

## Part 2

### Relationship Issues

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Note: This workbook is designed to be read in conjunction with viewing videos of this ministry on YouTube or the WOG Website. To find the videos on YouTube, use the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/wogcounseling>

Go to the resources tab on [www.wogcounseling.org](http://www.wogcounseling.org) to view the videos on the WOG Website. Not all topics have a related video. The topics that are supported by videos are noted with an \* after the title.

## 24. What is love?

*Watch the video: What Is Love*

### **Scenario**

A man and a woman meet and each are physically attracted to each other. Every time they are near each other they each get a warm fuzzy feeling, which prompts them to be together more often. Soon they begin dating. As they are preparing for their first date she is looking and acting her best. Not a hair is out of place, her makeup and lipstick are just right. Her dress and shoes look perfect. She walks and sits just so. She is constantly going to the ladies room to check herself out in the mirror. She laughs at his corny jokes and complements him often about his job and the way he acts.

He is looking and acting his best to impress her. His shoes are shined and he has on his least wrinkled clothes. He checks his breath often. He is careful to make sure that he does not make any vulgar noises with his body. He has washed and vacuumed the car and sprayed some nice scent on the carpet. He holds the car door and asks her if the music is ok, if the temperature is right and if there is any place she needs to stop on the way to the restaurant. At the restaurant he opens the car door, the restaurant door and holds the chair for her to be seated first. He stands when she stands and talks about things he thinks will interest her. He even goes to romantic chick flick movies with her where there is no killing and seems to actually like sitting through the movie with her holding her hand. He listens to her for hours without interruption. She is feeling emotionally connected to him and she is thinking that he may be the right one.

On several dates she even actually seems to be enjoying the time that they are spending together watching basketball, football, and all the other sports stuff. He begins to think, she may be the right one.

### **After Several Weeks**

They are spending hours upon hours talking on the phone. They cannot wait until the weekend when they will be together again. Both feel free and begin to ask personal questions and are sharing about how wrong they were treated in their previous relationships before finding each other. Neither seems to be happy unless they are with the other. They spend endless hours on the phone with neither wanting to hang up first.

Soon they both assume that they will be together on the weekends. Plans to be with each other are now worked out in detail. They both spend a lot of time daydreaming about where they will go and what they will do together. He may bring her flowers and frequently send or give her a card. She may purposely plan for them to spend Saturday afternoon together watching the football game with popcorn and desert for later. While watching the game he often holds her hand and gives her a lot of non-sexual affection. After the game they talk about their dreams and they are encouraging each other to go

after their dreams and discussing how they can help each other get there. They both feel like they have found the right one.

As the relationship continues she is wondering why in the world his ex-girlfriend would ever not want to be with such a wonderful man. He is charming, witty and meeting her each and every need. He is thinking the same thing about her. How could her ex-boyfriend have ever left her. She is so beautiful, she listens to every word that he has to say, she is encouraging, fun to be with and best of all likes football and basketball. He is thinking that he has found the right one.

### **After a year or two of marriage**

He is watching sports either alone or with a buddy. She is watching romance movies either alone or with a friend. He has almost forgotten that she used to watch sports with him. She has quit asking him to go to a romance movie with her. He no longer asks her how he is driving and she is constantly complaining about his speeding and the volume of the radio.

Her hair seems to not be so perfect and he does not bother to shave on the weekends. The nightgown she wears half the day does not look as sexy as the high heels and dresses she used to wear. His breath is not quite as fresh and his manners are not quite as good. Sometimes she hears some of those vulgar noises from his body that when dating he was so careful to keep from her ears.

The hours she used to spend with him on the telephone she now spends with a friend talking about all the personal things she used to share with him. When she does call him on the phone he seems to be irritated that she has bothered him at work, wants her to get straight to the point or often lets the call go to his voicemail.

When they are together there is little conversation and the time is usually spent watching a television program together. He is working later and later and she is complaining more and more. She has given up on asking him to come home early and plans most of her activities without him and he seems to do the same with his buddies. It is odd that they now seem to be happier with their friends than each other.

Often when she is shopping she finds it difficult not to respond to the complements of men who seem to notice her. She wonders why her husband no longer sees her the way the men at the mall do.

He seems to pay her little attention unless it is that night that he wants to be sexual with her. She used to enjoy being sexual with him but in the last several months has begun to feel used by him and now sometimes even avoids or ignores his sexual advances.

Sometimes when they go out he still holds the car door and opens the restaurant door for her, but things just don't feel the same, as they are more like two strangers living in the same house than the lovers they were when they first got married.

Often he wonders why his wife no longer finds him to be funny and as interesting as the women at his office do.

Months pass by and the chores she has for him to do around the house seem to be forgotten or no longer important to him. She has begun wondering what she saw in him that caused her to want to be married. He thinks often to himself about how sexual she used to be and wonders what happened. She now often nags him and rarely seems to be happy even on those few days that he actually does come home on time. Neither seems to be happy and neither understands why.

We have been taught that love is a warm fuzzy feeling we have for each other and it seems to be a mystery to us why a short period of time after marriage that warm fuzzy feeling seems to fade away. It is a mystery why we may want to get away, be separated from or actually divorce the person we “wanted” to be near a short year or so ago. It is a mystery why we now feel so bad around the person whom we used to feel so good being near. To understand this let’s start where it all began with why we were first attracted to the opposite sex.

### **Physical Attractions**

We are all attracted to someone. What causes the attraction is that when we “see” a particular someone, endorphins are released into our body. Endorphins are chemicals that cause your body to feel that warm fuzzy feeling. Endorphins are not love but the release of endorphins can deceive us into thinking we are “in love” because of that warm fuzzy feeling we get when we see someone we are attracted to.

There is a picture in the back of your mind of whom you want to be with. When you see “that” person that matches the picture in the back of your mind then there is an endorphin release in your body. Not everyone is attracted to the same physical features in the opposite sex. Some like dark hair, others like blond hair. We are attracted to a fair complexion, tan complexion, dark skin, deep voice, high pitched voice, small frame, large frame, big boned, small figure, blue eyes, brown eyes, green eyes and so forth.

Since we all have different pictures in the back of our mind of whom we want to be with, we are all generally attracted to different physical features. What determines the picture in the back of our mind has a lot to do with our good and bad childhood experiences and what got recorded back then as love and who was present when you first felt that way.

If you are a male and felt very loved by your mother then you may subconsciously be looking for someone who resembles your mother. If you felt very unloved by your mother, then you may be looking for someone the complete opposite of your mother.

As an adult you may be attempting to reproduce your first love experience with someone similar to your parent or your first adolescent love. When you connect in the present with that particular someone that matches the picture in your mind, you feel in the present the same feelings you had when you had your very “first” love (endorphin) experience.

You want to keep the warm fuzzy feeling. To keep that feeling going you will most likely physically move closer to that person, say something to them and check out their response to see if they are attracted to you the same way you are to them. To keep the endorphin release going you will look for ways to stay connected to that person which may result in many of the following activities:

1. Long conversations
2. Holding hands
3. Long looks into their eyes
4. Gentle strokes of their face
5. Long smiles
6. Deep sighs
7. Long talks on the phone

Remember when you were first dating? You had those long conversations. It seemed that “you” were the most interesting person in the world to him or her. They wanted to know everything about you. You may have been on the phone for hours, neither of you wanting to hang up first. Sometimes you may have just simply listened to each other breathing or fell off to sleep just knowing you were connected to that special person on the other end of the phone.

If the phone rang you would run over to where the phone was to see if it was that special person calling. If you were away from your phone for a while you would hurry and check your caller ID to see if they had called. You may have had a picture of them in your phone or wallet that you would check several times during the day. You would often daydream about being together on the weekend and what the two of you would do together.

If you were a male you would hold the door or her chair for her, stand when she stood. You may have brought flowers, a card or candy to your dates. You may have pretended to actually like shopping, being at her parent’s house, putting up with her silly friends just to be near her in order to have the warm fuzzy feeling.

When you were together there were those long looks into each other’s eyes, many deep sighs and no conversation may have been needed. You would hold other’s hand, gently caress each other on the face or give each other a taste of the food you were eating. You would go places you really did not want to go, do things you really did not want to do and be around people you really did not want to be around, all in an effort to keep that warm fuzzy release going.

You would be very polite and courteous to each other, forgiving any offense quickly and want to show off your mate to your friends.

If you were female you may have pretended to like his fast driving, complemented him on his corny jokes and sat and watched sports on television. You may have even encouraged him to bring his obnoxious friends over to watch the game with him while you served all of them snacks, doing all those things just to be near him.

It appeared that you really wanted to do the things you were doing. You were sacrificing and doing what you really did not want to do, when you really did not want to do it, simply so you could be near that special person and feel that warm and fuzzy feeling.

You may have actually deceived yourself into thinking that you liked doing those things.

If you both enjoyed each other so much, then why did you stop? Why did he stop going shopping and watching chick flicks with her? Why did she stop enjoying sporting events with him.

The truth is that you were doing all those loving things for you, so you would feel what you knew you would feel every time you were near that person.

In other words, you were not doing what you were doing for that other person's benefit; you were selfishly motivated into doing it so you would have the benefit of feeling what you would feel every time you were near that person. You might have called it "I am falling in love". You were not actually falling in love. You were both doing selfishly motivated things in order to get endorphin releases that you called love.

Did you come to a realization that after about a year of being married or even much sooner that those warm fuzzy feelings began to stop?

Many couples find that shortly after marriage the warm fuzzy feeling stops! This is the point that the trouble starts in most marriages. This is the place where many husbands or wives say I love you but I am not "in love" with you. This seems to be a great mystery. Let's begin to solve this great mystery with the word of God.

The reason we feel so loved by God is not because God keeps telling us that he loves us. Simply telling someone that you love him or her does not result in that person feeling loved by you.

Even scripture tells us that love is not simply words spoken.

*Dear children let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:18*

For someone to feel loved by me I must do more than just tell him or her so. How often have you told your spouse that you love them however, because of your actions your spouse tells you that they do not feel loved by you?

There must be action attached to the words that we love someone. Without action the words do not mean much to the person we speak those words to.

Scripture tells us what love is.

*This is how we know what love is: Jesus laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our life for another. 1 John 3:16*

The reason we feel loved by God is because of what someone else did. Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross. Jesus did what he did not want to do, when he did not want to do it, for the benefit of others. Jesus was the conduit of God's love. God honors sacrifice and God sent his love through the sacrifice of Jesus to humanity. Humanity feels the love of God through the sacrifice of Jesus.



Our human love for each other is very shallow. My love is so shallow that I really do not want to do the little things my wife asks me to do. I do not love my wife enough to take the trash out when she asks me to. You may raise your eyebrow at that statement but first let me finish. When my wife asks me to take the trash out, the first thought that comes to my head is similar to this: *“you have two arms, you have two legs, the trash bag is not real heavy and I am busy”*. If you are honest you most likely have similar thoughts when your spouse asks you to do something when you are busy.

What thoughts come to your mind as I offer the following examples?

1. After work you are very tired and want to get home as soon as possible. About five minutes from home your spouse telephones and asks you to go to the grocery store and pick up a few things for dinner. What would you be thinking and feeling?
2. It is Saturday; you have been working hard in the yard and are hot and sweaty. You are now entering the house at the end of the day looking forward to a well-earned shower. As soon as you walk in the door your spouse asks you to go to Wal-Mart to pick up a few things he or she forgot to get earlier while there. What would you be thinking and feeling?

Most likely thoughts will come into your mind similar to the thoughts I thought when my wife asks me to take out the trash.

Even though those thoughts come into my mind I do not act upon them. Instead, I adjust my attitude and go into the kitchen and do what I do not want to do, when I do not want to do it (sacrifice), and take the trash out.

God honors that small sacrifice of mine and uses that sacrifice as a conduit of his love to my wife. My wife “feels” a small amount of God’s love through my willingness to do what I did not want to do with the right attitude. As my wife sees me do what she asks me to do she “feels” loved by me. It is not my love she is feeling, as I did not even want to do what she asked me to do. She is feeling God’s love through my sacrifice.

When you were dating and doing those things you did not want to do for the selfish motive of feeling the endorphin release, you were also making sacrifices. You were doing what you did not want to do, when you did not want to do it, and God honored those sacrifices. As you made those sacrifices for each other, not only did each of you have an endorphin release, each of you were also a conduit of God’s love through the sacrifices you were making for each other. Each of you were getting a double dose as you were getting the endorphin release of the “warm fuzzy feeling” and God’s love was flowing through those sacrifices you made for each other.

As you know, after a time the endorphins stop flowing. When the endorphins stop flowing we may see no benefit to sacrificing. Since we no longer feel the warm fuzzy feeling, we may stop doing those things we really do not want to do for the other person because there is no warm and fuzzy reward. God’s love also stops flowing, as there are no sacrifices.

At this point couples may say to each other, "I love you, but I do not feel loved by you". What that may really mean is that you are staying because you do not want to be alone, for the sake of the children, because of the fact that you are a Christian or for convenience.

Many husbands are surprised that their wife does not feel loved by them. Most husbands think that they show love to their wife by going to work, earning money and providing their wife with a nice car, home and the necessities of life. Most husbands do not realize that a female needs an emotional connection to her husband to feel loved.

After a long day at the office he may not feel like doing the things that he does not want to do that she may be asking him to do when he arrives home. He may not feel like listening to how her day was, how the kids misbehaved, about the bills that need to be paid or that the trash that needs to be taken out. He may be tired and all he wants to do is eat dinner, withdraw into his own little world and find some peace and quiet for the evening.

Often husbands feel that they have already made their sacrifice for the day by going to work and now it is time to rest.

### **To Receive Love You Must First Give Love**

Many husbands and wives come to counseling stating that they do not feel loved by each other. We do not understand that our job as a husband or wife is to "give" to our spouse instead of focusing on receiving. If your focus is on receiving instead of giving, then both you and your spouse will most likely feel unloved by each other.

If you focus on receiving then you will get back what you are sowing. According to God's law, if I give love and am constant and consistent with it, then I should eventually receive love back from the person I gave it to.

We must remember what love is. Love is sacrifice. Therefore if you are a sacrificial husband or wife then you should be reaping back from your sacrifices and feel loved in the same exact areas where you sacrificed.

*Do to another, as you would have them do unto you. Luke 6:31*

A woman who divorced and remarried was in my office complaining that her new husband treated his own biological children with more love than he did her children. I asked her how she was treating her husband's children and she replied that she was treating his children basically the same way he was treating her children. She said that her husband had exactly the same complaint that she had in reference to the children. He was complaining to her that his children did not feel loved by her. I explained to her that both she and her husband were reaping from what they were sowing. I helped her to understand that if she wanted her husband to treat her children differently then she needed to first love her husband's children. She needed to give to her husband what she wanted from her husband. She had to do unto her husband what she wanted her husband to do unto her and if she was constant and consistent with making that sacrifice of loving who she did not want to love in the way she wanted her children to be loved

that eventually her husband would give back to her the love that she was giving to her husband's children because it is God's law of reaping and sowing.

Based on God's law of reaping and sowing and doing to others what we want them to do for us it becomes easy to understand why husbands and wives do not feel loved by each other.

A man came to counseling complaining that his wife does not seem to desire to spend time with him. I asked him to explain to me what was going on during the time that she did spend with him. He said that every chance he got he would tell her how wrong she was for not wanting to spend time with him, using words like you never and you always.

I explained to him that he was reaping from what he was sowing. It was because of his constant complaints to her that she did not want to be near him. I explained that he needed to forgive her and talk to Father God about her behavior instead of accusing her. The constant accusing of her resulted in her not wanting to be near him. I asked if he would like for his wife to speak very negative about him when she was near him. He answered that obviously he did not want her to talk that way. I told him to talk to her in the way that he would want her to talk to him and he would see a different result, as he would be sowing different seeds.

In the above examples you can see that we must be willing to give what we want.

*One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him; "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"*

*The most important one, answered Jesus, "is this: love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these". Mark 12:28-33*

*Husbands, love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. Ephesians 5:25*

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

According to Jesus, it is all about love. We are to love God and love each other. I consider my job in the marriage for my wife to feel loved by me and her job is for me to feel loved by her. Since it is my job for my wife to feel loved by me then it is not her fault that she does not feel loved by me. That is my job for her to feel loved by me. In any area that she does not feel loved by me it is a clue that a change needs to be made by me so that she will feel loved.

Often we lose our peace due to words someone spoke to us or about us. There is great power in the words we speak to each other.

In the following scripture Paul is talking about love and explaining to us why we do not feel loved by each other.

*Now I will show you the most excellent way.*

*If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but have not love I am only a resounding gong or a clanging symbol. If I have the gift of prophesy and I can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have faith that can move mountains but have not love then I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames but have not love then I have gained nothing. 1 Cor 12:31(b) thru 1 Cor 13:1-4*

The most excellent way means that there is absolutely nothing above this.

Verse 1 tells us that if your spouse does not feel loved by you then when you are trying to talk to your spouse what you have to say is not very important to him or her

If you are speaking to your spouse and your spouse does not feel loved by you then the words you are speaking are like a loud resounding noise or a clanging sound to your spouse's ears. If you do not feel loved by someone then you are not really interested in what that person has to say to you even if that person is your spouse.

In the next verse Paul is telling us that it does not make any difference how smart we are or how much faith we have if the person we are in relationship with does not feel loved by us then at that time we are nothing to that person. You can have great faith, you can be a prophet and be very educated, however, if your spouse does not feel loved by you, your education and your faith and whatever gifts you have mean absolutely nothing to your spouse.

If your spouse does not feel loved by you then it does not make any difference to your spouse how smart or educated you are as your spouse will quickly lose respect for you if they do not feel loved by you.

Paul tells us that even if we are charitable and give everything we have to the poor that if your spouse does not feel loved by you then it is meaningless how charitable you are to others or how good others think of you.

Now let's take the same scripture and put your name in the beginning of each verse and your spouse's name in the verse and see how it reads with what we have learned so far.

*If I (your name) speak in the tongues of men and of angels but (your spouse's name) does not feel loved by me I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.*

*If I (your name) have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have faith that can move mountains but (your spouse's name) does not feel loved by me, I am nothing.*

*If I (your name) give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames but (your spouse's name) does not feel loved by me I have gained nothing.*

We are beginning to see that love is not about you, who you are, how intelligent you are, what you have or what you give to others. What your spouse feels about how you treat them is the only thing that really counts.

- Do you sometimes lie to your spouse - that is not love?
- Do you sometimes make fun of or put your spouse down - that is not love.
- Do you do things that result in your spouse not trusting you – that is not love.
- When you disagree with your spouse do you give up hope – that is not love.
- Are you proud or humble, humility asks for forgiveness and does not defend – pride is not love as it defends and wants to be innocent.
- Do you want your spouse to give himself or herself up for you (get your way) – that is not love.
- Are you easily angered – that is not love.
- In a disagreement with your spouse do you remind your spouse of their past wrongs – that is not love.

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Love is not always something you feel, love is something you give through sacrifice; it is for the benefit of the other.

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always hopes, always preserves. Ephesians 12:31(b) – 13:1-7*

*This is how we know what love is: Jesus laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 1 John 3:16*

*My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. John 15:12*

*Husbands, love your wives the way Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word and to present her to himself as a radiant church without stain or wrinkle or any blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way husband ought to love their wives as their own bodies, he who loves his wife loves himself. Ephesians 5:25-28*

### **Trust Issues**

Lack of trust in relationships can be a major issue and cause many arguments. Lack of trust by your spouse in the present is usually a result of broken trust in the past, which may or may not have anything to do with you.

Lack of trust may have several different roots:

1. A painful unhealed childhood event where trust was violated.
  - Mom cheated on dad or dad cheated on mom
  - Mom or dad violated your trust as a child
  - A childhood sweetheart violated your trust
2. A painful unhealed life event where trust was violated
  - Your fiancé or spouse cheated on you
3. Your spouse violated your trust and they have not done what you needed them to do to regain your trust.

A person who has a hard time trusting is usually a person who has experienced pain caused by someone who violated their trust. This could stem from their childhood, a teenage relationship, a spouse who divorced them or someone who cheated them or took all their stuff.

If you are in relationship with a person who has a trust issue, then you may often be questioned and hear questions similar to the following:

1. Where are you going?
2. Where did you go?
3. Why do you want to go there?
4. Who are you going to see there?
5. Why do you want to see them?
6. Who was there?
7. Did you talk to them?
8. How long did you talk?
9. What did you talk about?
10. How do you feel about them?
11. Do you think they are handsome or pretty?
12. Have you seen them there before?
13. What took you so long?
14. Why did you go there?
15. Why did you take that road to get there?
16. Did you see someone on the way?
17. Do you really love me?
18. How do you really feel about me?
19. I wish you would look at me the way you look at them.
20. You don't really want to be with me do you?
21. I wish you would spend as much time with me as you do them.
22. Was it a female cashier, or waitress, or sales clerk?
23. Why did you look at him or her that way?
24. You said you would be home at 7pm, it is now ten after seven, why are you late?

If you are in relationship with a person with trust issues you may have become worn out in trying to gain their trust and now respond in anger to their insecurity. Your angry

response only puts fuel on fire of their mistrust and the arguments and fights may get bigger and bigger.

Lack of trust is actually fear; fear that you will do the same thing to your spouse, that was done to them by someone else or that you did to them in the past.

Fear comes from being loved imperfectly, so imperfectly that he or she suffered a major wound that has never been healed.

*There is no fear in love, but **perfect love casts out fear**. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. 1 John 4:18*

If it was not you that violated their trust and hurt them and caused the fear, then it is you who have replaced the person who loved him or her so imperfectly. You are now standing in the gap for that person who caused the hurt.

It is through your perfect love in the present that this spiritual wound in the past can be healed. If you would be willing in the present to take the sin of the person who violated their trust in the past, and love your spouse in the present more perfectly, then the trust issue can be resolved.

This is normally accomplished through submission to the endless questions being asked. Through your willingness to sacrifice your right to be angry and patiently answer all of you spouse's questions and reassuring your spouse over and over again, you can heal this spiritual wound.

## **Workshop**

If your spouse has trust issues and you have responded with anger instead of loving him or her through their issue, would you now ask your spouse to forgive you and give your spouse permission to ask you any question any time?

If you are that spouse with the trust issue, would you now forgive your spouse for loving you so imperfectly?

Trust issues from the past usually are a spin-off from un-forgiveness. The person who violated your trust will need to be forgiven.

If you are a person who has trust issues and would like to begin resolving this issue, then you may want to ask yourself where all this began. Was it in your childhood? When you were a young adult? Who hurt you so bad in the past that it is hard to trust your spouse in the present? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you remember.

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Would you be willing to forgive that person now?

## Perfect Love Casts Out Fear

How many times have you said to your spouse?

1. Stop acting like a child
2. You need to grow up
3. You are acting so immature
4. You should not have that need

It seems that the first reaction we have to someone when they are acting like a child is to scold them, just as if he or she is that child, by telling him or her that their behavior is not acceptable.

It may be hard for you to comprehend why your spouse can be very educated, have been a Christian most of their life, be forty years old and still sometimes act like a child in different life situations.

We may not understand that we have different ages and none of the ages match.

1. We have a physical age
2. We have a spiritual age
3. We have an emotional age

**The physical age** - of a person is relative easy for us to identify because we can “see” their physical features and come to a logical conclusion as to how old or how young that person is.

**The spiritual age** - is a little harder to determine because we confuse biblical knowledge with a person being spiritual. In other words, a person could be in church for fifteen to twenty years and have much biblical knowledge but there is not much spiritual fruit in their life. I have learned that spiritual age is determined by how closely that person resembles Christ to the people in closest relationship with him or her. It is easy to go to church on Sunday and pretend to be someone for several hours on a Sunday morning that is not at all like the person we are with our spouse and children the rest of the week.

**Mental age** – this is the age we have been educated to through either formal education, life’s experiences or both. It could be how smart we are. You may know someone who is highly intelligent, been in church many years but is very spiritually immature.

**Emotional age** – is the age we “feel” when we are triggered which keeps us from growing spiritually. Each and every unresolved spiritual issue we have in life leaves us emotionally locked at the age of the trigger.

Every unresolved trigger we have has emotions attached to the spiritual issue. Those emotions are the feelings we felt at the age where we believed the lie or we did not forgive. Often those emotions are feelings of hurt or anger from the injustice of a caregiver or someone else that withheld love, abused or embarrassed us in some way.



**We are deceived into thinking we are with someone we are not really angry with.**

All of those emotions go into the trigger along with the thoughts we were thinking at the time we suffered. Later in life when someone does or says something similar to the person who hurt us our conscious mind will search our memory bank to see if there is anything on file telling us how to feel about what just happened. Our memory bank will look for the closest thing on file that matches what we just experienced and send those emotions into our body from our previous life experience.

The emotions from our previous life experience are felt in the present time often deceiving us into thinking we are angry with someone that we are not really angry with. If the source and origin of those emotions is from the unresolved issue of a child then we will in our adult body “feel” like a child and also experience the “thoughts” that were recorded in that childhood experience. The person that was triggered now has the emotions and thoughts of a child in their adult body and most likely will begin to “act out” with those thoughts and emotions.

This begins to explain why a person in an adult body who has been in church many years, when “triggered”, will often act like a child. He or she is feeling the emotions of a child and has the thoughts of that child when triggered.

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**Unmet Childhood Needs**

Each of us has needs in our childhood that our mother or father is supposed to meet. Any need that we have that is not met leaves us emotionally “stuck” at that childhood age (see codependence). An unmet childhood need does not go away. These needs get transferred to the person who takes the place of your mother or father. That person is normally your spouse.

Although we may grow up to be an educated adult and have been in church many years, we will still have the emotional needs of a child in each and every area where our mother or father did not meet that need.

Boys need to be affirmed by their mother. Girls need to be affirmed by their father. An adult with these unmet needs to be affirmed will transfer this need to the people nearest to them. Usually this need for affirmation is transferred onto our spouse, fiancée, boyfriend, best friend, minister or counselor, son or daughter.

When this transference is made we then want our spouse to do what our parent did not do. We are subconsciously asking our spouse to affirm us or to give us the worth we did not receive from our mother or father.

While I was counseling a husband and wife she said in the presence of her husband that she was so tired of her husband acting like a child and that he needed to grow up. I asked her what she meant. She said that yesterday she said something to him that apparently hurt his feelings and he had been acting like a child ever since then by becoming withdrawn and very quiet and she was angry with him for behaving that way. She said that he needed to grow up and act like a man instead of a little boy.

I asked her how he was to achieve completely ignoring his emotions and acting like a grown up. She said that she did not have the answer. I then explained to her about emotional triggers and that apparently her husband's father or mother had treated him in a similar way when he was a child and that he was locked emotionally at that childhood age. I further helped her to understand that she as his wife had taken the place of both her husband's mother and father and that apparently this was a need in his life that one of his parents had not met by comforting him when he was emotionally hurt.

To the extent that a parent does not love a child perfectly and meet its needs, that child will have an emotional wound and when that child grows up and is triggered into that emotional wound the adult is no longer emotionally present.

I asked her if a child was doing the same behavior as her husband how old would she estimate that child to be. She answered about five years old. I asked her if a child was acting like a hurt five year old would she tell the hurt five year old to stop acting like a hurt five year old. She answered that of course she would not as that would leave the child hurting.

I asked what she would do and she answered that she would go over the child and scoop him or her up in her arms and tell him she was sorry and love the child through the pain.

I told her that was exactly what her husband needed right then, that she had taken the place of her husband's mother and if she would love him more perfectly in the present than his mother did in the past by doing what his mother did not do, then he can begin to be healed of the emotional wound left over from the imperfect love of his mother.

*There is no **fear** in **love**. But **perfect love** drives **out fear**, because **fear** has to do with punishment. The one who **fears** is not made **perfect** in **love**. 1 John 4:18*

I asked her if she would now do with her husband what her husband's mother did not do when he was hurt. She then stood up, went over to her husband and said that she was sorry for what she said that hurt his feelings, asked for his forgiveness and held him tight until he felt loved by her again.

We must love each other back to life instead of being critical of our husband or wife for not being complete and whole. The next time your spouse acts immature, ask them what

you did that may have resulted in them acting the way they are and then take ownership of it by asking your spouse to forgive you.

A father told me that after a disagreement with his son that when the father turned his back to his son that his son struck his father on the back. In anger the father turned around and began wrestling his son to the ground. The father told me that while he had his son on the ground in a headlock that he suddenly realized how wrong he was for physically engaging his son. The father asked what he could have done differently.

I explained that for his son to be angry enough to strike out at his father, that he was obviously emotionally triggered from feeling unloved. It was not his son's fault that he felt unloved by his father. It is his father's job for his son to feel loved. I said once your son struck you wouldn't have been better to turn around and ask him a question?

"Son would you help me to understand what it was I did that was so bad that you felt the need to physically attack me?" I told him to give his son time to answer and then to love him through it by asking his son to forgive him for the way he had treated him. After his son had forgiven him, he could then address the issue of being struck by his son and the consequences of that behavior.

When a father asks his son to forgive him for imperfect love, it casts out the anger and the hurt and pain the son was feeling that led him to strike out. Healing the hurt and wounds in the son takes priority over getting even.

The next time your spouse gets triggered and is acting like a child, instead of focusing on the childish behavior, could you love them more perfectly than their mother or father did?

Ask: "Would you help me understand what it was that I said or did that resulted in you feeling like you need to say what you said or act the way you are acting right now?"

After that person tells you what you said or did, then instead of defending your behavior, ask for forgiveness for what you said or did and help your spouse to be healed of the emotional wound. After you have been forgiven, go to your spouse and do what his or her mother or father did not do. Hold your spouse and love your spouse through their trigger.

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## **Accusing your spouse keeps your spouse locked at the age of their childish behavior.**

A woman reported to me that her husband kept losing jobs because he would be goofing off at work looking at movies on his computer, playing electronic games and reading books based on fantasy or fiction.

Obviously this is not the behavior of a grown mature man, which indicates that this is an area in his life where he got stuck in his childhood. She said that they had been to counseling and the previous counselor told him that under no conditions could he read a fiction book or live in fantasy.

The previous counselor was focusing on the behavior instead of the reason for the behavior. This man needed to be loved through the need that a little boy had that was never met. A wife being critical of the behavior would result in her husband remaining locked at his emotional age and going into hiding to play his little boy games.

I advised her to stop being critical of her husband and that her husband come to counseling to resolve the issue(s) that were keeping him locked in his childish behavior.

We need to stop withholding love and being critical of the behaviors of our spouse. Instead we need to love our spouse through their emotional wounds.

*If you forgive anyone I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven – if there was anything to forgive – I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, on order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes. 1 Corinthians 2:10-11*

*In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry and give the Devil a foothold. Ephesians 4:26-27*

Satan outwits us with the offense that we have not forgiven. He divides and separates us from our unity with each other. When we accuse we separate ourselves from the unity of another and from our unity with God. When we accuse another we are withdrawing our love. God tells us that if we withdraw our love from another and say that we love God then we are liars.

*If anyone says, "I love God," and **hates his brother**, he is a **liar**; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. 1 John 4:20*

The devil has taught us well to do his job of accusing each other in our anger instead of forgiving and staying in unity.

**Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs that it may benefit those who listen.**  
*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander along with every*

*form of malice. **Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other just as Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:29-32***

Instead of focusing on the behavior of your husband or wife, be the mature spouse. Be willing to ask for the forgiveness that the parents of your spouse did not ask for. You have taken the place of his or her parents. Your spouse can be healed of their wound by you being willing to take the sin of that parent who did not ask for forgiveness.

Love will sacrifice their right to accuse the other for their behavior. Love will take the sin of another. Love lays down its life for another. Love your spouse perfectly in the present where they were loved imperfectly in the past.

Childish behaviors you can love your spouse through:

1. Shutting down and not talking.
2. Withdrawing and walking away
3. Suddenly yelling at you
4. Pouting
5. Playing electronic games
6. Saying something similar to:
  - I can't believe you said that!
  - You just made me so mad!
  - I am so hurt right now!
  - I know, it is always my fault.
  - You expect me to be perfect and I can't be.
  - I just never will be good enough.

## 25. Submission & Love

### *Watch video: The Cause of Most Separation & Divorce*

It is not unusual in counseling for a husband or wife during the session to say that they could not believe that their spouse left them because they love them so much. My response to that husband or wife is that it is very unusual for someone to leave a relationship because they are loved so much. Therefore, the issue is not the fact that he loves her so much or she loves him so much, the issue is that person left because they did not “feel” loved so much.

In marriage both the man and the woman have physical and emotional needs. The man is dependent on his wife and the wife is dependent upon her husband for those needs to be met.

We can have a good relationship with God; however, God does not meet all of our emotional and physical needs. God has given us a spouse in order to meet the needs of conversation, to be listened to or be affirmed. We have a need of human touch through the holding of hands, holding each other, cuddling and the fulfillment of sexual intimacy.

To the exact extent that our spouse does not meet those emotional and physical needs is to the same exact extent that we may not feel loved by our spouse.

### **Complaints**

Unmet needs do not go away and are usually voiced as complaints.

We complain in the areas that we do not feel loved by each other. Therefore I should know where my wife does not feel loved by me, as that is the same exact area where she has been complaining

Since it is my job for my wife to feel loved by me I will use her complaint as my measuring stick of where she does not feel loved.

Once she voices a complaint it will be my job to make a change in that area so she will feel loved by me. If I do not change (sacrifice and give myself up) then she will continue to not feel loved. My wanting to change or stop doing or start doing something has nothing to do with making the change. That is why it is called sacrifice. Once a complaint is made, it is my job to sacrifice and make a change so my spouse will feel loved.

All that my spouse has to do for me to change is to ask me to start or stop doing something or say something a different way. It does not matter if my spouse should or not feel what they are feeling about what I am doing. I could revert to truth and tell my spouse that they should not feel what they are feeling about what I am or am not doing, but that is reverting to truth and putting truth before love, which will result in my spouse

continuing to not feel loved by me. Instead of reverting to truth I will submit to my spouse and do what my spouse has asked.

