

BECOMING ONE

A Leaders' Guide

for

Marriage Growth Groups

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PREFACE

We believe God is doing a new thing in bringing about restoration in marriage relationships which in turn restores the family. This restoration is in the sense of making new according to His design, not rebuilding what was.

It's as though God is taking two damaged halves of a pot dropped and broken in the Garden of Eden and is reforming it according to His original plan of leaving, cleaving and becoming one. For the two halves to fit together properly He first remakes the chipped and broken pieces in individual restoration. Before God can make new He must first remove the barriers to restoration – that within us which is not of Him.

This has been His process for us. After 16 years of unsuccessfully doing our own thing within our marriage, 23 years ago we were introduced to the Master Creator. Our process to intimacy began. It continues as we are learning to allow Him to “restore” us.

We believe that the marriage relationship is God's on-the-job training to learn to love. God is love; we are created in His image. His goal for husbands and wives is to produce love in their relationship and in turn reproduce it in their children. We pray you will join us in the adventure of becoming one.

Rundle and Cinda Smith

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Compilation of the material in this **Becoming One Leaders' Guide** began twelve years ago. At that point, however, we had no idea we were compiling anything. We were asked by one of our pastors to develop a marriage-related group. Our hearts were there so the first thing we said was, "Yes!" The second thing we cried was, "Please direct us, God. We don't know how to do this!" He answered our plea and our training process began.

We fumbled, bumbled, made many mistakes and kept listening to Him. Piece by piece new ingredients were added with each group we led. Throughout the years the Lord changed and refined the content and procedures. Twelve years later we find that He has created a package which works and others want to use it.

Needless to say, all of this material is not original. We have gleaned from many books and articles that we've read. Here and there we have found an exercise or two which we've incorporated. Some material was passed on to us by friends. Because we thought all of this was solely for our own use, unfortunately we did not document our sources. Our desire today is to give full credit to all of those who have contributed so strongly to **Becoming One**. A bibliography is included at the end of the leader's guide acknowledging those sources of which we are aware.

We are also very grateful to Marriage Encounter for their question style, which is the format for many of our one-on-one exercises and our homework questions.

There are substantial amounts of others' material which we are using for which we cannot give credit simply because we don't know where it originated. To those of you we express heartfelt thanks. Please know that our intent is not to plagiarize!

May the Lord pool our resources – taking that which someone else originated and that which is original with us, creating His new whole. Our prayer is that the material herein, whoever it "belongs to," may be used by Him to enable group members and leaders to reach new levels of oneness with each other and with Him.

This "baby," the **Becoming one Leaders Guide**, never could have been birthed without our midwife, Ginger Chapman. With great expertise she put all of this material onto the computer for us; with great love she gave unstintingly of her time. It would have seemed impossible to labor to this end without her. We thank you from our hearts, good friend.

FACILITATOR INFORMATION

1. Size of Group: 5 participant couples
1 facilitator couple
2. Duration: 12 weeks
3. Meeting Time: Each meeting is designed to last two hours and fifteen minutes. The first fifteen minutes are a fellowship or gathering time. Having coffee or a cold drink available for members promotes fellowship as well as relaxes participants at break time. The remaining two hours are structured according to the suggested agendas. Good facilitators respect the participants enough to conclude promptly, not over-extending the two-hour period.
4. Setting: A home setting for meetings is preferred. If this is not possible it helps the tone of the group to have comfortable chairs (not straight chairs) placed in a circular arrangement. This may sound unimportant but a comfortable, homelike atmosphere adds tremendously to a relaxed, open feeling within the group.
5. Team Teaching: A husband – wife facilitator team is a must. This adds balance and variety to the teaching and to the unstructured input of the facilitators. We've found that a loose, conversational, back-and-forth flow between the two facilitators adds to the life and informality within the group. Sitting across the circle from one another keeps the eye contact strong between each other as well as with the group members. Informality is a key ingredient for successful group assimilation of material and identification with the leaders. Leaders' willingness to share themselves, their own present and past struggles, will add tremendously to the transparency within the total group.
6. Intercessors: At the conclusion of the twelve week period we ask the present group to serve as intercessors for the next group. When names of the next group's members are

known each previous group couple is given the name of one new group couple. They intercede for that couple throughout the new group's twelve-week time.

7. Covered Dish Suppers:

Before the fourth, eighth, and twelfth meeting a group covered dish supper is held. Members volunteer for the food assignments with two couples supplying a main dish, other couples bringing a vegetable, salad, rolls or dessert. The host couple supplies beverages and paper products. These shared meals are a wonderful bonding tool for the group.

Note:

As you lead **Becoming One** groups, we're sure you will find numerous articles, books, etc. which offer new or augmentative concepts relative to marriage. We encourage you to keep a file of these. They form a strong addition to the teaching material herein and increase your dimension of sharing with your group.

Purchase of the leaders' guide entitles the group leader to reproduce copies of the One-on One Exercises, Group Exercises and Homework for Becoming One Marriage Group use. Reproduction of these materials or any other segment of the leaders' guide for other purposes is strictly forbidden.

INTRODUCTION

The following suggested 12-week meeting agendas are just that – suggestions. Experience has shown that the listed sequence of teaching topics builds well one upon another. Also, the integration of group exercises and one-on-one exercises into the topics serves to highlight and personalize the material being covered in the session. However, please do not feel locked into covering a certain amount of material in a meeting just because it is listed on the agenda.

The pace at which subject matter can be covered will vary from group to group. For this reason the agenda for the seventh meeting is very loose to allow for “catch up time.” Please tailor the inclusiveness of each meeting to meet the pace of your group, not to adhere to the proposed agendas. They are adaptable skeletal structures. As you formulate your week’s meeting agenda, it is wise to be prepared to cover more subject matter than you think you will need. Also, each group is different...with different needs at different times. Be flexible and sensitive to the Holy Spirit. If you sense a need to dwell on a subject longer or take time to hear someone’s heart, do it! Give the Lord freedom to direct your meeting, then it will have power and change lives.

FIRST MEETING

A. OBJECTIVES

1. To help individuals feel relaxed and at ease
2. To help them begin to get to know you and a few individuals within the group.
3. To give them a feel for what the group experience will hold
4. To let the couples see that they aren't the only ones with problem areas
5. To begin to encourage openness and vulnerability
6. To glean some preliminary information as to where they are in their relationships

B. ADVANCE PREPARATION

1. Prepare name tags for each individual and for yourselves
 - a. Print them in large bold letters which can be read across a group circle
1. Prepare for doing **Small Group Exercise – 1st Meeting** by dividing the people in the group plus yourselves into groups of four with husbands and wives not in the same group. There will be 3 groups of 4 each. The leadership couple will each lead a group. As the couples gather, draw aside one person who seems to be outgoing and ask him/her to lead the third group.
 - a. Explain to this leader how the small group leader functions (See instructions on sheet marked **Small Group Exercise – 1st Meeting** in **Group Exercises** section, pg. 2)
3. Pull copies of:
 - Small Group Exercise – 1st Meeting** (Group Ex., pg. 2)
 - Marriage Inventory** (Group Ex., pg. 3)
 - Becoming One Contract** (Group Ex., pg. 4-6)
 - First Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 1)

1. Opening prayer
2. Introduce yourselves
 - a. Give personal background, information
 - b. Acknowledge to the group that you as the lead couple are in process too and don't have it all together
3. Group members introduce themselves – give personal background, information
4. Opening comments
 - a. Purposes of the group
 1. To grow and change in your marriage relationships according to God's plan
 2. To learn what God says about marriage in His word and how to practically do it.
 3. To develop transparency
 4. To develop rapport with other group members
 5. To encourage and challenge one another
 6. To realize the normalcy of problems in marriages and their solutions
 7. To foster growth by weekly accountability
 - b. What they're getting into
 1. How the group works, accountability, etc.
 - c. Christ centered group – not psychological encounter group
 - d. Subject matter to be covered
 - e. Stress your availability to them (phone or in person)
 - f. Team leading – wife isn't interrupting!
 - g. Carrot dangling
 1. Our goal is to arrive at intimacy – describe components of marital intimacy (emotional intimacy, spiritual intimacy, becoming best friends, sexual intimacy)
 2. Stress each individual's potential for growth and change

3. All that is required is commitment to opening themselves to the work and power of Jesus then cooperating, working with Him
5. **Exercise** (Total Group) **Small Group Exercise – 1st Meeting** (Group, Ex., pg. 2)
Note: Explain to the group that the purpose for this exercise is to begin to relate with a few other individuals within the group. Following the explanation divide into designated groups of four and complete the exercise.
6. Each person writes down their answers to the following then shares their answers with the total group. Each individual in turn gives his answer to (a) then each shares his answer to (b), etc.
 - a. I am here because...
 - b. I most need help in...
 - c. As I see it, the greatest weakness in our marriage is...
7. **Exercise** – (Total Group) **Marriage Inventory** (Group Ex. pg. 3)
8. Explain check-in (begins next week)
 - a. Is individual sharing relative to what has gone on in the couple's relationship during the past week
 - b. Each person shares from his/her own perspective
 - c. The couple's relationship is all we want to hear about not work, not the kids, etc.
 - d. Check-in is a form of becoming transparent with the group
 - e. Check-in is a tool for accountability
9. Explain homework
 - a. Each will need a notebook
 - b. Stress the importance of commitment to this
 - c. 20 minutes minimum per day
 - d. Format
 1. Each spends 10 minutes alone writing his/her answer to the question

2. Get together, exchange notebooks, read answers
3. Discuss your answers
- e. Purpose
 1. Self-revelation
 2. Discovery of spouse's feelings
 3. Not convincing or converting!
- f. Set a definite time of day to do this
- g. Long range purpose
 1. To build a pattern of daily interaction at the feeling level
10. Review **Becoming One Contract** stipulations (Group Ex., pg. 4-6)
 - a. Hand out contract – Can you commit to this? If so, sign and hand into leader.
11. Teaching: Leaving, Cleaving and Becoming One (Notes, pg. 1-3)
12. Extra homework assignment
 - a. Read daily and meditate upon I Cor. 13:1-8. As you meditate upon these attributes of love, ask the Lord to show you where your own strengths and weaknesses lie in loving. In your relationship with your spouse in which of these do you do well and where do you fall short? Ask God to show you.
 - b. Get a copy of *Love Life* by Ed Wheat, M.D. and begin reading it.
13. Hand out **First Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 1)
14. Closing prayer

SECOND MEETING

A. Advance Preparation

1. Prepare name tags for yourselves and the group
2. Prepare an alphabetical list for each couple of the names and telephone numbers of the couples in the group plus leaders' names and telephone numbers. Hand these out before the meeting begins.

3. Pull copies of:

Leaving and Oneness (One-on One Ex., pg.2)

Why Don't You Talk To Me? (Appendix Ex., pg. 2)

Communication Focus Sheet (Group Ex., pg.7)

Second Week Homework (Homework, pg.2)

-
1. Opening Prayer
 2. Check-in
 3. Ask for feedback on the I Cor. 13 assignment
 4. Homework accountability
 - a. Ask each individual questions such as:
 1. Did you do your homework daily?
 2. Did the two of you hit any snags in doing it?
 3. How do you feel that the homework time went?
 4. Was the reaction of your spouse to what you shared one of acceptance? anger? disgust? interest?
 5. What solutions do you see to the problem of finding time?
 - b. Reiterate the purpose and value of the homework
 5. Teaching: **Leaving, Cleaving, Oneness** (Notes, pg. 1-3)
 - a. Before giving any teaching on **Oneness** do the following:
 1. Have each person write down what comes to their mind when they hear the word "oneness" applied to marriage. Each individual shares his answers with the total group

- b. If the **Leaving, Cleaving, Oneness** was completed last week do a recap as a reminder
6. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Leaving and Oneness** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 2)
7. **Exercise** (Total Group) **Communication Focus Sheet** (Group Ex., pg.7)
8. BREAK
9. Teaching: **Communication** (Notes, pg. 4-9)
 - A. **Introduction**
 - B. **Definition**
 - C. **Problems Resulting**
10. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Why Don't You Talk To Me?** (Appendix Ex., pg. 2)
11. Teaching: **Communication** (Notes, pg. 4-9)
 - D. **Male-Female Differences**
 - E. **Levels of Communication**
 - F. **Facts**
 - G. **Quotes**
 - H. **Emotional Word Pictures**
12. Hand out **Second Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 2)
13. Closing prayer

THIRD MEETING

A. Advance Preparation

1. Pull copies of:

Male-Female Communication Inventory (One-on-One Ex., pg. 3,4)

Communication (Appendix Ex., pg. 1)

Listening (Group Ex., pg. 8)

1. Opening prayer
2. Announce:
 - a. Covered dish on 4th, 8th and 12th week meeting nights
 - b. Next week – covered dish
 - c. Meeting time next week: 6:30
 - d. Plan food assignments
3. Check-in
4. Homework accountability
5. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Male-Female Communication Inventory** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 3,4)
6. Teaching: **I. Reasons Unable/Unwilling to Share** (Notes, pg. 6)
7. Total Group Questions: (each person answers to the total group)
 - a. In my parental home I did/did not express my true feelings because...
 - b. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being pitiful, 10 great) I would say that our sharing of feelings level is at a _____. I think this is because...
8. Teaching: **J. General Information-Feeling & Sharing** (Notes, pg. 7)
 - K. Non-verbal Communication** (Notes, pg. 7)
 - L. Baggage From Past** (Notes, pg. 7)
 - M. Listening** (Notes pg. 7)
9. **Exercise** (Total Group) **Listening** (Group Ex., pg. 8)
10. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Communication** (Appendix Ex., pg. 1)
11. Teaching: **N. Withdrawal** (Notes, pg. 7)

