

*Journey* CHURCH

# *Creating* **A MARRIAGE** *that Lasts*



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# WELCOME TO CREATING A MARRIAGE THAT LASTS

It's what you do after you say 'I do' that makes the difference.

*"Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband." Eph. 5:33*

The truths in this book are an accumulation of years of research, marriage counseling, personal experience and biblical insight. I hope that you and your spouse would use this book to grow closer to each other as well as closer to God. This book can be a great investment into your future.

In Christ,  
Pastor James

Eph. 3:20



*Creating*  
**A MARRIAGE**  
*that Lasts*



# Creating a Marriage that Lasts

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# SIX PURPOSES OF MARRIAGE

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## 1. **Companionship**

True companionship grows out of a oneness of spirit. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (*Amos 3:3*)

## 2. **Enjoyment**

The principle behind enjoyment is self-control. "Marriage is honoable (of great worth) in all, and the bed (should be kept) undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

(*Hebrews 13:4*)

## 3. **Completeness**

God designed Eve to complete that which was lacking in Adam's life. "And Adam said...She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." (*Genesis 2:23*)

## 4. **Fruitfulness**

God's first command in Scripture is, "Be fruitful (Hebrew parah, make increase after your kind), and multiply (Hebrew rabah, increase with exceeding abundance of children), and replenish the earth (Hebrew male, fill up the world to overflowing)..." (*Genesis 1:28*)

## 5. **Protection**

The husband is to protect the wife by laying down his life for her (See *Ephesians 5:25*). The wife is to protect the home (See *Titus 2:4-5*). Parents are to protect their children to rise up a Godly seed

(See *Malachi 2:25; Psalm 112:1-2*).

## 6. **Typify Christ and the Church**

Marriage is to be a human object lesson of the divine relationship between Christ and believers (See *Ephesians 5:31-33*).





# FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

## *FIVE SIMPLE STEPS TO START US OFF:*

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### **#1 - Pray for each other the next 30+ days.**

*(1 Thessalonians 5:16-19, NKJV; Galatians 5:22-23, NKJV)*

We need to be thanking God and rejoicing for our marriages. When we quench the Holy Spirit, it reduces the love, joy, and peace we have in our marriages. The very things we need in our marriages is quenched by not praying and giving thanks. This will not just happen; we have to be intentional.

### **FIRST CHALLENGE**

**Pray and give thanks for your mate for the next 30 days.**

### **#2 - Forgive before asked.** *(Ephesians 4:26-27, NKJV; Romans 12:17-19, NKJV)*

When we don't forgive, we are giving place to the devil in our marriage. When we give place to the devil, we will start thinking negative thoughts.

### **#3 - Don't make any personal decisions while fighting and upset.**

*(Jeremiah 17:9-10, NKJV)*

### **#4 - Make a list of the good qualities of your mate while not upset.**

**When you are upset, read them.** *(Philippians 4:8-9, NKJV, NCV)*

### **#5 - Read the true definition of love.** *(1 Corinthians 13:4-8, NCV, NLT2)*



# THE TRUE DEFINITION OF LOVE

## 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-9

- 1. LOVE SUFFERS LONG**  
It is slow to lose patience.
- 2. IT IS KIND**  
It looks for a way of being constructive.
- 3. IT DOES NOT ENVY**  
It is not possessive.
- 4. IT DOES NOT PARADE ITSELF**  
It is not anxious to impress.
- 5. IT IS NOT PUFFED UP**  
It does not cherish inflated ideas of its own importance.
- 6. IT DOES NOT BEHAVE RUDELY**  
It has good manners.
- 7. IT DOES NOT SEEK ITS OWN**  
It does not pursue selfish advantage.

## AMPLIFICATION

Doesn't demonstrate irritations, or reflect anger, or have a quick temper. Has fully accepted the character of the mate.

It is actively creative. It is able to recognize needs. It discovers successful methods of improving or contributing to the other's life.

It does not hold exclusive control where one is allowed little or no freedom to fulfill apart from the mate.

Doesn't seek to make an impression or create an image for personal gain.

It is not self-centered. It has the ability to change and to accept change. It is flexible. It doesn't allow or expect life to revolve around itself.

Has respect for others which results in a set of Christ-centered standards. Has discretion. Knows what is proper and when.

Does not have primary concern for personal sexual appetites or social status but concern for the needs of the mate and the families involved.



**8. IT IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED**

It is not touchy.

**9. IT THINKS NO EVIL**

It does not keep account of evil.

**10. IT DOES NOT REJOICE  
IN INIQUITY**

It doesn't gloat over the wickedness of other people.

**11. IT REJOICES IN  
THE TRUTH**

It is glad. With all Godly men, truth prevails.

**12. IT BEARS ALL THINGS**

It knows no limit to its forbearance.

**13. IT BELIEVES ALL THINGS**

It knows no end to its truth.

**14. IT HOPES ALL THINGS**

It knows no fading of its hope.

**15. IT ENDURES ALL THINGS**

It has unlimited endurance.

Is not hypersensitive or easily hurt. Does not take things too personally. Is not emotionally involved with personal opinions so that to reject ideas or reject the one giving them. It is not fickle. It has perfect peace and confidence that God is primarily responsible for introducing the right partner at the right time.

Doesn't compare self with others for self-justification. Doesn't use other's evil to excuse personal weakness. Doesn't say, "Everyone is doing it."

Is active in fellowship with dedicated Christians. Is occupied with spiritual objectives.

Has the ability to live with inconsistencies of others. Has empathy for the problems of others.

It believes in the person and the person's worth without question. It has no reason to doubt the person's integrity.

It is not fickle. It has perfect peace and confidence that God is primarily responsible for introducing the right partner at the right time.

It is able to outlast anything. It is able to endure all obstacles and even love in the face of unreturned love.



# HOW TO MAKE THE RELATIONSHIP YOU HAVE THE RELATIONSHIP YOU WANT

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*1 Corinthians 7:17-24 (NIV)*

One of the problems in marriage is that we want more control over the other person but what God wants is for us to yield more control to Him. What you don't allow God to control will get out of control. Your mate is your special assignment by God. You can't always change your situation but you can accept your assignment in any situation.

One of the other biggest problems in relationships is focusing on trying to change the other person instead of what God wants to change in you. Are you the "who" that you want them to be?

Marriage is a calling. As spouses we are called to:

- **Carry the other spouse's burden.** When your mate is weak, you try to be strong. (*Galatians 6:2, NKJV; Galatians 6:5, NKJV; Matthew 11:28, NKJV*)
- **Assume the best.** Unmet expectations is what caused us to get offended so change your expectations and assume the best.  
(*Song of Songs 2:15, NKJV; Proverbs 19:11, NIV*)
- **Live with commitment.** Enjoy where you are on the way to where God wants to bring you. Don't compare yourselves. At the core of every man is a will to provide and protect; when he sees or feels that his wife is not content it makes him feel like he is a failure in some area of his life.  
(*Philippians 4:11-13, NIV; 1 Timothy 6:7-9, NKJV*)
- **Let God be God.** When you focus on being who God wants you to be, then God can begin to work on you. (*Philippians 2:8, NIV*)
- **Encourage the other spouse's strengths.** Most of the times we think we are called to expose our spouse's weakness but the truth is, we are called to encourage their strengths. Be your spouse's CEO – Chief Encouraging Officer.





