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UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE
Chapter One
Characteristics of a Godly Man

God is looking for people who want to be used of the Lord so He can show Himself mighty and strong. It is not for us to determine when or how we are going to be used. It is for us to diligently seek Him, coming into His presence with an open heart and mind for all that He would do through us. I feel very strongly that many people will be left behind because they haven't purposed in their hearts to seek all that God has. *"God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."* (Hebrews 11:15) It isn't enough just to seek Him. It is a matter of diligence and discipline, preparing yourself to be ready when God says, "Go."

God is working in us, causing us to want to and enabling us to do that which is of Him. If people really want to be used of God, they have to go a little bit further. God will not push them.

God puts desires in everyone's heart. He has a different purpose for every one of us, but we have the freedom to say yes or no. I thank God for that freedom. When I am not coerced into action, I find that finer things happen because I am freely, willingly, lovingly, going forward.

God would have us serve Him without feeling any pressure. Normally the pressure that we feel is either coming from the inside or from people on the outside. I won't put pressure on myself by thinking I should be at a certain level by now. We don't put any pressure on little children to grow. If they eat properly, they will grow.

If you get diligent with the Word of God, you are preparing yourself. *"Study to show yourself to be a workman approved unto God, rightly dividing the word of truth."* (2nd Timothy 2:15)

I love to worship God. That is one of the things I love to do the most. Some people love to pray, some like to study the Word, some like to worship. Others love to be out there helping and encouraging people. We should be doing a little of everything.

However, I am not going to feel pressured by that. There are times you may feel that you should be doing something, but it is very important to simply ask God what He wants you to do. Ask Him, “Do you want me praying, studying the Word, calling on people, going to a nursing home or going to a hospital?” That will take a lot of pressure off you. Then be obedient to do what He has given you to do.

Hearing God talk to you is often just like a thought. You ask Him a question, and He will give you an answer. If you direct it to Him, “Father, in the name of Jesus, I thank you that you will answer my question.” State your question, and the Lord will minister to you.

Many people don’t live the reality of it because they haven’t spent time with God. He *will* talk to you.

God’s Authority Order

In God’s order the Father God is first, then the Lord Jesus, next man, and then woman. (1st Corinthians 11:1-3)

Man was created for fellowship with God. Woman was created for the man. It doesn’t make a woman any less than a man. It is a simple working order that God has established.

A man’s closest communion should be with God. We were created to fellowship with Him. We were created to spend time with Him. Every godly wife permits her husband to spend that time, and every godly wife encourages her man to spend time with God. Then God reinforces the covering. A man is like a covering over his wife, and as he spends time with God, he will be given divine wisdom, knowledge, and insight into how to lead his wife and family. A man will come back from the mountain, or wherever he spent his time, and share with his wife what God has revealed. When communication is developed along godly lines, you will see the marriage bond become tighter than ever before.

A single man can spend all his time with the Lord, but a married man needs the support of his wife who understands the need within his heart to go away and talk with God, wherever it is.

Wives will find that godly men need to do this. He will recognize in his heart that he needs that time, and he will thank his wife for it. I don't believe you can nag a godly man into going to God. Godly men want to be where God is, where His word is being ministered, where His power is present, and where the Lord Jesus is being lifted up.

There is a time to spend with just you and the Lord. You will be amazed at how wonderful that time becomes. I believe, in time, the quality of that visit with God will become even finer.

Adam Relinquished the Authority

Adam was the first man ever created. He was given dominion (authority) over every living creature, and he was given dominion and authority over his wife. This authority was given by God to be used in wisdom and in love. When Adam told the animals their names, the animals didn't talk back to him. Every aspect of creation was to be under Adam's feet.

His dominion was over Satan, sickness, disease, maladies, infirmities, and torment of every kind. However, Adam lost the authority when he fell away from God. It has been given back to us through Jesus Christ. The dominion and the power is there, and the right to use it is there.

How did Adam lose that dominion? He didn't exercise it. When his wife brought the fruit to him, he didn't exercise his authority. He knew full well what God had said, and he set his dominion aside, and as a result he lost it. He actually gave his authority away.

On the one hand, man has been given dominion and authority. On the other hand, a man's tendency (in the flesh) is to give over the dominion and give up the authority. It is the spirit man (the godly man) who will exercise the authority and dominion. If Adam had been walking in the spirit, he would have said, "No, thanks, Eve. How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" If he had been exercising his dominion, he would have said, "Out, in the name of Jesus!" But he relinquished it. As a result he lost dominion, and there have been all kinds of troubles from that day forward. A woman who was created to be a helpmate took the dominion.

Why was God angry with Adam? Was it because of what he did? God was upset because Adam listened to the woman before he listened to Him. A godly woman will want her man hearing from God. What will happen? A godly woman and a godly man will both seek the Lord. The two are one, and God is not the author of confusion, so they will be in agreement about what they come up with. There will be peace about it in both of them, and if there isn't, then there is something wrong. It has to be taken before God to find out.

When that is done, the answer will come forth. If one of them is fearful, then confess that fear to God and ask forgiveness. Get rid of it so you can move ahead. In any case, godly men and women will come into unity, and they will take dominion over the devil and everything else that tries to hinder the work of God from being accomplished.

The reason the devil runs roughshod over this world is because God's people have not taken the dominion that God has given them. As we start rising up, whatever was hindering us will fall by the wayside. Many times we worry about what other people will think of us, and that hinders us from taking authority. A husband may be afraid of his wife or afraid that something will happen. Women love men who stand up and take authority in love. They don't like wishy-washy men (because of their need for stability in their lives.) If a woman sees her husband vacillating, even if she is ready to go with him anywhere, she will say, "Why don't you make up your mind?"

I learned this from my wife, and God spoke to me and said, "She's right." When you get settled, get settled and stand. Even if you are wrong, it is better to make a stand in some way and then ask God's forgiveness.

Martin Luther once said that if you are going to sin, sin boldly. *"Would that you were hot or cold, but since you are lukewarm, I will spit you out of my mouth,"* Jesus said. (Revelation 3:15, 16) God does not like the men created in His image to be wishy-washy.

QUALITIES OF GODLY MEN

Let us look at certain qualities of men in the Bible. To be men who possess the combined qualities of these biblical characters is what we all should desire.

1. Noah

The special quality in Noah, a man of God, was obedience. God told him one of the silliest things I have ever heard. He told Noah to build a big boat out in the middle of nowhere. He gave specific directions down to the minutest detail. Then He told Noah to round up all the animals.

All the people scorned him, yet he persisted in doing what God had given him to do. He didn't waiver or deviate from it. When you are being obedient to the word of God and are doing what He has given you to do, some people will laugh at you. It may even be your own family. You have to hold the line because they will all come around. We have been given dominion, and with dominion comes obedience. Put dominion and obedience together to see the power of God in effect.

After the ark was built, Noah went out with his sons to get all the animals, from the smallest and most insignificant to the largest. I imagine they even marched the ants in. We usually think about lions and tigers and bears, but let's include the insects. The Bible says, "*every living thing.*" Noah knew how to take dominion. Even termites wouldn't have had any effect on that ark.

I have learned about dominion, including dominion over the insects. One day a big June bug flew inside my house and tried to get into the study. I was in there praying. I heard commotion outside the door, and I looked out to find the bug attempting to come in. I just kept on praying, but before long I became annoyed. I pointed at the bug and said, "Don't you dare cross the threshold of this door." The next thing I knew it flew into the room. The fear of the Lord rose up inside of me, and I yelled, "Now!" It dropped on its back in mid air and fell to the floor. It lay there looking up. I walked over to it and said, "Now, I told you. In the name of Jesus you get out of here and stay out." It flipped right side up and flew out of the room.

Another time I marched the ants out of my yard. My neighbor got upset because they went over to his place. I taught my neighbor how to take dominion, and now he doesn't have ants either.

When the Bible said dominion over every living thing, I took it literally. I am a son of the Most High God. I am sitting with Christ in the heavenly places right now. (Ephesians 2:6) And so are you. Take the Word of God just as it says. I take dominion over my wife, my children, and anything that tries to harass us in the name of Jesus.

Because Noah was obedient, he was prepared and ready. The ark was completely built, sealed, and loaded when the rains came down and the water came up. God will always do what He says He will do. Our part is to be obedient. Sure enough, when all the animals were loaded on the ark, and it was sealed up with Noah and his family inside, the rest of the water started to rise and come down. The people who had been laughing at Noah weren't laughing anymore.

God told me one time that He was going to prosper me in such a way that the people who had laughed at me in the past would come to me for help.

You have to learn to be obedient because if the rain starts coming and the job isn't done, we are all in trouble. Those who did not repent, believe on the Lord, and be obedient were destroyed. How cut and dried. Obedience is what saved Noah and is what will save us.

2. Abraham

The particular quality of God in Abraham was faith, even though the account in Genesis looks like Abraham had anything but faith. However, when God first called Him, he packed up and took off to a new land. He didn't know where he was going or what would happen when he got there. Because God said, "Go," Abraham headed out. He was a man of faith. As Abraham moved out in faith, then God began to prosper and bless him.

God gave Abraham a promise. He said, "From your seed will come a great nation – as many as the stars in the sky and the sands on the

seashore.” That seemed totally ridiculous since Abraham was old and Sarah was old *and* barren. They laughed at the Lord. (Names are very significant in the Bible. Isaac means laughter.)

Over a period of time, they lived in ways that wouldn't be considered acting in faith. Abraham did not take dominion over his wife, and as a result he listened to her when she encouraged him to lay with Hagar to conceive a child. (In their time it was okay to do that kind of thing, but not today, friends).

After many years God showed Himself faithful and true to His word, and along came Isaac through Sarah. What did Sarah want to do? – Get rid of Hagar and Ishmael. Abraham was caught in the middle. (Guys, don't act on the impulses of your wife. Love her dearly, but don't act on her impulses. Spend a little time with the Lord and check out those impulses. That was where Adam blew it badly. He just picked up the fruit and took a bite. He didn't even ask God about it.) God promised a child would come from Abraham and Sarah. It wasn't going to come through Hagar.

Abraham and Sarah did not act in accordance with the vision that God had set down. There was Isaac, the father of the Jewish race, and Ishmael, the father of the Arab race, and they have been at each other's throats ever since – all because Abraham and Sarah didn't do it the way God said.

Still, notice that Abraham was made out to be the epitome of faith in the book of Romans, chapter four. It says his faith didn't stagger. He was unwavering. He held his ground, thoroughly convinced and assured that what God has said, God would cause to happen. Apparently Abraham got some reprieve someplace. He is noted throughout the Bible as a friend of God. Why? Faith and works. He acted on His faith, and it was counted to him as righteousness. (James 2:23)

3. Joseph

Joseph was noted for purity. Purity is something that every godly man has to have. It says, “*Without holiness [purity] no one will see the Lord.*” (Hebrews 12:14) We can't say we are Christians and be

living to the contrary. Purity and holiness has to be in our lives. When Potiphar's wife tried to "put the moves" on Joseph, he looked at her and exclaimed, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Then he ran out of there in his birthday suit.

A godly man will stand up and say, "No, in the name of Jesus. I refuse to give my flesh indulgence. I refuse to give anybody else's flesh indulgence. I refuse to fear, worry, doubt, be confused, depressed, or anxious. I refuse to be brought under the power of anything other than the Spirit of God." You can include smoking or drinking; you name it. Food used to be one of my difficulties.

Have purity in heart, mind, and body. Like those little monkeys: *see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.*

Jesus is the only foundation from which to build. I am building my house on the Rock. Let not hay and stubble be the building.

I would like a little gold and silver too. Let me tell you, I want to stick to Jesus all the way up the building. I don't want to get sidetracked. *"Except the Lord build the house, they that labor, labor in vain."* When God builds the house, it is built with solid gold. But something has to be done with gold because it isn't very strong. So what are they going to put with it? Jewels and diamonds.

When you pour concrete, you have to put something in it to keep it from crumbling. When God builds something, it is built solidly. It will last and endure. If you build on these principles as godly men, you will find that you will not fail, and you will not fall. When you stand before God, He will say, "Well done" because all these qualities being built into you are the qualities of God Himself.

4. Moses

Moses possessed meekness. (I had to look up the meaning of that word.) I said, "Lord, that guy doesn't appear to be very meek." I mean, he went through hell leading those people. He didn't seem to be wishy-washy, timid, or backward. That is what came to mind with the word meekness, but the original definition of meekness is humility.

Many times as the Spirit ministers through us, and we are talking about the Bible, He makes it seem as if we were right there helping Noah build the boat, or witnessing Potiphar's wife trying to seduce Joseph. Put yourself in the situation with Joseph. Yeah, God, that is me too. I am in agreement with him.

Miriam and Aaron came against Moses because he married a black woman, an Ethiopian lady. (Numbers 12:1) They were offended. Moses' wife could have been the most godly woman who ever walked the face of the earth, but just because she was black, Miriam and Aaron got after him, and they didn't respect him as the leader anymore.

"And they said, 'Has the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses?' "
When people don't like somebody, they begin attacking the authority of that person. It happens all the time in churches. Let it not be found in our midst. *"Touch not God's anointed."* You don't talk badly about them. You encourage them and help them because they are people just like you. They may make a mistake, but godly men will be open to reason from the word of God. Don't jump on them. Talk to them (between you and them) alone.

...So Miriam and Aaron spread all over camp, *"Has the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Has He not spoken also by us?"*

This kind of thing usually goes on behind closed doors, but I think in this case it went around the camp. I have found that it normally starts behind closed doors. It starts in people's hearts, and then it gets communicated to somebody else. I believe it was Miriam that started this. Who is open to Satan's movement? People. Like Aaron and Miriam, Moses' family.

The Bible says women are the ones susceptible to the demonic temptation, but who was stupid in this situation? Aaron – and he did it time and time again. If you want an example of a bad quality, Aaron had one. He let people manipulate him. When they wanted a calf, he made a golden calf. Miriam started talking to him and before long, he sided with her. *What are the people going to think, Aaron? Our brother, the leader of the nation, has married a black lady. What*

are they going to think of us? (The devil can't make you do anything unless you want to, so we can't blame him for this.) It was their flesh. Then they challenged the authority of Moses with, "Hasn't God used us too?" That was not the issue. God uses all of us, but God has placed certain people in authority. In the home the husband is the authority. In the church the pastors are the authority. The apostles, the prophets, the evangelists and teachers are over all the authorities.

When you hear, "Has He not spoken also by us?" (meaning, "Hasn't God talked to me just as well as He talks to him?"), that is the seed of rebellion rising up. *"And the Lord heard it."* This is very significant. People who are doing this kind of nonsense think they are getting away with it, but God hears it!

God is always going to support His authority. Proverbs says that a woman (not a man) undermines her own house. A man usually won't talk bad about his wife or his kids. I have found that the tendency of wives is to talk to somebody about a problem. They may not talk to someone who is wise in counsel, and it ends up being something they regret.

"Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." A godly man has the quality of meekness, meaning humility. It is not weakness. Moses was doing what he was given to do. He did not seek that position, nor did he take it upon himself. God gave it to him. In the beginning the people did not recognize this so God confirmed the position through signs and wonders.

Apparently, God must have done something, because all of a sudden the people were in agreement with Moses. God will cause a person to be raised up. If we seek our own position, then we are not preferring others more important than ourselves. And we are certainly not meek.

As we seek God, He will give the increase and make things happen as we are faithful to do what we have been given to do. Before long, in the body of Christ, God will cause recognition to come.

After spending time with God, you are supposed to know what He has given you to do, and if you don't know, I encourage you to go back to the drawing board and get with the Lord.

You don't have to run around telling everybody, "I'm called to do this, and this, and this." Just do what you are called to do, and before long it will be recognized by others.

God appointed Moses, and many was the time he said, "Oh, Lord, these are a stubborn and rebellious people." And when God was ready to cut them off, Moses was the one who said, "No, Lord. Remember your covenant with them." That is meekness. The guy had every right to do it, for God said, "Moses, I'll take you and start a whole new people." The quality of meekness and humility in Moses rose up, "No, Lord, I know that isn't the way you would have it to be done." If he had been on an ego trip, he would have said, "Glory, God, I've just been waiting for that. I'll have all these people off my back now, and we'll start fresh and clean."

There was a temptation at that point, but because of the godly quality of meekness and humility in Moses, he called God back to remembrance of His covenant. He stood strong in the gap, and God honored him. He honored the righteous man.

The Lord spoke to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam at the same time, *"Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of the congregation, and they three came out."* Apparently they were in different sections of the camp, and they were all told to go to the tabernacle. Why? That is where the presence of God was at that time. "The Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forth. He said, *'Hear now my words. If there be a prophet among you, I, the Lord, will make Myself known to him in a vision, and will speak to him in a dream. But not so with my servant Moses, who is faithful in all my house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth...'*" (Numbers 12:4-8 KJV)

Moses was such a godly man that God spoke to him face to face, and not in dark or hidden speeches. *"And the presence of the Lord shall he behold. [Moses saw the backside of God.] Wherefore then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"* In other words,

people should fear rather than talk against the servant of the Most High God. Miriam and Aaron had the audacity to speak against him. *“The anger of the Lord was kindled against them and He departed. The cloud departed from off the tabernacle and behold Miriam became leprous, white as snow, and Aaron looked upon Miriam and behold she was leprous.”* (Numbers 12:8-10) That gives me a good indication of who the originator of the problem was.

“And Aaron said to Moses, ‘Alas, my lord, I beseech you. Lay not the sin upon us wherein we have done foolishly and wherein we have sinned.’ ” Aaron was quick to repent, especially after he saw what happened to Miriam. *“Let her not be as one dead of whom the flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother’s womb.”*

A leprous person was considered as dead. They were considered unclean. They were cast out of the camp. *“And Moses cried to the Lord saying, ‘Heal her now, O, God, I beseech you.’ ”* (Here was the humility, the desire of his heart, and love going forth),

God let her stay that way for seven days until she got the point: *Don’t do this again.* And she learned her lesson, she didn’t do it again, and she was healed after that time as God honored the righteous man, Moses. God honored the quality of humility and meekness that put others before himself. Godly men have to have that quality.

5. Elijah

Elijah had a spirit of power and authority. Things shook when he walked. With him was Elisha who asked for a double portion of what Elijah had. You won’t find anybody in the Bible except Jesus doing more miracles than Elijah and Elisha. Miracles are beyond the natural, like sunken axe heads rising back up out of the water, etc.

The only way that we will see that kind of miracle-working power in us and through us is to be open to it. I have seen people who didn’t have the bones in their ears be given the ability to hear.

We see miracles time after time. A seven year old boy once came up to the prayer line who had punctured his retina. The doctors said he would never see out of that eye again. The Spirit of God touched

him, and he started seeing. Even when there is no part there to work, God causes it to work.

I am believing God that we will see legs and arms grow out. One fellow had suffered a stroke, and his right arm was completely paralyzed. He also lost his hearing, his speech, and the use of one of his legs as a result. The Spirit of God touched him, gave him back his speech, and opened his ears. The man had only come up for prayer to be able to use his right arm, and God “threw in” the ability to hear and speak. His arm was so rigid it could not bend or move. (Since God has given me a bold spirit, I often wrench people’s arms up or I pull them out of chairs to do things that are normal in the spirit.) The Lord enabled the man to get filled with the Holy Spirit, and he spoke in tongues. God healed another man whose ankles were causing him agony. He jumped around for joy, and the people were rejoicing with him. His little boy was right there, and God gave him back his sight. A lady was completely healed of diabetes.

The guy with the stroke stood there watching all these things happening. The Lord had us go back to him, and the man started to move his arm. The tears rolled down his face as he rejoiced in God. He was so thankful that he could use his arm again. The Spirit of God is here to do the work. *“To them that believe, the works I do, you will do.”* (John 14:12)

I believe the only people that will see that kind of work and power going through them are the ones who are open to it and are diligently seeking to be used that way. It is not so they can be miracle workers, but so that God will be glorified through them. If you are looking to be a miracle worker, you will never see anything happen through you.

The Lord gave me a word years ago. I was doing a park revival at the time. We came back from a meeting, and my spirit was so excited I just couldn’t contain myself. There are times I just want to take off. When I went to sleep, the Lord gave me a vision or a dream (I don’t know what it was), but I was shot out of my body and soared up into the heavenlies. There was a glorious light all around. Something inside of me kept calling, “Randy, Randy, go back, go back, you don’t know where you’re going!” I kept zooming out there.

It was glorious. I was beside myself, being in the presence of God, but that voice kept calling to me.

The next morning I was sharing with some other pastors, and they had been to a seminar about God being light. I sat there grinning and beaming as I took it all in because I had been there. I knew exactly what they were talking about.

Later that day, the Lord ministered to me that Ephesians 3:20 was the key to opening up miracles in our lives. The Lord told me, “My son, it was your mind that was telling you ‘Go back, go back – you don’t know where you’re going,’ ” but my spirit was soaring into everything that God had.

The mind operates on what is known, and I didn’t know where I was going. This was new to me, and if God ever chooses to let me do it again, I will go. It is up to Him to transport me. I don’t believe in wishing myself out of my body. Unless God makes it happen, don’t get into that. You may not be able to come back.

“Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church...” (Ephesians 3:20, 21 KJV) The Lord is the power, and He is working inside us. The only thing that limits His divine power, ability, and wisdom from coming forth is our minds. The Lord told me to teach the people not to let their minds get in the way of what can happen when the spirit is free to soar.

One time a guy in a wheelchair came up for prayer. He was crippled up. I could see that everybody was watching him and thinking about what would happen. I know what will happen, but I don’t like telling people what will happen. Some may have looked at him and said, “Friend, it’s impossible. Nothing will happen with you.” (Quite frankly, I’ve been known to ask people to leave the auditorium while we pray. I look out, and I can see blatant unbelief on their faces. I don’t need any spiritual gift to see it.) I yanked the guy out of the chair and told him, “In the name of Jesus, you can start walking and do whatever you want to do.” Well, he started walking. A week later he was running. All of his parts straightened out, and away he went.

A chiropractor came from Los Angeles to see what God was doing in those meetings, and then he told other chiropractors. He had been treating some people for years. For example, there was a lady who couldn't turn her head because of a neck condition. The Spirit of God touched her that day and she was able to turn her head. At first I couldn't figure out why she was laughing, jumping and happy. She had been in that condition for 15 years, and it was gone.

Her chiropractor had been treating her all those years, and it was simply amazing what she saw. How did she get here? A woman who had the effects of polio for many years, and couldn't even raise her hand very high, was touched by the Spirit of God. He caused her to raise her hands up toward the ceiling. Then she told the lady with the neck condition. They were both under the same chiropractor's care.

Another chiropractor came (who I thought was a swami, mainly because she wore a turban), and she told me with such interest that she had never seen anything like it before. You know what she did? She renounced her beliefs. She renounced her religion. She renounced her turban and everything with it. She received Jesus Christ as her Lord, got filled with the Holy Spirit (talking in tongues), and went down under the power of God. She received the whole works. She had a hip condition, and the Lord told her that unless she completely gave up everything, she wouldn't receive her healing.

The Lord spoke to me during that week and said He wanted me to tell her something. When she came back the next week, she walked up to me and said, "God told me that you have a message for me." I confirmed it. Out of my mouth came "*I am the way and the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me,*" saith Jesus. The only way you're going to get any hope is if you renounce everything."

You can actually renounce or you can merely say you do. She completely renounced it, and God touched her body and healed her hip. Apparently, she then told some other chiropractors what was going on. God is making believers all over the place.

6. Samson

Samson was known for his physical strength. There is a time when a man has to be physically strong. God made men in a way He didn't make women. He made men masculine, so that there is more strength to him. Men simply need to develop it. I am not talking about working out eight hours a day and walking around like a rooster. God wants men spiritually and physically strong. Note: Samson's strength went to his head. And it was his downfall.

7. David

David loved to praise the Lord. He delighted in the word of God, and he was free.

At first, I had difficulty in praising God like David did – raising my hands and jumping. The best I could do was tap my toe a little bit. It seems like the ladies can get “with it” easily, but a man is a little more reserved in praising the Lord.

When David got carried away in the Spirit – dancing, leaping, and rejoicing before all of Israel – he lost one of his wives. She was offended because he made a display of himself in front of all the ladies of Israel. David said to her, “Woman, what I did I did as to the Lord.” In other words, God wanted him to do it, and God was pleased with what he was doing. David basically said, “If you don't like it, Babe, I love you, but I'm sorry.”

Many guys think they couldn't ever say something like that to their wives. Friend, who are you going to choose? – God or your wife? I love my wife dearly, but I made it clear to her before we ever joined together with vows that she was going to come second. God is my First Love and that is the way it will stay. I told her, “I love you dearly, more than anything else in this world, but you stand in line after God, and I know you know that's the finest company you can stand in line with.”

David told his wife that he loved God first, but she got offended, and that was the end of it. Glory to God, I believe David was better off for it. I would not sacrifice my freedom in the spirit for anybody or anything. You would never know I am the same guy who wouldn't be

caught jumping in a service. You can't usually hold me down now because I get excited about what the Spirit of God is doing.

David was a man who was quick to repent. He committed some abominable sins, and God sent a prophet to confirm it, but God said David was a man after His own heart. David was somebody who understood repentance, mercy, and grace. He was a man who had a tender heart, and yet he was a warrior, a warrior king.

Any godly man has to have a tender heart. He should have strength inside and outside, but have a tender heart. As soon as he sees that he is caught in error, he repents. I thank God today that He sends people to us who will help us to see our blind spots. Then as godly people we will be quick to repent, ask God's forgiveness, and get back into His good grace.

David understood and appreciated the importance of being in fellowship with God. Psalm 32 and 51 are good indicators. You can see the joy of salvation that David knew and experienced, and longed to have back. God restored it to him, and then he began to teach the ways of God again. He wasn't too proud when it dawned on him that he was wrong. Many men will never admit they are wrong. They will never ask forgiveness from their wives, let alone a child. That is not a godly man. If you provoke a child to wrath, you need to ask God's forgiveness for it and ask the child's forgiveness for it. Then you instill in your children what a godly man is all about. I am not perfect in my actions, but I am working towards it. That is my position. Sometimes I blow it, but that is the exception, not the rule. When you mess up, be a godly man and admit it. "I have sinned. Father, forgive me. Wife, forgive me," or whomever you have offended.

That was David's heart. He wanted to be right with God, and He wanted to be right with everybody else. However, you won't always be right with everybody else. One time God showed me that the way David was praying was wrong. David prayed, "Lord, strike down my enemies. Destroy them." I was in a situation where I was seeking direction, and I was ready to have God strike down my enemies. The Spirit of God spoke up and said, "He was wrong." The Lord Jesus took me into Matthew 5 where it says to love your enemy. "*You have heard it said, 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' but I say unto*

you, 'Love your enemy.' Pray for them that despitefully use you..., that you may be a child of your heavenly Father."

That is what I did. I could have called down the fire, but it isn't the Spirit who lives in us to do that. I was so horrified when some people who were opposing the ministry actually dropped dead. I said, "God, have mercy on these people." It is the last thing you want to see happen. God told me that only the scorners were being consumed. All the others who had been led astray were going to receive doctrine, and they were going to receive the truth, and they were going to be given life. They began coming to us to get born again and filled with the Holy Spirit.

As God was doing a work in me, this passage haunted me night and day: *"When a man's ways are right before the Lord, even his enemies will be at peace with him."* God was teaching me how to love, even though I thought I used to love everybody. I thought there wasn't anybody I couldn't get along with. I wanted to learn to have mercy and show mercy.

8. Solomon

Solomon was full of wisdom and sensitivity, yet he got "in the flesh." All the wisdom and sensitivity was lost for a long period of time.

Many people don't like the book of Ecclesiastes, which Solomon wrote, but I love it. It shows a man who had everything – wisdom, power, riches, everything that anybody could ever have – but eventually sought after things other than the Lord. He lost his First Love, and as a result, He lost the delight and everything else that came with having God first. God had given him everything. I believe in all those things. I have all those things, and I will have more in the time ahead because of the Spirit of God.

Ecclesiastes is written from a beautiful perspective by the wisest man that ever lived, coming back to his First Love and showing the emptiness, depravity, and poverty of everything of this world. I mean, if anybody could talk about having it all, he could. He described how it is all emptiness and vanity apart from having the Lord.

I get excited when I read Ecclesiastes because it puts perspective on life. A godly man will keep Jesus as his First Love. That is wisdom. There will be long life on the one hand and fame and riches on the other. I expect to have abundance, and I know every godly man desires that because it is what the Word says is ours.

Note, Solomon got in the flesh, and all of that wisdom didn't do him any good. 1st Peter 3:6 says that a husband is to deal with his wife with knowledge as the weaker vessel. A godly man has to develop a sensitivity to his wife's needs and the needs of his children.

A mother usually knows best about the children. I will go on record saying it is because she is a woman, but a godly man who is walking in the Spirit will be shown what is going on with his wife and children.

Many times I was away from my home, and yet I knew what was happening there. That sensitivity grew stronger and stronger. My wife knows what is going on with me (the two are one). However, such sensitivity doesn't happen overnight.

There are times when your wife may cry, and yet she doesn't need to be coddled. She needs to be spoken to. "I come against that in the name of Jesus." Other times she needs to be hugged. She needs to be held and have nice things spoken to her.

Diana is a good indicator of what is happening in my walk with God. I can usually tell when there is something amiss in my life because she is, in some way, going bezerk. It is important as a godly man to hold the ground with godly principles. Diana has shown me blind spots where I wasn't acting in a godly manner, but I wasn't aware of it.

I love her. She is one of the greatest blessings I have. She has to be because God put her with me, and God knows what I have to do. I believe that God matches up wives with husbands, and even if He doesn't, I believe a godly man will make his marriage work because *"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things; love never fails,"* and a godly man will move in love.

The Song of Solomon was written by a man with the greatest amount of wisdom, and, I believe, a sensitivity that went with it in dealing with

women, and yet women were his downfall. Adam was given the most dominion, but his downfall was a woman. Samson, the strongest man that ever existed, and his downfall was a woman. Many times the devil will get to a man through a woman.

The way I read the Bible, a man is more at fault because he is supposed to be walking and talking with God. If he is, he won't be doing any nonsense. Samson never would have given away his secret. Solomon never would have taken any wives with foreign gods. He knew God's standards. One of the first things God set down was "*Thou shall have no other gods before me,*" let alone, "thou shalt not take to yourself women from other nations who have other gods." If you take the people, you take their gods.

I want to encourage single men to make sure you marry a born again, Spirit-filled, tongue-talking lady who loves God better than she loves you. There are a few around, and there are more coming.

9. Jonathan

When the Lord gave me this list of godly men and their qualities, I was really struck at how significant this one is (out of all of them). The quality of Jonathan was devotion (a friend's friend). He was heir in line to the throne, but he gladly relinquished it to David. When Saul went after David's hide, Jonathan befriended him. It didn't serve any purpose for him because he could have been the king one day. Jonathan was loyal. He was devoted. He loved his friend (and they weren't homosexuals, as some people suggest). There is such a thing as genuine friendship, being closer than a brother. A godly man will have that ability. It is the kind of friendship that nothing can divide or separate. A godly woman will encourage her man to have godly friends. I believe that God will bear witness and show her the friends her husband should get in touch with. A godly man moving in wisdom won't spend all his time with the boys though.

In the same way, godly women need godly women friends. A husband will know who his wife should be associating with. You may not want your wife hanging around some gals. We tell the women not to become friends with those who are disgruntled towards their husbands. They would do well not to associate with a woman who is

loaded with rebellion because all she will do is spray garbage.
“Come out from amongst them.”