O. Pitfalls To Avoid (Notes, pg. 8)

P. Helps (Notes, pg. 8)

Q. Reaction or Response? (Notes, pg. 9)

12. Hand out **Third Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 3)
13. Closing prayer

FOURTH MEETING

A. ADVANCE PREPARATION

1. Pull copies of:
 - Acceptance** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 5)
 - Expectations** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 6)
 - Judgments Against My Spouse** (Appendix Ex., pg. 3)
 - Fourth Week Homework** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 4)
-

1. Opening prayer
2. Check-in
3. Homework accountability
4. Tools for communication do no good if lack of acceptance is the root problem.
5. Teaching: **A. Acceptance** (Notes, pg. 10)
6. **Exercise** (individual) **Acceptance** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 5)
The results of this exercise are **not** to be shared with their spouse
7. Teaching: **B. Expectations** (Notes, pg. 11)
8. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Expectations** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 6)
9. BREAK
10. Teaching: **C. Criticism** (Notes, pg. 11)
 - D. Bitter Roots of Judgment** (Notes, pg. 11-12)
11. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Judgments Against My Spouse** (Appendix Ex., pg. 3)
12. Teaching: **Wounded Spirit** (Notes, pg. 12-13)
13. Hand out **Fourth Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 4)
14. Closing prayer

FIFTH MEETING

A. Advance Preparation

1. Pull copies of:
 - Affirmation** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 7)
 - Love Language** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 8)
 - What Makes Me Feel Loved** (Appendix Ex., pg. 4)
 - Intimacy Needs Identification** (Appendix Ex., pg. 5-10)
 - Fifth Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 5)
-

1. Opening prayer
2. Check-in
3. Homework accountability
4. Teaching: **F. Affirmation** (Notes, pg. 13-14)
5. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Affirmation** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 7)
6. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Love Language** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 8)
 - Note: Do the exercise first then the teaching. This leads to more accurate self-discovery of what each one's love language is.
7. Teaching: **G. Love Language** (Notes, pg. 14-15)
8. Have each person share what he or she thinks his or her primary love language is.
 - Does his/her spouse agree?
9. Teaching: **Needs** (Appendix Notes, Needs pg. 1 thru #8 on Appendix Notes, pg. 2)
10. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **What Makes Me Feel Loved** (Appendix Ex., pg.4)
11. Teaching: **Needs: Eight Primary Intimacy Needs** (Appendix Notes pg. 2-3 Needs)
12. Exercise (One-on-One) **Intimacy Needs Identification** (Appendix Ex., pg. 5-10)
13. Teaching: **Giving To The Needs Of Your Spouse** (Appendix Notes., pg. 3 Needs)
 - Responses to Needs Shared** (Appendix Notes, pg. 3-4 Needs)

Need Meeting by Wives (Appendix Notes, pg. 4 Needs)

Need Meeting by Husbands (Appendix Notes, pg. 4 Needs)

Key Verse (Appendix Notes, pg. 4 Needs)

Three Dangers in Needs (Appendix Notes, pg. 4- 5 Needs)

14. Hand out Fifth Week Homework (Homework, pg. 5)

15. Closing prayer

SIXTH MEETING

A. Advance Preparation

1. Pull copies of:

Healing Unmet Needs & Hurts (Appendix Ex., pg.11-12)

Unmet Childhood Needs (Appendix Ex., pg. 13-14)

Evaluation Questionnaire (Group Ex, pg. 9-10)

Sixth Week Homework (Homework, pg. 6)

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1. Opening prayer
 2. Check-in
 3. Homework accountability
 4. Teaching: **Unmet Needs-Unhealed Hurts (Emotional Cup)**
(Appendix Notes, pg. 6 Needs thru #6 pg. 7)
How to Empty the Cup (Appendix Notes, pg. 7-8 Needs)
 5. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Healing Unmet Needs & Hurts** (Appendix Ex., pg. 11-12)
(Allow half an hour for this. Do not rush it.)
 6. Teaching: Unmet Childhood Needs (Appendix Notes, pg. 9-10 Needs)
 7. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Unmet Childhood Needs** (Appendix Ex., pg. 13-14)
 8. **Evaluation Questionnaire** (Group Ex., pg. 9-10)
 9. Hand out **Sixth Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 6)
 10. Closing prayer

SEVENTH MEETING

A. Advance Preparation

1. Pull copies of:
 - Joint Prayer Evaluation** (Appendix Ex., pg. 15)
 - Spiritual Intimacy** (Appendix Ex., pg. 16)
 - Seventh Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 7)
-

1. Opening prayer
2. Announce:
 - a. Covered dish next week
 - b. Meeting time: 6:30
 - c. Plan food assignments
3. Check-in
4. Homework accountability
5. Teaching: **A, B Individual Spiritual Process** (Notes, pg. 17)
 - A Spiritual Intimacy** (Notes, pg18)
6. **Exercise** (Total group) **Joint Prayer Evaluation** (Appendix Ex., pg. 15)
7. Teaching: **B-F Spiritual Intimacy** (Notes, pg. 18-19)
8. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Spiritual Intimacy** (Appendix Ex., pg. 16)
9. Hand out **Seventh Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 7)
10. Closing prayer

EIGHTH MEETING

A. Advance Preparation

1. Pull copies of:
 - Anger & Arguing Focus Sheet** (Group Ex., pg. 12)
 - Handling Anger Effectively** (Group Ex., pg. 11)
 - Eighth Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 8)
-

1. Opening prayer
2. Check-in
3. Homework accountability
4. **Exercise** (Total group) **Anger & Arguing Focus Sheet** (Group Ex., pg. 12)
5. Teaching: **A-J Anger** (Notes, pg. 20-23)
6. **Exercise** (Total group) **Handling Anger Effectively** (Group Ex., pg. 11)
7. **Group Questions: (each individual answers)**
 - a. How was anger handled or expressed in your parental home?
 - b. How do you usually handle or express it?
8. Teaching: **Fighting Fairly** (Notes, pg. 23)
 - Forgiveness** (Notes, pg. 24-27)
9. Hand out **Eighth Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 8)
10. Closing prayer

NINTH MEETING

A. Advance Preparation

1. Pull copies of:

Initiator-Responder (Appendix Ex., pg. 17)

Eleven Needs of A Wife (Appendix Ex., pg. 18)

Decision Making (One-on-One Ex., pg. 11)

Ninth Week Homework (Homework, pg. 9)

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1. Opening prayer
 2. Check-in
 3. Homework accountability
 4. Teaching: **Husbands** (Appendix Notes, Husbanding #1-3, pg. 11-12)
 5. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Initiator-Responder** (Appendix Ex., pg. 17)
 6. Teaching: **Husbands** (Appendix Notes, Husbanding #4, pg. 12-14)
 7. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Eleven Needs Of A Wife** (Appendix Ex., pg. 18)
 8. Teaching: **Husbands** (Notes, pg. 35-39, A through B)
God's Design for Wives (Notes, pg. 39-44, C)
Bottom Line (Notes, pg. 44-45, D)
 9. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Decision Making** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 11)
 10. Teaching: **Three Things Every Husband Hates** (Appendix Notes, pg. 15-16)
 11. Hand out **Ninth Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 9)
 12. Closing prayer

TENTH MEETING

A. Advance Preparation

1. Pull copies of:
 - Meditation on Covenant** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 9-10)
 - Agape Love** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 12)
 - Friendship Love** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 15)
 - Romantic Love** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 14)
 - Tenth Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 10)
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1. Opening prayer
2. Check-in
3. Homework accountability
4. Teaching: **Cutting Covenant** (Notes., pg. 28, A & B)
 - Procedures For Cutting Covenant** (Notes, pg. 29-31, A-J)
5. **Exercise** (Individual) **Meditation on Covenant** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 9-10)
6. Teaching: **Marriage Covenant** (Notes, pg. 32-34, A through K)
 - Kinds of Love Introduction** (Notes, pg 46-47, A & B)
 - Agape Love** (Notes, pg. 47-49, C)
7. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Agape Love** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 12)
8. Teaching: **Friendship Love** (Notes, pg. 49-51, D)
9. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Friendship Love** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 15)
10. Teaching: **Romantic Love** (Notes, pg. 51-52, E)
 - a. Give emphasis to the need for non-sexual touching
 - b. Teach on breaking the conditioned response that physical touch is always a sex signal
11. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Romantic Love** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 14)
12. Hand out half sheets of paper and ask each member to write down any questions which they have regarding the sexual relationship or topics they wish would be addressed. Do not sign names. Fold and hand in.

13. Hand out **Tenth Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 10)
14. Closing prayer

ELEVENTH MEETING

A. Advance Preparation

1. Pull copies of:
 - Belonging Love** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 13)
 - Sexual Love I** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 16)
 - Sexual Love II** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 17)
 - Sexual Love III** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 18)
 - Sexual Love IV** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 19)
 - Learning To Talk About Sex** (Group Ex., pg. 14)
 - Eleventh Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 11)
-

1. Opening prayer
2. Announce:
 - a. Covered dish next week
 - b. Meeting time 6:30 p.m.
 - c. Plan food assignments
 - d. Next week each person is to bring written promises/commitments which they choose to make to their spouse as a result of what the Lord has shown them and what they have learned in this course. Do not share these with your spouse.
3. Check-in
4. Homework accountability
5. Teaching: **Belonging Love** (Notes., pg. 52-53, F)
6. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Belonging Love** (One-on-One Ex., pg 13)
7. Teaching: **Introductory Remarks On Sexual Love** (Notes, pg. 54, A)
 - a. Before giving any teaching explain that this area will be addressed with as much candor as any other because of its' importance in God's eyes. If God created the sexual relationship in marriage and talks of it freely in His word, why should we be embarrassed to do the same?

8. **Exercise** (Total group) **Learning To Talk About Sex** (Group, Ex., pg. 14)
9. Teaching: **Sexual Love** (Notes, pg 54-55, B 1-7)
10. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Sexual Love I** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 16)
11. Teaching: **Sexual Love** (Notes, pg. 55-57, B 8-12)
12. **Exercise** (One-on-One) **Sexual Love II** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 17)
13. Teaching: **Sexual Love** (Notes, pg. 57-59, C)
14. Note: If there is time do One-on-One Ex., **Sexual Love III**, pg. 18, if not, send this exercise plus One-on-One Ex., **Sexual Love IV**, pg. 19, home with the couple to be completed at their leisure.
Encourage them to follow through and complete both of these.
They can make a big difference in the couples' understanding of one another in the area of sexual intimacy.
15. Divide into a men's group and a women's group. The groups should go into separate rooms with doors shut so that the respective discussions cannot be overheard.
 - a. The purpose of these groups is to discuss anything relative to sex which might be too delicate or embarrassing to bring up in front of men/women other than your husband/wife.
 - b. This is not a teaching time. Informal, personal sharing and discussion are the aim.
 - c. Women's Only information may be found in (Notes, pg. 60-62)
 - d. Men's Only information may be found in (Notes, pg. 63-65)
 - e. A minimum of 30 minutes should be allotted for this sharing
16. Reconvene. Hand out the following:
 - Eleventh Week Homework** (Homework, pg. 11)
 - Sexual Love III** (One-on-One Ex., pg. 18)
 - Sexual Love IV** (One-on-One E., pg. 19)
17. Remind them to bring their written promises/commitments next week
18. Closing prayer

TWELFTH METING

A. Advance Preparation

1. Prepare the elements for communion
 2. Suggestion: Don't eat dessert with dinner; save it for later in the evening.
-

1. Opening prayer
2. Explain the sharing of promises/commitments as follows:
 - a. Each couple in turn will sit facing each other, knee to knee, within the circle
 - b. The husband will look his wife in the eye and share with her the promises/commitments he is making to her. He then gives her his paper to keep. The wife then does likewise.
 - c. This sharing is done publicly before the group just as your initial marriage vows were shared before God and a group of friends and family. We are in His presence tonight and are serving as loving witnesses to each other's commitments.
 - d. Following the wife's sharing the couple shall remain seated while all of us gather around them, laying hands upon them and praying aloud for them.
 - e. The next couple will then come forward and share, etc.
3. Share promises/commitments
4. Serve communion
 - a. Introductory remarks could relate things such as our dependence upon the power of Jesus Christ to change us individually and as a couple. His life, strength and love within us are all that make restoration possible. He is our Covenant Partner. He has provided this Covenant Meal as a tangible reminder of all of Himself which He has committed to us, etc.

- b. Pray consecrating the elements.
 - c. If using a common cup it is suggested that the bread be dipped into the cup, rather than drinking from it.
 - c. The serving may be done couple by couple with the elements available to them so that they may serve each other and pray together.
5. Break for dessert.
 6. Informal discussion of any suggestions this group has for use in future groups.
 7. Reiterate that you are still available to them via phone or appointments. This isn't the cut off point for your relationship nor exile for them.
 8. Closing prayer.