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

Submission is not a one-way street of the wife doing what the husband tells her to do. Jesus was submitted to the Father. Jesus voluntarily did what the Father asked Jesus to do. When we submit to one another it means that we will voluntarily do what the other has asked us to do with the right attitude.

Your emotions have nothing to do with submitting to what your spouse asks you to do. We are to do what we are asked out of obedience to the Father, who commands us to submit to each other in everything except for sin. Your “want to” or your “feel like it” also have nothing to do with obeying Father God and doing what your spouse asks you to do. The husband and wife are commanded to submit to each other. We don’t just obey God when we feel like it.

If you are asked by your spouse to do something that you do not want to do, then it is considered by the Father to be a sacrifice (doing what you do not want to do, when you do not want to do it), giving yourself up so that your spouse will feel loved by you.

To submit means that you are to surrender, yield, set aside your own wants or desires, and agree with your spouse in the things of the Lord.

## **Nagging**

During a counseling session a man told me that he was so tired of his wife nagging him. I explained to him that a person does not nag where they feel loved and that a nag is a complaint being voiced for the second or third time because there was no change when the complaint was first voiced.

A “nag” defined: is simply complaints being voiced again and again because there has been no change. There is no change where there is a lack of submission. Each and every nag is a complaint where a person continues to not feel loved.

Being submitted to your spouse is “not” being controlled by your spouse. Controlled means you have no choice. If you are submitted then you cannot be controlled as you are voluntarily doing what you have been asked to do.

**“Submission may require you to stop doing things that bothers your spouse”**

*Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. It is better not to eat meat or drink wine **or do anything else that will cause your brother to fall.** Romans 14:19-21*

According to Paul it does not make any difference if what you are doing is sin or not. If it

bothers your spouse and you continue doing it, knowing that it bothers your spouse, then the fact that you continue to do it makes what you are doing wrong.

Many times our spouse may ask us to stop doing things that bother or offend them. It could be something as simple as smacking our lips, looking at them a certain way, watching a television program, watching a certain movie, using a slang phrase, laughing or making fun of them, the children or others, going to a certain internet site, a certain way they kiss you or touch that bothers them. It could be friends that you have, the hours that you work, places that you go or people you associate with. It could be something that embarrasses your spouse that he or she keeps asking you not to do.

Think about your relationship with your spouse. There are most likely several things that you do that your spouse may have asked you over and over to stop doing. You may have kept on doing those things just to “bug” your spouse and think that what you are doing is funny. You may have justified your behavior because it is not sin and nothing is wrong with what you are doing.

Part of the act of submitting is to stop doing those things that bother your spouse. Many times submission will require sacrifice as you may be asked to do something that you do not really want to do. Below is a list of things you may be asked to sacrifice:

1. Your friendship with a certain person really bothers me.
2. It bothers me that you are in that chat room.
3. I do not like you going to that internet site.
4. I do not like that person being your friend on Facebook.
5. I do not like you going there.
6. You are always working late.
7. You never tell me where you are going or where you have been.
8. Will you give me access to your desk drawer that is always locked?
9. Will you remove the password on your phone and computer?
10. Can I check your phone to see who you have been talking to?
11. Can I check your text messages?
12. Will you no longer erase the history from your computer so I can check to see where you have been?
13. Will you give me the pass codes to your computer, phone and all other electronic devices?
14. You are always working late.
15. You never listen to me
16. What I have to say to you is not important to you
17. Your mother/father is more important to you than me
18. You never take time to just sit and talk to me
19. You won't agree to a budget
20. You hardly ever meet my sexual needs
21. You hardly ever pray with me
22. You don't go to church with me
23. You frequently are talking or texting on the phone when alone with me



24. You don't take me on a date night
25. You watch television programs that should not be in our home
26. You don't tell me where you are going
27. You don't call me during the day
28. When I call you during the day you rarely answer the phone
29. When you answer your phone you usually tell me you are too busy to talk to me.
30. Your work is more important to you than me and your children
31. You never take a vacation
32. You don't spend time with the children
33. You frequently bring your work home with you
34. You never help with the housework
35. You never take out the trash
36. You never straighten out the garage
37. You never check my car
38. You never affirm me

Is the Holy Spirit bringing something to your mind that your spouse keeps complaining about that you keep doing or won't stop doing?

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The answer to some of these statements may require you to sacrifice and say "yes" or you may be able to negotiate to a place with your spouse where your behavior is acceptable and the answer they receive is yes.

### **Submission has nothing to do with control**

Your behavior is not being directed or controlled by your spouse. Submission is volunteering to do what you have been asked to do out of obedience to God.

Remember, both submission and sacrifice have nothing to do with you wanting to do what you have been asked to do. You are submitting or sacrificing simply out of your obedience to God so that your spouse will feel loved by you. If you are in obedience to the Word of God pertaining to submission to your spouse, then you will voluntarily do anything your spouse asks you to do as long as it is not sin.

1. I won't go there if you don't want me to go.
2. I won't do that if you don't want me to do that.
3. I won't look at that.
4. I won't go there.
5. I won't spend that money.
6. I won't purchase that item.
7. I won't be with that person.

8. I won't go to that web site.
9. I will tell you where I spent the money.
10. I will share with you the checking account.
11. I will share with you the savings account.
12. That person will not be my friend.
13. I will not be with that person.
14. I will not invite them here.
15. You can look in my wallet.
16. You can look in my purse.
17. You can examine anything on my computer.
18. You can look in the desk drawer
19. You can have the pass codes to everything
20. You can have access to my e-mail, Facebook or phone.

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Voluntarily doing what my spouse asks me to do means that my spouse and I are in agreement and submitting to each other's requests.

## **Workshop**

Are there things listed above that you have refused to submit to? Have you given excuse after excuse for not doing what your husband or wife asked you to do? Would you now make a commitment to your spouse to submit? Would you ask your spouse to forgive you for not submitting to him or her before?

## Submission & Secrets

*“So have no fear of them, for **nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.** What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Matthew 10:26-28*

*I tell you, on the Day of Judgment people **will give account for every careless word they speak,** for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” Matthew 12:36-37*

*Therefore, having **put away falsehood,** let each one of you **speak the truth** with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Ephesians 4:25*

In a marriage there should be no secrets, as secrets separate and cause suspicion and lack of trust. To the degree that there is a lack of trust, there is not the oneness that God commands us to have. **God commands the man and the woman to “be one”.**

We are not to live two separate lives, but as two individuals living in such a close personal intimate relationship that it is as if we are “one”. If I am living in that “oneness” with my spouse, then nothing in the marriage should be considered to be private to include my thoughts or property even though I may be the primary user. If it is not mine, but ours, then why should I become angry if my spouse wants to check anything that belongs to us as nothing is solely mine?

To insure that there are no secrets and since everything belongs to “us”, neither of us personally owns anything. My spouse therefore does not need my permission to at any time examine any of the following items that are normally considered for my personal use:

- It is not my car, it is our car of which I am the primary user.
- It is not my house, it is our house.
- It is not my money, it is our money.
- It is not my checkbook, it is our checkbook.
- It is not my saving account, it our savings account.
- It is not my business, it is our business.
- It is not my tax refund, it is our tax refund.
- It is not my computer; it is our computer, of which I am the primary user.
- It is not my cell phone; it is our cell phone, of which I am the primary user.
- It is not my desk; it is our desk, of which I am the primary user.
- It is not my friend, it is our friend.
- It is not my wallet; it is our wallet, of which I am the primary user.
- It is not her purse; it is our purse, of which she is the primary user.
- It is not my E-mail; it is our E-mail, of which I am the primary user.
- It is not my text message received or sent, it is our text message.
- It is not my mail, it is our mail.
- It is never not their business; everything I do is my spouse’s business.

Everything including “me” belongs to both of “us”; there is no personal ownership of anything.

Paul talked about this very thing in scripture when he stated the following: *The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Corinthians 7:4*

Can you imagine Father God asking Jesus a question about a phone call Jesus made or an e-mail Jesus sent and Jesus responding with one of the following statements?

- I can't believe you don't trust me!
- I can't live like this, not with all these questions.
- You are violating my privacy.
- You have no right to look through my e-mails.
- That is my computer and I feel violated.
- This is my private area and it is none of your business.

Just as Jesus would not respond to the Father like this, neither should we respond like that to each other.

## Workshop

Whether you have intentionally or unintentionally been keeping secrets from your spouse is beside the point. If your spouse believes that you have secrets, then would you be willing to make the changes in your life so that there is no longer any reason for your spouse to have mistrust.

1. Ask your spouse what changes they feel you need to make so that they can begin to fully trust you.
2. Are you willing to submit to your spouse to make those changes?
3. Ask your spouse to forgive you for your previous behavior that resulted in them not trusting you.
4. Tell your spouse what you are going to do to regain or maintain their trust.

## Trust Builders

1. I will not quickly hang up the phone when you enter the room. Instead I will pause for a moment and tell you who I am talking to.
2. I will never be reluctant to tell you who I am talking to and what it was about.
3. I will not tell you that you are nosey for asking me any question at any time. You have the right to know everything about me anytime.
4. When you enter the room I will not quickly click out of a web site. I will stay right where I am until you have had the opportunity to see what I am doing.
5. I will not be in any chat room that you have not approved of or chat with anyone who you do not approve of.
6. If I am in a chat room, you have the right to see everything I have said.
7. If you ask me a question, I will not tell you that it is none of your business.
8. I will not tell you that you have a jealousy issue and demand that you stop asking me questions.
9. I will always wait several days before I erase the history on my computer of web sites I have been to. (Better yet, let your spouse do it).
10. I will wait several days before erasing telephone, voice and text messages (better yet let your spouse do it).
11. I will not have another phone or phone number that you are not aware of.
12. I will never have an e-mail account you are not aware of.
13. I will never have a Facebook or e-mail account that you are not aware of or do not have the pass code to.
14. I will not have a friend of either sex that you are not aware of and have not agreed to.
15. I will not become angry if you ask who I have been talking to, what we talked about or where I went, when I are coming home, and who I have been with.
16. I will always keep you aware of my comings and goings.
17. I will not have meetings with anyone you are not aware of or have not approved.
18. I will not share a meal with anyone of the opposite sex that you are not aware of and agreed to.
19. I will never have a checking or savings account you are not aware of.
20. I will never have locked drawers, file cabinets or safes that you do not have access to.
21. I will never have money hidden from you that are not aware of.
22. I will never have property, a house, an apartment or any expensive items you are not aware of.
23. I will never have a private room or office that you do not have access to.
24. I will never go to any chat room and type anything at any time that I would not type in your presence.
25. You can check my wallet anytime for anything
26. You can check my purse anytime for anything
27. You can check my car/truck anytime for anything
28. You can check my text messages any time
29. Ask me where I am going anytime.
30. Ask me what time I will be back.
31. Ask me who I will be with.
32. Ask me what the purpose of me going is.
33. Ask me why I am going.
34. Ask me what was said.
35. Ask me who said what.
36. Ask me who else was there.
37. Ask me why I was late.

38. Ask me not to go and I won't go.
39. Ask me what happened during the day; who I was with, who I talked to and what we talked about.
40. Ask to look at my diary any time, since we are married it is no longer personal.
41. Ask to look at my letters, credit card statement, bank statement, messages, notes or anything else.

## **Covenant**

I now see that I was wrong in my past behaviors of keeping secrets from you. I was wrong for the way I reacted and the rejection you felt. I promise that from this point on that we own everything jointly together. I will do whatever I need to do to insure that you have absolute free access to everything that I am the primary user of. I promise you that from this time forth I will not conceal anything or keep any secret from you. You may ask me anything at any time and I will not react with anger. I will be patient and give you a truthful answer. Will you please forgive me now for my past behaviors?

## **Reminders**

1. You may have to negotiate with each other to a place you can say yes to make the requested change.
2. Ask your spouse to be patient with you as you are in transition and may out of habit do it or say it or not do it or not say it again.
3. Give your spouse permission to lovingly remind you that you did it again.
4. If you do it again then ask for forgiveness again and continue to work harder on the change your spouse has asked you to make.

## 26. Making what is Important to Your Spouse Important to You

I learned that in order for my wife to feel loved by me, I had to make what was important to her to be important to me. I learned that in any area of our relationship that if I did not make important to me those things that were important to her in any area of our relationship, that in those same areas she would not feel loved by me.

I will give you some examples to help you understand:

1. About seven years ago we got a dog. At that point in time my wife asked me to start putting the toilet lid down so that the dog would not drink water out of the toilet bowl. Our dog does not lick, so it really did not bother me if the dog drank from the toilet. It made no difference if it bothered me or not. My wife asked to put it down. This does not seem like a big deal, but my job is for my wife to feel loved by me. This was important to her. For her to feel loved by me I needed to make what was important to her important to me. I am submitted to my wife so the answer to her request has to be yes. So, from that point on I always put the lid down on the toilet.
2. Sometimes when I am busy my wife will call me over to her computer to share with me something that is important to her. Frequently it would be a picture of baby or a child that I had never seen before. While looking at the child on the computer my wife would say something similar to, "That is my father's, brother's, cousin's, sister's baby who lives in California, isn't she cute?" I would most often ask her in a condescending voice why she thought it was important to share that picture with me? When I would speak those words she would often lower her head with disappointment. From those disappointing looks I knew that she did not feel loved by my response and that I needed to make what was important to her important to me. To do that I began to respond differently when she called me over to look at something on her computer. Now when she asks me to look at a baby or a child, not only will I look, but I will also comment about the picture, ask how she found the picture, the relationship of the child to us, where they live and carry on a conversation about the subject matter on the computer. Now when I walk away from the computer she feels loved by me.
3. Both my wife and I were married before and we both have children from our previous marriages. It is important for my wife to stay in touch with her children who live in another state. I have made it important for me to stay in touch with her children and make telephone calls to them so my wife feels loved by me.
4. My wife likes ballroom dancing. I have absolutely no interest in ballroom dancing. However, since it is important to her, I have made it important to me so that she will feel loved by me. A television show comes on called Dancing With The Stars. Even though I have no interest in this program, I will make it a point to watch this show with her and express interest in who may or may not win. I make this sacrifice with the right attitude which results in her feeling loved by me.

5. I have a boat and really enjoy going to the lake and spending the weekends on the boat. My wife has no interest in spending the weekend on the boat. However, since it is important to me, she will make it important to her and when I ask her to join me she will go with the right attitude and we have a good time.

Remember, this is all about love and having peace in your relationship with each other. If you do not make what is important to your spouse important to you, then most likely your spouse will not feel loved by you.

The following are some typical areas of things being important to one but not the other:

1. One likes a neat and orderly house and it is not important to the other.
2. One likes and neat and orderly yard and it is not important to the other.
3. One likes to go for long walks and the other does not go.
4. One likes to go to movies and the other will not go.
5. One likes to have company at home and the other refuses
6. One has children that are ignored by the step-parent
7. I want to finish my college education but you do not want me to.
8. We have a blended family and I feel like you have not accepted my children as yours.
9. I do not feel like what I have to say to you is important.
10. You watch television or keep checking your phone when I am talking to you.

For us to feel loved by each other we must be making sacrifices for each other so God's love is flowing back and forth in the relationship. We complain where we do not feel loved by each other. Listen to the complaints and change those complaints into positive moments in your relationship.



# 27. You Are Not Safe To Talk To

*Watch three videos:*

1. *Understanding The Power of the Words We Speak*
2. *We Just Can't Seem To Talk Anymore*
3. *I am an interrupter*

You should be the safest person in the world to your spouse.

If your spouse cannot talk to you without it becoming an issue then it may result in little intimacy in the relationship

Your spouse should be able to share their emotions or thoughts with you without you becoming angry with them . . . Especially if it is about you that they have a complaint.

**You should be safer than**

1. Their mother or father
2. Their priest or pastor
3. Their sister or brother
4. Their best friend
5. Someone they work with

If your spouse is not sharing their heart with you then you have by your responses proven to them that you are not safe.

**You Are Not Safe If**

1. You become angry when your spouse complains about you.
2. You defend yourself when your spouse complains to you.
3. You are not willing to make a change when they tell you that they do not feel loved
4. You tell them that they should not feel what they are feeling.
5. You tell them that something is wrong with them.
6. You are not willing to sacrifice and change

## **Reminding Of Their Past Wrongs**

During a disagreement about an issue do you or your spouse begin to bring wrongs from the past into the present? Do you often forget what you were originally in disagreement about?

*Love does not keep a record of wrongs. 1 Cor 13:5*

Keeping a record of wrongs not only makes you unsafe to talk to, but also puts you into sin as you are commanded by God to forgive everyone for everything every time. Your spouse is not exempt from forgiveness. The forgiveness of your spouse is not for them, it is for you, and so you are not tortured by the memory of what your spouse did.

1. Remember that forgiveness is for you, not your spouse.

2. Forgiving your spouse is not based on your spouse actually doing something wrong; it is based on your perception of truth of what your spouse did or did not do.
3. Forgiving your spouse is not based on him or her deserving to be forgiven; your forgiveness to them is based on you obeying God who commands you to do so.
4. Forgiving your spouse is not based on you feeling like it or my heart getting right. Your obedience to God is not based on you feeling like obeying God. You are to obey God whether you feel like it or not. God honors your obedience. You are not required to want to obey him to have the same result as if you had wanted to obey him.
5. Forgiveness of your spouse does not make the wrong your spouse did into a right. What they did is still wrong. Forgiving them results in you obeying God and transferring the debt of your spouse to God, the rightful owner.
6. Forgiveness puts you back in right relationship with God and releases you from the torment of your memory of what your spouse did and results in you having peace in your mind in place of the torment.
7. If you do not forgive you are claiming the debt – since you are claiming the debt (your spouse owes you). Since you are claiming the debt, God gives you the responsibility of collecting the debt so there is a consequence.
8. Forgiveness transfers the debt to God, the true owner of the debt.
9. Un-forgiveness of your spouse keeps the pain within you and robs you of peace in your mind.
10. Time does not heal the wounds; only forgiveness heals the wounds within you. In fact, the longer you wait the worse the torture gets as the spiritual wounds within you get more spiritually infected and it is harder and harder to separate yourself from the hurt, pain, anger and bitterness you are feeling.
11. To forgive your spouse you do not have to personally go to your spouse to do what you can do spiritually. In fact you may actually cause more of a problem by attempting to forgive them for doing something that they do not believe was wrong.
12. Even if your anger is righteous, once it is the next day, righteous anger not forgiven is now un-forgiveness.
13. Forgiveness is very specific; it is not a general statement. To forgive requires you being very specific about the hurt and pain you are forgiving

## Workshop

If you have a record of wrongs against your spouse (or anyone) you are tortured with the memory of what that person did and every time you think of them and what they did you feel the emotional pain over and over.

1. If you keep reminding your spouse of his or her past wrongs, would you make it right by asking your spouse to forgive you.
2. Would you now forgive your spouse of their transgressions?

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## The Power of the Words We speak

### Speaking Things Into Existence -

God did not think things into existence. Everything God created was through the words that God spoke. Although God had to think those things before He spoke them, it was the words that God actually spoke that had the power.

*And God said, "let there be light". Genesis 1:3*

*And God said, "let there be expanse between the waters to separate water from water. Genesis 1:6*

*And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear." Genesis 1-9*

*Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: Genesis 1-11*

*And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night Genesis 1-14*

All through the first chapter of Genesis we see that God created by the words he spoke. God "spoke" things into existence. I believe these scriptures reflect the power of the words we speak as God created us in His image and so there is power in the words we speak.

God also spoke negative words, which resulted in powerful things happening:

*So God said to the serpent. Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the livestock . . . Genesis 3:14*

*To Adam God said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you that you must not eat of it, cursed is the ground because of you . . . Genesis 3:17*

God both blessed and cursed with the words he spoke.

In the book of James we are told that we can either praise or curse with the words we speak.

*The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire and is itself set on fire by hell. All kinds of animals, birds and reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With the **tongue we praise our Lord and Father and with it we curse men who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers can a fig tree bear olives or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. James 3:6-12***

*For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things stored out of the good stored up in him and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the Day of Judgment **for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted and by your words you will be condemned. Matthew 12:33-37***

We can see from this scripture that it is the words we have spoken that God will use on the Day of Judgment to either acquit us or condemn us.

We can also see that we can either speak evil words or good words and it is our choice which words we use according to what is stored within us.

In the bible God never did anything that he did not say first. He said it, then he did it, the power to do it was in God's Word. God's power was in the words he spoke. He spoke it and then what he spoke was.

God created man in God's image, to operate with the same faith as God, with power in the words that we speak.

*The tongue has **the power of life and death**, and those who love it will eat its fruit. Proverbs 18:21*

There seems to be little power in the words we think and do not actually express. It is the words we actually speak to another that cause the most harm to that person. Once the words are spoken, those words cannot be put back into the mouth. Once the words have been spoken and are heard by another those words can either praise or hurt others.

God spoke things that were not as if those things were until they were what He said those things to be.

*The god who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were. Romans 4:17)b)*

We humans, in the image of God, tend to do the opposite of God when we speak. We speak things to each other, as we believe they presently are instead of what we want them to be.

The words we speak fall into one of three categories:

1. Positive
2. Neutral
3. Negative

Positive words are words that are wholesome, uplifting and build up the person who receives them. Positive words are encouraging and affirming and result in the receiver feeling loved by the person who spoke the words.

Neutral words are words that do not put a person down or lift a person up. Neutral words are matter of fact such as:

1. One plus one equals two.
2. The chair is brown.
3. The sky is blue.

Negative words are words that are not wholesome, not uplifting, discouraging and not affirming. Negative words do not create intimacy. Negative words result in the receiver feeling unloved by the person who spoke the words and cause separation.

*Ephesians 4:29 – Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*

**Negative words are usually accusing and words that do not create intimacy.**

- You never clean the house
- You never clean the garage
- You never go anywhere with me
- You never take me shopping
- You will never change
- You never help me with the house
- You never come home on time
- You never meet my intimate needs
- You always take the side of the kids
- You always work late
- You always get your way
- You will always be the same
- Idiot, stupid or dummy

*The tongue is also a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire and is itself set on fire by hell. James 3:6*

*With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father and with it we curse men who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth comes praise and cursing. My brothers this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? James 3:9-12*

Speaking the words over your spouse that God would speak is a blessing. Speaking the words over your spouse that Satan would speak (accusing) is a demonic prophesy.

### **Our Job**

In the spiritual realm we all have a job to do. The devil is the accuser. The Holy Spirit is the giver of truth. My job is to forgive and bless my spouse and children. We humans try to do the devil's job of accusing our spouse and children and giving them the truth when we accuse. I try to never speak negative words over my spouse but find a way to speak it in a positive way or actually speak a blessing over her.

When God spoke one of two things occurred.

1. If God spoke positive words then the Holy Spirit took those words and did what God said and there was a positive result.
2. If God spoke negative words then the evil one took those words and did what God said and there was a negative result.

Example 1: A woman brought her adolescent son for counseling. While sitting next to her son with her arm lovingly around her son she said: "I have brought my son to see you because he is always selfish, he is very stubborn, he is rebellious, he never listens to me or does what I ask him to do, he never picks up after himself and he is a slob".

I explained to the woman the power of her words. I asked her if someone said the same things to her how she would feel? I then spoke her words back to her and said to her: You are selfish, you are stubborn, you are rebellious, you never listen or do what I ask you to do, you never pick up after yourself and you are a slob."

I then asked the woman how she felt hearing those words. She answered that she actually felt anger inside like she was being accused. I asked her why she would think that her son would feel any different. I went on to explain to her that her son would not make a heart change because she verbalized to him that she is disappointed or angry with him.

We are here in the image of God and we have power with the words we speak. With the words we speak either the Holy Spirit takes them and there is a positive result or the evil one takes them and there is a negative result.

All the words her son was hearing were negative words that he was selfish, rebellious, does not listen and does not do what he is asked to do. Those words spoken by his mother were in the boy's mind and the boy was doing "exactly" what his mother was speaking into his mind for the boy to be. The mother expected the boy to improve his behavior even though her words were reinforcing in the boy's mind to be whom he was behaving like.

If the mother wanted the boy to change she needed to change her words to words of affirmation so that there would be different words in the boy's mind.

*As a man thinks in his heart so is he. Proverbs 23:7*

The scripture states that "we are as we think" If the words the boy is thinking is what the mother said then he is as he thinks, which means that he will be what his mother says that he is because those are the words he is thinking. Therefore, the boy was selfish, rebellious, did not listen, and did not do what he was asked to do.

I explained to the boy's mother that she needed to speak to him differently if she expected a change in his behavior.

I helped her to choose better words when speaking about the behavior of her son.

You are a very good boy but sometimes your behavior does not match who you are. I bless you to do what your father and I ask you to do, I bless you to listen to us and I bless you to do what we ask you to do. I bless you to pick up after yourself and to have a neat and orderly room.

Example 2: A child does not clean their room and the father feels dishonored and disrespected by the child because the father has told the child over and over to clean the room and the child does not do what the father has asked. The father speaks the following words:

**Negative words:** I am very disappointed in you. You never clean your room, you do not honor me, and you do not respect me. You hardly ever even make an attempt at cleaning your room. This is going to have to change.

The words the father spoke over the child were negative, he was accusing his son, therefore it was being reinforced in the boy's mind the words his father spoke over him.

When we accuse another we are speaking the words Satan would speak, we have inadvertently become the mouthpiece of darkness. Satan's name actually means "accuser".

*Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. Revelation 12:10*

The father was inadvertently making a demonic prophesies over his son for the son's room to become worse instead of better.

The child hearing over and over in his mind: I never clean my room, I do not honor my father, I do not respect my father, I do not make attempts at cleaning my room, I am a disappointment to my father.

**The result:** The child's room gets worse instead of better. The father's intent was for the child to clean the room, however, because of the negative words the father spoke over the child the room became worse instead of better.

Look at the words the father spoke: **"I am very disappointed** in you. You **never clean your room**, you **do not honor** me, and you **do not respect** me. You **never ever even make an attempt** at cleaning your room. **This is very bad** and it is going to have to change."

The boy hears:

I am bad, I am a disappointment, I do not honor my parents, I am disrespectful, I never clean my room, I will hardly make an attempt to clean my room.

For the situation to change the father would need to speak to the child the words that God would speak.

*The God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were. Romans 4:17)b)*

Instead of making a demonic prophesy over the child's life such as – You will never or You will always, the father should begin to bless the child with words to be who the father wants the child to be. The father should speak positive words that bless his son similar to the words that follow:

"First I want you to know that **I love you** and **I am very proud of you**. I want to talk to you about your room. **You are a good son** but the appearance of your room does not match who you are. **I bless you to honor us** as your parents **and clean your room** to the standards of the rest of our home. You can make a real good attempt at this and if you need any help let either your mother or me know. This is going to be a good change for all of us."

The Holy Spirit takes these words and reinforces these words in the mind as the child. The child now hears in their mind the following:

I am loved, my parents are proud of me, I am a good son, I need to clean my room to the standards of the home, I can make a good attempt to do this, mom or dad will help me if I need them to, this is good.

As the Holy Spirit reinforces these words to the child and as the parents continue to bless the child with the words they speak over the child the appearance of the room begins to change. The father spoke what was not, as if it was, until it was, and the child was blessed instead of cursed with the father's words.

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## Some Good Ways to Start a Real Good Argument

1. Don't ask your spouse for permission to talk to them, just tell them they are going to listen.
2. Demand that your spouse stop what they are doing and talk to you right now.
3. Tell them what they just said "is not true". (They are now challenged to prove you wrong).
4. Tell your spouse: "you never" or "you always" do this or don't do that. (They will be sure to find that one exception.)
5. Become loud, yell or scream – your spouse will like it about as much as you will.
6. Keep changing the focus of what the original topic was by bringing up their past record of wrongs, they really like to be accused.
7. Remind them of how they hurt you in the past. Be sure to give them their turn and see how good they are at remembering your past faults.
8. Blame your spouse for your bad behavior. Tell them that it is their fault that you are behaving the way you are.
9. Tell your spouse it is their own fault they do not feel loved by you.
10. Roll your eyes in disgust at your spouse while they are talking to you.
11. Sigh loudly and throw your hands up in the air several times.
12. Make a disgusting look on your face while you are listening.
13. Nod your head back and forth as if silently disagreeing.
14. Tell your spouse that they are never satisfied no matter what you do.
15. Frequently interrupt your spouse while they are trying to tell their side of the story.
16. Tell your spouse to shut up or that you do not want to hear that any more.
17. Stop meeting the sexual needs of your spouse, and then tell them it is their own fault you don't have sex with them anymore.
18. Don't make eye contact when they are talking, keep looking at the television, newspaper or working on something.
19. Only kiss your spouse, hug your spouse or tell your spouse that you love them when you want to have sex.
20. Withdraw, shut down, stonewall, tell your spouse that there is no reason to talk about this because you have already told them over and over what you want and they still won't do it.
21. Don't tell your spouse what is wrong. Tell them that they should know what is wrong with you. Keep them guessing until they become frustrated or angry.
22. Tell your spouse that they are still doing the same old things they always do and they will never change.
23. Tell your spouse that they "never" listen to you. See if they can find the one exception.
24. Tell your spouse that they "never" do what you have asked them to do
25. Tell your spouse that no matter what you do that it is "never" good enough for them.
26. Ask your spouse why they can't ever do it right?
27. Keep putting your job, sports, shopping, hobbies, mother, father, children, another person or a thing in a position of more value than your spouse. They usually like being second best.
28. Keep spending more time with another person than your spouse and tell them that you did it to see if it would make them jealous.
29. Tell your spouse that they are just like their mother or father or your mother or father or that you feel like you married your mother or father
30. Ask your spouse what is wrong with them and after they tell you then tell them that something is wrong with them for thinking that way.
31. Tell your spouse that what they said is ridiculous or that they are ridiculous.
32. Tell your spouse that what they said does not make any sense or that they don't make sense.

33. Ask your spouse why they would think something so stupid or dumb like that?
34. Tell them that what they are saying is not the truth. Insist that your spouse know the truth of the matter. Make the truth of the matter the main focus of the conversation instead of acknowledging their hurt or pain.
35. Tell your spouse that he or she does not love you
36. Tell your spouse to prove to you that they love you.
37. Tell your spouse that if they loved you that they would do this or stop that.
38. Tell your spouse that they should not feel what they are feeling.
39. Don't acknowledging feelings of pain, hurt or anger. When your spouse tells you that they are hurt or angry because of something you said or did, make sure that you defend your behavior, tell them there was nothing wrong with what you said or did, that it is not a sin.
40. Throw a tantrum to get your spouse's attention – yell, scream, hit them, squeal the tires, slam the door, stomp on the floor, hit the wall, break something, break their windshield or do some other damage to their car.
41. Make uninvited comments or constructive criticism – tell them that what they did could have been better “if” they had done it a different way. Focus on what is negative instead of positive about what your spouse has said or done.
42. Demand your own way without compromise – Tell them that this is the way it is going to be done or else.
43. If your spouse insults you make sure that you get even and insult them back. Exchange insult for insult. Make sure that the name you call them is worse than the name they called you. Names like you are stupid, dumb or an idiot, are good for starters.
44. Threaten your spouse - tell them you are going to stop paying the bills, not pay the rent or their car payment. Threaten to tell their parents, a friend or the pastor what they have done. It is always good to say something like “That is not a threat, this is a promise.
45. Discuss or share intimate facts of your relationship with your friend, parent or someone who your spouse has not agreed that intimate things can be shared with.
46. Tell your spouse that you will not or will never forgive them for what they have done.
47. Do not defend your spouse from insults or bad behavior of “your” parent(s).
48. Take a long time to let go of things, tell your spouse over and over day after day week after week how much they hurt you and how angry you are at them for what they have done. Make sure you tell them enough that they really get tired of hearing it and then get mad at them if they ask you why you keep bringing it up.
49. Tell your spouse often that you quit or you want a divorce. Keep them guessing if you are really going to be there for them.
50. If your spouse asks you why you have not changed tell them “This is just the way I am – You knew I was this way when you married me”.
51. Threaten to have an affair or find someone else if they do not change.
52. Compare your spouse to your ex-husband or ex-wife and tell your spouse how much better your ex treated you.
53. Tell your spouse they are just oversexed and should not have that need.
54. Compare your spouse to your mother or father.
55. Be macho and tell her that no woman will ever tell you what to do.
56. Don't submit to your spouse. When they ask you to do something say something like: No one is going to tell me what to do. You are not mother/father and you are not going to tell me what to do.
57. Failure to leave and cleave – disrespect your spouse often by taking the advice of your parent(s) instead of your spouse, spending time with your parent(s) instead of your spouse, or insist that your parent(s) be involved with most things you do.
58. Don't take a time out when you become frustrated, irritated or are feeling stress. Don't pray about the matter. Keep on talking and being in disagreement until you have to yell or scream.

- 59. Don't accept your spouse's perception of a matter. Tell them that what they are saying is a lie.
- 60. Demand that he or she respect you.
- 61. Demand that he or she submit to you.
- 62. Threaten to stop paying the bills.
- 63. Tell her that you wear the pants in the family.
- 64. Tell your spouse that they are just too sensitive.
- 65. Tell them that it is none of their business how you spend your money.

## Workshop

If you have done any of the things listed above would you now ask your spouse to forgive you for each and every one of these things by confessing each of these to your spouse and asking your spouse to forgive you?

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### Finding A Positive Way To Say It

Negative/accusing - You never pick up after yourself, you never clean our home, I am ashamed for company to come.

Positive - I bless you to be a person who has a clean and orderly home.

Negative/accusing – You never go anywhere with me outside of our home

Positive - I bless you to have a desire to go places and be with me outside our home.

Negative/accusing- You never go shopping with me.

Positive - I bless you to have a desire to take me shopping

Negative/accusing – You never help me around the house

Positive - I bless you to have a desire to help me with the house

Negative/accusing – you are always late, you are never on time.

Positive - I bless you to be home on time

Negative/accusing – You don't care about sex, you never meet my needs.

