to be tenderness and compassion towards one another. Compassion means that you share one another’s ideals and visions, and you encourage each other in good times and hard times. You stand together and commune with one another in passion. Passionate communing and sharing with

each other. (That ought to be in a novel!) No matter what is happening, whether someone is hurting or rejoicing, you stand together and share with one another.

- “Make my *joy* complete...” That is like one of those sayings, “Make my day.” It is amazing what can happen if people would get up in the morning with a smile instead of looking angry. Just look and smile, and people will ask what you are smiling about. You can say, “I am happy... I am happy that you love me.” Wonderful things happen when people grasp these principles.
- “By being like-minded, having the same *love*...,” one for another. Just as we love the Lord, have love for one another. One should not have more love than the other one has. We should have the same kind of love towards one another. Love equals commitment, accountability, responsibility, and faithfulness in good times or hard times.
- “Being one in spirit and *purpose*...” Husbands and wives need to come together in God’s purpose, plan, and vision for them. God has a plan, a purpose, and a vision for every home and every family. Come into agreement, not for his vision or her vision, but God’s vision for both. What is God’s purpose? Many times a wife has a vision for a husband, but he does not fit into it. She wants him to be like someone else, do certain things, but he is not into it at all. The husband may have something for his wife, and she is not into it at all. It creates problems. God has something in both of them that is His plan and His purpose. We need to lay down our ideas and get God’s ideas.

One time the Lord spoke a word to me while I was driving down the hill from home. While I drive, I like to pray. Somebody wanted to get me a car phone once, but I said, “Thank you very much, I really appreciate your love for me, but that is my quiet time.” I need to be away from phones during that time. I need to be communing with God and talking with Him. As I was driving and communing, He said, “Son, I am not interested in your opinions.” He continued, “I am not

interested in anybody's opinions." I started laughing because that made a lot of sense to me. What does God need our opinions for? Half the time our opinions are half-baked anyway and need to go back into the oven to get reviewed and renewed.

He said, "Speak My truth." He wants His truth put out there. He wants what is going to change somebody's life, what will set somebody free, what will bless somebody individually, what will bless a marriage, a ministry, a church, a business, a nation, and the world. When we get God's truth, we should base what we do on that truth rather than our opinions and what we think or feel. God does not care about your opinions, and He does not care about mine. I am not here to share my opinions; I am here to share some of God's truth that will set you free.

- "Do nothing out of *selfish ambition* or vain conceit..." Some people's visions, dreams, and ideas are nothing but selfish ambition and vain conceit. Vain means empty. Have you tried to build a little monument to yourself, and it did not quite work? It came out upside down or something. Have you felt misunderstood because people did not understand all your dreams, visions, and desires? Why should they understand? Many times these are just things that you dreamed up. They did not come from God. Then you think more highly of yourself than you ought to. *He does not understand, or she does not care about me.* Really, both of you are selfish and self-centered. You need to get on your face before God, get out of yourself, and start preferring the other, in humility, better than yourself.

Have you been around someone who only talks about himself? The bible is very clear. Let somebody else toot your horn.

Marriage needs to be a little fun. It needs to have a little spontaneity. It needs to have a little interaction, where you learn to laugh at yourself, love your spouse, and prefer her and what she is interested in more important than yourself.

Selfish people can run with a statement like “prefer the other more important than yourself.” They will take this scripture and say, “See there, you should be preferring me as more important.” Selfish people do not understand the Word of God the way it is written. They take it and twist it a little bit. They say, “Wife, you are supposed to submit to me,” or “Husband, you are supposed to love me as you love yourself. You love yourself and consider yourself so important; you would better get with the program and love me a whole lot more. You are supposed to prefer me more important than yourself. God said it. Thus saith the Lord. I read it right there in **Philippians, chapter 2.**” Verse 4 says each of you should look *not only* to your own interests. It does not say not to look at your own interests at all.

A problem comes when people are only looking out for their own interests. Others are going down the tube because they *do not* look out for their own interests. They do not look out for their own health. They do not look out for their own business. They do not look out for the things that pertain to their lives. They had better start looking. Many problems in marriage are because people have neglected themselves and are not looking at their own interests. If you are not happy, why is it? Something is not being fulfilled somewhere. Maybe you need to sit down and pray to see what God has for each of you, and what He wants for each of you.

If you go the other way, you become a slave. Since we are to be servants one to another, husband and wife are to serve one another. A slave has a different connotation. The bible talks about us being bond servants to Christ. These are the kind of servants that have been set free by the master, but they say, “I love you, and I want to serve you,” so they come back freely, out of love. Marriage needs to be that way too. The bond servant kind of love. I have been set free in Jesus Christ, I love God, and I love you. I want to submit to you. That is what marriage is about. It says, “Submit yourselves one to another” in **Ephesians 5.**

You have to look out for your own interests under God because He is more concerned about you than anybody on the face of the earth, including yourself. Once you come to grips with that and understand, you do not have to pursue your own interests or your own way

anymore. You lay down your own way on the day you asked Jesus Christ to come into your heart as your Lord and Savior. You lay down your own life, your own interests, your own self-rights; and you took on the rights that are yours in Jesus Christ. They are far better than anything you had before. You do not have to push yourself all the time.

Because you chose marriage, remember that you are no longer single. When you said, "I do," out went the past and "I do" the future; and I do it with my spouse. Many people act like they are still single. They act like they can just pick up and go whenever they want to go, do whatever they want to do, and forget their spouses. "Fend for yourself; you are a strong person, you can take care of yourself." That is not a marriage; it is two people choosing to co-inhabit within a house. It is not blessed. These people are just downright selfish.

Many people who are selfish do not understand that they are selfish. They see themselves as having perfectly legitimate rights to choose to do what they want to do and say what they want to say. They figure, *I am okay*, but they have a problem. The Lord would show them if they would open their hearts to Him and really let Him examine them.

This is what should happen in a marriage: "Search me, O God. Try me and prove me, and see if there is anything in me that needs adjustment." **Psalm 139:23, 24**

- "...Each of you should look not only to your *own interests* but also to the interest of others." When I married, I included my spouse in what I was doing. When I take on the Lord Jesus Christ, I include the Lord in my life, in my decisions, in my plans, in my visions and dreams. They are not mine. I do not want them. They are His, and I say, "Lord, I am yours." When you take on a spouse, you say, "I am yours."
- "Your *body* is not your own any longer. It belongs to your spouse." **I Corinthians 7**. Diana is doing a better job with her body than I am with mine. My body belongs to her, so I told her, "You will have to work on this a little bit better." Actually,

she is doing everything she can. I am the one who likes French fries. You have to learn to work together. You have to learn to share. You have to adjust your attitude.

- “Your *attitude* should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.” What did Christ Jesus do? He gave His life for us so that we might have His life. If you are giving your life for your spouse and you are preferring another as more important, then how can you let anything get between you? It will be difficult to let somebody or something get between you – even the critters that you do not see. It is not easy for them to get in there when you are giving of yourself out of love for God and love for your spouse, when you are committed, responsible, accountable, and faithful, or when you are giving encouragement, comfort, fellowship, tenderness, and compassion. You make your spouse’s joy complete in God by having the same love and being one in spirit and purpose.

It is impossible for the devil to take that marriage, but it does not happen overnight. Your marriage has to be taken care of. It is like a garden that has to be nourished, fertilized, and cared for long before the plant starts to shoot up out of the ground. There needs to be lots of plowing and weeding so that the plants can come up. Then those big fat succulent caterpillars try to eat the plants. Likewise in marriage, those big fat (not talking about your spouse) critters attempt to mess it up. There are unseen spirits that try to come into your marriage or relationship. Just keep doing good, and loving, caring, and believing God. Just keep doing what God says, and nothing in hell can stop your marriage from working, growing, and producing fruit.

The seventh trait of a woman is to know that her husband is aware of her presence even when his mind is on other matters. Do you men think about other things more than your wives? Guys, she already knows you are thinking about other things, even when you sit there looking at her or talking to her. She is not stupid. We can help you with that if you will consider this: God is present right now. You know you can have your thoughts on things other than God right now too.

A guy has the same need to know his wife is aware of his presence. Guys like to be honored. We like to be celebrated. We like to be rejoiced about. We like to have nice things said about us. Nice things done for us. Guys and gals are the same. So when I am talking about wives, I am also talking about husbands. Girls, learn what I am saying about the guys. Guys, learn what I am saying about the girls. They like to have their presence celebrated and known. *Are they on some kind of ego trip that they have to be recognized?* No. That is not what we are talking about.

People need to know that you are really talking to them and paying attention to them, that you are not just nodding your head.

Love has good manners. Which of the following manners do you *consistently* practice?

1. Help your wife with her coat. (Is that still done in America?) Is not she able to take off her own coat? The chauvinist and the feminist say, "I can do it myself, thank you." When the guy wants to help with the coat, he is saying, "I love you and care about you," not that you are incapable. You have to let him do it. How many times have I seen the guy try to help his wife, but instead she did it herself. Men do this because they are aware of her presence. It shows a caring and a concern. "Oh, I am not mindless; I can do things." That is not the issue, lady. If the guy is thinking enough about you to offer to help you, let him do it. One day you will need something major done and, if you keep doing all these other things, he will say, "You can handle it. You are capable." It is not a great team when everybody decides they cannot work together.
2. Seat your lady at the table. Pull out the chair for her, have her sit down, and shove the chair in. She may have to help you with it. Teamwork. But you are showing that you are honoring her presence. Ladies, get it.
3. Open the doors for her. Of course she can open the door herself, but you are showing that you are aware of her presence. You are honoring her.
4. Lift heavy objects or say, "Let me do this for you." Ladies work hard; they do things. It means a lot when a husband says, "Let

- me carry that wash basket. Oh, and by the way, thank you for doing the wash.” Ladies, do not swoon on me here, or go out under the anointing. Let me tell you these are anointed words, guys. “Let me help you with the wash. Thank you for doing the wash.” Gals, just thank God for the privilege to be a wife. Guys, thank God for the privilege to be a husband. It is a God-given privilege. You are a team that works together. You want to honor her presence just like you want to honor the Lord’s presence. When you honor her presence, and she honors your presence, you are actually honoring the Lord’s presence in your house. It is exciting what can happen.
5. Order for her at the restaurant. “I can order myself, thank you.” Honey, you are missing the whole point. Of course you can order for yourself. He is really not ordering for you, he is ordering with you. He is representing you as a united front in the restaurant when he asks you what you would like. It is a nice thing, and it saves time and confusion. My wife used to say about me in our earlier years, “Randy’s idea of being out on a date is taking me to one of those fast food restaurants and then going home with a video.” I have changed, thank God. I have had to make a few changes.

Do you want to be cheap? That is what you get. God wants us all to be generous, especially with one another. There were times when Diana went cheap on me, but I said, “No, no, let’s go do something.” She was thinking we could use the money for something else. When you get married, you begin thinking about all the other things that you need, like the children need braces or you have to have insurance. You start to think less about yourself and more about things that are going to benefit the family.