LEAVING, CLEAVING, BECOMING ONE – GEN. 2:24

A. Leaving (Separation)

1. Not only physical leaving, more importantly is emotional separation
2. Husband and wife refocus their lives on each other
 - a. Look to no other individual or group to meet their emotional needs
3. The marriage relationship becomes of prime importance
 - a. Whatever is important to you in this life (except the Lord) should be less important to you than your marriage relationship
 1. Job, advanced education, interests, children, church work, etc.
4. Parental relationship must be changed, not discarded (honor)
 - a. Man starts new household, no longer under parents' authority
 - b. Assumes headship of his own household
5. Honoring your spouse
 - a. Definition = to attach high value to someone or something, to esteem
 - b. When you are honoring, you:
 1. Give the other person top priority in your life
 2. Communicate to the other person that there is nothing else (or no other person) that is more important to you than they are
 - c. Six weeks of honoring brings a change of emotion, attitude, feelings
 1. Honoring is a choice, a decision (feelings will catch up)
 - d. Practical applications
 1. Listening to your spouse
 2. Value him/her enough to communicate (especially feelings)
 3. Walk it out by showing loving care for the other, consideration
 4. Demonstrate importance by spending time with the other one
 5. Display high value by investing effort/time in improving the relationship
 6. Recognize and appreciate how you are different from each other
 - a. Don't expect the other to think, feel, relate just as you do
6. It's impossible to reach the thrill of oneness unless you "leave" all else

B. Cleaving (Permanence)

1. No use leaving unless you are prepared to cleave
2. Definition = to cling, to adhere to , to follow close and hard after, to cement, to stick like glue
 - a. Verb suggests determined action, nothing passive
 - b. Cleaving = welded together so the two can't be separated without damage to both halves
3. Two characteristics of cleaving
 - a. An unswerving loyalty
 - b. An active, pursuing love which will not let go under any circumstances
4. Cleaving "glue" is like Crazy Glue
 - a. With Elmer's Glue the two halves can be separated when subjected to heat and pressure
 - b. With Crazy Glue there's no sliding apart of the halves when heat is applied
5. Marriage ties must be forged like steel in the heat of daily life, the pressure of crisis. Quoting Richard Halverson, Chaplain, U.S. Senate:

"I have an arrangement with Doris that God witnessed as an unconditional covenant for life. No matter how difficult it is to live together, we're going to stay married. Every struggle we have that could be used as an excuse to separate or divorce is the very material God wants us to use to create intimacy in our marriage. We can't get it any other way: it comes by hammer and heat. Good marriages are always forged."
6. Anything that cements the relationship, draws you together into oneness = cleaving
 - a. Look at your actions words, attitudes in light of this
 - b. Does this draw us closer together or drive us apart
 - c. Does this express my love and loyalty to my partner or does it reveal my self-centered individualism

B. Oneness (Intimacy)

1. This is the goal in marriage
2. Characteristics or signs of oneness
 - a. You know your spouse so well that you often know what your mate is feeling, experiencing or thinking without their verbalizing it
 - b. You have a couple viewpoint – “we” – not two separate entities
 - c. Experience an intimacy where you can share your deepest, most secret feelings and not be put down
 - d. When one cries, the other tastes salt
 - e. Laugh over private jokes together
 - f. Know the other as your staunchest supporter, defender
 - g. Physically love each other, not for what you can get from the experience but for the joy of giving to the other
 - h. Have no fear, timidity or awkwardness in sharing the intimacy of your relationship with the Lord with your spouse...you're part of each other
 - i. Both feel incomplete when separated for a period of time (when one is away for some reason)
 - j. Enjoy each other's company more than with any other
 - k. Experience total trust, total commitment
 - l. Don't keep anything from each other

COMMUNICATION

A. Introduction

1. Most prevalent problem area in marriages
2. Affects all other areas of the relationship
3. Either couples don't talk meaningfully or experience conflict and/or lack of understanding when you do communicate

B. Definition of Healthy Communication in Marriage

It is the free exchange of thoughts, ideas, opinions and feelings. It is open and honest. In it you each make yourself vulnerable yet you know that you will remain totally committed to each other. (This commitment is the key.)

C. Problems Resulting from lack of Good Communication

1. Misunderstandings
2. Loneliness
3. Rejection
4. Vulnerability to outside attack
5. Dullness, disinterest in the relationship

D. Male-Female Differences and How They Impact Communication

1. General Physical Differences
 - a. Every cell in a woman's body is different from cells in a man's body
 - b. Female: have better immune systems, less deaths at birth
 - c. Male: have a million more red blood cells per drop of blood and therefore can work harder longer than women
Female: fewer red blood cells so tire earlier (I Pet. 3:7)
 - d. Male: bones thicker
Female: insulating layer of cells – makes her curvier, harder to lose weight
 - e. Male: 40 percent of body weight is muscles
20 percent of body weight is muscle
2. Right Brain Dominance – Left Brain Dominance
 - a. Male: before birth the male hormone testosterone is released into unborn

baby's body, washes boy's brain, affecting the connecting fibers in the brain

The testosterone wash then leaves the male with ability to only use one side of the brain at a time

Female: more connecting fibers so has bilateral use of the brain can process different kinds of impulses, stimuli simultaneously

b. Male: favors left side of the brain (seat of logic, deals factually, more aggressive, programmed to conquer)

Female: favors right side of the brain (seat of feelings; emotions; the creative; relates intimately; linguistic center, therefore, more ability to communicate)

d. Although he can only use one side of the brain at a time the man can make a decision to become more right brained

3. Various Differences

a. Male: want to discover and express facts (avg. 12,000 words per day)

Female: express emotions, intuition (avg. 25,000 words per day)

Child: boy – 40% of sounds are noise, not communicating

girl – almost all sounds are communicating, talks to self

b. Male: needs solutions

Female: needs to give emotion, sympathy, etc.

Man solves the problem, conquers, they are married then often he stops in the marriage relationship. Is less romantic, loving than when they were dating. The problems solved. He has conquered!

c. Male: more objective, compartmentalized in thinking

Female: more personal not compartmentalized-all flows along together like a river-subjective

E. Levels of Communication

1. Level one – sharing events, things about other people

Example: Tom needs braces

Sue's mother is here for a three week visit

2. Level two – sharing ideas

Example: I think we should look for a new car

Maybe we could handle the problem with the children this way

3. Level three – sharing feelings

Example: I felt like a failure and a has-been today

I've been so excited and encouraged over the new growth in our relationship recently

F. Facts About Feelings

1. Your feelings aren't right or wrong. Don't put value judgments on your spouse's feelings
2. You have the right to express feelings
3. You don't have to act on feelings
4. Feelings draw you closer to your mate when shared; judgments push you apart
5. Avoid asking, "**Why** do you feel that way?" Can be an attempt to correct your spouse's feeling. Puts the sharer on the defensive

G. Tap Hansen Quote:

"Love without honesty is sentimentality

Honesty without love is brutality

The Christian's aim is to be lovingly honest"

Eph. 4:15 – Speak the truth in love

John Powell Quote

"Most of us feel that others will not tolerate emotional honesty in communication. We would rather defend our dishonesty on the grounds that it hurts others, and having rationalized our phoniness into nobility, we settle for superficial relationships."

H. Emotional Word Pictures: Communicative Tool

1. When trying to convey to your spouse what you are feeling, use a word picture which creates an analogy to your feeling
 - a. Most effective use is when you draw an analogy, which your spouse has experienced.
They can identify with the feelings depicted

I. Reasons Unable or Unwilling to Share Feelings

1. We can't identify feelings
2. We're not brought up sharing feelings in parental home
3. We fear rejection or criticism
4. We think it won't do any good anyway

5. We have poor self worth – “I don’t have anything worth contributing”
6. We don’t trust our spouse
7. Males – less linguistic ability

All of the above – can be helped by an understanding, accepting partner

J. General Information – Feelings and Sharing

1. Risk vulnerability – trust grows by degrees
2. Accept him/her (accept doesn’t mean approve) – Spouse is sharing self when sharing feelings
3. Listen – respect spouse’s self-revelation
4. Focus – no right or wrong to feelings
Not your job to correct or readjust spouse’s feelings
5. Avoid solution mentality (particularly husbands!)
Provide a soft, listening ear; don’t put on counselor’s hat

K. Non-verbal Communication

1. Displaying body language
2. Using facial expressions
3. Shrugging off touches
4. Slamming cupboard doors, etc.

L. Baggage from Past Affects Sharing

1. Communicative patterns from parental home
 - a. “We don’t talk” “We don’t feel”
 - b. Yelled at, ridiculed if did share
2. Relational experiences with other men, women

M. Listening

1. Listening is not just waiting for your turn to talk
2. Eye contact essential; says to the talker, “You are important to me.”
3. Active listening
 - a. Respond
 - b. Repeat

N. Withdrawal

1. Greatest form of rejection
2. Says, “You don’t merit a response.”

O. Pitfalls to Avoid in Communication

1. Always – never
2. Gunny sacking: repeatedly stuffing resentments, anger or irritations then spilling them all out at once when your sack is too full (usually at the time of a minor provocation)
3. Predicting reactions
4. Assuming or presuming
5. Over talking – under talking
6. Passive listening
7. Negative or critical listening
8. Preaching
9. Nagging
10. Digging up the dead cat (digging up old offenses, grievances)
11. Dominating conversation
12. Lacking time: over commitment to others, work, children, activities
13. Interrupting
14. Being dogmatic: expressing opinions in a black and white manor
15. Over-agreeing: spouse never suggests anything or gives any feedback or opinion
(often due to co-dependence)

P. Helps

1. Harville Hendricks' model – issue, playback, correction, playback, spouse responds, playback correction, etc.
2. "I" messages – "I feel...when..." not "You make me feel..."
3. Normal playback
4. Maintain eye contact
5. Avoid pat answers; don't opionate too fast
6. Keep spouse's shared confidences; don't ever share with others
7. Never communicate about divorce or separation

8. Use time between leaving work or stressful activities as transition time
9. Avoid discussion of issues, important topics when either is exhausted, ill, in pain, or medicated
10. Remain on a topic until each person feels satisfied that they've had opportunity to share thoughts and feelings
11. Allow freedom for your spouse to start conversations on subjects important to him/her – even if not important or interesting to you
12. Take the initiative in bringing up topics that are of interest to spouse
13. Avoid “why?” questions – implies criticism

Q. Reaction or Response?

1. React: to act in response to an outside stimulus (circumstance, person)
Respond: to act, reply or answer irrespective of outside stimuli (not controlled from outside)
2. The circumstance or individual doesn't cause the reaction. It's what was in me to start with
 - a. Lemon – the pressure brings out what was already in there
3. Who is in control of you – the Holy Spirit or the other person?
4. Gal. 5:17-26
5. If you have a problem reacting rather than responding
 - a. Seek God's help – confess
 - b. Pray daily that the Holy Spirit will set a guard over your mouth; control your thoughts
 - c. Command your spirit to be strong and responsive to the Holy Spirit this day
 - d. Declare that you **will** walk by the Spirit today (choose)
 - e. When you blow it, confess instantly, start over again

RELATIONAL PATTERNS – HELPFUL AND HARMFUL

A. Acceptance

1. Rom. 15:7
2. I've experienced Christ's acceptance, as I am, in salvation
I respond to my spouse from this
Otherwise I'm setting my standards higher than the Lord's
3. Acceptance is a gift we give
4. May not approve yet we accept
Approval: says, "What you're doing, being, or thinking is OK by my standards"
Acceptance: says, "I take you at face value without condemning, accusing or criticizing you"
5. Acceptance is possible only through God's love working through us – Rom. 5:5
6. Acceptance comes before change
7. Two keys to help in accepting your mate
 - a. You're not responsible for your partner's behavior (Don't correct him/her)
 - b. You're not responsible for your partner's growth (you may encourage, don't control, manipulate)
8. The sin problem is my judging
 - a. Must ask God's forgiveness
 - b. Must repeatedly forgive spouse for the action/attitude; not out loud
 - c. Then I free him/her to be changed by God – Matt. 18:18
9. Steps for overcoming unacceptance
 - a. Pray, "Lord, show me where non-acceptance exists"
 - b. Instantly take it to the Lord when non-accepting thoughts occur
 - c. Be real with the Lord about the feelings you're having
 - d. Ask His forgiveness for judging
 - e. By an act of your will, release God's power to love which is within you (Rom. 5:5b)
 - f. Each time you have a non-accepting thought about your spouse, thank the Lord for what he/she is. He/she is God's gift to you

B. Expectations

1. Hidden agendas
2. Ways to solve problems originating from unmet expectations
 - a. Discuss them with spouse when they are not an issue
 - b. Ask the Lord whether they are valid
 - c. Be willing to lay them down
 - d. Ask Him what they should be
 - e. Explore where they came from

C. Criticism

1. Directly linked to non-acceptance, judging
2. Can be an ingrained habit pattern
3. Often rooted in own insecurities, lack of self-worth
4. Pattern can be broken – with God's help
5. Buzzards and bees – both find what they are looking for
6. Look at the areas in which we're critical of our mate
7. Read quote from H. Norman Wright's *Communication* pg. 100 (re: own sins and criticism); read also from pg. 100 – Questions to evaluate whether or not you're critical
8. Constructive criticism – trust must be built first, motive is key

D. Bitter Roots of Judgment

1. Heb. 12:15 Judge = to condemn, find fault, accuse
2. Judgment is one of greatest causes of problems in marriage relationships (bad fruit is a spotlight for a bad root)
3. Matt. 7:1-2
4. Gal. 6:7
5. Luke 6:36-38
6. Rom. 2:1
7. God's laws must be satisfied
 - a. That which we have sown (seeds of judgment) we shall reap – Gal. 6:7
 - b. As in the world of nature this reaping often occurs after a time lag
 - c. As it says in Luke 6:36-38, we shall reap in greater volume than we gave out to other

- d. The most telling place for the reaping to take place is in our marriage relationship for it is our closest relationship (therefore, there is more impact upon us as we reap)
8. Past judgments placed upon parents
 - a. Deut. 5:16
 1. Rather than honoring we often judge our parents
 - a. We hold bitterness toward or hate certain actions or character traits of our parents
 2. The flip side of this scripture is that in the areas where we do not honor, it will not go well for us
 3. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you any places where your judgments against your parents are infecting your marriage relationship due to your reaping there
 - b. Reaping
 1. God's laws must be satisfied – Gal. 6:7
 2. We choose a mate predisposed toward the exact behavior/trait we've judged in our parent
 - c. Rom. 2:1 We become like the one whom we've judged (We see ourselves doing/being the thing we resented or hated in a parent.)
 9. Present tense judgments
 - a. Reiterate acceptance
 - b. Forgiveness needs to be a daily, minute-by-minute discipline, a lifestyle
 - c. With my judgment, I bind my spouse to the very behavior or attitude which I abhor
 10. Cleaning up process
 - a. Ask the Lord's forgiveness for the specifics of your sin (hatred, resentment)
 - b. Ask the forgiveness of the one you have judged (out loud, as if they were present). Be specific
 - c. Forgive the one whom you have judged. Be specific
 - d. Ask Jesus to set His axe to the base of the root, cutting it off
 - e. Be vigilant about re-sprouting. Nip it! Satan loves to resurrect negative thought patterns