Positive - I bless you to have a desire for me and that we meet each other's needs for intimacy

Negative/accusing – you never do what I ask you to do.

Positive - I bless us to do what we ask of each other without giving excuse.

Negative/accusing – you always tell me no.

Positive - I bless us to never say no to each other and to always negotiate to a "yes".

Negative/accusing – you are always gone with your friends and do not have time for me.

Positive – I bless you to have a desire to spend time with me.

Negative/accusing – You always work late and put your job before the children and me.

Positive – I bless you to have a desire to spend more time with the children and me.

Negative/accusing – you always interrupt me when I am talking to you.

Positive – I bless you to be patient with me when I am talking to you and allow me to finish what I am saying

*Live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, loving, compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult but with **blessing because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.** 1 Peter 3:8-9*

The following are examples of blessings that a husband and wife can speak over each other several times a week. These blessings are a very simple means of praying for and with each other. The wording in these blessings can be changed to fit special circumstances of your life as they come up.

If by chance you are attempting to bless your spouse and your spouse says that they are offended or feel controlled or that you want to control them with the words you are speaking over your spouse then ask your spouse how you can say the words differently. You may even ask your spouse to reword the words for you to a phrase that feels like a blessing to your spouse instead of control over your spouse.

When my wife and I first began using these blessings I would read one line to her, she would read the next one back to me, then she would read one line from her list and then I would read back to her. It was a very intimate time for us, as we lay in bed holding each other and blessing each other nightly. You can bless each other at night, during dinner or in the morning. The most important thing is that you are consistent in blessing each other.

## **Blessing Your Wife**

1. I bless you by being a godly husband who will lead you by setting the example for you to follow in righteousness and holiness in the things we watch on television and the music we listen to.
2. I bless you by not going to Internet sites I would not want you or our children to go to.
3. I bless you by seeing you as my co-pilot in life, especially in the car and taking your feelings into consideration about speed, other vehicles and asking for directions.
4. I bless you by never putting you down or embarrassing you either privately or in public and always speaking words of encouragement to you.
5. I bless you by submitting to you by voluntarily doing the things you ask me to do with the attitude of Christ.
6. I bless you by speaking to you with patience, kindness, goodness and gentleness.
7. I bless us to only speak positive words of affirmation over each other and to not use words like “you always or you never”.
8. I bless us to be emotionally and spiritually bonded to each other.
9. I bless you to be my number one priority on earth by putting you before all others to include my work, friend, hobbies, children or my parents.
10. I bless us to meet each other’s sexual needs weekly and for this to be a priority in our life.
11. I bless you by promising to set aside time daily to listen to you without television, newspapers or other distractions.
12. I bless you by trying hard to not fix the things you have shared with me, to be a good listener and by not interrupting you or giving advise you have not asked for.
13. I bless you to feel safe to share your thoughts and emotions without me being critical or defensive, especially if it is about me.
14. I bless us to have an expectation of saying “yes” to each other and negotiating with each other to a place where we can say yes.
15. I bless us to have a long life together, free of sickness and disease and to be youthful in our old age.
16. I bless us to communicate to each other in a loving way without harshness or loud tones.
17. I bless us to reconcile our differences daily. I promise to lead you in this area by forgiving you daily and by not going to bed while still angry with you.
18. I bless us to hear the complaints of each other without taking personal offense, not defending our behaviors and that we each will be willing to make those changes in our relationship with each other so that we “feel” loved by each other.
19. I bless us to only have friends that we have “both” agreed upon.
20. I bless us to not go places or do things we have not agreed for the other to go or do.
21. I bless us to only make major financial purchases that we have agreed upon.

## **Blessing your Husband**

1. I bless you to live a life of holiness and righteousness before me and to be my protector.
2. I bless you to always speak truth to me to set the proper example of honesty.
3. I bless you to protect you by never putting you down either privately or in public and to always speak words of encouragement to you.
4. I bless you to be a godly man who sets a holy example for me to follow in the things we watch on television, the movies we go to and the music we listen to and all aspects of our life together.
5. I bless your lips and tongue to speak to me, our children and others patience, kindness, goodness and gentleness.
6. I bless you to have the mind of Christ, to have thoughts like Christ's thoughts and to not allow your mind to focus on negative things.
7. I bless you by putting you as a priority in my life by putting you first, before my work, friends, hobbies, children or my parents.
8. I bless you by being the wife with whom you feel safe to share your thoughts and emotions without me being critical or defensive, especially if it is about me.
9. I bless you by submitting to you as my spiritual leader and voluntarily doing the things you ask me to do with the attitude of Christ.
10. I bless you to see me as your co-pilot in life and by doing your job instead of being offended when I give you advice, especially in the car when I ask you to slow down or stop for directions.
11. I bless you to take time to develop an interest in spiritual things and study the word of God and share what you have learned with me several times weekly.
12. I bless you to take time daily to pray with me and to bless our children and me.
13. I bless us to have good health and be free of sickness and disease and to have a long life here on earth and be physically fit in our old age.
14. When you are offended with others or me, I bless you to forgive those offenses and resolve your anger before going to bed and to not remind me of my past transgressions.
15. I bless our marriage to be a marriage in which we are in perfect unity, where we are perfect agreement with all aspects of life, to include friends, family and finances.
16. I bless you to meet my emotional needs, to provide time every day to listen to me and connect to me emotionally.
17. I bless you to give me the safe love and affection I need through daily non-sexual touch.
18. I bless you by often meeting your needs for sexual intimacy without you having to ask.

## **Blessings from Parent to Children**

1. I bless you by not speaking to you with impatience or when I am angry. If angry I will first forgive and speak to you with proper respect and honor.
2. I bless you by never embarrassing you by correcting you in front of your friends, others or in a public setting.
3. When I feel I need to correct you, I will bless you by first asking you to help me understand why you did what you did or did not do, before I make a judgment on your behavior.
4. When you need to be corrected or receive discipline, I will first ask for your input on what you think should happen and bless you by insuring that the discipline you receive is not unjust and appropriate for what you did.
5. I bless you to feel just as loved by me after your receive discipline as you did before discipline was administered.
6. I bless you to never get upset with you or punish you for making an honest mistake.
7. I bless you to be part of the home team and do your job by keeping your room neat and orderly.
8. I bless you by not interrupting when you are speaking to me or someone else.
9. I bless you by never yelling out your name when I want to speak to you, but instead going to where you are and speaking to you in a normal tone.
10. I bless you by accepting your friends and loving who you love and praying for your friends, instead of being critical, judgmental and putting them down or saying they are bad.
11. I bless you to “feel loved” by me and know I am proud of you by giving you positive affirmation and never telling you that you are bad.
12. I bless you by never comparing you to others or speaking about others in a better way than I do you.
13. I bless you by making time to listen to you weekly, just you and me, and giving us time to bond together.
14. I bless you by not getting angry with you when you speak to me when I am reading, watching television, talking on the phone or doing something else.
15. I bless you to follow my proper example of television programs we watch, movies and music we listen to in our home. I will not watch what you should not watch. I bless you to not violate the honor of our home and to only watch television and movies that are appropriate for our home and the example that has been set.
16. I bless you by “asking you” to do things instead of “telling you”.
17. I bless you to do your chores (your job), honor your bedtime and dinnertime and to do the things you are asked to do without me having to ask you a second or third time.
18. I bless you not to visit inappropriate web sites on your computer.
19. I bless you by each of us in this family being accountable to each other by giving full access to each other’s phone, text messages, voice messages, computer, facebook and individual rooms without any of us being offended at the other.
20. My job as your parent is for you to feel loved by me, when you do not feel loved by me I bless you to come to me and give me the opportunity to change my attitude or behavior so that you will feel loved by me.
21. I bless you to clean up and pick up after yourself and put your personal things in your room each night before going to bed.
22. I bless you to know and have a close personal intimate relationship with Lord Jesus.
23. I bless you by me seeing you as a child of Father God and giving you that respect and honor.
24. I bless you to know and see yourself and others are as sons & daughters of Father God.
25. I bless you by forgiving you daily and not reminding you of your past wrongs.

## **Blessings from Child to Parent**

1. I bless you to set a good example for me in the television and movies we watch in our home.
2. I bless you to only watch what you would want me to watch and learn from you how I should behave as your son or daughter.
1. I bless you to watch the programs you want me to learn from so I know how I should live as an adult.
2. I bless you that we not watch programs where the main theme is to make fun of others, cut others down, and themes of revenge or where darkness is thought of as good such as vampires, witchcraft and horror movies.
3. I bless both my parents to not disagree or argue in front of me and to do that privately.
4. I bless both my parents to never ask me to take sides or speak badly about the other, as I should never see you in disagreement.
5. I bless each of you to never speak badly of my other parent or of anyone, but to teach me forgiveness by your forgiving example.
6. I bless you to never share your hurt and pain or ask me for my advice of what you are to do about your problems with my other parent.
  - a. I should never know of your problems with each other so I can have a happy childhood.
7. I bless you to not yell or raise your voice at me and to forgive me daily and not remind me of my wrongs from the past.
8. I bless you not to compare me to anyone in or outside the family and to use positive instead of negative encouragement.
9. I bless you to pray with me and bless me often.
10. When I need to talk to you I bless you to make me feel like I am important to you by stopping what you are doing and making eye contact with me and not interrupting me while I am talking to you.
11. I bless you to never embarrass me in front of others, to include my friends by correcting me in private.
12. I bless you by picking up after myself in the home and keeping my room neat and orderly.
13. I bless you to pray for the defects you see in me and my friends instead of judging or criticizing them or me.

## **Blessings for Sibling to Sibling**

1. I bless you by never doing or saying anything that would embarrass you in front of anyone to include our parents or your friends.
2. I bless you by me not doing things that would result in you feeling unloved by me:
  - By not calling you names or making fun of you.
  - By not yelling at you.
  - By asking you to forgive me when I have accidently hurt you.
3. I bless you by allowing you to interrupt me when I am watching television, playing a game or doing anything else.
4. When you want to talk to me I will bless you by stopping what I am doing and making eye contact with you and listening to you.
5. I bless you when you make an honest mistake by quickly accepting your apology.
6. I bless you by quickly forgiving you when you have hurt me.
7. When you need my help I will bless you by stopping what I am doing and try to help you in the way you have asked.



8. I bless you by not making fun of any of your friends, not judging them and accepting them for who they are, forgiving them and praying for them when I see them do something they should not do.
9. I bless you by not arguing with you when I think you are wrong, instead I will forgive you and ask Father God to tell you the truth.
10. I bless you by not interrupting you when you are talking to anyone, including me.
11. I bless you by never going into your room, taking anything from your room or using any of your personal property without first asking you for permission.
12. I bless you by always picking up after myself when I have used your things or have been in your room.
13. I bless you by always speaking to you truthfully in a loving way.

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### **Unsolicited Advice**

#### **“Is Usually Heard As Criticism”**

Couples who cannot talk to each other may be couples that are trying to fix each other. If advice is not asked for then it may not be welcomed and can cause an offense.

Even though you may have the answer to the problem your spouse is sharing with you, most often your spouse just simply wants to share with you, not be fixed by you. After your spouse has shared you could do one of two things:

1. Ask: is this something you want me to just listen to?
2. Ask: is this something you want me to respond to?

If you feel that you must say something or your spouse needs to hear what you have to say then ask if you can speak into that situation. Once you have been given permission, then your advice may be welcomed and not be heard as criticism.

When you are giving advice never find fault with your spouse or take sides with the other person. When you side with the other person you are “one” with the other and not your spouse. If you feel that you must take a side then it should be the biblical side. That puts you in a neutral position not finding fault with your spouse.

You can ask: Can we see what the bible says about this situation and go with that instead of what you, the other person or I think is right?

If your spouse replies that they just want to be heard – then respect their request and do not violate their free will. The Holy Spirit does not violate the free will of anyone even when it is in the best interest of the other person.

Biblically your spouse and you are “one”. Therefore what hurts your spouse should also hurt you. What bothers your spouse will in fact bother you as your spouse is talking about the situation.

If your spouse is angry with another then instead of telling your spouse that they need to forgive, say to your spouse that what hurts them also hurts you and that “we” need to forgive that person. You can then simply take the hand of your spouse and begin speaking forgiveness to the person who caused the hurt or pain.

After you have forgiven then the two of you can speak a blessing over the person who caused the hurt or pain. This keeps the two of you at peace and in God’s will.

You can do the same thing with your children when they share things with you about another child who caused hurt. You can simply tell your child that what hurts them also hurts you and that “we” need to forgive that other child. You can then simply take the hand of your child and begin speaking forgiveness to the child who caused the hurt or pain. This teaches your child what to do with injustice, hurt, pain and anger caused by others.

## **Workshop**

If you are a fixer would you ask your spouse to forgive you? Give your spouse permission to tell you in the future when you are trying to fix them again and make the commitment to not try to fix them in the future.

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## Stop Accusing Each Other!

### *Watch the video How to Respond When Wrongfully Accused*

*Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one lawgiver and judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you – who are you to judge your neighbor?*

*James 4:11-12*

*2 Corinthians 10: 3-6 (Amplified) For though we walk and live in the flesh, we are not carrying on our warfare according to the flesh and using mere human weapons. For the weapons of our warfare are not physical, but they are mighty before God for the overthrow and destruction of strongholds. Inasmuch as we refute arguments and theories and reasoning's and every proud and lofty thing that sets itself up against the true knowledge of God: and we lead every thought and purpose away captive into the obedience of Christ.*

*1 Cor 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts.*

Not all lies originate from our childhood. Many lies also originate in our adult life based on false conclusions we come to about the behavior of another. If you are a person who tries to reason out in your mind the behavior of your spouse then you are most likely making statements similar to:

I know why you did that!

I know why you said that!

I know what you are thinking!

You purposely did that to hurt me

They did that purposely to hurt us

They did that because .....

You did that because .....

You don't really love because if you did you would or would not . . . . .

If you loved me you would . . .

As an adult you may spend hours analyzing the evidence of the behavior of another in order to come to a conclusion or perception of truth. Like a broken record you may allow your imagination to replay the event over and over in your mind looking for clues to determine the motive of why someone did what they did or said what they said. Once you come to a conclusion, you will then most likely believe you “know” the motive behind the behavior of another. This conclusion is then a stronghold in your mind, which sets itself up “against” truth.

Judging the motive behind the behavior of others is in direct contradiction to God's word. If the truth that we have come to is not “really” the motive behind what another has said or done then we are slandering the other person with our perception of truth.

We frequently minister to men and women who will spend hours daily analyzing the behavior of others to determine motives. A mind that is attempting to determine motives behind the behaviors of others is a mind that is not at peace and is a mind that is tormented by its own thought processes. During this process these people are undergoing stress and anxiety in order to come up with false

motives in the behavior of others and then they blame themselves, others and God for this behavior based on these false motives.

These people frequently blame themselves and have come to the conclusion that it is because of what they have said or done that the other person behaved the way they did. The emotions and behaviors of others rarely have anything to do with us, as most emotions and behaviors are on automatic pilot from what is stored within our heart from our hurts, pains and unresolved childhood issues.

The more pain that a child suffers in their childhood, the more likely the child is to analyze the behavior of others in their adult life to try to determine the motives causing the behavior. This person came to false conclusions about why their parents did what they did when they were a child. It is impossible for a child to come to a logical conclusion about an emotionally based behavior of their parent as that emotion originated in that mother or father many years before this child was even born.

Accusing is the Devil's Job

*Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For **the accuser** of our brothers and sisters, **who accuses** them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. Revelation 2:12*

It is Satan's job to accuse us. When we accuse another we are the mouthpiece of Satan and spitting out our accusations on another.

*Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who are you to condemn? Romans 8:33*

*Brothers do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law you are not keeping it but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor? James 4: 11-12*

The same is true of you as an adult. If someone you are in relationship with is triggered, then most likely the emotion that person is feeling has absolutely nothing to do with you. It probably originated in a life experience long before they knew you, most likely in their own childhood. Therefore, no matter what conclusion you come to by trying to analyze the "why", your conclusion will most likely be wrong.

The other person may not even know why they did what they did as it was due to an emotional trigger from their childhood. When you come to false conclusions and then voice your conclusion by accusing that person, you have placed that person in a "defensive" posture.

I know why you did that!  
I know why you said that!  
I know what you are thinking!  
You purposely did that to hurt me  
They did that purposely to hurt us  
They did that because .....  
You did that because .....

This is where many arguments originate.

To stay in God's will, the end result of all this analyzing will be you having to forgive whatever conclusion you have come to. You can either spend endless hours trying to analyze the "why" and then forgive or simply forgive in the very beginning without accusing.

Accusing is a childish behavior that the devil encourages. The real accuser tempts us to accuse each other. A mature person does not do the job of devil and accuse. Evidence of maturity is knowing that regardless of the motive of the other person's behavior, in order to stay free, the response of forgiveness has to be the end result.

## **Workshop**

If you are an accuser would you ask your spouse to forgive you of all those times you have accused him or her? Would you ask your spouse to remind you any time in the future that you should revert to your old habit of accusing? Will you promise your spouse that you will not become angry when he or she reminds you that you have accused them again?

## Other Safe Places

Sometimes no matter how hard you try it is difficult for the two of you to agree on an issue.

When you are hurt or angry with your spouse you may be tempted to share with your mother or father. There are several problems that can arise if you do that.

- Mothers and fathers often have very long memories and long after you and your spouse have resolved the issue your mother or father may not be as forgiving.
- Mothers and fathers normally will take the side of their biological son or daughter, regardless of who is “really” wrong.
- Mothers and fathers often say what they “believe” is the right thing to do based on their experience. Even though your parent’s intent is good, the advice may not be based on God’s instructions and result in further division in your marriage.

You may have a good friend who you share intimate details of your marriage with. This person gives you advice based on what they would or would not do. Although friends can be well meaning, their advice will often not be biblical and will usually be one sided.

Advice that does not match what the bible says may sound good, but if it does not match biblical instruction, that advice can bring destruction to your marriage. Instruction from the bible is from God. Instruction from God is wisdom and not based on a mother’s, father’s or friend’s opinion.

*But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. James 3:17*

For those times of hurt and pain we may need a safe person, someone in our life other than our spouse who we can go to for advice.

### Safe People

- A safe place person should only be someone who both of you agrees to be safe.
- Never go outside your safe places to get advice unless you have asked your spouse and there is agreement.
- A safe person may be different or the same for both of you.
- A safe person is someone your spouse has agreed to who you can basically share anything in the marriage.
- Each of you should have at least one safe person that you agree your spouse can talk to about you or get advice from.
- A safe person should be a person who you trust will give you and your spouse good “biblical advice”, not a personal opinion of what your friend should or should not do.

Discuss between the two of you who each of you agree that your spouse can talk to about you. Do not become angry with your spouse if they do not agree to your selection of a safe person. Keep choosing till you both agree.

## Workshop

If you have talked outside your marriage to your father, mother, friend or someone else without your spouse's permission and it has caused a problem, would you make that right by asking for forgiveness.

Discuss and make an agreement about who you agree your husband or wife can talk to, other than you, that you feel would give good biblical advice.

Make a commitment that once both of you agree to a person who each of you can share with outside the marriage that you will not share with anyone else without the permission of your husband or wife.

Possible safe people:

- Minister – to whom you have both agreed
- Pastor – to whom you have both agreed
- Christian Counselor – to whom you have both agreed
- Church elder- to whom you have both agreed
- Trusted friend to whom you have both agreed
- Mother or father to whom you have both agreed

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## 28. Adultery & Priorities in Marriage

*First please watch “two” videos:*

- 1. Priorities in Marriage*
- 2. How to Deal With Jealousy*

If our priorities in marriage are not right there will be a loss of peace in each and every area that our priorities are out of order. Often wrong priorities are simply a lack of knowledge of the proper order of priorities in each relationship we are in.

If your spouse were asked what **your first three** priorities in life are, what would their answer be? Please number them **in the order you believe your spouse would respond**. Remember, this is not what “is” your true priorities; it is what you think your spouse believes to be your true priorities.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ My mother
2. \_\_\_\_\_ My father
3. \_\_\_\_\_ My Job
4. \_\_\_\_\_ My boss
5. \_\_\_\_\_ My spouse
6. \_\_\_\_\_ My friend(s)
7. \_\_\_\_\_ My sports/hobbies
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Television
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Electronic games
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Internet
11. \_\_\_\_\_ My personal relationship with God
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Ministry at church
13. \_\_\_\_\_ Involvement at church
14. \_\_\_\_\_ My children
15. \_\_\_\_\_ My pet
16. \_\_\_\_\_ Money
17. \_\_\_\_\_ Other

*Do not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is jealous, is a jealous God. Exodus 34:14*

Both you and your spouse are made in the image of God. God is a jealous God. Since we are made in the image of God we will be jealous over the same things that God is jealous over. God is jealous over anything or anyone we put before Him.

Anyone other than God who your spouse perceives that you value more than them - to include your mother/father, children, or job - will result in your spouse being jealous over that person or



thing and it will be righteous jealousy. This could be a friend, father, mother, sister, brother, boss, someone at work, a computer, television, an electronic game or a faceless person on the other end of a chat room.

### **Order of Priorities**

1. Your “personal” relationship with God – a position in a ministry or at church is not a personal relationship with God. That position is a job and your job carries a lower priority in your life than your wife and children.
2. Your spouse – you are commanded to be in a one flesh relationship with your spouse, not your children, mother or father or a friend.
3. Your children (living at home)
4. Your job
5. Your extended family (children, mother/father)
6. Friends
7. Sports & hobbies

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Since you and your spouse are created in the image of God then anything you put before your spouse (other than God) will result in your spouse being angry and jealous of that person or thing.

### **Your personal relationship with God**

- A position in a ministry or at church is not a personal relationship with God.
- Your personal relationship with God is your devotions, prayer time and time in the word of God.
- Your relationship with God is refraining from knowingly sinning.
- Your relationship with God is living your life with the proper priorities.
- Your relationship with God is demonstrated by the love you exhibit with your spouse and children through your patience, making time for them and sacrifices you make for them.

### **Work**

- That position is a job and your job carries a lower priority in your life than your wife and children.
- You should not allow your work to result in a separation of you from your spouse and children.
- You must work and earn a living, however, you are not living to work; you are working to live.
- There should be an agreement between your spouse and you about the number of hours you work outside of “normal” work hours and weekends.
- There should be an agreement about bringing your work home, the number of hours you will work at home, and when you will be working at home.

- Sitting in bed working on your computer while your spouse is lying next to you night after night greatly detracts from intimacy.
  - Make an agreement and keep the agreement
  - Working hours outside of that agreement should be the exception on a case-by-case basis.
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## **Your Children**

Your spouse takes priority over your children. You are commanded to be “one” with your spouse, not your children. When you put your children above your spouse you are being one with that child and it may cause a separation between you and your spouse.

Putting your children above your spouse can result in righteous anger and jealousy in your spouse causing a separation in the oneness of your spouse and you.

The exception to this rule would be if your spouse were continuing to overtly sin, causing harm to a child physically or sexually. At that time you are commanded to separate from your spouse.

If you are in disagreement with your spouse about their relationship with your children then disagree privately so that the children are not aware of the issue. The children should always see their mother and father as “one”.

Your children will eventually grow up and leave home. If you keep putting your relationship with your children ahead of your relationship with your spouse then your spouse may leave before the children do.

If you continue to put your children first then after the children grow up and leave, your spouse may have so much bitterness built up in them that intimacy never returns even though the children are now gone. This often is the result of a mother devoting so much time to the children that the sexual needs of the husband are ignored and justified by the wife because of the demands of caring for the children, or a husband who keeps putting their job before their wife.

## **In-Laws**

*For this reason a man will leave his mother and father and cleave to his wife and the two will become one flesh. Eph. 5:31*

Once you are an adult you are commanded to be “one” with your spouse. To be one with your spouse you must leave the oneness of your mother and father and be one with your spouse.

Your spouse replaces the position your parent(s) once held.

1. Physically
2. Emotionally
3. Spiritually
4. In agreement with
5. Being submitted to

## 6. Being oneness with

Before we left home our parents were:

1. The most important people in our life
2. The people who we were to desire to be with the most.
3. The people who we were to spend most of our time with.
4. The people we were submitted to.
5. The people we were to be in agreement with.
6. The people who were to be more important to us than anyone else on earth.
7. The people who we were to have a close intimate relationship with.
8. The people from whom we received direction in life.

*For this reason a man will leave his mother and father and cleave to his wife and the two will become one flesh. Eph. 5:31*

To cleave to my spouse, I must let go of my parents. I must separate from my parents and my spouse is to take the place previously held by my parents. My spouse now stands in the place that my mother or father stood.

- My spouse now becomes the most important person in my life.
- If given the choice of doing what my mother or father asks or what my spouse asks I should always choose my spouse.
- Where I previously took the advice of my mother and father I now take the advice of my spouse.
- If given the choice of taking my mother or father's advice or my spouse's advice, I must always choose my spouse.
- I can never let my relationship with my mother or father cause separation in my relationship with my spouse.
- If given a choice of spending time with my mother or father or with my spouse, I must always choose my spouse.

A husband and wife came for counseling. She said that she was in a dilemma because her father did not like her husband. Her father told her that she must eat Sunday dinner with her mother and father every Sunday, however, that her husband was not invited to come with her. She said that this was causing a lot of problems between her and her husband. I explained to her that when she married that her husband and she became "one". That she was no longer a child living at home who had to obey her father.

*For this reason a man will leave his mother and father and cleave to his wife and the **two will become one flesh.** Eph. 5:31*

I explained to her that when she married that she left the "oneness" with her parents and was now "one" with her husband. I helped her to understand that when she as a child that she was to be submitted to her father and mother, however, that upon marriage her submission was at that time transferred to her husband.

Since she and her husband were now “one”, if her husband was not invited, then she was not invited, as she was only half of a whole person. Helping her father to understand biblically why she could no longer eat Sunday dinner if her husband was not invited would prompt her father to resolve his spiritual issues pertaining to her husband.

Her father was in a lower priority than her spouse, therefore, she was to submit to her husband and not go to Sunday dinner if her husband was not invited in order to maintain the “oneness” with her husband and peace in the marriage.

I helped her to understand that if her father kept causing an issue between her and her husband then she would eventually have to end the relationship with her father until her father was willing to resolve the issues he had with her husband.

### **Defending Your Spouse**

Your spouse cannot defend themselves from your parents. Part of your job is to be the defender of your spouse from your parents. You should never allow your parents to speak in a negative manner about your spouse.

Your parent(s) are not the ones you should be sharing your marriage hurts and wounds with. You will forgive your spouse but your parents may not. Long after you have forgiven and reconciled, your parents may not have forgotten or forgiven what you shared with them. This may cause many problems long after you and your spouse have reconciled your differences.

If you feel a need to share your hurts and wounds you should have someone to share with that both you and your spouse have agreed upon. This should be a “neutral” person such as a pastor or Christian counselor, which you both trust to remain neutral and who will not give their personal opinion but only what the Word of God says in reference to the issue.

You may have to actually separate yourself from your parents if they continue to put your spouse down, will not accept your spouse or do not include your spouse when they invite you. You may need to explain to your parents that you are only half a person and that if they do not accept your spouse then they are not accepting you, which may result in you separating from their bad behavior. Once you have set the conditions for the relationship with your parents it is then up to them to decide if there will or will not be a relationship.

### **Rule**

Never allow your relationship with a lower priority to separate you in your relationship from a higher priority.

If you have a choice of obeying God or doing what your spouse asks, you must not allow your relationship with your spouse to separate you from God.

If you have a choice of pleasing your mother or father or pleasing your spouse your spouse must always come first.

If you have a choice of pleasing your children or being in relationship with your spouse, you must always choose your spouse.

## Indications of Wrong Priorities

Sometimes, for your spouse to feel loved by you, it may require you to be willing to change your priorities or behave differently. Submission means that you will stop the undesired behavior. It is indifferent whether you think the behavior is wrong or not. If the behavior bothers your spouse and you continue with the behavior, it causes separation of the “oneness” of the relationship and that is enough to make it wrong.

### Your spouse is complaining

We do not complain about areas of our life where we feel loved, we complain where we do not feel loved.

1. Your spouse is complaining that you are spending more quality time with your mother or father than with them. *(The time with your spouse takes priority over the time with your parents).*
2. Your spouse is complaining that you are spending more quality time with your child or children than them. *(The time with your spouse takes priority over the time with your children).*
3. Your spouse is complaining that you are spending more time with a family member such as your brother, sister, or cousin than them. *(The time with your spouse takes priority over the time with your family).*
4. Your spouse is complaining that you are constantly spending more time with a friend than with them. *(Your time with your spouse takes priority over the time with a friend).*
5. Your spouse is complaining that you are working long hours and do not have time for them. *(Your relationship with your spouse takes priority over your job or making money).*
6. Your spouse is complaining that you spend a lot of time working on your car, boat, truck or motorcycle and then do not have time for them. *(Your relationship with your spouse takes priority over your car, boat, truck or motorcycle).*
7. Your spouse is complaining that you spend more time in a ministry or serving at church than you do with them. *(Your relationship with your spouse takes priority over time given to a ministry or church).*

### Sacrifice

Just as if God told you that He felt something was more important to you than Him and asked you to sacrifice that person or thing and move it into its rightful place in your priorities; you must also be willing to sacrifice people or things for your spouse.

If your spouse has voiced their complaint to you and you refuse to give up that thing or person, you are saying to your spouse that the thing or person is more important to you than them.

Failure to sacrifice that person or thing will result in your spouse being angry, jealous and resentful and your spouse will not bless the time that you spend with that person or thing.

## **Time**

You must be willing to give your spouse the time they need to be with you. You cannot build the relationship beyond the time you are willing to put into it. Our relationship with our spouse is no different than our relationship with Jesus. Our relationship with Jesus will only be as good as the time we give to Him.

## **Attitude**

Your attitude of sacrifice and giving of time should be an attitude of love, the same attitude, as we would have toward Christ Jesus. Jesus would frown on us coming to him in anger and begrudgingly stating: *"Ok, here I am to worship you and talk to you. I sure wish I were somewhere else, but here is where I have to be."*

In sacrificing for your spouse .....your spouse should see an attitude of love.

## **Workshop**

If you have not defended your spouse from your parent(s) or have put one or both of your parents above your spouse would you now ask your spouse to forgive you and tell your spouse what you are going to do to make this right.

If other priorities have been wrong now is the time to make it right by confessing to your spouse that you have been wrong and asking your spouse to forgive you.

Tell your spouse what changes you are going to make and make a commitment to your spouse to keep your priorities in order.

## Emotional Adultery

With Facebook, electronic mail, texting and mobile telephones it is very common in today's society for husbands and wives to be in emotional adultery spending hours on the computer, telephone or other communication device with someone other than their spouse. They then defend the behavior with the defense that actual physical adultery is not occurring.

The simple fact that your spouse is insecure about the relationship is reason enough that you should break it off, as your relationship with your husband or wife is a higher priority than your relationship with a friend or a stranger on the other end of your computer.

If your husband or wife is insecure about your relationship, then you may have replied with some of the following statements:

- We are not having sex, nothing is wrong with this, we are just talking!
- You are just jealous!
- I am not doing anything wrong!
- I have never even seen this person on the other end of the computer?
- It is none of your business who I have been with!
- It is none of your business where I am going!
- You are just nosey.
- You are not my mother/father and you are not going to tell me what I can or cannot do.
- You are just trying to control me
- You don't wear the pants in this family

The mere fact that you feel like you must defend the relationship is an indication that the relationship is wrong in the eyes of your spouse.

If you are not married and your significant other is making statements similar to the ones above it should be a caution light for you to not proceed further in the relationship with someone who defends emotional adultery.

If you are married and your spouse is engaging in these behaviors and has refused to stop then your spouse:

1. May not be submitted to you
2. May be committing emotional adultery

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## **Insecurities from the past**

If your husband or wife is insecure, they could have things left over from their past where they were wounded. This wound could originate in his or her childhood due to the divorce of their parents or a parent that cheated. This could leave a fear within them that:

- All men cheat
- All women cheat

Someone in your husband or wife's past may have cheated and left a deep emotional wound that is being transferred to you.

Your spouse could be insecure about how they feel about themselves with lies floating around in their mind such as:

1. I am not good enough
2. All men cheat
3. All women cheat
4. Something is wrong with me

These lies will often result in insecurity with strong emotions attached to them.

It is indifferent if you are actually committing emotional adultery. In marriage you have taken the place of the person who did hurt your spouse and when you behave a similar way (even in innocence) your spouse will feel the same insecurities with you that belong to the person who actually did hurt them.

It is your perfect love in the present that will help your spouse be healed of their insecurities.

Denying your guilt and arguing over the issue only adds gas to the fire of their insecurity. To help your spouse work through his or her insecurities, be patient, be willing to go the extra mile and make the changes you need to make to help your spouse be at peace. Be willing to break off any relationship for the sake of your spouse.

If your spouse is insecure about your relationship with another person, regardless who this other person is, and you refuse to give up that relationship, then you are demonstrating to your spouse that the other person is more important to you than your spouse.

Love will sacrifice. Love your spouse through his or her insecurity by being willing to give up the relationship that is resulting in the insecurity.

## **Examples of Spiritual & Emotional Adultery:**

1. Seeking the advice of someone other than your spouse first.
2. Sharing good news about a promotion, a new job, or a pay raise with someone other than your spouse first.
3. Spending time at work, with parent(s), children, a friend, hobby, sports, ministry, on line, at church, with the television and then not having time for spouse.
4. Not being emotionally connected to your spouse and then giving emotions to children, a parent, a friend, a pet or having an inappropriate emotional relationship with someone of the opposite sex on line or in person.
5. Talking to others but having little to say to your spouse or the time to talk to your spouse.



6. Giving money to others and withholding from your spouse or giving money without consulting with and being in agreement with your spouse.
7. Sharing facts or problems outside the marriage with your father, mother, a family member, someone at work or anyone other than a minister or counselor things your spouse has not agreed to you sharing.