Guys, if you are more concerned about spending money on yourself and doing what you want to do, and you do not give her money to buy clothes, you will have a problem. If you do not give her money to buy food, but you can go out and do all the things that you like to do, then you have a problem. You need to do something about this, and you need to make some adjustments if your marriage is going to work right.

6. Know and use table manners. Have you ever been around somebody who was all over the table? Do you know about “see” food? I am not talking about shrimp and halibut; I am talking about someone who “sees” food. Someone who “sees” everyone else’s food. Manners go a long way. You want to honor the people you are with, and no smacking allowed. Do you want to be with a gross-out?

Before you go out on a date, you should take a bath or shower. Go hose off outside, but do something to clean yourself up a little bit, comb your hair, and make yourself presentable and attractive. You want to put on nice clothes, and you want to smell good. Most people do that because they want the other person to like them, but that is the wrong motivation. You should be doing it to honor the person you are with.

7. Pick up after yourself at home. When I was single, I had socks that would stand up on their own. I thank God every time my wife Diana does the wash. I say, “Thank you, Lord.” His tender mercy is fresh and new every day. Fresh sheets. Fresh underwear. Fresh socks. Fresh shirts and pants. A miracle. She does it because she loves us and cares about us. I used to tell my kids, “You would better be on your face before God, thanking Him for a mother who does your clothes. The only reason you have laundry that still stands up is because it is in the depths of your closet or under your bed. You have to get that stuff out and get it into that wash basket. Like dad does, most of the time.” Guys, if you leave your clothes laying all over the house so that somebody can track you down by following your stuff, or they can track you down by your muddy footprints, there is something wrong.

Much of being aware of your wife’s presence is picking up after yourself. It is fine when you were by yourself and single. You can leave stuff anywhere you want anytime, but when you get married, you have somebody else who lives in the place too. They might not be a slob like you are. Maybe it is time for a little anointing on the slob, and let God make some changes. Being a slob is not necessarily because we leave stuff laying around; it is an attitude.

It is an attitude in the brain of not being considerate; it is being selfish, self-centered, and is not preferring someone else more important than yourself.

Think about this: If you had somebody else coming to visit your house, would you leave your clothes all over the place? How much more so for your spouse? She has to live there all the time, day in and day out. How can I tell my kids to pick up their clothes and put them in the wash basket if I do not? It is very easy, but not appropriate, if I am not doing what I am saying. So we have to make some little adjustments.

8. Properly introduce your wife. Always introduce your wife as your wife. “This is my bride in whom I am well pleased.” You can listen to her because when she speaks she speaks with discretion in the Spirit of the Lord. I had been ministering for a long, long time – 37 years. My bride had been with me going on 31 years, and I had never let her speak publicly before. We had an agreement at home. I stay out of her kitchen, and she stays out of my pulpit. (We have a good time with each other.) The last time I was to go on the men’s retreat, I asked the Lord whom He wanted to speak while we were gone. He said, “I want Diana to speak.” (God is the one who directs who is in this pulpit.) Then she asked me, “Who are you going to have speak when you are on retreat?” And I answered, “You are.” She said, “Oh, no, you have to be kidding me. Remember our agreement. You stay out of my kitchen; I will stay out of your pulpit.” I said, “God wants you to be in there (because God had something He wanted to say).”

Later I listened to the tape of her message. It was marvelous what God said through my wife. She spoke about sensitivity to marriage from a wife’s perspective and the things a wife looks for. You have to understand my wife; she is as truthful as truthful can be. She does not “hem and haw” because she just says the way it is, and that’s good. That is what people need to hear, and that is what I love about her. She does not play games. What you see is what you get. She will say to your face what she thinks of you in love. Many is the time she has told me in love. You know, I

needed to hear it. Still, she knows her place. Her place is by my side, not out ten feet in front of me. My wife may wear pants, but they are not mine. A lot of gals try to run the show, they try to run the house, they try to run the spiritual things, they try to run everything, and then they wonder why the husband finally says, "Have at it, lady. Do whatever you want." Introduce your wife properly, honor her in that introduction. Do not forget her name, and do not forget to introduce her.

Many years ago when we first got married, we were at a place where most of the people knew me. I had ministered there, but it had been several years before, and I had forgotten some of their names. I am really bold nowadays if I forget somebody's name. (I might have known them for 10 years, but I had forgotten their names). I will walk up and say, "This sounds ridiculous, and I know it is just totally obscene, but I forgot your name." And they will look at me and laugh. Do not forget people's names if you can help it. Try to latch it down and lock it down. You know, it is fine the first time or two, but when you are going on the 30<sup>th</sup> time, and you have to ask what their names are, you are indicating that you are not interested.

The same thing with, "What is it that you said?" They've only told you three times. It says you were not interested enough the first time to listen to what was said. Sure, sometimes you are distracted. If you are distracted, say, "Honey, I am sorry, I have been thinking about this. What was it you said?" They can live with that, but if you do it three times, you are out of it.

I came up to those people, and we were all talking, and Diana was standing near me. She did not know any of them. I talked to them, and I never introduced her. Bad news. Later she asked me, "Why did not you introduce me?" I said, "I forgot their names." Now, who was I more concerned about? I was actually more concerned about them, then myself, and then her. It does not bother me one bit personally, and it does not bother most guys one way or the other, but I did not want those people to feel bad because I had forgotten their names. You know if you are a jerk, you are a jerk. You do not mean to forget somebody's name.

However, do not ever forget your anniversary, your wife's birthday, and anything else that is important to her. You want to honor her presence and recognize her. Diana put our date of marriage in my ring, so I would remember exactly what day I got married. Be smart. Bring a little book with you and jot stuff down because, let me tell you, she is just waiting to see if you remembered. Maybe she has been plotting out an event for three months, planning it out ahead of time.

9. Punctuality. Do not be late for your bride. Do not be late with anybody. Punctuality is courteousness, but it is not good to be too early either. I remember when we were dating, I was so happy and excited to get over there, I went an hour early. I did everything I could think of, but I just had to get over there. I would get over there, and she was not nearly ready. She was trying to do all those things to look nice and there I would come bopping in. One time she still had those cans on her head. Not good. Try to be a few minutes ahead of time.

On the other hand, for church service come an hour early because we pray. If you come two hours early you might be standing outside. Understand. Timing. What does that mean? It means you care. It means that you are so excited in honoring her presence that you are into what is going on. Sometimes if you are a little late, call if you can call, but do not make a habit of being late. One of the most frustrating things to a man is to be ready to go and his wife is dragging things along. Then she uses the kids to drag things on. Get that crew out and moving.

On Saturdays my crew was out the door at 7:30AM to come to the church service. Church did not start until 9:40AM, but my family was out the door early. Let me tell you, swoosh, we would move it. They knew it was important to get things together and to get there to praise the Lord and give dad time to be relaxed. I do not like running in on a wing and a prayer to the service. I like to be settled and ready to go in the Lord. That means our family had to work through a few years of commotion before church.

Let me tell you, everything under the sun would start to go wrong before we got ready to go. Approach it right and get things done

the night before, like lay out the clothes. God knows people might make 20 changes before they get going, but do it anyway. Make some steps to order things. I think it is important that guys take charge of their homes to get things in place and get their family ready.

I thank God Diana always worked with me on that. She never bucked me, and I learned to keep my mouth shut. I would look at my watch, and I could not figure out why the children were not ready. You know, young girls grow to be older girls, right? I have never figured out why it took an hour and a half for somebody to get ready to go somewhere.

This is something the guys have a hard time figuring out. I would take my shower, I would go and get my breakfast. I would get my suit on, buckle up my tie, and I would be out the door, ready to go. It took 10 minutes. Why does it take somebody an hour and a half to get ready? (I am not talking about Diana.) I guess they have to have everything just right. It is important for them to look good and to be at their best for you. So we had to learn to take time to let them do it.

(They would say, "That's okay for you. You get yourself ready, and you are out the door. You are sitting there in the car honking the horn. Do not honk the horn anymore, by the way." I started thinking, too, that it was very rude. Guys, do not ever pull up and honk the horn for her to come out, like *Here; fetch*. No, that is not cool. That is not honoring and preferring. I would sit out in the car and Diana would say, "You can do that because you do not do anything else except get yourself ready." I thought about that, and, you know, she was right. I was the only one who got myself ready.

I would be walking around supervising every room, looking at everybody, seeing how they were progressing. They would slam the door on me. "Dad, get out!" I would say, "Well, you know it is going on..." and look at my watch. I guess if they wanted to know the time, there was a clock in every room. Then I used this one, "Do not you know it is important to Dad that you be there on time?"

That did not phase them, and they never said anything. Thank God the kids did not talk back that much. That never got any miles with me, but basically I could hear their thinking. One of the benefits of being in the spirit (or one of the curses) is that sometimes you hear what people are thinking. They were thinking, *Dad, do not you know I have to get ready. I have to do all these things to get ready.*

And so, I thought, *Okay, I will feed the dogs, and I will make the toast, and I will do this and that.* I believe guys should pitch in when you are on a schedule. You need to pitch in and work together as a team.

So I figured she was right. It is kind of humiliating when somebody else has to tell you what you should have known yourself. But thank God at least you got it. Then you can make the changes and adjustments. I thought, *she is right. All I have to do is get myself ready and go sit in the car.* I figured, *let's do some things.* You know, it was amazing how it worked. Everybody was out there on time. It works that way when you start to pitch in, do your part, help everybody else, and work together as a team, then we can get out the door.

10. Tell your wife your schedule because she wants to know what you are doing. Gals, your husband wants to know your schedule too because he wants to know what is going on with your day – what is involved and what your plans are. He wants to be a part of it the same way you want to be a part of your husband's plans.

If you do not think you need to tell her what you are doing, adjust your attitude. Why do not you want to tell what you are doing? Are you doing something that you should not be doing? Think about it. What is the problem?

Has it ever happened that when you were trying to throw a surprise for them, they wanted to know what you were doing? What did you do? Did you lie? Did you tell them the truth? It is amazing how you cannot keep a secret from a spouse. They

know you better than you know yourself because they are looking from an objective perspective. You look through your own eyes at yourself. You do not see yourself clearly many times unless you really get diligent before God.

11. Refrain from criticism. If it is not building others up, do not bother with it. It is not that important or essential. Criticism offers no solutions. It would have been easy for me to say, "Well, you know, all I have to do is get myself ready and go sit in the car." It would have been very easy for her to say, "You are just a selfish pig." Right? No, she did not do that, and I did not do the other. You come to a place where you have to make a quality choice about what will be best for the team, what will be best for the home. She offered some suggestions: Why do not you feed the dogs? I thought the dogs could wait until I got back, but that was not the answer. Feed the dogs. Do you like to be fed in the morning? Sure. God taught me about taking care of his birds, so then I had to take care of his dogs too. It is alright. It is good. Fulfill your responsibility, and do what you need to do. She was offering constructive solutions. That is different than criticism. Criticism belittles, demeans, and dishonors a person.