E. Wounded Spirit – Prov. 18:14 Prov. 15:4

1. Your estimation of yourself is often gleaned from what others have said to or about you
2. Therefore, words in our most intimate relationship are **so** important

3. When we speak rashly or in anger, we often wound the spirit of our mate
4. Identify wounds – when something you said to him stayed with him and hurt him
5. Solution
 - a. Ask spouse if there is anything you've said which he/she has a hard time forgetting, which is a source of irritation or hurt
 - b. Don't defend yourself
 - c. Tell him/her that you were wrong. (You were if you hurt him/her!)
 - d. Simply ask his/her forgiveness
 - e. After you've asked forgiveness, you may give an explanation if it will help clarify, but don't be defensive or excuse yourself. (It's better to say nothing than to defend yourself because then no healing comes)
 - f. Ask God's forgiveness for wounding the other person
 - g. Remember, even if you were misunderstood, it was what they received that hurt them

F. Affirmation

1. Give unconditional praise, no strings attached
2. Thank people for what they do for us, affirm who they are
 - a. Thank God for what He does; praise Him for who He is
3. Voice what you admire about him/her and about things he does and how he does them
4. Affirmation differs from flattery which is for your own personal ends
5. Affirm in public as well as privately
6. Affirmation insulates us from outside temptation
7. Phil. 4:8
8. Affirmation is a special kind of stroke that makes you feel completely accepted by another. Conveys that you truly are an OK person
9. Result
 - a. Helps recipient to feel worthwhile
 - b. Helps recipient to become enthusiastic
 - c. Helps recipient to be better able to cope with stress

10. Conveyed through
 - a. Praise
 - b. Expressing love and confidence
 - c. Physical means – hug, pat, smile

G. Love Language

1. An individual's method of expressing love to others and the most meaningful expression through which he receives love from others
2. Three primary love languages
 - a. Verbal
 1. The individual uses many verbal means of expressing love or affection
 2. Examples
 - a. Writing notes or letters
 - b. Sending cards
 - c. Verbally letting others know his appreciation for and/or affection for them
 - b. Social
 1. "Doing" types of love expression
 2. Examples
 - a. Husband helping with household tasks
 - b. Giving gifts to the one loved
 - c. Husband providing very complete life insurance protection for wife upon his death
 - d. Husband giving security through sound investment program
 - c. Physical
 1. Affection expressed through touching, hugs, etc.
 2. This expression is not sexual in nature
 3. To avoid confusion with the sexual, explore whether the individual uses physical love expressions with those other than his/her spouse (friends, children, etc.)
3. All three should be operable in each individual's life and in the marriage relationship
4. Identify partner's love language – enables you to express love to him in the manner most meaningful to him/her

5. Goal – become bilingual
 - a. Speak mate's language fluently – most effective way to convey love.
It's what he/she can hear, understand and identify with
6. Positive re-enforcement encourages your partner in attempting your language

H. Ministry or Manipulation?

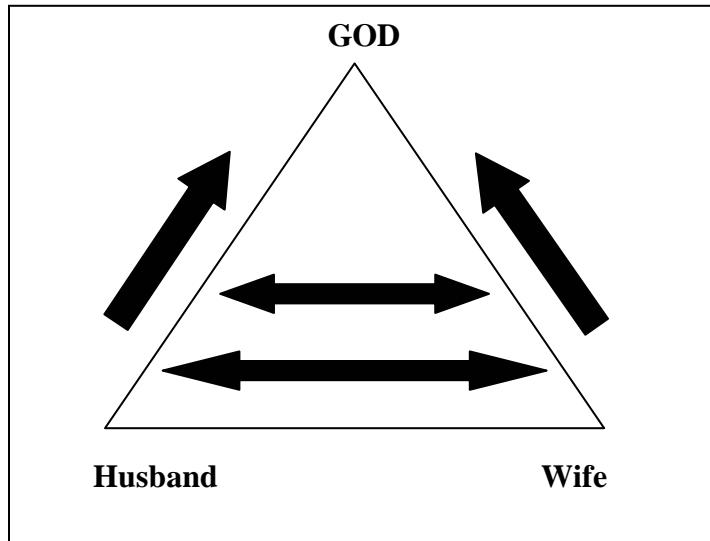
1. We all have built-in needs
 - a. To be loved
 - b. To be found worthwhile or significant
2. We enter marriage expecting spouse to meet all our needs
 - a. Like a tick looks for a dog. This causes trouble!
 - b. Both spouses do this – two ticks, no dog
3. If my needs are unmet
 - a. I will utilize manipulative methods to get spouse to meet my needs
 1. Exploitative – leads to conflict
 - b. I will ignore my basic needs for love and significance – look to physical pleasure to satisfy my personal needs
 1. Food, sex, drinking, etc.
 - c. I will experience pain, withdrawal, or anger when partner can't fulfill my expectations
 1. Feel rejected and protect myself by not sharing feelings
4. Necessary realization
 - a. It is impossible for my mate to totally meet my built-in need to be loved, found worthwhile or significant
 - b. He can add to, give some but never all
5. Christ is our only need meeter – Phil. 4:19
 - a. Must risk, trust Him to supply my needs. This can be scary
 - b. I then set my goal to meet, to the best of my ability, my partner's needs. Do this out of love
 - c. I must make the choice (a series of deliberate choices) – set a new goal to minister to my mate rather than my previous selfish goal of manipulation to get my needs met

- d. As I make the choices, God provides the power to make it real; but I must choose, again and again
 - e. We fear we'll be shortchanged if we make this choice
 - f. Paradox of Christ – We must die to live
6. When we can do all of the above and give without wanting to get, a miraculous thing takes place. Our mate then begins to give to us and to meet our needs. (We mustn't do it for this; or then we're back to manipulation)
7. God has called me to a unique ministry to which He has called no one else – that of loving my husband/wife with the unique committed love of a husband/wife
- a. I can't add to the fact of his/her security (Christ's job) or significance. But I can add to his/her feelings of being loved and of worth

INDIVIDUAL SPIRITUAL PROCESS

A. One of our goals in the becoming-one-process is developing spiritual intimacy with each other. For this growth to take place both husband and wife must grow in their individual relationship with the Lord.

The diagram below illustrates the importance of this process. As the husband and wife individually move closer to God, they become closer to each other



Let's examine some necessary ingredients in the individual spiritual process

B. Necessary Ingredients

1. Committing to develop my relationship with the Lord – not when and if I feel like it
2. Making quiet time alone with the Lord – not just on the run, catch-as-catch-can
3. Learning to have honest dialogue with Him
4. Learning to hear God's voice
 - a. John 10:3-4
 - b. Isa. 30:21
 - c. How-to ideas (refer to the various books written on how to hear the voice of God)
5. The Word
 - a. Is nourishment for our spirit, just as body needs nourishment
 - b. Before you read the Word, ask the Holy Spirit to bring it to life to give revelation to you, to show you application in your own life.

SPIRITUAL INTIMACY

A. Vital Goal

1. This intimacy is a bedrock, great re-enforcer for sexual intimacy and friendship intimacy in marriage
2. Spiritual intimacy: being able to be totally open with each other about the spiritual part of our being
 sharing your spiritual struggles, insights, high points and doubts with each other
 all “religious” or “spiritual” masks are thrown away
2. With spiritual intimacy, we can rely upon each other
 - a. Be open enough to ask each other for specific prayer
 - b. Re-enforce each other in spiritual warfare

B. Praying Together

1. Time priority must be given to your spiritual life together
2. Difficulty in praying together (how to overcome)
3. Conversational prayer
4. Goal = to be as real with the Lord when you are together as you are when alone with Him

C. Listening Together

1. Essential for obedience, direction, unity
2. Unity in listening together comes when each individual agrees that he consents to agree with what God desires.
3. Steps for achieving unity in listening
 - a. Each individual consents to lay down his own desires, logic and/or agenda
 - b. Each agrees to submit to whatever the Lord’s direction is
 - c. Both then listen independently. When they have an answer, they compare answers
 - d. The answers they hear may be identical or may be complementary parts of His direction
 - e. If spouses hear contradictory answers, they return again to the Lord, restating that they choose to agree with Him and binding their own logic and their own emotions as they listen

D. Kinds of Prayer Which Need to Be a Part of Your Experience Together

1. Praise and worship
2. Petition
3. Intercession
4. Spiritual warfare
5. Confession

E. Putting the Lord in the Middle of Your Conflicts

1. When anger or discord flares, sit down together with the Lord, invite Him to meditate/solve the conflict
2. Each individual spills out his "case" to the Lord
 - a. Be real about the emotions you are experiencing
 - b. State your views regarding the issue involved
 - c. Do not interrupt your spouse during this venting-to-the-Lord process
3. After the unloading, get quiet which is preparatory to listening for the Lord's input
 - a. First, bind in the name of Jesus Christ
 1. Your own logic
 2. Your own feelings
 3. The voices of the enemy
 - b. Ask the Lord to show you what He wants to say to you regarding the current situation
 1. "Why am I reacting so strongly, Lord?"
 2. "With me, what's really at issue here?"
 3. "Is my view valid?"
 4. "How do we solve this?"
 5. When both have finished listening, share with each other what you have heard
 6. If it is called for, seek your spouse's forgiveness, acknowledging your sin responsibility
6. Examine solutions/compromises in light of what the Lord has said
7. Pray aloud together regarding the situation

F. There is great strength in spiritual unity between husband and wife

Read Eccl. 4:9-12

ANGER

A. Definitions

1. Anger = any feeling of displeasure directed against a person or object accompanied by a desire to remove the cause
- = the natural reflexive result of the frustration we experience when a goal of ours is blocked

B. Forms of Anger

1. Resentment
2. Aggression
3. Frustration
4. Outrage
5. Depression
6. Crossness
7. Bitterness
8. Spite
9. Defiance

C. Is Anger an Emotion? A Sin?

1. Eph. 4:26
 - a. "Be angry" shows us we **are** going to be angry
 - b. Anger is a God-created emotion. An erroneous view is that a good Christian is never angry
 - c. Sinful anger
 1. Is passion boiling up within us
 2. Is a passion characterized by vindictiveness, hostility, resentment, or a desire to hurt or damage another person
 3. Wants to inflict pain upon another person (verbal or physical)
 4. Can occur in our minds with no overt behavior
 - a. Attitudes, not open aggression
 - b. I John 3:15 (He who hates brother is a murderer)

D. Christian Anger

1. Must be controlled – not a heated, uncontrollable passion
2. Must carry no hatred, malice, resentment, intent to hurt or harm
3. Is directed at something wrong or evil by God's standards

E. Three Components of Interaction in Marriage

1. Congruent living patterns
 - a. Alike in both partners – no conflict
2. Complementary living patterns
 - a. Dissimilar yet compatible – “I give here, you give there”
3. Clashing living patterns
 - a. Triggers the frustration, reflexive anger mentioned in definition

F. Three Ways of Dealing with Anger

1. Suppressing
 - a. Many Christians do this – a very damaging response to anger
 - b. Results – anxiety, ulcers, headaches, depression
 - c. Can come out indirectly
 1. Critical attitudes, irritability, scapegoating
 - d. Like an infection breeding within us – enemy flourishes there
 - e. Inner healing can clean this out from as far back as childhood
2. Venting
 - a. Letting it rip
 - b. Each one unloads, no process of reaching a solution is followed
 - c. Can be very emotionally wounding to each other
3. Processing
 - a. Method for couple to use
 1. Cool down until you can keep cool (get alone with the Lord first and vent to Him defuse your anger)
 2. Jointly define your disagreement: get rid of all the stuff – “What’s the real issue here?”
 3. Each person states his views regarding the issue
 4. Each person writes down what the other person’s views are
 5. Correct each other’s statements where necessary
 6. List all available options
 7. Choose a compromise or mutually agreeable solution

G. On-going Maintenance

1. Get together daily for a time of sharing feelings
2. During that period, take the time to work through every issue that brings any kind of tension into your relationship

H. Anger: A Helpful Signal in Marriage

1. Like a smoke alarm signal, anger warns you when there is danger and enables you to take appropriate action
2. Like the squeak in the motor of your car which tells you that something needs to be fixed, attend to it and the car will run better than ever. Ignore or avoid it and you might wind up with a breakdown on a lonely road some dark night
3. Anger can be a servant of love if used the right way – never sinful
 - a. Can be a reliable guide to areas where adjustment or growth are needed

H. Control of Our Anger

1. Exercise of the will stands in the gap between the two halves of Eph. 4:26
2. Voluntary control is possible
3. Eph. 4:31 We're commanded to choose. Control is an act of our will
4. Col. 3:8-9
 - a. We're now spiritual beings; Spirit dominated
 - b. We're not helpless slaves to anger
 - c. Gal. 5:16-21 – talks about battle of flesh against Spirit
Gal. 5:22-25 – fruit of the Spirit is self-control

I. Tips

1. Acknowledge your anger
2. Ask yourself what goal of yours is being blocked
3. Forget the argument momentarily; ask yourself what you are feeling
 - a. Is it really fear? embarrassment? superiority?
4. Own your anger; therefore, you can do something about it
 - a. Not "You're making me angry" but "I'm angry"
5. Share your emotion with your spouse