10. Daniel

The qualities of this mighty man of God were discipline and diligence. He would stay before God until he got an answer, even if it took many days. He was devoted and disciplined. In fact, his discipline and devotion got him into trouble. His enemies knew this guy prayed three times a day at certain hours. Every single day they found him before God. They used it against him, but God turned the situation around. *“No weapon formed against [the righteous] will prosper. Every word that is spoken against [a godly man or woman] will be turned back upon those who have spoken it.”*

What we need to do is pray that God would show mercy. Why? I don't want them to die. I believe if I don't put in a good word to God, that could happen, and I believe that love will put in a good word.

11. Paul

Boldness and conviction of faith are Paul's qualities. He would charge right into the lion's mouth. Wisdom would say not to, but if it meant saving somebody, he would go into the fire and get them.

Sometimes I have to laugh at Paul. At Ephesus, the mobs were there looking for him. He said, “Let me have an opportunity to speak to the crowd.” I love it. Thank God there were some disciples who said, “No, Paul, we'll take care of it.” They had to lower him out of the window in a basket to save his life.

Paul was full of boldness and conviction. For him, *“To live is Christ, to die is gain.”* He counted everything else as a pile of dung for the sake of knowing Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. He was a man full of zeal for God. A godly man needs such zeal. It is boldness and an unwavering conviction of faith. When you mix wisdom with that, you will see mighty things happen by the Spirit of God.

12. Barnabas

The special quality in Barnabas was encouragement. He was a man who came up when somebody needed a good word. Barnabas was the one who introduced Paul to the disciples. Paul was just ornery enough to say, "Flake off, fellows. I don't need you. I have my ministry, and you have yours. We will take the world, and you do your little thing down here."

Another time Paul and Barnabas locked horns over a fellow named Mark. Paul said, "I don't want the guy around; he's no help to me. He's not strong in his conviction of faith, and he will hinder us." Barnabas insisted, "Give the guy a chance." Barnabas left with Mark, and Paul took off with Silas. With the same boldness and conviction of faith, Paul later said, "Send me Mark, for he is useful to me." Mark could have been finished as a minister if it had not been for Barnabas standing with him and encouraging him, developing him, and bringing out the qualities of God that Barnabas saw in there. Paul just didn't have time for it. He had the zeal to get the whole world saved. He didn't want anybody who wasn't profitable and useful right then. But Barnabas, the encourager, stayed with Mark and developed a minister of God.

I believe a quality of God that is needed in the body of Christ today is people encouraging others.

13. Stephen

He was a man full of the Spirit of God and wisdom. As a result, he saw the miracle-working power of God. (Acts 6:3, 8) The book of Acts mentions Stephen as the only deacon who was full of faith. This guy believed God for the impossible. If something needed to happen, it would happen.

One time we had a meeting where hail came down like stones. Such an occurrence can keep people from going out. In addition, snow (or ice), cold weather, or heat keep people away. Before our prayer seminar, the hail began. We were going to walk out to the truck to get some equipment, and I heard a loud sound on the roof. I thought, *Oh, God, no*, because I knew ice would be the end of a meeting. I walked out the door, and no sooner did I go out, a fellow came right behind my heels. I said, "In the Name..." before another hail stone

could hit the ground. The hail stopped immediately. I turned around and looked at this guy, and his eyes grew wide with wonder. God will not let anything stop one of His meetings, but you have to believe God for these things to happen. I didn't even get to say, "Jesus," but I knew what would happen. God put it in my heart to do that.

A godly man won't limit God. God spoke to me out of one of the psalms. As I was reading, He said that my wife would be a fruitful vine by my side, and my children would be blessed. A godly man will speak faith. He will speak the best about his wife, his kids, himself, God, and everybody else.

There are times when you have to speak the truth in love, and it may not seem to be the best thing to do, but it will get God's best in the situation. If you try to put something on me, and it isn't right with God (and you see it), then what will you do? You will say, "Hey, that's not right!"

This can happen when people prophesy over each other. God uses us that way, but I don't get into it. Show me God and His word, and if He gives me a word, it will bear witness to a person. It isn't because He tickles my ears. Everybody likes hearing good things about themselves. I have had some amazing things spoken over me that I knew were not of God. I know what my Father has told me, but it doesn't lift me over any of you. If it lifts me above you, then it isn't God.

14. Jesus

Jesus personified all of the godly qualities that a man of God would desire to have. He walked in complete compassion, mercy, meekness, obedience, faith, love, and strength (as well as physical strength – Jesus physically tore up the temple area.) He had mercy toward the people that were hurting. To the proud, the stubborn, and the rebellious, He was a man of iron.

I encourage you to go through the gospels and look at Jesus. He walked as a man portraying all of the qualities that a godly man will portray.

In Ephesians 5:25-33 the husband represents Christ, and the wife represents the church. If we, as godly men, take hold of that, the power of God will come into our homes in ways we can't begin to imagine. If any godly man, whether married or single, could grasp, *"It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me, and the life I now live I live... by the faith of the Son of God,"* (Galatians 2:20) God would demonstrate power, love, and wisdom in a great manner. People flocked to Jesus because of what they saw in Him.

Act like a Godly Man

"We are created to be to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:12) to demonstrate the glory of God in this life. We are to love our wives (and everybody) as we love ourselves. God said that a man is to love his wife as himself because a man in the flesh only thinks about himself and what affects him. God told the woman to respect and honor her husband because it is the hardest thing for a woman to do in the flesh. She is called to be a helpmate, but in the flesh she desires to run the show.

Being "macho" is a bunch of garbage. The day I have to prove I am a man is the day I am not a man. I walk in complete freedom to be myself because I don't have to prove anything to anybody, not even to myself because I know who I am in Jesus. I know who God has made me to be.

God spoke through Paul to every godly man. The first thing for a godly man to do is watch, to be spiritually alert to what is happening around him. (1st Corinthians 16:13, 14)

If I am spiritually alert, I can tell (before it happens) that my wife is being oppressed. If not, we digress. There are certain times of the month when ladies are vulnerable. Ask her to tell you in advance when it is happening. She is in a weakened condition at that point, and she needs to pray more in the Spirit and take spiritual authority, and you need to watch over her. You do that by praying more during that time and by covering her in advance so that nothing can happen.

Watch. Be spiritually alert. That means you have to be diligent. None of this praying once or twice a week. It says pray without ceasing. All day long you can pray in tongues wherever you are.

You don't have to shout it out, you can pray under your breath, and it will help you to be attuned to the Spirit of God and His leading.

“Watch, stand fast in the faith.” Stand fast and act like a man. Act like the godly man we have been describing. Put those qualities into practice. Being macho is unloving. It is selfish and degrading. God has made us to be men of God. Put to work the qualities we have been examining. We are strong, so let's be strong. The time will come when you have to stand in love, speak the truth, be uncompromising in it, and love will make things happen. Don't give into the devil, and don't give into any of his tactics over yourself, your wife, your children, or anybody. You can take authority over your friends and cover them too.

Act like men, be strong, let all things be done with charity or love. Love is not weakness. Love is what faith operates by. Love is the power of God Himself. Love is the highest quality of God that can be demonstrated through His people because that is who God is. When we let God's love determine our every decision, word, and action, the power of God will move. We can't even begin to imagine what amazing things we will see.

Paul prayed for the church that they might come to know the height and depth and breadth and width of the love of God which is ours in Christ Jesus. I have taken hold of a little bit of that. Let me tell you, it is enough to set multitudes free. The only thing that is holding us back is our flesh.

The way I read the Bible, though, the flesh can't hold it back anymore either because it is dead. I am risen with Christ, you are risen with Christ.

Go back to your Bible and spend time with these men of God mentioned in this chapter, drawing from what they did, bringing out those qualities, and you will see them. They will start to develop within you.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE
Chapter Two
God's Plan of Authority for the Home

God will help us to do His good word as we yield to His principles, and we will grow in the Lord with our families.

The Breakdown of Authority

The home is the first place to show the relationship of Christ and His church. Our witness will increase as our marital relationship at home increases in love because it is where the true expression of Christ's love for His church is shown.

Understanding that, we can see where the enemy wants to attack. If he can tear apart the homes where the love of Christ is to be shown, he can destroy the witness of the Lord Jesus Christ in the world.

It is in the home that the children are to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is in the home that the husbands and wives are to be working together in the harmony of the Lord. You will see what havoc can be wreaked when God's principles aren't being worked in the husbands or wives. The breakdown in authority in this country today is in the home. Children are not taught to honor or respect because many wives are not honoring or respecting their husbands.

There are four areas of authority: home, church, government, and employment. Satan wants to break down God's authority structure, and he wants to establish his own authority structure. It always works out of self, where one puts self above the authorities that God has given.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden

with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (2nd Timothy 3:1-7)

You can see that all these qualities are present in our society today. Such things are happening in our homes and churches. *“Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof.”* There are people who say they are Christians, but they don't really care to take God at what He says in His word. They either don't want to receive it or they don't want to do it. That denies the power of God because God moves in power and in response to faith.

How does faith work? Faith works by hearing and hearing by the word of God. You need to take God's principles in His word and do them. We are not to be hearers only, but doers also. It is where the power of God moves – when God's people, in faith, and in response to God, take Him at what He says and do it.

“Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion [power or authority], and speak evil of dignities.” (Jude 8) We see this happening more and more in these latter days. The authorities of God, whether they are Christian or not, are still God's authorities according to the word of God, and God works through them. But they are being despised, they are not being given honor, they are not being held in esteem. This totally violates God's principles.

We need to recognize that all authority, Christian or non-Christian, is from God. (2nd Peter 2:9, Romans 13:1, 2)

The only one that will hold a marriage together is Jesus Christ. Spouses begin their time together with two different ways of life, two different sets of values, and two different desires. Nothing will hold them together unless they have the common denominator of Jesus Christ. It is very important that He remain so in at least one of the parties, even though the ideal is both spouses. God will hold the marriage together as long as one is seeking Him.

Family Dynamics

There are two individuals in a marriage, and then there is the marriage relationship itself. Thus there are three relationships: the husband to the wife, the wife to the husband, and the marriage.

As soon as you enter into a marriage, you are no longer your own person. You have a spouse, and you are not to be committed only to yourself. You have another person to think about, and you have to think about your marriage.

Once you have your first child, new relationships form: the husband to the child, the wife to the child, the child to the father and the child to the mother, the child to the marriage and the marriage to the child which equals seven relationships. Your second child increases the total amount of relationships to 15. If you have a third child, your relationships increase to 32. The dynamics of the family keeps growing. If you don't have the Lord Jesus Christ holding this marriage together with 32 personal relationships, you will have some difficulty. With three children and their parents, there are five people seeking their own directions, and they have their own wills and desires. Therefore, it is necessary that some practical principles be set up, recognized, and practiced.

We can't let 32 personal relationships go heading off in their own directions. There would be 32 different ways of doing things.

You can't do your own thing any longer. When you were single you could do that. You could come and go when you wanted to. It was fine to do what you wanted because there was nobody else necessarily involved. When the first child comes along, and mama is giving a lot of attention to the baby, sometimes the guy feels left out and not needed anymore. The child and the father may get close, and mom can start to feel forsaken.

"Be imitators of me just as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I deliver them to you. But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ." (1st Corinthians 11:1 NASB)

“Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.” (Colossians 3:20)

God’s Order Works

This is God’s authority order for the home:

1. God the Father
2. Christ Jesus (He was always under the Father’s authority during His life on earth)
3. Man
4. Woman
5. Children

Christ is the head of the husband and He is the Lord of the family. The husband is the head of the wife. He is the chief authority of the children.

“And the Lord God said it is not good that man shall be alone. I will make him a helpmate for him [a helper suitable for him].” (Genesis 2:18)

A wife is a helper to her husband and the second authority over the children. She is subject to the man which means she is to submit to him, respect him, honor him, praise him, love him, adore him, and revere him.

This key principle of God is being thrown in the can and swept under the rug nowadays because of the rebellious movements that want to remove the authority that God has set up. A scripture to support God’s principle is in Genesis 3:16 *“And to the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”* This was the Lord God speaking to Eve after the fall. There was a definite order set up at that point as a consequence of her disobedience. She would be subject to her husband and he would rule over her.

Today, that statement causes all kinds of red flags to go up when women think somebody will rule over them. A man doesn’t like

having to be under authority somewhere either. It isn't in man's nature to be under authority.

What was the sin in the garden? What was Eve's desire? *That she might be as God.* She wanted to throw off God's authority and be on the same level with him. Why was Satan thrown out of heaven? *He wanted to be as God.* Nobody can be as God. God is sovereign.

From the beginning of time we have been in rebellion against God. Another definition of sin is rebellion against His authority.

Genesis 3:16 is part of the curse, but we have been redeemed from the curse of the law through Christ Jesus. We have become heirs to all the promises of Abraham which are abundance in every way and in every relationship.

However, in no way does it discard God's principles of authority. Being redeemed from the curse of the law doesn't establish a freedom to do whatever you want. Instead, you now walk in accordance with the principles that God set down because God set them down as a blessing for us. It is the purpose of the law after we had been given right standing by Jesus Christ and received Him as our Lord and Savior. The law becomes a guideline in order that we might have all of the blessings promised to Abraham. As we walk in obedience to what God says, His perfect life starts to fill and guide us. Then we have prosperity in our homes and families: financially, physically, and in every way as we trust Him to perform what He said He would do.

“Wives, submit yourselves to your own husband as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church and He is the savior of the body. Therefore, if the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.” (Ephesians 5:22-23)

In God's order wives are not subject to God. They are subject to their husbands. The husband is responsible to the Lord. The woman is responsible to the man.

This has been abused, and I can see where women have a right to be concerned about what has happened in the authority order. There is nothing wrong with the order because it is God's order. What is wrong is the way some men apply it and do it. I have seen husbands take this and say, "I'm the authority. I'm the lord and the ruler of this house." Then he runs roughshod over his wife. At that point, she reacts. What has happened is the man has forgotten who the real authority in the home is. He will be responsible some day to the Lord Jesus Christ for what he does with his authority. This is where the woman's hope lies.

God's Plan for Children, Husbands and Wives

As long as children are children they are under authority. We have noted that the man is to be the authority in the home as he follows the directions of Christ. To have authority coming from two or three different directions is totally disruptive to the children, for they no longer know who the boss is. They have to have but one authority. Here is where the woman as the helper helps the man do what needs to be done with the children.

God's principles will work when we are faithful to do them His way. Even though we don't always see the results immediately.

The husband is an umbrella or shield from the wiles of the enemy. His wife is under his protection as long as he is under Christ's authority, she is under the husband's authority, and the children are under the wife. Many times a woman will get out from under her husband's authority. In Ephesians 5 the husband is called to love his wife as himself, the reason being that men are basically selfish. That is why a man is called by God to love – to love his wife like himself because we love ourselves very much. The wife, in the wisdom of the Lord, is called to respect and honor her husband as to the Lord. Why? Because the Lord knows that the hardest thing for a wife to do is to respect and honor. She isn't content in being a helper. God created her to be a helpmate to the man, but she wants to run the show. When a wife runs out from under the authority of her husband, her husband will often say, "Okay, fine, go ahead" because he doesn't want the responsibility. He will give her the responsibility if she wants to take it. There are a bunch of holes forming in the umbrella when the man gives it up. He will give his wife the

responsibility of the children, and he will just go on his way. He will be the first to run.

When a wife gets out from under the authority of her husband, then the enemy can come directly on her with burdens and pressures that she was not created to bear, and she will be vulnerable at that point. Rebellion will form in the children because they will follow whatever their mother does. The mother is the key in God's plan because she is the one who has a very special place in God's line. She holds the husband and the children together.

The children are sanctified or made holy through the believing partner. (1st Corinthians 7) God says to a woman that He will respect His plan. Heaven and earth can pass away, but God's word will never pass away. This plan will last until the new structure is given when Jesus returns. If a husband isn't walking in the Lord, God will still honor His plan. A husband has been given to his wife as her authority whether he is of the Lord or not of the Lord. He is her husband, and as such, *"I have called him your husband,"* and the Lord has put him there as the woman's head. When a wife is faithful and obedient to her husband as to the Lord, He says, *"I will honor you,"* and by so doing the children are made whole.

This is very important to understand. Many times a wife will say, "My husband has all kinds of holes in his umbrella. He's so unspiritual. I just don't see how I can remain in this house with him any longer." There is a danger that a wife will take this sanctified attitude to run out from her husband's shield, thinking all along that he is not providing what she needs in the home as far as Christian leadership and headship. However, all the time God is recognizing him as the authority.

As a wife takes the responsibility and the authority, all of the burdens come on her. Next comes a nagging attitude towards her husband because she thinks he isn't doing anything right. She feels he is letting her down in regard to the children because she has to carry all the responsibility for them. He may be gone all the time. She will find that he will disappear a little more often when she either pushes religion on him or looks down her nose at him (consciously or unconsciously), thinking he is no good. Before long this

rebelliousness turns out to become a force for separation in the marriage. We have seen where women who are really desiring to follow the Lord's way just can't bear it any longer. Why? Because they have stepped out from under the authority by rebelling, and consequently all the pressures fall on them. Then they take off.

Interestingly enough, the word of God says that if the unbelieving spouse desires to stay, the believing partner should stay with the spouse.

These are God's principles and God's order which is where the blessing will really come. This is the plan according to the word of God.

Don't be in despair if you find that you have missed it because there is no perfect marriage. However, in a marriage you should be growing closer and closer as you follow God's plan.

Move in Mutual Esteem

The key to a marriage that is really moving in the Lord is mutual esteem and respect. "*Submit yourselves one to another.*" (Ephesians 5:21) It is not saying that there is an equal authority being set up. It is saying the husband and wife are to move in mutual esteem and respect for each other in the Lord because Christ is the head. This order of God is not a power order. It is an authority and responsibility order that is intended to help the marriage function.

Thus a woman is able to develop herself into the woman that the Lord wants her to be. This order frees her up to be the kind of person that the Lord created her to be. She will see some creative things happen as this is done. This meets the needs of a man wonderfully too. The children will see a bond between husband and wife. It gives them even more reason to honor and respect Jesus. Children will have a desire to walk with Him. They will start to see how important Jesus is when their mom and dad are following Him.

When that happens, it is natural for a child to seek the faith of the Lord too.

Men should revere their wives because God calls them wives. Some husbands say, “There’s nothing good about my wife. I don’t see any reason to love her.” In a marriage it doesn’t take a person deserving the love of another, and it doesn’t take the other partner earning respect and honor. The principle of Christ is while we were yet in our sin, Christ died for us on the cross. The principles of God are in effect. In other words, while we were unworthy and apart from God, Christ died that we might be his own. If you want to win a husband or wife to the Lord, you love. A husband loves, and a wife respects and honors. You might not be worthy of it in any way, but the love of Christ says you are worthy because God calls you worthy.

“Love” Cannot Be the Basis for Marriage

Marriage is not based on love as the world understands it. I ask couples why they want to get married, and they often tell me, “Because we love each other.” That is the worst reason to get married! I always look for something else because the love of the world is based on sex, physical attraction, money, position, social status, or infatuation. A spouse could be the opposite of you.

The love of the world is such that one day you love people, and the next day you hate them. It is based on emotions and circumstances. There is no substance to it whatsoever. Love cannot be the basis for a marriage. There has to be something firmer to hold it together.

Marriage is not based on love as the world understands it, but it is on the love of Christ and recognizing that God has given you your spouse. You took her in marriage, you took her as your wife – for better or for worse, and it isn’t going to be anything but for the better if you seek God first.

It isn’t love that sustains the marriage. It is the marriage that sustains the love. This is a critical point. The only thing that will hold a marriage together is people seeking Jesus Christ and following his principles, wanting to do it at any cost. In other words, you are set on keeping the marriage.

What if you feel that you no longer love each other? I hear this often. People feel that they are not compatible anymore. Men say, “The woman I married 20 years ago (or 5 years ago or 2 years ago) is not

the woman I once knew.” In marriage, both parties will be changing. You can’t base where you are now on what you saw five years ago in a person. Five years later, everyone has changed, and that won’t hold it together anymore. If a husband says, “I just don’t think I love you anymore,” his wife better tell him, “I think it’s time you start learning how to.” We have a command from the Lord that says we are to love one another, and that starts at home.

Love is the outcome of a successful marriage, not the beginning. (1st Corinthians 13) When couples say that they love each other, we can say very truthfully at that point, “You have no basis for that statement. The only way a person is really able to love as 1st Corinthians 13 says is by going through daily life with each other and responding the way that God says to respond.”

“Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails...” (1st Corinthians 13:4-8 NASB)

Those are the love qualities of God and they are made in us by God as we respond properly to our partner. People who say they want to get married because they love each other have never gone through what it takes for God to build those qualities inside of them. When you are courting someone, you have your best foot forward, and no matter what, you really don’t know the other person. As marriage continues, then love is developed. You notice innocent things you say may cause a reaction. As you respond properly and know what the needs of your wife are, you will see the love of God moving in your home.

All guys basically respond the same way to varying degrees. All ladies basically respond the same way to varying degrees, though it is impossible to know exactly how a person will react.

In conclusion, *“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: But I speak concerning Christ and the*

church. Nevertheless let everyone of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.” (Ephesians 5:31-32 KJV)

Marriage is a mystery. Reinforcing it in your daily life is the way you can chiefly express the love that Jesus has for His church, for the relationship between a husband and a wife is like the relationship of Christ and the church.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE
Chapter Three
Husbands Take Authority

Dialogue:

Man: *I've been reading the book of Samuel and the book of Kings and I've been listening to God. Samuel was a prophet, and I believe that God works through His prophets, His ministers, His apostles, His teachers. I believe that every word I have heard through this man [Pastor] has materialized in our lives. Everything that has happened in my life has come to the glory of God. So, everybody listen to the prophet, the apostles, and the evangelists, and God will steer you in the direction you are supposed to go. That's a good praise report as far as I'm concerned.*

Pastor: What happened in your life that would make you consider that to be true?

Man: *My wife was really rebellious, and I had to use some force on her without hurting her. I love her very much, and I'm not going to hurt her. All I did was pick her up, carry her downstairs, set her down on the couch and said, "Now, listen to me. Listen and forget about yourself. Forget about your self-indulgence and your self-pity and listen to me because God is mighty in me and what comes out of me is going to be good for you." Well, God took the situation over and she sat there just like a little child and said, "Yes, honey, yes, honey." Praise the Lord. I'm the authority now. I'm responsible to God for my family, and she had to realize that the man is not going to hammer on her, he's not going to thump her every time she gets out of line, but he's responsible for everything that happens in that home, and my wife just had to realize that I'm not going to hit her. I'm not going to thump on her. I love her, and all she has to do is let God work through me and listen, and everything will go according to His will. Praise the Lord.*

Pastor: I remember when the Lord said to him, “Stand up and act like a man. Take authority over your home. You stand up and take it.” Why? God works through the head of the household. If God didn’t work through me, I wouldn’t have very much confidence in telling you, “Hey, do what you’re told to do here.” Correct? However, I know without a shadow of a doubt that the Spirit of God is in me and the Spirit of God is leading and speaking through this ministry. I am not putting this above any other ministry, I am just saying that is the case here. When I speak in the confidence of the Spirit of God, I know that what God says will happen and those that do it will get blessed, those that don’t, won’t. God told him to take authority over his wife. Act like a man. God told him (and this is the way I do it): Pick her up. Pin her against the wall. I didn’t say hurt her. I said to take authority. Let her know who the man is and who wears the pants in the family. Glory to God. None of this “last word” where the husband says, “Yes, dear.” The devil thought that one up. God never intended it to be that way.

I am referring to the Bible, “*Be strong and act like a man.*” (1st Corinthians 16) Have confidence. God has established me as the head of this ministry. There is none other. In the husband’s home, God established him as the head of that home.

Joshua said, “*As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.*” He said it to all of Israel. In other words, this is what we will do. Now you will choose what you will do, but this is what we will do, and we will be blessed as a result of it.

We are not talking about hammering women over the head or knocking them into submission by pounding them a few times. If a wife is off on an emotional jag, it is to her shame when a man has to act like that. Women can’t blame the men, and the men can’t blame the women. It is time we quit making excuses for our spouses and start treating them the way that God would have us to treat them.

If you are thinking your wife doesn't want to do anything that you want to do (as far as following God), are you some kind of weakling? Who is the man? Who is the head? Who is the God-given authority? Don't think you shouldn't violate her will. Do you let your kids do anything they want to do? Let me tell you, I violate my kids' wills. They will do what my wife and I tell them to do as God directs us. The same thing applies to my wife. The same thing applies to me. I am under God. If I don't do what God tells me to do in regard to my wife and children, I am accountable and responsible.

What about their free wills? We will line them up with God. Do you think I let any of you do whatever you want to do? There is no way. It says to obey those who are over you in the Lord (who watch for your soul), those that must give an account. If I were to let you do anything you wanted to do, I would be responsible and accountable for it.

Eli, a priest in the Old Testament, was held responsible for the neglect of his children. He didn't make sure that they obeyed God, and he let them do what God would naturally forbid. He let them get away with it. He didn't discipline them, and he probably never said more than, "You know, you shouldn't be doing that."

In this ministry, it isn't "You shouldn't be doing that." It is "You'd better stop doing that or else!"

Don't you do that with your children? If you don't, you'd better pray because you will be accountable for them.

The only way to bring blessing is to follow God's way, and that is love, the highest form of love. "*Open rebuke is better than secret love.*" (Proverbs 27:5) What good is saying you love people but then let them do whatever they want to do? That isn't love. You don't really care about them. Actually, if you get down to it, you probably hate them. Why? You are letting them do whatever they want to do.

I can do that with people in this ministry under our care because God has established the authority line, but I can't go out on the street or tell somebody in a bar, "Hey, you'd better stop it now, or you're under God's judgment!" God will judge the unbelievers, but the believers in a body of Christ are accountable and responsible to the ministry of God. Why? That the Word of God be not blasphemed, that the work of God can continue and increase.

A husband has the same responsibility for his wife and his children. *"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."* (Joshua 24:15)

Diana

Pastor's Wife: *Before I got married I wanted to marry somebody that was in the Mafia, because I wanted somebody to tell me what to do, and if I didn't do it... you know, one of those numbers. Yet, I didn't want anybody to ever hit me or touch me because men aren't supposed to do that. When I got married to Randy, he was strong, and he told me what to do, and that was it. I said, "Oh, no you don't." I wasn't walking with the Lord the way I am now, and I was not in a full understanding of the Lord. I wanted Randy to be ruler over me, only when I said he could, only in areas that I wanted him to rule over me. I didn't understand what was going on inside of me when I was so rebellious. I prayed, "Lord, change him. I can't stand him the way he is; he's driving me crazy." The Lord didn't change him, the Lord changed me and my outlook. But I wanted somebody with a backbone. I wanted somebody that was sure about where they were going and what they believed in and what they wanted to do. Yet my old nature said, "You know, he's treating you like a dummy, like you don't even have a brain, like you can't even think." That was the old enemy's trick.*

Once I said, "Alright, Lord, if you want me the way you want me to be, and you want him the way he wants to be, then you'd better change me because there is something needing to be done in this house so we can live together. I don't know what I ever did that was so horrible to end up with

somebody like him, and vice-versa.” The Lord changed me and opened my eyes.

I used to fight scriptures with scriptures. Randy never condemned me; he was always so much love. He never condemned what I did, he just told me what it said in the Bible and let me be the judge of what I was doing. The Word of God convinced me and showed me that I was out of line, I was one of those rebellious women, and I didn't want to be. Then I used to look for scriptures that said something about rebellious men. You know, I was looking for some ammunition. The more I looked for ammunition, the more the Lord turned my heart and said, “Look where you are. Look at what you're doing and how you're acting.” So that was many, many, years ago, and our squabbles are few and far between, but I know who is the boss of my house.

When I was looking for ammunition in the Bible and saw that what Randy said was true, I still didn't want to do it. Randy told me that was the way it was, and if I didn't like it, then I could take a hike, but I wasn't to expect the knight in shining armor, as it were, to follow me, begging me to come back. He didn't want me to leave, but if I couldn't abide by the rules of God in the house and have it a peaceful and pleasant place to live, then I could just take a hike and keep going. I thought, Uh-oh, now what? The Lord convicted me in my heart, and I knew within myself I didn't want to be this way and didn't want to act this way. I didn't want to be screaming and hollering and looking for a fight one way or another every time he came in the door. I decided that if I wanted to be the kind of wife that the Lord had me to be, I'd better do some reading and find out how I was supposed to act instead of how I'd been taught in the world all my life.

Pastor: You have to stand up for what you know is true and not compromise it. *“If you love father, mother, son, daughter, wife, friends, etc. more than me, you're not worthy of Me.”* (Matthew 10:37) It has to be the way God wants it to be in our lives. He gave me a word concerning my wonderful wife. He said that she was going to be a fruitful vine by my side,

and my children were to be like the little olive plants. That is a blessing. I said, "Lord, this is the way it's going to be." He answered, "Yes, I know it. Because that's the way I intend it to be. You are obedient to My Spirit and you're going to do with your wife what I've told you to do. You won't compromise, you won't back down, you won't get afraid of all that's going on. You're going to hold your ground, intercede until things break through, and do what I say to do. Then you will see the results."

There was a time early in our marriage when I (in the spirit) had to hand fight the devil off of my wife. He was trying to steal her, and there was no way in hell he was going to have her or my children, or any of you.

I encourage you. Get planted in the word of God. Grow in the word of God. Get the attitude that it says we need to develop. If you love Jesus, those attitudes are in you. All you have to do is let it out.

Diana: *I would have had no respect for Randy if he said one thing and did another. If he had told me the Bible principles, but then let me have my way, so to speak, in order to have peace in the house, I would have had absolutely no respect for him because he didn't believe or do what was in the Word for the sake of "peace." He could have overlooked that and overlooked this, but I would have had no peace. The more I felt that I was in control, the less I liked it because I didn't want that responsibility. It was too much for me. I didn't want to feel like I had to make all the decisions, but I mean, when you're married to a jerk, what else have you got to do?*

Before I was aware of what the enemy was doing to me, I felt in the natural that I had to be in control, and I was the one that had to make the decisions. There was a war within me constantly because my spirit (my heart) was telling me one thing and my flesh would say, "No, you've got to do that to make sure it's done right because he doesn't know how it works." You know, this type of stuff. Instead of working

together, I tried to push him off the throne in our house and have me try to do it. The more power and freedom I thought I had, the more I was boxed in, and I didn't like it. I didn't like it one bit. Like I said, if I had let the emotional-me (the flesh-me) rule, I would be one miserable, dried up old prune.

Pastor: That's true. Because the blessing God wanted to be fulfilled would never have been accomplished.

When I said that my wife could take a hike if she didn't want to follow God's principles, I meant just what I said, and I wasn't going to follow after her. What did it do? It called her bluff because there was no way she wanted to go anywhere. You have to use discernment in the Spirit of God, too. It is very important. My wife wasn't going anywhere but staying in my house, and I knew it. When your wife gets out of sorts, this is what you do. (This is why God has given you strength. Use it.) You grab her like you're going to tackle her, and you squeeze her, and you don't let her go.

You hold your wife, even if she fights you, tries to bite you, or claws you, but have her arms pinned down to the side so she can't do too much. Start to speak in tongues and command the devil out of your household – not just off your wife, but out of your household, and off of both of you. Hold her until that thing breaks. Who cares if it takes as long as 30 years, if need be, glory to God. This is the way it works. You pray until you get a release from the Holy Spirit. Don't go by what she says, like "It's all over." No, it isn't. Pray until the Holy Spirit releases you. You are the head. One thing I have learned is that God ministers through the head of the household. I believe the work is good.

"Be strong and act like a man." Men, love your wives. Then put the principles of God out in front and act on them, and bring your wives in. I am leading my family, I am not shoving my family.

Diana used to get after me by saying "Are we living in China or something?" because I would have her walk 10 feet

behind me. I really wasn't making her walk 10 feet behind. It was that she had given me an attitude.