I often ask this question of others, "Are you deaf? Are you stupid? Or are you disobedient? Which one is it?" They were not deaf or stupid, so it must have been the other one. Disobedient. If people are disobedient, then how do you deal with them? In loving correction. People do not like loving correction in this day and age. They believe they can do whatever it is they want to do, and nobody has a right to correct them. You can have all kinds of ideologies and philosophies, but that will not work at home. It will not work in a marriage. It will not work in a family, a business, or a nation. Somebody has got to have the authority, in love, to correct, discipline, and adjust. The others have to be willing to submit to it and work together on it.

Cruel language is never a part of discipline. It is never a part of correcting a situation. Has anyone ever demeaned or dishonored

you? Have you felt that they did? Maybe they did not do it, but you felt that way. This happens quite often when people are corrected. I remember a few times in school when I was acting up, and I got corrected. I felt like hiding. When you are out of line, you need to be corrected – the quicker the better. God loves those He disciplines, and He never demeans, belittles, beats down, or demoralizes us. He never in any way tears us down. He corrects us. This is important because God does not find fault even when we are wrong. He is not picking on us. He sees us as His sons and daughters.

In the same way, we need to see one another as God's sons and daughters. We need to build up and encourage one another, even when we are disciplining our children. Sometimes we have to discipline one another. A husband and wife will do it with one another under the Spirit of the Lord, and it is a good and healthy thing. Sometimes we do not see what we are doing, and we need somebody, in love, to help us.

Some people have a spirit of criticism, and all they do is run around looking for fault in somebody else – *pick, pick, pick*, nothing is right, nothing is good enough. That spirit does not stay around here, and we cast it out of our homes too. If you let that spirit get inside of you, your home, your business, or your life, it will tear you apart. If you *pick, pick, pick*, the next thing you know, others start to *pick, pick, pick* back at you. Nobody likes that. After awhile it is like torture, and someone will blow. That is not helping or honoring anybody.

12. Personal cleanliness. How many wives have I talked to over the years who said their husbands never take a bath or shower before they make love to them? How gross. Then the guy gets upset because she rejects him. Well, you should be rejected; you smell like a skunk. It works both ways too. Some gals do not do anything to clean themselves up, to smell good and look nice. That should be a formal time. A blessing time. Everybody is looking good and smelling good. You honor the other person. God forbid you should want to have relations with anybody else. You want to be your best for your spouse.

13. Explain to your wife that you want to work with her in certain areas.

In the area of courtesy: I had a little help early in our marriage because I had an old red car. The door on my wife's side would not open up, so I had to open it. That helped in one area. Sometimes you have those little helps, but it is better to say, "Honey I would like to do this for you. I would like to open the door. I would like to care for you. I am doing this because I want to cherish and honor you, not because you are unable. This is some little thing that I want to do to show that to you." She will understand and go along with it. You have to be consistent with this, guys. If you stop doing it after awhile, she will look at you and wonder what it was. It is similar to starting in Jesus. People start up in Jesus, and after a while it becomes just a passing fad or something. Then they quit.

Be alert and responsive to your wife's daily readings of your awareness of her presence. When she asks a question, a) stop what you are doing, b) look at her, c) smile when you talk, d) answer her questions, even the little ones. Usually in a guy's brain the "little questions" are insignificant questions. However, half the time she is not only looking for information, or an answer to your question, she is looking to see if you are interested in talking to her.

If you are honoring her presence, if you are glad to be around her, tell her with your eyes that you love her. I guess the only way you can do that is to practice a little bit. It starts with looking into her eyes. Let her discern your spirit. It is very important. Many times when gals do that with their eyes, a husband can discern what is going on very quickly. With the children you often never have to say a word. Look them right in the eyes, and let them discern your spirit – whether you are not happy with what is going on, or you are happy with what is going on. People can discern just by looking into your eyes. If someone is not your spouse, do not look too long. Understand what we are talking about. Let your family discern that you love them. It is all they are looking for.

In a similar way, God is looking to see if our eyes are upon Him. “Do not take your eyes off of Me,” He says. Then we can discern His Spirit, and He can discern ours, and we can work together. Eye contact is important in many sports, it is important in relationships, it is important in anything. Have you ever talked to someone’s back?

Discern one another’s presence and honor their presence. Honor the Lord’s presence, honor the husband’s presence, and honor the wife’s presence. Teach the children to honor their parent’s presence.

No one does everything right, and no one does everything wrong. You are probably somewhere in between. If you are trying, it is all your spouse cares about. If your spouse sees you trying, even though you might putz around a little bit, he or she is excited about it. Any little thing that you can do for each other is a step in the right direction. Be encouraged about that. Laugh with Diana and me, and cry with Diana and me, because we have been through it, and we are still together, going strong. God is doing good things.

You will see in your own life that is the way it is. There are times when you do good, there are times when you totally flub up, but the key is to continue to honor God and one another, preferring the other more important than yourself. That will bless any relationship.

LOVING YOUR SPOUSE  
CHAPTER EIGHT  
Make Investments in One Another's Lives

A women needs to see that her husband is making investments in her life which will expand and fulfill her world. Guys need to see the same thing from their wives. What is good for the goose is good for the gander.

Honor one another; prefer one another as more important than oneself. In marriage we are to make investments in one another that will allow God's vision and plan to be fulfilled in and through our spouses. It is very exciting to see husbands and wives work together, honor and prefer one another, and speak life and blessing into each other's lives. It is exciting to see the good things that God is doing, to see people praying in order to understand what God wants to do through their spouses. What is good for one will be good for the other and will complement the other spouse. *You will be blessed as you bless your spouse* is a principle that works.

As a woman honors her husband, God allows His blessing to come. God starts to take His form in the home, and beautiful things happen. Likewise, when the man honors his wife, beautiful things happen. Each starts to develop into what God has each to be. Honor is a key word because it is what God would have us to do. The man is to treat the woman like a queen, and the woman is to treat the man like a king. They are to prefer, defer, and honor each other as to the Lord.

Many years ago when I was teaching this principle, one of the women became a little upset. She said, "I cannot call him lord," and I asked, "Why not? The bible says to do so." **1 Peter 3:5**. She answered, "I do not have any lord but the Lord." She was not quite understanding what I was talking about. Jesus Christ is our first love. Because He is our first love and He is our Lord, He now tells wives to honor their husbands in that way. It is not like they are honoring their husbands before the Lord, but they are honoring them as to the Lord. This means that Jesus is their Lord and now they are, in obedience,

simply doing what God says to do. Then God will do something special in their relationship.

This woman went home and started doing what we taught. The first time she called her husband lord, he left the room. He did not know how to take it or what to do. He did not understand that submissive, loving, honoring kind of behavior. The next time she called him lord, he brought a little pressure on her. He thought something was up, and so he started proving it a bit. She kept honoring him as to the Lord. Calling him lord like that began to do something in him. When one honors the husband as to the Lord, then it brings him under the lordship of God Himself. The promise is in **1 Peter 3:1** that a woman can win her husband to the Lord simply, without a word, as he beholds her behavior: her godly respect and honor for her husband.

Soon the husband liked being treated that way. At first he did not understand it, but he saw the tenderness, love, and encouragement in which she came to him. It was quite a bit different than how she had treated him before. He said, "Well, there must be something to this Jesus stuff you are learning. I want you to go back to that church. I want you to continue there."

Before long, he was coming too. Today he is leading his household. Jesus Christ has become his Lord as well, and he is leading the family in the way that God would have it to go. The wife had to back off a little and let her husband lead. (This is very important in God's order – to lead the family in His good grace together). The children are all coming around to the things of God. It is beautiful when you have people working together, instead of pushing and shoving each other. Then God can do something.

In Titus, chapter 2 we see the order as the Lord has laid it out. God instructs us about these things so that we might know them and do them then we will see the blessing that God would have come to pass. When things are done God's way, we get His results. You can try and try and try your hardest, but if you are not doing what God says to do, it will not work. "Except the Lord build the house, they that labor, labor in vain. They get up early, they stay up late." **Psalm 127:1** You need to believe that it will work the way God says, and it

will. These principles have been proven to work. They've worked for me and for hundreds of other people. You do what God says, and it will work for you.

“You much teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, sound in faith in love, and endurance.” **Titus 2:1** We teach these things to the older men. We seek to get them to learn to be temperate and worthy of respect. The ladies often think a man is not worthy of respect. However, you can make a person worthy of respect.

We tell the men that there are certain things that they need to do to take the lead in their household. If they are going to be an authority, they have to seek God and pray. They have to get in God's Word and find out what He says to do. They have to take the lead in love. Whatever they do should be done in love. The next thing you know, their wives will say they are worthy of respect.”

We teach the girls that the bible says to respect their husbands whether the men are worthy or not. **Ephesians, chapter 5** when a wife respects her husband, the husband begins to look at himself and take notice. He begins to see a few areas that he is neglecting. His wife might be one of them. He begins to take his place and fulfill the calling and the need.

One of the things that a man needs to learn about his wife is that she is fragile in many respects. His words have great impact on her. Anyone else could say something about her and it would not bother her as much as when her husband does. What he has to say means something to her and will affect her life and security.

Either you can make a good investment into her life with your words, or you can ruin the investment with your words. In two minutes you can verbally undermine what you spent two years building up. Take special care to be self-controlled. Your wife is not a whipping post. She is not to be harangued. She is not to be discouraged. She is to be loved, encouraged, and held in high esteem.

We protect, bless, and encourage the greatest investment that God has given us in this life outside of salvation in Jesus Christ. What comes out of it will be godly heirs and godly blessings that will continue from generation to generation.

Fellows, take note of being sound in faith. Be rooted and grounded in the Word of God and take authority over influences that are not of the Spirit of God. We need to make sure that we set an environment in which our bride and our children can grow and flourish. We want to see all that God has for us come to pass in love. Be sound in faith and sound in love.

Again, we are the servants to our households. We are the lords and we are the servants. The privilege of being the lord means that you are then the servant. You have the ability to serve the household and make things work the way that God would have them to work. You actually have God backing you up. You have God supporting, encouraging, helping, and empowering you. God will honor your words when you speak. He will honor your deeds because they are done in faith, and they are done in love and endurance.

There are times when husbands and wives may not be going in the same direction. In love you have to say, "This is the way it is, honey. This is what God says, not what I say. You love God, and I know you love God and me. I love you, and I love God. We will go God's way. That is just the way it is." When you approach your lady in love and with the understanding that she loves God, you will lead her and draw her along. You will see God's best come to pass.