- a. "Let's stop a minute. I'm saying things I don't mean. Let's stop the discussion until I can get my feelings under control"
6. Utilize time out
 - a. Always set an appointment time to resume, don't sweep it all under the rug

FIGHTING FAIRLY

1. Don't avoid conflict with the silent treatment
2. Choose the time and the place for the "intense discussion"
 - a. Avoid audiences
 - b. Avoid interruption
3. Attack the problem, not each other
4. Stick with the issues at hand – define the issues
5. Don't bring in unrelated issues to score points and intensify the attack
6. Watch your volume. Increasing volume indicates increasing loss of control
7. Watch your tone of voice. Avoid sarcasm, ridicule, etc.
8. Avoid name calling, labeling
9. Don't make negative references to your mate's appearance
10. Don't use tears as a manipulative device
11. Don't manipulate by threats such as leaving, suicide, money, etc.
12. Learn to listen in the midst of the argument. Remember, the goal is to solve the problem, not to win the argument
13. If you see that you are wrong, admit it
14. Utilize timeouts to regain self-control. Always make an appointment to resume the discussion
15. Use "I" messages
16. Be willing to take full responsibility for your words, actions and attitudes
 - a. Avoid a blame mentality (Matt. 7:3-5)

FORGIVENESS

A. Forgiveness: A Pre-condition of Love

1. We can't let His love flow through us if we've slammed the door of our heart shut with unforgiveness and bitterness
2. If you want a marriage filled with love, you can't permit yourself the luxury of:
 - a. Resentment
 - b. Self-pity
 - c. Anger
3. Self-examination is a necessity
 - a. Look within for buried anger or hurt
 - b. See if a bitter root of judgment has formed within yourself
 1. Clue – bad fruit, bad root Heb. 12:15
 - c. Matt. 12:34 – If my heart is full of unforgiveness, then that is what comes out of my Mouth

B. Forgiveness – God's Answer to Anger

1. Eph. 4:29-31 Col. 3:12-14
 - a. In both God commands us to put anger away from us
 - b. In both God instructs us regarding forgiveness
2. Sounds tough; but God doesn't ask us to do anything for which He doesn't supply the instruction and the strength

C. Why Forgive?

1. Because you have been forgiven Eph. 4:32 Col. 3:13
2. For uninterrupted fellowship with the Father
 - a. Mark 11:25
 - b. "Anybody" – all inclusive "Anything" – anything whatsoever
3. To free yourself and others
 - a. By hanging onto my judgment of my mate, I can bind him to the very behavior or conditions I'd like to see changed

D. Three Steps to Forgiveness

1. Choosing to forgive
 - a. An act of the will
 - b. You don't have to be controlled by your feelings
 - c. God isn't asking you to work up a feeling of forgiveness – is asking you to make a choice (no matter how you feel) to forgive
 - d. Feelings follow actions (proven fact)
 - e. Make the choice with the mind and the will. Then the matter is committed to God – frees you and the one who offended you from the power of the past
 - f. You choose. God moves in then and brings the feelings in line with the choice
 - g. The **decision** to forgive is your own The **grace** to do it is from God
 1. God's grace covers every category in marriage. Adultery doesn't automatically destroy a marriage
2. Changing your behavior
 - a. Eph. 4:32 tells us how in capsule form
 - b. Kindness (in line with forgiveness) will take these forms which are proofs of forgiveness
 1. You'll never use the past against your spouse
 2. You'll never talk about it again to your spouse or to anybody else
 3. You'll never dwell on the offense in your thoughts
 4. If you think of it in passing, you'll immediately remember it has been forgiven, just as God has forgiven you of many things
3. Renewing your mind
 - a. Feed positives about your spouse into your mind – Phil. 4:8
 - b. Repeatedly ask God to enable you to see your spouse as He does
 - c. Remember that the Christian life is all present and future tense
 - d. Acknowledge that your mate has the ability and the power to change. Don't limit him or the power of God to work in his life

E. What Forgiveness Is Not

1. Excusing
 - a. Excusing says that we know the person was not to blame for the wrong they caused us
2. Pardoning
 - a. Pardoning frees the offender but leaves the offense on his record
 - b. Forgiveness erases even the record (as if it never happened)
3. Forgetting
 - a. "Forgive and forget" – erroneous concept
 - b. God created us with memories. We don't forget
 - c. Proof of forgiveness' completion – I remember the event but feel none of the pain, trauma connected with the event

F. Forgiveness: A Process

1. May be quick and concise or may require a time lag as the Lord works within us
2. Steps in the process
 - a. Enjoying the hating, bitterness or anger which I have
 - b. Recognizing that it isn't right but unwilling or unable to make the choice to forgive
 - c. Crying out to God, asking Him to help make me willing
 - d. Choosing to forgive
 - e. Allowing feelings to slowly line up with that decision
 - f. Completing the process, the pain is gone

G. Seeking Forgiveness

1. Essential – own your sin responsibility in hurting your mate
2. Acknowledge your sin responsibility specifically to your mate
 - a. "Please forgive me for..."
 - b. Don't just say, "I'm sorry." – carries no acknowledgement of personal sin responsibility
3. Response – wounded mate also must acknowledge the sin for forgiveness to be complete
 - a. "I forgive you," not "Oh, that's all right"

H. Lifestyle of Forgiveness

1. Forgiveness must flow like fresh, cleansing water throughout the marriage relationship

2. Forgiveness must be a choice exercised, sometimes daily -- in the little irritations, hurts
3. Forgiveness must be linked to acceptance
4. Forgiveness must see my response to the little irritating things my spouse does or says (judging, lack of acceptance, blame)
 - a. Don't go to your spouse with all of this smaller garbage and junk asking forgiveness
 - b. That can become a "spiritual" way to throw negative darts at him/her
5. How to deal with minor irritations – flash prayers
 - a. Be real in acknowledging to the Lord the emotions you are experiencing, the thoughts you are having about your spouse
 - b. Claim your own sin responsibility
 - c. Ask God to forgive you
 - d. Choose to forgive your spouse for the behavior, words, etc.
 - e. Sometimes you must say (not out loud), "I forgive you" over and over again – every couple of minutes on some occasions
6. If we don't make this a lifestyle in the little things, then, when we get into the pro game we have not learned how to pass or dribble

CUTTING COVENANT

A. Definition

1. Hebrew word for covenant = to cut
2. The word has the suggestion of an incision where blood flows
3. In practically every place where the word is used in scripture, it means “to cut the covenant”

B. Historical Background

1. Studies reveal – blood covenant has been practiced by all primitive peoples from time immemorial
 - a. Practiced in all parts of the world
 - b. To this day practiced in Africa, India, China, Borneo, islands of the seas
2. Theory – was begun by God in the Garden of Eden
 - a. There isn't a primitive people in the world, as far as it is known, that hasn't practiced blood covenant in some form. Could indicate that it had a God-given origin, and man has practiced the covenant through all the ages
3. God cut covenant with Abraham – Gen. 15:7-21
4. Stanley and Livingstone
 - a. Stanley cut the covenant fifty times with different African tribes

PROCEDURES FOR CUTTING OR MAKING COVENANT

A. Exchange of Robes

1. Symbolized the “putting on of one another”
2. This first step says, “I’m becoming so one with you that I will take on your likeness”
3. New Covenant – We take on His likeness (put on His robe, the Holy Spirit) He puts on our robe of humanity
4. Phil. 2:6-8 – “Though He existed in the form of God...emptied Himself taking the form of a bondservant and being made in the likeness of men and being found in appearance as a man”
5. Because of this, our Covenant Partner sympathizes, understands, knows our weaknesses, temptations and infirmities

B. Exchanged Belts or Girdles

1. Belt or girdle represented a man’s strength
2. Signified that the partners would now compensate for each others’ weaknesses
 - a. When one runs out of strength, the other would become his strength
3. Jesus covers your weaknesses, becomes your strength, and gives you His abilities for your inabilities
4. Our main problem isn’t weakness but independence. In covenant you die to independent living
5. II Cor. 12:9-10 – “My grace is sufficient for you. For power is perfected in weakness. I will boast about my weakness that the power of Christ may dwell in me...for when I am weak, then I am strong”

C. Exchanged Weapons

1. Symbolized taking on one another’s enemies
2. All the partners had, they held in common – even each other’s enemies
3. When one was under attack, it was the duty of the partner to come to his aid
4. New Covenant – I needn’t worry about defending myself against my enemies. My Covenant Partner is my defense. I am to give love. He deals in justice.

5. Rom. 12:19-21

“Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine. I will repay, says the Lord.’”

“But if your enemy is hungry, feed him; and if he is thirsty, give him a drink. For in so doing, you will heap burning coals upon his head. Do not be overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.”

6. We must stand against Jesus’ enemy – the world

D. Split an Animal, Addressed God

1. The two people split an animal in the middle, down its back, laid the two pieces on the ground opposite each other
2. The two people would stand between the two walls of blood and point to heaven calling to God, then they would point to the dead animal and say, “God, do so to me and more if I break this covenant.”
3. They were saying that breaking the covenant was punishable by death
4. The covenant agreement superseded all other relationships, even those of birth
5. Luke 14:26

“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sister, yes, even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.”

E. Walked through Pieces of Animal in Form of Figure 8

1. Called “a walk unto death”
2. Signified they were dying to their rights to independent living
3. Said now they would no longer live for themselves, for their own pleasure, but would live for their covenant partner
4. Implies we must walk through Jesus’ torn flesh

F. Cut Their Own Flesh

1. Each cut himself at the wrist, clasped hands, mingled their blood
2. This signified that the two had become one
3. No longer were they to live or act independently of one another – what affected one now affected the other

4. At Calvary the cut of covenant took place as they pierced His hands and feet
5. If you are His by covenant, you are no longer your own

G. Giving the Blessings

1. The partners next gave “the blessings” to each other
2. Each gave an accounting of all of their resources to the other
3. All each possessed belonged to the other, should it be needed
4. Phil. 4:19

“My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus”

H. Making a Scar

1. Rubbed dirt or something into the place where they had cut themselves to make a permanent scar
2. Created an enduring visual reminder of their covenant partner and their obligation to care for each other forever
3. John 20:27

“Jesus told Thomas, ‘touch the scars in My hands and side.’”

I. Changing of Names

1. After covenant was cut, each took the name of his covenant partner and added it onto his name
2. After covenant, God changed Abraham and Sarah’s names – added the breath sound of His own name into theirs
3. To all Christians comes the promise of a new name (Rev. 2:17)
4. Isa. 62:2

“You will be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord will designate”

5. Even now we bear a new name --- the name Christian means “little Christ”

J. Partaking of the Covenant meal

1. At this meal each took bread, broke it, then placed it into their partner’s mouth saying, “You are eating me.”
2. Each offered a cup of wine to their partner saying, “This is my blood; you are drinking me.”
3. If they were Jews they mingled drops of their own blood in with the wine.
4. Is a picture of giving yourself to another – unconditionally, totally, eternally
5. Matt 26:28 – This is my blood of the covenant

The information in this section on Cutting Covenant was taken from *Your Day and Mine, A Devotional Study Guide* by Kay Arthur, March and April 1990, published by Precept Ministries, Chattanooga, TN.

MARRIAGE COVENANT

A. God's View – Marriage = Covenant

Malachi 2:14-16 (Amplified)

“Because the Lord was witness to the covenant made at your marriage between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously and to whom you were faithless. Yet she is your companion and the wife of your covenant made by your marriage vows.

“And did not God make you and your wife one flesh? Did not One make you and preserve your spirit alive? And why did God make you two one? Because He sought a godly offspring from your union. Therefore take heed to yourselves, and let no one deal treacherously and be faithless to the wife of his youth.

“For the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I hate divorce and marital separation and him who covers his garment (his wife) with violence. Therefore keep a watch upon your spirit that it may be controlled by My Spirit, that you deal not treacherously and faithlessly with your marriage mate.”

What do the steps for cutting covenant say relative to the marriage covenant?

B. First Step: Exchanged Robes

1. “I am so becoming one with you that I will take on your likeness”
2. No longer two separate entities, blended into one
3. A “we” mentality is born

C. Second Step: Exchanged Belts or Girdles

1. Belt or girdle represented a man's strength
2. As covenant partners, they would compensate for each other's weaknesses
3. When one runs out of strength, the other would become his strength
 - a. Emotionally, spiritually
 - b. Pray for, encourage and affirm each other

D. Third Step: Exchanged Weapons

1. Symbolized taking on of one another's enemies
2. Partners held everything in common – even each other's enemies
3. When one is under attack, it is the duty of the partner to come to his aid
4. Support each other when attacked from outside (by family members, others)
 - a. Don't jump on the band wagon and fire your own volleys at your spouse
5. Support one another when under spiritual attack
 - a. Wage spiritual warfare
6. Covenant attitude – "You and me against the world"

E. Fourth Step: Split Animal, Addressed God

1. Breaking a covenant commitment was punishable by death
2. Between bloody walls of flesh partners say, "God, do this to me and more if I break this covenant"
3. Imperative to shut the back door – no divorce or separation
 - a. See your marriage as a lifetime commitment
4. Covenant agreement superseded all other relationships, even those of birth
 - a. Leave, cleave, become one

F. Fifth Step: Walk Through Pieces in Form of Figure 8

1. Called "a walk unto death"
2. Signified they were dying to their rights, dying to independent living
3. Partners would no longer live for themselves – their own needs or pleasures
 - a. Refocus on covenant partner – meeting their needs
 - b. Giving love, not striving to get it

G. Sixth Step: Cut Own Flesh

1. Mingled their blood – two had become one
2. No longer were they to live or act independently of one another

H. Seventh Step: Giving the Blessings

1. Accounting made of all resources
2. All resources now at disposal of the covenant partner should they be needed
3. In marriage
 - a. Material resources – no “my money,” no separate untouchable bank accounts

I. Eighth Step: Making a Scar

1. Enduring visual reminder of their covenant partner and their obligation to care for him
2. Custom of wedding rings originated here?