We are a team. We work together. But the final decision comes from me. Don't get discouraged if it doesn't happen in the first eight years of your marriage. Don't get discouraged if it doesn't happen in the first 20 years of your marriage. Stick to your guns, and you will see it happen. My wife has her moments, and I have mine. The best thing you can do is get down on your knees together, ask God to forgive you both, and kick the devil out of the house.

If you are single, you need to take hold of what I am sharing because the day may come when you are married. It would have been all over in the first year of our marriage if I hadn't had one thing in my heart: *My commitment to God and my commitment to the woman I married was going to be for good.* No matter what she did or didn't do, it was for keeps because it was a holy vow before God, and I was going to honor it with everything in me.

Like she expressed, she is in a whole different place now than she was then. She wasn't any witch when I married her either. Let me point that out. She wasn't a screaming, rebellious person. I never would have married her if she had been. Let me tell you, if a woman is that way before you get married, don't marry her. If you already have, you have, and that is it. If you knew hollering before you got married, then you can't cop out afterwards. You have her, and you better make it work.

I really learned about true love – unconditional, a total commitment of love. To me, divorce is not an option, especially among real believers. If you have been through a divorce, don't get condemned by this. God will forgive you, and He will pick up the pieces and put you on the right track. Understand, God has a better way. He has a perfect way. Many times when people get divorced, they don't know any differently. They are in the world, or they are listening to "Christian counsel" that says you can get a divorce.

Nowhere in the Bible does it say that you can go out and get a divorce. It says that if your spouse gets one, and you marry somebody else, you two are committing adultery. It is the way the Bible reads. It is loud and clear as to what God's plan and purpose is.

When I told my wife to take a hike, I wasn't commanding her to get out of my house. I was saying, "If you don't abide by the principles of God in this house, and you want to leave, feel free to do so." I wasn't putting any burdens on her, like making her stick to every little point. Then if she didn't do it she was disobedient to God. No, that is nonsense. I don't believe in that. God didn't think up many of such points. A marriage is a loving, working relationship between a husband and a wife. There is giving, there is taking, but it is always with God at the center of the home. When a family is established on those principles, then God is able to do mighty and abundant works.

I have learned everything about faith by doing it. I know God's word works. I know His promises work. I know this for certain: I am blessed with my wife from the day we said "I do" until Jesus comes back, or I go first. I look forward to a long, long life.

It is what we will have, but we have to work at it. Sometimes after a disagreement I would walk out the front door, and she would be inside. I would get in my car, ready to drive off. I don't know how many times it was that I got out of my car, walked up to the door and found her meeting me halfway. Thank God for His Spirit, and thank God for people who are really seeking Him. The devil wants to destroy your home. He wants to destroy your life. He wants to destroy your spouse and your children, but we are not going to let him.

Love means sticking with it. It is the kind of love that God had for us in sending Jesus. The home is the example of the relationship between Jesus Christ and His church, Jesus and the husband being the same, and the wife and the

church being the same. (Ephesians 5) The highest place God's love is to be displayed is in the home.

Have you ever wondered why it is you can love all kinds of people outside of your home, but when it comes to loving your spouse, it is difficult. Do you know why? God has placed and established a high order on marriage, and the devil will do his best to disturb you and your spouse. But he can't do anything if we don't let him. The love of God will be displayed in our homes, and then people will see it. It will be a testimony to them, and they will say, "That's the Jesus I want. If He can make two people who are so different into one, then he is a supernatural, miracle-working God."

People flock to the occult because they want a move in the supernatural. Let me tell you, if the devil is doing supernatural things, then how much greater should the Spirit of God be doing them? The devil learned everything he learned from God.

You and your spouse have to be in agreement. *"Whatever two or three agree on earth as touching anything they ask,"* God will agree on it in heaven. In the home, God has already made two in agreement. *"One will move a thousand, two will move ten thousand."* Just think what can happen when we all come into agreement.

It takes just one person moving with God, and the whole household can be brought in (1st Corinthians 7:14) – one person standing up for God and saying, "This is it. This is the way it will be. I will love no matter what they are doing, and no matter what others are saying. This home will be brought under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ." One person can kick the devil out of the house if he or she is a believer who is steadfast, courageous, and strong. *"Be not afraid, don't be discouraged or dismayed, the Lord God goes before you to prepare the way."*

If that is the case, who can stand against you? Nobody. There was a time when my wife encouraged me, and I

started to back off a little bit. I didn't need too much encouragement to do that. I thank God every day for her because she is a tremendous blessing in my life. If you see your spouse in any way other than a tremendous blessing God has placed in your life, you are wrong. Don't think that God has somebody else for you. Friends, the day you said, "I do," God said, "I will." God can make the miraculous happen.

I used to be very much into myself, and at times I still am, but we have to bring ourselves under the control of the Spirit of God that prefers the other person more important than ourselves. Just because you are the authority in your home doesn't mean you can do anything you want, neglecting your spouse's needs. If you don't know what her needs are, ask God and He will help you to become sensitive to her.

Sometimes in a marriage you think, *Oh, God, it would be a whole lot easier if I were single.* Let me tell you from experience in counseling many, many singles, they are sitting there saying, "Lord, send me someone. I don't want to be alone." What we should be praying is, "Lord, fill me with your presence and your blessing. Cause my will, mind, attitudes, and values to line up with what you would have me to do in the state I am in, whether single or married. Lord, make me content, that your blessing might flow through me and that I might get my eyes off of myself and my wants, desires, needs, and be about the work of your ministry because the time is short." Paul said to them that were married to live as though they were single. (1st Corinthians 7) What was he talking about? The devotion in the marriage should be on the Lord, not on people. Together a couple should minister to the Lord and be about His work. Let them that are single be about the work of God with all their hearts and with total contentedness. If God should have someone come along, make sure, make sure, make sure they are walking in the Spirit where you are (or open to it). How will you know they are open to it? They will flow with you. Otherwise you will have a rocky path. Still, God says He will make even the crooked paths smooth.

Why do I have such confidence in God? Time and time again I have seen His promises to be true. When I purposed in my heart that I wouldn't move from what God has said, I found it was no different than believing Him for healing or salvation. God has a will for your marriage, and God has a will for your wife. Note, the Bible doesn't mention any difficulty with the man bringing his whole family in. You won't find one promise about God having to do something miraculous to bring in the wife. Do you know why? Because if a man is acting in the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, loving his wife and leading his home the way that God wants him to, his wife will follow.

1st Peter 3:1 and 2 teaches a wife about winning her husband to the Lord without speaking a word, but simply by her godly behavior. She honors him and respects him. She leads her husband in when she lets God come over him (while she is under him, respecting and honoring).

All a man has to do is say, *"As for me and my household we will serve the Lord,"* and do it in love. His wife will come. Be strong and act like a man and whatever you do, do it heartily as to the Lord – in love for the family. (1st Corinthians 16)

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE
Chapter Four
The Man's Role, Stability and Spiritual Direction

A Word From the Lord

...Mighty by My Spirit, saith the Lord. Great and wonderful things would happen around the world if the husbands, my men in the homes, would stand up and rise up strong and mighty in Spirit, and stand firm in conviction and faith, have concern and love for Me and love for their wives. My men need not be afraid of what their wives think, or what the wives feel, for I have my hand upon those wives even as I have my hand upon those men. As they rise up and stand strong, and put the [correct] ways of the home, then, even then, my Spirit would draw their wives into all that I have for them. For they desire to be submissive. That is the desire of the wife's heart. You need not fear, men, you need not fear, for they will come into all that I have for them through you, through you, through you. You will usher them into the fullness of the things of my Spirit. They will honor and respect you for taking a firm stand. Firm in love. Firm in kindness. Firm in gentleness. Firm in my word. Firm in Me. Take that stand. Be bold enough to take it. They will grumble, they will complain, they will come against you, but they will love what you are doing, and they will love what you stand for. Very soon you will see the fruit of the stand of love upon My will. You will see the results that I have intended you to have.

The Husband's Role

This chapter will include what the husband's role is in the home and how he should minister to his wife. We are not on this earth to meet our own needs. God meets our needs, and we in turn are supposed to meet the needs of others in the name of Jesus. It is only by God's power, ability, and wisdom that we can reach out and meet the needs of others. We do not have the ability on our own.

For a family to be strong and healthy, Jesus has to be in the center of at least one of those people's lives.

Key scriptures for men, specifically speaking to husbands, are:
“Watch, stand fast in the faith, act like men, be strong, and let all your things be done with charity [love].” (1st Corinthians 16:13, 14)

Be Watchful

The Lord is calling husbands to be watchful. Involved in that is a form of diligence, not doing our own thing, but watching and being alert. We need to be alert to what is going on in the spiritual realm and what the devil is trying to do. We need to be alert in the spiritual realm to what God is trying to do. We need to be alert to what is going on in our own hearts. We are to watch our own thoughts, attitudes and values, and we are to watch what is going on with our wives.

It doesn't take too much spiritual discernment to tell what is going on with your lady because it is written all over her face. If you would take the time to look at her, it would be very easy to pick up when she is doing well, when she is getting shaky, and when she is in the pit.

We are called by the Lord to be watchful. This is a man's responsibility. He is a kind of watchman for his home in order to keep the enemy out. It is very important. This is one of the areas where guys will let down and then wonder why things have happened to their wives or children. It is because they haven't been watchful. If they would be watching, some things would never come about. If you find that this is an area you have neglected, ask God's forgiveness, forget the things behind and make sure it doesn't happen again. It is simply a matter of doing it.

I missed it, I messed up, this happened as a result, Father God, and I'm sorry. Would you please forgive me in the name of Jesus? Go to your wife and say, “Honey, I really messed up in this area. I wasn't watching. I wasn't alert. I wasn't diligent, and then this happened to you as a result, and I'm the one who did it.”

One of the finest things a wife can hear is that her guy is making steps to be watchful, and she will fall in line quickly. She might argue with you for a while. It is alright. If you have it coming, you have it coming. A man of God isn't afraid to take a little stuff, but then it won't go any further. It is over, forgiven, forgotten, and done; move

on. She will respect that. She will honor that and look to you. Not only did you catch what you were doing that opened a door, but you shut it and had the spiritual strength to say, "I missed it. I was wrong. Would you forgive me?" Then, as she watches, you make the steps to be watchful again. Mighty things can start to happen.

Stand Fast in the Faith

Hold your ground with conviction about what the word of God says. Get into the word of God. Get to know God and His word. Be true to God's commandments, principles, and standards. Spend time in prayer. Then when you go to your wife, you have conviction in your heart. It isn't that one day you are hot, the next day cold. You will know what God says, and it is what you will do. You may be 50% consistent right now, but tomorrow you may be 51%. Strive for 100%, and just keep moving ahead. When you develop godly patterns, the old ways sift out. It is a matter of taking that stride straight to the mark. Put your wife to work helping you because she is your helpmate. Tell her, "Honey, help me, this is what I want to be. I want to be consistent in the word of God. I don't want to just speak out of my mouth. I want to be a doer of the Word. Please help me to do it."

You have to work with her in helping you be consistent. Then she won't be working against you. Then she becomes a part of your godly move.

Stand fast in the faith because the devil will work towards you and he will work through you wife. Why? She is susceptible to demonic activity. What makes her susceptible? Emotions. Men are responsible to keep the devil off her back.

Many times guys make mistakes because they are so concerned about themselves that they don't watch what is happening. Then the devil comes in through their wives. One of God's greatest blessings to a man could end up to be a cursing if he isn't diligent, watchful, and about the things of the Spirit. There were times I let a devil come on my wife because I wasn't watching. I was being neglectful in an area.

Adam wasn't tempted. Eve was. The devil came to Eve, but Adam did not stand firm in the faith. He relinquished what was his and his

family's. Then Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent. Adam blamed God..., "this woman you gave me did it." But God came right back at Adam and asked, "Why did you listen to the woman rather than to Me?" (Genesis 3) If he had stood fast in the faith, she never would have moved him. If he had been watchful, she never would have been there communicating with the devil. Where was Adam? I'd say he wasn't watchful. Let me tell you, I'm not perfect either, but Adam was created perfect. He didn't have a fault in him. Where was he when his wife started hanging around the tree that was off limits?

Many guys are not tending to their wives. What is the order? God first. We know Adam wasn't communicating with God. If he had been, he wouldn't have fallen into that. God first. Then the spouse, the children, work, friends, the world.

When Eve gave into the temptation, Adam wasn't standing fast in the faith, even though he knew God's commandment full well. Who did God say the commandment to? Adam. He had it right from the Lord's mouth. Eve was told the commandment by her husband.

Many guys would do very well to spend more time with their wives. There wouldn't be so many broken homes if they did. They are too busy doing other things.

Act Like a Man

Be courageous. Have the courage to take the spiritual headship of the home. If you think she knows more about the Lord than you do, forget it. Start to take the headship. Don't let her run the spiritual part. This is what we as men are supposed to do, and if she doesn't know anything about the Lord, hold family devotions and set a standard in the home. When she starts calling you fanatical or cultish, you can say, "so what, Hon?" Love overcomes everything.

The world has a totally different idea of what it means to act like a man than God does. Be the authority. Be loving. Be strong and steadfast in the faith. Be considerate. Take hold of the reins and run with it. God gave the man the responsibility to run his household. Don't relinquish the responsibility to anyone. Moses got into big trouble by listening to his father-in-law. His father-in-law came to him

with some counsel that sounded good (about dividing the labor), but it wasn't really good counsel because he lost the responsibility for Israel.

A guy who delegates all his authority has lost the responsibility. If you delegate too much to your wife or to others to watch your home, then you end up losing the reins.

Moses had to judge all those people, which is what he did all day long. There were lines and lines of people. He was tired. God never intended for it to be done that way. God intended it to be done through the Levites and the priests. He didn't intend to have all the different judges over a hundred, judges over ten, and judges over a thousand.

The world creeps into the home and messes up the guy's attitude as far as what his responsibilities are towards his wife and children. The world has a totally different idea of what it means to run a home. If we don't do it God's way, then hell will break loose in our homes.

Act like a man, be strong. Why? The pressure will come to the man through his wife. If he isn't strong in the word of God, then he might get swayed. The perfect case in point is Abraham. Sarah came to him and said, "Well, I'm barren. You're old. There's no way we're going to have a child." God had promised Abraham that they would have a son and he would be the father of a great nation. Sarah didn't believe it, so she encouraged Abraham to sleep with Hagar, her handmaiden, so they could get a boy. It was Sarah's idea. Where did she get that idea? The devil. He put that amazing thought in her head. According to their culture, it was permissible. (Not God's law.) Sure enough, they had a little boy named Ishmael, and as he grew up Sarah hated Abraham for having this woman and her boy around. It was her suggestion, but she brought pressure on Abraham. "Get rid of them. I don't want them in this house anymore."

Abraham got rid of them to his shame. Let me tell you, there was a mark on him, and he hated every minute of it. He tried to please his wife rather than being strong and saying, "You're the one that wanted this to happen. They're going to stay in this house, and I'm going to

raise that child. I will take care of Hagar just as we agreed.” Rather than do that, he sought to please Sarah and sent them away.

When Isaac was born, he became the father of the Jewish race. Ishmael was the father of the Arab race. Ever since there has been war between the two. You can see how man’s idea got in the way of God’s plan. If Abraham had stood his ground and been strong, it never would have happened. It was God’s idea to have the child through Sarah, not through Hagar. Abraham waited, and then he gave in – and not only once.

Do In Love What Has to Be Done

“Let all things be done with charity and love.” It is one thing to be strong, but it is another thing to be loving. I believe the two should go hand and hand because strength without love is nothing but harshness, and harshness will make people bitter. Love will never make anybody bitter. It will always bring out the best in the person. *“Let everything you do be done with love.”*

Do in love what has to be done. The reason some women get away with disrespect is because the man hasn’t put a stop to it, and he has turned over the responsibility in certain areas for x-amount of years. When he wants to take the reins back, she isn’t ready to give them. He bred a spirit of independence in his wife. Now he doesn’t like it, but he will have to pay the price for a short period of time.

If you are not married, it is much better to operate on this principle. Start out by taking the reins. Give responsibility in areas where you always have the final say. Never give blanket freedom for your wife to do whatever she wants to do, or you will end up losing in the end because you lose the responsibility. This is very important in any authority position. The final say-so always has to rest with the authority. Whether it be a husband, an employer, a minister of the gospel or a government official, the final say always has to rest there. President Harry Truman said, “The buck stops here.” You will bring disorder into your home if you don’t. It may take a while to get to the place we are talking about. It doesn’t happen overnight, so I want to encourage you a little bit. It could happen in two days if a man sat down and came to the place, “This is what has been coming to me,

and this is the way I want to run the house.” He makes that stand, and he makes it solid in love, and points out that he has neglected some areas, but he is going to change. It will be different, and “This is the way we will do it from now on.” She will be watching him to see whether he really means business. As she sees that he does mean business, then she will pick right up on that. I believe it doesn’t need to take 20 years because in God’s order the woman is under the man, and the man says, “This is it.” She will fight him at first, but she will see. Before long, she will say, “Thank you, Jesus, for making a man out of my man.”

In the world people think it is chauvinistic. My wife, like all wives, will fight me, but when it gets down to the bottom line, she always submits. Not only to me, but to God. By submitting to me she is submitting to God. It works if you are courageous enough and man enough to do it. Who thought up the worldly idea of chauvinism? Women’s lib. The doctrine is right from the devil, from the pit of hell. I have never seen those women happy. Not a one. You can tell by looking at them. God bless them, I pray that He forgive them and grant them repentance.

When a woman finds a godly man, she will hate it at first, but later she will love it. Guys cannot go by the response of a woman because down deep in her heart she wants a real man to lead her spiritually in governing the home. She wants a man who will keep control. God created her to be a helpmate, not independently running the show. Deep down in her heart she is looking for somebody like that. If you go by her emotions, you will lose. If you go with what comes pouring out of her mouth, you will lose. Trust God, here is where the point of faith comes to be courageous. Take that stand even if it means losing your wife. *“Whoever loves father, mother, daughter, etc., more than me is not worthy of me.”* Take a stand on the Word of God.

What is love always concerned about? God and the other person. Love is never concerned about self. That is a rule of thumb. Anytime you are thinking about yourself, you are not acting, thinking, or speaking in love. Love prefers others more important.

Understanding Your Wife:

Your wife needs stability and the direction of a spiritual leader.

I am fully convinced that if a godly man is really moving in the fullness of the Spirit of God, it won't take long for his wife to come to God. A man who is leading his household in the ways of God will usually see quicker results than when a wife is believing for her husband to come in.

Why is that? The man is over the woman in God's authority order. She has to pray to God to deal with the will of her husband, but a husband can just take the reins in love, saying, "Honey, where I go, you go." Before long, she will love it. She may grumble and complain about it at first, but when she is moving with it, things start happening. Sometimes one just has to take the lead and go with it.

Part of acting like a man is not being afraid of the woman. The day man is afraid of his wife is the day he is ready for a fall, and is probably already on his knees. *Yes, dear, yes dear.* There are a lot of "yes, dear" jokes, but those things make me want to vomit. According to the word of God there is no "Yes, dear," it is "Yes, sir." I don't say that in any way but love. It is God's order.

A wife is supposed to call her husband "lord." (1st Peter 3:5) You don't see a lord saying, "Yes, dear." He says, "This is the way it is."

When a man starts to take the reins, he has the responsibility from God to lead in godliness.

If you saw somebody ready to drive off a cliff, you wouldn't let them go. If your wife isn't in the Lord, you need to love her into the kingdom of God. Take her to church with you. You want her to have the same joy and love that you have when you are there, and the Spirit of God will move on her.

Women are usually quicker to come into the kingdom of God because as soon as they get in the presence of the Spirit of God, they melt. Their hearts "turn to butter," and they just start loving God.

Your wife needs the stability and direction of a spiritual leader. If her husband is not giving direction, then he doesn't have it. We are all made up of spirit, mind, and body, whether believer or unbeliever. The spirit part is the part that is dead to God until one is born again. All people have needs, no matter who they are or where they are in the world. There is a hunger and a thirst for things of the Spirit, and people want to see miracles. They want to be a part of it. The occult has such a strong draw to people because they think there is something out there. How much more so, the Spirit of God.

If you take the spiritual reins of your home, and move in the things of the Spirit of God, and act in love, setting an example of love for your wife, she can see it almost immediately. Before she might have considered you an insensitive clod. When you start loving her as you love yourself, it will get to her, especially when you start acting like a man, saying, "Honey, this is where we're going today." She might fight you tooth and nail, but when she gets there, glory to God, she will have a good time. She will go with you to the beach, she will go with you to the restaurant, she will go with you anywhere you want to go. Why back off on the most important thing there is for her? Fear is not in you.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE
Chapter Five
Your Wife Meets Vital Needs

Here are evidences in your life that show a desire to seek the Lord:
Regular time in the Word
Faithfulness and prayer
Regular church attendance

The husband is the spiritual leader. He is an example to his wife.

What provides part of the stability in the home is the example the husband sets. A wife wants to see that her husband is consistently striving to be a godly man and leading the household according to godly principles. It will make a big difference in her walk with the Lord and in her respect for him.

Obstacles that will hinder your walk with the Lord are television, wrong friends, or not being honest (putting up a false front). That is what the Pharisee did; "I thank you, Lord, I'm not like that guy over there." Many people say they don't have a problem when you know full well they have one. Others can see a problem, and you can't. A wife is one of the best indicators a man has. She can see what is going on in her husband when he may not be aware of it. Respect what she has to share because she can see blind spots you cannot see. You may be aware of them, but you don't want to recognize them, which will hinder your spiritual growth. There is a way a woman can approach her husband that will not be offensive and won't put him on the defensive.

Your wife meets vital needs in your life and work that no other woman can meet.

Many times a wife may feel like she is just a servant – washing the clothes, cleaning the house, doing the dishes, cooking the meals, and then satisfying her husband sexually. This is something that we need to be aware of. Women operate by their feelings. Convey to your wife that she is meeting a vital need in your life that nobody else can

meet; otherwise she may simply feel like a maid. She may feel that way even if you are seeking to do your best. This will happen from time to time because the devil uses it to come against women to make them feel unimportant and unnecessary.

I always told my wife over the years, "Love, if I wanted a maid, I'd hire a maid." I don't believe in going out to prostitutes so that is out. In a marriage there is only one woman that can fulfill you, and quite frankly, that is the only way it can be. There is no blessing on a sexual relationship outside of marriage. The kind that has God's blessing is the one with your wife. Otherwise, there is a cursing on everything that is done, and it is a sin against your own self.

Here are some ways to confirm that your wife meets vital needs:

1. Your wife's needs must be important to you. She is aware of any need that is important to her husband, especially when you have taken the time to communicate what you really feel is important. You need to show her how she fits in to meet those needs.

Let's say she cooks a great meal, and you go out of your way to thank her. That would indicate to her that she met an important need. I believe that we should always be on the praise side with our wives. This is tremendously vital, and is part of loving somebody. Don't be critical, for they are often concerned that we will put them down. It is something that is always in there. However, there is a difference between praising people for something they did and flattering them. Flattery has no basis or substance behind it. A person who flatters somebody when there is no reason to is simply setting that person up to be used. Usually the person being flattered knows there is no basis for it.

"Beware of the flattering tongue which lays a snare for your feet." In other words, they will try to get something from you. Praise, on the other hand, is for a job that was done, not even necessarily well done. There was some substance to it. Even if she made a cake and the thing fell, praise is still in order. Why? Something was done. There was an attempt made, and the praise should be made for the love in her heart, the motivation of the heart for what was attempted.

Even if it didn't come up to your expectations, it is wrong to put those kind of expectations on anybody.

Praise for what is done, praise for what is attempted, praise for the motivation of the heart seeking to do something. She needs to know the specific needs that she is meeting in your life, otherwise she feels like a housemaid, she feels like a prostitute, etc. Be specific about the needs she is fulfilling. She will know what needs she is meeting by the things you praise the most.

2. Don't give your wife's special task to another person, especially another woman. If you have women workers around you, don't assign them work that is important to her. Don't give it to somebody else, and especially not another lady, like giving a secretary a check to deposit at the bank.

Don't ever stress what your mother does, and don't let your mother do anything for you anymore. Let your wife do what needs to be done for you. Don't honor your mother over your wife in anything. If you honor your mother over your wife, you have lost, for there is already something built in between the two. Mama is still looking out for her boy, and a wife says, "That's my husband, woman. Don't mess with him." *"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, one flesh."* (Genesis 2:24)

3. The scourge of a woman is jealousy. What is jealousy? Jealousy is the fear of being displaced. A woman may fear that somebody else will take the time and attention of her husband. Even an activity being done in place of spending time with her can cause jealousy like passing the time with a male friend. It may be work situations, or the fact that you like to go boating or golfing without her. There is nothing wrong with going out and doing activities separately from your wife. In fact, I encourage you to, and a wife should also go out with her husband's permission. It should be a mutual agreement. People need space. We encourage people to do things they enjoy. It makes for a healthy relationship, but it should be agreed upon.

When it isn't agreed upon, and you are constantly neglecting your wife and going out and doing other things, your wife becomes jealous. Then, "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned." A jealous wife will definitely break down the relationship very quickly. You need to be sensitive to the fact that your wife is meeting vital needs in your life. She does work that no other woman can do, and as you become sensitive to it, and you watch out for it, jealousy won't have a place in her. A wise man will guard against it by being sensitive to her needs. On the one hand, express that she is meeting vital needs in your life, and on the other hand, you meet vital needs in her life. She wants to be loved and needed. It isn't enough to tell a woman that you love her. She has to see how.

4. A man's tendency is not to share the real needs that he has within himself because he wants his wife to see him as a success. Women will love you more when you share specific failures. However, there are certain things you should never share with her.

If your wife was already aware of the failures, and she has been praying for you and seeking to encourage and help you, then admit, "Yes, I'm a failure in this area, and I have neglected you," or "I have been insensitive to your needs." Then you will win her admiration and love because she knows full well that you are lacking in those areas. When you admit you have messed up (note, specific failures), "I've neglected you in this way," she knows it is true. Then you say, "I ask your forgiveness and I ask God's forgiveness. Are you willing to forgive me?" Never say, "Forgive me." We are dealing with an act of the will. You don't have any right to violate somebody's will. Love never violates it. When you start doing it this way, then it will open up doors.

I would never go to my wife and share a fear. I acknowledge the fear to God, and I ask God to forgive me. Then I command that fear, and the devil that is working there, to get out in the name of Jesus. If you put fear on your wife, the next thing you know, she will pick it up. There is a principle in Proverbs that "*He who meddles in another man's strife takes a dog by the ears.*" I believe that he who meddles

in another man's sin takes a dog by the ears too. Paul told Timothy not to involve himself in other people's sin because he would become a partaker of it. You can partake of something that belongs to somebody else, and you can meddle in somebody else's strife, but in the end they may reconcile without you.

If you have a difficulty with somebody else, don't talk to your wife about that person because she will take offense against the one who is trying to hurt you. You may get the situation resolved, and your wife will still be carrying the weight around with her. You have not done her a favor. Those are the kind of things you don't share. Only share what directly relates to her.

Before Diana and I got married, I would always send her cards and bring her flowers. After I got married, I became a clod for a while, and I quit doing those things. She had grown to see them as an expression of my love for her. Being the way she is, she didn't come right out and say anything, but every now and then I would be aware that she liked cards and flowers. Isn't it just like the Lord? He put it back on my heart to do it again, on "off" occasions. It is on those occasions that you tell them you are thinking about them, which makes it very special to them.

There are times when you share information and there are times when you don't. The tendency of a man is to put on a "macho" front, especially to his wife. Of all people, she is the one who knows you are anything but the macho man you try to present yourself to be. You really can't fool people. Pride is obvious to everyone. It is amazing how people are drawn closer to you when you share that you are just like everybody else. There is a time to be an eagle and to soar, and there is a time to be a man. I love to soar in the Heavens, but I am not a 100% spiritual person who continually goes around walking, talking, and breathing God. I wish I were. I am getting there, but I am still a man. It is very important that at times we share that we have bounced two times on the bottom. God will surely bring us up. What people relate to is that when they are bouncing on the bottom, and they think you never have, they can't relate to you. I don't believe in saying what I never did, though.

How can I speak so well about fighting the devil? Because I have to fight him every day. I fight him in the strength of the Lord. I have learned that. I don't fight him in my own ability or strength. There is a time to be the man, and there is a time to be the spiritual leader.

In the previous chapter we looked at the husband as the spiritual leader. Now let's look at him being a man. A wife cherishes both the eagle and the man. All she wants is the total love (second to God) that comes from him. She didn't marry a god. She married a man, and she took him just the way he was.

We always teach the women not to expect to change their husbands. Only God will do that. Our part is to be tuned into God so that He can make those changes happen, and she will appreciate it.

5. Explain needs that you have, and teach her precisely what she can do to help. Note: We cannot expect our wives to know our needs, just as we have found most men don't know the needs of their wives. You must explain the needs that you have and tell her precisely what she can do to help. Her desire is to please, whether she lets on or not. God put that desire in every woman to be a helper. She wants to. But she has to know how to help, and she needs to know exactly what you are looking for. Again, everything you do you are doing in love.

It is important that you come to grips with what your needs are. You should know what they are. Most men don't take the time to search their hearts to find it out. They get caught up in their way of life and go about their business. They don't know the motivation of their own hearts. Take the time to examine them: Why did I respond this way in the situation? Why did I feel this? Why did I do this? There is a motivation in your heart that will answer the questions. Then you can do something about it.

You want your wife to know that she is meeting vital needs in your life and work, but first she needs to know what those needs are. Praise and encourage her about the ones she is meeting.

As far as your wife is concerned, she has to know that she is the queen. You are the king and she is the queen. That position should

be so unshakeable that without a shadow of a doubt she comes next to God in your life.

6. List needs that your wife is meeting that no other woman can meet. This is a time of evaluation. You can often see where you went wrong, but I believe in not dwelling where you went wrong. Instead, learn from it so you don't make the same mistake again. You can either dwell on the wrongs that you have done and go to the pit, or you can see the wrongs, acknowledge them, ask God's forgiveness, and start to make steps to correct them. You can't run around with your head in the sand. Guys not willing to face up to the issues have destroyed their homes. All kinds of doors sprung open in their wives, and problems occurred.

A wife needs a place in the home that is hers alone. She needs to know how special she is. List some things that show how special your wife is and how important she actually is to you. Your wife is not just an ordinary woman. When your vows were made, she became something very, very special and unique to her husband. A husband has to acknowledge that and start to understand how important she is to him. She is not just a maid. God has done something very special in the marriage union that actually elevates a wife above a single woman. There is a fulfillment that comes to her when she becomes a wife. It has God's blessing, and she starts to come into all that God has for her.

The following are examples of ways your wife meets vital needs:

- a) Your wife is the basis of your most important message. In other words, what is the most important message that anybody can share? The love of Jesus Christ. The gospel. The good news that God loves and cares for His people, gave Himself for us, that we might have life and have it abundantly. That is the most important message that anybody can share. Look at Ephesians 5:21-33 to find the relationship between the husband and wife, representing the relationship between Christ and the church. This is why Paul told Timothy that if he couldn't manage his own household, he couldn't be a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. The beginning for ministry is in the household. You can see how highly God esteems the relationship between a husband and

wife, and how important a wife is to a man. You can say you love God with all your heart, but if you don't take care of your wife and meet her needs (physically, spiritually, mentally, financially, etc.); the Bible says you are worse than an infidel. Who is an infidel? He isn't just an unbeliever; he is somebody who is the epitome of evil. You see how this works. In a marriage God has given a man and a woman the very high calling and privilege of having the same relationship that Christ has for the church. The only relationship that is equated with Christ and the church throughout the whole Bible is the one between the husband and the wife.