There are times when you are both out of sorts. Hopefully one is out of sorts when the other one is not. Then each can encourage the other to move along. Say, "Lord, forgive us both." You do not say, "She is the rotten sinner," or "He is got the problem" because the two are one. The investment is together. The blessing is together. The blessing is not on one or the other but on both, the way the Word of God reads. **1 Corinthians 7**

The unbelieving spouse is covered by the faith of the believing spouse, lest their children are unclean (so the children are blessed).

They are holy through the faith of the believing spouse as that one continues to believe God and remains faithful in faith, love, and endurance.

You have to keep going. Then you will yield the fruit that God says you will yield. Do not give up on the fruit tree just because it does not bear fruit in the first three years. In fact, many fruit trees get rid of the fruit in the first three years. After that they will give really good fruit.

I feel that is true with marriage too. It takes a minimum of three years to get started in marriage and see something really good come. If you are past the three years, then say, "Hallelujah; thank you, Lord," and you are on the way. You might be in a marriage where you think, *Oh, Lord, how long?* However long it takes. Stay in there. Stay sound in faith, sound in love, and sound in endurance and believe God. You do what God says to do. God says He will do what He says He will do, and He will.

"Likewise teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live. Not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good." **Titus 2:3** Gals ought to be learning these principles whether they are young or old (perhaps nobody ever taught them these things). They are supposed to be teaching the younger ones. If some taught the younger ones what they know, the younger ones would be in bad shape. Older women can still learn and impart the principles to their children or grandchildren. It is never too late to learn the principles because they are God's principles, and they will work. God will bless and honor.

"Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands." **Titus 2:4** This is the only thing that it says the older women are really supposed to teach the younger women: to love their husbands and children.

"...To be self-controlled and pure" Titus **2:7** means you are not to fly off whenever you feel like it, but be reverent, respectful, and discrete in your attitudes. "A gold ring in a pig's snout is like a beautiful woman who is indiscrete." (She opens her mouth and unfitting

language comes out.) She is to be self-controlled and pure. Let the influences be those of God, not of the world. Narrow your focus.

“...To be busy at home,” not around the neighborhood **Titus 2:5**

“...To be kind.” **Titus 2:5** I have noticed that sometimes when gals get hurt or wounded, they are not kind. They get bitter and hard. They get to a place where they do not want to reach out, and they do not want anybody reaching out to them. Kindness is the quality of God that reaches out to somebody who has done horrible things to you. It is God’s loving kindness that leads people to repentance. **Romans 2:4** The tendency is to say, “Okay, husband, you are a jerk. You have been doing this and this and this.”

Sometimes the husband needs to know it just like that, but it is to be done in kindness, not with spite, not with put downs. A wife is not his mother. A guy does not respond to that “mother stuff” from his wife. In fact, he will get upset. In the same way, I think a lot of guys treat their wives like dogs. They are not “nice girl, nice girl.”

“...To be subject to their husbands.” **Titus 2:5** To be subject is a submitted state. “Submit yourselves one to another.” **Ephesians 5** To be subject is not a bad term. It is not an evil thing. It is in God’s order. God has placed the man to be in a position of authority and responsibility for his wife and children. He has placed the woman in a place of influence. She can influence him for good (for God) or she can influence him for evil.

The wisest man on the earth fell to the influences of women. (Solomon had a thousand wives.) I do not know how he ever did it. It is enough to have one wife, let alone a thousand. He compromised the things of faith. Adam, the purest man that ever lived, fell to the influence of his wife when she accepted the influence of the devil. The strongest man that ever lived, Samson, gave in to a woman’s influence. On the other hand, there were great women of God in the bible. Ruth, Esther, Lydia, and Dorcas must have been gems. Esther was a par excellent godly woman on the inside and out because she had the qualities of submission, reverence, and respect.

God promotes that. He honors that. Those kind of people have an influence for God in their households.

I think feminists came up with the expression, "Behind every great man is a *greater* woman." Put aside whether men or women are better. The two complement each other. It is true that behind every great man is a great woman. Greatness is determined by the investment that you make in your life for God, and you allow God's grace and blessing to come forth to be cultivated and developed.

In a house where there is nothing but strife, nobody is great. There is nothing but problems, and there is always a pulling apart. No one can come together and accomplish what God has given, but when the two come together, their prayers are not hindered anymore (1 Peter 3:6). God's blessing can happen.

To continue "...that no one will malign the Word of God." **Titus 2:5**  
When a wife is subject to her husband, then no one can malign the Word of God. When people do these principles, the marriage will be blessed. When the marriage is blessed, and people in the community see it, they will say, "Your God must work."

When people call themselves Christians but are not doing what God says, then people out there say, "Yeah, they are Christians, but look at their marriage. Look at how they fight like cats and dogs all the time. Look how they talk about each other." That causes people to blaspheme and malign the Word of God.

When people are doing what God says, God blesses it. Others might say, "Maybe there is something to it. I want in on that because it is something good. It works." The husband whose wife was calling him lord said, "There must be something here because this is not the lady I knew, and I like what I see."

The wife needs to know that you are making investments in her life that will expand and fulfill her world. Action steps are:

1. Learn your wife's spiritual gifts and discern her progress in developing them. Romans 12 talks about spiritual motivational

gifts. What is the gift that is in your wife? What is working in her? Work to cultivate and develop it.

What drew me to my wife initially was that I sensed in Diana a real genuineness and caring. In addition, she was honest. She was upfront. She did not play games.

She calls things as they are, and she sees very clearly. (Sometimes too clearly!... but it is good.) One outcome of seeing so clearly is what we call the Jonah spirit. A person with a Jonah spirit wants to see justice done. Diana is all about truth in justice, and I love that in her, but there is a tenderness and a caring that goes with it.

When you do not see justice being done, you still need to have loving kindness and mercy. Jonah said, "God, I just knew you would do it. I knew you would save the whole city." Jonah sat outside pouting because the people had repented. When you are off a little bit, you can get into that Jonah spirit and miss the loving kindness. It was the loving kindness I saw in Diana that attracted me to her.

If your wife's gift begins to tend toward the negative side, it has to be brought back into balance. Find the spiritual gift that God has given her. He has put something in her. It is a deposit that He puts in every person. This is to fulfill His plan and His will in each one's life, whatever that might be. It is a spiritual gift. We, in turn, need to work with it to help it progress, to develop it and nurture it.

2. Work with her about the responsibilities which each of you have in the home. Many times people feel like a fish out of water because they do not know what is expected of them. What do you expect of your wife? What do you want her to do? Everybody is a little bit different about their responsibilities. We encourage every family to work these out and set them down. What are your responsibilities? You should lay them out and work together on them. I could give you some examples, but ultimately you have to determine for yourself what you will do. The principles I am showing help people to function.

Let's say you go for a job interview. If you are not told exactly what your responsibilities will be and what will be required, it would be very difficult for you to function in that role. Before long it would create problems. You would either overstep your bounds or under step your bounds and not fulfill what you should be doing according to your boss's expectation.

In the household, it cannot be assumed that the guy takes out the trash and the lady does the dishes. That is how I believe in approaching it.

Then there are things you like to do and things you do not like to do, but you have to do both. A wise man will often look for input while he is absorbing, and then he makes his decisions based on many things. Sometimes guys do not look for input, but they should put the responsibilities out there on the table.

Many girls have the "I do it all" spirit. Think about this. It calls for honesty. Then there are men who do not look at what is going on in the home. Let's say they make the money to buy the groceries. The cupboards would be bare if they did not, but what the wife makes she spends.

The things that people think are important are the things that they do. *I have got to cook. I have got to clean. I have got to do this. I have got to do that. All he does is come home, sit there, ask for food, and watch TV.* We have to look at, evaluate, and see what it is that they can do.

Diana was an office manager. She was trained to do accounting, so I said, "Go ahead and keep the books for the household." I am in charge of the books, but she keeps the books. If I am going to manage the household, I need to know where the money is going. After we talk about it, she does them under my direction. That works really well as long as she does it under my direction. (You cannot be working against yourself.)

At one point she felt pressure when she looked at what was going out and what was coming in. I said, "It is always a miracle." She looked

at me and asked, "What do you mean it is always a miracle?" I answered, "Being able to pay your bills is a praise report." Then she understood.

Over the years we have cultivated and developed that it is always a miracle when we are able to pay a bill. The person on the other end (receiving the payment) says, "Yes, it is a good thing." It is a good thing for the one who got paid. So that is part of our testimony too.

When the pressure came on her, though, then I would say, "If you are having a problem with it, then I will take it back for awhile." She would answer, "No, I do not want you to take it back." Then we had to deal with it a little bit, which meant we could not be saying, "We are going to be short." The way I understand it, we will never be short.

The guy has to be strong in faith, love, and endurance because at that point his wife might say, "What do you think? Are you going to go to the grocery store, and they will just give you a loaf of bread?" I say, "Have you ever asked God?"

One time Diana wanted to know why I always had extra money on the side. I replied, "Because I loose my faith on having extra." I am not putting her down. I am just saying that is what I do. I am expecting increase. So she began to see and ask how I did that. I told her I was expecting for increase over and above, according to what God's Word and promise says. I expected that it would come in. Every now and then we need to encourage one another.

I find that the more you have, the more goes out. When you had little, what you had went out. Now that you have increase, more goes out. There is always something you have to keep believing God for, and God keeps things moving along. He will supply, and then you can say, "Yes, thank you, Lord. You did it." Someone is encouraged in faith some more.

The man has his responsibilities: Go out and earn the living and be totally opposed to a welfare mentality (where the man sits around and/or drops in on the household every now and then, but the wife makes the income). It is not God's order. A man has no business in

that house if he is not fulfilling his responsibilities. What does the poor woman do? She carries all the responsibility. That ought not to be so. That must change. If you are relating to what I am talking about, do not start feeling sorry for yourself. You will not carry it by yourself if you are believing God because He will stand with you. He will help you, and He will see you through until the guy finally gets the drift, takes his place, and rises up. (We live in a very strange age. It is easier to get a divorce than it is to get married.)

3. Define the responsibilities which each of you have in the home. If it is his responsibility, girls, to cut the grass (and it is five feet high), do not you dare go out there and cut it. Let him do it. You want him to take his responsibilities. You let him take his responsibilities, and you do not say a word about it. Guys, you do not say a word about your wife's responsibility either. You have already defined it with one another. You sat down together, right? You made an agreement.

I like making agreements and contracts. I think it is really helpful. I made contracts with our children too. I set down exactly what their responsibilities were, and we signed it.

Put it on the refrigerator, or post it on the door. Put it somewhere where it is obvious and all know what their responsibilities are. Everybody needs to do their part in the working of the team. We all pitch in and we work together.

You can say, "I am looking at my list of responsibilities and what I am supposed to be doing around the house." Never say, "Hey, you are missing number four – mowing the grass. It is five feet high. Come on. Get out there." You just say, "I am looking here at my responsibility list, and I am checking it to make sure that I am doing everything I am supposed to do." Do not put it on them. Let God deal with their hearts. You make it known that you are looking at your list. Then you make sure, if you are going to point a finger, that you are not missing anything on your list. They will check your list twice also if you start pointing the finger. They will start looking at you and pointing the finger too.