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Almost all-physical adultery first begins with spiritual or emotional adultery. When the union in the relationship between a husband and wife fails, particularly in the area of communication and heartfelt sharing, husbands and wives are left open to another who may seem to be able to fill that gap.

When you reach out to someone other than your spouse or a counselor or a minister to share your problems it begins a bonding process with that person. You are now sharing things with that person that should only be shared with your spouse, a counselor or a minister, which results in you putting that person in the position of your spouse.

When you put a person other than your spouse in the emotional position of your spouse your heart then may begin to form an attachment to that person as if this person were your spouse. It is not who the person is, but it is the position that person is now occupying. This is especially dangerous if you are sharing with someone of the opposite sex.

At first it could appear to be very innocent since it is a person you have never seen on the other end of a chat room, or someone on Facebook you have never met, an old boy or girl friend, or someone you work with, see at the gym or have an innocent lunch with. Once you begin to share your hurts, pains and desires from your heart, you have unknowingly put the person you are sharing with in the position of your spouse and a bonding may begin.

In this bonding process you may begin to have a warm fuzzy feeling every time you think about this person or being near this person. This could result in you inventing ways to contact them. You may be excited to check your Facebook, e-mail, text messages or chat room to see if they have contacted you.

It does not matter "if" your spouse should be jealous over this person or thing or not. Instead of focusing on whether they should be jealous, we should refocus on how to properly react to the jealousy.

### **Indications that you are close to or in spiritual/emotional adultery**

1. Your spouse or children are complaining that they are not receiving enough attention or time.
2. You have found yourself desiring to be somewhere other than at home with your spouse.
3. Distance is growing between you and your spouse.

4. Distance is growing between you and your children.
5. When you are with your spouse there is little to talk about.
6. You seem to no longer desire the closeness of “just being with” your spouse.
7. A special friend has to normally be included or you don’t have fun.
8. Your job, ministry, sports, a friend, television or something else in your life is valued more than time spent with your spouse.
9. When you have the opportunity to be with your spouse you instead choose to be at work, at a ministry, with a friend, watch television, be on the computer or to bring your work home with you.
10. You find yourself making statements to someone of the opposite sex outside of your marriage/relationship something like; “my husband or wife has never understood me the way you do”.
11. You have begun to treasure or value something or someone in this world more than you treasure or value your spouse.
12. You have begun to disrespect your spouse.
13. You are putting your spouse down and looking at the negative instead of the positive you used to see.
14. You have begun to hunger for spending time with someone else. You no longer want to be exclusive!
15. You have begun to question the feelings you once had for your spouse.
16. You frequently find yourself having to defend to your spouse why you must go minister, serve, work long hours, go to sporting events, or be with a special friend instead of being with your spouse.
17. You find that you are now sharing from your heart with someone else what you previously only shared with your spouse.
18. Sex life between you and your spouse continues to be less and less frequent.
19. Because of the void between you and your spouse and the lack of joy in the home your children are beginning to seek relationships outside of the family rather than to spend time with you.
20. You find yourself making up excuses to spend more and more time with someone or some place.
21. Your spouse other is complaining of feeling neglected.

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### **Indications Physical Adultery is Close at Hand**

1. Because of loneliness, you or your spouse is now seeking relationships outside of the marriage with others to fill the loneliness void.
2. Meeting with some person other than your spouse other begins to excite you.
3. You may be arguing with your spouse to justify your telephone calls, text messages, messages on Facebook or being near this person.
4. You are thinking about or have begun to secretly contact this person without the knowledge of your spouse.
5. You are hiding from your spouse the fact that you have a relationship with this person.

6. You have justified in your mind meeting secretly with this person.
7. You make frequent telephone calls, send text messages, e-mails or Facebook messages with this person to say hello or check often see if he or she has contacted you.
8. You are hiding from your spouse the fact that you are secretly repeatedly contacting this person.
9. You have begun to fear that your spouse or others will find out how you “really” feel about the other person.
10. You have begun to tell lies to your spouse about who you have been with.
11. In the company of other people you find that you and this other person are constantly making eye-to-eye contact.
12. You fear inside that others know that you are looking at each other.
13. You feel the need to sometimes innocently touch this other person.
14. You give this person small insignificant gifts of which your spouse is not aware.
15. You have begun a mental sexual relationship with this person.
16. Intimacy with your spouse has become very difficult.
17. This person comes to your mind when with your spouse intimately or sex with your spouse has stopped or is almost non-existent unless the other person is in your mind.
18. You are thinking of what it would be like to have a future with this person.
19. Others may be warning you that something appears to be wrong with this relationship.
20. You have begun to think that you married or are in relationship with the wrong one.
21. You have begun to think that for the first time you have found the right one.
22. You are seldom happy unless you are in the presence of this other person.
23. You are thinking that the risk of a physical relationship with this person is worth the reward.
24. You are thinking of forsaking all to be with this other person.
25. You are planning a future with this other person.
26. You have asked for a break/pause/separation in your current relationship to evaluate your relationship with another person.

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### **What you should do if you are in Physical Adultery**

1. **You must break off the adulterous relationship completely.** There must be absolute separation from the individual. All contact with this person should be immediately terminated, to the extreme of changing jobs, friends, telephone numbers, or leaving the ministry where the other person is serving. Take all actions necessary to insure there is not even a chance of seeing each other, meeting or of being alone together in the future. You have become emotionally, mentally, and possibly spiritually bonded with this person. Every time you “see” this person you will be tempted to continue the relationship.
2. **Get counseling to find the root of the problem.** Open up and talk and agree to come to an understanding as to what caused this. You must get to the root of why it occurred. Examine the marriage to see what needs in the marriage were not being met that resulted in one of you to seeking relationship outside the marriage. If you do not get to the root of

the problem, you may eventually begin seeking outside the marriage again to get your needs met. Healing within the marriage must take place.

3. **Take responsibility for your part** – If your husband or wife is committing emotional or physical adultery or is involved with pornography, you are most likely not an innocent victim. It is very unusual for a husband or wife who feels loved to commit emotional or physical adultery or even to go to pornography. Adultery or porn is not always but often the end result of needs in the marriage not being met.

Take responsibility for your part. Your spouse was most likely complaining for a long time before he or she felt they needed to reach outside the marriage to get what you kept excusing or refused to do to. Needs you did not meet did not go away; needs may have been stuffed for a long time and your spouse may have eventually given up on you meeting those needs. Husbands and wives who feel loved in the marriage hardly ever reach outside the marriage.

### **“I just felt so loved by my husband or wife that I had to be with someone else”**

Adultery (emotional/physical) is usually the end result of a marriage that was already spiritually and emotionally in trouble with one person feeling very unloved by the other. You cannot continue the behavior that led to your spouse feeling unloved and at the same time expect your spouse not to be tempted to go outside the marriage to have their needs met.

Normally a person who feels loved and whose needs are being met within the marriage does not commit adultery or go to porn. If your spouse has been involved in spiritual or physical adultery then take ownership of not meeting their stated needs which may have led them to reach outside the marriage in order to get those needs met. This is not meant to excuse their behavior or make wrong right but it does help to understand your part in why the adultery occurred.

If your spouse was emotionally or physically involved with another or involved with porn you should ask yourself some of the following questions:

1. Am I meeting the sexual needs of my spouse?
2. Do I often give excuse after excuse for not meeting his or her sexual needs?
3. If I have a sexual disorder have I sought help to resolve the issue?
4. If I have a sexual disorder have I neglected the sexual needs of my husband or wife?
5. Do I often initiate sex without being asked?
6. When my spouse complained was I willing to change or did I continue to defend my behavior?
7. Am I often critical of my spouse finding fault and rarely affirming him or her?
8. Does my spouse often tell me that he or she does not feel loved by me?
9. Has my spouse withdrawn from me because of my critical tongue?
10. Is my spouse able to come and talk to me when they did not feel loved without me becoming angry?
11. When I have a choice of spending time with my spouse or someone else or doing other things such as television, games, face book, telephone, friends, work, mother or father, what is my normal choice?
12. Have I taken ownership of not meeting the needs of my spouse, repented and asked my spouse to forgive me for ignoring them and not meeting their needs or do I continue to insist I'm the innocent victim and blame my spouse for being unfaithful or going to porn?

13. Are most of your conversations with your spouse complaining or uplifting?

Ask your spouse to share with you any needs they have that are not being met. Ask your spouse to forgive you for not meeting those needs and tell your spouse what changes you are willing to make so that your spouse feels loved by you.

1. Share with your spouse any needs you have that are not being met that cause you to not feel loved and ask your spouse if they would be willing to meet those needs.
2. When your spouse shares unmet needs with you, do not blame them or become angry with them for having those needs. Instead, ask for forgiveness and be willing to sacrifice and do what you have been asked to do.
3. Keep in mind that you are the only person in the world your spouse can turn to for their needs of touch, affirmation and intimacy to be met in a holy way.
4. If you determine that a separation/break in the relationship is temporarily needed “do not” begin a relationship with a person of the opposite sex during the period of separation! You will be lonely and vulnerable to the advances of another. Avoid the temptation to seek a relationship with someone of the opposite sex simply to avoid being lonely. Loneliness is not always a bad thing as it gives you time to think clearly without the distractions of pursuing someone else. Allow the separation to be a time of missing your spouse or significant other to see if you are willing to make the changes to get back together.
5. If the separation is going to be over a month, consider that the two of you make arrangements to meet at least once weekly for sexual intimacy to lessen the temptation to go outside the marriage to get those needs met.
6. If you want the current relationship to continue, be willing to change and do whatever you need to do to meet the stated needs of your spouse/significant other.
7. If you do divorce, do not start another relationship immediately just to avoid loneliness. There is always a chance to make the last relationship work. Agree to come to counseling to resolve the emotional triggers that may have led to the divorce.

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### **Restitution for Adultery**

What the Church should do:

- Have the offender immediately break off the relationship and insure that there will be no chance meeting in the future.
- Have both the husband and the wife submit to counseling to get to the root of the issue(s) that led to the infidelity.

- Have the spouse who committed the adultery to make restitution to the other spouse to reestablish trust.

Restitution is the offender doing whatever is necessary to reestablish trust between him/her and the spouse who is the victim. The victim, not the offender, determines what the restitution should be. Restitution is the offender paying the price for trust to be restored.

If the offender is not willing to pay restitution, it is an indication that the offender is not truly repentant (has not agreed with God that this is a sin, does not realize the damage caused to the heart of the victim and their relationship with God).

### **Examples of restitution:**

1. For a specified period of time, requiring that anytime the offender is absent from his home, that he makes frequent calls to his spouse or accountability partner verifying his whereabouts. These calls are to be made from a store or business so the “caller ID” can verify the offender’s location.
2. Requiring the offender to make a job change or some other change to insure that the offender does not again come into contact with the person he has been involved with.
3. Requiring the offender to be home at a certain hour.
4. Requiring the offender to undergo marriage counseling.
5. Requiring the offender to break off any friendships/relationships, which may have influenced or condoned the adultery.
6. Requiring the offender to have an accountability partner. The accountability partner should be someone who has a solid marriage and understands this problem.
7. A public confession should be made in accordance to the public’s knowledge of the sin. There is no private sin. Public confession could be to:
  - The pastor
  - The pastors and associate pastors
  - The pastor, associate pastors and deacons/elders
  - The pastor and associate pastors, deacons/elders and the small group the individual is in.
  - The pastor, associate pastors, deacons/elders, small group, and the congregation.
8. Requiring the offender to step down from a trusted position for a specified period of time.
9. Put the person on sabbatical – out of the office (but not out of the church and not fired) for a specified period of time.
10. Assign menial tasks to be done in humility for a specified period of time.
11. Confession of the sin to the children and a request for forgiveness (depending on the age of the children, their maturity level and ability to understand).
12. Constant and consistent church attendance.
13. Constant and consistent family time.
14. Constant and consistent attendance at small groups.

There is no sin, which does not involve idolatry. Behind every idolatry is the kingdom of “self”. Self wants to sit on the throne. We want to make the decision of what is important and what is not important. We are giving more “worth” to ourselves than to God or someone else.

If we steal, we have valued whatever we took as of higher value than God.

If we choose to not go to church on Sunday, we have made an idol of whatever else we wanted to do more than obedience – pleasure, business, repairing the house, a football game, laziness, etc. have all become more important to us than God.

If we do not tithe, then money is our God.

If we take drugs or drink whisky and get high, the drugs and whisky are more important than God.

When we give time/attention/love to our children that should belong to our spouse, the children become an idol and you have committed spiritual adultery.

When we give time to a ministry that should belong to your spouse or children, the ministry becomes an idol and you have committed spiritual adultery.

When your spouse has told you that your car, job, sport, television show, hobby or something else is more important than he/she is to you, the car, job, sport, television show or hobby is an idol and you have committed spiritual adultery.

If we yell, scream or become demanding, then our own individual rights may be more important to us than obeying God and being like Jesus to others.

If we constantly work overtime and are not with our spouse and children, material possessions may be more important than being the husband/wife/father/mother that God commands us to be and material possessions have become our idol and we have committed spiritual adultery.

Pushing our children or spouse away because they are interrupting something we are watching on television results in us worshiping television more than we worship God.

When we become angry because the boss fails to compliment us, it is a sure sign that we serve the idol of self instead of humility.

In marriage when one spouse demands his or her way instead of being submissive to each other (*Ephesians 5:21- Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ*) we are placing ourselves above God and have become an idol to ourselves demanding our rights. In whatever degree we are not subject to Christ, we will not be subject to one another.

Spending time with friends instead of with our spouse or children has made an idol of the friend.

Spending time on the telephone that should have been given to the spouse or children has resulted in the telephone and the person on the other end of the telephone being an idol and you have committed spiritual adultery with that person.

Not spending dinnertime together as a family because what you are doing is an idol that has kept you from your family and you have committed spiritual adultery by doing it.

## **Agreement in Giving Outside of the Marriage to Another**

If you feel that you need to give your time or emotions to another for a period of time such your mother, father or a friend who are in need, this needs to be first discussed with your spouse and an agreement should be reached on the specific purpose and how long this purpose will last. It should be an exception rather than the norm that you are giving your time or emotions to someone other than your spouse.

Examples:

1. Your father, mother, a family member or a friend is sick and needs your help for the next week. You and your spouse have talked it over and there is agreement for you to spend the next six evenings at that person's home assisting with meals and other needs.
2. Your boss has asked you to work the next three weekends which you would normally be spending with your family. You and your spouse have talked it over and there is agreement for the two of you to temporarily sacrifice your family time together and for you to work the next three weekends.
3. A group of married women want to have a girl's night out to go eat and see a movie together. You both agree for each of you to have one night out with your friends. The agreement also includes which places you can each go to with others.
4. Your mother or father asks for your help on a Saturday that you would normally spend together with your family. You both agree to sacrifice your family time together so that you can help your parent on a Saturday.
5. Your work has put an extra burden on you to finish a project, which will require you to work on that project on your computer at home several evenings a week for the next month. You and your spouse have talked it over and there is agreement for you to work on your computer at home in order to finish the project.

## **Opposite Sex Friends**

You should covenant with your spouse that you will not have a close personal friend of the opposite sex that you both have not agreed to. Opposite sex friends must be friends with both of you or neither of you. You should agree that outside of a professional business relationship that you will not communicate with anyone of the opposite sex in the form of letters, e-mails, text messages, telephone calls or in person. You will not meet with, have breakfast, lunch or dinner with, go visit, or have someone visit me, be alone with or go with anyone of the opposite sex anywhere at any time without your spouse's expressed knowledge and consent.

To do any of the above should be an exception, not the norm, and should be on a case-by-case basis and considered to be highly unusual and only with your spouse's full consent and blessing.

If your spouse does not bless it you should covenant not to do it and to not be angry with your spouse for not blessing it, for they come first in your life above all other relationships.

## **Making It Right**



If you have had the wrong priorities then you need to make it right.

1. Admit your faults to each other.
2. Tell your husband or wife what you are going to do to make it right.
3. Negotiate with your husband or wife to a place where the two of you are in agreement.
4. Commit to meeting each other's need, not focusing "if" the need should be there, but on how you can meet the need.
5. Ask your spouse to forgive you for having your priorities mixed up.

## 29. Bitter Root Expectancy

*Hebrews 12:15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God that no root of bitterness springs up and by it many be defiled.*

Bitter root expectancy comes from either one single event that has happened or from a series of events that have occurred which will result in a person believing that “everyone” will treat them a certain way. As a result of a life experience or a series of life experiences the person expects to be treated the same way the rest of their life.

Bitter root expectancy is not based on God’s law. Expectancy is psychological; it is a lie that the mind has accepted as truth. A person with bitter root expectancy will treat the other person in such a way that it will usually result in the other person doing exactly what they were expected to do.

Let’s look at the following examples to help us understand:

1. As a child, Mary’s father leaves Mary’s mother for another woman. Mary’s mother tells Mary many times that this is just the way men are and that sooner or later every man will leave you. Mary is angry with her father for leaving her mother and blames her father for her mother’s unhappiness. Mary accepts what her mother says as the truth (sooner or later every man will leave you). As Mary is growing up she has many relationships with males. During each relationship Mary will test the male over and over to see if they will leave her. Each test to see “if” they will leave becomes bigger and bigger. Soon the test becomes too painful for the man to hang in there. Because of Mary’s behavior the man does in fact leave, proving to Mary that what she believes to be true is true that all men will eventually leave you.

It was Mary’s own behavior of testing the man over and over that greatly contributed to each man leaving. She had to test him to prove that he would leave. Her expectancy became reality and all through life each relationship she would have would be tested to the point that each man would eventually leave her. Mary is reaping from what she sowed in her childhood through her un-forgiveness of her father. She is cursed to have a similar problem as the situation that led to her childhood un-forgiveness and the lie she accepted as truth pushed her to test the faithfulness of each male she had a relationship with.

2. Judy’s father slapped her in the face when she was about three years old as a result of her talking back to him. When she was 5 years old while playing with the little boy next door he became angry with her and slapped her in the face. A thought entered into her mind which she accepted as truth that “sooner or later all men will hit you.” Judy grew up and married. The first time her husband disagreed with her Judy stood toe to toe with him and in a very loud, demanding and controlling voice said sternly, “all men are alike, you want to hit me don’t you? “Don’t you ever hit me!” Her husband is very surprised by her actions, as he had never struck anyone in his entire life. From that moment on each and every time her husband disagreed with her about anything, Judy would test him over and over to see if he would hit her. She would become louder and louder and stand toe to toe

with him and in a very loud, demanding and controlling voice said sternly, “all men are alike, you want to hit me don’t you? “Don’t you ever hit me?” After several years of this behavior her husband did began to tire of Judy’s behavior and finally lost his temper while she was standing toe to toe with him and reached out and slapped her. Judy was not surprised at her husband’s behavior, because she expected that sooner or later that he would hit her. Judy said, “See, I told you that sooner or later you would hit me . . . and you did, I knew that all men are alike!

Judy had dishonored her father by not forgiving him when he slapped her. Since she had not honored her father by forgiving him, she was cursed for life not to go well with her in the exact same area. Her testing of her husband was based on the lie that she expected to be hit by men. Judy was now reaping from what she sowed as a child with her unforgiveness of her father and the lie she imagined as truth.

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Some other examples of bitter root expectations would be:

1. Everyone will reject me = everyone does eventually reject them..
2. I will be treated differently than others. = will be treated differently
3. I will probably be fired from every job = fired from many jobs
4. Authority figures do not get along with me = does not get along well with the boss
5. I will most likely fail at everything I do = few successes in life
6. I am not the kind of person that women love = going from relationship to relationship
7. Sooner or later everyone will reject me = rejected by almost everyone

Do you have any bitter root expectations in your life?

Is there a repeated negative pattern in your life? Think about negative patterns that seem to follow you from relationship to relationship, job-to-job or different life situation to different life situation.

To be free from bitter root expectancy you will need to forgive at the root level and ask God to free you of the lie you believed that led you to expect a certain thing to happen to you in your relationships with others.

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## Sabotage of Success or Relationships

Bitter root expectancy often leads to self-sabotage in relationships and jobs. If you expect to be rejected then you may behave in such a way that leads to what you fear. The fear is usually rooted in the childhood or young adult life.

First time childhood experiences get deeply rooted in our foundation. When a child or adolescent has a huge success in his or her life and just after the huge success something very bad happened, the person feels fear on the verge of success and those emotions are now recorded in their mind.

The closer this person comes to achieving success in a job or relationship the greater this fear from the past comes into the present situation. Eventually the fear may become so great that this person will begin to sub-consciously sabotage a job or relationship in order to avoid the fear that is hitting them on the verge of success.

It may be a great mystery why this person will go from job to job or relationship to relationship and do something very unexpected or “stupid” that will sabotage the job or end the relationship.

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The anxiety is often resolved through counseling by going to the root of the fear and resolving the issue that the emotions are spinning off of.

# 30. Fear of Love

## *Watch the video: Fear of Love*

Other reasons a person may go from relationship to relationship could be an actual fear of love. A person with a fear of love may go from relationship to relationship and just when there is the most intimacy there will be a fight the very next day.

They fear opening their heart and therefore will only open their heart to a place where they feel safe. Because of past hurts in this person 's life, they may set up a self-protective mechanism to make sure that they are never hurt that way again. A person with this fear will have a history of growing close to you and opening up to you and just about the time you begin to feel close to this person they will pick a fight with you. They make a big deal out of a very little thing that may not make any sense to you.

Picking a fight with you and getting you to engage in the fight is a way this person protects their heart from opening further and risking being hurt to the level they were hurt by someone in their past. There will usually be a repeated pattern of being close, fighting and making up, over and over again.

It is the fear of love that the person is fleeing from. They are fleeing from your goodness. Your goodness causes their heart to open past the point where they feel safe.

This person was most likely loved very imperfectly in the past either by parents, a first love or someone else who hurt them badly. They are now afraid to receive love again out of fear that if their heart opens they risk the same hurt and pain they felt before. This is typical with first loves where one suffers a broken heart by another. Each of us has a fear of love to some degree or another.

This person may sub-consciously lay traps for you, falsely accuse you, and find defects in you in order to start an argument.

Each time an individual with this fear is threatened by the sweetness of love of a person near him (feels his or her heart beginning to open past the safe place), they will cause an argument or fight in order to be able to justify closing off their heart so they will feel safe again.

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## **To Break Through The Fear**

1. Love them through the issue.
2. Do not engage in the argument.
3. Put the value of them feeling loved by you over the truth of the matter.
4. Take the blame for whatever it is they want to charge you with. Ask them to forgive you even if you are not guilty (love is always higher than truth).

5. You must love them back to life (be willing to sacrifice and suffer for the past sins of others). Perfect love in the present heals the imperfect love from the past.
6. Be consistent in not engaging in an argument so they cannot justify closing off their heart to you. If you respond in anger they can justify closing their heart.
7. Reassure them that you will not leave them no matter what. If you make this statement then expect it to be tested.

*Perfect love casts out all fear 1 John 4:18*

Your perfect love and sweetness in the present is the key to breaking through their fear from the past. Keep in mind that you must be tested to be proven genuine. To be tested means that you can expect for the problem to get bigger before it gets better.

Each and every time their heart is opened past the safe place you must be tested to see if you genuinely love them. If you pass the test then their heart will open a little further, however, the test will be bigger for their heart to open to the next level. As you are found to be genuine at each level you are tested in, your perfect love in the present will eventually break through their fear of truly giving and receiving love.

Keep in mind that as your spouse finds defects or perceived defects in you, that you may be “triggered” by your spouse. Seek counseling to resolve these triggers so that you can be patient with your spouse and love them through this time of testing. Responding in anger will only give this person an excuse to close their heart in order to feel safe.

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# 31. Our Identity

## *Watch the video: Who Am I*

If you have a child and your son or daughter-in-law mistreats your child, how do you feel in reference to your son or daughter-in-law? When we love someone and someone mistreats the person we love, then we also feel unloved by the person who mistreats those we love.

*If anyone says, "I love God", yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God who he has not seen. And he has given this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother. 1 John 20-21*

God says that if anyone does not love (sacrifice for) their spouse and says that they love God, then that person is a liar

In the above scripture God is showing that if we do not love the person we are with, the person we see, then God, who we have never even seen, does not feel loved by us.

If you have a son or daughter-in-law, then the way that son or daughter-in-law finds a place in your heart is by loving your child. To the extent you see that your child is not loved by your son or daughter-in-law, the relationship with your son or daughter-in-law has is greatly hindered.

Would God, your father-in-law not feel the same way about the person you are married to?

We are commanded to love God and love each other. Each of us is a "child of God" which means if you are a husband you are married to God's daughter. If you are a wife you are married to God's son. If married you carry two titles with God.

1. You are a son or daughter of God
2. God is your father-in-law

*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.** 1 Peter 3:7*

This scripture indicates to you as a husband that to the extent your wife does not feel loved by you, your relationship with your father-in-law (God) is hindered.

For God to feel loved by us we must love whom God loves.

Husbands, one of the ways to your father-in-law's (God's) heart is to love who God loves. God loves his daughter and when he sees that His daughter does not feel loved by you, he also does not feel loved by you and your relationship with God is hindered.

Wives, one of the ways to your father in law's (God's) heart is to love whom God loves. God loves his son and when he sees that His son does not feel loved by you, he also does not feel loved by you and your relationship with God is hindered.

*This is love for God; to obey his commands, and his commands are not burdensome. 1 John 5:3*

*In this 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 members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church. **Each one of you must love his wife as he loves himself** and the wife must respect her husband. Ephesians 5:28-32*

The husband is commanded to:

1. Love his wife as he loves his own body
2. Leave his mother and father
3. Be united to his wife
4. Become one with his wife
5. Love his wife as he loves himself

Questions:

1. How do you love another **as you love your own body**?
2. What does it mean **if I love my wife I love myself**?
3. How do **two separate people become one**?
4. How do you **love your wife as you love yourself**?

To understand these questions requires us to go to other scripture.

*Then God said, “**Let us make man in our image, in our likeness** and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.*

***God created man in his own image, in the image of God He created him. Male and female he created them. Genesis 1:26-27***

*This then is how you should pray. Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name, your kingdom be done on earth as it is in heaven. Matthew 6:9-10*

Jesus prayed that the will of the Father be on earth the same as it is in heaven. For that to be so there must be individuals on earth who represent who is in heaven. When God made man, God placed two images in man. The image of Father God was in man and the image of Lord Jesus was in man.

God will meet absolutely every spiritual need man has, but not one flesh needs. God will not come down from heaven and hold us, caress us, hold our hands, give us hugs or have sex with us. When God created man, God purposely withheld himself from man so that man would need more than God. God withheld himself from Adam so that Adam would be interdependent upon another human being for completeness.

If God were all we needed there would have been no Eve for Adam would have been completely satisfied to be alone with just God. Adam was with God, yet Adam was lonely, as Adam had no other human being to meet his flesh needs.

***The Lord God said,” It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him”.** Genesis 2:18*

Note that it was God, **not** Adam who said that it was not good for Adam to be alone with just God. God knew that even though Adam was with God that Adam was lonely. Therefore God separated



Adam from himself. God put Adam to sleep and did spiritual surgery on Adam by reaching down inside of Adam and removed one image from Adam. God then brought the other image before Adam.

*The man (Adam) said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman **for she was taken out of man (me)**".*

Once Eve was removed from within Adam he was no longer a complete person. Adam was now part of a whole person.

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

Adam was the masculine part of Eve and Eve was the feminine part of Adam. **God commanded that they become one again.** After God separated the two images from each other each of them were then part of a whole person. This scripture in Ephesians now begins to make sense.

***In this 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 members of His body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery but I am talking about Christ and the church. Each one of you must love his wife as he loves himself and the wife must respect her husband. Ephesians 5:25-33***

I believe that for an individual on this earth to be a complete whole person there must be a trinity on earth as there is a trinity in heaven. I believe that the man, designated on earth to be the spiritual leader is here in the image of Father God, who is the spiritual leader in heaven. I believe that the woman is here in the image of Jesus, who follows the spiritual leadership of man.

*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. 1 Cor 11:3*

I believe that the Holy Spirit and the man and woman all "together as one" complete the trinity on earth.

If you remove any component of the trinity there will be loneliness. If you remove the woman and the man is left with the Holy Spirit the man will be lonely for a part of him is missing and he is incomplete. Soon the man will look for another woman to complete him.

If you remove the man and the woman is left alone with the Holy Spirit there will be loneliness for a part of her is missing and she is incomplete. Soon the woman will look for another male to complete her.

If you remove the Holy Spirit from the man and woman there is a void, there is incompleteness and they never feel complete.

The main objective in heaven is the "oneness" of the trinity. Nothing in heaven is more important than maintaining that oneness of the trinity. I believe that on earth nothing should be more important than maintaining the "oneness" of the trinity.

In my marriage the number one priority for me is for there to be no separation between the Holy Spirit and myself which means I try to be stay out of sin as sin separates me from both the Holy Spirit and my wife.

In heaven Father God and Jesus agree and the Holy Spirit carries out what the Father and Jesus have agreed to. I do not believe that Jesus would do anything that the Father has not agreed to and I do not believe that the Father would do anything that Jesus had not agreed to. It is agreement that maintains unity. Oneness in heaven in maintained through agreement. Neither the Father nor Jesus do anything that the other has not agreed to, as it would result in separation. The number one priority in heaven is to maintain the “oneness” of their relationship with each other.

If we are to do here what is done in heaven then our number one priority in marriage should be to maintain the “oneness” of the relationship. On earth if we want to have the blessings of the Holy Spirit in our marriage then we should be in agreement with each other before we do anything. Anything that a husband or wife does outside of the agreement results in:

1. An immediate loss of peace
2. The blessings of the Holy Spirit being withheld.
3. A separation of “oneness” in the husband/wife relationship.

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## 32. Becoming One

*Please watch the video: "Becoming One"*

*My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, **that all of them may be one**, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that **they may be one as we are one**. I in them and you in me. **May they be brought to complete unity** to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. John 17:20-23*

Jesus prayed for us to be in complete unity. Unity brings oneness. Unity and oneness is achieved through complete agreement. If you asked Jesus, the Father or the Holy Spirit a question you would get the same answer from each of them as they are in complete unity and are like-minded.

In the Lord's Prayer Jesus tells us that we are to live here on earth, the same way that they live in heaven.

*Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Matthew 18:10*

1. In heaven nothing is done unless there is agreement. Doing what the other has not agreed to would bring separation.
2. The Father does nothing Jesus has not agreed to.
3. Jesus does nothing the Father has not agreed to.
4. The Holy Spirit only does what the Father and Jesus have agreed to.
5. The relationship "oneness" of their relationship with each other is a priority.
6. They are submitted to each other and do what is asked of each other.
7. They have no secrets from each other.
8. One is leading and the other is following.

If we want to have the blessings of the Holy Spirit here on earth in our marriages then:

1. Neither the husband nor the wife should do anything that the other has not agreed to. The Holy Spirit does not bless or work in disagreement.
2. The "oneness" of the marriage relationship should take priority over all other relationships on earth except for your personal relationship with God.
3. The husband and wife should be submitted to each other and do what is asked of each other.
4. There should be no secrets from each other.
5. There should be a spiritual leader that leads in love and the other willingly following that loving leadership.

*Again I tell you that if **two of you** on earth **agree** about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my **Father** in heaven. For where two or three come together **in my name** there I am with them. Matthew 18:19-20*

*Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so? Amos 3:3*

## **The Trinity**

The husband, wife and the Holy Spirit form a trinity on earth. The trinity is maintained by no one doing anything that would result in separation from each other.

The main objective of the marriage is to maintain the trinity “oneness” through agreement and obeying God’s commands which results in a blessed marriage.

No matter how good your intent to do something, if doing that thing brings separation from your spouse then you are breaking the oneness of the marriage and the oneness of the trinity. Maintaining the oneness of the trinity should be the number one priority of each one of us on earth. Oneness of the trinity is based on agreement. The Holy Spirit only does what both the Father and Jesus have agreed to. The word tells us that where two or more are gathered together in “agreement” that the Holy Spirit is present.

Here is where I believe that many of us go wrong. Our intent to do good is there, however, we may often do things with the intent to do good that our spouse has not agreed to. I offer several examples:

1. In our ministry we have a room upstairs (attached to our home) that can be used by people coming from out of state to reside in overnight if they cannot afford a motel in the area. From time to time an individual who is homeless comes to our ministry seeking counseling. In this situation you would think that the Christ-like thing to do would be to offer the homeless person a place to stay for a period of time. What if my wife in her childhood had memories of someone breaking into her parent’s house and causing physical harm to her and her parents? Offering the homeless person a place to stay in our home could easily result in my wife having a fear in the present as her mind relates to what happened to her in her childhood. In this situation my wife would most likely not be in agreement to a homeless person staying in our home. I could easily argue and justify why this is a good thing to do, however, just the argument alone would lead to separation in the oneness in my relationship with my wife. That separation in itself is enough reason for me to not demand my way in this situation so that my wife will not be in fear because one of my jobs as her husband is to insure that she feels protected. Therefore, to maintain the oneness of the relationship with my wife I would not allow the homeless person to stay in our ministry.
2. Another example would be a pastor, a deacon, elder or leader of a church spending so much time with the hurt and wounded flock that his wife and children hardly see him. He defends his behavior of not spending time with his family because he is doing God’s work. He further justifies his actions because it is his “job” to be a pastor and helping the hurt and wounded. He does not realize that in doing this he is causing separation from his wife and his wife and children do not feel loved by him. It is true that his intent is good; however, his behavior separates him from the “oneness” of the trinity and the blessings of oneness with his wife. God’s blessings are based on agreement. He needs to place the needs of his wife and children above the needs of the church.

### **Sin from The Past**

Another obstacle to a man and woman becoming “one” with each other in the present is sin in the past, which triggers us in the present and keeps us from being “one” with the person who triggered us.