You and your wife draw others to the Lord by illustrating how He loves the church. In other words, how I love my wife is supposed to represent how Christ loves the church. He doesn't give up on the church. He gave Himself before there was a church. We will make our wives godly wives. How? As we keep letting the love of Christ come through us. Christ made a godly church. You can see the significance. You can't do that with anybody else in this entire world. It can only be done with your wife. How important she is! The more I go through this, the more I see how important she is.

- b) A wife provides potential for power in prayer. The husband is to deal with his wife with knowledge as the weaker vessel, lest his prayers be hindered. (1st Peter 3:7) How I deal with my wife will make a difference in my prayer life. If I am in strife with her, it will hinder my prayers. That is why I have to be forgiving. That is why I have to be in a state of peace as much as lies within me. If I am not dealing with her in knowledge, I will be undermining my own household, and I am acting in ignorance. I am not taking the time to get before God to find out what needs to be done in the situation. Many times we think out of our own heads. If you are getting knowledge from God and His word, He will help you to become sensitive to your wife's needs.

If you have blown it in the past, so what? Ask God's forgiveness and get up, and move ahead. Act like a man. Be strong. You will not get trampled by the devil. If a wife gets wounded, it will take a while to get that healed. Why? She says, "Don't tell me

anything; show me.” We are not talking about half an hour. It may take days, weeks, months, or years. She will have to see that you consistently mean what you say. I thank God every day that the love of God in Jesus Christ is consistent. He is always faithful. He never changes, never depending on his moods. God is totally stable. He is in us, so we are coming into that. Your wife is looking for consistency, and a man of God needs to be striving for it (before God as well as with his wife). *“...If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask it shall be done for them of my Father...”* (Matthew 18:19)

- c) Your wife should be your best prayer partner. You can cultivate her in that, for it needs to be developed. The old saying, “a family that prays together stay together” isn’t far off base. It needs to be done on a regular basis so that she can see it is something important. If you pray once a week, then it isn’t very important. If you pray every day at a specified time, and you observe it every day, day in and day out, then it becomes a way of life. It becomes something very important. It will cause changes to happen. Results will come.

- d) Your wife has an alarm system about other women with wrong motives. It is a tremendous blessing to a husband. Many times a man is just trying to be nice. I used to say to my wife, “Come on, give me a little credit,” but I quit doing that because if a woman has wrong intentions, how do I know except by the Spirit of God? Not only does my wife have the Spirit of God, she also has a woman’s intuition, which means she knows when some other woman has ideas. She knows a woman’s heart better than a man does. A man knows a man’s heart better than a woman. See how important your wife is? I trust my wife’s judgment about other women. This is very important if you have other women working with you. Let your wife be the one who hires them because whoever is working with you is actually working for your wife. Why? She is helping meet the needs that you have. Actually, your wife should be the boss. Your wife should be closer friends to the female employees than you are. She is an alarm system. Use that. It will be a benefit to you. Trust it. Don’t just shine her on. You might regret it later.

e) A wife is a mirror of our present spiritual condition. In other words, if my wife is flaking out, I may have left a door open somewhere. Granted, she is the one who is flaking out, but it may be that I wasn't watching in a certain area, and I let it happen. I am of the opinion that if I am walking tight with God, and I am right with God, my wife will be like that with me. If I have peace in my heart, then she will have peace in hers. If I have joy in my heart, she will have joy in hers. If I have love in my heart, she will have love in hers. If I am neglecting certain areas, then I will have to do some catching up. As I have sought God's forgiveness, my wife has changed. When I go to her and say, "I've asked God's forgiveness and I want to ask your forgiveness for any area where I've let down," I see a difference like night and day. Other times she may have opened a door by herself. It is our responsibility to close it, and the sooner we close it, the better it is for everybody. The easiest way to close the door is to come against it together. When a husband and a wife pray together to God, He will send someone to help from the outside to instruct with godly principles.

There are certain things a husband really can't get through to his wife. He needs to study God's principles. I have found that most people don't know God's principles in these areas. Once they open up their hearts to the Lord Jesus Christ and seek, they will grow. Down the road, as they keep seeking and growing, bingo, the light goes on, and they will see it. Then comes the communication which they will be learning and developing. Together they will have a united front to work out a solution for the situation. They need to speak faith about that. Many times we get impatient.

When I seek God and draw near to Him, and I am involving my wife through prayer (as I am interceding), I can be 20 miles away and God will minister to my wife. Sometimes when I came home, Diana shared what I had been praying about. This is something that has been cultivated over the years. There was a time when we didn't pray together, but God has caused this to happen. We got stronger and stronger. (There is always hope.) There was a time when we first got married that I was ready to go one way and she was ready to go another. The devil didn't want our home. God did. I thank God today that I had commitment so rooted in my heart that I told Diana

when we got married, “This is it. There is nothing else. I’m not going to leave you, and you’re not going to leave me.” However, I said, “If you try, I’m saying fine, that is what you want, but don’t come knocking back on my door.” The reason I said that was I wanted it clear in her heart that marriage is for keeps, and that she can’t play little games with me. She talked about leaving, but she never did it. Even if she had, God would have moved on her heart. Why? Because my heart was committed to her “till death do us part,” and I wasn’t going to kill her. My heart was committed to the marriage, to God, and to her. That is where it stood. Would that people understood this before they went into their second, third, and fourth marriages.

I dealt with a situation where a man had married four times, and he was ready to lose the fourth one. God got a hold of this one, Glory to God, and He drove a stake right into the man’s heart concerning God’s principle for marriage. Somewhere along the line, you have to make a commitment. Once you make the commitment, that is it. If you start flipping from one to the next to the next, you have a pattern. There were so many devils that had to be removed from that man as well as all the past garbage. Every time you break a bond, you break a bond, and before long, you don’t know how to make one, let alone keep one.

I thank God that I was instructed in righteousness at an early age, and it was rooted in: “till death do us part.” You see, my parents got divorced. It was wrong. They sinned against God, they sinned against us, they sinned against themselves. They have asked God’s forgiveness since then, but in the meantime they both remarried. I believe God will pick up where a person is, but it is not His finest. It is not His best. I am not saying God can’t do something with a second or a third marriage. I am just saying it isn’t His best. If we can make a commitment where we are, and make it till death do us part, we will live to the glory of God. I am going to love my wife, and that is it. In God’s eyes there is no such thing as divorce. He doesn’t recognize it, and He hates it. (Malachi 2)

The Bible says a wife is the crown of the man. (1st Corinthians 11)

- f) She can give joy in a physical relationship without guilt. We are talking about a sexual union. Your wife is the only person you can have a sexual relationship with and not experience guilt. Why? The marriage bed is undefiled. (Proverbs 5:19 & 20; Hebrews 13:2) In other words, if you have a sexual relationship with a woman other than your wife, God's judgment is on you. You are sinning against your own body as well as causing that other person to sin. There is no blessing from God. Where there is no blessing from God, there is nothing but guilt. You might have pleasure for the moment. There is pleasure in sin for a season, but after a while it will rot your bones. You and your wife can have joy and delight together, and God intends it to be a joyful and delightful time. His blessing is on it. He says to do it. Again, it should be mutual. Love should always prefer the other person more important than yourself. (Philippians 2:3, 4)
- g) A wife is a safeguard against hasty decisions (because of her need for security and consistency). She can act as a check in your making decisions, and God will use her. If you are being hasty with something that will affect her and the family, listen to her. Don't just jump into it. She will balk at anything major. It is a blessing because it will stop you from making a hasty decision. Proverbs says that a fool makes reckless decisions. You can always take your time with anything of God, and it will be birthed.

What do I mean by birthed? It takes nine months to birth a baby. In the same way, anything that is of God usually has a time factor involved. It is formed and developed and birthed. If someone tells you to get something today or you won't have it, you say, "Thank you very much – not interested." Anything of God will be there tomorrow. She is of God, and you have found a great blessing. *"He who finds a wife finds a good thing."* (Proverbs 18:22) She is a blessing to you. You need to look at it that way, and she will be there tomorrow.

- h) A wife instills attitudes in the children. She is the one spending most of the time with them. What we do concerning her will make a big difference in what she does with the children. I thanked God every day that Diana worked with our children. When I came home, they respected and honored Dad because she taught them to. Sure, she let down at times, but the majority

of the time she taught them to respect and honor what I said. In many homes, the children have no respect for their father. In fact, they call him names. This is part of the reason there is such an undermining of homes today. Such an attitude has been passed down from generation to generation. The husband should take the time to work with his wife in how to raise the children.

- i) A wife discerns the real needs of the children. She knows exactly what is going on and what little games they play. Let's say you come home and let them get away with something. She comes and disciplines them. Don't get in a snit about it, and don't say that she doesn't need to do it, because she knows exactly what is going on with them, and you don't. Most dads don't spend enough time with their children to really know them.

I trusted my wife implicitly to discipline our children. I knew that when she was disciplining them, she actually knew what to do better than I did – unless God gave me a revelation, which He didn't always. I trusted her judgment because she was there consistently day in and day out. If God showed me something else, then I went with what He showed me. I communicated it to her, and together we worked with the children. They saw a united front, and they couldn't play off of us.

You will see this happening time and again. Children will try to pit one parent against the other and create strife. This is one of the ways the devil creates strife in a home when the husband and wife aren't united. Who is the husband's first priority to? God. Next his wife. Then; his children. Who is the wife's first responsibility to? God, through her husband. She has to have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, but direction comes through her husband. There are times when one parent (or both) put the children before their spouses (and before God). It will cause a break up in the home. It will cause a discipline problem. Children are not going to be disciplined correctly because there has to be a united front, husband and wife in agreement, and then the children can't buck it. They see Dad and Mom both have the switch, and Dad will minister it. When he is not around, Mom will administer it. If Dad says, "Mama, minister; she does. Usually if I was home, I did it. Many times with my schedule I wasn't home. A wife is of vital importance to you as far

as how your children will turn out. I would cherish her highly, and I would equip and I would train. When I stand before God, I am responsible for how my children were dealt with.

When a mother says to her child, “You just wait till Dad gets home,” the child has usually forgotten what happened by the time he gets there, especially younger children. In addition, the impact of the moment isn’t there. Discipline needs to be done right when the action is done. Thirdly, you will find that at that point your wife does not want to take the responsibility for the discipline that her husband has given her to do. That will contribute to their delinquency. Fourthly, Dad won’t want the responsibility. When he comes home after work and has to go through all that has transpired, he will shirk his responsibility. Fifthly, your wife really knows exactly what was going on, and you weren’t there. You don’t know what happened. When you do come home and hear what happened, you should be in agreement with your wife. There is a tendency for a man, especially if he thinks more highly of the children than he does of his wife, to side with them, which will create total chaos as far as discipline is concerned. Sixthly, the husband coming home and disciplining causes the total effect of the discipline to be lost. Too much time has gone by, and he is made out to be the bad guy, which will actually cause the children to develop an unhealthy fear of him. When he comes home, the children have lost the understanding of what they did wrong. With little children, half an hour is too long. They have lost what the discipline is all about. I believe that discipline with the rod should be done from age one through about eight years old at the maximum. That is the time for the rod. After that time, they should be disciplined in other ways. You may have to take away what they cherish the most.

7. The key to relating to your wife is love. We are to love our wives as we love ourselves. The more a man dwells on the love God has for His people, looks at God’s example, and dwells on the qualities of the heavenly Father, the more he is modeling himself for his children. As I look at my heavenly Father, I can develop the kind of a consciousness where I treat my children that way.

Approach your wife by concentrating on love. Spend time in 1st Corinthians 13:4-8. The whole Bible shows examples of what to do

and what not to do. The way I treat my wife is the way I will treat my brothers and sisters too – with courtesy, consistency, faithfulness, loyalty, patience, self-control. The more I press into the Lord Jesus Christ, and I draw closer and closer to God, then everything will fall into a natural place with my wife. As I put God as the focal point of my love, it is a natural flow for my wife to do also. We are one, and the closer we draw near to God, the closer He will touch us.

The Bible doesn't say, "Thou shalt go out once a week and get daisies and bring them in and put them on the table." Operate on the principle of doing unto others as you would have them done to you. If you want your wife to do nice things for you, then you need to do nice things for her. "You reap what you sow" is a spiritual principle. (Galatians 6) What you give out is what you will get back. If your wife doesn't respect, honor, and love you, then maybe, for a long time, you weren't loving her. I hate to put it that way, but it is a principle. Let me tell you, if you are loving your wife as you love yourself, she will respect and honor you.

It will take a man drawing near to God to be able to deal with his wife in knowledge. Where will you get that knowledge? By spending time with God. Ask, "Lord, what do you want me to do for my wife today? How do you want me to minister to her today?" First, love her. Love her as you love yourself. I had a problem with that because I didn't think about myself too much. I like to constantly spread out, and I don't really have a life of my own anymore. But I have to love my wife as I love myself. God said, "Love her as much as you love all the people." Then He went back to "Your ministry begins with your own household." That brings it down from the world to the country to the home. Anyone in the body of Christ should realize that my first concern is not to them, but to my wife, after my time spent with God. Then I will be more effective in ministering to them.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE
Chapter Six
Cherish Your Wife

Cherish your wife.

Insight:

1. To cherish a woman by definition, is to see great value in her as a person – someone you want to protect and praise to others.

2. Part of cherishing her is telling her she is a vital part of your world. You want to involve her in things that pertain to your life because she is a part of it. She is one with you, and she needs to know that. If you are cherishing your wife, she will be an asset and a blessing.

3. Your delight for her should go beyond what she can do for you. It is important she hears that you cherish her. Then she will understand that if she doesn't measure up you're not going to replace her with someone else. Cherishing your wife means she is the apple of your eye, and there is nobody finer. Nobody will take her place.

If she knows she is cherished, is meeting vital needs in your life, and your delight for her goes beyond what she can do for you, then she will feel safe, and that provides stability.

She needs to know that your relationship goes beyond a service. You cherish the relationship even if she does nothing for you. That provides a freedom for the woman to meet the needs of her guy without any pressure.

Learn to keep pressure off of your wife. As soon as pressure comes on her, you will have pressure on you. Protect her from it.

4. Rehearse the qualities that attracted you to her, why you were attracted to her and how God led her to you.

All guys like to hear their good qualities rehearsed. It works the same way for a lady. She lives for praise from her husband. She lives for the love and cherishing from him. Involve God's leading in rehearsing her good qualities. It may have been that you got married before you even knew the Lord Jesus, but God still had a hand in it. You can't just dump your wife because you came to Christ. If you are going to do anything, renew your vows to the same wife.

Many times men think that since they weren't with God when they got married, the marriage had nothing to do with God. If I am in God, I won't leave my wife, and we will make the marriage work by the strength and wisdom that God gives.

One of the qualities you were attracted by may have been beauty. However, over the years the beauty fades, and you will have to use some discretion. She doesn't want to hear you say something that isn't necessarily so. "Beauty isn't skin deep, dear. I love what's in your heart" is really saying she is ugly, but she has beauty in her heart.

God says that the outward adorning isn't what makes a woman beautiful. It is the inward adorning of a quiet and meek spirit. It is of great price before God.

Think of some other qualities that attracted you to her. For example, the way she takes care of herself. Again, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. I have seen beautiful women who didn't think they were pretty. What one considers pretty, another does not. All that matters is that you were drawn to her. Whether somebody else considers her pretty or ugly doesn't matter. What do you feel in your heart towards your wife? She couldn't care less what anybody else in this whole world thinks about her, but she cares what her husband thinks. You can break her heart with two words because she lives for the love and cherishing. When a word comes out that isn't right, you can destroy your wife quickly, and then wonder what you said. You may not know what you did or said. If you cherish somebody, make certain that everything coming out of your mouth will be what is best.

If she is just an object in your life, then you won't really care what you say or do to her. You can either build her up, or you can tear her down. You can build up your house or you can destroy it.

Rehearse the qualities that attracted you to her, and then involve God's leading in it. How she turns out is a reflection of what you do. How a rose turns out has much to do with the gardener. Your wife is your rose, so your care of her will make a difference in how she blooms.

If you are feeling any condemnation at this point, ask God's forgiveness, and start fresh.

A wife wants to hear why you chose her above those 40 million other women around the world. There is something particular about why you chose her, which means more to your wife than the ongoing changes. It is where the commitment was made when you first met her. It is always good to rehearse good things that are happening and things that you are pleased with and proud of.

One of the things that I saw in Diana was a tenderness of heart. It was something I was looking for. There are all kinds of qualities, so maybe we just need to go back and do some rehearsing. It is good for us. What drew you to your wife? Maybe it was her smile. It is amazing how smiles can fade over the years. If you are encouraging her about that beautiful smile (and that was something the Lord used to draw you to her), then she will start smiling. There is nothing finer than hearing your lady laugh with you – happy and joyful.

Why does a wife want to hear about God's leading in your relationship? So she can be assured that God put your marriage together. The devil is always going to try to steal it.

Your wife wants to know her qualities are still important to you – Not just “way back when.” She needs to hear they are still just as good as the day you set eyes on her. It is very important that she still shines bright in your eyes. She is your crown. You cherish her. You are not looking anywhere else. Your undivided attention is on her – next to the Lord, of course. If you have God in a proper place, then your wife can come right behind. Love her as you love yourself.

Action Steps:

1. List the character qualities and the things that you see in her, and the personality traits that first attracted you to her. (Memories can fade if we don't keep them out front, and it is our responsibility as husbands to keep them there. If we don't remember what they are, then we can't very well communicate them to her.)
2. List any unchangeable qualities. These are the things that a woman can't necessarily do anything about, like physical features, past experiences she has had, or things she finds difficult to accept. There may have been a situation from her past – maybe her parents were divorced – which had an impact on her life. She may have come out of poverty or had a lack of education. There may be something physical, like one eye is bigger than the other or she has a tooth that looks funny. There may be past failures she has had. Many of these are unchangeable qualities, but in themselves have had an effect upon her. If you were to mention them, you could destroy her. You should list them because they are areas that you don't ever want to mention.

For example, let's say she has difficulty with procrastination. She has failed in the past. How would you handle that? Don't speak about the procrastination because if you dwell on her failures, you will increase the failures and lower her worth. She will get to the point where she isn't interested in making it better. If procrastination is the problem, encourage her when she is industrious and diligent. Then you are building her up, not tearing down.

3. Determine how each of these traits has produced or strengthened qualities in your wife which you admire and which also challenge you to spiritual growth.
 - a) For example, Diana came from a family that didn't make much income, although they always had enough to meet their needs through frugal, prudent management. You will never find anybody that can manage as well Diana's mom except Diana. Where did she learn it? She

learned it from not having much of anything. Not only did it produce a prudence, frugality, and discipline in spending, but it also dealt with attitudes about what one has to have. She was raised in a situation which could not be changed. Qualities were produced in her which I admire. I thank God. A prudent wife is a blessing from the Lord. You can see how it made her the way she is today. I have to encourage her to spend money on herself, and I know she won't go out and blow everything I have. It also renews in me a challenge to spiritual growth – that I watch my attitudes and values about spending too.

- b) Let's say your wife didn't get much education, and she is wishing she had more. If a husband is sensitive, he won't bring pressure on her about it. To be aware of these areas is to help and encourage. It may be that a wise husband will encourage his wife to study something she is interested in. This is part of helping her bloom. If she feels a lack in that way, provide something. It may be that all she wants to do is take a cooking class, even if she is a very good cook. Why? It is an accomplishment to cook even better for her husband.
- c) There might be something she doesn't like about the way she looks. Sometimes things have happened to people, and they are sensitive to it. What should you *never* do? Bring it up and talk about it, or point it out; and never compare her to anybody else.
- d) Perhaps if your wife was fat when she was a child, she has worked hard to get rid of it. What would be a quality that was rooted in her? A fear of being fat again or a determination that she will not be that way again. Self-discipline could come out of it.

Fat people are usually made fun of. If she was heavy when she was a little child, more than likely she is carrying a hurt about her looks. I have learned over the years that people who were overweight when they were

little, might be the most shapely, beautiful person when they're older, but they still think they're fat. They still think people see them as ugly.

Basically, we are teaching you how to deal with your wife in knowledge as a weaker vessel. Say only good things about her physical appearance, like how she keeps herself up or the way she dresses. Be open enough with her to share some things that you want her to do as far as her dress.

I didn't like the way Diana did some of her make-up, so I told her I wanted her to have someone show her how to apply it. I was really blessed when God put an individual in her life who did exactly what I had in mind. So, things can change. Don't say she should have done it ten years ago. No, thank God. It is exactly right. It is the way it should be.

I told her that there were several things that I didn't think were bringing out the good qualities God had placed in her. I believe some things were being accentuated that weren't doing her justice. I believe in approaching it that way. I did make specific mention that I didn't care for dark, heavy eyeliner, especially because of her skin tone. Many times an adjustment will make a world of difference. These are personal things between a husband and wife. Your wife should conform to your image of her, not somebody else's.

In other words, "Honey, this will make you even better in my eyes as far as what I see God has done in you, and I can see much more is going to come out."

Tell her what you like. If you don't tell her, you are making a mistake. In her heart she wants to dress and look the way you want her to. This is why Diana had long hair. I liked it that way. Your wife wants to know and do what is pleasing to you. Then she does what is pleasing to you, especially when you tell her.

There are many worldly influences working against our wives, and it is time godly men stand up for the principles of the Lord. Love is what will bring changes.

- e) You cannot rely on your wife to let you know what unchangeable qualities she may have. In fact, she will want to bury those areas because, in many cases, it is a shame to her. If her parents were divorced, there was probably a lot of fighting, strife, hurt, and name calling so that she doesn't want to talk about it. She would rather just let it lie, yet it is affecting her life today.

If the dad was never home, or when he was home he never took responsibility, it had a direct effect on her. When she comes into a marriage, she will project it onto her husband – that he will do the same things and not take responsibility. There is a fear, and she will seek to compensate for it by taking the reins like her mother did. You cannot do anything about those divorced parents. On the other hand, you can do something about her. Let me tell you, if you bring up her father or mother, you are opening a can of worms. She will defend them even though she hates everything they did and stood for.

Again, unchangeable qualities might be: divorced parents, poverty conditions or a lack of education. They are things that have already happened in the past. You can't do anything about that past, but you can do something about the present and the future.

A woman may pick up on one word you say and apply it to all of her past. You can see the significance of that word coming from her husband. You are the key to actually making her bloom, develop, and get rid of the past through the Lord Jesus Christ. You are the key. What you do with your wife will make the difference. That is your responsibility.

If you are thinking you will have to get rid of too much bad from her past, that isn't what we are saying. You set the climate. You set the atmosphere for God to do the changing. It is like a greenhouse. Plants don't grow overnight. Something that has been rooted in her for 20-30 years will not disappear immediately.

I believe that as a husband you can do something about it.

- f) If your wife feels that she didn't have enough education, you can help provide her an opportunity to develop a real gift (an ability in a certain area). Diana is very good with crafts, and she can make amazing items out of clay. I have been cultivating that, for it is an opportunity for expression, an expression of love. All wives have areas like this, and you just need to draw them out. It will give them a sense of accomplishment. They had the desire, and to hear you say, "I'd really like you to do something with the ability God has given you" provides the extra encouragement to set things in motion.

Then they don't think it is something you are manipulating, but you are cherishing them and trying to draw out God's best. Remember, it shouldn't be forced.

- g) If there is a reluctance, then you are probably dealing with a fear or failure in the past. She may have hit her head against the wall so many times she doesn't want to venture out again. Give encouragement. Come beside her like a tugboat and help her, or do something together in order to get her started. It is similar to the process of getting people filled with the Holy Spirit. We come beside them and speak in tongues with them. Before long, they start speaking.

Never be pushy; just be encouraging. Encouragement always leaves an option to the person. Pushing says, "This is the way it's going to be."

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE
Chapter Seven
Protect Your Wife in Limitation Areas

Show understanding by protecting your wife in areas of limitation.

Every individual has limitations. We are not to look at people's limitations as weakness or inferiority. It doesn't matter whether it is a man or a woman. Many times people look at another's limitations, and then fault the person for those things. People will also look for limitations in themselves, and then dwell on them, never making any positive steps to overcome and work out of them.

Limitations are not to be a point of negative focus. Do not point them out. People don't need to hear it. It won't help them unless they have asked for help in pointing out what they can do with the limitation to strengthen it or get rid of it.

Many people make the mistake of volunteering information when they weren't asked. If you are not asked, people will not respond well to you. A wife won't respond very well to a husband who is pointing out her limitations, even though he may think he is being constructive. All along she is really saying, "I don't really want to deal with that area right now." This is where trusting the Holy Spirit to give insight into these areas will come into play. When it is the right time, you will be able to minister to that area, and your wife will be receptive to it.

The key is that she knows you understand her by protecting her. In other words, you know her limitations, you know her weaknesses and you are protecting her from anything coming against her.

You show her that you understand by not picking on her. You should actually protect her from any pressure she might have.

Women don't like pressure, even the ones who work in pressure situations. After a while they will break, so we need to keep stress away from them. Anything that will cause any question about their security needs to be kept away. We need to protect them from

pressure, whether it is coming from people outside or from inside themselves.

If your wife is feeling unworthy, talk about her strengths, not her limitations. When you stress her strong points, before long she will start dwelling on them. No mention is made of her limitation. You don't need to tell her, "You're speaking unworthy, and you will be unworthy as long as you speak that way." It is one way to approach it, but I don't believe it is the best. There is a time to say that to people, but not to your wife. As you stress her strong points, you say, "Honey, look at this area, and this area. You have these qualities, and you're able to do these things. What do you mean you are unworthy?" Let her examine it. If you drum the negative, all you will do is bring more attention to it. Once you get her to look at the things she is able to do, then she approaches life in a different way, and she will see those areas for herself. If she wants help, she will ask. Many times, unfortunately, she won't tell you her limitations, and if you were to ask her, she may or may not be able to share them.

Like most people, your wife won't be really up front to share her limitations because she doesn't want you to pick on her. That is inbred in everybody. You don't put everything out there because somebody may pound on you. Many things are better left uncovered; let God deal with them. If you uncover something, and she doesn't want it uncovered, then she won't receive your ministry. In public, unless the Spirit of God moves in a certain way, we don't uncover limitations in people. We wait for God to move on their hearts, and then there is a fuller work. It is a more complete ministry when they want help.

Insights about Protecting Your Wife:

1. Your wife wants you aware of her needs and to have wisdom and courage to provide loving, firm direction so she will not fail.

How can we make her aware of her needs? If you spend time cherishing her, her needs will come out. She will feel free to lay out her innermost thoughts to you. She will feel safe, knowing that you will not turn around and press her about those things, or use them at a later time.

She wants you aware of her needs, but she may not tell you what they are. She may not even realize what they are, so part of your role is to be a detective. Be alert and observant. Watch how your wife responds in different situations. After living with a woman for a while, you will get to know some things. You can quickly identify her limitations.

All she may realize is that certain events happen, and she feels pressured. Then she feels like coming off the wall. She hasn't really pinned down the limitation. *Why am I feeling all this pressure? Why am I coming unglued?*

I have learned from experience too. I used to come bopping in with two or three guests for dinner. I rapidly found out that it was a limitation area. The way my wife operates (and this is no fault to her. Many limitation areas are just people's way of operating) is she wants to know what is happening in advance. She wants to have the dinner planned so she can have everything nice for the people that come into our home. My way of operation is very spur of the moment: "Here we are for dinner!" I thought nothing of it because it was the way I was raised. She was raised differently, so it created a conflict. I have learned over the years to protect her from those kind of things. What I simply do is call her and say, "I'm here with someone. Can we come home for dinner or should we go out?" That provides the opportunity for her to make a decision. All she has to do is pick a,b,c,d – the option she wants.

I believe in options, like planning the dinner for another time. A wise man can make options. Understand that your wife isn't an ogre, but she will look for what is best for the situation. Give your wife credit for being sharp.

She may not feel like going out if you bring someone from out of town. She may not even feel like having anybody in the house. I protect her from that. I ask, "How do you feel about this?" and we will just talk (a little bit of communication). Never in front of the other people. This is very important. It should be just you and her. Everything will start to work out. Use options with children too. Lay

out two or three options that are agreeable to you. Then they have the freedom to choose one of them. They feel like they are a part of it. Your agreed-upon options are met, and away you go.

No wife wants her husband inspecting everything she does or scrutinizing her, for you are not there to inspect fruit. You are there to cultivate.

Have you ever had someone scrutinize your every move? Your every word, your every thought? It is horrible. The Lord will not do that to you. He knows everything, but He won't bring any pressure on you because He knows how to minister in love. What He does is bring things to our attention. In love He gently presents them to us. Then it is our responsibility to deal with it. He isn't saying, "You have this fault, this fault, etc." *"If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity [scrutinize], who shall stand?"* We would all be wiped out; there would be nobody left on the face of the earth.

"But there is forgiveness with thee, O Lord, that thou mayest be feared [reverenced and honored]. I wait on the Lord, my soul does wait and in His word do I hope." (Psalm 130:3-5)

If God doesn't scrutinize, then who are we to do so? By scrutinizing, we are judging. There will come a time when God will judge everybody, and we will be responsible for what we have done. Paul told the Corinthians if they would judge themselves, they wouldn't have any trouble.

Over the years I have learned some wisdom in dealing with my wife. I still have a long way to go, but one thing I have learned is that it is far better that I pray for her and let God show something to *her*. There are times when you can't say anything, even being the lord of your house. There are times, if you are really smart, you would get before God and say, "God, she's yours; help me," because it is only God that can change hearts. Sure, you are the lord of your house, but the Lord of all and the King of kings doesn't go around pressuring people to change. Therefore, how can I pressure my wife to change? I can't, if I am ministering in love to her. There were times when I was ministering to people that I wanted to take a hammer and knock them over the head (knock some sense into them) because they

were going down the wrong path. They were going to destruction, and they didn't even see it.

Your wife wants you to be aware of her needs and have wisdom and courage. It takes courage sometimes when she wants to go one way, and you have to stand up for what you know is true on the principles of God. It takes courage because the pressure is there to move you off of the word of God (and get you into trouble).

Remember Eve? Adam freely ate the fruit, and God didn't blame Eve. God blamed Adam. He said, "Why did you listen to the woman and not to Me?" Now, if you don't stand and take courage when your wife is being tempted by the devil, then trouble will come, and she isn't going to respect you. She won't like you to stand up at that moment, she may not even like it the next day, or the next week, but sooner or later she will respect your courage.

Provide loving, firm direction so she will not fail. She doesn't want to fail. Your part is to show wisdom and courage in this. Be aware of her needs and then provide the direction so she won't fail. Nobody wants to fail.

I believe that there is such a thing as planned failure. You can watch something fail, but then you can just pick it back up and use it as a source of encouragement.

For instance, when Diana and I were engaged, she made a pork chop dinner for me. At the time, I was watching a movie in the other room, and she came in and wanted to sit and watch the movie with me. The next thing I knew, she ran into the kitchen to discover the meat had turned into briquettes. She was so upset about it, and she came in and said, "Randy, I'm so sorry. I burnt the pork chops." I said, "I know. I smelled them burning." She looked at me strangely, and then I said, "Well, let's go eat." We sat down at the table, and I ate those pork chops. I didn't say a word about it, and she asked me, "If you knew they were burning, why did you let it happen?" I said, "Because I want you to learn how to be a good cook for me."

The only way I know how to learn is by doing it. What blessed her heart was that I ate those things. I was going to eat whatever she fixed because I wanted to encourage her to develop her skills as a

cook. She is a good cook now. I didn't let her fail. I didn't say, "Oh, what kind of a crummy cook are you anyway? Don't you know how to do anything?" I knew her mother did all the cooking at their house, and she didn't let Diana in there. She showed her how to do a few things, but when it came to preparing the food, her mother did everything, so Diana didn't really have that freedom. She had to learn. As I came next to her and encouraged her, I didn't just let her fail, but it was a learning experience. You don't let your wife bounce her head three times on the floor, and then pick her up, saying, "You really blew it this time, didn't you?"