4. Visualize how you can add new dimensions to your wife's responsibility so she can see future value to what she is presently doing. I think this is very important. Diana is very creative. She comes up with ideas to make things. It is a natural gift. In addition, she reads a lot so she has information. She is like a walking encyclopedia. She can remember phone numbers, as well as people's birthdays and anniversaries. I thank God for her every day. She will come up to me and say, "Did you know it was (a certain person's) birthday today?"

Look for those kinds of things because every gal has different talents which are complements to you. It helps you to be better at what you do. Diana helps me to be a more loving and caring pastor in God's service because she is really into all the stuff that ladies are into. Sometimes I just go right on by.

The husband and wife are a team. Start to look at it that way. What is it that is in your wife that God put there as a complement to you? Look at those guys, girls, and see what is in there too.

Take a problem she is having and turn it into projects which will be an effective part of life's message (part of your testimony). I was sharing a little earlier about Diana's accounting ability and her organizational skills. However, every now and then fear would set in. It is common to women as we have pointed out in previous chapters. We need to, in love, deal with it. If it means taking back a task for awhile until she makes the adjustment, that is okay. I would rather let her keep it, but the attitude has to be changed. We have to get rid of the fear. Otherwise, I would be believing God on the one side, and she would be saying on the other side, "I do not know where it is going to come from."

Accountants are a rare breed. They look at the figures. They look at the facts. They can tell you exactly what is coming in, exactly what is going out, and where you are going to be six months down the line if you continue at your current rate.

Believers are a rare breed. I am not making a contrast between accountants and believers – one not having faith and the other having faith, but faith sees things that are not there. Put the two ways of operating together. You will get one of God’s good blends, which develops a testimony.

Take a problem, and start to work it. You know your wife and you know what her frailties are. She knows yours. You can play the “pick, pick, pick” game all day long if you want or you can choose to minister to, love, and encourage one another. Turn that weak area into a blessing. What was once the weak area can actually become a great strength. You choose how you will approach it.

If you keep pecking at her she is going to peck back. “People who live in glass houses should not throw stones.” If that is the kind of marriage or life you want to have, you can make it just that way. You peck at her (she might be just tolerating it), but before long she is going to peck back, or she will leave. It works the same way for the guys. We live in a day and an age where the guys are getting beaten up by their wives. I never heard of such a thing, but it works both ways. I think it is time we stop beating on each other and pecking at one another and start, “Okay, God, let’s see some miracles here. Begin with me.”

Diana used to pray all the time, “Lord, change him.” As she has often shared, God changed her. When I saw that God had changed her, then it changed me. She quit pecking, and I started seeing all the things I needed to adjust. Incredible how that works. I would not change because she was pecking. When God pecks, I change. You see the difference?

I started to encourage and build her up. I am a counselor and I would see things in her that the Holy Spirit showed me. I started treating her like I would anybody else I counsel. People have a tendency not to treat the ones closest to them the way they treat people out there. Would you treat somebody else the way you treat your spouse? Think about it. It is a question one needs to ask oneself. If I am going to bring glory to God, I might need to make some adjustments.

I started setting up counseling appointments just like we do. Diana would say to others, "You do not see me up in the prayer line very much because I get delivered over dinner or over laundry." Guys, you need to take special authority in your home to love you family and care about them, dealing with things in the spirit, in love, and see God's best come forth.

5. The final step of action is help her to visualize how she can use these qualities and skills to further benefit her family. I do not believe in marketing my wife, but I do believe that abilities can be used. Diana uses all the things that she can make, as gifts for people. She must have saved me a fortune over the years. There would be 20 birthdays on one day, a shower would be coming up, and other things were happening.

If people would use the abilities they have... Say, "Honey, the way the kids respond to you is incredible. You have such an influence on them. When you talk with them they respond," or "What you made was beautiful." People have walked up to Diana and said, "That dress must have cost you 200 dollars," and she would look at them and say, "No, it was \$12.95. I made it." You have to encourage people to apply God's principles. Many times they will not step out and do anything on their own because they think it is not something you want, or they might think it is distracting them from what they are supposed to be doing around the house.

LOVING YOUR SPOUSE  
CHAPTER NINE  
The Proverbs 31 Woman

Proverbs 31 describes a wife of noble character. I believe that the Proverbs 31 lady is made that way. She has the gifts, she has the skills, and she has the qualities. The husband cultivates and develops them, permitting the freedom of God to work through her.

To begin with a husband has to know 1) that his wife is the best thing that God gave him and 2) that she is gifted by the Spirit of God. Not only does she have abilities and qualities that God has given her, but she has learned other things as well. Encourage your wife to learn. Encourage her to pursue the areas that she is gifted in. Do not dwell on negatives unless you are going to help build those into strengths. If you are not willing to take the time and the energy to develop those areas and build them into strengths, do not even bring them up. She knows where she is weak.

“A wife of noble character who can find?” **Proverbs 31:10** I believe this quality is groomed, cultivated, and developed. A lot of it depends on the husband. In the same way when a husband has the confidence, respect, and admiration of his wife, he will go out and leap tall buildings in a single bound (he is encouraged). He knows that his wife is supporting him. No matter whether he is failing or winning, he knows she is with him. He will go out and do things with that kind of encouragement coming from the one closest to him.

“She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.” **Proverbs 31:11** I trust my wife with finances. I trust that she will not go out and spend money that is not there. Because I released that freedom and privilege to her, I actually have to get her to go out and spend now. She is more concerned about everybody else being taken care of. I am excited about that because to me it says that her value is not dependent on what she has. She does not have to buy things. Many people buy to make themselves feel good.

“She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life.” **Proverbs 31:12** When a husband and wife have their hearts set on bringing good to their spouses and not harm all the days of their lives, what a blessing can happen! You are here for his good, not for harm, not to beat him down.

When people have insecurities, they will beat down their spouses. For example, if the spouses have more education or ability than they do, they beat them down to try to discourage them, rather than cultivating their strengths and using their strengths in their behalf. They demean what is good in others. If you really have God’s wisdom, you would see that God gave your spouse to you to be a benefit, not a harm. You need to start to draw on that.

Put away the insecurities and the jealousy because you are on the same team. If you have people on the team who can shoot the ball and make the baskets, who cares how many times they shoot? Let them shoot, and let them make the baskets. You are on the same team, and you win together. “Well, I should get the ball.” Who cares? Let them shine. I love it when my wife shines. Glory to God. Let her shine. Let her do something that will bring glory to God.

Do not tell your wife to just sit there and be quiet. Is that going to help anything? Let her do what God has given her to do, not “You cannot go out. You have to stay home. I read in the bible you are supposed to be busy at home.” The bible says, “Rightly divide the word of truth.” After she takes care of the home, and you will see that a lady like this is able to do 101 things, do not limit her to those things. Let her do what else God has given her – under your covering, under your direction, under your supervision.

It says, “Her husband has full confidence in her.” Guys often do not trust their wives; that is the problem. They are insecure about them. She is a blessing; you do not have to be insecure about her. She will be with you. She will be faithful. She will be a whole lot more with you and a whole lot more faithful if you trust her a little bit. Then the responsibility goes on her. The same thing with the husband.

Wives, are you always clinging? Guys do not like clingers. Clingers say, "What are you going to do now?" They are always in your face bugging you. "Where are you going? Who are you going with?" That gets old really fast. A little bit of trust and confidence lacks nothing of value. Everything of value will come to you. There will be many things that are not of value, and you will learn to pitch those.

"She brings him good, not harm all the days of her life. She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands." **Proverbs 31:13** She works with eager hands because she knows she is loved. She knows her place is secure. She knows that her husband has confidence and trust in her. She knows that she can do anything that she wants under God's guidance through him. She knows her responsibility, and because she is a godly woman, she will run with it.

Over the years I have seen guys and gals seem to think their spouses are not godly. I say, "Man alive, that will ruin your relationship really fast." It might be the case that they are ungodly but God calls things that be not as though they are, and they end up happening. **Romans 4:17**

It is time you put in a little faith and confidence to allow your wives to work with eager hands. If they know you trust them, and you believe that they can do it (you are putting confidence in them), they will work eagerly. Even though they stumble and fall, keep praising and thanking God for them and encouraging them. When they need to be shown how to do something, you show them. There is nothing wrong with being shown what to do if you do not know how.

It is obvious many guys do not know how to be husbands, and women do not know how to be wives. Do not get offended if I tell you how a husband should act, and how a wife should act. It is what God says. They are not my ideas; I do not have an idea of my own. With every idea of my own, I end up getting in trouble. Let's stick with what works. God says what works. Stay with God's ideas.

"She is like the merchant ships bringing her food from afar. She gets up while it is still dark. She provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls." **Proverbs 31:14, 15** When you are doing

things God's way, you will have many servants. People tell me, "I do not have any servants." Then I ask if they have a refrigerator, dishwasher, garbage disposal, washing machine or dryer. In addition, does not it say we are supposed to serve one another? Think about it. Some of our servants are cars, heaters, and air conditioners. It used to be that you had to do everything yourself: Get the water, get the wood, start the fire.

The Proverbs 31 woman is diligent. Diligent hands prosper. "She considers a field and buys it." **Verse 16.** Out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. I thought she was just supposed to be busy at home? Yes. (Note; she is working all of these things out of her home.) She is resourceful.

Guys, if you want to marry a resourceful lady so you can sit back and do nothing, you have it wrong (you missed it). Is she doing everything? She should be doing what he has given her freedom to do. "She considers a field, she buys it out of her earnings. She plants a vineyard." I think many women have the idea, *I want to marry a rich guy, so I can sit back and do nothing.* How ungodly. If God has given you gifts and invested of Himself in you (His virtue and His blessings), God intends for them to be used. He does not intend for you to sit around doing nothing. He intends for you to be resourceful.

"And she sets about her work vigorously (with eager hands)." **Verse 17.** It makes a difference to a husband when he comes home and sees his wife praising God and singing while she is working, as opposed to complaining that she has to pick up after him all the time. It says a lot to him about her attitude around the house. If a woman would say, "I thank God for the privilege to pick up after you," he will look at her like *Lady, what happened to you?* Soon he will start looking at all the stuff to be done, and he will pitch in and pick up. If you say it will not work, it is because you do not believe it will work. It will work because it is God's principle. It will work if you do it in the right attitude.

"She sets about her work vigorously. Her arms are strong for her tasks." She has strength sufficient to do things. "She sees that her

trading is profitable and her lamp does not go out at night.” **Verse 18** This lady works day and night. “In her hands she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.” This lady is too good to be true. How does she help the poor and the needy? She makes things. She does things. She works. She believes God. She is resourceful. “When it snows, she has no fear for her household.” **Verse 21.** She is not afraid for her household “...for all of them are clothed in scarlet.” She has already made provisions. She has been out there working, getting everything ready for the time that it snows.