It is impossible to be one with your spouse in a holy way when you are still one with your mother, father or another in the past in an unholy way. What keeps us “one” with another in the past is un-forgiveness of that person. Anytime your spouse does anything similar to something you have not forgiven in the past, the same negative emotions you felt the past are felt again in the present and break the oneness in the present with your spouse and your peace is lost.

This is why it is so very important to go back into the past and forgive absolutely everyone for everything so these unwanted emotions do not keep surfacing into the present and causing division.

You may ask, “How do I know if **I really should be feeling** what I am feeling when my spouse does something or says something that results in me feeling unwanted emotions?” I believe that Jesus is the answer. I believe that one of the things Jesus did by coming to earth was to set the example for us of what normal is supposed to look like.

Early in my search for freedom I read that Paul was having some of the same problems as me. Paul said that he kept doing the very things that he did not want to do.

*We know that the law is spiritual but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living within me. For I know that good itself does not live in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For **I have the desire to do what is good. But I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do - this I keep doing. Now, if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.** Romans 7:14-20*

Basically Paul is saying, why do I do what I do not want to do when I do not want to do it? If I do not want to do it and keep doing it, then it is no longer I who is doing it but it is the sin within me that keeps doing it.

This is exactly what a typical “trigger” is. A trigger is coming from un-forgiveness in the past (sin) causing me to behave in the present and feel in the present what I do not want to feel. When we feel it in the present we do not associate what we are feeling with what happened in the past. We are actually deceived into thinking that the reason we are feeling what we are feeling in the present is a result of the behavior of another and we want the other person to stop doing what they are doing so we do not feel what we are feeling.

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**We are deceived into believing that we are angry with people who we are not really angry with.**

Then the question is: How do I know if I am triggered? I found that answer by asking myself: If the same thing was just said to Jesus or was done in his presence, would Jesus be feeling what I am feeling right now?

Usually I find that the answer is no. He would not have the knot in his stomach, the pressure in his chest or the tightness in his jaw. Since Jesus would not be feeling what I am feeling and I am created to be like Jesus, then there is something in me that is not in Jesus. That thing that is in me and not in Jesus is sin which is triggering me.

*Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but the sin living in me that does it.*

If we would simply obey God and forgive everyone for everything, every day, right away, we would eventually settle the sin debt within us. By forgiving everyone each time you are triggered you will eventually begin to walk in freedom by dealing with the bad fruit each time it appears. Obviously, though, going to the root is a much quicker way of getting free.

### **How to Be Blessed**

In all areas that you have agreed with your spouse and that you and your spouse are as one in, that agreement can be blessed by God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In all areas where there is disagreement between you and your spouse, the disagreement causes separation between you and your spouse and therefore, the blessings of God are withheld. When you pray independently of your spouse for God's blessing in this area of your life where there is disagreement, that prayer then lacks the power of the "oneness" between you, your spouse and the Holy Spirit.

Look at the areas listed below where you and your spouse may not in agreement. These would be the areas where there is conflict. You need to try to reach agreement through negotiation. You may not get exactly what you want and your spouse may not get what they want, however, through the negotiation process you should be able to come to a place where the two of you can agree in each and every area.

### **Areas of Possible Disagreement**

1. Budget
2. Allowance
3. New purchases for home
4. Clothing purchases
5. Moving
6. Taking a new job
7. Going to church
8. Going to a different church
9. Being late
10. Assuming a church position
11. Visiting parents or in laws
12. Time spent with parents or in laws
13. Friends who are and are not acceptable
14. Time spent with friends
15. Places you go separately
16. Places you go together
17. Relationship with someone of the opposite sex
18. Going certain places
19. Coming home at a certain time
20. The day/ hours you will work
21. Mission trips
22. Vacations
23. Spending time together without kids
24. Date night
25. Frequency of sexual intimacy
26. Intimacy without sex (emotional intimacy)
27. Time spent on the computer
28. Time spent on sports or hobbies
29. Television viewing
30. Movies watched
31. Making time daily for conversation/re-bonding
32. Making time daily for blessing each other/prayer

- 33. Making time during the week for study of the word.
- 34. Who will cook
- 35. Cleaning the house
- 36. Picking up after each other
- 37. Discipline of children
- 38. Yard work/house maintenance
- 39. Helping around the house

- 40. Children's chores
- 41. Drinking alcohol
- 42. Planning retirement
- 43. Starting a ministry
- 44. Business partners
- 45. Where you work
- 46. Different bedtimes
- 47. Doing what has been asked

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**Workshop - homework**

Highlight each area where there is not agreement between you and your spouse. Then determine the priority of the issues you need to discuss with your spouse. Each of you may have a different priority. Take turns working through your priority list until you have reached an agreement with your spouse in each and every area of your life where you have not agreed. Remember that agreement is reached through negotiation. Be willing to give/negotiate to a place where you can say "yes". If there are issues not listed on this page you can write them down in the extra space provided.

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# 33. Spiritual Leadership

**The husband is designated as the priest and spiritual leader of the home.**

The leader of the home leads by example. It is normally through his leadership that his wife and children learn to respond in the same way that he has demonstrated to his family. His leadership should be all about love.

The husband leads by setting the example to his wife and children of what to do:

1. When he does not get his way - *he does not become angry or impatient.*
2. When he is wrongfully accused - *he does not become angry and upset but instead he responds with patience & love.*
3. He shows how to respond when his wife needs him to do something – *by not putting her off or ignoring her.*
4. He teaches how to respond when someone feels emotionally hurt - *by validating the feelings of others. He never tells them that they better not cry, make fun of them for crying, tell them that they should not be feeling what they are feeling or tell them to grow up or stop acting like a baby. Instead he affirms what they are feeling and attempts to reconcile them to him or others.*
5. He sets the example to his children - *through seeing him studying the bible and in prayer.*
6. He sets the example of how to properly respond when someone has wronged him by - *openly demonstrating forgiveness to his children and blessing those who have wronged him. He does not become angry and want to get even in front of his children.*
7. He sets the example of what is seen and not seen on television – *he will not watch something that the children cannot watch (mature audiences only) the world says, “mature”, however, Christ would say immature. He does not watch programs, which glorify sin such as murder, stealing, slander, name-calling or belittling or making fun of each other as most situational comedies do.*
8. He never belittles or publically embarrasses his spouse or children by correcting them in front of others.
9. He never makes fun of others, poking fun at or belittling anyone or a family member.
10. He demonstrates how anger is properly expressed by *not yelling, screaming, slamming doors, calling names or hitting or breaking things.*
11. He never disciplines in anger. *He waits until later, discusses it with his wife and agrees upon discipline. He never withdraws love to discipline. The child is not bad, what the child did was bad.*
12. He prays for and with his wife and children and blesses them daily.
13. He is the same person at home with the wife and kids Monday through Saturday as he is on Sunday morning in church. *He does not treat his wife and children differently than he does those people at church. (Hypocrisy) – which causes rebellion.*



- 14. He is a man of justice. *He does not punish for mistakes but uses mistakes to teach (injustice causes rebellion around the age of 12 years).*
- 15. He disciplines only for direct disobedience of "known" rules of the home. Injustice says you should have known. Justice insures that the rules are not only known but understood and gives grace by not giving the maximum punishment or simple warnings for minor infractions.
- 16. He leads his home by setting the example, *not commanding his wife - the children see him and his wife as equals as we see the Father and Son as equals submitted to each other.*
- 17. He disagrees with his wife in private, never in front of the children.
- 18. When he is triggered *he does not blame his wife or children for what he is feeling.*
- 19. He is the peacemaker, setting the tone of peace for the household when he is present by *resolving conflicts between others teaching them to forgive and to be reconciled to each other.*

## Workshop

If you have not led in the ways described above, now would be the time to ask your spouse for forgiveness and tell her what you are going to do differently in the future.

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## 34. Codependency

People in codependent relationships allow their spouse or another they are in close relationship with to treat them in an abusive way in order to avoid being alone. They may allow the other person to mistreat them in exchange for the other person not leaving them. Or, they may allow the other person to behave in a dysfunctional manner so that they can also continue to do what they want to do which is also unacceptable behavior.

You may hear a person in a codependent relationship make statements similar to:

1. He only beats me twice a year, the rest of the time he is a nice guy.
2. It is ok if he gets drunk at night, he does not say anything about the house being a mess.
3. I know it is not right for him to sometimes be with her. But, I know that he loves me because he always comes back.
4. If I left him I would not have anywhere to go, who would take care of me?
5. You can do what you want to do, just don't leave me.

### **Co-dependence usually begins in childhood**

Children have needs, which must to be met. Children need to be affirmed by their parents. If the parent does not affirm the child, the need(s) of the child do not go away. Physically the person will grow and mature. But, emotionally, the person will not mature past the age where the needs of the child were not met. Unresolved triggers such as unforgiveness and lies believed as truth also leave a person stuck at the emotional age of the unforgiveness or where the lie was believed.

Subsequently, the person becomes an adult with the "emotional needs of a child". This can quickly become overwhelming to the spouse (who has taken the place of this person's parents) – who is trying to meet the emotional needs of a child in an adult's body.

Often a person who is married to a spouse who is stuck emotionally as a child gives up trying to meet those overwhelming unmet needs. When the giver gives up, the emotionally immature person then often reaches outside of the relationship to try to get their needs met.

Due to the increase in dysfunctional families in today's society, it is not uncommon for a husband and a wife to both come from a family where they were not affirmed by their parents. Both have emotional needs which may be overwhelming for the other to meet. Since the deep need of affirmation and being held is not being met for either of them, the relationship may soon quickly deteriorate and neither of them will understand why. They are both trying now to get from each other what they did not get in their childhood and neither is capable of meeting these great emotional needs that the other spouse has.

An adult with unmet needs will transfer this need to the people nearest to them in order to get these needs met. This is usually our spouse, fiancée, boyfriend, best friend, minister, counselor, son or daughter. When this transference is made this person is then asking the giver to do what his or her parent did not do. He or she is subconsciously asking the giver to affirm and to give worth.

Most relationships are formed with an individual that is equal to or near our own emotional maturity. If the taker is a female and not affirmed by her father as a child, she may be subconsciously searching for a male (father figure) to affirm her as an adult.

She may have many relationships, however, because due to her emotional immaturity, males who are emotionally healthier than her will eventually break off the relationship due to her neediness. She perceives the break-ups as more rejection, which reinforces the lies in her mind about her lack of self-worth.

The only long-term relationships she will be able to maintain are relationships with a male who is near her same emotional level of immaturity or with a male who is emotionally healthy enough to help her work through her insecurities.

If the person she is in a relationship with is also emotionally immature, this can result in two emotionally starved individuals involved in a relationship who are subconsciously looking to each other for affirmation.

Neither individual consciously realizes that they are looking to the other for affirmation and neither is usually capable of affirming the other. This will most likely result in big fights over needs not being met where words similar to the following are spoken:

- You never
- You always
- If you would just do this I would ...

In this type of emotionally immature relationship the focus is usually on getting, not giving.

If the male is slightly more emotionally mature than her or emotionally healthy enough to help her work through her insecurities, he will try to meet her unmet emotional needs. In the beginning he gives out of love and really thinks that he is doing the right thing. Neither of them realizes how deep each other's unmet emotional needs are.

She does not know how to meet his unmet needs and he does not know how to meet her unmet needs. It won't take long until he tires of trying to meet her never ending neediness and begins to withdraw. When he withdraws, neither of their needs are being met. The relationship then reaches a point where both individuals are critical of each other.

At this point one of several things may happen.

1. The one who is the most mature is usually the one who ends up "giving" to the one who is the least mature, the "taker".

2. If the giver wants the relationship to continue, the giver will continue to give, however, the giving is now starting to be given out of obligation and not out of love. Since the giving is now out of obligation and not out of love, the giver often "gives out" as the obligation reservoir is much shallower than the love reservoir. Soon both the taker and the giver begin to sense the defilement of giving out of obligation instead of love and the relationship deteriorates further.
3. The giver realizes that he is not capable of meeting the neediness of the taker as the taker continues to complain that their needs are not being met. The distance between both individuals continues to increase and the taker becomes more angry and bitter at the giver. The taker begins to have fear that the giver will not meet their needs. The taker may eventually feel betrayed by the giver and either the taker or the giver may terminate the relationship.
4. The giver finally realizes that the needs of the taker are too great for them to meet and they feel that they are being sucked dry emotionally. This usually results in the giver disconnecting and running from the relationship.
5. Out of fear of being alone, and not believing that they are lovable, they may form a love – hate relationship. Because of their immaturity they both fear being alone. To each of them, the thought of being alone is worse than a bad relationship where their needs are not being met. This results in them being in a fear based relationship. They are not happy with each other; however, they fear terminating the relationship and being alone.
6. The taker may become suicidal and out of fear that she may harm herself, the giver may stay in the relationship out of obligation for her safety.
7. The taker may become so dependent on the giver that the taker is no longer attractive to the giver. The giver is being "squeezed" to give what he or she does not know how to give. The giver eventually is no longer satisfied in the relationship as he or she is being squeezed over and over to give something that he or she cannot give. As the giver begins to disconnect, the taker senses that the giving has lessened and the taker may become bitter and easily offended. Many arguments take place and the taker becomes more and more insecure. The more insecure the taker is, the more jealousy and signs of insecurity will be exhibited. The insecurity of the taker causes the giver to disconnect even more. The taker may end up begging the giver to stay by threatening suicide, saying that they have no purpose in life without the other person. Eventually the giver "gives out" and either shuts down (emotionally disconnects) or leaves. Frequently the taker is left alone wondering why this person would not love them.

Unfortunately neither individual realizes why the relationship was terminated and they begin a search for someone else to meet their needs and the process begins all over again.

And may happen again and again, resulting in broken relationship after broken relationship.

If two needy people marry, they will hold each other accountable for their unhappiness. She will now hold him accountable for her happiness. She wants him to tell her how pretty she is and to notice those little things about her. She wants to be complemented on how she looks and for him to notice her new hairstyle. She wants to be complemented on the new dress she has on and how nice she looks with that particular necklace or earrings. She wants to hear the words that she is loved and that she is a treasure to him. She wants to feel emotionally connected to him by him holding her hand. She wants to feel protected and secure with him and for him to put his arm around her often. She wants to be held often without the fear that each time she is held that he will expect it to lead to something sexual. She may want him to do for her what her father did not do. She is looking for affirmation. She is looking for her husband to affirm her worth.

Each of these are natural needs within her. All women will have these needs within them, however, to the degree that her father did not tell her how pretty she is, there will be an insatiable void for her to hear those words from her husband. To the degree that her father did not notice the little things about her, there will be an insatiable need for her husband to notice those things. To the degree that her father did not complement her in her new dress, did not notice her hair, earrings and necklace; did not tell her often that she is loved; to the degree that she did not feel treasured by her father; and to the degree that she was not held often by her father; deep voids will be left within her which now only her husband can fill.

To the degree that her husband does not fill these voids, she will not feel loved by her husband. That little girl who did not feel loved by her father is still there deep inside her and the needs have not gone away. She will soon either consciously or subconsciously begin blaming her husband for her unhappiness.

This unhappiness may be expressed in words similar to: "I do not feel like you love me anymore", "If you really loved me you would", "I do not feel secure in this relationship", "I do not feel like I am attractive to you", "You do not treat me like you used to", "All that you want is sex".

He may also hold her accountable for his happiness. His deepest need as a man is to feel respected and honored. The need to feel respected and honored is even stronger than his need for sex. As his wife is now beginning to be critical of him, he no longer feels honored and respected by her. His next deepest need is for sex. He is visually stimulated and is connected with his emotions through sex. When he is having sex with her he feels loved. This may result in him having an insatiable sex drive. At first his wife is anxious to meet his sexual needs as the sexual experience is still new and exciting, however, as time continues, his sex drive does not diminish.

Since he does not know how to connect with her emotionally she may begin to close off to him and become weary of trying to meet the needs of what seems to her to be a sexual maniac.

She may now very often openly express her disapproval of him and be very critical of her husband who is not meeting her emotional needs. She is sexually stimulated through her emotions. Since her husband is not meeting her emotional needs she may now feel that she is being “used” by her husband sexually and may frequently express that all he wants is sex and that she feels like he is just using her body. The more she feels that her emotional needs are not being met, the more she will begin to distance herself from her husband.

He will sense in his deep self that his wife is disconnecting from him and this will trigger a fear within him subconsciously to reconnect with her. Since he only knows how to connect with her sexually, his desire for sex may increase, which causes her to withdraw from him even more as she feels more and more used by him during the act of sex.

Since he is no longer feeling respected and honored at home he may now begin to spend extra time at the office. A man will spend most of his time at the place where he feels the most honor and respect. If he feels respected and honored the most at home, he will be at home. If he feels the most honor and respect at the office, on the golf course, at the bar, or with the guys fishing, or working out at the gym, that is where he will spend his time. Since he is now not feeling honored and respected at home he may be coming home late and spending time with friends instead of her. This will result in her feeling even more emotionally disconnected from him. She may become extremely jealous of the fact that he is spending time with others or something other than her.

They are now locked into a never-ending battle. She is not feeling emotionally protected by her husband. Her lack of security causes her to disconnect from him sexually and be critical of him. He then is not feeling honored and respected by her and his sexual needs are no longer being met.

The wife is blaming the husband for her unhappiness and the husband is accusing the wife for his unhappiness. Out of fear of being alone, or because they have children or for religious reasons they may stay in the marriage, however, they are disconnected emotionally from each other and there may be much silence in the home.

This not an unusual cycle for a husband and wife to be locked into. The cycle can change when either of them will stop taking and become a giver. The best circumstance is for both to become givers and begin meeting each other’s needs.

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To stop the cycle:

1. Decide to be a giver instead of a taker
2. Stop being a martyr and telling your spouse all the sacrifices you have made for them.

3. Listen to your spouse's complaints. Find a way to meet the need, instead of making excuses for not doing what your spouse has asked you to do. Remember that a complaint is a place where your spouse does not feel loved by you. Nagging is a complaint being voiced again because you still have not changed. Your job is for your spouse to feel loved by you. Be willing to change so there is no complaint.
4. Stop accusing your spouse.
5. Stop speaking negative words to each other.
6. Stop using words like you always or you never. These are accusing words.
7. Look for things to complement your spouse for. You can find something!
  - You are pretty or handsome
  - You are a hard worker
  - I like the sound of your voice
  - You are a good lover
  - You are a good man
  - You are a good woman
  - Thank you for . . . .
  - I appreciate what you did . . .
  - You are a good father
  - You are a good mother
  - You are a good house keeper
  - You take good care of the house
  - Your hair looks nice
  - You dress nice
  - You have good taste
  - You are so smart
  - I am so proud of you
8. Never share outside your marriage with anyone that your spouse has not agreed to. Never share with your mother, father or a friend that your spouse has not agreed to. You will eventually forgive but that friend or parent may hold a grudge.
9. Never seek advice from your friends. They are most likely having problems also. If you seek advice, make sure it is from a person who counsels/ministers and has the "real" answers about what you should do to improve your marriage instead of listening to what a friend thinks you should do. Agree with each other about who you will seek advice from.
10. Never ever go to bed angry. Forgive everything, every day, every time, right away. Going to bed angry allows darkness to go deep in your heart.
11. Ask for forgiveness even if you did nothing wrong. Forgiveness is for your spouse so they can keep their heart open to you.
12. Never defend yourself when your spouse is hurt. It is more important that your spouse feels loved by you than that you are innocent. Pride wants to be innocent and will defend. Humility will ask for forgiveness even when you are not guilty. Stop being so prideful and tell your spouse that you are sorry for what you said or did and offer to say it different or do it differently even when you are innocent.
13. Begin speaking blessings over each other and praying for each other.

14. Seek a professional counselor to resolve your deep wounds left over from your childhood, which causes you to be emotionally triggered with each other.

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# 35. Lack of Purpose in Life

Early in life many high achievers set a life goal. After that goal is set, that goal becomes their purpose in life. That goal could be to become a rock star, movie star, CEO of a company, a certain position such as a doctor, to have a certain amount of money, to have certain possessions or to be a mother. In the mind of this person success may be measured by how close they come to achieving this goal.

There is a phenomenon that often occurs with people who have met their life's goal. Now that the goal has been met, that person may lose their purpose in life. They may not know what to do with the rest of their life once their original purpose in life has been achieved.

This person has achieved their goal. They may have more money than they could ever spend, have a position that few achieve, a home and material possessions but none of these things seem to have the value they once did because the purpose behind it all is now gone.

Depression is common and suicide often accompanies the depression. I counseled a CEO that this happened to. He had actually put a gun to his head and intended to pull the trigger. He was the CEO of a number of companies. He had absolutely all the earthly possessions and money that he had ever dreamed of having. However, his purpose of life was gone and he was in deep depression for several months. He began drinking heavily, quit going to work and stayed in bed most of the day. It was only getting him with God and redefining his purpose in life that the depression lifted and he became excited about life again.

The same thing often happens to women who suddenly become empty nesters. If her priorities in life were out of order and she was more devoted to her children than she was to her husband, she may have neglected the needs of her marriage in order to meet the needs of her children. Her entire purpose of life was focused on the children. When the last child leaves the house, this woman's purpose in life has just come to an end. She may attempt to refocus on her husband, but it may be too late after so many years of neglecting him. Through counseling, if her husband is willing, and hearts are reopened through forgiveness, she can be redirected to focusing on the needs for unity in the marriage.

*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28*

We all need refocus on God's purpose for our life for the use of our gifts and talents.

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## 36. Second Childhood

We have all heard of someone who suddenly threw all caution to the wind and left a marriage, a job or a position in life to do something that made absolutely no sense at all. If you are married to someone who has done this or who is in this stage of life, it may be hard to understand this behavior without looking at the roots of this person's childhood.

### **Living the dream of a parent**

*Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4*

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

It is not uncommon for a father to attempt to live out his own life dreams through the life of his son. This father may be pushing his son to do the things the father never could do. It does not matter what the child wants to do or what God given talents the child has as the father is completely focused on living out his dreams through the life of his son. If that son yields to the demands of his father he may push down his own talents and dreams to achieve what his father wants. His father may require that his son have a certain job title such as a doctor or a lawyer, live in a certain home in a certain part of the city and be married to a person of a certain status.

Everyone on earth was created by God for a God given purpose with God given talents. Our parents are to encourage us to develop our talents and help us live out our dreams to individuate and become a person separate from our mother or father.

Even though the son may grow up and be successful in the eyes of his father, his own dreams and desires may not have ever been achieved. This man may eventually wear out trying to be someone who he was not created to be. When he does wear out, this is the time when he is willing to give up everything he has in order to become who he wants to be instead of who he was forced to be.

He may suddenly quit his job, buy his dream car, divorce his wife and marry a woman he is attracted to instead of the one that was handpicked by his father or mother. He is now later in life individuating and attempting become the man he wanted to be instead of the man his father or mother forced him to be.

### **Strict Parents**

Sometimes a child is brought up in a home with very strict parents. The parents may be strict because of religious or moral beliefs. This child may not be allowed to watch television, listen to music, have friends, go to the movies or do the normal things that children do to have fun.

To please his or her parents this child may follow all the rules of the home until he or she has reached the age that they can leave the home. Children who leave these types of homes often throw all caution to the wind and are eager to experience the life that their parents never allowed at home. Adults from these homes sometimes become the opposite extreme of their strict parents, drinking alcohol, using drugs or being involved in immoral sex.

Shaming this person for their behavior will usually not be helpful as it will be doing the same thing their mother or father did. Their parents used guilt to get them to do what they want them to do instead of encouraging them to develop their own talents and become who they wanted to be.

If you are married to a man or woman going through their second childhood, attempt to walk this out with them. It may be a delicate tightrope you are on trying to stand on concrete and walk beside them as they throw caution to the wind. It is your more perfect love in the present that will help them through being loved so imperfectly in their past.

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# 37. When Separation is Appropriate

*Please watch the video on Separation*

If the offender is not willing to pay restitution to their spouse that was requested due to adultery or other unacceptable behavior, then separation should seriously be considered. Separation is not for the intent of punishing the offender; the separation is out of obedience to God who commands us to separate ourselves from certain unacceptable behavior(s).

**First** - we must realize that our obedience to God comes before our obligation to be married. God commands us to separate ourselves from individuals with certain behaviors. Simply because we are now married to someone who is behaving unacceptably does release us from obeying God's command to separate our self from that behavior(s).

**Secondly** - the separation is designed for the offender to miss fellowship with his or her spouse and children enough to be willing to make those changes that are necessary and to receive counseling during the separation period so they are able to make those required changes.

## **Commands to separate are as follows**

*But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them. 2 Timothy 3:1-5*

*When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft or casts spells or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults with the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord. Deuteronomy 18:9-11*

*The cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars – their place will be the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death. Revelation 21:8*

*Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10*

*I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people – not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. But I am writing you that you must not associate*

*with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy an idolater or a slanderer a drunkard or a swindler. With such a person do not even eat. What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. Expel the wicked man from among you. 1 Corinthians 5:9-13*

*But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality or of any kind of impurity or greed because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving for you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person – such a man is an idolater – has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes to those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them. Ephesians 5:3-7*

*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. Therefore come out from them and be separate. 2 Corinthians 6:14-17*

The people listed above that we “are” to separate ourselves from are those people who are:

1. Immoral (wicked, bad, sinful, indecent or dirty)
2. Greedy People - (lovers of money instead of God, money hungry or gluttonous people having an uncontrolled desire for things)
3. Swindlers - (cheaters, people who defraud, trick, deceive, steal, or fraudulently represent themselves)
4. Slanderers - (to tell lies about another person or false stories about others)
5. Drunkards - (alcoholics)
6. Individuals who use obscenities - (indecent, pornography, smuttiness, profanity, cuss or swear words).
7. Foolish talk - (irresponsible, senseless, stupid, idiotic, ridiculous, or use a lack of judgment, lack of common sense)
8. Coarse joking - (tasteless, unladylike, uncouth, rude, impolite, ill-mannered, vulgar, indecent, improper, foul-mouthed, obscene, dirty, revolting, or disgusting).
9. Abusive people who are boastful, conceited or proud (continually praise themselves instead of God, people who claim or act as if they are better than others, or act as if they need no one).
10. People who are disobedient to their parents.
11. Individuals who are unforgiving.
12. Spouses who are ungrateful (show no appreciation for things done for them and have no humility).
13. Spouses who are unholy and without love.
14. Spouses who are rash (irresponsible, reckless, thoughtless, foolhardy or, foolish)
15. Spouses who are brutal (savage, inhumane, hardhearted, merciless, remorseless, unfeeling, crude or coarse) and have no self control (physically abusing).

16. A spouse who refuses to live in peace with his or her partner.
17. A spouse who is sexually immoral.

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Remember, the purpose of the separation is:

1. Obedience to God to separate ourselves from certain sins.
2. For the offender to miss fellowship with the spouse and children enough to want to seek help or stop the unacceptable behavior.
3. To give the offender incentive to pay restitution so that trust can be reestablished.

If the offender refuses to stop the sin, then the separation could possibly become permanent in order to maintain obedience to God.

If the offense is an affair and the offender refuses to stop an affair then he should be expelled from fellowship with the church until the time that he repents, asks for forgiveness, makes a public confession and is willing to make restitution to their spouse.

#### Examples of Restitution

1. For a specified period of time, requiring that any time the offender is absent from his home, that he make frequent telephone calls to his spouse or accountability partner verifying his whereabouts. These calls are to be made from a store or business so that the "caller ID" can verify the offender's location.
2. Requiring the offender to make a job change or make some other change to insure that the offender does not again come into contact with the person they had been involved with.
3. Requiring the offender to be home at a certain hour.
4. Requiring the offender to undergo marriage counseling.
5. Requiring the offender to break off any friendships/relationships, which may have influenced or condoned the adultery.
6. Requiring the offender to have an accountability partner. The accountability partner should be someone who has a solid marriage and understands this problem.
7. Full and open disclosure of all e-mails, voice mails and letters.
8. Full and open disclosure of all previously private areas.
9. Temporary transfer of all finances into an account which the offender does not have access to.
10. Full disclosure of the affair.
11. Certain individuals, friends, people, places or establishments are made off limits.

12. To patiently divulge the details of their daily activities.
13. To agree without argument to do whatever needs to be done to reestablish trust in the relationship.
14. Confession of the sin to parents/parents-in-law and other family members who were hurt.
15. Confession of the sin to children and a request for forgiveness (depending on the age of the children, their maturity level and ability to understand).

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# 38. You Drive Me Crazy in The Car

## We Are Going To Be Late!

*Watch the video: You Drive Me Crazy In The Car*

The car seems to be a place where many men and some women have a hard time submitting to the other. As a result of lack of submission, couples frequently argue, especially if the driver is feeling controlled by the passenger.

**Do you frequently hear statements such as?**

- Slow down
- You're driving too fast
- You are scaring me
- Did you see that sign showing us that we would be turning up ahead?
- Did you see the speed limit?
- You are following too closely
- Please don't pass on a hill/curve
- Watch out for that car
- Please keep your eyes on the road
- Please don't do that while you are driving
- Are you blind?
- Would you stop and ask for directions?



## **Fear**

Many women and some men have fear from previous life experiences that comes forth when you are driving too fast; following close to another vehicle or you seem distracted. Their fears may manifest when they sense danger. It doesn't matter whether you are an excellent driver or not. Their fear will manifest regardless of who is driving; therefore, **it is not something personal** targeted towards you.

Remember your job is for your spouse to feel loved by you. If your spouse is scared of your driving and you continue to drive in ways that cause her to be scared, then you are not doing your job of being submitted to your spouse.

**Basic rule to go by:** Love is always higher than truth.

If you are insensitive to your spouse's fear and tell them that your driving should not bother them or give them repeated excuses for your behavior, then that simply means or implies to them that you are putting how you want to drive above your spouse's fears or concerns. Love gives up its right to be right or to do what it wants to do for the benefit of the other.

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## **We Are Going To Be Late!**

I remember a lot of arguments occurred either before we left to get into the car to go somewhere or on the way there because we were running late. My wife is from the Philippines and I have learned that time in the Philippines is about 45 minutes slower than time in the United States. This resulted in many arguments when we were going somewhere. Several times I left her at home because I knew we were going to be late and I really hated arriving late.

As I grew into my role as the spiritual leader of my home, I learned that my wife feeling loved by me was more important than if we were going to be late somewhere. I also learned that the reason being late bothered me so much is because I cared more about what the people would think of us arriving late than I did about how my wife was feeling about the way I was treating her because of her lateness.

I made a major change in my life to care more about how my wife feels than about what the opinions of others are when we arrive late.

Since I sometimes teach classes, there are occasions that I cannot be late. On those occasions I let my wife know beforehand that I have to leave the house at a certain time and we are in agreement that if she is not ready by that time that she will have to drive a separate vehicle. This has restored peace to this aspect of our marriage.

It is true that you could arrive an hour earlier if you were driving a little faster; however, if your fast driving results in your spouse not feeling loved by you, then it is wrong for you to drive fast. You are putting arriving on time above your spouse feeling loved by you.

It is true that you can drive the car and talk on the phone at the same time, however, if your talking on the phone at the same time as driving results in your spouse feeling fear, then it is wrong for you to talk on the phone regardless of your excuses and regardless of how well you can drive. Love is a higher priority than truth.

You are not exempt from God's law commanding you to submit to one another simply because you happen to be in a car. Remember that submission is not control. If you are submitted to your spouse then you are willing to voluntarily do what your spouse has asked you to do.

1. I will slow down when asked to do so.
2. I will not talk on the phone while driving when asked to not do so.
3. I will ask for directions because I have been asked to do so.
4. I will pull over if I get sleepy because I have been asked to do so.

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### **Expectations Change Attitudes**

In an airplane the pilot has a co-pilot. The pilot has an expectation for the co-pilot to warn the pilot of any dangers the co-pilot may see or perceive. The co-pilot is constantly asking the pilot if he checked his speed, the flaps, this control, that switch or whether he saw or checked this or that. The co-pilot is expected to ask the pilot over and over during the flight about whether the pilot did certain things. Can you imagine the pilot making statements similar to the following?

- What is wrong with you, do you think I am an idiot?
- You are just trying to control me aren't you?
- If you don't shut up I am going to pull this plane over to the curb and you can drive!
- If you don't get over your fear you can just get out!

### **Expectations**

Expectation is what makes the difference. The pilot expects the co-pilot to alert the pilot to any danger the co-pilot observes.

We should have the same expectations with our spouse. Our spouse is not saying things about our driving to torture us or to irritate us on purpose. Your spouse is simply doing their job or reacting to fear. As the pilot of the car we should have an expectation for our co-pilot to alert us to any danger or fear they may have and for us to be sensitive to their perceptions or fears and react without anger.

Consider officially making your passenger spouse your co-pilot and navigator and realize that they are simply doing their job by asking you questions and warning you of any perceived danger.

### **Workshop**

If your spouse has a fear that you have been insensitive to or if you have a history of becoming angry at your spouse for being your co-pilot or navigator, would you now ask your spouse for forgiveness and tell them what you are going to do in the future when they have a fear or try to assist you in navigating your vehicle.

Forgiveness:

I am sorry for the way I have reacted in the car when you voiced your concerns or tried to help me. I am sorry for the times you were scared because I was putting arriving on time above you feeling safe and secure. Will you forgive me?

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## 39. Bonding Time

You want to create an environment in which your spouse looks forward to coming home. Often a spouse dreads walking into their home when they know the evening download of problems will begin about how bad the kids have been, the discipline that you need to administer and how awful their spouse's day has been.

Don't immediately start unloading on each other about how bad your day was and how bad you're feeling and that the kids need to be disciplined. If you have a habit of immediately unloading on your spouse the moment they walk in the door, then you most likely have a spouse who does not look forward to coming home to you and they may be finding excuses to disengage from you as soon as possible. There is a time for sharing problems of the day later. Have an agreed time that you will share the problems of the day. This is not that time. This is a time to begin to reconnect emotionally to each other.