# SECRETS TO A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE

*Songs of Songs 5:16, NKJV; Proverbs 5:18-19, NKJV*

**To have a Great Marriage you will have to know what real Biblical Love is.** There is a difference between love and lust. Please see handout (Genuine Love). Lust is using someone as an instrument for your own satisfaction.

## **Three words for Love; Each have a different meaning.**

1. **Eros Love** - a need love; based upon physical attraction and fulfillment; marriages cannot be sustained by eros love alone. (*Proverbs 5:15-19, NKJV*)
2. **Phileo Love** - a friendship love; sharing of time, activities, the home, hobbies, and other objects of common fellowship. (*Romans 12:9-13*)
3. **Agape Love** - a giving love; one loves even when the other doesn't respond as expected; self-giving in meeting real needs of the other with the purpose of helping the person to become a better, more mature individual. (*1 Corinthians 13:4-8, NLT*)

**Agape Love + Phileo Love + Eros Love  
= Godly marriage that will last.**

## Exceptional marriages takes doing some exceptional things.

- **You must have an exceptional relationship with Christ** if you want the relationship God wants you to have with each other. (*Psalm 127:1, NKJV*) Exceptional is doing life together with Jesus being at the center of you both. (*Matthew 6:33, NKJV*) Whatever you prioritize will have progress.
- **You have to have exceptional self-acceptance.**  
You have to know and believe 'Who you are in Christ.' Learn to get your acceptance, security, and significance from Christ or you will try to get it from others. Learn to fix your hopes and dreams on God and seek to please Him through this relationship.
- **You have to become exceptionally unselfish.** (*1 John 4:7-8, NKJV*)  
Selfishness is at the heart of most problems between people. Due to lack of self-awareness we often miss how selfish we really are. (*James 4:1-3, NLT2*) Selfishness robs our joy with God and others. The way to overcome selfishness is the love of Christ in you. Christ' love leads us to wanting the best for the other person.
- **You have to be exceptionally forgiving.** (*Romans 12:17-19, NKJV*)  
Forgiveness is not weakness; it is a way to power.
- **It takes exceptional financial principles.** It takes two totally committed to financial principles to have an exceptional marriage. Don't spend more than you make. Make a budget together. Tithe 10%, save 10%, spend 80%. Financial principles lead to financial freedom. (*Matthew 6:21, NKJV*)
- **It takes exceptional moral freedom.** (*1 Corinthians 6:18, NKJV; Hebrews 13:4, NCV*)  
Don't be flirting with the opposite sex.
- **It takes exceptional purpose in life.** (*Matthew 6:33-34, NKJV*) Jesus is our only true source of meeting all our needs; everyone else is simply a conduit used by God.
- **It takes exceptional harmony with authorities.** If you're not in harmony with your authorities, you will have problems being in harmony with the Ultimate Authority, Jesus Christ and His Word. (*Romans 13:1-5, NKJV; NIV*)
- **It takes exceptional faithfulness.** (Not giving up) (*Galatians 6:9-10, NKJV*)



# A MARRIAGE THAT LASTS

## Priority determines Blessing, Direction, and Destiny

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Confusion comes from wrong priorities in our life. Confused marriages come from wrong priorities. Confused finances come from wrong priorities. Confused physically comes from wrong priorities. Confused spiritually comes from wrong priorities.

**If you want to be blessed, the first priority is learning to put God first.**

*(Matthew 6:33-34, NKJV)*

God has to be the ultimate source of meeting any and all our needs. Not our mates, jobs, pastor, etc...they are only conduits used by God. The way we spend our time tells the truth about our priorities. How we spend our money tells the truth about our heart. (Matthew 6:21, NKJV) If you don't tithe and give to the church, you are lying to yourself about loving Jesus and the church.

How we spend our time with God tells the truth about our love for God. If you tracked your time on a day to day basis for a week what would it tell you? The truth. Most people lie to themselves. We see ourselves as we want to be. Many times others see us as we really are. The Truth will set you free.

*(John 8:32, NKJV)*

**If you want to be blessed, the second priority is your mate.**

*(Psalm 127:1-2, NKJV)*

This verse tells us that unless we give it all to the Lord, our marriage will end up empty.

**How can we make our mate a priority?** *(Matthew 6:21, NKJV)*

How we spend our money tells the truth about our heart. Is it your priority to give or to get in the marriage? How we spend our time with God tells the truth about the love of your mate.



## 6 Steps to Help Priorities in Your Love Life

### Step #1: Put Love First.

- **Talk Charge** – Have loving personal talks with your spouse five times each day for a minimum of one minute.
- **Super Talk Charge** – Have a loving personal talk with your spouse once each week for a minimum of 25 minutes.
- **Touch Charge** – Make loving physical contact with your spouse a minimum of three times a day.
- **Date Night** – Go out alone on a date with your spouse at least once a week.
- **Romantic Treat** – Go on vacation at least three times per year **alone with your spouse** for at least three days and two nights.
- **Business Meeting** – avoid as many logistical and business discussions throughout the week as possible and discuss all of them during a weekly business meeting.
- **Photo op** – Put photos of your spouse in your wallet, your office, and your gym locker.
- **Birthday Party** – Plan an extravagant birthday party for your spouse. Invite only your spouse.





## Step #2: Give Presence.

- **Intimacy Review** – Extensively interview your spouse in order to create an inventory of giving opportunities. (This is more personal than financial)
- **Give** – Give from your inventory at least three times a week.

## Step #3: Move from me to we.

- **Move your circle of life** – Get more involved in one of your spouse's hobbies or interests.
- **Pick a Hobby** – You and your spouse select a hobby to do together.
- **Make room for love** – select one of your hobbies and interests that your spouse is not involved with and eliminate it from your life.
- **Be a team** – Invite your spouse to help you fix one or more of your problems or flaws.
- **What do you think?** – Ask your spouse their opinion before making decisions.

## Step #4: Save Time for Your Sex Life. (1 Corinthians 2-7, CEV)

This is talk time! You need to be honest and open with each other about what this means and how often!



## Step #5: Spend your Money Wisely.

- **Always put God first** so you won't be under the curse. (*Malachi 3:8-11, NKJV*)
- **Put your spouse second.**  
Would you rather give or get. You should always want their needs met first. Budget and we will both be better. Budget together. Spend together, don't spend over an agreed amount without talking to your mate.

## Step #6: Save Yourself.

- **Hold Back** – Refrain from sharing your inner life with anyone other than your spouse.
- **Please do not touch** – Refrain from physical contact with anyone of the opposite sex other than your spouse, your parents, and your children.
- **This one is for you** – Refrain from regularly giving gifts to or having thoughtful correspondence with anyone other than your spouse.
- **T.V. Fast** – A minimum of once a year, turn off the television for two days
- **Dress for success** – Refrain from dressing in a way that will provoke an emotional connection from the opposite sex. (except in private with your spouse.)