“She makes coverings for her bed. She is clothed in fine linen and purple.” This lady is decked out. She probably does not look like she has been through the washing machine when her husband comes home. She looks good. She is wonder a woman.

Now let’s get to the husband. What is he doing anyway? Maybe the guy does not have any respect for himself and what God is doing in his life, but when he sees what is happening in his wife, he will stand up and take notice, “Look at this blessing I have for a wife. Maybe I would better get with the program. Lord, what do I need to do? How am I going to do it?” Some things can begin to happen.

Girls, you can be just like the Proverbs 31 lady because the gift that God put in your heart is there; it is working if you just see yourself that way. Look at what God has given you. You do not even need the guy to honor and praise you. Start having some respect for what God is doing in your life and who He made you to be, and watch what will happen.

“He is respected at the city gate.” **Proverbs 31:23** It is possible to be respected at the city gate but not respected at home. How much better to be respected at home, and then be respected at the city gate as well. I think this lady has a good attitude toward her husband, and it has some bearing on what happens in the community. “Her husband is respected at the city gate where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.” He does not have to worry about the home front. He knows it is taken care of. He can be concerned about the affairs of the land.

Some gals are busy running around everywhere doing everything except taking care of 1) their husbands, 2) their children 3) their homes.

In God's order, when those things are taken care of, then the wives can do other activities under God's direction, through their husbands. See **Titus 2**. The guy in Proverbs 31 is so prosperous and blessed at what he is doing, and he does not have to take a thought about what is happening at home. He knows his wife is following his headship, and she has taken care of what needs to be done. It is not that she is doing everything. It is that she has the attitude that it is a privilege and blessing to fulfill her responsibilities and the calling that God has given her. She is carrying it out with all her heart to the Lord as a blessing to her husband.

Where would a wife have the money to do anything if her husband was not out there working and supplying? When he comes home, he is tired because he worked hard all day, but she worked hard all day too. Sometimes when the guy comes home, the wife says, "Okay, the kids are yours now; you take them." I cannot tell you how many times I have heard that one. Attitude. Adjust. You do not see the Proverbs 31 lady doing that, do you? The husband is sitting at the seat of the elders and running the land, while "she makes linen garments and sells them. She supplies the merchants with sashes. She is clothed with strength and dignity."

Ladies, never demean your position as a housewife. That has been demeaned in our society. It is one of the highest callings God has given because it helps keep the home stable. It helps keep the children blessed and in order. Some gals think that they are not of any worth unless they are out doing something else. However, as soon as they start neglecting their husbands, children, and homes, they have lost the blessing of God on whatever else they are doing. They have violated God's principles. Loving your husband and children and taking care of your home are your first responsibilities.

I see lots of gals who want to minister Jesus all over the world, to run here and there, but their husbands are thinking, *Let her go*, or *There*

*she goes again.* Those husbands are not happy or blessed. They will not really crab about their wives because after all they are doing something for Jesus, but they are not happy and they are not blessed. It is a sad thing. I encourage girls to go to church, but do what God wants you to do, honor God, your husband, and your family first. Then if the husband is in agreement, you can do other things. You can be a blessing in the work of God in other places.

The same thing applies to the guy. A guy should not be neglecting his wife and children. Many times guys miss it. According to the bible the qualifications for elders are: 1) they love God first, 2) they love their families, and 3) they have their households in order. If their households are out of order, if their wives or children are not in order, then they are not qualified to minister. That is the way it is. God wrote the book, not me. I just seek to do it and present it.

What else was the Proverbs 31 lady doing? “She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.” **Verse 27** “Her children arise and call her blessed.” **Verse 28.**

I tried to cultivate honor in our children. I would ask, “Did you kiss mom? Did you thank mom for making breakfast? Did you thank mom for doing the laundry?” After I learned to do that, I passed it on to the children. “Are you appreciative of what mom is doing around here?”

The gals need to be appreciative of their husbands too. Daddy works hard, and God is using him. He is doing this and doing that. Boast about your husband to the children, and bless God for him. Show him to be the knight in shining armor, not tarnished. You present him to the children as a blessing from God. In the same way, the guys need to present their wives to the children as a blessing from God.

Surely you have your moments. You explain that and talk to them about it. If you mess up, maybe you have an argument, just explain to the children that you needed to ask God’s forgiveness for what you did, and it was wrong. You asked God to forgive you, and you ask them to forgive you because they do not need that kind of ranting and raving and abuse in their lives. The children will enter in. They will

respect you and honor you even more for being honest with them and setting an example.

“Her children arise and call her blessed. Her husband also.” **Verse 28** The husband calls her blessed and he praises her too. The guys really want to be praised and honored, and they want to be respected, but the bible says, “Her husband calls her blessed and praises her.” Men and women both need to be praised and encouraged. They need to know that they are worthwhile and important. I thank God for Diana all the time, but I needed to tell her that. I had no problem boasting about God’s work in her, but I needed to personally tell her more. I started telling her, and I would say to the kids, “You have such a wonderful momma. God is doing wonderful things in and through her.” She started to perk up and respond. We all need that. Guys and gals. We all need that kind of encouragement.

“Many women do noble things.” There are many women doing noble things. A little tip, guys: never praise what another woman is doing more than what your wife is doing. In the same way, I always tell the girls, “Do not run home and say, ‘Pastor Randy said this, and Pastor Randy said that.’ Here a Pastor Randy, there a Pastor Randy.” Do not do that. Your husband will grow to hate me, and I am here to be a blessing to your household. The last thing he will want is to see my face coming around. It looks like his wife is following what I say more than what he says. Actually, I am just saying what God says. Ladies should tell their husbands, “I learned this from God’s Word, and what do you think about it, Honey?” That keeps it where it belongs. If you start praising somebody else more than your spouse, then you will have problems.

“...But you surpass them all.” How encouraging! “Charm is deceptive, beauty is fleeting.” Do you put too much emphasis on beauty? “But a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.” In like manner, a man who fears the Lord is to be praised. “Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.” What God is saying to us is to give our wives the rewards she has earned. If she wants a new dress, give her a new dress. Do not make her feel bad about it. “Well, what do you mean, she has only

200 dresses in her closet. She has clothes in there she has not worn in three years.” Instead, say, “I repent, Lord.” Guys have a tendency to go out and get whatever they need, but let their gals think about it. God’s principle is give and it will be given unto you, pressed down, shaken together, running over. She is always giving.

God says to reward her with encouragement, praise, and something that she has been looking for. Maybe she has put it aside and did not buy it because she felt more responsible to take care of the family. Reward her with that item. Find it, search it out, and pray about it. If you need to believe God for the resources in order to get it for her, believe God for the resources to come in. Do you think God wants to reward her? Sure He does. The same thing with the guys. God wants the guys rewarded the same way.

God may cause things to come in other ways too. I have seen this many times. When I did not have the resources to do something for Diana, but God wanted her rewarded, He caused it to come in.

Many years ago Diana thought it might be nice if we had a microwave. I thought we did not need a microwave. What did we need a microwave for? She had an oven. Well, she dropped the subject. I was ministering up in the Oregon area and a guy came up to me and said, “God told me that I was to give you a microwave, so I am going to order it. I want you to be down at the catalog store to pick it up when it gets there.” I said, “Okay.”

(Diana gets everything that her heart has ever desired because God causes it to come in. It comes in many different ways because she is faithful to God and allows me to do what God has given me to do. I take the time to do anything that I need to do, and she respects that. She honors that; she allows me to do it. She does not nag me. She keeps my home front fires burning, the fort protected, and everything blessed while I am gone.

I did not want that microwave. I did not even think we needed it. I thought it was a waste. God thought she needed it, and the gift giver had no knowledge whatsoever about her desire. God just put it on his heart, and it was exactly what was needed. I asked God to

forgive me after the guy left. Why was I stopping a blessing that He was trying to send in?

You know who uses that microwave the most now? I later realized that Diana did not want the microwave for herself.

She is my crown. “The woman is the crown of the man.” **1 Corinthians 11** I used that microwave all the time. I used it more than anybody. God wants to reward people for what they have done in their faithfulness to Him and to us. “Let her works bring her praise at the city gate.” Where is God sitting? At the city gate.

If you want to see the blessing of God in your spouse, work these principles. It is amazing how He has supplied and rewarded faithfulness to Him and to His work. If you are going to do anything in this life next to loving God (the first priority), love and care for your spouse even more than you care for yourself. Watch what God does.

Even if you are not married, these principles work in relationships. They work in business. When you provide a service (any business is providing a service to people), it is going to be blessed. It will increase over and over as you honor God as the first and foremost. When you prefer others more important than yourself, and you do not think about yourself, it will cause a blessing on the relationship.

Whether you are single or married, these love principles work. If you treat your employer the way we are talking about, you could be promoted to the head of the company. He might even turn it over to you someday.

LOVING YOUR SPOUSE  
CHAPTER TEN  
The Marriage Bed Undefined

The Effects of Pride

Pride will be the downfall of the home. Pride will be the downfall of a ministry. Pride will be the downfall of a job. Pride will be the downfall, period.

- *“Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.”* (Proverbs 16:18)
  
- *“There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof leads to death.”* (Proverbs 16:25)

Another definition of pride is self. Whenever people are looking out for themselves, it appears right and good, but the end is disaster and destruction. And they wonder why it happened to them.

Anybody who is going to be of use in a ministry will have no more of “me,” – it will be all God. Those of any worth in a marriage are always going to be looking toward their spouses. Looking out for your spouse should be more important than looking out for yourself.

We are to prefer others more important than ourselves. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus... who humbled Himself and became a servant. (See Philippians 2:1-11)

Anyone who would rise up in the place of employment has to be a servant, seeking the welfare of the company rather than their own promotion. Authorities would be wise to watch out for people who are on a promotion trip because they are dangerous. Many times they may be well qualified to do a good job, but if they are doing it for themselves, it will come out sooner or later.

We are to *“Trust in the Lord, lean not to our own understanding, acknowledge Him in all our ways and He will direct the path.”* (Proverbs 3:5, 6) However, sometimes we just miss it. I have taken

a few wrong turns here and there, but if I am a righteous person seeking God, He will speak to me. I will hear a voice behind me saying, "Go this way." (Isaiah 30:21)

Frequently pride will cause people to get into trouble in the bedroom.

### A Powerful Influence

The ancient stoics believed in being platonic, and there was not any emphasis on the flesh. On the other hand, the Epicureans were "everything for the flesh." In today's society as well there is wrong thinking about sexual activity.

Sexual activity makes up a small percentage of married life. Period. However, it has a powerful influence because it has to do with self. Trouble comes in the bedroom because people are considering themselves more important than their spouses.

Let us establish some principles in regard to the marriage bed. Every bed outside of the marriage bed is defiled. It is an abomination before God for anyone to have relations with any individual outside of the marriage bond.