Most women and many men need to reconnect after a day of separation. When you return home your spouse should be your first priority. You need to quickly work through the kids and the pets in order to get to your spouse and reconnect. This is setting the proper example for the children and teaching them correct life priorities. Give your spouse a warm smile, greeting, and hug and tell them that you missed them. This is a time that you should "pause" and spend five or ten minutes with your spouse before you check e-mail, the newspaper or the news. Connecting with your spouse takes priority over those activities.

If you are the first one home, stop what you are doing when your spouse walks in the door. Give them the respect that they deserve. This is a time for both of you to reconnect.

If you are already at home and your spouse enters:

- Watch the clock so you can time whatever you are doing to have several minutes to pause when your spouse walks in the door.
- If you are on the phone then hang up.
- If you are on the internet or the computer disengage.
- If you are watching television or listening to music either hit the mute button or turn it off. If you are ironing, cooking, cleaning or whatever – stop for several minutes.
- If you are sitting down, then get up and go to your spouse. Don't just sit there and expect them to come to you.
- Give respect, stop whatever you are doing and go greet them with a warm smile and a hug or a gentle kiss.

When you stop what you are doing and welcome your spouse home you have created an environment in which your spouse feels they are important, your first priority and that you value them.

Ask each other very specific questions about the day. Spend several minutes letting each other know how important he or she is to you. Set aside a minimum of 5-10 minutes just to reconnect. You can ask the kids to go play in their room or outside.

This should be done in a quiet and private setting - no television, radio, newspaper, telephone, pager or interruptions from friends, neighbors, family or children. This is your "special" time of bonding with each other. If you do not have time before dinner, then make it a priority sometime during the evening that you have this special time together.

Do not connect the bonding process with negative activity. You can set aside an agreed upon time later in the evening when the home activities have slowed down to talk about the children's discipline, problems in the home and serious issues. That agreed upon time should be the same time every evening and something you stick to. If your spouse knows that they will have that agreed upon time with you there will be less temptation to attack you the moment you walk into the door.

Dinnertime or bedtime is not the time to administer discipline. Everyone should look forward to dinner. Dinner should be a stress free environment where the entire family can bond. Bedtime should also be stress free as everyone is preparing their mind for sleep.

Kids do not have to be disciplined the same day as the offense. This gives the two of you time to discuss and agree on what should be done instead of making emotional decisions.

Let your spouse know that you are interested in what they have to say by occasionally nodding your head yes and asking appropriate questions. When talking do not interrupt each other as it is rude and indicates to your spouse that what you have to say is more important than what your spouse is saying. It devalues your spouse. Your spouse needs to feel that you are listening and that what they have to say is important to you.

Sit quietly listening to your spouse until they are finished and then say what you have to say. If one of you or both of you are interrupters then make an agreement to not interrupt. My wife and I devised a signal to let the other know we have been interrupted. My signal to my wife when she interrupts me is to place my finger to my lips. As soon as I do that she knows that I have been interrupted and she stops talking. I can then finish sharing what I want to share.

Maintain eye contact with each other. No deep sighing, looking at your watch, strumming your fingers, fidgeting in your chair, biting your lip, crossing your legs back and forth, tapping your foot, wringing your hands or tensing up while listening as this all indicates to your spouse that you are not really interested in what they have to share with you.

No rolling of eyes, daydreaming, watching television or trying to read the newspaper. Your spouse should have your full attention. It may be true that you can watch television or read the paper and catch every word your spouse has spoken to you and repeat those words back verbatim. That behavior is focusing on your truth of the matter and not how your spouse feels. Your spouse feeling loved by you takes priority over truth. Therefore, for your spouse to feel loved by you, it may require that you do not do several things at the same time that you are listening to your spouse. Your spouse needs to feel that what they have to say is important to you.

If your spouse is talking about a problem at work, with the kids, a neighbor, parents, at the store or whatever, DON'T offer your advice on what they should do unless they ask you to do that. Most of the time your spouse just wants to be heard, wants to share and wants to bond with you. Your spouse DOES NOT WANT TO BE FIXED by you.

Instead of trying to fix the situation . . . . If my wife or children share with me something that has hurt them I do not tell them that "they" need to forgive. Instead, if my wife is sharing a hurt or pain with me from something someone did during the day, I will listen and maintain eye contact with her. After she has finished sharing I will say something similar to the following:

Sweetheart, I love you. What hurts you hurts me, what angers you angers me, therefore "we" need to forgive that person don't we? I then take my wife's hand and "we" forgive the person who hurt her. After we forgive we take a deep breath and ask the Holy Spirit to lift the anger off of us. We then speak a blessing over that person.

My wife and I follow the same procedure when one of our children begins sharing their hurts with us. This teaches children what to do spiritually with hurts and pains that happen in this world.

It may be good to have a set time to begin the talk and a set time to stop as you do not want this to be overwhelming for your spouse. You may want to establish those two times and honor each other as you come to the time to stop. You can finish the conversation the next night.

## **Workshop**

1. Tell your spouse what you are going to do differently in the future and give your spouse permission to remind you when you are not doing what you promised.
2. Establish a start and stop time every evening to discuss serious issues.
3. Ask your spouse to forgive you for your past behaviors.

# 40. Sex in Marriage

## *Watch the video: Sex in Marriage*

We were not created to by God to have sexual problems. We were created to have a great fulfilling sex life with our life partner. We were not created to dread sex, want to avoid sex, not have a desire, and have problems having an orgasm, maintaining an erection or achieving ejaculation.

As a Christian counselor I am well aware that sex is one of the biggest issues in marriage that causes a lack of peace. We need to understand that the sexual problems we have in marriage are “fruit” and all fruit has a root. In other words the problems we having sexually have a lot to do with:

1. Our past life experiences.
2. A lack of understanding of our responsibility to meeting each other’s needs.

The frequency and passion of sex in marriage is often but not always a very good guide to determining how well the marriage is going in other areas. If other areas of the marriage are not going well it usually shows up in sexual intimacy. A survey was taken several years ago in which Christian couples were asked how many times a week they had sex. Most couples answered, “zero”. It is not unusual in today’s society for couples to go several weeks, months or even years without sex.

A husband who does not feel respected and honored by his wife may soon reject her sexually.

A wife who does not feel emotionally connected and that she is not a priority in her husband’s life will most likely be a wife who is sexually disconnected from her husband.

### **Typical conversation about sex:**

Wife - if I felt emotionally connected to you this would not be a problem.

Husband – if you would meet my sexual need I would meet your emotional needs.

In many marriages sex has become so infrequent that many men try to hit a home run every time they see an opportunity to corner their wife alone without the kids around.

### **Everything leading to sex**

- Often because sex becomes so infrequent many men intend for every kiss, hug, snuggle or touch to ultimately lead to sex.
- Men often try to cop a feel when his wife is cooking.
- He may try to poke his tongue into her mouth when all she wants is a gentle kiss.

- He may try to touch her sexually when snuggling on the couch.
- He may make crude remarks about how often his buddy is having sex.
- He may make suggestive remarks about sex.

Her having to fight off his wandering hands while she is washing the dishes, cooking dinner or doing the laundry is not something she looks forward to nightly.

Your wife may dread sitting on the couch beside you, as she knows when you sit beside her the nightly battle begins again of the wandering hands. She may no longer welcome your kisses; hugs or caresses as it seems like your intent is for every touch or kiss to lead her to the bedroom. Since she is no longer welcoming your advances you are most likely feeling rejected and are withholding the emotional intimacy that she needs to connect her to her sexual being.

Men, please understand that these behaviors “**do not**” normally turn your wife on. Instead, she mostly likely is feeling that all you want is to use her body.

Her complaint may be that you are never romantic. This makes no sense to you as every time you come near her she pushes you away. She pushes you away because every time you come around she senses it will lead to sex.

Often because of your behavior she is pushing you away and sex becomes less and less frequent. Since you are feeling sexual rejection from her you may have stopped meeting her emotional needs altogether. The more she withdraws sexually the more you withdraw emotionally and we have a never-ending circle of arguments.

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## Her Emotional Needs

Most men do not realize that women are created in such a way that they are put in touch with their sexual being through their emotional needs being met by their husbands. A woman who does not feel loved by her husband is usually a woman who is not sexually responsive. What separates her emotionally from you also generally separates her sexually from you.

Women feel emotionally connected to sacrificial men because God's love flows through the sacrifices resulting in her feeling supernaturally bonded to her husband. A wife who feels God's love through the humility of her husband is normally a woman who will not only meet her husband's sexual needs, but also frequently be the initiator of sexual intimacy.

Most men have no issue with working and making sure the home is maintained, the bills are paid so that his family's physical needs are met. However the spiritual and emotional part of their job seems foreign to most men.

Most men's fathers were not emotionally and spiritually connected to their wife and therefore may not have demonstrated a good spiritual and love example to their son. When that boy grows into a man there are often few spiritual and emotional examples to draw from. His father most likely did not pray out loud in front of his wife and your husband when he was a child. His father may not have spoken blessings over his wife or your husband.

We are not looking for faults, simply facts. It is not to find fault with your husband's father as most likely his father also did not set the proper example and there was nothing in his childhood for him to draw from when raising your husband.

This lack of example results in many men feeling uncomfortable praying out loud in front of their wives and children and therefore he may resist doing so. Most men do not know the words to speak or what being the spiritual leader really looks like. This leaves many wives and children feeling spiritually disconnected from their husband and father.

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### **A healthy sexual relationship in marriage is dependent on several factors:**

1. There was no sexual abuse your childhood
2. There was no sexual abuse in your spouse's childhood
3. There was no sexual abuse in your adult life
4. There was no sexual abuse in your spouse's adult life

5. There was no wrong teaching about sex in your childhood that sex is taboo, dirty or wrong.
6. There was no wrong teachings about sex in your spouse's childhood that sex is taboo, dirty or wrong
7. The very first sexual experience of both of you was on "your" honeymoon night.
8. The honeymoon night was fulfilling
9. Neither of you have "worth" issues about yourself such as:
  - I am worthless
  - I am not lovable
  - No one would want me
  - Something is wrong with me
  - I should not have been born
  - I am not desirable

To the exact extent that either you experienced any of the above there may be things left over from your past that are greatly influencing sexual intimacy in the present time.

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## **Sexual Problems**

Sex is an act that God gave to us to enjoy as a holy event between husband and wife. Therefore, when sex is not welcomed it is usually connected to previous unresolved spiritual issues in life.

During sexual abuse the thoughts and emotions felt at the time just before, during or after a sexual event go into the memory and could cause a person to not welcome sex in the future as the mind will remind him or her of the emotions felt during the abuse.

If you have a sexual problem and are therefore avoiding sex with your partner then get counseling to resolve this issue.

If you have a sexual problem then the two of you have a problem. It is not fair for you to withhold yourself from your spouse because you have a problem from the past, which is not resolved.

Seek counseling to get the issue resolved and in the meantime:

1. Ask your spouse to forgive you for not meeting their needs.
2. Have an honest conversation with your spouse about how you feel about sex.
3. Share with your spouse any abuse you may have suffered as a child, adolescence or in the past
4. Agree to seek spiritual counseling to resolve the sexual issue.
5. Make a commitment to meet your spouse's sexual needs in a way that you both agree to.

### **Impotence**

Impotence can either be physically or emotionally based. Emotionally based impotence may be the result of anxiety, which is felt just before sexual union is to take place, just before entry, or during the sex act. The anxiety felt results in a penis which often becomes placid.

The anxiety has a source of origin and is usually based on a previous experience, which was recorded in his subconscious, telling him to feel he is having a similar experience in the present.

A man came for counseling stating that every time he attempted to enter his wife he would immediately lose his erection. This was a mystery to him, as he never had a sexual issue in his life until he recently married.

Through counseling we discovered that when he was a child he had placed his erect penis in a pipe and his penis became lodged inside the pipe until the erection subsided.

Obviously this was a painful experience. It was at that time recorded in his mind how to feel when his penis was placed inside of a tight place. Once we found this memory he said that it now made sense to him because his wife's womanhood was so tight it subconsciously reminded him of the pipe and he would immediately lose his erection. This issue was resolved.

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### **Premature Ejaculation**

This could have several sources.

If the individual has been abstaining from sex or had few sexual experiences in life the premature ejaculation may be from the excitement of the current event.

Or, it could be an emotional cover up for pain.

This is usually brought on by the male focusing on the thoughts of not wanting to ejaculate prematurely. The total focus on not ejaculating prematurely distracts the mind from painful thoughts that the male does not want to have about an unresolved spiritual issue. Even though premature ejaculation is painful and causes problems in the relationship, the premature ejaculation is more acceptable than the thoughts and pain that he would be having if there were not a distraction in his mind.

We must remember, the bigger the problem (amount of pain that needs to be covered up) the bigger the solution will need to be. Premature ejaculation is a “big” solution, so there must be much pain that is being hidden by the mind that is being redirected to the thoughts of fear of prematurely ejaculating.

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## **Lack of desire**

Let's look closer and see why meeting the sexual needs of your spouse may seem like a duty rather than something you look forward to.

When our previous sexual experiences were out of the bounds of marriage:

- We all imprint on our first time life experiences. This is also true for sexual experiences.
- Sex outside of marriage is in the context of lust not love.
- In marriage the man imprints on the woman. Outside of marriage men imprint on the event of lust.
- The man has imprinted on the event instead of the woman - there are photographs in his mind of what he wants to recreate.
- Men try to recreate that event over and over the rest of their life wanting his wife to repeat the same act that was imprinted from his first sexual experience so he will have the same excitement as he did in the first experience. This is why it is so important that his and her first experience be on the honeymoon with love instead of lust outside of marriage.
- Women who have had sex outside of marriage imprint on what happens after the sex = normally when she has sex before marriage there is nothing after the event, as the man's lust needs have been met and he almost immediately disconnects from her resulting in her feeling used, dirty and wrong. She may feel that it was forced upon her against her will.

A female's lack of desire could also come from sexual abuse as a child, adolescent or sometime in the past. Sexual molestation usually results in a woman who:

1. Feels shame or guilt about sex.
2. Does not want to expose her body to a male.
3. Does not welcome touch, especially in a specific area.
4. Has a problem being properly lubricated.
5. Has numbness in her feminine area.
6. Has a hard time achieving an orgasm or does not have orgasms.
7. May see sex as abuse.
8. May see sex as something that has to be done but does not experience the joy or intimacy of sex.

A male's lack of desire could also come from sexual abuse as a child, adolescent or sometime in the past. These men could have problems in the following areas:

1. Feelings of shame or guilt.
2. Difficulty in achieving or maintaining an erection.
3. Does not welcome touch, especially in a specific area.
4. Difficulty in ejaculating.
5. Numbness in the penis.

## **Her Lack of Desire After Marriage**

If the wife was having no sexual problems in the marriage until about a year or two into the marriage, this could be attributed to several issues:

1. **She does not feel loved or emotionally connected to her husband** any longer, as he is no longer meeting her emotional needs.
  - Most men do not realize that generally women are put into touch with their sexual desire through feeling emotionally connected to their husband.
  - Most women are not emotionally connected to a husband who does not value the opinion of his wife, has his priorities wrong, exhibits addictive behaviors, does not listen to her, has little conversation with her, only holds her during sex, is not displaying spiritual leadership and is not submitted to her.
2. **The freshness of the relationship is over.** In all new sexual experiences “new flesh” usually causes sexual arousal, which can cover the abuse from her past. A year or so into the marriage the “new flesh” is no longer new and the thoughts and emotions from the past relationships begin to gradually “leak” into the current relationship and she may become less and less responsive.

If there has been abuse in the past and she does not feel emotionally connected to her husband in the present then eventually she may become completely shut down sexually.

Sometimes a wife who is sexually shut down from her husband may have an affair. This can be a great mystery to her and to her husband who cannot understand why she can be sexually responsive to someone else and not to him. This could be attributed to two reasons:

1. The current partner is “new flesh” which stimulates arousal.
2. Temporarily she feels emotionally connected to this person and not emotionally connected to her husband.

If the affair is resolved her husband may temporarily bond with her emotionally as he is so grateful for her return. However, as he begins to return to his old self she will most likely begin to withdraw sexually from him again due to him disconnecting from her emotionally which leads to her again not feeling loved by him.

### **She Cannot Orgasm**

Lack of orgasm for women can have many different spiritual roots such as shame, guilt or emotions left over from childhood or adult sexual abuse. Many questions will need to be asked about their personal history to begin tracking down her thoughts and feelings about sex. Wrongful thinking, teaching and bad sexual experiences all could contribute to this disorder; however, this problem is not always the result of sexual abuse.

Thoughts of lack of worth can contribute to it, as the person does not feel worthy of having the sexual enjoyment of an orgasm. Shame or guilt from the past may join in with each new sexual event causing anxiety that leads to a lack of orgasm.

For most women to experience an orgasm she must completely let go of control. A female who comes from a childhood where things were frequently out of control may have an issue with anything that may seem to be out of control in her adult life. This person may now have a fear of letting go of control and therefore not experience an orgasm.

Sometimes migraines or headaches are associated with women who do not orgasm. Faking having an orgasm with their husband or the guilty feelings associated with not having an orgasm cause stress which results in a migraine or headache.

A woman came in for counseling that said that she had not had an orgasm since being married. I asked if she had ever had an orgasm and she said yes, that during her youth she had been very sexually immoral and felt very guilty now about what she had done. She said that with her husband she would feel all the guilt left over from all those previous sexual partners and suppresses the orgasm. Through counseling we resolved the guilt, which resulted in her being able to have normal sex with her husband.

Another woman came for counseling that stated that she had never had an orgasm. During counseling we found that when she was a little girl her mother caught her exploring herself. Her mother screamed out in a loud voice how dirty the little girl was for touching herself. Through counseling this issue was resolved.

A woman's sexual organ is created in such a way that when it is touched in a certain way that touch results in arousal. She does not have the ability to not feel the arousal even if the touch is not welcomed. If that woman is molested or raped and felt arousal or had an orgasm during the molestation or rape she will then most likely feel guilty for being aroused or having an orgasm. From that time on that woman's guilt will most likely result in her suppressing her sexuality and feeling guilty when aroused by the touch of her husband and she will most likely avoid sex with her husband.

### **When She Has Had Multiple Sex Partners**

Women who have had numerous sexual partners do not bond as deeply after each encounter with a different partner. There is a chemical that is released into their bloodstream that causes the woman to connect and bond emotionally to the man she has been sexual with. This chemical becomes less and less effective with each sexual partner she is with sexually. Sex for her outside of marriage is less and less fulfilling as the man is focusing on the event and not the woman. After the event there is nothing for the woman. This results in each sexual event becoming less fulfilling and she may eventually lose the desire to bond sexually.

The man's job is to awaken the sexual desire in his wife by focusing on her and having the goal of bringing her to orgasm by being a caring lover to her. Most sex outside of marriage results in the man totally focusing on himself, which leaves little for the woman, especially after the event is over and she is laying there with no cuddling, no holding and little to no conversation as he is quickly disconnecting.

Because of this, if she has had multiple partners there may be little sexual bonding with the man she eventually marries and therefore little desire to be sexual. Women who have had multiple partners or abuse in their past often have little desire for sex with their husbands and most likely will not initiate sex because of a lack of desire.

A man married to this woman will often make the mistake of asking the question, "Do you want to have sex?" This man has just set himself up for rejection because the answer will most likely be "no", as she has no or little desire for sex.

Even though she may have no desire for sex because of having multiple partners or abuse, once she is engaged in the sex act the desire for sex can be and often is kindled.

A woman who has little sexual drive, but who will have sex with her husband when asked, is a woman who is often aroused during the actual sex act. These women only "feel like having sex" when they are actually engaging in the sexual act and therefore are not usually the initiators of sex.

This husband would have much better success in having sex with his wife if he rephrased his question to, "would you have sex with me?" His chances of receiving a positive answer are greatly improved by the way he asks the question as his wife, even though she may initially have negative emotions about the sexual act, once engaged, her passion for sexual release overcomes her negative emotions from the past abuse.

For both males and females, if you have little desire for sex because of prior abuse, counseling can often resolve these issues and your natural God given desire can return once these issues are resolved.



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## Frequency

For most women to achieve an orgasm they need about 7-14 minutes of actual sexual intercourse. Most men achieve ejaculation within two minutes if sex is infrequent. The more frequency there is, the longer his staying power to hang in there long enough for her to achieve an orgasm.

Since he achieves ejaculation within two minutes and it takes her from 7-14 minutes the female is frequently left unsatisfied sexually. This may cause her to slowly withdraw from wanting to have sex as she may not want her husband to feel guilty or to avoid being left unsatisfied.

Having sex on a regular basis would help the man to have more staying power to meet his wife's need and her more likely achieving an orgasm.

## Children

Women should not repeatedly reject their husband sexually to meet the needs of children. I often hear mothers say they cannot meet the sexual needs of their husband because there are children in the home or the child may hear. This leaves their husband sexually frustrated. This problem can easily be resolved by:

1. The sex act occurring after the children have been put down to sleep at night.
2. The bedroom door is locked to avoid an unexpected interruption from a child who has awakened.
3. A radio or television is placed in the bedroom and the volume is turned up to a level to cover other sounds within the room.

The unity of the marriage and meeting the emotional and sexual needs of each other within the marriage should be a top priority.

When a husband stops asking for sex it may be a sure warning sign that the marriage is in deep trouble. Men who are continually sexually rejected over a long period of time may eventually stop asking. Because of his anger and being sexually frustrated, he may begin to reject the very thing he wanted. When the children grow up and leave she is lonely, because by then he no longer desires to bond with her emotionally or physically because of all the years he felt rejected due to her wrong priorities.

## For most women to have great sex they need:

1. Privacy – no one else will see or hear.
2. To feel emotionally connected to their husband.

3. Spiritual resolution of any abuse in the past.
4. Spiritual resolution of the guilt of multiple partners.
5. Exclusivity – one man focusing on one woman, desiring just one woman.
6. No porn - lust does not = good sex.
7. Time – 7-14 minutes.
8. Foreplay.
9. Romance.

**Lies – to improve your sex life**

1. Have an affair.
2. View porn together - The more a man indulges in porn and masturbation the worse his sex life becomes.
3. Fantasy - ignore the real woman and focus on the fantasy one.

## Doing Your Duty

If a wife does not feel connected to her husband, then meeting her husband's sexual needs can seem more like a duty than something she looks forward to.

This fact is talked about in 1 Peter, Chapter 2, beginning at verse 20 through Chapter 3, verse 9 where both husbands and wives are commanded to be submissive (voluntarily do what you have been asked to do with the right attitude) to each other even if we do not feel loved by each other. Being submissive to the other and meeting the other's needs is not always because we want to, feel like it or want to. It may simply be out of obedience to God who commands each husband and wife to do so.

Another issue that frequently results in the wife not having a sexual desire is that she does not feel loved by her husband. Most women need an emotional attachment to her spouse to have a desire to be sexually intimate with her husband. Most men in today's society do not know how to love their wife, as they have not seen love demonstrated. This results in wives that have little to no sexual desire for her husband.

A husband's love is demonstrated by:

1. His willingness to sacrifice for his wife. Being patient, kind and gentle with his words and actions to his wife and children.
2. Not being easily angered and spiritually resolving his anger and emotional triggers without his wife or children knowing he was upset.
3. Demonstrating spiritual leadership of forgiveness, praying with her and speaking blessings over her and their children.
4. Not accusing or finding fault with his wife.
5. Not speaking negative words to her
6. Following the commandments of Ephesians 5:25-27

*Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. Ephesians 5:25-27*

This concept seems foreign to most husbands, to include Christian men. Most men demand their own way (selfishness) instead of leading with love. According to God's law of reaping and sowing you will get back what you give. If you want to feel loved by your spouse then first give love to your spouse. The man is the spiritual leader and therefore he is to first demonstrate love to his wife. If she feels loved by him she will by God's law love him back.

Husbands and wives who feel loved by each other normally do not have an issue with meeting each other's sexual needs. It is the husband or the wife who does not feel loved that may feel like meeting a spouse's sexual needs seems like a duty. In the following scripture Paul talks about meeting each other's sexual needs as a duty, therefore, this scripture appears to be for a husband or wife who does not feel loved by their spouse.

*The husband should fulfill his **marital duty** to his wife and **likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband.** In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone, but also to his wife. **Do not deprive each other** except for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 1 Corinthians 7:3-5*

A duty is a moral obligation that God has commanded us each to perform, regardless of our sex, to help prevent spiritual or physical infidelity. Meeting your spouse's sexual needs has nothing to do with them deserving that these needs be met or that you are feeling like meeting this need because your needs have not been met (Grace is the giving of something of value that is not deserved).

*Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult but with blessing because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. 1 Peter 3:9*

Meeting this need is your obedience to God. We do not obey God just when we feel like obeying God. Obeying God in this area of your life is similar to other areas. We are to obey God regardless of how we feel.

The scripture states that:

1. The husband is to fulfill his marital duty to his wife.
2. The wife is to fulfill her marital duty to her husband.
3. The wife's body also belongs to her husband for his sexual needs to be met.
4. The husband's body also belongs to his wife for her sexual needs to be met.
5. The husband is not to deprive his wife of his body.
6. The wife is not to deprive her husband of her body.
7. Through mutual consent they may "fast" sex and pray during that time.
8. The agreement to fast sex and pray should be for a specified period of time.
9. As soon as the time of agreement is up the husband and wife are to each fulfill their marital duty to each other again.

*The husband should fulfill his **marital duty** to his wife and **likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband.** In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone, but also to his wife. **Do not deprive each other** except for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 1 Corinthians 7:3-5*

This scripture is a command. A command is not supposed to be optional or based on your feelings of wanting or not wanting to. Since it is a command, each of you should be looking for ways to obey instead of giving excuses for disobeying. You can use your emotions as an excuse to your spouse for disobedience; however, do you think that God accepts your excuse for disobeying Him?

At the time of your marriage you made vows to each other. When you made those vows there was an expectation from your spouse that you would keep those vows until death do you part. If you are not keeping those vows and if you are not dead yet, then you are not keeping the promise you made to your spouse and to God.

Whatever reasons you have and whatever excuses you have to not meet your spouse's sexual needs, those reasons and excuses are most likely in direct violation of God's word. If you do not feel loved, that does not excuse you from obeying God's word in this area.

Meeting your spouse's sexual need has nothing to do with them deserving that this need be met or that you feel like meeting this need. Meeting this need is your obedience to God.

Not doing what you vowed in your marriage vows to do is **being unfaithful to your marriage**.

*It has been said, "Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce. But I will tell you that anyone who divorces his wife except for **marital unfaithfulness** causes her to become an adulteress and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery. Matthew 5:31-32*

**Unfaithful – defined** - Not adhering to a promise, a vow, not keeping your promise or obligation, not justly doing what you represented yourself to do, being inconsistent, untrustworthy, and disloyal to what you said you would do.

Simply because you are disobeying God in your marriage does not result in your spouse no longer having a need for sexual relief. You are responsible for and have an obligation to keep your marriage vow which you promised your spouse that you would meet their needs.

### **Withholding Sex**

Regardless if you are a male or female, you should never withhold sex from your partner. You are the only person on this earth who can meet this need in a holy way. Your spouse cannot turn to their mother, father, friend, pastor, imagination or anyone other than you to meet this need and it still be holy.

If this need is not met by you, there is no one else on earth that can meet this need in a holy way. Since the need does not go away, it may lead to temptation to get this need met outside the marriage through porn, a physical or imaginary affair or through romance novels.

***Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control***

You are the spiritual covering for your spouse so that they will not be tempted outside the marriage. If you are not doing your job then your spouse is greatly tempted by the enemy. It is very unusual for a man or woman who “feels” loved and “desired” by their spouse to have an affair. Affairs generally originate from a spouse not feeling loved or desired within the marriage.

**Never**

1. Demand, control or make threats that your spouse must do anything he/she is not comfortable doing.
2. Make a statement like – if you really love me enough you will do this (manipulating).
3. Ask him or her to do anything that may be painful.
4. Have a third person in the relationship either physically, fantasy or pornography.
5. Shame your partner for expressing a desire.
6. Refuse to meet your spouse’s need.
7. Tell them that they should not have that need
8. Use withholding of sex as punishment, revenge or to get even because you did not get other needs met.

This is a time of holiness, closeness and tenderness for the two of you to bond. Your wife is not your sex slave, a prostitute, or a means in which you work out your sexual fantasies. What occurs in the privacy of your home is “ONLY” what the two of you have agreed to do.

If you have a lack of desire because of previous sexual abuse or because you do not feel emotionally connected to your spouse then seek counseling to help resolve that issue and in the meantime attempt to meet your marital obligation in a mutually agreed upon way. The way the two of you agree may not be the way your spouse desires, however, it is a way of temporarily meeting the need until your past issues of sexual abuse have been resolved.

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**Spontaneous?**

How often is it spontaneous when you have several children?

How often is it spontaneous when you are both working and coming home tired?

How often is it spontaneous after you have been married several years?

How often is it spontaneous when you have many unresolved issues between you?

How often is it spontaneous “period”?

### **If it is spontaneous then why is it not happening now?**

If it was spontaneous we could not take our children to the movies out of fear that someone would be spontaneously having sex. People would be pulling their cars over on the side of the interstate. Grocery stores would have to have rooms for privacy. Trips to the mall to go shopping would have to be very short.

If sex is supposed to be spontaneous then why don't we live the other events in our life spontaneously? Why don't we just spontaneously go to work? I was not planning it, it just happened...

- I just spontaneously happened to eat, I did not mean for it to happen, it just did.
- Spontaneously a baby sitter just happened to show up, she did not mean to come over she just showed up.
- Spontaneously you just happened to come home after work, you did not mean to come home, it just happened and here you are.
- Spontaneously you just happened to go to the doctor, you did not mean to go, it just happened.
- Spontaneously you just took a bath, you did not mean to, it just happened!

We don't just spontaneously live our lives here on earth. All important events are planned. Therefore, why do we not plan one of the most important events we have between a husband and wife?

### **Negotiate to an Agreement**

Often the issue is sex is simply an area where the husband and wife have not agreed. When I do marriage counseling I look for a place of agreement in all aspects of the marriage. Anywhere there is not agreement there is disagreement and room for conflict. Unity comes from agreement. If because of the business of life there is a sexual void this can be resolved through a heart to heart talk and an agreement for sexual intimacy in the marriage. Agreement reduces the opportunity for conflict.

To reach agreement I ask several questions:

*Husband - if your wife would meet your sexual needs on a regular basis with the right*

*attitude how often would you like for this to happen?*

Most men answer two or three times a week.

*Wife - if your husband would meet your sexual needs on a regular basis with the right attitude how often would you like for this to happen?*

Most women answer once a week.

## **Negotiate**

Neither of you may get exactly what you want but you can find a frequency that you can both agree to and where the needs of both of you are met.

Now we have a math problem, however, there is a place in the middle where we can agree. He said three and she said once, what if we agree to two times a week? He makes a sacrifice to one less time a week and she makes a sacrifice to one additional time a week.

After they have reached agreement on frequency they need to negotiate what days it will happen and who will initiate intimacy on those days. There is nothing worse than knowing it is going to happen and both of you laying there on the bed waiting for the other to initiate. This often results in one person going to sleep while waiting and the other feeling very frustrated. To avoid this we also want to agree to who will initiate.

On his day she will be the initiator and please him in the way he wants to be pleased, however, she gets a mutual benefit of the experience. On her day he will be the initiator and please her in the way she wants to be pleased, however, he gets a mutual benefit.

## **Agreement**

- What will be his day(s)
- What will be her day(s)
- What time on his day?
- What time on her day?
- He will initiate on her day.
- She will initiate on his day.

Life happens and sometimes something can cause an interruption of the schedule such as company visiting or having to go somewhere that was not planned or one of you not feeling well.

In that case you should not lose your day, simply commit to meet this need the very next day at the same time and with the same person initiating.



Remember, if there are unresolved spiritual issues of sexual abuse such as rape, molestation, numerous sexual partners in the past then these issues will most likely have to be resolved so an agreement can be reached and maintained.

## Workshop

1. If one or both of you have been withholding from the other make sure you ask for forgiveness for not meeting this need.
2. If either of you have been sexually abused and have a lack of desire then make a commitment to go to counseling to resolve this issue.
3. Make an agreement and be committed to keeping it.

Work to an agreement

- What will be his day(s)
- What will be her day(s)
- What time on his day?
- What time on her day?
- He will initiate on her day.
- She will initiate on his day.

If you are having sexual issues that have resulted in you not meeting the sexual needs of your spouse would you agree with your spouse to seek help in resolving these issues through counseling?

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There are times when negotiating to an agreement is not possible or may even result in additional problems in the marriage because of unresolved spiritual issues within either the male or the female.

If there are unresolved issues in the past as described below, resolution of these issues will need to be made first before there can be a negotiation.

2. He or she was molested as a child or a victim of rape
3. Teachings beliefs that sex is dirty or wrong
4. Past or present mental, emotional or physical abuse

5. Past or present sexual abuse
  - Demanding sex
  - Rough sex
  - Displaying anger for not receiving sex
6. Ongoing emotional, spiritual or physical adultery
7. Treating one another in a very unloving manner
8. Previous sexual sins

Unresolved issues in the past do not go away simply because a period of time has passed. If either the husband or the wife are attempting to negotiate in the present to an agreement or have negotiated to an agreement without resolution of past issues, this may actually result in the marriage issues becoming worse as you are asking your partner to disregard some very painful thoughts and emotions in order to reach this agreement.

This agreement will most likely fail as each time the person with the unresolved issues attempts to fulfill or even thinks about fulfilling the agreement; the painful emotions from the past will come into the present making it almost impossible for him or her to fulfill the promise.

Since the agreement is not being kept by the person with the pain the other partner may become frustrated as the promise is being broken.

Most often past issues of sexual abuse such as wrongful beliefs that sex is dirty, molestation, rape or sexual sins, emotional, spiritual or physical adultery will need to be resolved through counseling before there can be a healthy sex life in the marriage.

Both partners should be brought into an understanding of how past issues come into the present, that the person with the sexual issues cannot simply “perform” to meet the needs of the other until the past issues have been resolved.