Sometimes you have to let people fail before they can realize where they are heading, because pride gets in the way. We teach the women to let the husband fail and not be afraid for her security. Why? He might turn to God then. Men have to learn to be responsible for their decisions, and they can't pass it off. They have to lead the household in godliness. I can't blame my wife for anything, no matter what she has done – whether right on, or right off the wall. I am still the head of that house, and God is expecting me to take control. He is expecting me to minister to my wife in wisdom and in courage and that is what she is waiting for. Note, loving firmness. If you are not being loving while being firm, you come off as harsh. Harshness beats a person down.

If you discipline children, there should be love present. If you just beat the tar out of them and send them off to their rooms, after a while they will fear you. They will be obedient for fear of what they are going to get, but they won't love you. They know you don't love them because there is no love in harsh discipline. It is very important that after the discipline is administered, your children are then loved and accepted. Let them know you are going to move on.

When your wife is wrong, you have to take hold of that situation and minister in love, not condemnation. The tendency is to condemn, especially if it is something that directly affects you. Almost anything your wife does has a direct effect on you.

We have to minister in love, and we have to be courageous enough to do it. When you are ready to lay it all out there, you have to bite

your tongue because in just one incident you can undo everything you worked so hard in the Spirit to do.

A wife looks for stability and consistency. If you are not stable and consistent, she may point out the mistake, but she is not looking for her husband to fail. Even a woman in a state of rebellion doesn't want you to fail. If you fail, she does. When you get right down to it, she doesn't want to hit the bottom. She is thinking, *Does he really mean business? Does he really mean what he says? Does he really mean that he's my protector?* If you blow it, ask God's forgiveness, ask her forgiveness, and be quick about it. Then get on with the program.

We need to give our wives the benefit of the doubt. They don't expect us to be perfect, because they aren't. The day I am perfect is the day I can expect perfection. In Jesus I am perfect, yet I am daily being made that way.

2. Your wife may act out of line to see what you will do. This is to test or prove you to see if you really mean business. Again, this is not an act. She is not playing games with you. She is simply proving something. God proves you to see what is really in your heart (Deuteronomy 8:2). He had the Israelites out in the wilderness to prove what was in their hearts, whether they would obey His commandments or not. It was a difficult situation, yet God constantly provided for them. He proved them in order to see whether they meant business, and a whole lot of them didn't make it. You are not to act out of line with God, but a woman may act out of line to see what you will do. She may throw a tantrum. The concern here is how you respond to it.

During her monthly cycle she goes through something a guy will never understand. To hassle her about it makes it worse. What kind of unloving clod are you? Watch and be sensitive. It will make a big difference her response to any given situation. She could normally be very stable, but come that time, she just reacts. I have always encouraged Diana during her menses. Standing together makes it easier.

3. Understand your wife so well that you know when to be firm and when to be lenient. When she is acting out of line, there is a time to be firm and there is a time to be lenient.

She may back you into a corner just to see whether you will stand up and take the responsibility to be firm. I didn't say to shove her or hurt her. I said take the responsibility. Unfortunately, many guys respond by knocking their wives around. She wants to know that you are the head of the household, and she may fight you tooth and nail just to prove whether you are the head or whether you will let her be. It isn't a game she is playing as she is not conscious of it most of the time. She will push you and try to get you upset. She will challenge your decision just to see how you handle it, so you need to be firm. You need to hold your ground, which she will respect in the long run. She may not say so at the time.

All women need a man who is strong, firm, and loving, and who will act like a man. When they see the man backing down, then they lose respect for him. At the time you may not think she respects you, but later you will know you did yourself a favor by standing firm.

A time to be lenient would be during her menstrual cycle. Be as lenient as can be. When she is having trouble from outside sources (relatives, employers, or school) is another time to be lenient.

A husband needs to sit down and evaluate what is going on in his wife's life. What are the circumstances and situations she is facing? Are these circumstances and situations that need to be the way they are, or could they be altered somewhat?

Many times little children will do crazy things, and they shouldn't be spanked. It may be that they are seeking attention. The key is to ask for God's wisdom. *Show me, Lord, what is going on, in the name of Jesus.* He will show you. Most people don't know how to receive positive attention, so they will act in a certain way to get it. Many

people get sick or stay sick in order to get attention. They can't come out and say, "I'd like you to recognize me." From time to time, I have stopped people who were acting out (in their flesh) to get attention.

Check the motivation of the heart. What is really going on in your wife? You may be tired when you come home, and she wants to talk. You don't respond, and the next thing you know you have an argument. She figures since you won't sit down and talk with her, she will argue with you and make sure she gets your attention.

4. Loving firmness is respected when both know it is right. If you are being firm, but you are wrong, it won't be respected. You can maintain that she is supposed to do anything you say. I would take another look at that attitude because if you are wrong, you are wrong. I gave my wife the prerogative to encourage me as a helpmate by pointing out in a loving, gentle manner where the wrong was in the matter. She has a right to an appeal. This isn't just "What I say goes." If I am wrong, I am wrong, but if I am right, and I hold to it in loving firmness, that will be respected. Down in her heart she knows when you are right. She is really agreeing in her heart, but pride gets in there and doesn't want to let you know it. Later she will respect you for that, even though at the time she may not.

You have to have the wisdom and courage to stand up as a godly man and do what has been agreed upon as right. Diana and I have had times when we were "going at it," and I would say, "This is the way it's going to be." What happened? She fought me tooth and nail, but she knew in her heart by her own admission that she was wrong, and the decision was correct. There has to be something right, and someone has to hold to it. If you want to break the rebellion in your wife, hold your ground in love.

Consistency has to be developed. The key is that both know it is right in their hearts. Mentally she may be operating differently. Many times husbands and wives don't want to admit that they are wrong. Deal with truth. What is the truth in this situation? What has been agreed upon?

5. Giving her everything she wants produces insecurities. (You can't buy off your family.) What is your wife looking for? Companionship. She is looking for love. She is looking to be a recognized part of your life, that she is cherished and needed for who she is and that she is a vital part of what is going on. She doesn't necessarily want things. She wants you. Does she have the right to you? She sure does, the way the Bible reads.

It has been known to happen that guys give gifts to their wives without the wives really being a vital part of their lives. They think, *After all, I supply her with a roof over her head, food is always there, I'm earning an income. I'm giving her clothes, I'm taking care of her every need,* but they don't spend quality time with them. I have heard this from women; "He's just trying to buy me off." A guy may think he can get what he wants and do what he wants if he does this for her.

He may give her something she desires, but he is actually replacing his affection with that item. He thinks it will meet her needs. I have heard it so many times from guys: "I don't know what happened. I took care of her. I provided for her. I did everything. I worked my buns off trying to provide, but she walked out on me for someone else." Why? That somebody else was meeting her needs. A woman isn't looking for material things. She is looking for the heart of her man.

A man needs to understand his wife by protecting her in areas of her limitations because down inside she thinks that he will go after something other than her. Work could just as well be "another woman." Whatever he is devoting his time and attention to might as well be another woman as far as she is concerned because he isn't devoting that time to her.

Action Steps:

What should we do? Scripture commands us to dwell with our wives according to knowledge, giving honor to her as to a weaker vessel. This isn't to condemn, criticize, belittle, judge, and scrutinize. It says, *"Honoring her as a weaker vessel."* God's way of doing things is to give more honor to the weaker parts of the body. (1st Corinthians 12) Why? – To make them stronger. If you are dealing in wisdom,

knowledge, and understanding with your wife, then you will give honor to her as to the weaker vessel. There are limitations in her, and God has put us there to stabilize, protect and keep those influences off of her.

If we are not doing our jobs, then our wives will get the brunt of negative influences. They can't handle it, and what will be the end product? We will have to pick them up, or we will go down with them. Strife will come into the home to consume and destroy, and our prayers will be hindered.

"...That our prayers not be hindered." (1st Peter 3:7)

6. The following are examples of opportunities to honor your wife by providing loving and wise boundaries for her:
 - a) If she is not getting enough sleep, what would you do? See that she gets more sleep. Actually it may be that you just need to provide the freedom to do that. Say, "Why don't you take a nap in the afternoon? I like you refreshed when I come home."

Always give alternatives. If you give enough options, then she can make the choice. It is important to let people make a choice, but give the alternatives that you are in total agreement with. In other words, you set the alternatives and then they have the freedom to choose which one. This works with your wife, and this works with your children as well.

- b) A financial pressure comes and she gets frustrated. How would you deal with that situation? "Honey, that's my responsibility in this home. I'll take charge of it (doing the books, writing the checks, priority of paying bills, making all the decisions in the financial realm)." This is one way to approach it if you see that she is having difficulty with it. Then you take measures to remove the responsibility.

If she is used to writing the checks, there is nothing wrong with her doing that. Many guys would do very well to have their wives keep the books. What trouble there is when the guy doesn't know how to manage money while his wife is very capable! They should be a

working team, but the responsibility for spending and bill paying should belong to the husband. In other words, he should make the decisions in that area. My wife used to be an office manager. It would be stupid not to let her take care of the books and do the accounting. If your wife doesn't know how to handle money, she is the last person who should be dealing with it. Set an allowance for how much should be spent for groceries, etc. If she is concerned about the finances and frustrated about them, then all the responsibility should be removed.

- c) What if she is too trusting of people? Watch her commitments by screening the people she talks to. Screen the friends. Is that some kind of big brother tactic? No, it is a form of protection because if she has the limitation of being too trusting of people, she could get into trouble. Is it a good quality? It sure is. You want to encourage it, but some wisdom has to be used as to who she can trust and who she can't. You can't trust everybody. It would be a good idea to have your wife read Proverbs and do a study on the different characters in there: the wicked man, the evil man and the wise man. Then she would begin to recognize who is trustworthy.

Love always trusts, but *“Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”* I have to take that verse in the way God said it. There are evil people in the world. Don't yield yourself to them. Love is always looking for the good, but we are not going to put ourselves out there. A wise man discerns who he can trust and who he can't trust even though he loves everyone. If you put forth your life for wicked people, they will kill you or steal everything you have, and you will be left with nothing.

Trusting everybody is not godly. We trust what is godly in a person, and we give people the benefit of the doubt. We will give them room to prove themselves for what they really are. Always follow the leading that is in your heart. Shield your wife from places where she has to trust the leading in her heart because her emotions will come into play. Certain religious sects always come to the door when the guy is not home. They appeal to a woman's emotions to get her sucked into their position.

On the other hand, people have been burned, and they won't trust anybody. Your wife may be that way. If she has seen how you got hurt, she won't trust people as a result.

How will you deal with it? There is a time factor involved, for to do all these things will take time. You can encourage fellowship with other godly women. We always teach the gals to stay away from rebellious women who are at odds with their husbands or are talking badly about them. Those women will sow bad seed.

It is our responsibility to watch our wives' friends, and we need to encourage them along those lines. There is no way I want my wife hanging around people who will offer temptation. She is a godly woman, but even Lot was corrupted by the worldliness of Sodom and Gomorrah. He was a godly man, he walked out of there with his hide, but his wife looked back. You put yourself around ungodliness, and before long you will have a tendency to look at it and give into it.

If you are gone all day, you have a responsibility to set some guidelines for what goes on at home, like no soap operas (that stuff should be banned from the house), coffee clutches (which is unprofitable), or telephone conversations. Then time is frittered away.

- d) Improper dress may be another topic to discuss with your wife. Is she dressing in a way that is not pleasing to you as her husband? Some guys like their wives to dress in ways that I would personally consider improper. The only time I can say something is within the body of believers. If a woman comes to a service with everything hanging out, I will say something. Who will I say it to? – her husband. If her husband isn't there, I would say something to the woman. It is important because there is a time for one type of dress and a time for another type of dress. You don't think anything of people wearing bathing suits out on the beach. (Then there are some items that are no longer bathing suits.)

A wife is to dress according to what her husband desires. She wants to do that. Make a point to express to her what you like and what you don't like. You will find that she will respond. Why?

Because you cherish her, and you know she is growing in godliness. You are developing it, as the love of God goes through you to her. Again, she is your wife. She picked you out of 20 to 50 million people, so that says something about her choice. I always say, "I have that one going for me" because it was my wife's free will choice. She said, "I do take Randy..."

Wives need to understand what we are communicating. We are not saying, "Dear, I want you to be wrapped up from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet." What I am saying is "I'm honoring you, and I want you to be honored." Anybody knows that the guys look at the gals who are hanging out every which way, but the guys don't marry them. You see the difference? It is a point of respect and honor. Once women start to understand that, then they don't think their husbands are just weird and don't want them to dress fashionably. Again, they don't have to be worldly fashionable, and I don't encourage that, because you can get into trends where you go broke. We are dealing with what is pleasing to you as a husband. Then communicate it. Why? Because a woman dresses to please whoever comments. The tendency is unconsciously to try to please that person, and try to look the way that person wants her to look.

There are many worldly influences on the street, and in the stores, and women see all kinds of things. We want them building good qualities inside. We have a big part in what happens inside of our wives as far as their attitudes, and what they do, how they dress, how they wear their hair, how they do their face. Quite frankly, I am of the opinion that I don't want my wife dressing for somebody else. Furthermore, I don't want my wife dressing so that everybody else can ogle her. It is a form of protection. She shouldn't have to put up with people either ogling with their eyes or touching with their hands.

Many "godly" kisses and hugs aren't godly. This is very important. I have seen live situations. I believe in hugging and kissing people, but let me explain a proper procedure to you: I teach the women how to respond when a guy comes toward them so that he is not able to give a bear hug in which her private parts are squeezed. I saw a guy go across the room saying, "I've waited all this time to do this." I teach the gals not to respond. There is no way my wife is going to kiss any other guy on the lips. I refuse it, in the name of Jesus. It is private.

There is no way that I permit bear hugging. Let me tell you, if I am standing there when it happens, somebody will hear about it. If my wife is uncomfortable about a situation, somebody is going to hear about that too.

Gals have tried to put the moves on me in my younger days, but I don't let them have that chance now. (I don't want to put temptation in anybody's way – either theirs or mine.) Here is how to hug properly: When a woman comes up, hug her from the side. This is godly because you are not getting physical about it, and yet you can express your tenderness, compassion, and love in the Lord. Put your arm around her back and squeeze her shoulder into your chest. Not from chest to chest. Her shoulder is going into your chest.

Women will respond very well to that. Many times it is actually improper for a man to address a woman in a hug. You will offend people that way (like their husbands). People may say I am old-fashioned, but glory to God, I know how women work, and they want to be respected and honored. I wait until they extend their hand before I even shake hands with them. This is very important. Let me tell you, if they don't even shake hands, there is no way I'm going to give them a hug.

Sometimes you get caught off guard, but make a point of this. (I'm saying this for everybody's good). Come beside her with your arm around her shoulder and squeeze her shoulder to your chest, not the frontal parts. Those belong to the husband. They don't belong to you. You'd better not be touching them.

Don't be a partaker in another man's sin, or another woman's sin. Don't encourage it, and they will get the hint very fast. In fact, if I see a woman starting to hug me, I just extend my hand. That is what we teach the women too. Guys, save yourself a whole lot of trouble. You may think that they want you to hug them, but they are really offended in their hearts. In addition, those lips belong to the husband. They don't belong to another man or a future husband. Do you want your wife doing these things with another man? A man can't do it to another woman if he doesn't want his wife to do it. It has to do with protection.

Be sure to compliment the way your wife dresses. She will dress any way you want her to if she knows she is loved and attention is given. A good way to approach how she dresses is to go with her when she shops. If you don't know what really looks right, work with her as a team. When she sees you getting involved, she will be more than happy to respond. You never know, what she liked to wear when you first met her can change over the years.

I liked very bright colors, and Diana was a little more on the conservative side because of her background. Low and behold, over the years she has started to get more colorful clothes. They look good on her. If you take an active part, what comes out will be what you want. Your involvement says to her that you care enough to take some time to work with her in this area.

To flip her \$100 and tell her to go out and get whatever she wants may make her feel like you are buying her off. Which is better? Getting a box with \$100 wrapped in it, or getting a box with something that took time to buy? A guy thinks a \$100 is \$100. What's the difference, what's the big deal? To his wife, it is the time involved to pick something out that makes the difference. I have no problem if my wife wants to wrap up \$100 bill and put it under the tree. Praise the Lord. However, a woman thinks a little bit differently, and it isn't as much what we get as the fact that we did something.

7. More Ways to Protect:

A wife knows that her husband understands her as she watches him protect her in areas of limitation. Again, God gives more honor to the weaker parts of His body. We are to honor our wives, and we do that as we operate in knowledge about them. The first demonic temptation usually comes through a wife (an attempt to get to her husband through her). Therefore, we are to deal with her in knowledge. The weaker vessel needs to be cared for.

She is a blessing to you. You are to cherish her, love her, and give yourself for her as Christ gave Himself for the church. As she watches you protect her, she sees that you care enough to notice her needs without her necessarily saying anything. Be observant as to what her needs are. Men are usually more concerned about their

own needs. They should be more concerned about their wives' needs.

If you want your needs met, you meet her needs. Many times men are like little boys, especially when they get sick. Any woman will tell you that. They act like pansies. They may be macho men but when something goes wrong, they start acting like children. It is the same thing when a man's needs do not seem to be getting met. With this kind of behavior, a woman will seek to meet the needs, but she will actually meet them more as a mother than as a wife. You don't want your wife acting like your mother, but if you begin to act childish, the woman in her will start to act like a mother. If you want her that way, it is your business, but I believe God has a higher way of working. You cannot stay a little boy forever. Grow up and take your place as a godly man, as the head of your home. The head of a business looks out for the employees, the head of a ministry looks out for the congregation, and the government leaders are to look out for the needs of the people. In the same way, a husband who is God's authority in the home should be looking out for the needs of his wife, and then God will meet his needs.

Your wife will be far more receptive and will give of herself in every way as you seek to meet her needs. *"It is far more blessed to give than to receive."* Give of yourselves like Christ gave Himself for the church; for the church responds to Christ out of loving thankfulness to God. In the same way a wife will respond to her husband out of thankfulness to God for giving him to her. Your wife is basically looking for you to take the reins in the home (where you are the protector). She should not look to the man as her protector but to God. Many men are not the protectors they need to be and are more considerate of what somebody else thinks than what their wives think.

If a wife sees her husband is more concerned about somebody else's needs being met, then she will be reluctant to minister to him. She is supposed to be the closest one to him. You are to value her opinion more than anybody else's because she is in a position of influence. A man should never go to another woman or his mother to talk about things. You go to your wife. That kind of a confidence should be developed as you groom your wife to be the kind of a helpmate you want her to be (and God wants her to be). If you hire somebody for a

job, you have to groom the person to take that position, to be equipped. They have to be shown what to do, what not to do, and how to do it. It works the same way with a husband and wife.

As a husband provides loving and wise boundaries, his wife will see that there are things available in her husband to help. She will start to look to him, but if she does not think you care about her needs, then she will not seek you. That weakens the relationship. It will be a barrier and will break down communication. Communication has to be established. It is the only way a wife will open up to her husband. You need to show that you care and that you are looking out for her interests rather than your own.

The fondest goal of a marriage is for a husband and a wife to be able to express their most intimate desires and needs (spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically) with one another without any threat of judgment, criticism, or a negative response coming back. The goal and desire that can be accomplished is that the two actually become one. When you know your spouse as well as you know the back of your hand, you will know exactly what is going on. When you have that kind of sensitivity, your wife knows that her man cares and that he knows her. Then she can trust herself to him.

8. Action Steps for Encouragement

When your wife is criticizing herself and tearing herself down, what can you do? She may do it in jest, or in a serious way. She is actually covering up her insecurities. Encourage her and build her up and at the same time correct her. Praise is very important because a wife looks at what you say and then looks to see if you really mean it.

The tone behind the words you say indicates the spirit in which you say it. I believe if you love and care about your spouse, you will take the time to speak in a way that is loving and respectful, which would accomplish what you want to accomplish.

For example, if she doesn't like the way her legs look, and she makes little chicken jokes, how would you rephrase it? When you repeat what she says, what are you telling her? That you are hearing and understanding what she says.

A wife may do things and say things just to see whether you are listening to her.

Therefore, first repeat what she said. Second, ask her what she meant by it. "Is this really what you think? Is this really what you feel?" Thus you are getting her to make an evaluation of her attitude about herself and defining what is really going on. People say things they don't really mean, or they are covering up something. You are dealing with a root of insecurity at that point. The third step is to encourage her, "I don't see you the way you see yourself." In this case, "Personally, I like your legs."

What does that do? It gives her confidence that her husband accepts and loves her the way she is, and is not critical of her. That gives her a basis to make some reevaluations of herself. It may be that she would never wear any short dresses because she didn't like her legs, or wear pants to cover them.

You could buy her something that shows her legs. You could say, "Perhaps you are wearing longer dresses because of the way you feel about your legs. It's alright with me if you wear long dresses, but you don't have to. I like to look at your legs." How will she respond at that point? *My husband likes to look at my legs*, and there is freedom there. Nothing is being pushed. If that confidence is not there yet, and she feels pushed, she will do it for you, but you are not really letting her bloom. It should be that she comes to the realization, and then she changes.

This is the way love works with anybody. You never push or force anything. You let people come to the realization, and when they come to it, it is a far finer revelation. It will last longer because it is rooted down. If you push something on somebody, it may grow for a while, but the roots need to be established. If she is constantly criticizing herself, this has been a pattern that has been established in her life for years and years. You simply say, "Why are you saying this about yourself? I don't see it that way."

Man's Testimony:

You may not be tuned in to applying those principles if you have not been spending some time cherishing her because when she starts talking about her boney legs, you might be in full agreement.

You may be, but you would not say it out loud to her.

Oh, you might. It has been known to happen especially in moments of rage, or you have been let down and you want to lash back. Let me tell you, spouses know where the weak points are.

Cherishing your spouse is very important.

Man's Testimony:

One of the neat things that has happened to me since I have been coming here is in regard to authority, where we should look at our own attitudes, and I have been doing that - recognizing resentments against my wife within myself which I was partially conscious of, but not enough to do anything about them. I would use opportunities to hang those resentments on her and I might do that about her legs, but I have been praying, asking the Lord to take those resentments out of my heart, and He has been doing it. I am much more cherishing and tender toward her. But I think unless the Lord helps us it is awfully hard to overcome those.

Impossible.

We are not aware of how deeply those resentments are within us. We might chop off the head of the resentment temporarily, but it grows back up again unless the Lord takes it out.

The core has to be removed. The core of that resentment may not even be towards her. It may be something that has been in your life since you were a little guy. As you let the Lord minister by His Holy Spirit, those resentments come up so you can identify them. Once we identify them, we are on the way to running them down to the roots.

Think through the guidelines that you can establish to protect your wife from problem areas:

In other words, seek to identify the weak areas, the areas that she is vulnerable in, and pin those down. Then get a plan of attack so that things can be warded off. If you know your wife cannot handle pressure from your mother, or somebody else, keep them away. Cover her. Always be sure to stand between her and others, and always be sure never to talk about your mother being better than your wife, or side with your mother, because there is a built-in working between them, even in the best relationships.

A woman wants her husband rather than things. The tendency in a man is to give her things and think that will make her happy. Then he will go about his business. Later, he will wonder what happened to his home and his wife. He says, "After all, I provided everything she ever wanted and anything she needed." A man tends to think about provision as meeting a need, whereas a woman thinks of the relationship. When you give her everything she wants, you are producing insecurities in her and it is just to keep her happy while you do what you want to do. It is a turn-off to a wife, which will produce more insecurities. While you are out somewhere, she thinks, *What is he doing now? Why is he doing it? He may have something going on the side.* This has been known to happen because imaginings come within a person. Again, what a wife wants is her husband – time with her husband.

I give my wife everything she wants that we have agreed upon, and I make a point to be available before I see anything get out of hand. I will ask her, "Honey, is this something we need?" Many times she will ask for something just to see where I am coming from, even though she doesn't want it.

Man's Testimony

I think lots of times we can give little things to our wives that do not cost much, but have a great meaning to her. Now, I am a Scotsman and I hate to waste money, and I never gave flowers to my first wife. Until I heard somebody say, the flowers fade, but the memory remains forever. I bought my wife a card last week. It was beautiful poetry that said something about we have differences and so on and so forth, but we love each other, and she has set that card up, you would almost think it was a little worship center at her dresser, and it only cost me a buck and a-half.

It is worth it.

It means a lot to her. It is just amazing to me what that means to her.

We are not talking about going out and buying her cars, and things like that. We are talking about little things that tell her you have been thinking about her today. That is what she will cherish. Again, what she looks for is, *Is he thinking about me?* She is not looking for extravagance. The only time a woman will want something extravagant is when she knows she doesn't have your heart, and when she knows that, she will take you for everything in your wallet.

Things are not the issue, but if she wants something you both have agreed upon *not* to get (and all of a sudden she wants to get it), then she may be pressuring you to see whether you really mean business or you will stand for what you have agreed on. Are you going to give it to her anyway? A wife hates compromise in her husband. Compromising says that he is wishy washy and he has no fortitude. One day he is hot, one day he is cold, and that produces an insecurity within her. She doesn't know what this man is going to do. It produces fears, as we have noted before. To compensate for that, she will try to do everything she can to get herself situated. If she thinks he will run off with another woman, she will make sure she is set.

When your wife expresses weakness during her monthly cycle, do not counsel her, but express verbal assurance of love. That time of the month is a weakness time. Her whole system is changing. Her hormones change. A woman who is normally very stable can become unstable during that time. She doesn't need to hear your wisdom at that point. In fact, a wise man dealing with knowledge will not counsel her at that time. She just needs a confident assurance that you are there and that you care, and that you love her. She knows her system is out of whack, and in many respects, she can choose some of the responses. Other times she is out of balance, and so to counsel her would be to add insult to injury. She knows it is not her normal behavior. If you treat her like she is crazy (that is how the counsel will come across), then she will be angry. In other words,

she will see you as insensitive. *After all, you don't have to go through this, I do.*

This is a time when a guy can really show his true colors. I would recommend getting together with your wife and marking down “the time of the month” on the calendar. The most crucial time is usually one week prior to the flow. During the flow it is just a messy time for her. She hates herself at times because she feels unclean, her system reads unclean, and she needs to know that you love and care. A tremendously insensitive thing to do, and I believe it is actually a sin in God’s eyes, is to have sexual relations during that time. The Bible even says a woman is considered unclean during the menstrual cycle, and she should not be forced to have relations because she does not want to. You have to be an insensitive clod to move ahead when it is the last thing on her mind at that point. Your body is not your own and you need to love, respect and honor the needs of one another. Never be demanding, but always be considerate.

It should be agreed upon that during the week prior, prayer goes out together to come against any ungodly influences. If she is consciously aware that you are asking her, in love, as a protector to help her in that limitation, just tell her, “Honey, I want to pray and help you through this time so it is not rugged for you. The Spirit of God will take a hold of this and you will breeze through it.” That says to her that you are looking out for her and caring.

During the times she does not want to have intercourse but you want to do it the most, you can see what is working there. I believe the principles that Paul sets down should be put into effect – that you have to bring your body under subjection. How do you do that? *“Watch and pray lest you enter into temptation.”* There are certain things that can be done: A cold shower will work for a season. Running or strong physical exercise will curtail it. I am just talking tongue and cheek, though the best solution I found is praying in the Spirit and getting alone with God, entering into praise and worship. I mean active praise and worship. Get into it with your whole being. I have found that when I put my attention on the Lord and off of my glands, then God is able to do something. That is what Paul was talking about in bringing your body under subjection. Many people

bring everything under subjection too much. When your spouse is desiring to have relations, you can't say, "Well, I'm under subjection now." Get under subjection to the law of love which says if your spouse has a need, you will seek to meet that need.

To say, "I have this need" is pushing something on her. I believe it should be that you are sensitive to her needs, and as you are sensitive then it will be reciprocated. One reason wives resent their husbands is because they are demanding or they do not want to do anything. Too busy working, too busy doing this, too busy doing that. How does a wife look at that? *He doesn't love me. He doesn't care.* Justified or not, that is how she thinks.

One man came to me and said, "I think I'm going to die if I don't have sex." I looked at him and asked, "Are you serious?" He said, "Yeah, I'm serious." You may not realize that demons hop on you and want to express themselves through you, and they will make your body burn unless you have an outlet.

The more the guy would say he thought he'd die, the more the bondage occurred. We got him out of that, but what happened? Later he married and was playing rabbit every night. It was not just every night. It was every time he looked at his wife. I eventually ended up counseling the couple, and she thought he was some kind of sexual pervert. He thought he was expressing love to his wife.

In the past, in a prior marriage, his spouse had run off with a younger man because he was not fulfilling his duties to her, and as a result, he wanted to make up for it. Every chance he got he was going to have intercourse. Then he thought he would die if he didn't have it.

You can see what kind of selfish trip that is. Any time you are so concerned or obsessed with your physical needs, you are in a state of sin.

This sounds hard, and it is, because that is the way God would look at it, especially with a person who is born again and filled with the Spirit of God. We are to be spending more time on the Spirit than on the flesh.

I had to work the same principle in regard to my eating habits. I had to put my body under subjection. I had a real problem packing away a dinner or two at a sitting. We are talking about flesh areas, now. Flesh is not just sexual relations. It could be almost anything – eating habits, vanity, working day and night trying to achieve. They have to be brought under control. Thoughts have to be brought under control. God would not say to do that if we did not have the ability to do it.

If the Spirit is willing, then by the power of God we are able to bring this body under control. During the woman's cycle, we are only talking about a week and a half. If you cannot hold yourself for a week and a half, then what would you do if something else should happen? If you are out of state for a while, what are you going to do? Run down to a prostitute or masturbate? There has to be some kind of control.

Most men do not realize it, but God has a natural release system: nocturnal emissions. They are not caused by lying there fantasizing and doing something with yourself. It is just done as a release of your body. The tension builds up, and you don't even plan the release. God plans it. It is a natural release, but you should not ever have to get to that point if you have a wife. It is the way God would have the union to be, between a husband and a wife. If you do not, God has the other plan, and you get along perfectly fine. Anything other than the marriage bed is defiled.

Man's Testimony

A little quick insight: when G. was pregnant with our son we went to Lamaze class, and as far as the physiological side of things, I learned there (that I shared with other guys when we got on the subject), that I never understood and it helped me to understand a little bit, is that the man has one cycle to his sex life. In other words, reproduction. There are five stages or cycles to a woman's sexual cycle, and that would be menstrual, reproductive in conception, pregnancy, birth, and then there is a sexual cycle after birth having to do with the natural nurturing and nursing of a child. That really helped me understand where a woman was at. They actually have five different cycles, and we have one. So it is no wonder that there is a physiological conflict right there.

Many times a man operates on impulse. He looks at his wife and gets turned on, so he says, "Let's go." She looks at him and says, "Go where?" A man operates by his sight. A woman likes to be courted into it. If you do not start in the morning, preparing her and getting her ready, forget it at night. This is what a woman is looking for: the caring, the concern, the courtship aspect. She is looking for that more than being quick to hop in bed. At that point the woman is more concerned about loving and caring.

A woman looks at the sexual act in a different way than a man does. For the man, it is bing, bing, bing; it's over and okay. The woman looks at it as a total giving of herself. So there is a different approach, and a man needs to be considerate of that. When a woman participates in the sexual act, she is giving her whole self. It is not just for the moment. It is something that is a part of her whole life with her husband. It is very precious to her, very special, and as such, you, as her husband, need to appreciate and understand that. Don't approach it thinking, *Alright, let's go*, as soon as you see her.

The husband needs to be loving and caring day in and day out, and there needs to be a mutual agreement. Many times you look and get excited, and that is the furthest thing from your wife's mind. She has been working all day –and she is tired. You can shove the passage in 1st Corinthians 7 under her and say, "See here, it says your body is not your own. It belongs to me, and I'm going to use my rights now."