J. Ninth Step: Changing of Names

1. Wife takes on last name of husband

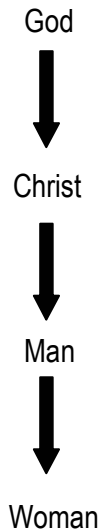
K. Tenth Step: Covenant Meal

1. Bread placed into partner's mouth saying, “You are eating me”
 - a. Feeding each other pieces of wedding cake
2. Cup of wine offered to the other saying, “You are drinking me”
 - a. Linking arms and toasting each other at wedding reception
3. Is a picture of giving yourself to another
 - a. Unconditionally
 - b. Totally
 - c. Eternally

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

A. God's Organizational Chart – I Cor. 11:3

1. Charted here



2. Husband and wife are equal in God's eyes

Gal. 3:26-28 I Cor. 11:11-12

3. Trinity
 - a. All three are coequal
 - b. See on organizational chart in I Cor. 11:3 that God is the head of Christ (but they are coequal, one and the same!)
 - c. The function of all three is different, the nature or essence is the same
4. Trinity – coequal yet different functions
Husbands and wife – coequal yet different functions

Let's look at how it works

B. God's Design for Husbands

1. Eph. 5:23, 25-33
2. Directives
 - a. Lead
 - b. Love
 - c. Nourish

- d. Cherish
- e. Live with wife with understanding I Pet. 3:7
- f. Be spiritual head of household
Eph. 5:26-27 Deut. 6:4-7 (Amp)

3. Lead

- a. Eph. 5:23 Husbands are to lead as Christ did
- b. How did Jesus exercise His authority? Phil. 2:5-8
 1. Didn't wear His authority as a badge, but emptied Himself, was humble, obedient to the Father
 2. Became the ultimate servant
 3. Poured Himself out, even to the point of death
 4. Gave totally to those He was over
- c. You only have full authority when you fully serve
- d. Christ heads the church in a way where each person's identity is magnified, not crushed
 1. Know, value each family member
 2. Encourage each one's uniqueness
 3. Affirm their strengths
- e. Serve, serve, serve
- f. Husband's authority is not to give orders and dominate

4. Love Eph. 5:25-33

- a. "As Christ loved the church"
 1. Gave and served; totally others-centered
 2. Poured Himself out for those He loved
 3. Valued the church (us) more than Himself, His own body
- b. Practical ways a wife feels loved as Christ loved
 1. Husband listens to her
 - a. Never too busy for her
 - b. Her concerns never inconsequential

2. Receives respect from husband
 - a. For her feelings
 - b. For her ideas even if different from his
 - c. For her opinions
3. When her husband is interested in everything about her, her world – just because it's hers
4. When protected by her husband
 - a. From overextending her energies
 - b. In prayer
 - c. In things she's insecure about
 - d. Physical protection, concern
5. When she receives husband's help with "her" tasks
6. When her husband is sensitive to her feelings – even if he doesn't understand them
7. When her husband pours out warm affection
8. When her husband affirms her (unconditional praise)
9. When her husband gives her top priority before
 - a. His job
 - b. The children
 - c. Sports
 - d. Hobbies
10. When her husband is more focused on meeting her needs than on getting

5. Nourish Eph. 5:29

- a. Definition = to rear up to maturity or fullness
- b. Husband is to nourish his wife mentally, emotionally, spiritually
- c. He is to make provision for her to be the most complete, well-adjusted, spiritually mature woman she can be
- d. Nourishes her as he would his own body
 1. Selflessly provides every opportunity that he can for her growth
 2. Encourages her giftedness

3. Wants her to be all that she can be

e. No squelching!

6. Cherish Eph. 5:29

a. Definition = to warm as a brood hen

b. Implies protection and tender love

c. Looks for ways to let her know she's special to him

d. Protects the safety of her inner personhood

1. Her self-image, sense of personal worth, are to be under his tender care and encouragement

e. Protects the sanctity of the emotional and sexual intimacy of his relationship with his wife

1. Guards his life and thoughts so she needn't fear emotional or sexual abandonment by him for a lover

2. Just as Jesus' fidelity to His church is unquestioned

7. Live with Wife with Understanding I Pet. 3:7

a. If husband fails in this his prayers will be hindered

b. Another aspect of loving

c. Understanding involves

1. Listening to her feelings and thoughts enough to know her deeply, intimately

2. Acceptance, not necessarily approval

3. Knowing where she is (and isn't) spiritually

4. Knowing the basic differences emotionally, perspective-wise, etc. between men and women

8. Be Spiritual Head of Your household

a. Eph. 5:26-27

1. Christ so loved the church that He was totally concerned with their need for spiritual renewal in their relationship with God

2. Christ's love for His church = model for husband's love for his wife

3. Husband therefore must have primary concern for spiritual well-being of his wife and children

b. Deut. 6:4-7 (Amp)

1. Practically speaking, God will hold husband accountable for leading his family closer to God via

a. His prayer life

b. His priorities

c. Sharing practical application of scripture with them

d. His own example of love and godliness

- c. A godly head of the household will
 - 1. Pray daily. Cover his wife and children with the protective covering of the blood of Jesus Christ
 - 2. Pray with his wife and children
 - 3. Pray for specifics for his wife and children
 - 4. Nurture and teach his wife and children
 - 5. Give direction to the family
 - 6. Let the family know that someone is in charge (not heavy-handed authoritarianism, but loving leading)
 - 7. Encourage and affirm each family member
 - 8. Help each family member know that they are important and necessary to the family unit
 - 9. Live out his faith in the daily routine of life
 - 10. Instill, by example, a value system for the family
 - 11. Be concise and definitive in decision making
 - a. Learn to hear the Lord's voice for direction for the family
 - b. Seek confirmation from his wife
 - c. Really hear his wife's input
 - 1. What she's hearing from the Lord
 - 2. What her intuitive feelings are telling her
 - 3. What her emotions are regarding the topic
 - 12. Initiate prayer, attendance at worship service, Sunday School, etc.
 - 13. Be the aggressor in spiritual warfare (battling Satan) when he attacks the individuals in the family. The husband protects and defends the family in this way
 - 14. Feeds himself spiritually by reading and meditating upon God's word
 - 15. Keeps his personal relationship with the Lord fresh, alive and real. This is the greatest security he can offer to his wife.
- d. The way a man exercises his authority, by the way he leads and the way he treats his wife
 - 1. Can show the world the character and work of Christ

C. God's Design for Wives

- 1. Remember – they are coequal with men in god's eyes
 - a. Not less important or less competent
 - b. I Pet. 3:7 – joint heirs (husband and wife) of the grace of life
Gal. 3:28 – neither male or female (all are sons)

- c. The essence or nature of each is the same. The function is different
What is her function?
- 2. I Cor. 11:9 – woman was created for the man
 - a. As complements
 - 1. Counterpart
 - 2. Completer
- 3. Directives
 - a. Submit – Eph. 5:22-24, I Pet. 3:1-6
 - b. Respect – Eph. 5:33
 - c. Be a helpmeet – Gen. 2:18-23
- 4. Submission – what it's not
 - a. Obedience (as in the military)
 - b. Slavery
 - c. A woman as a non-person, existing only to grant her husband's wishes
 - d. Intellectual suicide for the wife
 - 1. No valid thoughts, opinions
 - e. An act of subordination in a difficult situation
 - f. Doormatism
- 5. Submission – what it is
 - a. Submit = to arrange or order oneself under the authority of another, to submit yourself unto, be subject to
 - b. OBEDIENCE IS AN ACTION; SUBMISSION IS A HEART ATTITUDE**
 - c. Attitude
 - 1. Eph. 5:22 – “As to the Lord”
 - a. Our submission to Him is not heavy, degrading, negative
 - b. Submit to husband freely, lovingly
 - c. A love attitude that wants to cooperate, give
 - 2. Jesus coequal with God
 - a. God is the head. By His gift of love, He gives authority to the Son
 - b. Jesus gives the gift of love to the Father by submitting to Him
 - 3. With the right attitude, submission becomes a gift the wife gives to the husband

d. Motivation

1. Submissive behaviors often used by wife to
 - a. Get husband to change
 - b. Gain favor
 - c. Manipulate – to get what she thinks she needs from him – becomes a subtle form of control
2. Submissive behavior with motive of changing husband is not biblical submission
 - a. This violates the principle of agape, loving freely with no strings attached
3. Trying to “be spiritual”
 - a. Behavior looks submitted but heart attitude is resentful, defiant
 - b. Little boy – “I’m standing up inside!”
 - c. Going through the motions does not = a love gift

e. Keys to successful submission

1. Trusting god I Pet. 3:4-5
 - a. “Hoped” = trusted
 - b. Goes back to the organizational chart
 - c. Wife trusts god’s sovereignty over husband’s life
 1. Sees God’s position over him
 2. Realizes, “God’s in charge of my husband. I’m not.”
 3. Trusts God to communicate with her husband, lead him
2. Being honest with husband
 - a. God created wife to be a needed, contributing part of him (completer)
 - b. Must express her opinions, ideas, feelings
 - c. Without honest openness, she can become absorbed by him, become a non-person and not fulfilled in her God-created role

f. Decision time

1. Both make input
2. If the decision “has to be made” and they can’t agree then the husband (leader) makes it
 - a. Major decisions – important to wait until compromise or agreement is reached – both keep going back to God, asking for wisdom, direction
3. Her trust in God kicks in here
 - a. If husband makes a wrong decision

1. She knows God will get through to him through failure
2. If she attempts to head this off it only delays and interferes with what God wants to teach him, work in him
3. She gets out of the way and gives God a clean shot at him
- b. If husband's decision was right
 1. Wife's confidence in God's ability to work in and through her husband increases
4. If wife has disapproval, resentment or anxiety
 - a. She's saying, "God, you really don't know how to handle this as well as I do"
 - c. Often then husband begins making decisions without consulting his wife
 1. Has fear of being a failure in wife's eyes
- g. Two things husbands fear
 1. Being subjugated or ruled over by a woman (opposite of submission)
 2. Being found inadequate (opposite of respect)
- h. God's plan messed up
 1. Adam failed to protect Eve by not speaking words to stop her from acting on her deception; didn't lead
 2. This pattern has followed
 - a. Men don't lead, protect
 - b. Women rule and control
 3. Retreat – Husband's sinful response
 - a. Called to be initiator, provider, protector but retreats
 - b. "I don't think I'm adequate for this. So I back off"
 - c. If you knew how to do it, you wouldn't need God
 - d. Do your homework – on your knees find out where your wife needs cherishing, confrontation, protection, encouragement
 4. Control – Wife's sinful response
 - a. Tries to make husband do the right thing – to "fix him"
 - b. Women desire intimacy, spiritual leadership, cherishing, sharing feelings so they take over and try to make it happen (even if subtly) and it all gets upside down
 - c. Result – he struggles with his wife and never has to deal with God
 - d. Must get the power from God to love him correctly, irrespective of whether he changes or not
 5. Basic reason for the foul-up
 - a. We fear being hurt, want to avoid pain

b. We build strategies for self-protection (the retreat, the control)

6. Respect

a. Husband's second fear (being found inadequate) reflects built-in need for respect from his wife

b. Definition = to be in awe of, lofty in mind

c. Eph. 5:33 (really complete in Amplified)

d. Paula Sanford quote

"I am called to 'see to it' that I respect my husband's position – not to mother, lacerate or emasculate him. I am called to respect him as a person, not only for his admirable qualities, but as one who has problems, feelings and sensitivities that need to be met according to the nature of Christ in me. It is to our benefit if I respect the fact that his experiences and approach to many situations are often different than mine and that I am not always comprehensive or right in my perceptions and understandings"

Healing Women's Emotions, by Paula Sanford

Victory House, Inc. Tulsa, OK,

1992, pg. 26

This does not mean I have to agree with him. It doesn't prevent honest, loving confrontation but it calls me to discipline my heart to maintain attitudes which will affirm my husband in every way possible. It also means to discipline my actions and words to edify, not to undermine or annihilate my husband

e. If you have a problem with this

1. Ask God to show you your husband's strengths

2. Differentiate the position from the personality

a. Respect the office and uniform of a police officer even if he's a personal mess

3. Guard your thoughts

a. Satan's trap – thinking critically, negatively about husband

b. Kills all respect

4. Mentally give your husband the space God gives you

5. Concentrate on things you're grateful for in your husband

f. Seven ways a woman destroys husband's manliness

1. By expecting him to know what you need. (Tell him)

2. By being financially independent
 3. By being more loyal to outside leadership than you are to your husband
 4. By resisting his decisions in your spirit
 5. By reviewing his past failures (destroys his self-worth)
 6. By resisting his physical affections
 7. By taking matters into your own hands
7. Helpmeet Gen. 2:18
- a. Definition = aid, ally, support (partnership implied, not subservience)
 - b. Supporter
 1. Becomes husband's staunchest supporter – publicly and privately
 2. Edify him
 - a. Hit the positives, don't tear down
 3. Voices her appreciation for him
 4. Voices her appreciation for his work (his role as provider)
 5. Encourages him
 6. Boosts, bolsters his morale
 - c. Makes his home a haven
 1. Not a place of strife
 2. A place of acceptance, love
 3. Keeps his home reasonably uncluttered, clean -- physically pleasant
 4. Makes the effort to be attractive, welcoming herself
 - d. Strengthens, develops her relationship with the Lord
 1. So she can give agape
 2. So she can hear God and give input that she's hearing from Him
 - f. Listens to husband and hears him