# 7 Steps to Improving Your Marriage

**Step #1** – Focus on being the right person, instead of trying to change the other person.

**Step #2.** - Begin to fix your hopes and dreams on God and seek to please Him

**Step #3** – Agree to work on the real problem. Connect in love before addressing the problems, pains, and complaints. (Build equity before addressing the problems)

**Step #4** - Focus on your God-given purpose, purity, praise and God's presence and allow it to produce love.

**Step #5** – Agree to make marriage a priority. This will bring progress.

**Step #6** – Commit to praying for your mate every day.

**Step #7** – Do your assessment, but then share your dreams, hopes, and desires.

**The Bible teaches that God promises and guarantees that He will bless your life if we do what He SAYS!**

Every **Promise** has a **Premise (condition)**. Every Promise has a Prediction (you obey and you will be blessed, you disobey and you want.) There's over seven thousand promises in the Bible where God says, "If you do this, I will do this."

If we confess our sins, He will forgive us. If we call upon His Name to be saved, He will save us. If we obey, He will bless us. You're not waiting on God, God's waiting on us to fulfill the conditions so He can bless our life in ways we have never imagined!



# 6 Steps to Help Improve Marriage Satisfaction

## Step 1: Change the Focus

- **Reframe the conversation** away from being about what your spouse is or isn't doing to thinking about your relationship together. Marriage is about the bond. Focus on your connection and NOT on what each of you are getting or not getting from the relationship. What do you want your relationship to look like in five years? This will allow you to focus on the future and a solution that you both can work towards together.
- **Create Positive Interactions.** It's much easier to focus on the positive than to work through all the negative. Sometimes, though, focusing on positive interactions is very difficult for some couples. They are so lost in their hurt that they have a hard time thinking about anything else.
- **Questions to ask:**
  - What will build your bond vs. what will tear it down?
  - What do you do that improves your bond?
  - What do you do that tears down your bond?
  - What will be the impact to your bond if you continue in these behaviors?
  - What are you willing to do to improve? (Focus on the "I" statements)





## Step 2: Increase Validation

- **Couples often struggle because they don't communicate well.** They revert to poor communication skills. Increase your validation. Once you are able to better validate one another, you will be able to decrease poor communication skills.
- **Validation decreases poor communication.** To really understand each other, you need to uncover emotional needs. Listen for thoughts and feelings. As a couple focuses on emotional needs, it reduces poor communication behaviors such as, criticism, defensiveness, contempt, and stonewalling. Validating each other helps to connect at a deeper level.
- **Questions to ask:**
  - What has happened in the past when you share your feelings?
  - What prevents you from sharing your feelings?
  - What behaviors tear down your understanding?
  - How does feeling validated and understood impact your relationship?
  - What do you need from your spouse to validate you?

## Step 3: Recognize Emotional Triggers.

- **Emotional Triggers are what frequently fuels many of our conflicts.** Our spouse may say something and it triggers an insecurity inside that causes us to react. That in turn causes our spouse to get triggered by something else and things continue to escalate. Communication skills are important, but you'll never get to some of the true issues until you get to the emotional triggers. Understanding those filters make it easier to be compassionate and to have empathy for your partner.

- **Messages from your childhood.** Messages from our childhood influence how we think and feel. For example; If your father left when you were young, you might be afraid of rejection. If you feel rejected by your spouse, it would trigger all the feelings from your childhood.
- **Questions to ask:**
  - What filters do you have that are causing emotional triggers?
  - What would help you to feel safer with your spouse?
  - How do you react when your spouse expresses emotions?
  - Do you resort to logic to calm emotional encounters?
  - What's the impact on your spouse?

## **Step 4: Identify Conflict Patterns.**

- **It's tempting to think of managing conflict is just a need for better negotiation.** Conflict is not usually about solving the problem, it's about how you treat one another. Couples often fall into conflict patterns. It can look like this: He: criticizes, She: Defends. He: Criticizes again, She: Counter-criticizes. He: Defends, She: Stonewalls.
- **Choose Different Patterns** When couples recognize their patterns, they can choose different patterns and different reactions. Once they can recognize their pattern that is causing them to escalate or to disconnect, they can make different choices. Pick out a conflict that is not emotionally charged.
- **Questions to Reflect On:**
  - What were you feeling when it happened?
  - Were you feeling rejected, attacked, or abandoned?
  - Did it trigger a deeper emotion or filter?
  - How could you change the pattern to address each person's emotional needs?
  - What does conflict look like in your relationship?
  - Do you have behaviors that aren't healthy?
  - What is the impact of those behaviors?
  - Are there other behaviors that you like and dislike?
  - How do you think that you contribute to this pattern?
  - How does your pattern affect your marriage relationship?
  - What's the consequence of that?
  - What do you need from your spouse to stay engaged?

## Step 5: Process Resentment.

- **At the core of resentment is not being to forgive.** We hold the hurts and pains internally and then they suddenly pop up again and impact our current relationship. Sometimes, resentment and unforgiveness build up over time. Address your anger and grieve. Forgiveness is a process. If people don't deal with their pain, they risk being stuck either in bitterness and resentment or shutting down emotionally which leads to depression. Learn to express anger in a constructive way that enables you to process emotions and be able to heal from past hurts.
- **Questions to Reflect On:**
  - How do you react when someone harms you?
  - How are you processing the hurt, anger, or resentment?
  - How is it impacting your life or relationship?
  - What would be the impact to your life if you could let go of the hurt?
  - In what ways do you see past offenses impacting over interpretations of events with your partner?

## Step 6: Build Intimacy

- **Determine areas of interest.** Three topics. Communication. Conflict management. Physical intimacy. The sex topic can be difficult for many couple to talk about.
- **Provide a safe environment.** Areas of challenge include: Inviting God into the bedroom. Differing ways to be "in the mood". Using sex to feel close vs. feeling close to have sex. Comfort in talking about sex. Frequency of sex.
- **Questions to ask:**
  - Is there anything that you would change in your ability to talk to each other about physical intimacy?
  - What prevents you from sharing your likes and dislikes with your spouse?
  - What would make it easier to talk about what you like and dislike?
  - Is there anything you wish to change in the frequency of your love making?
  - How often do you feel under pressure to perform?





# WHO ARE YOU & HOW DID YOU GET THERE?

## **Truths to Consider:**

When we don't know who we are and how we got there, we spend much of our life and marriage trying to be someone we are not. We become who we were around (parent-grandparent-greatest influence) God + others = decisions we make and who we often think we are. Couples often get married and falsely believe everything bad in their life will disappear. Getting married cannot instantly heal past hurts, but learning and dealing with past hurts and handling them correctly can help bring healing. Secret sins keep us sick; sins others do to us make us sick. *(James 5:6, NKJV)* What is not healed will hurt you and others.

## **Talk about past hurts and hang ups that have been brought into your relationship.**

What were your parents like? How did you really feel as a child? What are a few good things that you learned from your parents? What are a few bad things that you hope you don't bring into this marriage or relationship? What do you feel is the greatest hurt or baggage you might have brought into this relationship? Don't live your marriage in regret management, but rather chasing your remarkable future (Discovering the wonderful possibilities God has for both of us.) *(Philippians 3:13, TLB)*

In the future, we agree it is our job to clearly communicate our wants, likes and desires. It is our responsibility to listen, but not fix. We agree and commit an unspoken expectation is an unfair expectation. We are responsible for communicating our own dreams, desires, and longings.

## **Marriages are worth fighting for so AGREE to:**

Stop allowing problems to hijack our progress. (*Romans 5:3, TLB*)

Pick times to talk about problems, but do not do it in a way to air grievances or win the arguments. Desire to show love and respect to one another.