If she doesn't want to have intercourse and you start pouting, "You don't love me, you don't care about my needs," that just tells your wife *you* don't care. She will give herself, but it will not be with her heart, and I don't know any godly man that wants that kind of a relationship.

You may have a right to take a right as God says, "The wife's body is not her own; it belongs to you," but I believe the love principle goes beyond that and says you will consider her as a cherished part of your life. You won't use and abuse her or violate her will because you want the freedom that goes with that kind of union.

It may be that your wife wants to have intercourse and you don't feel like it. You can't very well expect her to do something with you when you want to, but when she wants to, you are not going to help her out. On the other hand, I believe there is an agreeable point, and if you are both working towards that, it will just happen, and it will be blessed and blissful. Everybody will have a good time in the Lord.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE
Chapter Eight
Have an Intimate Time of Conversation

Have an intimate time of conversation on a regular basis.

If you are meeting your wife's sexual needs, she will find conversation times even more important. To her the conversation *is* more important. You can give things to her, you can have sexual relations with her, but that is not as important to her as taking the time to sit down, look eyeball to eyeball, and listen to what she has to say.

There is an old saying about this, but it is pretty close to true. Everybody has about 40,000 words to use each day. The husband uses about 30,000 out in the world, and when he comes home he has 10,000 left. The woman will use 10,000 words during the day, and when her husband comes home, she has 30,000 left with which to talk to him. The tendency is to say, "I'm tired, Honey." You are laying there at 10:30PM, and she wants to talk. You're worn out, you have been going all day long, and now she wants to talk. If she wants to talk, do yourself a favor, and sit up, look at her, and say, "Honey, I am available; talk." You know, it is amazing, she will not use all 30,000 words on you because she knows that you care enough to hear what she has to say.

She will spare you. She may cut it down to 20,000. In any case, it is amazing how you take time to talk with anybody under the sun, but when your wife wants to talk, you take her for granted. She should be the most important person in your life, and the one that has something very important to share.

Sometimes people are too close to you, and you lose respect for what they have to say. Your wife can have some of the best blessings to share if you would simply listen.

If you want to learn about your wife, listen. It is work, and it is a part of love. It says in Proverbs that a person who interrupts others before they have finished speaking is basically acting in an inconsiderate and unloving manner. All your wife is looking for is to know that you

care enough to listen. You might think what she says is not important. Much of it is just daily happenings, but if it is important to her, it should be important to you no matter how trivial it may seem.

Many times she will try to think up things to say because she wants to say something. Do not yawn and say, "Hurry up; get it out." A few minutes of alertness and sensitivity on a regular basis is what you need to do.

This is not like a once-a-month report. This is on a regular basis. A wise husband would do very well to make a scheduled appointment time with his wife where nobody or nothing will take away from it. This should be something she can look forward to and that she can plan on week after week.

This communication time should be something that is mutually agreed upon. If anything is to be sacrificed, it will be something other than this time. In other words, it should become one of the most stable things in your marriage – the time with her, doing whatever you want to do together. You might leave the options up to her.

Action Steps for Communication:

1. List regular times you and your wife are to have intimate conversation. If you do not have any, plan it. Get started on it.
2. List places your wife likes to go. You might check this out. What does she like doing? If you don't know, ask her. She may turn it back to you and say, "Well, honey, whatever you want to do." You can push that a little. You can say, "I like this and this and this, but I really want to do something that we both like. I am open to ideas." When she is trying to please you, she will throw it back to you. You can say, "No, I would really like to do something that you want to do. This is my way of expressing my love. I want us to do it together and I want this time to be something that you want to do, and I would like to do it with you."

My wife likes to shop at a certain discount store. I think the place is a junk store. I believe the people who run the store know it, but it meets a need. One man's junk is another man's treasure. Another man's treasure is somebody else's junk. If she wants to go there, we

do that every now and then. I will say, “Honey, this day is yours. We’ll do whatever you want to do today.” Sure enough, we end up at that store. I go in there with a happy, cheerful heart, and I look around for something that might be a treasure to me. If nothing else, she is a treasure to me – the finest treasure I will ever have on this earth. It is important to her to have that freedom, and she never buys anything, she just looks around. I thank God for that in many respects too. It is a matter of regular times doing something that she wants to do.

I personally hate going shopping. My way of shopping is: I know exactly what I want. I know exactly where it is. I know exactly when the sale is on, and I know exactly how much time I want to spend doing it. Namely, as short as possible, and I get down there and I get it, and I go home.

Ladies have another way of approaching shopping, and they can spend what seems like days in one store. If it is a store they are interested in, they will look around and look around and go over the same stuff 5, 6, or 10 times. Maybe try something on and look at it, take it off and look at something else and then go back to what they tried on. This is where patience comes in. Do I really cherish my wife? Do I really care about her? Am I willing to support her in these kind of ventures? I am not just talking about financially. Again, a woman is more concerned about where you are coming from than what you buy her or do not buy her.

Look for a place where you can have an intimate conversation. She may like to go out for breakfast. If you have never tried this, you will never know if she likes it or not. You may go out for lunch. Maybe you can get a babysitter, but spare the in-laws or your parents. This will help family relationships. There are times when grandparents want to take the kids, and there are other times they should not have to. Quite frankly, this is my opinion, I believe they have raised their children, and why should we dump them on the grandparents all the time and make them babysit for free? If you are going to do it, pay them. Have a little consideration.

In many respects, I used to laugh at this, sometimes out of bitterness and resentment, sometimes out of sheer delight: With my in-laws, I

had to schedule about a month ahead if I wanted them to babysit. Even then it was not guaranteed. Something that I have learned to respect is the fact that they have their own life, they have their own calendar, they love the grandkids dearly, but they have a right to their own life. I figure if it is not special enough to pay a babysitter to go out with your wife, then why put a burden on somebody else? If you cannot do it right, do not do it. If it means just going for a walk in the park, do that.

When I was going through school, I didn't want to spend too much on dates. Sometimes you can be just plain cheap too, but there is something nice about going for a walk, just you and her. Put out a few bucks, get a babysitter for an hour or two. It says that there is something special going on between you and your wife.

I liked to take our kids on outings too, but I found that I needed the time with Diana and me. Just the two of us. With the kids along, the whole perspective changes.

Letting the grandparents invite the children over is a whole different matter. They love the kids and they want to have them, but I have seen bad things happen in relationships when couples felt their parents had to take care of their children. It showed a lack of responsibility on their part. They figure they don't want to spend anything so they will send the children over to the grandparents. Grandparents have a right to their own lives, and they are not at our beck and call. I believe in respecting, loving, and caring. It should be that we are thinking about them as well.

In times past, I would joke about that, and I would think, *What kind of grandparents don't want to take care of the kids?* I needed a babysitter, and they wouldn't do it because they had other plans. It was nothing but selfishness on my part, nothing but flesh. What right do I have to act like that and not give them the freedom to make decisions of their own too?

In many cases, parents shirk the responsibility for the children and they put it over on the grandparents. Grandparents end up, basically, taking care of the kids all the time –potty training, etc.

Your wife may want to go shopping, and you may want to go to a little restaurant and have some lunch and talk. Take advantage of that time. Don't get so lead-footed after you walk around that when it comes time to talk you just want to go home. Your purpose in going with her is to talk. Actually, when you get to the point, "Now let's talk," you may look at each other and have nothing to say. If that is the case, make a little notebook and write down things you want to discuss. I believe in discussing personal things. You do not need to talk about the every day matters on these special times. These are to be intimate times.

On the other hand, you don't just sit down with her and ask, "What is your greatest fear today, Love?" She will say, "My greatest fear today was that you were going to ask me that question."

Dining out – this is what they love to do. They love to go out and not have to cook and do all the dishes. They like to do something special. You don't have to do this every night. It is something special and something she can count on.

You may meet at home at a certain time. Many times Diana and I talk when I get home, but the time to talk is not when the children are around. There should be a time when it is just you and your spouse together.

3. List distractions that hinder intimacy.

We have listed some distractions that may come. Purpose to avoid them:

- a) You might have your mind on other things, or you are in the middle of a project, which is not the time to talk. If she comes and wants to talk at that point, how would you approach it? You could drop what you are doing and look at her and say, "Honey, I am right in the middle of this. Would it be okay if we discussed this after I finish?" There is a time to drop everything, and there is a time to make your spouse aware that you are in the middle of a project. You want to give her your full attention, but you are requesting that it be put back a little bit.

Is this a priority that needs to be met? Is it something you need to discuss right then? If it is, be willing to discuss it right then. If it is something that can wait, you would appreciate her waiting on it.

b) Phone calls are another distraction. Let's say you just sit down with your wife and start talking when the phone rings. I believe that there is such a thing as turning the ringer off or unplugging the phone. There are definitely times when that should be done. One of those times is when you and your wife are communicating. Another time would be when you are having prayer or Bible study. I believe the husband should take the initiative to spend that time with his spouse and children. This is something that can be done together as a family. A husband and a wife should have a time of discussing the Word of God in various areas, and this could be done during daily situations – just discussing the promises that God has. We could go over promises that God has in these areas, and encourage one another and remind one another about it.

If you find you are being critical and speaking negatively, it would be well to get a verse that would apply to that. Speak and think about *“things that are true and just and beautiful.”* (Philippians 4:8) Those are not negative, critical things. They are of God. If we would encourage one another to remember that, it would help. It is one way of applying the Word of God in a practical way. You are not going to sit down with your wife and discuss the rapture (pre-tribulation or post tribulation) or some theological pie in the sky kind of issue because it isn't relevant to your daily lives. What you need to discuss are promises and Scriptures which apply to your daily lives.

If she is a little bit upset about some things or is worrying, you can encourage with, *“Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice,”* and be rejoicing. She will pick up on that, and then she will give it back to you. You may be the one who is down in the dumps, and she can say, *“Rejoice in the Lord always”* and encourage you with the Word of God. This is very profitable.

c) Being late for appointments is a distraction.

I believe that if you have an appointment with your wife, you had better be on time. If she is expecting you there, you need to be there, and if you're hung up in Timbuktu, make a point to be on the phone to make that call. Let me tell you, if you are in Timbuktu, and you are supposed to be at an appointment with your wife in ten minutes, then you did something wrong somewhere. Why should you be sixty miles away when you are supposed to be with your wife in ten minutes?

The meeting with your wife is more important than anything else. The only one that can waive that appointment is your wife. In other words, she can waive it, but if you do, what will happen? She will be hurt. She has probably gotten fixed up and ready (physically and mentally) to come and spend time with her husband, and there you are gallivanting around. Let me tell you, it will not be the same next time (if you are expecting her to be waiting for you with open arms), and she will wonder, *Is he going to do it again?* If you reinforce the pattern, before long, she will, quite frankly, not care about the appointment.

Being late for an appointment is a “no, no.” It is inconsiderate. To be inconsiderate is to be unloving. Granted, there are times when something comes up, but you should always ask her, “What do you feel I should do with this now?” You are giving it to her to make the decision. You can tell her, “If you want, I will be there, but I want to leave it up to you,” and let her determine the outcome. It is amazing, God did not give us dummies and insensitive wives. She will be looking out for what is best for the overall situation. Just the fact that you are acknowledging her says you care about her and what she thinks and feels.

There have been times when I got a call to go down to the hospital. For example, we would be getting ready to go somewhere when an emergency call comes in. I would always put it to her, “What do you want me to do here?” And she would always say, “Get to the hospital.”

Quite frankly, there are not too many things that will cause a delay. I give my wife priority (even over the hospital) because in my way of thinking I can pray right there at the house, and God will do just as much as when I go to the place. I believe God.

Question:

How about the people who asked for you? How are they going to feel?

I believe it works two ways. More than likely a person has called me at other times when he could have waited too. The situation varies, but what I am getting at is I leave that to my spouse, for I am respecting and honoring my wife. Diana is going to have many blessings when it comes time for God to dole them out because of the times she has sacrificed for the sake of the people. I have never really found her not to. That causes me to cherish her more and to make our time even more special when we do have it.

Emergencies should not be the norm – in other words, they should not be frequent. People who do not work in crisis situations should have no problem with keeping appointments. Only those who work in crisis situations should have difficulty in this area, and even that can be resolved if there is an understanding, if there is a bond with the spouse.

If you find yourself running behind, simply make a phone call. It says a whole lot to her. Say, “I will be there in fifteen minutes,” and then be there in fifteen minutes. If dinner is served at five, do not come frolicking in at 6:30PM and expect the meal to be hot and in front of you, *especially* if you have set it up that you want the meal at five.

Using basic, simple love principles which prefer the other more important than yourself will make the difference in all of this.

d) Talking to friends that you meet

I used to get into trouble all the time about this because everywhere I go, I run into people I know. That is why I often try to go places where I don't know anybody. However, I have found that even if I go sixty miles away, I still run into somebody I know. It happened the other day. We went 30 miles from home, and lo and behold, we sat down right next to some acquaintances. What happens? We start talking with the other people, and this is supposed to be an intimate

time of conversation. When it ends, we have a whole auditorium of people – especially if we like to talk to others.

Diana always laughs about that. She says I would talk to a telephone pole if it would listen to me. I have to get my priorities straight, though. This is an appointment with my wife. It is not to involve the community. It is not to involve other friends. When you go out, you may have the tendency to say, “Let’s have some friends come too, and then we’ll all go.” Your wife thought it was going to be an intimate time of conversation and you end up making it a big party. How distracting! There is a time to go out with a bunch of friends. There is a time for just you and your wife.

e) Looking at other women

What does this do? You are out with your wife in a restaurant, and you get wandering eyes. You sit there looking beyond your wife. If this was not so serious, it would be funny. All of a sudden she begins to notice, *Hey, he’s not with me. He’s looking over there.* Then when she turns around and sees what you are looking at, your number is up. I had difficulty with this in my younger years, even though I was not thinking anything out of order, but I was observing. It was a distraction. When I come into a situation, I always get a quick appraisal of everything going on around me. I have always been that way. For ministry purposes, it can be used for good too. I have learned that the time with my wife has to be me looking at her. Glory to God, I have ahold of it now. I make a point of it, and I try to glue onto her eyes when I am there, and I talk to her and I listen.

If you talk to anybody else, you give them attention. When it comes to your wife, she is the one who needs it the most. Make a point to be diligent about that. If you are looking at another woman while you are out with your wife... That’s bad.

If you are, repent and change.

The needs of a wife apply to all women whether they are single or married. All women have these needs within them.

Communication is the most basic need of all women. They want to be understood. They want to be able to communicate what is in their hearts. A regular time needs to be planned for a husband and a wife to communicate. It needs to be a regular time your wife can count on. There is something here about the fact that a woman looks for stability. She wants to see if you are interested in what she has to say, and what she is feeling. It is not that she has something pressing on her mind to talk about, it is simply that she wants you to be interested in her and understand her more. Understanding people comes through talking with them. Once she realizes it is important to you, then she will open herself up even more in the time ahead. This is why it has to be a regular time together. It will be something she can look forward to.

- f) Lack of manners can be a distraction or hindrance. An example of lack of manners is to interrupt her when she is talking. What does that say to her? You are not listening, and you are not interested.

Love prefers another person. It is really discourteous to interrupt people. You may even know where they are headed, you may know what they are going to say, but to interrupt them is not to respect their right to say what they have to say. This is very subtle.

Another example of lack of manners would be to be preoccupied instead of paying attention.

If you run into somebody you know (that she might not know), you should introduce her. I have been guilty of this before, but Diana laughs about it. She says I either introduce her 20 times, or I do not introduce her at all. I meet many people, and I don't always remember their names. Usually I am pretty blunt and will come out and say, "I'm sorry, I forgot your name," or I will introduce myself to help get things moving, but I found I forgot their names again. For some reason (pride), I did not want to say, "Hey, I'm sorry I forgot your name." As a result my wife would stand there while I talked with them. How do you talk for two hours with people and not ever know their names? She would just wait and see what was going on, and I never would introduce her. Especially if there is another woman there, you need to introduce your wife. That I forgot their names is

not the issue. The issue is that my wife is my crown, and I should want to be considerate of her.

In the long run it will hurt. I think it would be better to simply say, "I am sorry, I forgot your name. What is your name?" and the person will give it. Start with, "This is my wife, I would like you to meet her," etc.

Man's Testimony:

Around high school or shortly thereafter, I had been going out with this girl for a while. Believe it or not, I took her out to dinner, and I forgot her name. My mind just became a blank. There was a register in the restaurant, and I was going to put our names there. I didn't know what to do, but I thought, Well, I'm going to pull it off as kind of funny, so I just turned around and said, "What did you say your name was?" or something. Anyway, what do you do in a case like that? What would a guy do?

Pray. Pray that the Lord grants mercy, and that she grants mercy.

We are learning to humble ourselves, get rid of the pride, get ourselves out of the way. It is much better to simply say, "I am sorry, I forgot your name." You do not need to cover it up, you just say, "What is it?" She will probably get a good laugh out of it, and she will know that you are not an egotistical person who is not willing to humble himself and admit, "I'm wrong here, I forgot something, please help me." If it starts when you are dating, later your wife will really appreciate the kind of a man who knows he is not always right and is willing to say, "Hey, I'm wrong, I messed up here, we need to do something about this. Would you help me?" A wife will just love that kind of guy. Every woman knows there is no perfect man, and every man needs to understand that he is not perfect. There is nothing wrong with saying, "I have this problem." Either that, or you can make up a nickname on the spot. From this day forth and forever more I would like to call you...

There are many ways to cover up. It says that he who covers his sin will not prosper.

g) Improper dress or grooming can cause a distraction. How would that hinder a conversation?

If you are going to take her out to dinner, and you do not care how you dress, then it doesn't show much importance to the event.

A gal may spend hours getting herself ready because your time together is something special. This applies to either dating or going out with your wife. If you come in haphazardly and sloppily, and she is dressed up, then it says something about you. Guys need to tell their gals what they are doing, where they are going, and what kind of attire they should expect to wear. This is courtesy. If you have some idea that you want to go roller skating, and she thinks you are going out to dinner, she will get dressed up for a nice place. Then she will be dressed improperly. If you expect to go out to a nice place, and she thinks you are going bowling, it won't work. Dress needs to be considered.

h) Distracting music or surroundings

Many times you may go out to a place to have an intimate conversation, and the music is so loud you can't hear over it. That is not the place to go.

Waitresses who bend over so that you can see everything is distracting. There are lots of places like that.

Sometimes those places come as a surprise, and you don't expect it.

A party going on around you would be a distraction too.

The conversations around you may not be conducive to an intimate conversation, or there may be smoking. Irritants will not be conducive to a nice time together.

It should be a special time in a place that she likes. In other words, not a place of hustle and bustle, with a lot of things going on around.

i) Another distraction might be bringing up unpleasant subjects. I want to punch this a little bit because, unfortunately, I have

seen couples go out on the right foot (everybody is ready to have a nice time), but one of them brings up an unpleasant subject. It is usually not the gal. Why is this? What is the man concerned about doing? Unpleasant subjects could be problems from work, situations that do not involve her, criticisms that you have of her. A guy may try to make the conversation something that has to do with bettering her. She is not looking for you to pick her apart, or to try to put her back together. A wise husband will let God do much of that work with her, and he will spend time in prayer.

A wise husband will draw things out of her. You don't sit back and say, "Yeah, I knew it all along. I've just been waiting for you to get to that one." That will not be productive; it will hinder the conversation. Rather, this is a time to be a good listener, and let her bring things out.

Other unpleasant subjects would be bringing up an ex-spouse or an ex-girl friend – anything not directly related to your wife in a positive sense. Speaking about her family in a negative way is an unpleasant subject. "You're just like your dad," or "You're just like your mom."

She may want to talk about what happened during the day. That is not an unpleasant subject necessarily unless you find fault with what she did in each situation.

Finding fault with her will make her feel insecure, and she will withdraw inside. She will be reluctant to open herself up, thinking you are going to find fault. If you want to develop a relationship with anybody, don't always dwell on the bad things you see. Dwell on their positive attributes. Speak the good things, and what does that do? It builds them up. She will eventually bring up any of the negative areas herself. In cherishing your wife, you protect. Many of the things she does not bring out, you will observe so that you can cover her.

For example, if she doesn't like her nose or freckles, how can you protect her? Don't dwell on the blemish; dwell on something good that is not controversial to her – a strong point in her.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE

Chapter Nine

Communication

Communicate that which will build up the hearer. However, there is still a time to say something about what is out of line. Don't bring it up during your regular intimate conversation, though. (When we come to praise and worship the Lord, we don't bring up problems either.) Set up another time to bring up problem areas.

What things does your wife look forward to sharing with you?

Look ahead a little bit. With a girlfriend you can learn ahead of time what she likes to talk about. It doesn't take too long, and you will find areas of interest, especially if you are asking questions. People do not know how to communicate because they think they have to state something all the time. One of the finest ways to communicate with people is to ask questions. It gives them an opportunity to express themselves, and it says to them that you are taking an interest. Before long a relationship is developed. It is not shallow but rather says, "I care about you, and I would like to get to know you better. I would like to know what your interests are." You can say to your wife of 20 years: "I would like to get to know you better, Hon." I have seen people married over 50 years that still did not know each other.

There are qualities within our spouses that we have not even begun to discover. Questions will draw them out. Questions will give them the opportunity to share. What does your wife look forward to sharing with you? Many times she likes to share what she has been doing during the day. She may like to hear what you have been doing. Again, stay away from the negatives. If you had a bad day, you don't need to come home and dump it on your wife. She doesn't need to hear it.

I believe the man is the stronger of the two and can handle a wife's dumping on him because that will help her. Who will help her when I dump all my stuff on her? I am strong, and I believe God has made every man to be strong, and all we need to do is rise up. We are to deal with the wife in knowledge as the weaker vessel, dealing with

her in honor. It is not for me to come and dump on her and leave her in shambles. But if she has issues, I am there, and I need to know those things. I need to know many of the things that are going on so I can step in and start to take some control of it. Maybe the children are acting up, and she is having some difficulty with that. We should come into agreement. We shouldn't say, "You can't handle the situation. What is your problem, anyway?" A wife goes through situations during the day that you need to be protective of, and you need to know about them so you can deal with them. She won't share those things if you come down on her. You are there to help get things straightened out, not blame her. Again, blame is a horrible thing. Blame never gets anything resolved. Blame destroys relationships. You might be a little tired, and when she comes up with something, you light into her. Then it is too late after you have done it. You can say, "I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?", but you left a mark. You might as well have stuck a harpoon in her chest. When you pull it out, it will leave a hole.

Blame is very destructive, so stay off it. Catch yourself, this is where the understanding comes. You can be so very understanding of other people, but when it comes to your spouse, you expect more. That is an ego trip, too. I have heard it before. "I expect more of you; you are my wife." What is that saying about her? You are making her feel inferior because she is not living up to your expectations.

Never hash over things that were not accomplished or finished. Why not? We are getting at something that is very critical to conversation. Never blame, never put down. Find good things to speak about. It says in Proverbs that if you want friends, you must show yourself friendly. No one is showing himself friendly when he is blaming, criticizing, judging, condemning and belittling. People like that don't have very many friends. Your wife is supposed to be your best friend, and if you are dating a woman, be a friend. Many times guys come into a relationship too intensely, thinking, *I'm going to marry you tomorrow*, and the gal just wants to get to know you. The end product is a woman "freaks out" and the guy feels insecure and inferior. He wonders, *Why doesn't she like me?* She doesn't like you, not because of you, but because you are coming on too strong. She just wants to check things out before rushing into anything.

A guy thinks, *I have to get married and get me a wife* because there is a strong drive during most of his life, especially from about age 15. If he doesn't have a wife by 23 or 24, he starts thinking, *Oh, man, time is getting short*. Little does he know that the average age for a male to get married is around 30.

A man can come on too strong by becoming possessive of his date or calling up too much. If she wants to go somewhere with somebody else, he gets his feelings hurt. It is basically rooted in insecurity. He may feel that when she is his date, he is going to marry her. If she is only a date, she should have the freedom to go out with somebody else. When she is your wife, there is no way she will go out with somebody else.

Single guys can get very possessive and domineering. This produces troubles. A woman will run the other way, even though she may really like you. Why? She is scared. It is just what it is – you could scare her off. The key is to be a friend, and that should carry over into the marriage, if she is the woman you marry. She should still continue to be your friend.

If she desires to go out with another man, she may be wanting to prove what is in your heart towards her. She may be asking herself, *Where is his commitment to me?* At that point you can simply state what your commitment is. If you are looking at her as just a date, you can say, "Fine, go ahead," as a friend. A friend has no ties. If you look at her as though you want to marry her, then you need to put that out there.

I believe in being up front with people, but don't make an offer of marriage on the first date!

Intimate conversation will give you a basis for any lasting commitment. How important is conversation before a marriage and after a marriage, even between friends? There are problems in many homes because there is no communication, and it is simply because time is not taken for it. You get up in the morning and hurry to get your breakfast, get ready to go to work, and you say "Hi, goodbye," as you head off. When you come home, you are tired, you eat dinner, you sit in front of the tube for an hour or two, and then you go

to sleep. On you go, day after day. These are ruts that people get themselves into, and basically, their relationships at home are very superficial because time has not been taken to talk. Your wife may put out a question, "When can I talk to you?", or she may do it in another form which you might not really care for. She just may make a scene to get your attention.

You may think it is childish, but if she cannot get attention one way, she will get it another way. A woman does not think the way a man thinks.

There has to be conversation to communicate.

Conversation Points:

1. What does your wife look forward to sharing with you? – events of the day, needs or activities of the children. I believe it is very important during this time that you draw out your wife. In other words, don't come with *your* agenda, having points A,B,C,D,E,F that you want to communicate with her during that time. Instead, how can you draw her out? Let her share whatever she wants to share. You can put questions out and lead it, and you will know by spending time with your wife what areas she wants to discuss. Sometimes she may want to talk about something and other times she may not. This is how you develop sensitivity when you spend time with her. I believe that marriage should be developing a courtship, and everyday should be a new facet of that.
2. She may want to talk about her own ideas on home improvement. It is important to her. She may be home a lot, and she wants to have her touch on the place. I have some very definite ideas as to how I like things done, but I believe in having my wife give input. Then we go from there. God has given a very special gift to women, and we need to let them have the opportunity to develop creativity in the home.
3. There may be things she would like in a certain manner, or she may want your input about how you would like them, preferring you more important than herself. She may know that the man's

house is his castle, and that he should be able to arrange it the way he wants it to be. Neither spouse should say, "This is the way it's going to be." Love always prefers the other more important than yourself. So if you both prefer the other more important, you will get something good. Both will be in agreement. A freedom will come into that relationship. You will be able to take the freedom when she puts it back in your lap to simply state, "No, Honey, I want you to do this, this, this, and this." How can you say all that? Because you have listened to her ideas.

Tell her, "I would like to hear your ideas." Once you hear them, then you can figure out how to incorporate them. You end up making a decision from her ideas. You will also have the freedom to put in your own ideas too. Why? Because she respects and honors you.

I always thank God when I can convince a husband and a wife to work both ends against the middle and get God's glory and best.

4. Your wife might want to talk about enjoyable memories. Normally, a wife is not going to talk about past boyfriends. She will want to talk about past enjoyable times with you, maybe with the kids or friends, but her life basically revolves around the family unit. Those will be the things she will enjoy talking about. You might bring up some of the memories, about the time you went to a certain place. That is good conversation because it is about enjoyable times. Leave the bad times buried except to learn from them.
5. I do not necessarily believe you should preach to your wife (or a single guy should preach to a girl friend). I do believe, though, that one can communicate spiritual truth in a way that doesn't have chapter and verse on it. The principles of God are eternal, they are life-giving, and you don't have to necessarily say, "This is found in Matthew 6, verse 19." You are not trying to prove yourself to be some spiritual authority to your wife or girlfriend, nor do you have to drag her along.

Trying to be super spiritual can be an area of pride, too, and you end up being out of the spirit and in the flesh. You become like a

hypocrite. It is very subtle because you have a godly desire to share the principles of the Lord, to lead your household in the way of God, and yet sometimes it comes off like “I am righteous and you are unclean.” There has to be a sensitivity to this.

Through sharing spiritual lessons and insights, and asking questions, you draw out your wife. The question I used to ask Diana, and I can see where I was missing it at the time, was, “What did you get out of my message today?” The way she took it was, “Were you paying attention or were you not?” It is all in how you approach it. In my heart I was not approaching it that way, but that is the way it was received. Be aware of what is necessarily going on in your spouse’s thinking.

Let’s say you have a rejection complex to the effect that you feel nobody wants to be around you. You don’t think you are interesting, and nobody is going to like you. This may have been compounded with past experiences over the years. Perhaps you make comments that you are not “with it.” This might be based on some truth. On the other hand, a person who has a rejection complex has already set himself up not to be “with it.” He figures he won’t be received anyway, so what the heck? He runs around with a chip on his shoulder, just waiting for somebody to come along (who is not acting in wisdom) and say, “Well, you are just not with it.” Then he would say, “I know it. I knew you wouldn’t like me.”

6. You need to become sensitive, and this is possible through communication. Then you will know very shortly where people are coming from and how they feel about themselves. You can tell a lot about people within the first four minutes, but this is not for you to become a Sigmund Freud, Jr. Some people run around thinking they have to be everyone’s psychiatrist. They analyze everybody they come in contact with and think, *If you would do this a little differently, it might help you here, and this and this and this and this.* People are not looking to go to a “shrink,” and they won’t want to hang around you if that is the way you come off.

You can sit and listen, and you can ask questions, and you can actually minister to people simply by letting them bring out their own

ideas. You don't even have to say a word, as if you were on top of the whole thing. "I knew it, I also knew that about you." It says in Proverbs that a wise man does not talk about everything he knows. He will perceive things. He will observe and listen, and as he listens and observes, he will be able to put together what will help the other person. Your wife is unconsciously going to be helped, and it will not be in a direct form where you say, "You have this problem, and this is what you need to do."

It is more important for your wife to find out she has the problem and realize what she needs to do about it. You can help her by simply asking questions. Your whole attitude in accepting her just the way she is and loving her just the way she is is what will free her.

7. One of the other things a wife might look forward to sharing with you is how she really feels. If she thinks you will "play shrink" with her, she will not tell you how she feels.
8. Your wife may or may not discuss fears during your time of conversation.

Insight:

Reasons your wife does not share fears:

- a) She feels guilty about the fears that she has.
- b) She hopes they will pass.
- c) She feels rejection from you.

If you are playing psychiatrist with your wife (or your girlfriend), she will withdraw inside because she thinks you will reject her if she shares her innermost thoughts. A wife does not share her fears with her husband because she knows for a fact that her husband, since he is going to blame her for dropping a dish, is going to blame her for some of her innermost fears. Many of these fears, if the guy is not on top of it, will blow him away. If his wife knows that, she will not share it. What will happen? She will run around with those fears. *"That which I feared the most is that which came upon me."* (Job 3:25)

It is so important that you be understanding, loving, available, and attentive so that she can get rid of the problem. Who is a wife's minister? The husband should be. I always try to guide women back

to their husbands, and I try to equip those husbands to minister to their wives. It takes time, but it takes a husband's heart that cherishes his wife next to the Lord, first and foremost before anybody or anything.

- d) Another reason that a wife does not share her fears is that she desires to reduce her husband's burdens. In other words, she does not feel he needs to think about it. He has enough to think about.
- e) She also knows that her husband does not have all the answers, and what good would it do to put something out there when he does not have the answers to it?

9. Action steps to take to remove your wife's fears:

- a) First, become aware of her fears. This comes with sensitivity, observation, and communication. What might be some of those fears?

- 1) Insecurity about her husband dying

- We have encountered many women who when they when they have had this fear were just married. *What am I going to do if something should happen to my husband?*

- 2) Fear of getting old

- A woman looks at age differently than a guy. Actually, men get better the older they get. It is what the Bible says. White hair is a sign of wisdom and maturity. But for a woman to get old means she loses all her beauty. She basically loses what she feels originally caused her husband to be attracted to her.