D. Bottom Line – Eph. 5:21 “Be Subject One to Another”

1. All Christians are directed to submit, serve
2. Husbands and wives
 - a. Each yields his own rights
 - b. Each seeks to discover the other's needs
 - c. Each moves to meet the other's needs

3. In his role of authority the husband
 - a. Submits to his wife's needs, sacrifices himself rather than seeking to have his needs met – love!
 - b. He is subject to her in that way
4. Each must yield to
 - a. The order of authority God established
 - b. His individual responsibility to submit within that order
 - c. To all that God requires of him/her in his/her assigned position

KINDS OF LOVE

A. What is Love?

1. Love isn't
 - a. Some irrational, emotional feeling which you either have or you don't
 - b. An anointing which raises and lowers
2. Love is a choice
 - a. Is an action, a "being" ...not a feeling...a way of acting, thinking
 - b. Is a daily choice (sometimes minute by minute choice)
 - c. Is an individual choice
 1. Irrespective of your mate's actions
 2. Is an error, a cop-out, to wait for your mate to behave lovingly so that you can "love back"
 3. God's question to each individual probably will be, "How did you love?"
 - d. A choice which must be made based upon pure motives
 1. Example of impure motive – "If I act lovingly toward him/her then it will be easier, more pleasant, etc. for me"
3. Love is learned
 - a. Does not come naturally
 1. Our "natural" attitude or action springs from our own self-interest and/or self-protection – the flesh!
 - b. Is not easy, simple
 - c. Must want to learn it – back to choice again!
 - d. It's possible to learn because of God's Spirit within me
 1. I choose, commit, He enables and instructs
 - e. New motivation which must be learned
 1. Always doing the very best for the object of my love
 2. Goes directly against the grain of the "natural" man which screams, "Me, my, mine"
 - f. Requires refusing to live a life dictated by your emotions
 1. Feelings follow actions
 2. What you think, choose to do, will control your behavior
 3. The desired feelings will come as a result of the right thinking and action
4. When we love God's way and through His power we can
 - a. Restore the love in our relationships
 - b. Enrich the love in our relationships

B. Five Aspects of Love in Marriage

1. Agape love
2. Friendship love
3. Romantic love
4. Belonging love
5. Sexual love
 - a. All are necessary for the full expression of love in marriage
 1. Can't pick and choose – have some, not others in the relationship
 - b. Each has its own distinctive place
 - c. Each builds on the others
 1. All are interrelated
 2. Result = the physical, emotional, spiritual processes overlap and reinforce each other in the act of loving
 - d. Self evaluation necessary in marriage
 1. Identify where we are in each aspect (as a couple)
 2. Shore up those which are weak
 - a. Seek God's direction, help
 3. Health is possible in all five regardless of how we rate now
 - a. We choose, discipline ourselves, He enables

Let's examine each aspect of love and what it comprises

C. Agape Love

1. This is the glue that holds marriage together
 - a. Is for the times when we don't even like our partners
 - b. Is the love for the spouses who have no reason to feel love for their partners
2. Is God's solution – the bedrock of all the other loves
 - a. A love fueled by the will – not the emotions
 - b. God supplies the resources for this love
 - c. We can do this because
 1. Holy Spirit within us empowers us
 2. Rom. 5:5b "God's love has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us"

3. Characteristics of agape
 - a. Unconditional
 - b. Unchanging
 - c. Inexhaustible
 - d. Has the capacity to persist in the face of rejection
 - e. Continues on when there's no response at all
 - f. Gives gladly to the undeserving, never totaling the cost
4. What agape is
 - a. Agape love means action, not just a benign attitude
 - b. Agape love means loving unconditionally the
 1. Unlovable
 2. Undeserving
 3. Unresponsive
 - c. Agape love means involvement, not a comfortable detachment for the needs of others
 - d. Agape love means permanent commitment to the object of one's love
5. Benefits when unconditional love becomes part of your marriage
 - a. Your partner's self-image will be greatly enhanced
 1. Feels loved all the time knowing it's not based on performance
 - b. Carries your partner safely through periods of severe stress
 1. If they act unattractive, this is a signal that we need to give more love than ever
6. Questions to ask yourself to find if you love conditionally
 - a. Is my treatment of other people usually based on their behavior?
 - b. Does my partner's performance determine the degree of love I give him/her?
 - c. Do I think that love should be shown only as a reward for good behavior?
 - d. Do I feel that my partner has to change before I can love him/her more?
 - e. Do I think I can improve my partner's behavior by withholding love?
 - f. Am I reacting to other people most of the time?

7. How to love unconditionally
 - a. Make the choice
 - b. Set your will daily, pray asking that His love might flow through you
 - c. Ask the Lord for specifics for that day – attitudes, actions
 - d. Study your mate
 1. Discover what makes him/her feel loved
 2. Discover what he/she needs and desires
 - e. Daily make a specific choice to do loving things for your partner, in addition to what you are
 - f. When you blow it confess and start again
 1. Remember learning to love a new way is a process
8. Read: For you and me, unconditional love involves not merely the heart, but is an act of the will. It says I will love you no matter what...no matter what you do, what you become, what you believe. I will love you. I will accept you. I will make a commitment to you. I may not like what you are doing to yourself. I may not agree with you. I may not believe as you do, but I will accept you and will commit myself to you and your growth. If you need kindness, I will give you kindness. If you need warmth, I will give you warmth. If you need hugging, I will hug you. If you need firmness, I will be firm. Where you need freedom, I will give it to you but I will not seek to control you, dominate you, manipulate you or use you, because I love you.

D. Friendship Love – Becoming Best Friends

1. Friendship can be at its very best in marriage
 - a. Nothing equals having your spouse as your “best buddy”
 - b. You then enjoy each other’s company more than anybody else’s
 - c. Comradeship, rapport are part of it
 - d. Mutual trust is foundational for this love
 - e. This is God’s bonus in marriage – like the prize in the Cracker Jack box
 - f. Communication at the feeling level is essential
 - g. Joy and shared laughter are part of this
2. Lack of best friends’ love in marriage creates
 - a. Emptiness
 - b. Dissatisfaction
3. Must be built – doesn’t automatically occur

- a. Some never bother to develop it
- b. Some had it when dating, early in marriage but haven't maintained it
- c. Can begin building it now
 - 1. If you don't – empty nest syndrome (Kids gone, look at each other and say, "Who are you?")
 - 2. It's a process
 - 3. Guard against building your relationship totally around your children
- 4. Friendship love is a love consisting of emotions, not just an act of the will
 - a. Creating the right conditions brings the right feelings
- 5. How to build friendship love
 - a. Plan togetherness time
 - 1. Share daily time together without interruption from the children
 - b. Learn to be comfortable together
 - 1. Begin with simple, uncomplicated togetherness
 - 2. Find things you can enjoy or be comfortable doing together
 - a. Initially, mutual give and take may be needed to develop common interests
 - c. Learn to trust each other
 - 1. Begin sharing feelings at a non-threatening level
 - 2. Progress to more threatening levels – test the water
 - 3. Never ridicule, never correct, nor negate a feeling shared by your spouse
 - d. Sharpen your communication skills
 - 1. Clarify, use play-back to be sure you are understanding and being understood
 - e. Focus your attention on each other
 - f. Pray for and practice an attitude of acceptance toward your spouse
 - 1. Without this, you'll never have rapport, shared feelings, shared confidences
 - g. Keep all shared confidences, feelings strictly confidential
 - h. Allow yourselves to lean on each other, to be emotionally interdependent on each other
 - 1. Intimacy is only born through risking vulnerability
- 6. Statements characteristic of the beginning of "best buddy" love
 - a. We spend time together
 - b. We have fun together

- c. We share some interests and activities (If you don't, pray that they Lord will create some for the two of you)
- d. We know and like each other
- e. We talk things over
- f. We confide in each other
- g. We call on each other for help
- h. We count on each other's loyalty

E. Romantic Love

1. This is what got us going in the first place
2. Dies automatically after the first 3 to 7 years of marriage if not fed
3. Totally emotional, can't be summoned at will
 - a. Can be learned emotionally – right conditions produce desired emotions
4. How to develop it
 - a. Remove any roadblocks of anger and/or unforgiveness
 - b. Give up mental criticism of mate – practice appreciation
 - c. Maintain respect for your mate
 1. Never allow another to tear him/her down in front of you
 - d. Practice saying good things about your mate to others
 - e. Provide the right climate in which romance can grow (Ideas will follow in a minute!)
 - f. Pattern your actions and attitudes after how you behaved and thought when dating
 1. Look into your spouse's eyes
 2. Hear everything your spouse says (Give it importance just because it's a part of him/her)
 3. Practice courtesy
 4. Give him/her compliments, attentions
 5. Let him/her know that he/she is the most important person in the world to you
 6. Strive to delight the other
 7. Spend as much time alone together as possible
 8. Don't just sit and watch TV
 9. Use lots of non-sexual affectionate touching
 10. Give your personal grooming attention – be desirable
5. The right climate – suggestions
 - a. Romance grows best with two people alone
 - b. Break the usual routine – do something new and unexpected

- 1. When men plan something like this, women love it
- c. Share intimate jokes, notes, etc. (Things no one else knows about)
- d. Go to bed together whenever possible – snuggle!
- e. Share your very personal feelings
 - 1. This intimacy is very important to a woman, enhances romance
- f. Use lots of non-sexual touching as well as sexual
- g. Have a date once a week
- h. Dim lights, soft music, and conversation
- i. Walking on the beach or in the woods
- j. Dinner in an intimate restaurant
- k. Being alone on or near the water
- l. Picnic lunch for two in your living room during children’s naps
- m. Intimate dinner for two after the children are in bed
 - 1. Different eating place from the usual, candlelight
- n. Trade children for overnight
- o. Weekend alone at home
- p. Short trips overnight
- 6. Get the Lord’s help – He wants it for you
 - a. Pray that He will give you both a desire for each other
 - b. Pray for renewal of your minds
 - 1. That He will rid you of old ruts, attitudes, thought patterns
 - c. Pray for newness and life in your relationship
 - d. Ask Him for specific, creative ideas of how you can interject romance into your relationship

F. Belonging Love

- 1. Implies a “couple” viewpoint
 - a. Two against the world
 - b. Like brothers on the playground
 - 1. “For” each other even though we clash in private
 - c. Each has the feeling of coming first with the other
- 2. Five elements of “belonging” type of love
 - a. Practical oneness

1. Every problem is “our” problem whether it directly involves both of us or not
 2. Realize that what hurts one, hurts the other – not two Lone Rangers
- b. Supportive loyalty
1. See each other’s faults yet are always for each other
 2. Imparts security to the marriage
 3. Enables you to jointly withstand outside pressure
- c. Mutual trust
1. Builds until it is so deep that it’s unconscious
 - a. Removes jealousy of other men/women
 - b. Removes fear of your “mother-in-law’s critical influence”
- d. Emotional refuge
1. This is the healing, soothing love of marriage
 2. We are “there” for each other in times of hurt or crisis
 - a. We listen
 - b. We care and comfort
 - c. We serve as a refuge
 - d. All of the above – even though we can’t solve
 3. When “belonging” love is missing in marriage, we seek it from friends, other men/women
 - a. Opens the door for Satan, adultery, etc.
 4. Wrong to “protect” our spouse from negative circumstances in which we find ourselves
- e. Comfortable familiarity
1. Affectionate warmth, “old shoe” feeling
 2. Grows with consistent kindness, loyalty, supportiveness
 3. How to develop it
 - a. Forgive past mistakes...clean up the garbage
 - b. Make a practical decision to be one against the world
 - c. Show consistent kindness in your daily behavior
 - d. Practice agape daily, showing your choice to love
 - e. Make your marriage a place of homecoming

The majority of the information on Kinds of Love was derived from *Love Life* by Ed Wheat, M.D.,
Grand Rapids, Mich., Zondervan Publishing House, 1981

SEXUAL LOVE

A. Introductory Remarks

1. A good sexual relationship = culmination of all other phases of the relationship being strong
2. A marriage may survive without a satisfactory sexual relationship, but it will be vulnerable to
 - a. Frustrations from within
 - b. Attacks from without
3. Sex **not** the most important aspect of your relationship, but sex **is** a barometer of the health of your marriage
 - a. Tension in any other area of your relationship shows up in sex life
 - b. In-bed relationship only as strong as your out-of-bed relationship
 - c. Strong communication at the feeling level impacts positively here
 - d. Romantic love fuels sexual love
4. Can't just "let it happen"
 - a. Requires effort, action, mutual building – just as all other phases
 - b. If sexual love is neglected, mismanaged
 1. You will never reach the tangible oneness, emotional oneness God intended
 2. You will never achieve sexual intimacy

B. Sexual Intimacy

1. God placed within the sexual relationship the potential for sexual intimacy
 - a. We often settle for a sorry substitute, just the sexual act
2. Can have highly successful sex (technically speaking) and no intimacy
3. This results in even greater loneliness and anxiety
 - a. Temporary joining of bodies doesn't fill the deeper need
 - b. We each have a need for soul-to-soul closeness, sharing
 - c. Each act of intercourse should renew and reaffirm intimacy that is there
4. Sexual intimacy has the power to
 - a. Heal
 - b. Renew
 - c. Refresh
 - d. Restore
 - e. Sustain