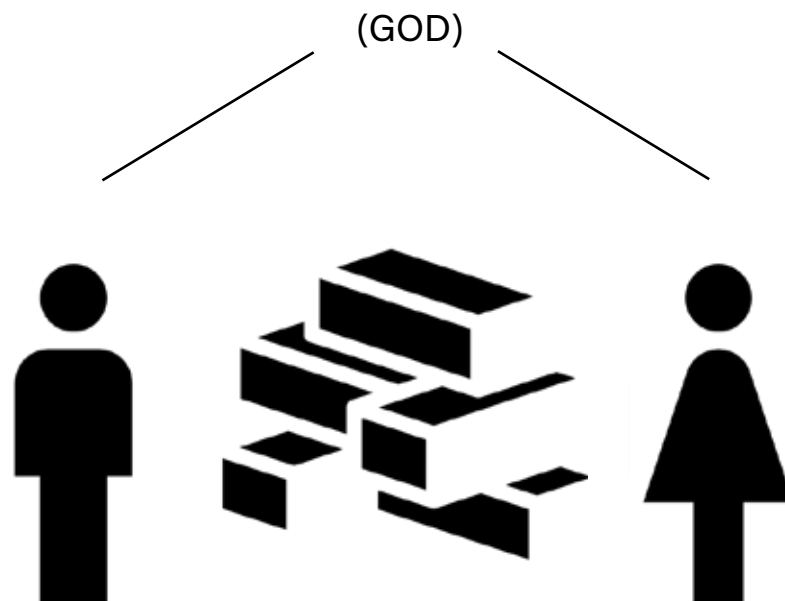
## COUPLES CHANGE ONLY WHEN...

- They hurt enough they have to.
- They learn enough they want to. *Romans 10:17*
- They receive enough they are able to.

If you always do what you have always done,  
you will get what you've always gotten.

- Do you want help? Do you want to change?
- Why do you want to change?
- Why are you hurting?

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



"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off  
are made nigh by the blood of Christ. *(Eph. 2:13 (KJV))*

For he is our peace, who hath made both one,  
and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.

*Eph. 2:14 (KJV)*

## **PERSONAL INTIMACY (SEX)**

Maintain sexual purity before marriage. If you have violated this command, confess that sin to God and your mate. Understand that God created and intended sex among married people. Realize that failure to have regular physical relationships within marriage is sinful and opens your mate to temptation of Satan. Understand that God intends for sex to be enjoyable and pleasurable within marriage. Understand the destructiveness of lust and adultery after marriage. Commit to each other and be accountable to each other.

## **CHILD REARING**

First, a Christian couple should desire to have children. It is best for a couple to spend time together before they begin having children. We must train our children properly. There must be total agreement between the parents regarding the training and disciplining of the children, which is art of the training.

## **LEARN TO HANDLE PROBLEMS WHEN THEY DO COME IN YOUR MARRIAGE**

Don't let them build. If they are not resolved within two weeks, both parties should seek help. Determine to stay together. Never go to bed with unresolved conflict. Read your Bible together. Talk about what you are studying. Learn to be close friends with your mate.





# THE TRUTH ABOUT CONFLICT

**Conflict** -- two or more people trying to occupy the same space or control the same resources.

Learning to handle conflict correctly is the tunnel to intimacy. *(1 Corinthians 14:32-33, NKJV)* Believe that every conflict can be resolved if both parties want to follow God's plan for it. The goal of conflict is not to win and have victory but to resolve the conflict. *(Matthew 5:9, NKJV)*

**"Never again list" during conflict:** *(James 1:19, NKJV; Proverbs 21:23, NLT; Proverbs 16:24, NKJV; Proverbs 15:1-2, NKJV; Proverbs 18:21, NKJV; Ephesians 4:29, NKJV)*

- Never call each other names.
- Never raise your voice.
- Never get hysterical.
- Never say "Never" or "Always".
- Never threaten divorce or separation.

**Learn to make anger work for you, not against you.** *(Ephesians 4:26-27, NKJV)*  
**Learn the "ABCD" of anger:**

- Acknowledge your anger.
- Backtrack the primary emotion or cause.
  - Sadness, loneliness, disappointment, wrong expectations, feeling attacked, embarrassment, feeling unloved, jealousy, disrespected, insecure, etc.
- Consider the real cause is that you expected everyone to want and feel like you do.
- Determine the best way to deal with and handle the situation.

# MY "NEVER AGAIN" LIST

1. *Never again will I confess that "I can't" for "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13)*
2. *Never again will I confess fear for "God hath not given me the spirit of fear but of power, and of love, and of a sound min." (2 Timothy 1:7)*
3. *Never again will I confess doubt or lack of faith for "God hath given to every man the measure of faith." (Romans 12:3) and "this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith." (1 John 5:4)*
4. *Never again will I confess weakness for "The Lord is the strength of my life." (Psalms 27:1) and "the people that know their God shall be strong." (Daniel 11:32)*
5. *Never again will I confess supremacy of Satan over my life for "Greater is He that is within me than he that is in the world." (1 John 4:4); "and He hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:6); "Far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name in that which is to come." (Ephesians 1:21); "That is the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace and His kindness toward us through Christ." (Ephesians 2:7); "That we might know what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us who believe according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 1:19-20)*
6. *Never again will I confess defeat "For God always causeth me to triumph in Christ Jesus." (2 Corinthians 2:14) and "we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." (Romans 8:37)*
7. *Never again will I confess sickness for "With His stripes I am healed." (Isaiah 53:5) and "Jesus Himself too my infirmities and bare my sicknesses." (Matthew 8:17)*
8. *Never again will I confess worries and frustrations, "For I am casting all my cares on Him who careth for me." (1 Peter 5:7); "I will be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let my requests be made known unto God and the peace of God that passeth all understanding is keeping my heart and mind through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7) In Christ I am free.*
9. *Never again will I confess lack for "My God shall supply all my needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus," (Philippians 4:19)*
10. *Never again will I be utterly defeated by Satan in any area for "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and He delighteth in His way. Though He falls he shall not be utterly cast down for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand." (Psalm 37:23-24) and "Jesus gave the power over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall by any means hurt me." (Luke 10:17); "Sin shall have no dominion over me." (Romans 6:14) for I am "Yielding myself unto God as one that is alive from the dead and my members as instruments of righteousness unto God." (Romans 5:12)*
11. *Never again will I confess that anything is too hard or impossible for the Lord for "There is nothing too hard for the Lord." (Jeremiah 32:17) and "With God nothing shall be impossible." (Luke 1:37)*

# SEVEN ESSENTIAL QUALITIES FOR AN EXCEPTIONAL MARRIAGE

1. Exceptional relationship with Christ. (*Psalm 27:1; Matthew 6:33*)
2. Exceptional acceptance of self. (Who you really are in Christ)
3. Exceptional Spirit of Forgiveness. (Forgiveness of self and all others)
4. Exceptional Moral Freedom.
5. Exceptional purpose in life or for life.
6. Exceptional financial principles: these financial principles lead to financial freedom.
7. Exceptional harmony with authorities.



# HUMILITY

Humility "Not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less."