- 3) Fear of becoming unattractive to her husband

- Some women look for older men because they want maturity and security. She might have a fear of losing her husband to a younger woman.

- 4) Fear of getting sick – due to past sins, like bitterness and unforgiveness

Guilt is a big factor here.

- 5) A fear of failing as a wife and mother

She may be doing everything to meet her husband's needs perfectly, but there is a fear that she is not. Or she fears she may let the children down, or not be doing something right with them, and it may cause everlasting problems with them. This is very common.

- 6) A fear of her husband losing his job

What is that going to do? It is based in insecurity and the need for stability. *What do I do if my husband loses his job?*

- 7) Fear of a nervous breakdown is the kind of fear that grips women more than men. It is a demonic attack that says, "How can I cope with my husband, with the kids, with trying to run the house (or if she is working, how to run a job on the side)?" Women are the weaker vessel, the Bible says, and as such, we as husbands are to keep the pressure off of them. There is always a common fear that she will break down. Recently an individual did break down because of the pressures around her, even though she loved God. How does this happen? She moves into a state of fear through a bombardment of pressures, and the next thing you know, she takes her eyes off the Lord. She tries to please her husband, tries to please the kids, tries to be a good wife and mother, and then pressure comes – especially if she feels her husband does not really care about her.

Many of these fears will group together, like the insecurity about her husband running off with somebody else coupled with her health starting to break down. If her health breaks down, then he will run off with somebody else. The fear of, "What if he loses his job?" causes financial pressure to come in. It is important to keep that off your

wife. I believe it is very important to keep the pressure back. It is of key importance to continually express your love, affection, and attention that she is your first love next to the Lord. She needs to know it, not only in your words, but in actions as well. It will keep many fears out of there. You have to become aware that the fears are there, and they are there in every woman to varying degrees.

- 8) Fear of being displaced by another woman, a job, a hobby, an interest, a child, or even another male friend

If she is not getting time and affection (a relationship), a woman may get jealous over the dog. A wife may get jealous over a child. A wife may get jealous over a job. Why? It is taking time with her husband away from her, and especially if he does not spend any quality time with her as it is. She will become more and more jealous.

- 9) Fear of being socially awkward (and therefore not wanting to be out in public that much)

In other words, she feels insecure when she gets out with people, and she would rather be close to home. You may be out in public all the time, but she feels awkward. It is a fear that is rooted in insecurity. Many fears are related to insecurity.

- 10) Educational deficiency

She may not have that much education, and when she gets around people that have an education or are talking about their education, she may feel inferior. You need to be aware of these fears.

Another action step to remove your wife's fears:

- b) During times of conversation, choose one of the fears. This should not be dealt with in an intimate conversation time. I believe this should be done at another time. Keep the other time very special and very holy. Always give her the freedom to talk about it or not. Respect that freedom.

During the conversation, choose one of the fears and ask how she really feels about it. She will come up with an answer. Ask in addition to that, "Do you have any other feelings about it?" You do this because the first answer you get will come from the top. The second one will go deeper and will actually get down to the heart of the matter. This is very important to know when working in communication with people. Normally the first thing they tell you is superficial. It is a mask or covering. If you talk about it further, you will get down to the heart of it. Many times you will find when you first ask people how they are doing, they will say, "Great. Everything is really fine." After you talk with them a little bit longer, you find everything is not great, and everything is not really fine. Get down to the heart of it.

Still, everything may be great, and everything may be fine. Don't run around digging up garbage where there is none. If there is something down in there, it will surface. You don't have to ask, "Are you sure? Do you really mean it?" Such questions become a form of badgering, and it will cut communication off quickly.

"Do you love Jesus?" "Oh, yeah."

"Are you sure you really mean it? Is He really the Lord of your life?"

Who put you up as judge? That is what you are doing at that point. If you are really a Christian, you would not be doing some of the destructive things you do.

You do want to get beneath the initial surface answer, so simply ask in addition to that, "Do you have any other feelings about it?" That is a very non-threatening question. In other words, it is totally neutral. It is not, I know you have other feelings about it, and I want to get down and get after it. You are simply putting it out there, "Do you have any other feelings about this? Do you want to talk about it some more? Is there anything else that needs to be pursued?" If they want to, they will.

- c) Take each fear your wife expresses and ask God for wisdom to resolve it.

Never step in there on your own and think you have the answers because your appraisal of the situation may be far off. It has been known to happen that people misinterpret what somebody is saying and are approaching it from the wrong direction.

You may perceive what she said differently than the way she communicated it, and you went by what you perceived rather than what was really going on inside.

- 1) For instance, she may state, "I have a fear that you might lose your job." You can perceive that she is in tremors, or she is up day and night, fearing that you will lose your job. Then you come down on her, "Cast that fear down in Jesus' name quickly because your fear could cause me to lose my job."

That would be the last time your wife shares any fear with you. She is not up day and night necessarily fearing about you losing your job. If you say, "You're just being selfish, you're concerned about your stability here," it undermines any form of intimate conversation. She will withdraw and never share with you again. It will take a long, long, proven time for her to come back out of that shell. She was simply saying, "I have this fear, and we need to deal with it," and you are imagining what she is doing or not doing. You are not reading the situation correctly.

Ask God's wisdom in resolving it. What Scriptures deal with fear?

- 2) The following are critical Scriptures having to do with fear.

Psalm 34 covers about every kind of fear you can have. Psalm 91, Psalm 46, and Matthew 6:19-33 deal with provision. There is a beautiful promise about provision, and this is one area, again, that fear will try to come into because it directly affects a woman's need for stability.

If her fear is related to being displaced, you need to take another promise: "*I will never leave you, I will never forsake you,*" which is what the Lord tells us in Hebrews 13:5. Simply state to her:

“I love you in the love of the Lord, and He will not ever leave you, and He will not ever forsake you, and I am not looking to leave you or forsake you because I have set my love upon you. No matter what else seems to happen around us, or no matter what else I may say at some point when I am out of sorts, that is not my heart’s desire. I am going to stay with you, and I will not forsake you. I will seek to be a godly husband faithfully.”

That will do dynamite things inside of her. If that fear is there, she does not think that her husband loves her and cares about her. She may unconsciously look for love in another place. Or, she will not look for it, it will find her. There are plenty of wolves running around, and we need to protect our wives from them. They are actually looking, and they are the ones who are so understanding and caring... and available. She is not necessarily looking for intercourse. She is looking for somebody to talk to.

This is how these relationships start, however... by talking. They talk, they communicate. They are not blaming, judging, criticizing, or being negative, etc. They are just being understanding. A wife is simply looking for that.

Take hold of the Scriptures. Find out what the fear is, search the Word of God, and study and memorize it. Figure out what action steps you can take for these specific fears.

Here is a point where a husband can really show himself strong. Step out there to cover and protect your wife.

- 3) What steps can she take? Figure out the steps together, and then encourage her. You can take steps, but she has to take her own steps. All you can do is encourage. You are respecting a person’s will and choice. Respect the fact that she is not stupid or cannot do anything right. How subtly you can do that. It is a form of put-down, and it needs to be dealt with. By encouraging her, you are saying she is able to take the responsibility for the situation. She is able to take the proper steps. Say, “I have great faith in God and in you that you are able to do it,” and she will respond. Still, the confidence has to be instilled in her: “I trust your decision

implicitly. I know that without a shadow of a doubt, you are working to my good and for the good of yourself and for the good of the family and you are never going to cause any harm to us.” When you put that kind of confidence in your wife, it is amazing what will develop, but if you are picking at her, you are undermining that confidence. Before long she becomes so dependent on you, that you cannot go out of the house without her wondering, *Is my life going to fall apart if he isn't here?* That is not the kind of dependency you want. Many guys want a wife who is waiting on his every move. I call them clingers. Let me tell you, the guy that wants a clinger as a wife is so insecure in himself that he has made his wife that way.

A woman thinks differently than a man. The sooner you realize this, the better.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE
Chapter Ten
Communication (con't)

Women communicate from four perspectives and operate differently than men.

First, women respond to situations with their emotions (what they feel about the situation). Then their minds will come into play (what they think about the situation). Next they respond with their wills (what they want in the situation). Lastly, their spirits will respond with what they know God wants.

A woman responds to the immediate situation. She does not look down the road. This is where a conflict often occurs because a man has a tendency to look at what will happen in the future. A woman is more concerned about her immediate needs. A situation will come up, and a man will think, *Gosh, my wife is going bonkers. She doesn't even listen to reason.* He usually responds with what he thinks, and next he runs with what he wants, and then he applies his emotions. Finally, he responds with his spirit. I hate to say it this way, but people usually do not respond with their spirits.

Problems come. Get tuned to what the Spirit of God would have to be done in a situation, as well as what will happen when you present something to your wife. She may think you are wrong because it doesn't seem to be something that she can put into immediate working order. You are thinking somewhere down the road, and she is thinking, *How is this going to benefit me right now?* You may be considering a change of jobs (which would involve more time away from home), and she is thinking, *I want him home.* She is not looking at the whole plan and provision. She is looking at what she feels at the moment. If she feels that this will be a threat to her security, her emotions will flare up, and she will say what she thinks and then what she wants. All these things will more than likely, if we were to list them on a blackboard, be totally opposite to what you think. It is reasoning that you are coming up with because she is not reasoning with her mind. She is reacting with her emotions.

Many times husbands have difficulty communicating to their wives because they do not understand where they are coming from. If you would understand how a woman thinks, you could present things in a certain way, knowing that her first response will come from her emotions. You would respond to her emotions first. It may be that you just have to get her settled down first. "Brace yourself, dear."

The real complications come because a woman will then mix these responses around. One day she will operate by her emotions first, but when you try to work with her emotions on the next situation, she comes off with what she thinks about it, or she may come forth from her spirit. She may conclude with what she wants. "I don't want that at all," she will tell you.

When a woman mixes up these areas, it will appear that she is contradicting herself. This is a very real situation. If you listen to your wife talk about an issue, you may think *Oh, she doesn't even know what she's talking about. She is confusing issues.* She is not necessarily looking at things analytically, she is looking through her emotions, and emotions have a tendency to taint situations. This is not to put your wife down at all. Deal with your wife as the weaker vessel in knowledge, honoring her as the weaker vessel. It is important to learn where she is coming from.

What would you do in regard to a home mortgage? Let's say you are looking down the road, and your wife is looking at how it will affect her. This will cause a breakdown in communication. If your wills get into it, then there will be a total breakdown. Each will want his or her own way. Nothing can be accomplished when there is division because getting a mortgage is something that involves a joint operation. A husband and a wife should usually be in agreement about any major decisions related to the family. It is not the kind of decision that you can simply go out and do. A wise husband will never just go out and make a major decision that pertains to the family. Why not? Is he not the head of the house? He is the head of the house, but he should not want strife there. We are referring to a wise head of the household. There is a difference between a head trying to bully and one walking in wisdom.

We have to understand as men that a woman thinks in a totally different way, and she cannot begin to relate to where we are coming from. A man has difficulty understanding where a woman is coming from because he is thinking analytically. Once we are aware of this and we gain insight, then we will be able to communicate and reach our wives.

Some women work more out of their wills, some work from their feelings, and some work from their minds. You cannot just generalize about women. The emotions, mind, will, and spirit mix and match. Even men mix these areas. We need to become aware of what goes on within us. Which is it? Am I communicating from my emotions, my mind, or my spirit? We need to recognize where we are coming from. If you come in the house and start ranting and raving, you are communicating with your emotions. You may have a logical reason for it. Then again, is it logical? In your own mind it may be justified. You know it is not your spirit responding, and very likely you may be trying to assert yourself with your will. So you may speak loudly, which is an emotional working, but it comes from what I would consider a justifiable cause. Yet it is your will forcing it. You want what you want, and you will have a trade until you get it. Sometimes we can act like little boys. In any form of communication, you will find all four areas in varying degrees.

There may be a time when you act on the principles of God. Your spirit will rise up, and you will know something is right, or something is wrong. Your spirit rises up and matches with your mind in agreement (what you are thinking is based on the Word of God). That is why we have to renew our minds in the Word to line up with our spirits. The will comes into play and then the emotions. People who try to detach themselves from their emotions are deceiving themselves.

The Communication Process

The mind is the center of the emotions, the intellect (or reasoning), and the will. It is separate from your spirit. You are made up of a spirit, a mind, and you live in a body. In the communication process, the spirit and the mind do most of the communicating, but if we were to carry this out further, I can even communicate with my eyes. I can communicate with my facial expressions, I can communicate with the

way I sit. If I am sitting on the edge of my chair, I am ready for action. I could slouch down and that would indicate something else.

Have you ever noticed the pose of the famous sculpture, “The Thinker?” Elbow on the knee and hand on the side of the head and chin – thinking or contemplating. This tells you there is more to communication than meets the eye. Many times you do not even have to say a word to your wife to communicate to her whether you care about what she is saying. What is going on with your body? For example, is your back turned to her while she speaks? Or are you walking from one room to another while she says something? If you don’t tell her, “Come, follow me, I’m in a hurry,” you are just being rude. It is easy to do. I did it a few times today. We have to become more and more sensitive to it.

Your wife is also concerned about what others think, so it will have some bearing on her decisions and in the way she looks at situations. In her estimation, who is the most important person? You are the most important one in her life, so if you say something off the wall to her, you can crush her faster than anyone else on the face of this earth.

Start to become sensitive in approaching her, and notice how she responds. Is she responding from her emotions, from her will, or from her spirit?

If you knew the significance of this, you would know how to treat her. If she is reacting from her emotions, you are not to respond from yours. Why not? There will be one big fight. “*Return not railing for railing.*” If you put something out there that she doesn’t like, and she responds from her emotions and starts to cry, what are you going to do? Crying is a form of communication. Understand, it could be a form of manipulation also. What are you going to do if she starts crying? At that point, she is not thinking with her mind.

Let’s say you tell her you will both move to another town. All her ties are where she is, and her loyalty to you and her family is here. She wants to go with you, but she is torn apart in her emotions. What will you do? If you are going to move, there are not too many alternatives. Appeal to her mind. Give alternatives about different

ways that things can be done, which will settle her emotions down. Look at the benefits involved. It is not the time to look at the negative. She is already looking at it.

There are benefits; otherwise you would not be moving. Have her consider the entire family, and the benefits that will come her way. For example, if the move is closer to your work, you can spend more time with her. There are always benefits, and let me tell you, if there are none, you are making a bad move. If the benefits do not outweigh the negatives, then there is something wrong.

She will be concerned about what others think. Who are the others she will consider? Her mom and dad, the children. Many times a dad will be less concerned about what the children think than the mother will, especially if the children are older. What about in-laws? A woman will be concerned about such things a little bit more than her husband. This is something you need to take into consideration ahead of time. So whether she states it or not, these factors are being considered.

Insights, Wisdom and Principles of Communication

Many times a woman won't communicate everything she is thinking about (many of the fears she has) because she doesn't want to burden you. She feels guilty about the burdens she has and hopes they will go away, but they will not go away unless they are dealt with. She might feel rejection from you, and she knows you do not have all the answers, so why burden you with something you cannot deal with? What a low blow, is it not? Any honest man will recognize he does not have all the answers. Only God has them.

People often communicate by putting "a feeler" out there just to see how you will respond. They will talk about somebody else and say, "What about this situation where a wife is bitter in her heart towards her husband because he seems to neglect her all the time? How should I approach her? How should I help her?" She is actually talking about herself, and she wants to hear how you will respond. If you say, "That woman is rebellious and out of line," your wife will be slow to share and open up her heart to you. Be sensitive. It becomes easier the more you do it, especially if you are paying attention and listening to what the Spirit says. We teach the women

to appeal to the husband's spirit, and we teach the men to appeal to the wife's spirit. Let us get down to what God wants in the situation. The sooner we get there, the better the communication. We put away our wants, we get rid of our desires, and we line up with what God wants. Then God gives us the desires of our heart because He puts those desires in there. Then a husband and wife can come into agreement quickly as they bring God into the center of the picture.

God will give wisdom and insight. Many times the decisions we make are not best for us or our families, but we do not know that at the time. Seek the Lord first and trust in Him. *"Lean not to your own understanding; acknowledge Him in all your ways, and He will direct your path."* (Proverbs 3:5, 6)

If we would acknowledge the Lord first, then He would direct the path. *"Lean not to your own understanding."* Our own understanding, again, is the area of our emotions (what we are feeling), our intellect (what we are thinking) and our will (what we want). Put your mind out of the way and get the mind of God on the situation.

Because of a woman's need for stability, she thinks of what will affect her right now, in the moment. This is simple wisdom. In your dealings with your own wife, you will find this happens. God knows how people work. He knows how people think. Watch for a mixture of the four areas. You cannot take any of them away because they are all there working. It is just a matter of dealing with your wife with knowledge – knowledge as to God's Word and how your wife operates. Again, you will find different workings in different wives. Each one is different, and yet there are the same workings in each. We are all different, yet common. The same temptations that happen to one will happen to everybody in varying degrees.

The principles will work because this is the way a woman operates, and when a man becomes sensitive to her needs, freedom will come. There will be such a blessing in the communication.

Communication, in my opinion, is a priority. She wants to be able to communicate to her husband if she has difficulties with it, and she wants to be able to understand him. Therefore, we teach women how to understand their husbands. We see challenges in marriages

because a man thinks, *What is her problem? I provide for her every need.* Well, he is gone all the time. If he is working and providing, so he thinks, *I am a good provider,* and she thinks, *He is not home.*

Security is another one of a woman's foremost needs. She wants to have her man around. In other words, we are not just talking about material needs. Emotional and physical needs are involved. I thank God every day that He is not just concerned about my spirit. He is concerned about my mind and my body. The whole man. You need to be concerned about the whole woman. You need to be concerned about your wife just like God is concerned about you. He is concerned about our minds, our reasoning, our emotions, and our wills. He is concerned about our bodies to keep us healthy.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE

Chapter Eleven

Be Aware of Your Wife's Presence and Make Investments in Her Life

Be aware of your wife's presence even when your mind is on other matters.

As you know, your mind is usually on other matters. That is the way a man operates. He is usually thinking about his next project. He is usually thinking about work, and, unfortunately many times he will carry work home with him. That should not be done, and when it is, deal with it quickly. I believe it is very important that you communicate to your wife that there are still a few things you need to get resolved. You appreciate her working with you on it, and you try to get it done as quickly as possible so that you can get to her. Or, you put it aside and spend that time with her, and then get back to it later. Work that is carried home can be done later.

Action Steps:

1. Love has good manners.

What manners do you consistently practice? Manners are little things that are just plain courtesy. We find in 1st Corinthians 13 that love is courteous. What is involved in courtesy? You should be aware of your wife's presence, even though you may be thinking of some other things.

- a) One courtesy would be to help her with her coat. Nowadays many gals will not want you to do that. They think it is a sign of weakness, but stick to your guns. This shows that you are concerned about your wife, and it is a sign of respect. I believe that many of these good, old-fashioned, courteous manners are still "in," which are just a matter of thoughtfulness. You will be amazed how much she will grow to enjoy it after a while, even if she is not used to it. She may not be able to put her finger on why.

- b) Seat her at the table. If you are in your home, there should be a place that is your wife's. If you have guests over, it should be made clear where your wife sits. You seat your company at the other places. What you are doing is giving a place of honor and showing respect for your wife. If she begins to see that you are sensitive to her (you are not giving her place to another), she will respect that. It is another thing if she gives her seat to somebody else. She has the right to do it, but you should not do it. The Bible says when you are invited to a banquet, do not sit at the front table because if somebody greater comes along, they may send you to the lower seats. Always, out of plain courtesy, when you go to someone's house, wait for them to seat you. Then everything will be done in order.

It is unfortunate that many times people are not taught courtesy or etiquette, and as a result, when they go into unfamiliar surroundings where etiquette is necessary, they don't know how to act. (See Proverbs) The fool does not know how to act when he gets into certain situations, and so he acts foolishly. Many times people are not taught. If you are taught properly, then there is no excuse for foolishness.

- c) Lift heavy objects for her. Contrary to popular opinion, a woman cannot do the same work a man can. Physically they are not built to do it. A man should have the courtesy to lift heavy objects.
- d) Order for her at the restaurant.

This does not mean she doesn't have a mind of her own. It simply means that you are looking over the menu with her, getting her order. When it comes to representing your family to the public, you are the spokesman. You simply represent them. You did not pick out what she was to eat. You are being courteous, and the sooner you can get ahold of this, the better. You are exercising the authority that rests on the head of the home – that you speak for your family.

- e) Know and use table manners.

You don't want to act like a pig at your wife's table. I have thought about this for a while. A woman will work for a long time preparing and cooking a meal, and getting everything just so. Then we can sit down and scarf the food up in just a matter of minutes, if that long. She has worked two or three hours possibly, it goes away in a matter of five minutes, and you don't even thank her for it. When you are giving a dinner prayer, thanking God for the food, also include, "and, Lord, bless the hands that prepared the food." That is just a note of respect and honor to your wife for her paying diligent attention to the food. It is amazing what God can do with courtesy. It is a form of loving.

- f) Pick up after yourself at home.

It means a lot to a wife if she doesn't have to pick up after you. It has been known to happen that you could, depending on the day, leave things in every room. I encourage women to let their husbands have one place that is his dumping place. Sometimes my one place can get as high as three feet, but it should not be the entire house. True, we are the lords of our house, and our house is to be the way we would want it to be, but we cannot very well blame our wives when company comes and our junk is lying all over. It is not her responsibility to pick up after us. It is her responsibility to pick up after the children, and she is more than likely working on that. We are not little kids, and we should have the courtesy and love to pick up and clean up after ourselves to a certain degree. We can save work for our wives, because there are many things to do around the house. It is easy to flip those socks and underwear into the hamper. We do not have to leave them lying on the floor, on the dresser, and on the bed.

- g) Proper introduction of your wife is a matter of courtesy, respect, and honor.

If you do not remember other people's names, simply say, "I am sorry, I forgot your name," and they will be more than happy to tell you. Then you can introduce your wife properly. Very simply, if you forget her name, you had better pray. Introducing her says she is important to you, important enough that you consider her enough to introduce her to your friends or acquaintances. Again, she is a helpmate, she stands by your side, and she needs to be honored that way. Quite frankly, I believe if you cannot feel that kind of honor for your wife, then you have an attitude within you that is out of line with God. She is your wife, and she is to be held in honor as your wife. If you think she is incompetent, a rottenness to your bones, then more than likely there is something that is a shame to you. There is something wrong that needs to be adjusted. There is a healing that needs to happen in the attitude. Granted, she may be doing stuff that causes you to feel and think that way, but still, what is love going to do? It will cover a multitude of sins, and it will enable the change to happen. I am sure that there are things in you that she does not really care for. It always works both ways.

Sometimes if she cannot get your attention any other way, she will be nasty. She will get your attention this way, even if it is negative. This is not a conscious thing, but an unconscious need being met.

h) Punctuality

What does punctuality say to her? She is important to you. Again, when you make an appointment with your wife, be early.

i) Tell your wife your schedule.

This is another act of courtesy. It simply lets her know where you are. This isn't a check list that she is checking twice, and she is not insecure and afraid of where you are. This is a matter of courtesy and love. Simply let her be a part of what you are doing and she will know where you are

as much as possible. A simple phone call does wonderful things too. It shows her that you are thinking about her. She knows. She is secure. She is not dogging your tracks, driving around, checking on you, seeing where you are. There is no fear in this. What does it produce in her? A security, feeling a part of what you are doing, as well as respect and confidence.

j) Refrain from cruel language.

What we mean by cruel language is criticism. Love has good manners, and these are things to be consistently practiced. Implications can hurt your wife. Cruel language can take on many forms. Love actually thinks before it talks. It is very important to consider another person's feelings and respect her enough that you think before you talk. Something you say by implication or inference can hit her, and it was not something you meant. Still the implication is there, so it is just a simple matter of changing the wording.

k) Personal cleanliness

What does this have to do with love? When you are going to spend time with your wife, you want to be at your best. Think back to when you were dating. You didn't drive up and stink to high heaven, wearing grubby clothes, with your hair disheveled. You presented your best. When you present yourself to your wife, you want to present your best. Wear the cologne she likes, especially if she bought it for you.

Explain to your wife that you want to work with her in those areas. In other words, if you have never before helped her with her coat, explain to her that this is a simple way you want to express your love to her. Do so consistently because if you say that one time, she will expect it from here to eternity. You may say you will help around the house by picking up after yourself. If you wash your hands in the sink and leave ¼ inch of scum in there, and then you say you are cleaning the sink as an expression of your love for her, she

will look for that. Does she have a right to look for it? Yes, if you tell her. Then you have a responsibility to continue, and she will look forward to it. Every time she comes in and sees that sink shining, she will say, "He loves me." Every time she comes in and finds all the clothes in the hamper, she will say, "He loves me." You can say you love your wife a thousand times, but it doesn't mean as much as doing something you said you would do to express your love to her. Even getting a posy out of the yard and bringing it in shows you are thinking of her.

Be alert and responsive to your wife's daily readings (of your awareness of her presence). In other words, she is observing what you do. When she asks a question, will you answer?

2. Stop what you are doing when she speaks to you.

Now let me tell you, when you are right in the middle of something, it is not easy to stop what you are doing. Especially if you work from home. If you have carried your work home, that is a different story. Stop what you are doing.

- a) Look at her.
- b) Smile when you talk.

Answer her questions, even a little. All she is doing is checking with you. More than likely it is no earth shattering question, and usually that is when you say, "You mean you bothered me for that?" It isn't the question that is the issue here. It is her reading of your attention to her presence.

- c) Tell her with your eyes that you love her. You will have to practice that in the mirror. That means you are communicating with your eyes. It is nonverbal communication. You can communicate with your mouth, but watch what you say.

It may be you give her a hug and say, "Honey, I am busy right now, I will be right with you." It is acknowledging, it is explaining, and that may be all she is looking for.

Have you ever been working on a project, and she will peek in? You may want her to peek in. If you do, tell her you want her to come in and tell her why (because you want her to be with you). Do not hem and haw; tell her why. Communicate. Tell her you love her and you want her to be there with you. "I know you have important things to do, but right now I would like you to be out here with me. Let the other wait." Do that for her sake. Drop what you are doing and spend some time with her. It doesn't have to be that long. Five minutes.

A woman needs to see that you make investments in her life that will expand and fulfill her world. Note: her world.

This is a switch. It says you are to love your wife as you love yourself. If you really love your wife like you love yourself, then you will be concerned that her life be expanded and fulfilled. That will be a blessing to you too. It is a blessing to her. Your desire is to count her more important than yourself. Again, what is the hardest thing for a guy to do? To think about somebody else as more important than himself. Men have a tendency to have their lives revolve around themselves and what they are doing, their jobs, their thoughts, their hobbies, etc., and they leave their wives and children on the outside. Watch that. She has a need, and what is that need? To see that you are making investments in her life that will expand and fulfill her world. In other words, you are developing her creativity. You are developing gifts that God has given her. Believe it or not, God has given gifts to your wife. They are gifts to use. They are blessings. Proverbs 31 describes a godly woman, but don't read Proverbs 31 and then go to your wife and say she should be like this and this and this. If you want to undermine your house, then go ahead and do that. It is for the women to read Proverbs 31, not you.

Expand and fulfill her world, and when she sees you taking investments in fulfilling her, what does that do within her? She is being built up and it says to her that her husband loves her. Not in word only, but in deed. He wants her to develop into everything that

God wants her to be. She will get excited about it because the tendency is to dwell on the negative. Here is an opportunity for you to do something really positive that will make her bloom. What happens when she blooms? You are blessed.

Action Steps:

1. Learn your wife's spiritual gift and discern her progress in developing it as well as other gifts that she might have.

Romans 12 deals with some of these gifts. Your wife might have the ministry of giving. She gives your money to poor people and to ministries. I do believe that if a wife has that kind of a gift, her husband should help develop it. Then the husband and wife are together in a ministry of giving. The husband may have the giving gift. Before long his wife will be in agreement with him about it. There may be a gift of mercy. This is the ability that goes out to the people that nobody cares about. Your wife might have that kind of sensitivity. It is mercy. It needs to be cultivated. She needs to be encouraged in it. You might think, *Oh crumb, she is gone all the time now, out ministering mercy. Why doesn't she show some mercy to me?* The funny thing about mercy gifts is they operate to the ones that need it. If you think you need the mercy, show some mercy, and you will get some. Encourage her about it. Granted, there should be some guidelines set down. Her first responsibility is to the home, but you should be considerate about the desire in her heart to minister to the needs of people that are hurting. I believe a wise husband would give the opportunity and the freedom for her to do it and to develop it. He should encourage her by working with her at different times. He could go to a nursing home with her, or go to see some of the people she is working with. That would be a tremendous source of encouragement to her. Soon you will have that mercy gift, even if you didn't have it before. Husbands and wives have been known to flow that way.

What one has will go to the other and vice versa because the two are one. God will work that bond. In other words, the gifts will not tear a family apart because God will not tear a family apart. The family needs to come together in God's gifts. It may be that she has some creative abilities where she can make things with her hands. That needs to be encouraged. It may be that she has the ability to draw.

That needs to be encouraged. It may be that she has the ability to sew. Glory to God, get her the best sewing machine you can get her. That helps her creativity. She feels a sense of fulfillment doing that. Invest in her. Just because somebody else sews doesn't mean you get your wife a sewing machine too. Your wife may not have the aptitude for it.

Encourage her where she is and in what she likes to do, or in an area where you see some potential. You cannot see potential when there is none. Guys have done that and gotten themselves into trouble.

She may not have much schooling and feels insecure in that area but maybe she has an interest, like making clay pots. Perhaps you see that, lo and behold, a ceramics class is being offered. You would be making a wonderful investment towards her if you got her into that class, encouraging her. This is a way to make an investment, and she will appreciate it.

Many times we have our hobbies, and she does not have any. A wise husband will encourage her to do something, and especially something that will give his wife a sense of fulfillment.

2. Define the responsibilities each of you have in the home.

Why is it important to define responsibilities? If there are no guidelines, there can be no fulfillment. If you do not know what is expected of you, you cannot fulfill or be fulfilled. Nothing will get done. Trouble has come into homes because responsibilities were not defined, especially with children. Children need to know what their responsibilities are, and what is expected.

What does defining responsibilities have to do with making investments in her life? If she has an important place, or there is an important function, a feeling of self-worth will be cultivated, and she will be able to fulfill exactly what is expected, and be able to meet that. When each member of a team knows what each one is supposed to do, things get done. You are involved in making her life easier. Defining responsibilities makes things easier for a person. When you do not know what is expected of you, there is a tremendous pressure, and you will always be seeking to please but

never really knowing whether you are. When the responsibilities are defined, and you are doing what is given, then you know that what you are doing is right.

3. Visualize how you can add new dimensions to her responsibility so she can see future value to what she is presently doing.

A woman usually thinks in the present. You are helping her to see where she is heading, and what can be done down the road.

For example, if she is making ceramic pots, one house can only hold so many of them, but you do not want to discourage her. This may be a way that she can express her love to others.

These examples have to do with home-centered activities because if a wife gets out there in the world she comes under an authority other than you. They set their own guidelines, responsibilities, and expectations, and you will find a conflict between what you desire and what they desire. That always has to be right up front when you consider your wife going out into the world to work. If she is going to start a business, who will run the business? The husband will run the business, but she makes the pots.

Encourage your wife if she likes making things and has a desire to make them even if she doesn't make them well, because this is something she is interested in and something she likes doing. A loving husband will look out for these areas of interest and seek to develop and cultivate them.

4. Take a problem she is having and turn it into projects which will become an effective part of her life's message.

Let's say she has a problem with weight. What would be some projects that would help her develop character and accomplish what she wants to accomplish? We are to accept her and love her just as she is. What are we supposed to do? Take the problem she is having. She knows she has a problem. Turn it into a project.