All forms of abuse must come to an end. If there is emotional, spiritual or physical adultery these issues must be resolved.

If the spouse was the abuser then reestablishing trust will be dependent upon the offender paying restitution. (See Restitution Page 68).

# 41. Indications of Sexual Abuse

1. To me sex is dirty and something that you should not think about.
2. I feel that the bedroom is not a safe place.
3. Sometimes I freeze when my spouse touches me in a certain place.
4. I can only have sex with my spouse if I think in my mind I am with someone else.
5. I can only enjoy sex if I think in my mind I am participating in rape or being raped.
6. The only way I can have sex with my partner is to go somewhere else in my mind and escape what is going on until it is over.
7. Without any medical explanation I frequently feel pain during sex.
8. I have bad flashbacks about sex in my past.
9. I have flashbacks about sex in my past that I have no memory of.
10. During sex I feel used.
11. Thinking about sex causes me to have a headache.
12. I have a no sex drive.
23. I think that sex is disgusting.
24. I am frigid about sex.
25. I avoid sex at all costs.
26. Even though married and receiving frequent sex from my spouse I feel the urge to frequently masturbate.
27. I feel like a prostitute when it comes to sex.
28. I become tense when thinking about having sex.
29. I have problems having an orgasm or ejaculation.
30. I cannot have an orgasm.
31. I have guilt feelings towards sex?
32. I cannot get an erection.
33. I have trouble maintaining an erection.
34. I lose my erection when I attempt entry.
32. I am repulsed at oral sex.
33. I am repulsed at sex.
34. All I think about is having sex.

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## 42. Pornography & Masturbation

Men or women who masturbate frequently are often using masturbation to self-medicate stress or anger. After a habit of masturbation is developed, men may introduce themselves to pornography. Women often turn to romance novels.

Pornography is usually an instrument used to create fantasy in the mind to enhance the event of masturbation. Normally, pornography is not simply for viewing pleasure. In a home where there is pornography, there is usually repeated masturbation. It makes little difference if the individual found the pornography first or began masturbation first as the pornography is now used to fantasize and enhance the event of masturbation.

Pornography may also be used to redirect negative thoughts to more acceptable thoughts and emotions with the added bonus of the pleasure felt through the fantasy and masturbation.

Normally men who are seeking help for the addiction of masturbation will claim to be addicted to pornography and come seeking help for the addiction to the pornography with no mention of the masturbation.

**A person involved with pornography and masturbation may also have a fear of letting go of control.**

Giving of oneself fully to another individual and becoming “one” may cause fear in a man who must then begin to share himself emotionally for the first time in his life. If he has been detached from his emotions most of his life it may be frightening for him to allow his heart to open for the first time and share from his innermost being.

Since he has a “real” fear of sharing himself emotionally with his spouse, he finds that through masturbation he can find temporary relief without having to share himself intimately. He has found a solution to the fear he has of sharing emotionally. Individuals with a fear of sharing intimately usually come from a home where there was little love and affection given to him as a child.

As a child he may have learned that a heart that was open was a heart that could be hurt. Therefore, as an adult, he may not know how to share from his heart and masturbation is used as a means of avoiding intimacy with his wife.

Statistics have revealed that about 77% of all men, to include Christians, are involved in pornography to some degree and view porn for several minutes to several hours a day.

### **Facts on pornography**

- Usually starts about the age of nine.
- Can lead to children experimenting with younger children what they have read or seen and can lead to perversion.
- Crosses all social and economic levels.

- Usually related to men.
- Teaches the opposite of God's principles - It is ungodly sex education.
- Leads us away from God's will for our sexuality.
- Leads a man to satisfy his own selfish desires.
- Children learn to imitate what they see in magazines or films.
- Men usually "act out" what they see as men are visually stimulated.
- Results in men not being emotionally connected to their wife.
- Leads to a decrease in satisfaction with partner.
- Increased sex without attachment.
- Loss of respect for women.
- She will usually take it personally, wondering what is wrong with me, why is he doing that?
- She feels like she cannot measure up any more as she has to compete with the pictures in the films or magazines.
- He will often become dissatisfied with his wife as he may expect his wife to be like and do what he is seeing.
- He often begins to be emotionally detached from her and wants her to act out - perform for him what he has seen.
- Porn robs the marriage of great sex. When a man uses porn to meet his sexual needs there is no reason for him to be emotionally connected to his wife. This often results in his wife feeling neglected, as he is no longer motivated to make the sacrifices to meet her needs.
- Pornography has made men lovers of self instead of lovers of women. It is all about what he wants.
- Pornography has turned men toward self-centeredness, not needing to be nice to their wife.
- He does not need to romance her, or even attempt to awaken the desire within her. It is about what he wants her to do to him instead of him waking the desire within her or pleasing her.
- It is easier for him to take care of his need himself through porn and masturbation instead of taking the time to romance his wife.
- Romancing her is not waking her up in the middle of the night asking: "help me out will you?"
- Men who view porn are usually attempting with their wife to recreate the scenes they saw on the Internet. These men are in fact fornicating with an imaginary person in their mind and the love and tenderness of making love is missing from this unholy union with his wife.
- Wives of husbands who view porn feel used and disconnected from their husband.
- Very few women will have a sexual desire for a man she does not feel loved by.
- Wives who are withholding sex from their husband contribute to their husband being spiritually unprotected from the evil one who is tempting him with porn. It is unfair for a wife to withhold sex from her husband and then use his porn temptation against him as an excuse for her to further disobey God and withhold sex from him.

- Many men would soon lose their desire to have sex with an imaginary two-dimensional person on the computer if their wife would initiate sex with him with a good attitude.

Introduction to pornography is usually by one of the following and almost always escalates to more explicit imagery.

1. Soft porn
2. Lingerie magazines
3. Hard core magazines or films

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### Three factors

1. **Escalation:** The addict requires more explicit and more deviant material in order to be sexually stimulated. What stimulated him last week does not stimulate him this week. Therefore he will need to look for other images. This often results in him looking at images that he once would have perceived as taboo. After he is hooked, he keeps coming back for more and more and feels like he can't stop.
2. **Desensitization:** Material that was once perceived to be shocking, taboo, illegal, or immoral becomes acceptable over time.
3. **Acting out sexually:** Pornography and fantasy no longer adequately stimulate the addict. Wanting to act out what has been seen is common.

### Self-Medicating With Porn

A porn addiction is most often a masturbation addiction with porn used to enhance the event. Porn and masturbation are usually used as a means to self-medicate unresolved spiritual pain from the past that keeps triggering the person in the present with stress and anxiety.

Porn instantly distracts the mind from the troubles that are causing the stress. He is no longer thinking about the unpaid bills, the fact that his boss is not happy with him, or the fact that his wife is thinking about a separation. His answer is simply a few clicks away on an internet site. Immediately his mind is redirected to pleasant thoughts. As his eyes look at the images he is suddenly desired, his body is stimulated and all the troubles of the world have temporarily vanished.

By releasing himself through masturbation all the tension in his body is also suddenly released and he feels relaxed. Since the troubles of his world have not really vanished he will need to repeat this process over and over and over to medicate his mind and find temporary peace with release.

Most women do not understand how porn helps their husband to achieve temporary peace. Since there is this lack of understanding, these women will usually take it personally, and think that her husband is not attracted to her or that she is not pretty or that something is wrong with her. This often results in her shaming her husband for his addiction and withdrawing from him sexually, demanding that he never look at porn again.

She does not realize that her reaction to his porn addiction usually causes more stress in his life, which often results in him going deeper into his addiction. When couples come for counseling we help his wife to understand that a porn addiction usually has nothing to do with her and encourage her to not withdraw from him emotionally or sexually.

If she had not been meeting her husband's sexual needs he may have turned to porn to get his sexual needs met. That is not meant to excuse his behavior but to help her understand the "why" to his behavior.

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### **Porn & Feeling Desired**

A man may turn to porn to avoid repeated sexual rejection from his wife. A man who is frequently masturbating to porn is often a man who may no longer see a need to be emotionally connected to his wife and is now meeting his own sexual needs.

This man most likely will neglect his wife in many areas of the relationship, as he sees no value in emotionally investing in her.

Many women do not understand that a man wants to feel desired by his wife. During marriage counseling a wife once made the statement that she never withholds herself from her husband, that even if she is not in the mood all he has to do is take what he wants. She could not understand why her husband would rather turn to porn to get his sexual needs met.

I explained to her that her attitude about sex had much to do with what was happening. I asked her how she would feel if she asked her husband to hold her and he responded by saying, "sure, come over and lay down beside me and take from me what you need".

She said that it would not mean much to her because it would appear that he did not desire to connect with her and even though she needed to connect with him that she most likely would not because of his attitude. I explained to her that is exactly how most men feel when a wife offers herself but does not appear to have the desire to "really" connect with him.

She began to understand that even though she had given her husband permission to satisfy himself with her body that he needed more than to have a sexual experience, that he needed to feel that she desired him sexually in the same way that she needed to feel that he desired her emotionally when she wanted to be held.

She responded that she did not have a desire for sex and asked if she was to pretend. I explained that there is a difference between pretending and having the right attitude. Pretending would be for her benefit, having the right attitude would be sacrificing how she really felt about the event in order for her husband to feel desired by her.

I gave her the example of my wife asking me to empty the trashcan. I was not emptying the trashcan because it was something I wanted to do, I was doing it with the right attitude simply because I wanted my wife to feel loved by me. Everything we do in our relationship with each other should be with the right attitude so the receiver will feel loved. The truth is, I did not want to do what she asked in taking out the trash. Love always trumps truth; therefore, I changed my attitude and cheerfully took out the trash so she would feel loved.

*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit but in humility, consider others better than yourself. Each of you should look not only to your own interest but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. Philippians 2:3-5*

Women do not realize that men “want to be wanted” sexually by their wives. A man feels desired by a woman who initiates sex with him. A man who is often rejected sexually and who always has to be the initiator, is a man who may feel that his wife does not desire him.

Needs that are not met do not go away. All of us have a need to feel wanted by our spouse. That need is usually met by our spouse being the initiator of meeting that need. In other words it is nice to get a present that I asked for, however, it is much nicer to receive a present that was not asked for.

In the same way, it is nice for me to hug my wife when she asks for a hug, but it means much more to her for me with a good attitude to go and hug her without her having to ask me to.

Using the same concept, it is nice for a wife to meet her husband’s sexual needs when he asks for it, but it means so much more to him if she meets this need with the right attitude without him having to ask. Having this need met without having to ask leaves that man feeling he is “desired” by his wife and that man is much less tempted to satisfy this need through viewing pornography.

### **The traditional approach to freedom**

The traditional approach to addictions tends to focus on “the addictive behavior as the problem.” Whenever you focus on a person’s behavior and make changing the behavior the goal, you put the person into a cycle of defeat and frustration. Focusing on the behavior requires the person’s effort to overcome the addictive behavior. This creates



false expectations and sets the person up for defeat. This is focusing on the “fruit” (what the person is doing) and not the “root” (the cause of the addiction).

This approach assumes that the person’s efforts and determination will provide the solution and recovery. If you don’t look at what you are looking at, you won’t have this problem! Therefore, “JUST STOP!” This belief may result in the person being shamed by their wife, pastor, friends or counselor for having the addiction.

The individual is usually told to “stop” what they are doing, ordered to repent immediately, given scripture to support what they are being told, and sent home shamed and feeling guilty. Being shamed for their addictive behavior usually causes more anxiety and more negative emotions within the body of the addicted individual.

Many counselors do not realize that the person with an addiction to pornography may be looking at the pornography as their solution in order to not feel negative emotions. The shame the counselor just placed on the person with the addiction adds negative emotions in the form of anxiety. The increased in negative emotions he is now experiencing from the counseling experience usually results in him being more addicted to pornography than before he sought counseling. This will mystify the person with the addiction, his wife and the counselor.

He may soon become discouraged and stop trying to quit the addiction.

If he is able to abstain from the addiction, he may be at war within himself as abstinence is dependent on maintaining the program and not on victory. There is true victory when the battle is over. The battle is not over until the “reason” the person has the addiction is resolved.

Abstaining from an addiction is doing something under your own power. This has value, but not eternal value as there is a constant war within the individual to not do the addictive behavior.

The question “Why do you feel the need to look at the pornography” is usually ignored. Most men really do not know why they are looking at porn. If you ask them why, they would most likely say, “because it stimulates me and it makes me feel better.” That is true. Looking at porn does make you “feel” differently. Looking at porn distracts the mind from the emotions that were making him feel bad and results in him feeling good. Now the question is this, “why were you not feeling good before you chose to look at porn?”

Addictions make you feel good. It may have been the first time in the individual’s life that they felt good and so they continued using the addictive behavior as a means to no longer feel the negative emotions they were feeling prior to having the addiction. It is a temporary solution.

As in any addiction, if the reason for looking at the pornography is removed, then the

need to look at pornography will no longer exist, as the solution is no longer needed. The victory is when the battle is over. The battle is not over if we are merely abstaining. The battle is over when there is no longer a need to self-medicate with the addictive behavior.

If the cause of the pornography addiction is ignored, quitting the addictive behavior will be completely through self-determination and it will be a constant battle to not be tempted back into the addictive behavior that makes you feel good.

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### **Porn & Erectile Dysfunction**

Some men are becoming unable to perform with their wife sexually because they have over a long period of time over stimulated their brain with porn.

A male's penis is created to be stimulated from the touch of female skin. If a man is - repeatedly using his hand as a substitute for a female vagina and masturbating to a two dimensional figure on the computer screen, that man is "retraining" his brain to tell his penis to only be aroused with his hand masturbating to a two dimensional figure.

Like a soldier in basic training who does the same action over and over and over until his brain has retrained his body to react automatically, this man is retraining his body to respond only to a two dimensional figure and his hand.

Once this man has retrained his penis in such a manner, he eventually may not be able to perform sexually with his wife. With the development of the internet and so much free porn available this is becoming more and more of a problem to married men who have wives who are sexually unresponsive and single men who have no sex partner.

When the brain has been retrained this way it is called **Traumatic Masturboid Syndrome** - the penis will not respond to a real woman as the brain has been retrained to only respond to his hand and a two dimensional figure on a computer screen.

This syndrome is treatable through counseling to:

1. Resolve the issues that led him to go to pornography to find temporary relief of stress.
2. Retrain his brain to respond to the touch of a human female.

We have had much success in helping men resolve this issue and return to a healthy sex life.

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### **Erectile Dysfunction and Self-Worth**

Erectile dysfunction can also be the result of a man not having self-worth. The lack of self-worth can have roots in his childhood from sexual abuse or being treated by his parents in such a manner that he does not feel that he has worth. Lack of worth can also originate from a lack of respect in his marriage with a wife who is consistently finding fault with him or berating him.

Erectile dysfunction may also be the result of taking medications, which restrict blood flow to the penis. These medications are usually the result of physiological problems that are often rooted in the childhood.

Through counseling we have helped many men to return to a healthy sex life without needing medications by resolving the spiritual roots behind the disorder.

### **Using Sex to Avoid Emotional Pain**

Many men “sincerely” believe that they are oversexed and that their wives are not able to meet their sexual needs. In a sense this may be true. The person may have been trying to avoid his emotional pain through sex with his wife being the solution.

Since it is merely an event for him to obtain release and he is not emotionally sharing with his wife during this event, his wife will quickly tire of trying to meet his sexual needs and begin to sexually avoid him. He rationalizes this problem with the belief that he is over sexed and his wife cannot keep up with his demands.

Since his continued sexual demands on his wife have resulted in his wife retreating from him sexually, he may then justify the masturbation he is doing to relieve himself.

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### **Lust**

Lust is excessive or unrestrained sexual desire. Lust wants to satisfy the desires of the flesh. Lust is fantasy and sexual immorality in the mind. Lust is purposely focusing eyes to see what should not be seen or the mind to think thoughts that should not be thought and the ears to hear what should not be heard expressly for the body to feel sexual emotions.

*The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body. 1 Cor 6:13*

*Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot (or any other illicit partner) is one body with her. The two will become one flesh. But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit. Flee sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God. You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.*

*1 Cor 6:15-20*

### **We can control our thoughts and our eyes**

As children, adolescents, teenagers and adults we are exposed to all sorts of soft and hard pornography on television, in magazines and on the internet, which excite our thought processes. Many men are not in the habit of controlling their thoughts.

Most of the time lust may begin as innocently as a young boy looking at a lingerie magazine. His young body begins to respond to the images his eyes are seeing. His imagination begins to take over with what she looks like further disrobed. As he is looking at the images his body is responding and he is feeling good. Males are created to be visually stimulated by the female body. He is feeling what his body is created to feel and it feels good.

No one has ever explained to him in a healthy manner what sex is, what occurs between married couples and what God has to say about immorality and what is going on in his mind. Without proper moral guidance this boy will most likely further explore magazines, television and the Internet for more images that will excite him even more.

As he sits in class at school he may let his mind wonder as he sees a girl sitting with a short skirt or blouse that should have been buttoned a little higher. In his mind he may be seeing her as he saw the lingerie models in the magazines. He may find himself trying to catch glimpses of women's legs as they are getting out of cars or bending over. His eyes become trained to have x-ray vision and see what others do not see. In his mind he may be with many females and masturbate often.

Relationships with females may become expressly for the purpose of seeing more, touching more and repeating sexual feelings over and over again. This person may now have a new normal, as he does not feel fulfilled unless he is aroused. Therefore he may be seeking arousal after arousal. This person will now normally be looking, thinking about, engaged in or talking about sex.

Like many men, this man was never taught how to control his eyes or thoughts. He is now on automatic pilot and his mind has no resemblance to the Mind of Christ.

*2 Peter 2:19 (b) A man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.*

Your eyes can master you instead of you being the master of your eyes. Many men are a slave to their eyes every time a beautiful woman appears on television, on a commercial, walking along the roadway, in another vehicle, at a restaurant, at the mall or at work. Anywhere their eyes lock onto these women they are undressing them and fantasizing about being with them.

There is nothing sinful about looking at a beautiful person. If you are a male then what may cause it to be a sin is the amount of time that you spend looking at her, what part of the body your eyes are looking at, and the thoughts that you are thinking while looking at this person.

The place where Satan attacks men the most is in the mind. Satan tempts us with a thought, a thought to look, to imagine, to see or to fantasize. These thoughts seem to be our own and we act upon them as if they are our own. The thought to look, to imagine to see or to fantasize is not a sin. This is the temptation or a suggestion to sin. When Satan was talking to Eve in the garden, Eve was having thoughts in her mind that she began to focus on, to imagine what it would be like to do what Satan had suggested. She first committed the sin in her mind and then did physically what she had already fantasized doing.

To receive a thought (suggestion) in the mind is not a sin, to focus on the thought and imagine doing the suggestion or fantasize on the thought can be a sin. It is like a bird flying through a barn. There is no problem with the bird flying through the barn, however, there will be a problem if you let the bird stay in the barn and build a nest there.

The bird flying through the barn may be the thought (suggestion) Satan is putting in your head. This is not a sin. The bird building a nest is the same as you keeping that thought in your mind and acting on the suggestion he has placed in your mind.

*You have heard it said, "Do not commit adultery. But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart (mind) Matthew 5:27-28.*

We can sin with our mind. Jesus tells us that fornication and adultery donot have to be a physical act, that we can sin in our mind and be just as guilty as if we had actually committed the physical act with the person we are looking at or thinking about.

The following scripture tells us what thoughts should be in our mind.  
*Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Philippeans 4:8-9*

**What we are looking at influences what our thoughts will be.**

Because we are not in the habit of taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

we may have also formed a habit of not taking captive to the obedience of Christ what our eyes are looking at.

*The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! Matthew 6:22*

*With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed – an accursed brood 2 Peter 2:14*

### **Making different choices**

This begins by making a conscious choice of the things that we are not going to think about any longer and the things we are not going to look at any longer.

You can consciously choose not to look at a person of the opposite sex the same way you have been looking at them. You can consciously choose not to look at the dirty magazine, the X-rated film, the television show, the television commercial, the woman sitting across from you at work or in the car next to you at the red light or walking on the sidewalk. You can consciously choose to not fantasize lustfully about the opposite sex.

We do this by forming new habits about what our mind is thinking and about what our eyes are seeing.

*For it God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality, that each of you learn to control his own body, in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God. 1 Thes. 4:3*

This scripture commands us to control our body. This means that we “can” control our thoughts and we can control our eyes.

### **The places where most men will have problems with lust:**

- At a red light, waiting for it to change, and allowing your eyes to look from left to right and into the rear view mirror. To see who is there, what they look like and if they are looking back at you.

*Proverbs 5:21 let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you.*

- Driving down the street and a person of the opposite sex is walking or jogging on the sidewalk.

*Proverbs 6:25 Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes.*

- At the mall or grocery store, shopping.

*Proverbs 17:24 A discerning man keeps wisdom in view, but a fool's eyes wander to the ends of the earth.*

- At work, at the coffee break area, during long lunches with the wrong person, making inappropriate insinuations, staring, making constant eye contact, being inappropriately too close physically.

*1 John 2:16 For everything in the world – the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does – comes not from the Father but from the world.*

*Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my work, and this was the reward for all my labor. Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.*

- The television, the movie channel, at the theater, magazines, the internet and x-rated movies.
- While having sex with your wife you are pretending that you are with the woman you saw in a magazine or a movie. This is using your wife's vagina for masturbation while spiritually committing adultery with someone else in your mind.

We need to educate ourselves about God's moral standards and make a covenant with our eyes and mind not to accept these thoughts or suggestions.

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## 43. Discipline of Children

*Watch the videos: Discipline of Children*

- 1. Causes of Childhood Rebellion*
- 2. Blended Families*

Prior to founding the counseling ministry I was the assistant director of Miracle Hill Children's Home. It was in that position that God helped me to learn and understand many of the issues children have.

The main purpose of a father and mother is to reflect the love of Jesus to a child. I personally see about 1,000 clients a year. About 95% of the problems the adults I see have, originated in their childhood as a result of how they were treated by their parent(s).

To date, no child has been to counseling or had problems in their adult life because they received a "C" on their school report card. That person had to come to counseling as a result of how the parent(s) of that child reacted to that child getting the "C" on the report card.

If you look around in today's world you will see many countries in rebellion. If you will examine the reason the people in these countries are in rebellion it is because they do not feel loved by their leaders. These people in rebellion feel that they are treated with injustice.

Often a parent will telephone our counseling center wanting to bring their child in for counseling due to rebellion. When a child "feels" unloved and believes that they are treated with injustice it normally results in that child rebelling. It would be rare for a child who feels that they are loved and treated fairly to go into rebellion.

It is not because a parent does not love a child that the child rebels. In fact most parents do love their children deeply, however, it is usually the behavior of one or both of the parents that results in the child's belief that they are not loved or that they are being treated with injustice.

Parents want their children to succeed and often push their children in school to get the best grades. The intent of the parents is usually good. However, if that child is pushed too hard and the parents withdraw love when the child does not perform to their expectations, then those parents are teaching that child to perform for love.

That child then begins to associate his or her worth with what they do and the opinions of others about what they have done. The child begins to falsely believe that their worth is attached to what they do, instead of having worth for simply being who they are. If that child performs to its parent's expectations, then that child will believe that they have



great worth. If the performance is less than expected then that child will believe that they have little worth.

That child's worth is now determined by the opinions of others. That child will most likely hide failures, hide who they really are and put on a false front in front of others so that others will think well of them. This child will most likely strive for perfection. The closer the child achieves perfection the more the child will be praised and the more the child will perform. Later in adult life that person's worth will be determined by authority figures that have replaced their parents.

It is all about love. A child who feels loved does not rebel. A child who feels loved and is trained up in the ways of the Lord is a child who will for the most part grow up to be a healthy adult who does not have anger issues, is not depressed and whose worth is determined by their position as a son or daughter of God instead of by the opinions of others.

### **God requires fathers to train their children**

*Fathers, do not exasperate your children, instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4*

*These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Deut 6:6-7*

While the child is still young parents are to teach the child the ways of the Lord, about forgiveness and to live a life of love.

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

**Train** - To teach a particular skill or behavior through practice and instruction over a long period of time

**Instruction** – detailed information telling how something should be done.

**Teach** – to show or explain or give instruction to someone on how to do something.

**Discipline** - The practice of training people to obey rules, or a code of behavior to correct disobedience.

**Disobedience** - Failure or refusal to obey rules or someone in authority.

**Exasperate** – Irritated intensely or infuriate

The goal of training and instructing a child is to bring the child to the place that they are trained in the ways of the Lord so that their attitudes and patterns and way of life begin to reflect the likeness of Jesus. That is done by the child seeing “Jesus” in you and feeling the love of Christ through you.

### **Do Not Exasperate**

We are not to speak to our children in a manner that is not uplifting to them. Our words should not result in the child feeling that we have been unjust with them. When speaking to us, Jesus does not call us names or make us feel stupid. We should give the same respect to our children. Generally children who do not show respect to their parents are children who do not receive respect from their parents. We reap what we sow into our children. If you want to receive respect from your children then give your children respect. Do not, when speaking to children use words like:

- When will you ever
- If your head weren't attached
- You never remember anything
- Why can't you be like your brother/sister
- You don't have any sense
- You are a bad person
- You always
- You never
- You are not my son/daughter
- My son/daughter would not do something like that
- You dummy or idiot
- I can't believe you did that again
- You slob
- You knucklehead
- You don't have the brains that
- I am ashamed for you to have the same last name as me
- I wish you had never been born.
- Don't do as I do, do as I say
- You will never amount to anything
- You will never succeed
- You are no good
- You are worthless
- You are just like your father
- You are just like your mother
- You should have known it was wrong
- You are just like that bad little boy/girl down the street

These phrases along with the hurt the child feels when they hear these words get stuck in the child's head and later in their adult life they end up in counseling forgiving you for the

hurt and pain they suffered all those years because of the things you should not have said to them.

### **Mistakes-Faults-Facts-Should Have Known**

**Mistakes** – No intent of doing wrong - Children should never be disciplined for making a mistake. Mistakes are used to learn from. A mistake is something the child did which did not have a good result with no intent of doing wrong.

1. Reaching for the butter and knocking over the milk
2. Running, tripping and falling on another child.
3. Dropping something accidentally on the floor.
4. Throwing a ball in the living room, which broke a lamp (had not previously been told to not throw the ball in the house).

Love should never be withdrawn or the child treated as if they are bad for making a mistake. With a mistake there was no intent in doing wrong. Parents should never display anger or frustration when mistakes are made. If the child makes a mistake then use the mistake as a teaching moment. Lovingly reassure the child that what they did was not wrong and teach them how to do it differently the next time. This is a time for teaching, not discipline.

**Faults** - Children should only be disciplined for deliberately doing wrong. Deliberate means criminal intent. The child had previously been taught that what they did was wrong, they knew it was wrong when they did it and they did it anyway. This is deliberate disobedience and a place where discipline should be administered.

Even with deliberate disobedience, discipline should be administered with love and without anger. The child should be reminded of the rule that was broken and what the consequences of breaking the rule are in a loving but firm way.

**Fact** – What the child did was wrong and had a bad result but the child has not been previously trained that it was wrong and did not know it was wrong when they did it. This is not a mistake or a fault, it is simply a fact.

**Should have known** - Whether or not the child “should have known” it was wrong is indifferent. If the child did not know it was wrong then they should not be disciplined for something they should have known. A child normally does not know until they have been trained to know. Do not expect a child to know something they have not been taught regardless of their age.

Discipline should not be administered for mistakes, facts or should have knowns. Use facts mistakes and should have knowns to teach the child to do it differently next time. A child can be exasperated and go into rebellion when they are punished for mistakes, facts and should have knowns.

If a child has done wrong and the parent yells and screams at the child and does not treat the child as Jesus would treat the child, the parent is also wrong. If you speak to your child using

any of the above words or phrases, you need to apologize and ask for forgiveness as these words cause emotional scars on your child.

When you admit your faults to your child, you teach the child humility and the proper way to respond when a mistake is made. Seek to reassure your child that you do love and respect them. If your child forgives you now it will save them years of hurt and pain until they learn to forgive you later in their adult life.

**We must practice what we preach.** A child doesn't respond well to demands to "Don't do as I do, do as I say!"

We should never punish a child for doing the same thing that we are doing. This is hypocrisy and the child will quickly resent it, which may also cause the child to rebel.

Do not make a rule for a child that you yourself are not willing to keep and set the example of.

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### **Give Your Child a Choice**

**Good discipline gives the child a sense of control by giving the child a choice.** Good parenting draws clear boundaries that the child must not cross. Children should know the exact consequences of their actions. That gives the child a sense of security and a choice. This will give the child control of their life.

A child should "always" be given a choice to obey or face a certain discipline.

- The choice should be clearly voiced to the child so that the child can make the decision.
- This does not require yelling at the child.
- The choice can be clearly stated in a normal "stern" voice.
- Do not force the child to make an immediate decision based on their emotions.

Give the child a reasonable length of time to think over the choices and come to a conclusion about what they should or should not do.

Examples:

1. You are to do what I said to do or you will be on restriction tomorrow night. Now take about ten minutes to think over what I have said and let me know what you have decided to do.

2. You are to get out of bed or you will have to go to bed one hour earlier tomorrow night. I am going to leave your room and give you about ten minutes to think over what I have said and when I return let me know what you have decided to do.
3. You are to do your chores or you will be given an extra chore of washing the dishes all next week. Now why don't you go outside and think over what I have said and then let me know what you have decided to do.
4. You are to clean your bathroom or you will have to also clean the hall next week. I will come back in about ten minutes and you can let me know what you have decided to do.

The child is given a choice to obey or face the discipline. There should be no yelling, no screaming, no loud tones, you simply talk to your child the way that Jesus would speak to your child.

You are Jesus's representative and this child has been entrusted to you by Jesus to train up in his ways.

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**The child should be given a reasonable time to comply with the request.** (If you do not get out of bed in the next five minutes you will have to go to bed an hour earlier tomorrow night).

If the child does not get out of bed, calmly say, "tomorrow night you will go to bed one hour earlier as a result of your disobedience. Do you understand?"

If the child is on the telephone and has been asked to hang up, calmly say. "I have asked you to hang up the telephone; if you do not hang up the telephone in the next minute you will not be able to use the telephone tomorrow." The child should be given a reasonable time to comply with each request.

The request should be stated very clearly to the child so that there is no misunderstanding of what your request is. The choice the child has is to comply with the request or face the consequences of the request.

**If the child does not obey,** then the discipline is administered without any arguing.

**Never keep adding on additional discipline for the same offense** once you have stated in the original request what the punishment is to be. Non-compliance or not complying immediately does not result in additional punishment. Simply follow through the next day by not allowing the child to use the phone. If the child asks to use the phone simply exercise your authority and remind the child that they cannot use it and why.

**All discipline should be administered out of a heart of love.** It is legitimate for us to be angry with our children over genuine disobedience. At the same time we must not express that anger in a sinful way such as yelling, screaming, showing irritation, name

calling. We need to express our displeasure with the disobedience in loving ways for the good of our children, not as a means of punishing.

### **Rules of the Home**

For there to be good order in the home there should be rules and chores that are established for “everyone” in the home. All rules and chores should be age appropriate.

Before rules and chores are established there should be a meeting between the parents to establish what the rules of the home will be for each child and what chores need to be accomplished. Once the parents establish a list of rules and chores, there should be a family meeting where it is clearly stated to everyone what the general rules of the home are going to be.

Examples of house rules could include but are not limited to:

1. The time to get out of bed during school days
2. Bed time on school days.
3. Bed time on Friday nights.
4. Get out of bed time on Saturday.
5. Bed time on Saturday nights.
6. Get out of bed time on Sunday.
7. Television programs that are considered wholesome to watch.
8. Movie ratings that are not acceptable to watch.
9. Music that is not acceptable to be purchased or listened to.
10. Games that are not acceptable to be purchased or played.
11. Web sites that are not acceptable to go to.
12. Language that is not acceptable.
13. Permission being obtained before friends are invited.
14. The time visitors are allowed and the time the visitors must leave.
15. No friends/visitors of the opposite sex behind closed doors.
16. The time homework is to be done.
17. The time that electronic devices can be used.
18. The time that electronic devices are turned off.
19. No pass codes to anything that the parents do not have access to.
20. Allowing free access to all electronic devices anytime the parent ask.
21. Not erasing history on websites visited – this is only to be done after parents have had the opportunity to examine.

22. Not erasing text messages – this is only to be done after parents have had the opportunity to examine.
23. Not entering the bedroom of another without permission.
24. Never borrowing something of another without permission.
25. Removing personal items from common areas such as the kitchen, den, living room or hall before going to bed.
26. Picking up and putting away toys in the yard before coming in the home for the evening.
27. The time to be home if away for the evening.
28. Making of the bed daily by a certain time.
29. Cleaning/straightening the room weekly.
30. Bathing nightly before going to bed.
31. Brushing teeth after each meal.

After the house rules are determined by the parents there should be a family meeting in which the rules are discussed and the children are allowed to participate in a negotiation process so that they can take ownership of the rules.

Examples of the children engaged in the negotiation process would be:

1. Bed time changed from 9 pm to 9:30 pm
2. Time electronic devices are turned off for the evening from 9 pm to 9:30 pm
3. The time visitors have to leave (age appropriate)
4. Homework time changed from 4:30-6 pm to 5-6 pm

### **Chores**

The parents should also make up a list of chores the children are to help with in the home. Examples of chores could be:

1. Helping cook the evening meal
2. Washing the dishes after the meal
3. Setting the table
4. Cleaning off the table
5. Cleaning the kitchen counter tops
6. Sweeping and mopping the kitchen floor
7. Vacuuming certain rooms
8. Cleaning of certain bath rooms
9. Cleaning the living room
10. Cleaning the den

11. Mowing the grass
12. Washing the car
13. Taking out the trash
14. Moving the trash can to the curb on trash day

After you have a list of chores there should be a family meeting where chores are assigned.