## Be humble or stumble.

- Relationships will crumble.
- Humility is the basis and foundation of every great marriage, and every great friendship.
- In humility, you treat others with respect and honor. *(Philippians 2:3, NKJV)*
- Humility is probably the most misunderstood quality that we need in life.
- Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less.
- In humility, the focus is not on you; the focus is on other people.
- Humility is not putting myself down, it is building other people up.
- Humility is not devaluing me; it is valuing others.
- Humility is not denying your strengths; it is being honest about your weakness.

## Here are a few things God promises to do if you live a humble life:

- He will give you his presence, power, and peace.
- He will make you prosperous, successful, and give you great honor.
- God blesses the humble, He opposes the proud. *(James 4:6, NKJV)*
- Every time we are prideful, we are on the opposite side of God; we are in a battle with God and we will lose that battle.
- God gives grace to the humble.
- Only way our relationships will last is with God's grace; and the only way to get God's grace is by being humble.



# LEARN TO FIGHT FAIR

**Conflict** -- two or more people trying to occupy the same space or control the same resources.

Learning to handle conflict correctly is the tunnel to intimacy. *(1 Corinthians 14:32-33, NKJV)* Believe that every conflict can be resolved if both parties want to follow God's plan for it. The goal of conflict is not to win and have victory but to resolve the conflict. *(Matthew 5:9, NKJV)*

**"Never again list" during conflict:** *(James 1:19, NKJV; Proverbs 21:23, NLT; Proverbs 16:24, NKJV; Proverbs 15:1-2, NKJV; Proverbs 18:21, NKJV; Ephesians 4:29, NKJV)*

- Never call each other names.
- Never raise your voice.
- Never get hysterical.
- Never say "Never" or "Always".
- Never threaten divorce or separation.

**Learn to make anger work for you, not against you.** *(Ephesians 4:26-27, NKJV)*  
**Learn the "ABCD" of anger:**

- Acknowledge your anger.
- Backtrack the primary emotion or cause.
  - Sadness, loneliness, disappointment, wrong expectations, feeling attacked, embarrassment, feeling unloved, jealousy, disrespected, insecure, etc.
- Consider the real cause is that you expected everyone to want and feel like you do.
- Determine the best way to deal with and handle the situation.

**Four Sign You're Not Fighting Fair:**

1. There's Criticizing
2. There's Contempt.
3. There's Defensiveness
4. There's Stonewalling

# God's Created Order for Marriage

**God has got to be first in the order.** (*Colossians 1:16-18, NKJV; Colossians 1:17, NLT*)

- Who created Marriage? God
- Who holds it together? God
- How does God hold it together? He has to be before all things. When we obey, and live out that creative order we have order; when we don't, we have disorder. (*1 Corinthians 14:33, NKJV*)
- Our position is more important than the condition (what is happening around us and to us). We often spend so much time focusing on our condition that we miss getting in the right position. (*2 Chronicles 20:17, NKJV*)

**What is the creative order for marriage, work, church, and our money?**

- God first. Our mates are to be second in that order. (*Ephesians 5:33, NKJV*)
- Husbands – love your wife.
- Wives – respect your husband.
- The reason men don't know how to love their wife and wives don't know how to respect their husband is because we don't know ***how to communicate love.***

**The key to joy in any and all relationships:**

Love does not produce joy. Joy in any relationship is at least a two-step process:

We have to #1 - ***Learn to communicate love correctly.*** #2 - ***Love has to be received correctly.*** When love is communicated correctly and received correctly it produces joy in the relationship. We all have or know people we love but they don't bring joy into our life. God is the world's greatest communicator; He communicates creatively, correctly and through words and actions. God demonstrated His love through giving His Son. **Yet there are still people who don't accept His love.**

**Results of not communicating love correctly?** Sexual & financial problems and lack of mutual respect. We have wrong expectations. We get offended. We get a root of bitterness. We begin to focus on wishing they would become the right person instead of focusing on becoming the right person.

# Keys to Making Marriages Great

**Galatians 6:7, NKJV** “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.”

## Keys to Making Marriages Great Again

- God has to be the **ONLY SOURCE** of meeting any and every need in your life not your mate, job, or parents. (*Matthew 6:33*)
- Learn to respond correctly to **unmet expectations**, because it's unmet expectations that cause offense and then blinds us to the truth God is trying to teach us. We then miss the miracle of the problem.

**2 Kings 5:10-11** Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, “Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleaned.” But Naaman went away angry and said, “I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy.

**Wrong expectations can cause us to miss the miracle God has for us.**

- **Men: Love your wife.** Men, becoming a Kingdom man does not come by demanding or inheriting it, the truth is, it's earned and learned.
- **Women: Learn to Respect your husband.** That is the Remedy to most marriage problems. **RESPECT = REMEDY.** Insight Ladies: When you hear the word **SUBMIT** think **lean on!!**

**Don't sow what you have reaped-  
Sow what you want to reap!**

# Marriage and Finances

## I. **You don't want anyone but God and your mate to have your heart.** *(Matthew 6:21, NKJV; Mark 4:19, NKJV, Mark 4:19, TLB; 1 Timothy 6:7-10, TLB)*

1. The treasures and pleasures of this world will fight for your heart, so you must learn to fight for your marriage.
2. Finances are one of the #1 problems couples fight about. One is a spender and the other is not.

## II. **Steps to keeping up with your finances and being more successful.** *(Galatians 6:9-10, NKJV; Malachi 3:8-11, NKJV)*

1. Both mates have to be supportive.
2. Self-fund faster. Get what you have to live on as soon as possible, not what you want to live on.
3. Understand less is more in the long run. The less you learn to spend now the more you will have later.
4. Understand the truth about a small amount of consistency of the right thing over a long period of time is one of the most overlooked secrets to success. Be consistent in small amounts of savings. Be consistent with your love and saying I love you. Be consistent in your job. Be consistent in helping your mate. Be consistent in your date night.
5. You have to understand the truth about good and bad debt. The truth is the best debt is paid off debt. Good debt is debt that's going to make you money or save you money. Use your God-given creative ability to make extra money if you need it.
6. You must both agree to tithe so you will not be under a financial spiritual curse. It helps us learn to put God first and open the door to being bless-able.



# Outside Relationships Matter

1. **Do they motivate me to love God more?** *(Hebrews 3:13, NIV)*
2. **Do they celebrate God's blessings in my life?** *(Proverbs 11:10, NLT)*
3. **Do they have my back?** *(Proverbs 17:17, NIV)*
4. **Do they hold me accountable out of love and friendship?** *(Proverbs 27:6, NIV)*
5. **Do they live what they believe?** *(Psalm 119:63, NIV)*
6. **Do they have the right friends in their lives?** *(2 Corinthians 6:14, NKJV; Acts 2:42, NKJV; Proverbs 18:24, NKJV)*
  - a. Doctrine.
  - b. Fellowship.
  - c. Breaking of bread.
  - d. Prayer.
  - e. It's not good for man to be alone.





# God's Prescription for Lasting Relationships

## The Context of God's Prescription

- When God establishes a personal relationship with us, his Spirit seals and adopts us into a brand-new, Christ-centered life.
- We are instructed to rely on spiritual power we've never had before as we speak, work, relate, and grow in our love for God and our love for others.