Start with, "Honey, I love you just the way you are. How do you feel about yourself right now?" You may simply say, "I have a desire to

get some health equipment.” If your wife is complaining because she is too tired, you can ask her what you can do to help her to get more energy. Then you can suggest getting vitamins, doing exercise, or go together for walks every night. Anybody knows that the only way to walk is to walk fast (to get the most benefit out of it).

What will it accomplish? You can talk while you are walking. You can do something together while you are walking. This will meet more than one need, and what will be the end product? Quite a few problems can be resolved at once. This is the key to projects. When we determine a project, it will usually accomplish more than one goal. If you start walking with her, she will lose weight, you will spend time together, and you will get to know your neighborhood and your wife better. She will feel you care about her. There is a reason why a woman lets herself go. There is a problem somewhere, and it may very likely be that she has been neglected. This project would accomplish a whole lot of things.

Do not play games. Do not manipulate. Act in wisdom. If you say that you are going to do something so that she can get rid of all the ugly fat, she will eat more because she hates herself as it is. She hates you because more than likely there is something going on. You may have neglected her as it is, and she will rebel. If you approach it as something that you do together, and tell her you have been looking for ways that you can do things together, it is something you thought of, and you would like to do it. Ask, “Would you like to do it with me?” More than likely she will start to get into it, even if she doesn’t like it. It will meet a need in her to spend time with you. There is something your wife likes to do, if you would think about it.

Take the problems she is having and turn them into projects which will become an effective part of her life message. What will be the end result of that situation? Two or three problems will be resolved at once and the end product is that she will see herself in a whole different way. She will see herself as loved and cared about by her spouse. She will start to fix herself up in a good way for her man.

5. Help her visualize how she can use qualities and skills to further benefit her family.

This is something a wife is always interested in. She wants to be a blessing, and she wants to be a benefit whether she states it or not.

What would be an example?

If she has a sewing machine, help her to visualize something. Visualization is an important phase for many projects. Picture the end product. Visualize what will to happen.

If she sews, she has an ability or skill. How will you help her visualize that in benefiting her family? One, talk to her and show her all the nice clothes she can produce. Two, praise her for being a prudent wife who is saving money by sewing. Three, praise her for the skill that God has given. It is a testimony to others when they see the clothes. Four, she could do this for people that don't have anything.

What do you do if she asks for more room for the sewing machine? You consider it. If she has an interest, you need to make the proper steps of provision. It may take time to put together, but all she needs to know is that you are thinking about it and that something is in motion. That makes her totally blissful. She will sew in a nook-and-cranny corner if she knows that she is appreciated and that she is being thought about. It is the attitude of the heart. A woman is not looking for a mansion to sew in. She is looking to know she is appreciated and that what she does is benefiting the family.

These are principles to be acted upon. We encourage you to go back over them. Do so frequently.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR WIFE

Chapter Twelve

Exhortation to Men

The main theme of the Bible is centered around not missing our inheritance. Many people will not be diligent and faithful to the end to receive the crown of life, though. We do not want to be like the five virgins who didn't have enough oil. We need to stay free from the flesh's influence, from the world's influence, and from the satanic influences that in these last days are coming against every man and woman.

Let us look at the responsibilities that God has given to men. We want to note that men have been entrusted with authority. Through the Word of God, we see the significance of a man taking the responsibility that goes along with the authority.

A woman is in a place of influence. A person in the place of influence should be concerned about priorities. Interestingly, the same priorities are for God's men.

There are four priorities. The first priority is God. The second priority is the family. The third priority is the church, and the fourth priority is work.

With Authority Comes Responsibility

2nd Timothy 2 states the foundational responsibilities of God's men. With authority comes a man's responsibility to fulfill the plan of God for his life. He has to begin to 1) know the responsibilities God has entrusted to him and 2) learn how to take the responsibility and use the authority of God in a wise manner.

- *“You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus and the things you have heard me say. In the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.” (2nd Timothy 2:1-2)*

Men who are reliable are men who take responsibility. They are accountable, committed, and faithful to assume the responsibility and

to carry it out. This is very important because it is how God looks at His men, and it is how God grooms us in His image so that we start to understand that we are the glory of the Lord. We may not have necessarily come to grips with that. In many cases, men are not taught to be men. They are not taught to be responsible. They are not taught to be accountable, or to be committed.

There is flagrant abuse of authority on this earth. There is a macho kind of working (and image) where a man is not to cry or show emotion or weakness of any sort. As a result he runs around living a lie. He is never true to himself. This is not God's image of what we as men should be.

Let us take a look at the position that God has placed us in. The apostle Paul, by the Spirit of God, taught Titus and Timothy and other ministers of God what to do and how to do it. He also shared with them what they should teach.

- *“You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled and sound in faith, in love and in endurance.”* (Titus 2:1, 2)

To have temperance is to be in balance, not moved to extremes. Moderation is another quality: Not mild one day and angry the next, not moved by impulse or circumstances. The temperature in a temperate climate varies little. Temperance is a form of stability and consistency.

A woman is called to respect and honor her husband. The Bible says that the man is to be worthy of respect. We teach the women that it does not matter whether her husband is worthy of respect because the Bible says she is to respect and honor, but it is a whole lot easier for her if the man is fulfilling his responsibility. His responsibility according to God is to be worthy of respect, and that means he is not a flake. He is taking charge and carrying out to the best of his ability as he seeks God in whatever is needed to be done. In other words, it is not the woman's responsibility, it is the man's responsibility.

Again, a woman is at a point of influence when priorities are right. A man with the same priorities at a point of authority has the

responsibility to carry out plans and make sure they are done correctly.

I dealt with a situation where a young man's endurance was short-lived. After being married a brief time, he was ready to leave. He wondered how long he had to carry his wife, and I told him. "As long as you live. It is your responsibility." That is what the authority was given for. That is why God had given the responsibility. I had him pick her up and carry her out the door.

Learn your responsibility, assume it, and then carry it out in the power, wisdom, and strength of the Lord. People are usually not taught this, and it is not something that comes naturally. Because God has called you to be the authority, assume the authority, and carry it out (which is built into you), you don't like a woman talking down to you. Maybe your mother talked down to you. One of the worst things that can happen is for a mother to belittle her son. She makes a little girl out of a little boy that way, but it is because she doesn't know any better.

We have a responsibility to help our wives teach our sons and daughter what is pleasing to the Lord and what is right. We have the responsibility to make sure it is done.

- *"Similarly encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness, and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us." (Titus 2:6-8)*

A person in authority has to be self-controlled. With self-control comes a measure of stability and consistency. A woman is looking for security and stability. She needs that consistency. She needs to know exactly what you are going to say before you say it, and she will just wait to see what you will do with it. All authorities are proved. People will test them.

There is nothing wrong with that if one is secure in one's position.

1st Corinthians 11 shows how God sees us. *“Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ.”* This is a bold statement, and one that I believe in with all my heart.

There are very few role models today that people can look up to or who will lead them to a blessed life. God has intended that we, as His men, be a blessing. We are the crowning glory of the Lord. We were created by God for fellowship with Him, and as such there has to be a confidence that develops in our lives and in our walk with God. “Yes, I am a man of God. Yes, I am seeking the will of the Lord. God is making me capable to be the blessing He has intended me to be. I have God’s wisdom and am growing in it. I have God’s courage, and I am growing in it.”

If there is one thing a godly man needs, it is courage – courage to stand up for what is right and to enforce it. If you cannot enforce something, then what is the sense of it? I have seen many men back down and lose the position that God gave them because their authority was belittled and demeaned.

Paul told Timothy to speak the truth in love with all boldness, with all confidence, and not let anybody despise him.

Love is what makes the difference. One should never have to run around saying, “I am the authority.” This happens where little men are trying to be big men. For example, Pontius Pilate said to Jesus, “Know ye not that I have the authority today to grant you life or death?” And Jesus, in all humility and respect, said to him, “You would have no authority except My Father in heaven gave it to you.”

A true man of God is one who understands that he is a man of God and he has been given the authority by God to carry out God’s commands in any situation. Then he has to do something with it. True authorities do not have to push it because they realize they are under authority. The man of God is under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I want to be an example to my family. I want to be an example to my brothers. I want to be an example in the way God has me to be. Whatever we are, whatever we do, we represent the Lord of Jesus

Christ in this earth. Whatever job we are on, whatever we are doing in the home situation or out at the grocery store, we are men of God with the authority that He has vested in us as His sons.

As you understand that, you will rise up in the Spirit. You do not have to try to be somebody. You do not have to try to make your way. The beauty of being the authority is you are the authority no matter what anybody says. As you carry out your responsibilities, then everyone will realize you are the authority. Too often men are looking for recognition, but they are not carrying out their responsibilities. That is why they are not recognized. If they were carrying out the responsibilities, then everyone around would say what they are. Who gave the authority? God gave it. It was not something you took to yourself. Authority taken to oneself is no authority. God is the one who gives it out. (Romans 13)

Jesus' example was the walk of love. In everything He did, in everything He said, He always preferred the other more important than Himself, even to the point that He gave His life for us. It is the example we follow, and the true authority of God becomes the servant of everybody else – not to have everybody wait on us, but we wait on them.

- *“I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings just as I pass them on to you. Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.”* (1st Corinthians 11:2, 3) This is the authority working order that God has established: the Father God, the Lord Jesus Christ, man, woman.

It is easier to put it this way: The servant is always at the bottom, and he holds up everything else. When you start to understand the working, you will see that the bottom is really the top. A man is to honor his wife, deal with her in knowledge as the weaker vessel. Instead of seeking a high position, he flips it around. That is what God did. He humbled Himself to lift us up.

Another way of looking at it is that God has put everything on an even plane. Many men miss their responsibility because they do not understand the authority that God has given. When God says that

you are to be respected and honored by your wife, He is not saying that your wife is lesser than you are. In fact, in the Lord Jesus Christ, there is no male and female. There is simply an authority/responsibility order and working. When a woman keeps her priorities and when a man does his responsibilities, then the blessing of God rests on everybody. It is a matter of finding out what your role is and doing it.

In the world the order is man and then woman. Were you raised in a home where your mother was treated like a servant? Have you had a tendency to do that with your wife? That is not the order, and if you have had a few difficulties, you will really be blessed to find out why.

- *“Be on your guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be men of courage. Be strong. Do everything in love.”* (1st Corinthians 16:13-14)
These are the marching orders for a man of God.

Look at the responsibilities of an authority. Every man is in a position of being an authority. If you are not married, you are being groomed. You may not ever be married. In any case, you are still a man of God. A true authority has to learn to be under authority before he will ever be an authority. If you cannot be under authority, you will never make a good authority.

What quality goes with being under authority? A joyful, submissive heart. How can you ever expect somebody to be submissive to you if you have not learned to be submissive to others?

This ministry is a part of a network of ministries. In fact, one of them is called the Network of Christian Ministries. This is a network of ministries all over the world, and we are a part of that. We are also a part of the Charismatic Bible Ministries. You don't want to be out there by yourself because there is no accountability. We are accountable to you and to God. Where there is no accountability, there is no way your actions can be checked. Unfortunately, many men do not submit themselves to being accountable to another.

Responsibility Areas:

Here is a word from the Lord for us:

We will be the blessing that God has created us to be. In these last days God is tightening down the ship. He is battening down the hatches for the storm. The responsibility areas are going to have to be tightened. If God's men are not ready, somebody is going to be washed overboard, and God does not want that to happen to any of us. We need to stand together. God is calling His men to their responsibilities. They are principles for today, they are principles for next week, they are principles for next year, they are principles of God, and they stand.

1. Our first responsibility is to be faithful to God. We want to encourage you to cultivate that more and more – a personal communion with God, a personal prayer time with God, a personal time in the Word of God with you and the Lord. During these times, let the Spirit of God speak to you individually. It is so important that an authority of God not compromise the Word of God. The only way that you will not compromise the Word of God is first, to know it, and second, to meditate on it, and third, to eventually do it, knowing that God is with you helping you to do it all.

I believe there is an intensity with which God is calling us in these last days to fulfill our responsibilities. As the responsibilities are fulfilled, all the other areas will start to fall into place and be blessed.

The first responsibility is to the Lord. When we stand before God, He will ask us to give an account for what we have done with the responsibility that He has entrusted to us. I am not afraid of giving an account, and I do not believe any of us should be afraid of it.

Consider for a moment how you can improve your relationship with God.

- a) *Spend more time with the Lord in the morning.* Be specific. This is part of the problem why people never go anywhere in fulfilling their responsibilities because they do not have a concrete plan. *“Without a vision My people perish,”* the Lord says. Get a concrete plan for your relationship with God, for your relationship with your family, for your relationship with the body of Christ. You share in the body of Christ, God's church,

so how can you be the greatest blessing that God would have you to be there?

- b) *Be still so you can hear God.* When you spend time with God, be still so you can hear what He has to say. Ask Him questions. He will answer you. The thought will come, *I don't know if that is God or me.* Here is where the fellowship of the brotherhood comes in handy. The spirit of the prophet is tested by the prophet. If you are not willing to test what you think you heard from God, then more than likely you did not hear from Him. Experience builds confidence too. The reason I know I hear from God is it has been proved time after time after time. If you never venture out to test it, to prove it, and to ask Him, then you will never know whether you are hearing Him. Be willing to make a mistake, and then you can always correct it and move on.

The authority that is not willing to make a mistake never makes any decisions. If you do not make any decisions, nothing gets done and you are not fulfilling your responsibility.

- c) *Spend more time in the Word of God.* Get some input. Know what God says.
- d) *Obey the Sabbath to the letter.* There is no sense in keeping nine Commandments and not ten. If you are not convinced about the Sabbath, what does it take to convince you? Study it. Pray about it. I challenge you to find one Scripture where the Lord God of Hosts Himself has changed the day.

The Sabbath is about rest, resting in the Lord, and separation from the world. A godly man is not influenced by the world.

There is power in a woman's influence. The most pure man that ever was, Adam, fell to a woman. He willingly, wholeheartedly tasted of the fruit, knowing full well what God had commanded. There was no deception. He went for the influence. Why would a man do something like that after knowing what God said? Why would he take the fruit and eat it just because his wife handed it to him? To please her. Peer pressure.

- e) The Bible says that we have a responsibility to be on our guard. *“Be on your guard.”* (1st Corinthians 16:13) Get to know your Father God so well that you not only know His voice, but you cannot wait to hear it, and you cannot wait to do it. On your own, think of ways that you can draw near to the Lord. Note, I make a distinction between God and church.

In Ephesians 5 God has given us a command, and what we are responsible to do as authorities of the Lord is to carry out the Lord's commands.

Pontius Pilate would have had no authority except the heavenly Father gave it to him. It was delegated to him.

The next responsibility area:

2. The husband's responsibility is to his family. Before a man can really be used of God in the church, he has to have his responsibilities towards God in order. (See the Books of Timothy and Titus) He had to have his family in order. If he cannot minister to his family, he is not to minister in the church.

This is a clear word from the Lord for me to share with you, and I know it without a question in my heart. We cannot be effective to others and to the world until we have our act together with God, our families, and our home situation.

- a) The responsibility God has given us in the home is *“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 of 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. In the same way husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 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 the 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.”* (Ephesians 5:25-31)

I want to stress one flesh. Not only do the two become one flesh, they become one spirit before God. This is why in the Lord there is neither male nor female as one would understand it. There is a role or position, a working order of responsibility for the man and for the woman. Your wife can love God just as much as you can, and God will look at her no differently than He will look at you. What does God honor? He honors faith, and if you are not walking with God in fullness the way the Lord would have it to be, your wife can cover you, the Bible says, by her faith.

I have seen it many times where my faith covered my wife, and her faith covered me. It is encouraging. It is exciting. Let us blow away the macho thinking that seems to permeate even the Christian realm where women are demeaned. They are not demeaned in God's sight. They are holy and a very special blessing. The only place in the Bible where a relationship is compared to Christ and the church is here in the family between a husband and a wife. You can see the extreme importance of a husband caring for his wife and assuming the responsibility. Many wives go bonkers because their husbands are not fulfilling their responsibility towards them. Then the sit guy wonders, *What happened?* It was because he did not fulfill his responsibility. I can always tell when my wife is out of alignment. In fact, the majority of times it isn't her, it is me not covering properly. I have not assumed my responsibilities or dealt with the situation. I would rather delegate it to her, and I know that might sound incredible to some of you who think I am a hard headed, stiff-necked brow beater to get things done, but there are times when I will slough off rather than deal with the responsibility myself. When I pass it off, it will cause a problem to come on her (since she is not intended to carry my responsibility). She is my helpmate. Often a helpmate ends up doing more than the one who is supposed to be the authority. It is not God's way. It is not God's order.

- b) *"However each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself."* (Verse 33) *"And the wife must respect her husband."* Do not dwell on what your wife is to do, dwell on what the Lord would have you to do to carry out your responsibility. There is no excuse. You can say, "She is rebellious as hell," which is a

bunch of nonsense. She is rebellious because you have not assumed the responsibility and the authority.

Examine your life and take a good look at what is down at the bottom of the problem.

Even if it is not for you yourself right now, do not think it is for somebody else. Some other fellow will come along someday with problems, and he will come to you (and I can guarantee you it is going to happen). Do not let God hear garbage coming out of your mouth. Just because you do it in a way that is not pleasing to God does not mean that another person needs to do it that way. You have to be an example. You have to have a testimony. You have to have something a fellow can hear, and believe and know. Yes, that is what God can do when I take the responsibility that God would have me to take.

c) *“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.”* (1st Peter 3:7)

I have seen men not being considerate of their wives or honoring them and dealing with them in knowledge. A man thinks, *She is just a weak person. What is her problem? Why doesn't she get with the program? Be strong. Be bold.* The Bible says she is the weaker vessel. Does that mean she is inferior? No. I have seen many wives who would put men to shame in the spiritual realm. I mean, they seek God, they are intense, and they hear God. They move and the power of God works through them. I say, Glory Hallelujah. Somebody is standing up for the Lord and doing the will of God. They are doing their role. They are doing it faithfully. Some women I have known for years have gone through hell and back with their husbands, but they stand strong. They stand faithful. They stand true. They have their moments, but they do not waiver that much.

“Weaker vessel” must be referring to something else because these women seem hardy and strong in spirit to me. What does it mean? It is in regard to their role. A woman operates on emotions, a man operates on intellect. Let me tell you, your intellect will get you into

trouble, and your emotions will get you into trouble. Perhaps you cannot figure out why she is doing something. You have not taken time to ask God for knowledge and insight because you are too busy being selfish.

I have been there. I know what I'm talking about. Too busy being selfish. Love your wife as you love yourself. It says, *"If any lack wisdom, let them ask God."* (James 1:5) I wonder how many men take the time to really ask God for insight, wisdom, and knowledge about their wives so that they can use it to be the blessing that God has intended them to be.

Father God holds things up, then comes Jesus Christ, next comes man, and at the top is women. Treat her like a queen; she is your crown. If you demean her, you demean yourself. If you demean yourself, you demean the Lord Jesus Christ. If you demean the Lord Jesus Christ, you demean the Father, and the Word of God is blasphemed.

You may be seeking to be a Christian and walk with God, but you are neglecting your responsibility at home. You can see why the Lord was strong to the apostle Paul in giving the criteria for elders and deacons and men of God. One criteria is that they be careful caretakers at home. How can you be entrusted to help somebody else if you do not have it together yourself?

One of the areas that the Lord wanted me to bring out with the men is money. If we cannot be good stewards of money, then how can we be good stewards of spiritual things? Holy trust. The Lord wants to encourage us to be good stewards of our money. Tithe and give offerings where God directs you. Manage your money properly. If you are faithful with little, God gives much. That applies to money as spiritual things. We have to be careful with how we use what God has entrusted to us.

d) *"Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives and treat them with respect." (1st Peter 3:7) "Deal with them in knowledge, honoring them as the weaker vessel." (KJV)*

Within the body of Christ God gives more honor and glory to the weaker parts. (1st Corinthians 12) I can guarantee you, if you are loving your wife, being considerate, treating her like a daughter of the Lord, she will respect and honor you and she will do anything you want according to the Word of God. But if you are being selfish and neglecting your responsibilities, she feels insecure, unstable, unloved, unwanted, and not important in your life. You just made hell on earth for yourself.

The tendency is to blame your wife when you should really look at your own heart. *Am I dealing with my responsibilities to my wife? Am I carrying them out? What are my responsibilities to her?* Note, she is an heir with you of the gracious gift of life.

Many men make a bad mistake. I have done it before myself. One time I was sitting out in the garage, and I had been battling before God for about 18 hours over something. I was fasting, I was praying, I was not getting any breakthrough whatsoever. I was sitting out there taking authority, and I was doing everything I knew to do. Finally I heard, like a sigh, the Father saying, "My son." It was kind of like, why don't you just get in agreement with somebody? meaning, what are you doing to yourself? Why are you doing it like this? I thought, who is around? Oh, Diana. I went in and got in agreement with her, and bingo, it was done. *"One will move a thousand, two will move ten thousand."* Gain wisdom and insight.

Your wife is a partner. The two shall become one. She is not your enemy, she is your responsibility. Learn that. Accept that. The day I said, "I take you to be my wife," I said, "I take you to be my responsibility." Someday I will stand before God and present her and my children to the Lord, just like Christ will present His church to the Father without spot, without blemish. I will be able to say, "Yes, Lord, I fulfilled my responsibilities towards my wife and my children," and they will give praise to God for that fact. It is what will be. There is not going to be anything else, I will not settle for anything short of that. Do not settle for anything short of God's best.

Don't say, "You know, my wife never listens to me; she never will." It is never too late. Instead say, "I asked God to forgive me for not fulfilling my responsibilities towards you. I ask your forgiveness for

not fulfilling my responsibilities towards you, and now I am going to do it right by the power of God working in me. I ask you to help me to carry out the responsibilities that God has entrusted to me.” There is no wife on this earth who will not go with that. At first she may buck you, but you remind her, “I am simply doing what the Word of God says. You love God, I love God, and this is the way it is,” and after a while she will follow.

Have you given much license and freedom to your wife to do anything she wants to do, whenever she wants to do it? If you do that, you are making a mistake. The independent spirit, the rebellious spirit will rise up. We have to fulfill our responsibilities towards them. We cannot expect them to do theirs if we are not doing ours.

3. As you have to be right with God, your responsibilities towards your family are to be in order. Then you can really be a blessing to your church.

Your witness field is where you work, but your first witness is at home. Have you ever come to church being so happy and praising God, but at home you had just had a blow-out fight. You came to church, and you could not enter in as well. You could not enter in because relationships were not right. If things are not right at home, they are not right with God. How we treat our wives is how we are treating God. How we treat our moms and dads is how we are treating God. Think about that.

The Qualities of a Man of God (Review)

The following apply to our relationship with God, our relationship with our family, our relationship with our church, our relationship at work:

- *“Be on your guard.”*

This means to be spiritually alert. I have a responsibility to be spiritually alert to the temptations that come against me every day. They take on different forms to a man.

How do the temptations come? We noted earlier that with Adam there was no demonic influence whatsoever, it came through Eve offering something to him. Where was Adam’s heart? Knowing full

well what God had said, he willingly took it. Where was his heart? Who was his first love? The woman.

If your first love is your wife, you are in trouble. I am in trouble. Before I got married I shared with my wife that she would come second in my life. I even put her before myself because as I love her, I love myself. As I do good to her, I do good to myself. I said, "It's not too bad being second." She did not understand at first, but she has come to understand. I told her, "Don't ever put me in a position where I have to choose between you and God because I will choose God." And you know, I believe that goes for a woman too. A husband should never put her in a position where she has to choose between him and God because I know according to the counsel of the Holy Spirit, and I encourage you, friends, she has to go with God.

Why would a man be tempted to put a woman into that position? Insecurity. Within a man is a desire to be loved, to be honored, to be respected, to be esteemed. Insecurity about his position forces him to try to manipulate that kind of love, that kind of encouragement, that kind of honor and esteem. This kind of person is always trying to assert authority. A true authority does not have to assert it; it is there.

By asserting authority I mean force it. You would have to force authority only if there is rebellion, and there would be no rebellion if the needs of the people were considered. Every rebellion that has ever happened has always come from people not being cared for. It gave opportunity and vent to the devil to start to work.

(Note, these are all about the flesh.) The biggest temptation that hits a man is flesh. Selfishness. How often do you really think about your wife? When you really get down to it, how often do you think about God? Let alone your church. How often do you pray for the ministry of God? Think about it. It has to do with priorities. Often we pray for things that pertain to us. We want to get ahead. We want to succeed. We want to prosper. In the work realm the order is often reversed. Work is high in importance for fellows, next comes the church, then God, and last the family. You can mix and match your own version. You think that by being out there working and supplying all the needs, you are fulfilling your responsibility towards your family. After all, the person who does not take care of his family is worse

than an infidel. True. But there are many ways to take care of the family, and it is more than just supplying shelter, food on the table, and clothes.

According to one survey, most men spend five minutes or less quality time with their children (per child) on any given day. How much more so towards a wife? Sometimes the children get more attention than the wife does. “Well, get my dinner. Where is my dinner? I’m tired.” You plunk down. She has been waiting to talk to you all day long and go over a few things. She has made a list and is checking it twice, too, because she wants to communicate. She wants to be a part of your life. You often just shove her away. That is not fulfilling your responsibility.

In the same way we can do that in the church. We slough off responsibility. I have often wondered why the intercession rooms are not filled with men praying. Why does it always seem to be the women praying? Is it something we have delegated to them? Why should we give them all the blessings? God wants both men and women praying.

- “*Stand firm in the faith.*” That means not to compromise. When you know you have the will of God, when you know you have heard from God, when you know it is what the Word of God says, do not compromise it. Stand on it.

Going back to Adam, his name means man. What did he do? He compromised the truth. He knew what God said. What did he think God would do? Not hold him accountable for his action? Did he think there were not going to be any consequences to his action?

It says, “Stand firm in the faith.” Fellows mess up here because they have a responsibility to get their wives’ input. Wives hear from God too, but the final decision rests with the husband. Don’t throw it all on the woman and say, “You talk to God, you get the answer, and then we will do what He gives you.” That is shirking your responsibility. Pray together. Hear the Lord. Get the input. Then make the decision and do it. Follow it through.

Most women feel insecure because they find their husbands do not follow through. He makes a stand. She knows it is a godly stand. She is rejoicing, and the next thing you know, he doesn't follow through. This applies to God, the family, the church, and work.

A boss may tell you that you did not follow through with what you were supposed to do. Following through means you take the responsibility to do it, and to see it through until it is done. Be a man of courage. Be strong. It takes courage not to compromise. That is the kind of man that says I am willing to take the consequences of a godly decision.

Is this an easy step? No. Not on its own because you stand to get in trouble with your wife. Children often do not care for godly decisions. Employers sometimes do not care for godly decisions. Interestingly, sometimes churches do not care. We care. We care enough to instruct. We care enough to be there to encourage.

- *“Do everything in love.”* Love is a totally unselfish working. 1st Corinthians 13:4-8 lays it out very clearly. If you want the blessing, then you must fulfill the responsibilities, and then you will see the blessings come back. It is a spiritual principle. I cannot expect something for nothing.

An unfaithful servant is like a broken tooth or a foot out of joint. He needs to go back to the drawing board. Back to priority number one: God.

Be faithful in all aspects of your life; what you do towards others, you do to God. At work, at church, at home, wherever we are. You can say you love God all you want, but if you do not show Him, then it is a lie.

Be available to do the will of God in your church. Does that mean somebody will have to come and say, “Hey, we need this done and this done and this done”?

What are we going to say? Is there something that we can do? No, what you need to say is, “I noticed that this area needs some help, and I am willing to help,” and then you can be put to it. The reason

you do not just jump in and do something sometimes is there may be a plan that is working. You may jump in there and offset something else that is happening. So say, "Yes, I am available. I see this need and I am available. I would like to help. What can I do?"

We always tell the intercessors, "Don't expect to come to intercession once or twice every two months and be an intercessor. You are expected to be there every time unless there is an emergency." God has shown me that there are no emergencies anymore, especially when you pray.

The key is "Be strong," "Be courageous," "Act like a man" (1st Corinthians 16) that means be alert. Be on guard. You are caring like I care for the church by the Spirit of God. You care for your family; you care for your business. These are responsibilities. If you shirk your responsibilities, what happens to the business or to the job? They are gone. If you shirk your responsibilities towards your family, you will lose it.

I do not want to stand before God some day with my children being like Eli's children. Eli, a high priest, knowing the truth of God, let his boys act like gluttons and commit sexual immorality. He did not take care of his household. The reason the boys were gluttons was because Eli was a glutton, and those things are passed down from generation to generation. Somewhere along the line, the blood of Jesus has to call an end to the whole matter and things have to be straightened out.

Men have broken up their homes because they were harsh and unloving, and then they wondered why their wives were rebellious. Being considerate is not being weak. Again, you do not give your wife everything she wants. You pray and ask God to show what is right. A woman is looking for some attention to know that she is important in your life. She does not ask for much.

We have to get a vision. Where do we get one? From God. This church has a vision. We have a purpose. We have a plan. We know what God wants us to do together, and we are doing it, and it is going to expand. "*Enlarge the tent.*" What we are doing right now is what we are going to be doing when Jesus returns. The only difference is

it will expand, and expand, and expand. For that to happen, God knows and I know we need good, faithful men and women to help with priorities, doing their responsibilities.

We come in, we take the responsibility of the authority that God has given us, and we do not let people do too much at church. We watch what people do. I have turned many people down when they wanted to get involved in different projects. I have said, "No, you have this to do and you have this to do and you have this to do, and take care of those things." We watch for that. I believe it is very important. I do not want to see "church burnout." God gave me a spiritual diet to share years ago, so I always encourage people with it: one worship service a week, one teaching service a week, and one opportunity for ministry (be about the work of the ministry) a week. Those three are a proper spiritual diet in any given week. Then let your light shine wherever you are. Anything else more than that is up to you in agreement with your wife and family. No burnout. I will not permit it. That is where we are helping too.

It is a responsibility to make sure that something is a benefit to you. I don't want you wasting your time. People can say what they will, but we need to get back to some of that "God, country, and apple pie." Many godly men have fought in the wars and have given their lives for the freedom that we experience. I thank God for them. I have never been in the service, but for a long time I thought about being a chaplain in the armed forces. However, that was not the way that God moved me. My heart is there with those guys because they are sacrificing for us. It is not easy.

I thought that I had made a bad mistake choosing to watch a certain movie one day. I pray about what I do and where I go, and so when I went to this movie, I was startled to see that it was all about "blood and guts." As I was walking out, I repented and asked God's forgiveness for going. Outside the theatre, the compassion of God came over me, and I knew I had been in the right place. Such an intense awareness came to me of the importance of praying for those men who had been in Viet Nam and other places. They are still, in many cases, going through things. We deal with deliverance all the time, day in and day out, and those men were put through hell with no

recognition from the nation about what they were supposed to be fighting for. How horrible. We needed to pray.

I prayed for a few weeks for those fellows. I believe that many times people do not want to go into the armed forces, and yet they would get some discipline in their lives that is vastly necessary. God can supply it. They would get some direction. Quite frankly, what you get there would benefit you the rest of your life. You learn how to be under authority so that you can start to be responsible, and you know that somebody else's life is on the line because of your responsibility.

I hold that from the Lord's perspective. I am a soldier in God's army. I am not just a soldier; I am a leader of soldiers with authority and responsibility to train troops for God. It is a very serious responsibility because if I do not give the alarm when I see things coming down, it is on my head and people are going to lose their lives.

One has to be ready for things when they come. The old expression, "Don't get caught with your pants down" means you are ready. You are prepared, and the jubilation will continue.