*"The marriage bed is undefiled."* (Hebrews 13:4) Many people think, therefore, that "anything goes" in the marriage bed. That is not true. A marriage bed is a very holy, special place. God would have it kept holy, where spouses prefer the other more important than themselves. It is a violation of God's love principle and love order for a person to come into a marriage bed selfishly.

Anything that violates a spouse's conscience is a violation of love. As two people are joined together in the Lord, in spirit, they are in agreement in the spirit. Then the flesh will need to come into agreement.

The bond in marriage is holy and blessed of God. It is intended for people to enjoy, but it is not intended for them to fulfill the lust of the flesh. This would mean you want your desires fulfilled before your spouse's desires. Anytime we want our desires fulfilled before our mates, then we are moving in the flesh.

This is not to say that you cannot tell your spouse you have a need, but it should be mutually agreed upon. Each couple has a right before God to do what each couple desires to do. This is very important that we set this down.

How many times they have sexual relations is up to each couple. I do not believe that others should be interfering in their love lives, unless the couple is having counseling. I do not believe that people should be talking about their love life with anyone else either. They have a holy union. Unfortunately, people are talking to those they should not be talking to. It is not going to help the relationship.

Although this area is a very small part of married life, it is a volatile area. Feelings can get hurt easily. Rejection happens. The devil will take an opportunity when one spouse is wanting to have relations while the other gets a headache. The spouse suddenly feels rejected and unloved.

### The Way of the World

Because of what has happened in the world, many Christians have been taught that sex is dirty or unclean. It is something that good girls do not do or that bad boys do. Most of what you watch on television or see on billboards is sexually oriented nowadays, and it is increasing. I call many programs sexually immoral, an abomination to God, or soft pornography. It puts enough thoughts in your head to totally pollute your mind and defile you before God, making you unclean.

Everything you look at in the world is sexually oriented. Therefore, the tendency may be for Christians to think they do not want it. They want to keep themselves pure, clean, and holy. In the marriage bond we have to realize that sexual acts are clean and holy and pure because God ordained this union between the husband and wife. You cannot throw out what God has established. However, God never intended that sexual perversion occur. He never intended for people to force themselves to give, and He never intended that they not give of themselves. That all came from people seeking their own wants and desires.

Many times the reason a husband forces himself is because his wife does not want to give herself. Rather than run off and find someone else, he wants to have sex with his wife, which is the way God established it.

It is a give and take situation. It is love giving, and it is love receiving, but there is to be nobody grabbing.

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7 is a key chapter about married life, giving us guidelines. I believe that the reason people have sexual problems in their marriages is 1) because of their upbringing and what their parents have told them or not told them; 2) what people of the world have told them; 3) perverted ideas have crossed their minds through perverted materials; 4) the emphasis of the world is upon sexual things.

Sexual thoughts are on some people's minds day in and day out, either pro or con. Some for it and some against it. Some women are concerned about being raped. Before they realize it, they are in bed with their husband and the fear of being raped comes up from within. Let me tell you, that is the end of it, guys. If you love your wife, you will get to the bottom of the fear, and you will not instill more fear in her. You will get rid of it. Where did it come from? It came from reading in the paper about someone who got raped, molested, or killed. Fear is instilled in girls this way when they are growing up. Then the freedom God intended towards one another is squelched.

Guys get the image from the world that a macho man is on the make for every woman in sight. That is not macho according to God. The macho man is tender, gentle, loving, considerate, and kind – totally different than what the world would say is macho. He is loyal and faithful. He is not some alley cat running around looking for his next lay.

In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7 Paul responded to the people's questions. The passage says it is good for a man not to touch a woman, which was referring to being celibate. He was saying that was good.

Jesus makes it very clear that some people are called to be celibate, others are not. (Matthew 7) If you are called to be celibate, be that way. If you are not, do not have relations until you are married. If you have already done so, ask God's forgiveness and knock it off. It works both ways, gals and guys.

Fornication is a sexual condition – relations outside of marriage. To avoid fornication, *“Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.”* Note, own husband, own wife. It is not plural. One.

We are talking about commitment in spirit, mind, and body. The whole person. You cannot join with a spouse in the spirit and not be joined in thoughts and in body. Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife.

Let the husband do what the wife desires him to do. Likewise also, let the wife do what the husband desires. This holds true in both cases as long as it does not violate either one's conscience. A violation of conscience is a violation of a person's spirit. We have seen many people broken up because a husband or wife violated the other's conscience and that was the end of the freedom until they were healed.

The reason sex is so heavy upon people's minds is because of the way it is presented all around the world. It is what people everywhere are talking and thinking about. Before long, it is possible to get obsessed with it. Many husbands and wives are obsessed with it. Some are “gung ho,” and some are not. The more you dwell on it, the more trouble you will have in that area. The bible says that we are to set our thoughts on higher things – on Jesus and on things of the Spirit. Then in due time when God wants us to have sex, we want to do it – and it is alright with our spouse. If we are seeking to indulge the flesh, and constantly dwelling on it, then we will end up in trouble.

### Be in Agreement

*“The wife has no power over her own body, but the husband. And likewise also the husband has not power over his own body, but the wife.” (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:4)*

That verse has been distorted. A woman may say, “Honey, I have been working all day, scrubbing the floors, doing this and that, running all over with the kids, I just do not want to do it.” Then the husband says, “Now.” Let me tell you what that will do in his wife. She will not think well of her husband, and I am putting it mildly. She will think he is the most inconsiderate clod that ever walked the face of the earth.

I believe that the union of a husband and a wife is supposed to be of one heart, one mind, and one body. It needs to be all three because they need to be in agreement. Otherwise, there is a break of fellowship.

We dealt with one situation where the husband thought that the more he had relations with his wife, the more he was expressing love to her. His wife wondered what kind of a pervert she had as a husband. He thought he was communicating love to his wife while she thought that he was sexually perverted. There was no communication in the bedroom. If there is no communication in the bedroom, there is probably no communication outside of it either. It is a use and abuse deal. God never intended it to be that way.

It says the wife has no power over her own body and a husband has no power over his own body. It belongs to the spouse. Let me tell you, you need to treasure your spouse. If you treasure your own body, you will treasure your spouse. You do not want to do any harm to your spouse because you are hurting yourself. Anything that violates your spouse’s conscience violates you.

Many times people are hindered from entering into the freedom that God has for them. *“Defraud you not one another, except it be with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency [lack of having relations].” (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:5)*

The term defraud means to deprive or take away. Defraud is an action against somebody by deceitful measures in order to take something that belongs to them. The bottom line is it is an act that is anything but love. Husbands and wives can take away from their spouses something that belongs to them. Now, who gave it to the spouse? The Lord did.

The world, people, parents' counsel, and the kids out in the school yard have defrauded people from enjoying the freedom that God has given in the sexual bond between a husband and a wife.

If you have a problem, either wanting too much or not at all, then there is a problem elsewhere. Again, "too much" is relative to the couple. Some people are in agreement when they are not going to have any relations, and it is mutually consented upon. In addition, they are not running around the hillside having sex with others. Each couple has a right before God to determine what they want to do. You should stay away from anybody that tells you what you can and cannot do in this regard. There would be some kind of cult operation working there.

*"Defraud not one another except it be with consent for a time."* If there is something that is agreed upon in the household, then it is permissible. If it is something that has been agreed upon but one spouse is desiring something else, then they need to make another agreement. They need to look at "...*that you may give yourselves to fasting and to prayer.*" In other words, couples may give themselves to fasting and prayer, dedicating themselves as a couple to the Lord for that purpose.

See the distinction. This is why Paul says that it is good that a man not touch a woman so he can devote himself to the Lord.

### Yes or No to Sexual Relations

What is involved in keeping God's Sabbath day holy? – Not to be doing your own pleasures. That certainly includes sexual relations because it should be a pleasure too, and not work or drudgery. Sexual relations between a husband and wife should be a great pleasure and delight.

*“After the time of consent they should come together again that Satan tempt them not for their incontinency.”* This means that the devil has an opportunity with a husband or wife because one may not want to have sex and the other does. It opens a door to the devil to come into that household and do all kinds of damage. It also gives an opportunity for adulterous and pornographic thoughts to come. We deal with these real life situations every week. Then there is an opportunity for resentment, bitterness, unforgiveness, and rejection to come into the home. You might as well be inviting the plague in.

Some people are called to celibacy because they do not have any desire or drive. Most people have a sexual drive, and yet some have indulged themselves more than others. It is not that some people have a stronger drive. It is that some people have yielded to it more.

There are times in this life when no matter how strong the drives are in you, and even if your husband is overseas, ladies, you have no right to fulfill your own need with somebody else. The same goes for husbands if they are traveling. Wait until you get home, even if it may be three years. The devil will tell you that you cannot wait. Your flesh says you cannot wait. It also will say you cannot wait to get married, you have to have sexual relations.

A man came to me one time and said, “I am going to die if I do not have sex.” I asked, “Who says?” He looked at me and thought about it. His wife had run off, and he thought he had to have sex. If you would spend your time thinking on higher things, you would get off the flesh and those desires. The only time I see it working correctly is if both husband and wife say yes.

One of the fruits of the spirit is self-control. There are times when we need it more than others. It is there if we want to take it because we are born again of the Spirit of God. We have the Spirit of God living in us, and we have the power and life of God.

Paul went on to say in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7 to deal with the fact that if you are married, you are to live like you are single. Is he saying to lock your spouse in the other room? No. It means to put God as your first

priority in the marriage. The husband's and wife's thoughts should be on the Lord. When their thoughts are on the Lord, then amazing things happen in the bedroom. A freedom occurs.

If your spouse is not home, you can read your bible. You can pray. Pray in tongues. Give glory to God. If anybody knows how to give perfect love, it is the Lord, but do not sit there fantasizing that you are going to have relations with God in the flesh. You will have a relationship in the Spirit. The bond in the Spirit is finer than any flesh relationship, and only people that spend time with God know that. It certainly does not do away with having physical relations with your wife or your husband. It simply says there is a finer operation going on, and maybe you need to spend a little more time in your relationship with God.

People who are having difficulty because their mate has left them need to dwell on the Lord, and not dwell on their physical lack. The more time you spend in the Spirit the more something amazing happens, and the more you do not lack physically because you do not care physically anymore. You are dwelling spiritually in a higher way. Do not indulge your flesh. Do not go around looking for other women or men.

### Mutual Delight

In some Christian homes the husband or the wife may think having sex is dirty or is a drudgery. They think they have to do it for their spouse's sake, and they are doing it out of obedience, but there is no love in it. That is *not* what God is looking for. Submission is love. It is to be a joyful, willing, love response to one's spouse.

It is supposed to be a pleasure and delight. It is delighting in your spouse in the relationship that God has ordained, that God has blessed, and that God has declared holy.