## Four Steps in God's Prescription

***Ephesians 5:1-2*** *[Therefore] be imitators of God, (as beloved children); and walk in love, (just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us), [an offering] and [a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma].*

### **Step 1: Instead of looking for the right person, become the right person.**

- Our love for others flows out of our sense of being deeply loved.
- Instead of looking for love, God tells us to realize that love has already found us. God loves us as no one else ever can.
- Imitating God means that in relationships we are to be kind, tender-hearted, empathetic, discerning, willing to make allowances for people's mistakes, and consistently forgiving.
- It means we want good for them.
- We forgive because we realize that we must pass on to others what God has given us. We who have been freely forgiven must, in turn, freely forgive.
- We will not be able to imitate God in our love for others unless we know that we are blessed, valuable, and significant---that we are loved. (1 John 4:19)

- Any time you want to build intimacy with a person before your identity is fully in Christ and you know and feel secure and strong in Him, you will be expecting that person to do something for you that he or she cannot do.
- The key to lasting relationships is developing a relationship with God through Christ in such a way that you are secure in who you are in Him.

**Step 2: Instead of falling in love, walk in love.**

- Walking in love is about sacrificial commitment.
- Walking in love means giving the other person what he or she needs the most when it is least deserved, because that's exactly how God has treated you.
- Love is giving the other person in the relationship what he or she needs the most, not necessarily what he or she wants the most.
- Love is a sacrificial, other-centered action that provides what's best for the other person.
- God's way is very hard on the feelings, but it's very healthy for the soul.
- Genuine love isn't a passive, quivering mass of good feelings; genuine love is a deliberate, intentional, honest, and even painful giving up of self-preservation for another person's good.

**Step 3: Instead of fixing your hopes and dreams on another person, fix your hope on God and seek to please him through this relationship.**

- The goal of relationships is not to make sure everything goes our way or makes us happy. ***The goal is to please God.***
- God's prescription creates an exciting prospect in which two people are actually learning to please a third---God---by the way they respond to him and to each other.



- Instead of trying to find out what's wrong with the other person, instead of continually expecting him or her to conform to our needs, we must ask God to make us who he wants us to be and to help us to walk in love, giving sacrificially what the other person needs.
- Great relationships involve struggle, conflict, working through issues, and refusing to demand, consciously or not, that the other person make our lives work.

**Step 4: If failure occurs, repeat steps 1,2, and 3.**

- God tells us to start over on step 1---choose to become the right person.
- We walk through the steps: imitate God, walk in love, fix our hope on God, and seek to please him in every one of our relationships. If failure occurs (and it will), we go back to square one and take the steps again.





## 12 Habits that Lead to Divorce and How to Avoid Them!

1. **Constant criticism can lead to divorce.** (*Ephesians 4:29, TLB; Ephesians 4:31-32, TLB*)
  - a. One of the biggest “warning lights” in a marriage is a tone of constant criticism.
  - b. When a husband and wife start being each other’s biggest critics instead of the biggest encouragers and when they start focusing only on the negative instead of the positive, it creates a downward spiral that often is one of the habits that lead to divorce.

## **2. Dividing everything into “His” and “Hers” can lead to divorce.**

*(Ephesians 5:31, NKJV; Psalms 133:1, NKJV)*

- a. This is something many couples do as soon as they get married, but they don't realize they're just preparing themselves for divorce.
- b. When a husband and wife have separate bank accounts, separate hobbies, separate friends and separate dreams, they're running the risk of creating completely separate lives.
- c. Marriage is about combining; divorce is about dividing.
- d. The more you can share together, the stronger your marriage will be.

## **3. Putting the marriage “on hold” while raising kids can lead to divorce.**

*(Ephesians 5:22-25, NKJV)*

- a. This is the reason there's an epidemic of divorce among couples who have been married for 20 years or more.
- b. Many times, two well-meaning people put so much focus on their kids that they forget to keep investing in the marriage.
- c. Some couples reduce their relationship to a partnership in co-parenting, and when the kids finally grow up, they discover that they have created an empty nest and an empty marriage.
- d. Give your children the gift that comes from seeing your parents in a loving, thriving marriage.
- e. Model the kind of marriage that will make your kids excited to be married someday.

## **4. Giving each other your “leftovers” can lead to divorce.** *(Philippians 2:3, NKJV)*

- a. This might be the most common (and one of the most dangerous) habits that lead to divorce on the list.
- b. Some couple have a “cable company marriage”.
- c. Some cable T.V. companies seem to give you their very best deals and service at the beginning of the relationship but then after he “introductory period” ends, they give you as little as possible to still keep you around.
- d. Some married couples were great at giving their best at the beginning of the relationship, but as time goes on, they start giving you the leftovers.
- e. Strive to keep giving your best to each other.
- f. Grow deeper in your love, your respect and your friendship through all the seasons of a good marriage.

## **5. Holding grudges and “keeping score” can lead to divorce.**

*(Ephesians 4:26-27, NKJV)*

- a. This is toxic when it happens, neither spouse is going to have peace or happiness.
- b. If you've been married longer than 15 minutes, chances are good that your spouse has done something to offend you and you've done something to offend him/her.

- c. When our words or actions cause harm, we need to be quick to admit fault and seek forgiveness.
- d. When your spouse has wronged you, you need to offer grace quickly so that trust can start being rebuilt and there's no room for bitterness to take root in your heart.
- e. Don't use past hurts as ammunition in arguments.
- f. Let grace flow freely in your marriage. No marriage can survive without it.

**6. Trusting your "feelings" more than your commitments.** (*Jeremiah 17:9-10, NKJV*)

- a. There are going to be days when you might not "feel" like being married, but feelings are fickle and they were never intended to be our primary advisor in major decisions.
- b. "Feelings" often lead people into adultery.
- c. The healthiest couples have discovered that love is a commitment; not just a feeling.
- d. Their commitment to each other perseveres regardless of what they're feeling.
- e. The strength of that commitment allows them to have a deeper intimacy, a stronger connection and a happier marriage.

**7. Making decisions without consulting your spouse.** (*Ecclesiastes 4:9, NKJV*)

- a. This happens when pride replaces thoughtfulness in the relationship.
- b. Our pride can often convince us that we don't have to answer to anyone, and we should be able to make decisions without consulting anyone.
- c. Pride has been the downfall of so many marriages.
- d. The healthiest couples have learned that EVERY decision they make as individuals will have some level of impact on each other, so they respectfully and thoughtfully consult each other in every decision.

**8. Trying to change each other.**

- a. This frustrates both spouses, but doesn't help either one of them.
- b. When you "try" to change your spouse, you will BOTH end up frustrated.
- c. As you've probably learned already, you can't change each other; you can only love each other.
- d. The only part of the marriage you have the power to change is the part you see when you look in the mirror.
- e. Be willing to change your responses to your spouse's behavior.
- f. Look for ways to love and serve each other even when you have differences of perspective or preference.
- g. You'll both probably end up "changing" for the better in the process.