As the assistant director of Miracle Hill Children’s Home we had a number of cottages with about 8 children per home. Each child in the home had chores that were to be done.

When there are numerous children in the home it is always best for the child to do the chore the child likes to do instead of arbitrarily assigning tasks. If the child likes the task they are more likely to perform the chore without issue.

After tasks are voluntarily taken by children and there are still chores that need to be assigned you can announce something similar to the following:

Ok, no one picked washing the car or cleaning the living room. If no one volunteers for either of these I am going to assign them. Are you sure that no one wants to volunteer? A child who hates cleaning a bathroom may cheerfully then volunteer to wash the car. If no one volunteers then you will have to assign the remaining tasks.

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### **Consequence to Disobedience**

As you assign different chores and establish different rules in the home each chore that is not done should have a consequence. Each rule of the home violated should have a consequence.

If there is no consequence to breaking a law then often it is better to not have a law. If you establish rules and chores in the home but there are no consequences to breaking the rules or not doing the chores then lack of enforcement of the rules often leads to the children having little respect for the authority in the home. It is very important that consequences are enforced.

As you talk about the rules and the consequences you could ask each child the question: “What do you think should happen if you violate this rule?” What do you think should happen if you do not do your chore?

You may be surprised as it is not unusual for a child to establish a consequence greater than you would have come up with. Use a negotiation process until you and each child have agreed to the consequences for violating house rules and not doing chores.



It is suggested that the house rules and chores along with the consequences of violating the rules be posted in a place in the home as a reminder to all.

It is very important that parents also have chores to do and abide by the general house rules. Do not make a general rule that you yourself are not willing to follow. For instance if a general rule is for everyone to have their personal items out of the living room nightly no later than 10 pm then all your personal items should be out of the living room by 10 pm. You are to set the example for the others to follow. If you have a general rule about making the beds daily then your bed should be made daily.

Children could understand that one of dad's chores is to go to work every day. One of mom's chores is to go grocery shopping or do the washing and ironing.

### **Punishment**

Punishment is very different than discipline. Discipline is used to teach right from wrong in a very loving manner. Discipline is what Jesus does to us when we do wrong. Punishment is what one person does to another to get even.

Parents are to teach their children to be more like Jesus, not punish them to cause them to feel that they are bad, worthless, not good enough or can't be a good person. Abusive parenting takes the basic ability to know right from wrong and changes it to knowing what is right and wrong according to the mood of the parents. It may not be wrong yesterday but it is today because of my angry mood today.

### **Grace**

Jesus uses grace and does not discipline us for everything we do wrong. If he did discipline us for everything, we would be in jail all the time. In the same way, we should not administer discipline for everything our child does wrong. The child would then always be on restriction and have no reason to be good or do the right thing. This causes loss of hope and rebellion.

When you choose not to use grace and you state what is going to happen if your child does not comply, then be sure to do what you said you were going to do. If you do not follow through then you cause confusion in your child, as you are not consistent.

The type discipline should always fit the crime. Discipline should not be administered based on the feelings or mood of the parent. Good moods should not equal easy discipline and bad moods should not equal harsh discipline. That is not God's way. God does not discipline us based on his mood. God's discipline of us is based on right and wrong and the degree of what we did.

Instead of discipline being administered by the mood or made up as you go, the consequences for the violation of each rule or not doing the chore should be established as part of the family rules. That way the child knows in advance what the discipline will be and that gives the child the power to choose to obey or face the "known" consequences for disobedience.

## **Blended Families**

If you are a blended family, the biological parent should administer the discipline with the stepparent standing by the side of the biological parent. The parents should be in agreement that even though they both have equal say as to discipline, that the biological parent will voice the discipline. Even though the biological parent is the person doing the talking, the children need to see both parents as a single unit standing together in agreement.

Discipline administered by a stepparent can result in anger, rebellion and thoughts such as you not having a right to discipline them since you are not their father or mother. Step parents should accept the children of their spouse as “their own” children and not treat their step-children any different than their biological children.

To the exact extent that your spouse perceives you do not love their children will be the same exact extent that your spouse will not feel loved by you.

# 44. Adult Children Living In The Home

*Watch the video: Adult Children Living in the Home*

After children reach a certain age, you cannot “make” them do anything. Adult children may go into rebellion and refuse to obey either parent, do chores, clean their room or contribute to the household.

Adult children could be children who have never left the home or children who have left but returned for various reasons such as finishing college, getting a divorce or because of economics.

Adult children living in the home may think that because they are no longer classified as a child that they no longer have to obey the rules of the home. This is common in homes where adult children are living with their parents and many problems arise because of the way the adult child thinks about their role or lack of role in the home.

To help resolve issues pertaining to adult children the adult child needs to be brought into an understanding that even though they are now an adult there are still rules in the home that the adult child must obey.

Adult children in rebellion should be also be given a “**choice**” to obey or face the consequences of continued disobedience.

To establish the rules with the adult child, a meeting should be held with both parents present “**before**” the adult child is allowed to return to the home so that the adult child has a choice to either come into agreement with the rules or find a different place to live.

During the meeting the adult child should be brought into an understanding of the following:

1. In many states after the age of 17 or 18 living at home is a privilege, not a right.
2. A privilege is like a driver’s license. To keep a driver’s license you must obey the laws (rules) of the State. If you decline to obey the rules the privilege to drive can be withdrawn.
3. This same rule now applies to living in our home. You are welcome to live in our home as long as you obey the rules of our home.
4. The person who determines the rules of the home is the owner(s) of the home, not the adult child living in the home.
5. We love you and would like for you to live with us or remain living here, however, to live here requires you to follow the house rules.
6. If you decline to follow the house rules, that means that you have made the decision to leave our home.
7. If you decide to leave our home then you will have to provide your own place to live and your own means of support.

8. If your decision is to not comply with the rules of the home then we are not making you leave or throwing you out, it simply means that you have made the choice to live elsewhere.
9. The rules of the home are as follows . . . . .

### Considerations When Making the Rules

1. Curfew - "no later" time that you would expect them home. This should be reasonable and age appropriate.
2. Asking permission for guests in the home.
3. The time guests must leave the house/property
4. If guests are allowed overnight.
5. Guests of the opposite sex behind closed doors.
6. The rating of movies watched.
7. No sex in the home or on the property.
8. No use of alcohol or drugs in the home or on the property
9. Language that is not acceptable
10. Chores you expect them to help with
11. Rent

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It is always best for the adult child to have ownership with making rules.

An example would be asking them what time they think they should be in as a curfew. If their time does not match the time you had in mind, negotiate with them until you both can agree on the time. It is always better for them to have ownership in making the rules instead of just having a bunch of rules they must obey.

Rules, which are not enforced, are many times worse than no rules at all. If a policeman sees you break the law and does nothing, you begin to quickly lose respect for that policeman who is an authority figure. Your children see you as the authority figure of the home. Therefore, do not make any rule that you are not willing to enforce or they will lose respect for you.

To enforce a rule you must have a consequence. After you have made each rule with the adult child the next step would be to agree on the consequences of breaking the rules of the home. Several examples would be as follows:

1. If the curfew is broken they come in two hours earlier for the next three weeks.
2. If they have guests over without obtaining prior permission then no guests are allowed for the next three weeks.
3. Certain people may not be allowed on the property.

4. If guests are in the home past the time they are to depart then no guests are allowed for the next two weeks.

There may be some rules that are not negotiable such as drugs, alcohol or having sex on the property, as there may be other smaller children in the home who are influenced by the unacceptable behavior of their older brother or sister.

If these rules are broken then you should remind the adult child that because of their bad choice of disobeying the rule they have made the decision to live elsewhere, however, you are going to give them grace.

For the first offense they will have to find another place to live for the next three days. For the second offense they will have to find another place to live for the next seven days. For the third offense they will have to find another place to live indefinitely.

Note: If you are considering allowing an adult child to move back into the home it is always best to establish the rules of the home “before” the child is allowed to return. If the adult child is allowed to return home without establishing rules it is hard to go back and establish rules and the result can be hurt feelings.

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## 45. When Adult Children Are Treated Like Adolescent Children in the Home

A couple brought their 19-year-old daughter for counseling because she was in rebellion. The parents said that their daughter was home out of college for the summer, however, the daughter was no longer obedient. The parents said their daughter had run away from home several times, would not honor their curfew and would come and go as she pleased.

The parents said that they had tried to discipline their daughter by taking away her computer, cell phone, television, limited who she could have as friends, demanded that she not see a certain male friend and even went to the extreme measure of removing the door from her bedroom so they could monitor her activities.

The parents said that they did not understand why the more restrictive they were to their daughter and the more privileges were taken away from her the more their daughter would rebel.

I talked to the parents without their daughter in the room and asked them if they had an adult female friend of the family who temporarily needed a place to stay and they told her that she could stay in their home under the following conditions:

1. You cannot use the internet
2. You will not be able to use the television
3. You must give up your cell phone
4. We will tell you who can be your friends
5. You must give up your current boyfriend for a boyfriend we approve of
6. You will not have privacy in your room because there will be no door to the room
7. We will come into your room and check anything anytime we want to do so

I then asked the parents if they thought the adult female friend would actually want to live there. Both the mother and father said absolutely not. I then asked them what made them think that their adult daughter would want to stay there under those exact same conditions?

The mother said, "Because she is my daughter, I have the right to tell her what she can and cannot do in my home".

I said that I agreed that you have that right, however, in exercising that right that no one "other than a child" would want to live there under those conditions. I explained to the parents that even though this is their daughter that they must treat their daughter like an "**adult daughter**" instead of an adolescent daughter

I went further to explain that yes, the daughter needed to obey rules of the home, however, those rules should be appropriate to an adult, not a child. Their daughter is now an adult with adult rights and their adult daughter would not tolerate being treated as if she were a child.

When their daughter became an adult her parents no longer had the right to demand how their daughter will and will not live or who can and cannot be her friends. Their daughter had changed positions in the family and was no longer an adolescent that could be “told what to do”.

I explained to the parents that their daughter was an **adult daughter** and had to be treated with the same respect and honor they would give to an adult friend living in their home who happened to be their daughter.

I told them that even though they thought that their daughter’s boyfriend was not a good influence that if they did not love and accept whom their daughter loved and accepted then their daughter would not feel loved by them.

Further, that as a Christian family it was a golden opportunity to have a good godly influence over the young man their daughter was seeing and he should be encouraged to be accepted as part of the family instead of shunned because he did not have Christian values.

I asked the parents if they would be willing to begin seeing their daughter as an adult living in their home who happened to be their daughter and to give their adult daughter the same honor and respect they would give an adult friend living in their home.

Both parents said that they would. I then asked the parents if they would be willing to ask forgiveness from their daughter for treating her like a child instead of an adult and they both agreed. I told them that the next step after forgiveness would be to “negotiate” with their daughter the rules of the home as they would with an adult who was an invited guest.

Their daughter was more than willing to forgive her parents for their behavior and the relationship was reinstated. The family then negotiated the rules of the home and they all left as a reunited family.

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# 46. The Difference between Good and Bad Parenting

*Watch the video: The Difference between the Good & Bad Parenting*

Good parenting will follow through with the consequences that have been stated.

Bad Parenting does not follow through with consequences. The child learns that there may or may not be discipline when they cross the line and this causes confusion in the mind of the child.

Good parenting draws a line and tells the child what will happen if the child continues the bad behavior. Good parenting teaches the child what is and is not acceptable behavior and the consequences to crossing the line. A clear boundary allows the child to know exactly what is right and what is wrong. This gives the child a choice to stay on the right side of the line and not be disciplined or the child can choose to cross the line knowing the consequences of making that choice. The child is learning to bear the consequences of his own actions.

Bad parenting expects the child to read the mood of the parents. If the parent is in a good mood the child will get away with anything. If the parent is in a bad mood the child will be disciplined or punished for doing almost nothing. The child must continually try to read the mood of the parent to know what is and is not acceptable moment by moment. The child never knows the severity of what they have done wrong.

Bad parenting will not tell the child the rules, the child will have to guess what the rules are and then face the consequences of not knowing.

Good Parenting will make the distinction between a mistake and a deliberate sin.

Bad parenting will punish the child for an accident or a mistake. There is always someone to blame; someone must be at fault and it usually the child.

Bad parenting will spank the child until the child cries, then spank the child for crying and spank the child until the child stops crying. This teaches the child that it is not safe to show emotions and results in an adult with psychological and emotional disorders.

Good parenting will enable a child to be able to please the parents by teaching what the child is doing, one small step at a time.

Good parents will give the child things to do that are age appropriate. Good parents will insure that what they give the child to do is "not too hard" for the child to do and teach the child one-step at a time how to do it. Children learn by what they have been shown to do.



Bad parenting will give the child things to do “without teaching” the child how to do it and give the child things to do which are too hard for the child to do. This can overwhelm the child as the child has not been shown and there is no information recorded in their brain that they can access to help them to know what to do.

Good parents always follow through with the consequence for the disobedience of the child. Good parenting will not threaten to discipline the child and then not follow through, even though there may be grace.

Bad parenting does not follow through with consequences and the child never learns to have choices. This teaches the child to push the parent to the limit as the child has a 50/50 chance nothing will happen.

Good parenting results in the child still feeling loved and not abandoned when discipline is administered.

Bad parenting will withdraw love from the child when the child is disciplined. The child will feel abandoned, alone and unloved. The child may receive the silent treatment from the parent.

Good parenting will tell the child exactly what he did wrong and that they are being disciplined for that offense.

Bad parenting lectures the child and belittles and condemns the child for what they did wrong. The child may not be told exactly what they did that was wrong but are told how “bad” they are. The child may be called names and told that they will never succeed.

Good parenting does not continually remind the child of their past sins.

Bad parenting continually reminds the child of past sins, this relays to the child that their sins are not forgiven.

Good parenting praises the child for accomplishments and encourages them to do better. Good parents will give the child a voice and will ask the child their opinion and thoughts about different situations. This will give the child an opportunity to speak their innocence and provides a means to vent their feelings.

Bad parenting makes bad predictions of the future, (you will never amount to anything, you will never be a good person, and you are lazy, no good). This labels the child not the sin.

Good parenting will allow the child to say no and listen to the reason the child gives for not wanting to do what the child was instructed to do.

Bad parenting will not allow the child to say no or give an explanation for what they did wrong. The child will not be allowed to vent their negative emotions and will be blamed

for their anger. As an adult this person may have a problem saying no and will say yes when they really want to say no.

Good parents will respect the child's privacy.

Bad parenting will demand to know each and every action of the child and make false allegations of what the child may have done. Each and every action of the child will be questioned and there is no trust between the child and the parents. Abusive parenting will check and search the child's room looking for wrongs and accuse the child of every little action.

Good parenting encourages the child to be who he or she is created to be and take a personal interest in the child and supports the child in school and extra activities and encourages the child to develop their talents.

Bad parenting will require the child to mirror or be just like the parents by not encouraging the child to be themselves. The parent will feel threatened if the child is different than the parent.

Good parenting will give the appearance of the adults always being in agreement in the presence of the child. They will be unified in all areas pertaining to the child's discipline and both parents will appear to be in charge. The child will know that mother and father "both" are in total agreement.

Bad parenting will argue in front of the child and not be unified. This confuses the child and the child is not sure who is in charge and who is not. Abusive parenting will confuse the child by one parent administering one discipline to the child and the other parent not being in agreement or letting the child off the hook. This may result in the child "favoring" one parent over the other and cause jealousy within the family.

Children learn "how" to be a husband or a wife and "what" a husband or a wife is by watching you interact with your spouse and with God. The most important things for your child to see is your healthy relationship with your spouse and God

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## 47. Some Problems Adults have as the Result of Bad Parenting

- **Be the epitome of proper, staying to a very tight schedule.** As a child he/she got into trouble for the slightest mistake or violation of being late.
- **Not be spontaneous out of fear of doing it wrong.** As a child she was frequently punished and did not know why.
- **Be self-conscience and rehearse everything that they are going to say and how they are going to act in front of others.** The child got into trouble for not saying it the way the adult would have said it even though what the child said or did was not wrong. The parents did not allow the child to individuate, and they do not feel accepted being themselves as the parent required the child to mirror the parent.
- **Stuttering** – Usually the result of the child saying it the wrong way and there was a severe consequence. Now the mind is double and triple checking the words before they are spoken to insure it is never said wrong again.
- **Lying in bed at night and going over and over in their mind to see if there were any flaws in their performance, in the things they said and the way they behaved.** As a child he or she was not told why they were being punished.
- **This person may join a church, which will have rules to govern every action.** This person will want to know the rules for any and all situations and be very critical of anyone violating the rules. As a child there were no known rules and they got into much trouble as the rules were made up by the parent or based on the emotions of the parent. Knowing the rules today will keep him out of trouble.
- **They may see God as someone who is very rigid and who will punish them for their least trespass.** They may have a hard time forgiving themselves for their sins and never “really” feel forgiven by God. A child sees their father as God. When the child becomes an adult their view of their father gets transposed onto God and they will feel the same way about God as they did their father.
- **From time to time they will feel that they will never be able to please God and may throw themselves to the wind for a night of drinking or sexual pleasure.** As a child they may have from time to time felt that it was impossible to please their father and gave up.
- **At times they may open up and become the life of the party. Later at home they will punish themselves for thinking that they had made a fool of themselves in front of God and everyone.** As a child the parent was very inconsistent with punishment. Sometimes they would be punished and sometimes they would not. The adult then is never really sure if they have done something wrong in the presence of others.
- **They may be a perfect housekeeper and then from time to time do nothing and let it all go to pot.** Again this comes from the child feeling that they could not please the parent and they give up.
- **The adult will not be able to find balance and becomes either an extravert or an introvert, leans toward legalism or sin, is hard working or lazy.** This is due to the

lack of boundaries and never knowing what would be or would not be acceptable as a child.

- **When she becomes married her husband cannot understand why she is not able to keep the house clean. In her mind the house will look so big and too overwhelming to clean, and she will keep asking herself where she should start.** This is the same problem she had as a child because she was not taught step by step how to do hard things by her parents and consistently felt overwhelmed.
- **The adult will not understand how her friends can put up with all the needs of a child.** He or she will have little patience with her own children or the children of friends. As a child she was not cared for and nurtured and therefore she did not learn that children have special needs and that children must be nurtured with patience.
- **The adult may have constant thoughts that she is a bad wife and a bad mother.** As a child she was constantly told how bad she was and that she could not do anything right. As an adult these same thoughts are like a broken record playing over and over in her head.
- **The adult may not know how to express his or her emotions, which go from one extreme to the other.** As a child emotions were governed by the mood of the parents. If the parents were in a good mood the child was not abused. If the parents were in a bad mood, the child was harmed. The child never learned to have their own emotions and what it meant to have emotions.
- **The adult has a hard time saying no to others and is constantly doing things they really do not want to do.** As a child they were not allowed to say no to their parents or there were severe consequences to saying no.
- **In his head he may know what is right, but it is hard to do those things.** As a child he was not taught how to do the hard things. What may be simple for another adult may be overwhelming for them such as taking care of the children, doing household chores, cooking, ironing and cleaning.
- **The adult allows anyone to run over him like he is a doormat.** As a child he had no rights, he was told and directed in all aspects of his life. He had no choices in what he would or would not do. He was not in charge of any aspect of his life.

# 49. Adopted Children

*Please watch the video on the website: Adopted Children*

Most adopted children have an identity crisis and they feel rejected. They feel that they have already been rejected once by their natural parents and have a fear of being rejected again by their adoptive parents. It would be too much for them to emotionally handle if they were rejected again. Therefore to avoid the pain of being rejected again, most adopted children will reject you before you have the opportunity to reject them. This is their internal solution to not ever being hurt by rejection again. It is their means of avoiding the pain of you possibly rejecting them as their parents rejected them.

Since they believe that they will eventually be rejected by you they will “test” you to see if you will reject them. These tests may last for several years.

You may see their heart begin to open to you and then suddenly they do something to sabotage your relationship with them. This may appear to be completely irrational to you. This is another test, however, this test is for both you and the child. What has happened is that the child has suddenly realized that they have opened their heart to you. The child has realized that their heart is vulnerable and can be hurt by you if you should reject them. Therefore, the child feels they must do something to sabotage the relationship to cause you to be angry with them. Your response with anger will then justify them closing their heart to you so that they no longer feel vulnerable in the event that you would reject them.

During these tests you will see them at their worst. They intend for you to see them at their worst in order to determine whether you will pass the test of not rejecting them. This is the only way they know of to insure that their heart is never broken again through rejection.

**Infants** - Infant children who have been rejected may also reject caregivers by holding back their affection. Infants may do this by being stiff when you hold them.

Other children may seem to not get enough love and be craving for love, as this child has not yet let go of the natural parent.

**Lying & Stealing is Common** - with adopted children. Sometimes the lying is part of the testing to see if you will reject them if they lie to you. Stealing may also be a means of getting attention. Negative attention is better than no attention.

If the child has come from a home where the child suffered physical or sexual trauma, the mind of the child may be dissociated (see Dissociative Identity Disorder). You may catch this child with stolen items in their room or even in their hand. When you ask the child about what they have taken the child will look straight into your eyes and lie to you, swearing that they did not do what you have said they did or that they did not take what you saw them take.

If the child is dissociative they may really believe that they are telling you the truth. Technically they are telling you the truth as someone else (a different personality) stole the item or did the behavior that you are accusing the child of doing.

Not understanding dissociation and punishing the child for something the child really believes that they did not do may quickly lead to rebellion by the child to your authority as the child “truly” believes that you are not treating them justly.

Many adoptive children are compulsive thieves. They steal because they believe that their life was stolen from them by giving them away. When a child is conceived they believe in their spirit that you, the person who has given them life, will always be there and take care of them. When they are given away the child feels like their life has been stolen and they want to get even by stealing things in life. The child may believe that when their parents gave them away they stole his life, therefore, he steals. It is a cry for help.

For the child to be free of the lying and stealing the child needs to forgive his parents for lying to them and stealing their life from them by breaking the promise to always be there with them.

From my previous job as the assistant director of Miracle Hill Children’s Home I gained tremendous experience in understanding the hurts and wounds of children who have been adopted.

Most families who have adopted children into their home have an expectation that the child will be very grateful, loving and open their heart to their new adoptive family. In the beginning of the relationship this could and most often is true. The child wins the hearts of the prospective adopted family.

Once the child is actually residing in the home there is often a very “sudden” change in the child. The mind of the child remembers how to feel in a home with a mother and father and often those are not good memories. All those old memories are now transferred to this child’s new family.

The new family has taken the place of the child’s biological parents and absolutely every unresolved issue the child had with his or her biological parents will be transferred to the new adoptive parents.

Adoptive parents are very surprised when a child quickly begins to put a wall around their heart to protect themselves. This child has already been rejected by his or her biological parents and very often rejected by several sets of foster parents.

Because the child has been rejected so many times in the past, the child will most likely test you to see if you will also reject them. The tests will be in the form of bad behavior. The more tests that you pass the bigger the tests will become.

All of their anger and frustrations they have with their biological parents and previous foster parents will be transferred to his or her new adopted parents. The child may become angry and easily triggered at things which make no sense to you. This may be very

confusing to you as you have not wronged the child. The child at the subconscious level is remembering the hurt and pains their biological parents inflicted on them. Anytime you do anything similar to what their biological parents did that caused pain to the child, the child's subconscious mind will remind them of how they felt when their parents did or said something similar to what you just said or did. The child will now feel the same with you as if you were the person who caused the original pain.

Obviously the pain the child is now feeling has absolutely nothing to do with you, however, the pain is very real to the child, and since the child does not know that their emotions have nothing to do with you, they will assume that you are the reason for the pain they are now feeling. The child will now try to work out with you their unresolved issues with their biological parent.

**Attachment disorders:** These children may give you lots of attention until you actually bring them into your home. Prior to founding this ministry while I was the assistant director of the Miracle Hill children's home we were a licensed foster care home in the Greenville area. Frequently my wife and I would take into our home different children over the weekend. I remember one little seven-year-old girl. Every time she saw me at the children's home she would run over to me, hold on for dear life, demand that I pick her up and smother her with attention.

One weekend we brought her into our home for a visit. Immediately her entire personality changed. She became very reserved, disinterested in attention and demanded privacy in "her" room. I knew that all the rules had changed. My wife and I were now in the position of her parents who had sexually abused and abandoned her. She was now trying to work out through my wife and I her unresolved spiritual issues left over from the rejection of her biological parents.

Sometimes the child fears that if they attach to you then they have betrayed their biological parent(s). The child does not realize that their heart and the hearts of others are big enough to allow more than one person in at a time. Assure the child that it is ok for them to still love their mother or father and let you in at the same time. You can explain that you love others and you are not betraying the others by loving more than one person at a time.

**Questions they have** -Almost all adopted children have an identity crisis and have little sense of who they are. Deep within they have lost their sense of belonging to the natural bonding of a mother and father. There will be questions and thoughts in their mind such as:

- Who am I
- What is wrong with me?
- What did I do wrong
- I am different than others
- Should I have been born?
- I am a mistake
- I should not be here
- Everyone will eventually reject me

A lack of bonding is very common. The child is rejecting the love they desperately need; however, their fear of being rejected is too big to overcome until you have proven to them that you will not reject them no matter what.

The tests will become bigger and bigger. As you pass a test get ready because the next test will be bigger than the last. The mind of the child is thinking, "ok, you did not reject me when I lied, let's see what you do when I steal?" If you pass the test when they steal then lying may be next. The lying and stealing may go on for a very long time as most of these children feel that life has been stolen from them and that they have been lied to about who they are. It is often that child's way of "getting even" with life.

A non-existent or very distant relationship with God is common as there is an inner anger with God. Questions in the mind of the adopted child in reference to God are often:

- Why did you put me with parents who would reject me?
- Why did you put me with parents who would abuse me?
- Why did you make me defective so no one would want me?
- Am I lovable?

**Dissociative Identity Disorder** - If the child went through overwhelming physical, mental or emotional abuse, the child could have developed dissociative identity disorder (created personalities to deal with what was happening to him or her). If personalities were developed, then it could be the job of a personality to steal. If a personality stole something and then you accused the child of stealing, the child will not know what you are talking about. If you discipline the child for stealing then the child will perceive this as injustice as it was not him or her that stole. This can be very confusing to parents who "know" that stealing took place but their child is pleading innocent.

At the children's home I would frequently observe a dissociative child do things or say things and have no memory of what they said or did as it was an alter personality that actually did the behavior or said what was said.

Once the child "believes" that they are in a safe environment and will not be rejected, then through the right kind of counseling the personalities are often integrated in several sessions of counseling and the dissociation is resolved.

When the child refuses love it may be because he is in fear of being rejected again.

Other children may seem to not get enough love and be craving for love, as he or she has not yet let go of the natural parent.

**Defiling Bond:** Often parents who adopt do so out of their own emotional wounds. This parent could be looking for someone to love them instead of someone to give love to. This parent may say things similar to:

- Come give mommy/daddy a hug



- Come and love mommy/daddy
- Come sit beside mommy/daddy

This inverts the love process as it is a taking of emotion to comfort the adult instead of a giving of an emotion to comfort the child. This defiles the child and the child is more likely to avoid having to give their emotions away as it emotionally drains the child.

An adopted child needs to “receive” love, not have to give the little love they have inside of them away. These statements need to be rephrased to:

- May I give you a hug?
- May I give you some love?
- May I sit beside you?

**Gorging food:** Often adopted children come from homes where food was withheld as discipline or there was not enough to eat. They could have been fed food that was bland or had little taste. Gorging is common with a child who was malnourished.

There are memories (echoes) in the mind of this child telling the child how to feel about food:

- Eat while you can as much as you can because you may be hungry after a while.
- Eat as much as you can as often as you can because there may be no food tomorrow.
- Get food while you can and hide it for later because there may be nothing to eat later.

**Picky eater:** The child may be extremely picky about what they will and will not eat. Children who lived in an orphanage or group home often did not have enough to eat to experience the “full” feeling or were not served a variety of foods. These children’s taste buds may not be familiar with the “healthy” food you are serving.

**Hoarding and hiding food:** This is a common problem for children who never knew where their next meal was coming from. They need time to learn that food is plentiful in their new home. This is done by you reassuring them that they can eat as much as they want as often as they want. You may find food hidden in their room they are saving for later. Do not treat the child harshly as they are acting out of fear from their previous experiences that there may be nothing to eat later. You can simply relocate the food to the kitchen and tell the child that it will be there anytime they want it. You may go to the child later and ask if they are hungry or would like a snack and personally invite the child to where that special place is where their favorite snack is located.

**You are not my real mom; you are not my real dad!** The child may have never met their real mother or father and you have taken the place of that real mom or dad. They may say that their real mom or dad would treat them much better than you.

Often the child will idealize their biological parent(s) into someone who is so much more wonderful than you. “If you hear these words from your child and you take it

personally then it can hurt you. Understanding that this is nothing personal and it is coming from the child's own hurts and wounds help you to stay steady.

The main thing is that the child does not see you reacting with anger or frustration. You need to build trust and stability with the child. Disagreeing with the child or trying to prove yourself with all the "wonderful" things you have done will have little positive results. Simply agree with the child, "you are right, I am not your real mom or I am not your real dad, but I have taken their place and love you very much.

If you "cave in" every time the "real parent" charge comes up, the child can quickly learn to use this against you to control you when they don't get their way.

Make a mental evaluation of the situation from the child's standpoint. If you were that child and you were being treated in a similar way would you have come to the same conclusion? Are you being fair? Is the discipline fair for what happened? If you feel you've done it right, then tell the child that you can see why they would think what they are thinking and feel what they are feeling, but disobedience results in discipline and you think that you have reacted correctly in reference to what they have said or done.

Sometimes adopters are so excited over having a child in their home that they do not want to do anything to cause the child to not like them. So, they allow misbehaviors of the child to go without discipline. This puts the child in charge as they have learned that they can do whatever they want to do and they will get away with it. The consequences of unacceptable behavior should be reinforced with discipline that is administered in a stern but loving manner.

Basically all the issues your adoptive child has will be the result of the lack of love they received from previous caregivers, which are being transferred to you.

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**Jealousy** – If you are adopting and you already have a child your son or daughter may initially share your excitement of having a brother or sister to relate to. Your biological child may soon begin to be jealous and resent the adopted brother or adopted sister because of the extreme emotional demands of the adopted child requiring so much of your attention. No one planned on the needs of the adopted child being so extreme and requiring so much of your time and emotional energy. This often leaves your own child feeling rejected as they are being ignored while you are getting emotionally exhausted trying to meet all the needs of your adoptive child.

You will need to make sure that you are making time for your own child and not trying to justify to your child that you no longer have time for him or her. This can quickly lead to resentment.

**Sending them away** – Your answer to not being able to meet the needs of the adoptive

child could be to send them away to a military school or a place for special needs children. You were not prepared to expend so much time and emotional energy on one child. If you do this you may have fallen into the trap and done exactly what your adoptive child expected you to do. The adoptive child expects you to reject them. Even though you do not intend this to be rejection it is perceived by the child that you also have done the same thing that all others have done. You have rejected me too.

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**Demanding too much attention** - Sometimes the child will bond with you immediately and then hold on for dear life. This child may not ever want you to be out of their sight, wanting to constantly be by your side, follow you everywhere and want to go with you everywhere. This child will whine or cry every time you walk out the door, feeling the echo of a parent who walked out and never came back.

Reassure the child you will be right back. Give the child a clock to look at and show them the time you will be back. Keep your word and return at the time you told the child. If you cannot be back at the time you gave the child then telephone the child and explain that you will be a little late and why. Give the child a new time that you will return.

**Tantrums** - Tantrums are common in children who did not get the attention they needed. A child quickly learns that if they cannot get attention in a positive way that they will get attention by bad behavior. These children were previously ignored and neglected. Be quick to respond to emotional needs that are expressed in a positive manner.

If you respond to the tantrum and give in to what they want the child has learned to control you with their bad behavior.

If a child goes into a tantrum then talk to them in a very deliberate soft tone of voice and say something similar to the following:

“I am sorry that I neglected you or ignored you, but as long as you behave this way I will not do what you have asked. As soon as you ask in a calm voice I will be sure to do what you want, but not until then.”

**Rocking** - Rocking is common with younger children who were not comforted by care givers. Rocking is usually a means of “self-comfort”. As the child rocks it gives comfort.

A couple adopted two children from Russia that would not stop rocking no matter what the couple did. The couple would scold the children and discipline the children for rocking and the rocking would get worse and worse. I told the couple to stop focusing on the rocking as the issue and go over to the rocking child and hold the child and rock the rocking child. As the parents rocked the rocking child the need for self-comfort dissipated and the child’s needs for comfort were being met.

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**Longing to see their biological parent** – It is natural for a child to have a deep burning or longing to see their biological parent. It is instilled within a child to bond with their natural parent. I advise adoptive parents to never keep their child from their biological parents. Sometimes visits are not possible because the parents have been ordered by the court to never have contact with the children. If the parents were abusive but there is no court order then visits should be encouraged. You do not want to be the focus of the child's anger due to keeping the child from seeing their natural parent. The visits allow the child to compare your love to the lack of love they receive from their biological parent. This can actually result in the child bonding to you quicker as all idealization a child has of their natural parents begins to diminish as they compare the behavior of the dysfunctional parent to your maturity and love.

If visits are prohibited because of court, then console the child, tell the child that it is natural to miss and grieve over a parent that is absent. Help the child to forgive the parent for acting in such a dysfunctional manner that the court will not allow a visit.

### **Healing for adopted children**

Healing is obtained by forgiveness of the parents for giving them away, rejecting them, not accepting them, and not knowing how to care for them. Pray for healing of rejection and bitterroot expectancy of being rejected.

Break any vows that need to be broken.

Lies believed as truth are common and they will need to receive truth for lies such as:

Everyone will reject me  
I should not have been born  
I have no worth  
I am not important  
I am not lovable

Encouraging adoptee to find their natural parents in their adulthood can help closure to all the questions in their mind. This allows them to get out of the realm of imagination and into the realm of reality.