*“Drink waters out of your own cistern, and running waters out of your own well. Let your fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only your own and not strangers' with you. Let your fountain be blessed.”* This is speaking to men. *“Rejoice with the wife of your youth.”* (Proverbs 5:15-18)

The marriage bed is to be a time of rejoicing, a time of laughter, a time of gaiety, a time of mutual love expression for one another. God intended it to be that way. It is not to be done with another, a stranger. Your wife or husband is not a stranger, and if you are feeling that they are, get to know them a little bit better in the spirit, in the mind, and then in the body.

*“Let her be as the loving hind and graceful doe. Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and be thou always ravished with her love.”* (Proverbs 5:19)

All the attention of the husband is to be on his wife alone, not looking around at anyone else. A godly man will not even consider it. When he does, he is quick to repent. *Lord, these eyes belong to you. Help me.*

*“And why will you, my son, be ravished with a strange woman and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He ponders all his goings.”* (Proverbs 5:20-21)

God is watching what is going on with each of us.

*“His own iniquity shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be held with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.”* (Proverbs 5:22-23)

This is a strong warning against immorality. It will end in death for the people who are indulging in it.

Note, the man is to delight in his wife’s body, but it works both ways.

The Song of Solomon (or Song of Songs) is a beautiful love expression that God has put in his holy bible to show the relationship a husband and a wife can have physically. The only reason they can have this kind of a relationship physically is because they are joined spiritually.

Many times guys are “ready to go” at the drop of a hat. They have to realize that if they treated their lady badly all day long, they should not expect to jump in bed at night. Women need to be wooed and courted, and be held as very special. A man cannot just think, *here we go*. Women do not work that way. Men need to court them. They need to woo them, and they need to treat them nicely day in and day out, not just in the bedroom: “Oh, honey, how wonderful, beautiful, and gorgeous you are.” If the only time they ever compliment their wives is in the bed, forget it. It is not what a woman is looking for.

Wives need to understand if the guy seems to be kind of impulsive, it is just the way a man is. He likes to act on the spur of the moment. Why? As soon as he sees his wife walking around, a man gets excited. He operates on what he sees. A woman operates on what is going on inside of her, in her emotions. They are totally different operations.

#### Expression through the Song of Songs

I encourage husbands and wives to spend time together reading through the Song of Solomon, especially if they are having difficulties expressing themselves physically. Take different parts. The woman reads her part, and the guy reads his part. Express it to one another. It is amazing how freedom will come.

Start in chapter two where the dialogue begins between the husband and wife. Notice “*The banner over me is love*” in chapter 2, verse 4. “*He brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me is love.*” This is the only way a husband is to express himself to his wife. The banner is a form of protection. It is a covering. He is never to violate his wife in any way. He is to be looking out for her. He is to be considerate and loving, not only in the bedroom, but all day, all week long.

When a husband starts to become loving all day and all week, his wife should not say, “You are just trying to get something.” She should enjoy what he is doing for her. He may actually be trying to be nice, kind, and considerate. He may not even have a hidden agenda.

It should not be that people have to earn a right to go to the marriage bed. Be nice to each other. Be loving and considerate. Start to delight in each other the way that God would have it in spirit, mind, and body.

When I started to read Song of Solomon, I did not just want to hop in the bed with my wife. What happened to me as I read it was I started admiring my wife.

- *“By night on my bed I sought him who my soul loves; I sought him but I found him not.”* (Song of Solomon 3:1) This is the expression that came from a wife who was looking for her husband who was not able to be there. She sought him. *“I sought him who my soul loves.”* That kind of an eagerness should develop.

People’s minds and emotions have been polluted in regard to loving somebody physically. They have been contaminated. The pure kind of a soul longing is not just about relations. It is a desire to have the spouse there in spirit, mind, and body.

Do you think the woman in the Song of Solomon went out and found another man because her lover was not there? Do you think she fell apart? No, but her love was strong. You cannot let your mind wander and go on a pity party. *Oh, poor me, I wanted to have sex and nobody is here to do anything with.* That is just selfish, and it is not love. It is a devil trip. Devil - petting is what you are doing. People do not realize that devils will have relationships with people who are thinking that way. I have met people who had actually been molested by devils. (Genesis 6:4)

If you open your thoughts up that way, you will end up getting more than you bargained for. I am not trying to put fear into your heart, but I simply want to say that if you have wrong thinking, you will end up getting something wrong.

- *“Behold thou art fair, my love, thou hast doves eyes within thy locks. Thy hair is as the flock of goats.”* (Song of Solomon 4:1)

Many woman would be insulted today if a guy started talking like this, but in those times it was very precious.

- *“Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet and thy speech is comely. Thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.”* (Chapter 4:3)
- *“Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins which feed among the lilies. Until the day break and the shadows flee away, I will get me unto the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense [perfume].”* (Chapter 4:5, 6)
- *“Thou art fair, all fair my love. There is no spot in thee.”* (Chapter 4:7) He is complimenting his wife.
- *“Thy lips, oh my spouse, drop as the honeycomb, honey and milk are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.”* (Chapter 4:11) That is a good smell, not the smell of goats.

This is the kind of fun that people should be having in the bedroom. When people get tense, it interferes with the process, and it damages the relationship. They think, *am I doing this right?* You cannot do anything wrong in the bedroom if you love your spouse and your spouse loves you.

All this garbage about performance has come from the world. What you see on TV and in books will pollute you. If you are doing those kind of things, quit it. Orgies, 24 hour endurance contests, and bull whips were thought up by a pervert who wrote the books and put the movies together, not only to indulge people but to ruin and destroy their minds, bodies, and spirits. God never instituted any of it.

God simply made a man and a woman, and He said the two shall become one flesh. That is a very significant statement.

In the bedroom, blessed of God, a husband and a wife not only are one spirit, one mind, and one body, they are one flesh. It should be

something to delight in and look forward to, not, *well, that is over; good*. It should be,

*Father, in the name of Jesus, I pray that you would bless me and my wife, and I pray that this time together would be a time of mutual love for each other, a consecration of our bodies together to you. Lord, let us enjoy the fullness of the freedom and delight that we have for you and for one another during this time. We bind the devil out of here. We bind our flesh in the name of Jesus, and we give this time together to you. We are going to have fun together in you.*

Let me tell you, that is starting out on the right foot.

- *“What is thy beloved more than another beloved, oh thou fairest among women? What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou doest so charge us?”* (Song of Solomon 5:9)

In other words, the man was asking his wife, “Why am I so special to you? Why am I so beloved to you?”

- *“My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold. His locks are bushy and black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters washed with milk and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices of sweet flowers. His lips like lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with beryl; his belly is of bright ivory overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold; his countenance is as of Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.”* (Chapter 5:10)

Now you know why Lebanon smells so good. It smells like cedar trees.

- *“His mouth is most sweet, yes, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.”*

A wife is talking about her husband. She is delighting in him – specifically, his physical appearance.

- *“Where is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? Where has thy beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with thee?”* (Chapter 6:1)

Because she longs for her spouse so greatly, there is pain of separation. Let no one tell you any differently. If you really delight in somebody, there is a torment in separation. We have to turn that torment around so it does not become the demonic kind. We are simply talking about there being a feeling of loss.

You find when you go away from somebody you love deeply, there is loss. You miss them. You care. It is not saying that you are tormented because they are gone. It is simply saying they are not there and you wish they were. Be patient, God can do wonderful things. He can bring them back.

Chapter 7 describes their mutual delight for each other. I believe part of the trouble in the bedroom and in some aspects of married life is a lack of being creative and a lack of communication. If people would think a little bit and talk a little bit, they could find out what their spouse really enjoys, and be a little bit creative. What does that mean? You have to hang from a chandelier or something? Whatever, but I believe there is a freedom between a husband and a wife that is so special and precious.

Each has his own way, and I know when not to tread, but a little bit of creativity never hurt anything. Verbal expression even. You cannot get any more creative than Song of Solomon. There it is, right in the middle of your bible.

- *“How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince’s daughter!”*  
(Song of Solomon, Chapter 7:1)

If you wonder how beautiful another woman’s feet are without shoes, it is none of your business. If you start thinking that way you will get into trouble. The only one you are to undress is your spouse, and you can undress with your eyes just as well as with your hands.

When you are reading Song of Solomon, be sure you are thinking about your spouse, not somebody else. Keep it holy.

- *“The joints of thy thighs are like jewels. The work of thy hands of a cutting workman.”* (Chapter 7:2)

When you admire and delight in your spouse, you are admiring God’s creation. It is a very special, holy time.

- *“Thy naval is like a round goblet which wants not liquor. Thy belly is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies. Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins. Thy neck is as a tower of ivory.”* (Chapter 7:2-4)

This just repeats what he is looking at. If this works, guys, you want to use it again.

There are some things that your lady or your guy loves hearing. You cannot wear those out. If you have a good thing going, run with it.

When we speak about each other, let us give nice comments and encouragement.

I believe that people will start to develop a delight in the freedom of the relationship that God intended to be there, to have fun when they are having relations with their spouse, and even to have fun when they are praying in the presence of their spouse. Cut them a little slack. There is enough tension around this world. In the spirit, God wants some laughter. It is a wonderful household that has laughter.

- *“How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights.”* (Chapter 7:6)

You can meditate on that verse. It is like a little kid walking into a candy store.

- *“I am my beloved’s and his desire is towards me.”* (Chapter 7:10)

His desire is not towards anybody else. Look at how proud she is about that. She is confident, assured, and she knows her man is not going to be unfaithful. When she knows that, she can be at perfect peace and give her entire self. She knows she is loved.

- *“Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field. Let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards. Let us see if the vine flourished. Whether the tender grape appear and the pomegranates bud forth. There will I give thee my love.”*  
(Chapter 7:11, 12)

### In Conclusion

Many Christians have difficulty in their marriage because this area has not been developed. God is concerned about our spirits, our minds, and our bodies. He wants wholeness in those three areas. Someone who loves his spouse is concerned about them.

God put a desire within a man for his wife. The fall of man has perverted it, but, glory to God, when we asked Jesus Christ to be our Lord and Savior, and we were filled with the Holy Spirit, speaking in new tongues, we became a new kind of a creature, a new kind of a creation. We are able to express love to our spouses in a way that the fallen world cannot. We are able to express our love in a way that is from above and that God has ordained. He has blessed this union.

If you set your thoughts on God before you go into the bedroom, you will be amazed. You will never go into a strange bed, you will never violate your spouse's conscience, and you will never force anything.

Submit yourself to the Lord together as you go to the marriage bed. If you do not have a spouse or your spouse has left, set your thoughts on the things above. The finest thing in this life (whether or not a person has ever had relations with another) is to have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

I knew a woman who was afraid that Jesus would come back before she was able to get married and have the marital relationship that God desired for her. I said, “Friend, save yourself for the Lord Jesus

Christ, and seek the things of God first, for the most important thing in this life is that relationship with Him. If it is His plan and purpose for your life, you will get married. You will find that even after you have had a good relationship with your spouse, it is nothing compared with your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.”