**9. Planning an exit strategy.** (*Malachi 2:16, NKJV; Proverbs 18:21, NKJV*)

- a. This is the biggest single step toward an eventual divorce.
- b. The healthiest couples have removed the "D-Word" (Divorce) from their vocabularies.
- c. When we threaten divorce or when we silently start fantasizing about life

- with someone new, we're ripping apart the foundation of the marriage.
- d. The couples who make it work aren't the ones who never had a reason to get divorced; they're simply the ones whose commitment to each other was always bigger than their differences and flaws.
- 10. Hiding the fact that you're married.**
- a. This doesn't necessarily involve sex, but it's still an act of infidelity.
  - b. If you are intentionally hiding your status as a married person or you're projecting "availability" through flirting, slipping off a wedding ring, acting single around your single friends or at bars, etc., then you're WAY out of bounds.
  - c. Those subtle acts of deceit are in themselves forms of infidelity even if they never lead to a sexual affair.
- 11. Seeing porn, erotica, or graphic romance novels as "harmless entertainment".** (*Matthew 6:22, NKJV*)
- a. This is EVERYWHERE, and it's having a tragic impact on marriages.
  - b. When you're acting out sexual fantasy apart from your spouse, it's an act of mental infidelity.
  - c. All true intimacy and all infidelity begins in the mind; not the bedroom.
  - d. If your eyes and your thoughts are wandering away from your spouse, then your heart is going to follow.
  - e. Two thousand years ago, Jesus taught that "to look at a woman lustfully is to commit adultery with her in your heart."
  - f. Don't just be physically monogamous.
  - g. Strive to be mentally monogamous.
- 12. Selfishness can lead to divorce.** (*Philippians 4:4-5, TLB*)
- a. Most likely the number one cause of divorce.
  - b. We are ALL selfish by nature, but a marriage can only work when we put our selfishness aside and put the needs of our spouse ahead of our own needs.
  - c. When BOTH spouses are willingly to selflessly love and serve each other in this way, the marriage will thrive.
  - d. The hard part is that YOU must be willing to go first and be selfless even in those moments when he/she is not reciprocating.
  - e. Your actions might turn the tide.
  - f. Choose to be a thermostat and not a thermometer.
  - g. A thermometer always adjusts to the climate in a room, but thermostat CHANGES the climate on the room.
  - h. Be the change. You probably have more influence than you think!



# WHAT DO YOU EXPECT



## Wrong Expectations

- I. It's a dangerous thing to:
  - a. Place our emotional stability in the hands of people.
  - b. Allow those who know us the least to define us the most.
  - c. Believe what others say about us rather than what God says about us.
- II. Wrong expectations are what cause us to have an offense.
  - a. Example: Jesus as King.
    - 1. They went from "Hosanna" to "Crucify Him"! (*Mat. 21:9, NKJV; Mat. 27:22-23, KJV*)
    - 2. They expected Jesus to come and be their earthly King, a temporary king, but Jesus came to be the Permanent King.
    - 3. Once they were offended because Jesus did not meet their expectations it then clouded their view of who He really was.
    - 4. Satan's goal for offense is always to get us to be offended against God.
      - i. That's what happened when the people went from "Hosanna" to "Crucify Him".
      - ii. Satan knows that if He can get you offended at God and mess up your walk with God, he can mess you up.
    - 5. The closer you are to someone the easier it is to get offended.
    - 6. Many times we can be trying to do what is right and still offend those closest to us.
      - i. That is why it is so very important that we learn to communicate our love.

7. Sometimes we offend those closest to us and we know it, but do it anyway.
  - i. Most of the time that's wrong unless it's doing what God would have you do.
8. If you are one of those who just keep offending people on purpose, God has a Word and a name for you. (*Matt. 21:2, KJV; Matt. 21:12-16, NKJV; Matthew 21:15, TEV*)

b. Example: John the Baptist (*John 3:24-30, NKJV*)

1. Before pressure comes, before we are asked to do something we don't understand or agree with, it's easy to say, "I must decrease and Jesus must increase"
2. When we see God doing a great work it should inspire us to decrease and Jesus to increase because we know that only God can give the increase, BUT yes, He does use people to bring it about.
3. This is the greatest struggle we all face and will always face.

(*Matt. 3:13-17, NKJV; Luke 7:18-23, NKJV*)

4. Why was John now asking who Jesus was? (*Luke 7:18-23, NKJV*)
  - i. Because John is now in prison and knew Jesus could do anything, he knew Jesus could change the situation if he wanted to; John's head was about to be cut off.
  - ii. This often brings the greatest offense of all, when you know that a person wanted to help you and could but they chose not to.
  - iii. Now the truth was that John was about to decrease and Jesus was about to increase, it just wasn't the way John had planned.

(*John 19:28-30, NKJV*)

5. Before you're offended you talk about how great somebody is and after you're offended you talk about how bad a person is. (*Acts 24:16, KJV; Psalm*

*119:165, KJV*)

III. Offenses cause us to have a clouded view (vision) of those who, we feel, have offended us.

- a. It's easy to be deceived when you have been offended.
- b. You can usually only see what they did to you but not your part in the offense.
- c. When it's us it's circumstantial, when it's them it's character.

IV. Offenses not dealt with lead to bitterness.

- a. Bitterness is an unfulfilled punishment (revenge).
- b. Offenses come because of unfulfilled or wrong expectations.

V. The cure is that when we get offended we have to learn to be quick to repent and/or forgive. (*Acts 3:19, NKJV; Luke 23:34, NKJV*)

# Will We be Married in Heaven?

## What does the Bible say about Marriage in Heaven? *(Luke 20:34-35, NKJV)*

- No, you won't be married, but how you live while you're married will greatly affect your rewards in heaven.
- No, you won't, but how we live while married will greatly determine how well you live in Heaven.
- Yet, when we don't know the purpose of marriage:  
The longer something exists, the easier it is to forget the original intent. The farther away you get from the original intent or purpose of something, the harder it is to remember purpose.
- One of the main reasons we have so many broken marriages is because most have forgotten or never knew what God's original intent for marriage was.

## The 3 Functions of Marriage

### **Multiplication.** *(Genesis 1:27-28, NKJV)*

To fill the earth with God's glory. To produce offspring to fill the earth.

### **Transformation.** *(1 Corinthians 7:2-3, NKJV)*

- Husband and wife make each other better.
- Avoid sexual sin.
- Lust is using someone as an instrument for your own satisfaction.
- Love is sacrificing all you can to meet the other persons needs and is willing to die in order to do it.
- Love is based on giving, Lust is based on getting.

### **Illustration.** *(Ephesians 5:31-33, NKJV, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, CEV)*

- Picture of Christ and the church
- Your marriage is to reflect what it's like to have an intimate relationship with God.
- You should both have Christ to meet your needs not simply your mate.
- The key for a happy relationship is to know what your mate wants in a relationship or what your mate wants in the marriage.

# Six Purposes of Marriage

## #1 - Companionship:

True companionship grows out of a oneness of spirit. This occurs in marriage when both the husband and wife can say, "My spouse is my best friend." "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (*Amos 3:3*)

## #2 - Enjoyment

The principle behind enjoyment is self-control. "Marriage is honorable [precious] in all, and the bed [should be kept] undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." (*Hebrews 13:4*)

## #3 - Completeness.

God designed Eve to complete that which was lacking in Adam's life. "And Adam said, She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." (*Genesis 2:23*)

## #4 - Fruitfulness

God's first command in scripture is this: "...Be fruitful [bear fruit], and multiply [increase], and replenish [fill] the earth..." (*Genesis 1:28*) The very nature and character of God is to multiply life, whereas the nature and character of Satan is to multiply death.

## #5 - Protection (*Ephesians 5:25; Titus 2:4-5*)

A husband is to protect his wife by laying down his life for her. A wife is to protect the interests of her home. Parents are to protect their children to raise up Godly seed.

## #6 - Typify Christ and the Church (*Ephesians 5:31-33*)

Marriage is to be a human object lesson of the divine relationship between Christ and believers.

# MARRIAGE ASSESSMENT

The assessment measures how well you know your spouse and your ability to give them what they want.

- Answer the questions below and then ask your spouse how many questions you answered correctly.
- Calculate your score and compare it with the assessment scale below.

		Correct	Incorrect
1.	Spouse's favorite color? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Spouse's favorite city to visit? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Spouse's favorite vacation destination? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Spouse's favorite restaurant? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Spouse's favorite type of food? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Spouse's favorite home cooked meal? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Spouse's favorite dessert? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Spouse's favorite holiday? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Spouse's most dreaded holiday? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Spouse's best friend? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Spouse's favorite relative? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



		Correct	Incorrect
12.	Spouse's favorite clothing store? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Size shirt/blouse your spouse wear? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Size pants/skirt your spouse wear? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	Size suit/dress your spouse wears? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	Size shoe your spouse wears? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	Spouse's favorite thing for you to wear? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	Spouse's favorite day of the week? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	The most relaxing thing for your spouse? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	Most stressful thing for your spouse? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	Spouse's most dreaded chore? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	Spouse's pet peeve? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	One thing your spouse has always wanted? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.	Spouse's favorite actor? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25.	Spouse's favorite movie? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Correct	Incorrect
26. Spouse's favorite artist? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Spouse's favorite musician? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Type of music your spouse likes the best? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Spouse's favorite way of making love? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. How often per month or week does your spouse like to make love? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Spouse's favorite author? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Spouse's all-time favorite book? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Type of books your spouse likes to read? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Spouse's favorite spectator sport? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Spouse's favorite sport's hero? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. Spouse's favorite sports team? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. Spouse's favorite hobby? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. Temperature your spouse likes the temperature set? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Correct	Incorrect
39. Spouse's favorite topic of discussion? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. If your spouse had an extra \$100 per week to spend, what would your spouse choose to spend it on? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. If your spouse was given one million dollars and had to spend it within one week, what would be the first high ticket item your spouse would buy? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. Which type of vacation does your spouse prefer? a) Sun, fun, and relax. b) Sightseeing c) Outdoor Adventure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. The best type of gift for my spouse is something: a) Practical b) Sentimental c) Just what they asked for d) A surprise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. My spouse prefers to wear/buy: a) Gold b) Silver c) Platinum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Number of CORRECT ANSWERS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**0-19: OUT OF SHAPE.** You have a lot to learn about your spouse. Ask more questions. Pay closer attention during conversation. Concentrate during your intimacy interview.

**20-31: AVERAGE.** You know enough to give some of the right things, but you could do better. Review the questions you got wrong and try to identify areas about your spouse where your knowledge is lacking. Make an effort to learn about them. Focus on them during your intimacy interview.

**32-44: MARRIAGE FITNESS CHAMPION.** Your knowledge of your spouse will make giving much easier. Keep building your knowledge bank. Giving based on fresh understandings is very powerful, so don't rest on your laurels.





## PUT LOVE FIRST MARRIAGE ASSESSMENT

If you began a physical fitness program, you would first want to establish your “baseline” - a measure of where you are now. A good assessment helps you focus on the areas that need the most attention and allows you to track your overall progress. Marriage fitness is no different.

The following assessment measures the degree of importance you give to your marriage.

- Answer the questions below “true” or “false”.
- Compare your score with the assessment scale below.
- Take the two periodically after you begin your Marriage Fitness program to monitor your progress.

### **True   False**

1. When my spouse phones, I almost always make time to talk.
2. If I’m with my spouse and someone else phones, I usually don’t take the call.
3. I speak to my spouse about non-logistical matters at least twice a day.
4. When something significant happens in my life, I almost always share it with my spouse first.



5. I initiate positive loving physical contact with my spouse at least twice a day.
6. When we go to a social function, I almost always spend at least half my time talking with my spouse.
7. When my spouse walks into the house, I almost always interrupt whatever I am doing to greet my spouse.
8. When I walk into the house, the first thing I do is usually greet my spouse.
9. I spend more time interacting with my spouse than I do watching TV.
10. I spend more time interacting with my spouse than anyone else in my life.
11. I usually interrupt whatever I'm doing if my spouse wants my attention.
12. When I need someone to talk to, I almost always talk to my spouse.
13. I almost always recognize in a significant way my spouse's birthday, our anniversary and other special days.
14. My spouse and I go out alone together at least once per week.
15. My spouse and I go on vacation alone together at least once a year.
16. I have photographs of my spouse in my office, wallet, or gym locker.
17. I have at least one personal and meaningful discussion with my spouse per week for a maximum of 25 minutes.
18. I do unnecessary thoughtful things for my spouse regularly.

Number of TRUE ANSWERS: \_\_\_\_\_

### Rate Your Score:

**1-8: OUT OF SHAPE.** You need to work hard to increase the importance you give to your spouse and your marriage. The above questions may indicate some areas you should concentrate on.

**9-13: AVERAGE.** But don't settle for average. Your marriage is the most important thing in your life. It should be great! Try to put love first more often.

**14-18: MARRIAGE FITNESS CHAMPION.** You seem to have your priorities straight. What else could you do to give your marriage even higher priority? How often do you feel rejected?

**Conclusion:** Did any of these areas resonate with you? Perhaps you have struggled in some of these areas?



ARE YOU A  
**HUSBAND**

*and Wife*

TEAM?

# ROLE CONCEPTS COMPARISON

## What do you believe about your role in marriage?

Answer Key: 1. Strongly agree 2. Mildly agree 3. Not sure 4. Mildly disagree 5. Strongly disagree

Wife		Husband
1 2 3 4 5	The husband is the head of the home.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The wife should not work outside of the home.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband should help regularly with the dishes.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The wife has the greater responsibility for the children.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Money that the wife earns is her money.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband should have at least one night a week out with his friends.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The wife should always be the one to cook.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Money can best be handled through a joint checking account.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Marriage is a 50/50 proposition.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Major decisions should be made by the husband in case of an impasse.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband should babysit one night a week so the wife can get away and do what she wants.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	A couple should spend their recreation leisure activities with one another.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	It is all right for the wife to initiate love making with her husband.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband and wife should plan to budget and manage money matters together.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Neither the husband nor the wife should purchase an item costing over \$15 without consulting the other.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The father is the one responsible for disciplining the children.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	A wife who has a special talent should have a career.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	It is the wife's responsibility to keep the house neat and clean.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband should take his wife out somewhere twice monthly.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The wife is just as responsible for the children's discipline as the husband.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	It is the husband's job to do the yard work.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The mother should be the teacher of values to the children.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Women are more emotional than men.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Children should be allowed to help plan family activities.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Children develop better in a home with parents who are strict disciplinarians.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The wife should always obey what her husband asks her to do.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	The husband should decide which areas each should be responsible for.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Neither husband nor wife should bring their parents into the home to live.	1 2 3 4 5



# Journey CHURCH



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