5. All of the other intimacies (friendship, sharing, etc.) feed and build this one
 - a. They create the climate in which sexual intimacy can happen
6. Lovemaking, when sexually intimate, is
 - a. Caring c. Intimate e. Close
 - b. Strong d. Tender
7. When love making is not sexually intimate
 - a. Is a physical release for our bodies
 - b. Is, or can be, pleasant
 - c. Misses the boat emotionally
8. Building blocks for true sexual intimacy (must be used continuously)
 - a. Non-sexual affectionate touching
 - b. Shared feelings
 - c. Shared laughter
 - d. Mutual trust
9. Hindrances to sexual intimacy
 - a. Habit of criticism of your spouse
 - b. Bottled up anger and resentment
 1. Claim of marital boredom -- a mask which hides rage, resentment never openly expressed
 2. Repressed emotions lean to resentment. Resentment leads to indifference
Indifference = marital boredom
 - c. Failure to communicate
 - d. Lack of trust in either partner
 1. One holds back from intimacy due to fear
 2. Fear generated from hurt in past close relationships
 3. Fear generated from poor self image (I have nothing to give)
 - e. Anxiety about your physical appearance, your body Ps. 139:14
 - f. "Spectatoring" during lovemaking
 1. So anxious to perform well sexually that constantly rate, grade, observe yourself
 2. Solution = switch your attention to pleasuring your partner and enjoying the ways your partner pleases you
 - g. De-emphasizing the value of sex
 1. Attitude of "so what's the big deal...it's just sex"

- h. Predictable, mechanical sex
 - 1. Is a sign of a very dull relationship or a dying one
 - 2. Solution
 - a. Emotionally prepare yourself for lovemaking
 - b. Vary times, places, approaches for sex
 - c. Emphasize sensuousness, tenderness
 - d. Avoid technique which is goal-oriented to quick orgasm

- i. Lack of sensitivity

Example: Husband demands sex right after an unresolved argument with the children playing in the next room and a neighbor at the front door
 Wife interrupts husband's passionate lovemaking to go take the meat out of the freezer or check on a sleeping child

- j. Absence of non-sexual physical touching

- 1. Too often, after marriage, physical touching is used only as a sexual signal

- k. Too much television

- 1. Promotes passivity

10. Sensuousness – a tool for sexual intimacy

- a. Very important in the enjoyment of sex
- b. Almost every square inch of the body has the ability to become erotic
 - 1. Exploring this with each other increases the sense of intimacy
- c. Husband learning sensuousness may find sex can be much more
 - 1. Leisurely
 - 2. With longer, greater enjoyment than he imagined
- d. For a man sensuousness requires the capacity to enjoy tenderness
 - 1. Some men think tenderness is not masculine
 - 2. Men have much to learn in this aspect of intimacy
 - 3. Need to learn that sensuousness, tenderness can melt a woman

11. How to relate sexually as lovers

- a. Husband: is tender, caring, shows strength and confidence, expresses his feelings during lovemaking without inhibition

Wife: responds to his approach of tenderness and caring, thrilled by his slow, sensuous approach, lets him know that this excites her

- b. Lovers avoid dull routine in their sex life
 - 1. Sometimes their sex is fun
 - 2. Sometimes intensely passionate
 - 3. Sometimes leisurely and tender
- c. Lovers enjoy each other out of the bedroom
 - 1. Spend enjoyable time alone together
 - 2. Build the romance factors
- d. Lovers have as their goal – giving the other one pleasure mutual enjoyment

12. Miscellaneous

- a. Put a lock on your bedroom door
- b. Communicate
 - 1. During lovemaking talk to each other, not just bodies operating
 - 2. When not lovemaking tell each other what you like, dislike
 - a. Be lovingly honest
- c. I Cor. 7:2-5
 - 1. Attitude all-important
 - a. Some women adopt martyr attitude “I never refused him”
 - 2. When it’s not an issue discuss woman’s occasional time of not being impassioned but enjoying giving to her husband and loving him quietly – again, attitude is key
 - a. cop-out to “use” this
- d. Frequency
 - 1. Study of 5000 couples – average two or three times a week
 - 2. Each couple is different – no rules!
- e. Grooming very important
 - 1. Shower, shave – shows love, respect, anticipation of closeness

C. Physiological Information on Lovemaking

- 1. First Stage – Foreplay or Excitement
 - a. Time of sexual stimulation called foreplay
 - b. Most effective touching in this early phase is gentle caressing of all the body
 - 1. Not just breasts, genital areas
 - c. Should not be rushed
 - 1. Lust and self-gratification only are done in haste

- d. Never interrupt or stop this phase after you have begun
 - 1. Can kill all arousal or stimulation emotionally and physically
 - 2. Too long a hug or any period of stillness can kill the wife's arousal
 - e. Soft lighting, candles, soft music greatly enhance this stage
 - 1. Very important for the man to be able to see his wife. His primary stimulation is visual
 - 2. Woman is emotionally stimulated by the romantic effects
 - f. Adequate time spent in this stage by husband is necessary to bring wife to full arousal
 - 1. Woman physically made to arouse more slowly
 - 2. Man moves to the second stage one to two minutes after his initial erection
 - 3. Man – microwave
Woman – crock pot
2. Second Stage – Plateau
- a. Time of greatly increased excitement
 - b. Control necessary for the man
 - 1. Reaches this stage earlier than the woman
 - 2. For his own maximum pleasure from his orgasm, he needs to remain in this stage from 10 to 20 minutes
 - 3. This control gives the wife more arousal which benefits the husband too
 - a. In this stage, the lower vagina decreases in diameter 50 per cent in preparation for gripping the penis
 - b. Little contact vaginally if intercourse before this point
3. Third Stage – Climax
- a. Women generally have multiple orgasms
 - b. Getting a woman aroused then not giving her the opportunity for orgasm causes
 - 1. Physical tension in the pelvic area – blood rushes there
 - 2. Frustration which can lead to bitterness
4. Fourth Stage – Afterglow or Resolution
- a. Equally as important as the other three stages
 - b. Very important emotionally
 - c. Lovers remain close, share this time with each other
 - 1. Time for cuddling
 - 2. Time to express appreciation to your spouse for his/her lovemaking
 - 3. Time for relaxed, intimate conversation

- d. Physiologically the woman needs this stage
 - 1. Hers is a slow wind-down
- e. Men need to adapt here

The source for most of the material covered under Sexual Love was taken from *Intended for Pleasure* by Ed. Wheat, M.D. and Gaye Wheat (Old Tappan, N.J., Fleming H. Revell Co., 1977)

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION FOR WOMEN ONLY GROUP

A. Painful Intercourse

1. Lowered estrogen level while nursing or immediately after pregnancy causes thinning of vaginal wall which results in painful intercourse
2. Estrogen drop during menopause has same result
3. Solution
 - a. Topical application of KY jelly before intercourse
 - b. Severe cases – once or twice a day place estrogen cream up inside vagina

B. Lubrication

1. Use of KY jelly can greatly enhance pleasurable sensations of manual stimulation of the clitoris, penis

C. Manual Stimulation

1. Researchers found that one third of women almost always require manual stimulation of the clitoris by the husband in order to reach orgasm
2. Very helpful in maintaining husband's erection
 - a. The underside of the penis just below the head is a particularly sensitive spot – responds well to stimulation

D. P.C. Muscle Strengthening

1. Excellent way to tighten vaginal contact with the penis
2. Strengthening exercises outlined clearly in *Act of Marriage* by Tim and Beverly LaHaye

E. Oral Sex

1. Bible is silent on the topic
2. Whatever is done in the act of lovemaking must be mutually agreeable
3. Tim LaHaye's and Ed Wheat's position on the topic (ours too)
 - a. Arrived at after interviewing, surveying Christian marriage counselors, ministers, Christian couples
 - b. If mutually agreeable, oral stimulation during foreplay and/or plateau is all right
 - c. The oral expression should not take the place of vaginal intercourse
 1. Why would God have designed the intricacies of the anatomy as He did if we were not to have intercourse vaginally?
 2. Contraction of the vaginal wall preparatory to gripping the penis indicates His provision for vaginal intercourse
4. Oral-genital sex definitely limits the amount of loving verbal communication that a husband and wife can have as they make love

5. Man and woman are the only two of God's creatures that become one face to face

F. Communicate With Your Husband Regarding What Delights, Excites You

1. Also clue him verbally or non-verbally during the lovemaking process as to where you are in your level of excitement
2. Don't expect him to be a mind reader

G. Unequal Sexual Drives Between Husband and Wife

1. When you lack desire during lovemaking use flash prayers asking the Lord to make you responsive, create desire within you

H. What Lovemaking Means to a Man (Why It Is Vitaly Significant to Him)

1. It satisfies his sex drive
 - a. His is strong, continual
 - b. It affects his work, motivation, personality
2. It fulfills his manhood
 - a. His sex drive is linked to his ego
 - b. A sexually satisfied man develops self-confidence in other areas
 - c. He can endure occupational failures, social failures if he and wife relate well in the bedroom
 - d. A gift we can give him
 1. When he's down, been put down, etc. be the initiator for sex
 2. Conveys that he's the most important person in the world to you, right here and now
 3. Conveys that you love him for himself, not for what he does
3. It enhances his love for his wife
 - a. Provides the only conscience-free way for a Christian man to satisfy his strong sex drive
 - b. If a man has a Cadillac in the garage, he's not going to steal a VW off the street
4. Reduces friction in the home
 - a. A sexually satisfied man usually is a contented man
5. Provides him with life's most exciting experience for a man
 - a. Sky divers, race car drivers, pro ball players, etc. rated this at the top of list of life's most exhilarating experiences
6. A warm, responsive wife is a great asset in keeping his thought life pleasing to God

I. Low Level of Desire for Sex with Your Husband

1. Check to see if you have buried anger, bitterness or unforgiveness within you
2. Check your attitudes regarding sex

- a. Have you been programmed that sex is dirty, sinful, etc.?
- b. Do you feel used in your sexual relationship?
- c. These attitudes may need healing, prayer
 - 1. Examine what the Word says regarding sex (God's attitude toward it)
- 3. Realize that your attitudes can change because of the enabling power of God within you
- 4. Feelings follow actions
 - a. Begin to say, be and do what you know is right in God's eyes in your sexual relationship with your husband
- 5. Tips for making sex more positive and enjoyable for you
 - a. Use the tool of anticipation
 - 1. Thoughts produce feelings
 - 2. Feelings produce behavior
 - b. Think positively during intercourse
 - 1. "this is pleasing to my body"
 - 2. "This is pleasing to me"
 - 3. "God created this for me"
 - 4. "I am going to feel wonderful sensations"
 - 5. "I want to delight and give love to my husband with my body as well as with my emotions"
 - c. Concentrate during lovemaking
 - 1. Don't let your mind wander – stay focused
 - d. Be active, not passive
 - 1. Caress your husband
 - 2. Abandon yourself to pursuing release
 - e. Break routine sex patterns

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION FOR MEN ONLY GROUP

A. Focus for Husbands

1. God's design for sexual love in marriage is real, obtainable
2. God's way produces the highest degree of closeness
 - a. Not just physically – emotionally and spiritually too
3. If you are focused solely toward physical closeness, you are missing the boat

B. Husband as Sexual Leader

1. Doesn't mean that he is always the initiator
2. Women are designed to be responders
3. Husband can, and should, set the tone of the lovemaking
 - a. Must realize his wife's need for sensuousness – her need to be
 1. Held
 2. Touched
 3. Caressed – not just in the genital area and breasts

C. Mutuality

1. Remember – is a mutual coming together
2. Provides exchange of love, pleasure and physical release for both
3. Husband must adapt to wife's slower physiological makeup
 - a. Lovemaking done in haste reflects self gratification and/or lust

D. How to Be a Lover

1. Must be learned by men – doesn't come naturally
2. Specifics
 - a. Concentrate on wife's pleasure
 - b. Practice self-control – avoid premature ejaculation
 1. Premature ejaculation definition = husband ejaculates before entering his wife's vagina or ejaculates immediately after entry thereby not allowing enough time for his wife to be physically satisfied (In short, he arrives at ejaculation before he wishes to do so)
 2. See pg. 90-99 in *Intended For Pleasure* by Ed Wheat, M.D. for explanation and control exercises
 - c. Communicate freely
 1. When not making love discuss together what brings each of you pleasure
 - d. Don't hurry – your own pleasure will be greater

E. Disinterested Wife

1. Examine the whys
 - a. Wounded spirit
 - b. Seldom brought to orgasm
 - c. Rest of relationship is unhealthy
 - d. Baggage from her past
 - e. It's "just sex" – no intimacy emotionally
2. Examine your role
 - a. Am I being self-oriented in our sexual interaction?
 - b. Am I operating out of lust?
 - c. Am I giving attention to our total relationship – not just the sexual?

F. Some Hindrances to Wifely Interest in Sex

1. No sharing of feelings (across the board)
2. No affirmation of wife
3. Poor technique in lovemaking
4. Husband's sexual demands may be excessive
5. No romance in the relationship
6. Absence of non-sexual physical touching
7. Little out-of-bed relating in intimacy

G. Manual Stimulation

1. Researchers found that one third of women almost always require manual stimulation of the clitoris by the husband in order to reach orgasm
2. Use of KY jelly may be helpful, pleasant in manual stimulation

H. Oral Sex

1. Bible is silent on the topic
2. Whatever is done in the act of lovemaking must be mutually agreeable
3. Tim LaHaye's and Ed Wheat's position on the topic (ours too)
 - a. Arrived at after interviewing, surveying Christian marriage counselors, ministers, Christian couples
 - b. If mutually agreeable, oral stimulation during foreplay and/or plateau is alright
 - c. The oral expression should not take the place of vaginal intercourse

1. Why would God have designed the intricacies of the anatomy as He did if we were not to have intercourse vaginally?
2. Contraction of the vaginal wall preparatory to gripping the penis indicates His provision for vaginal intercourse
4. Oral-genital sex definitely limits the amount of loving verbal communication that a husband and wife can have as they make love
5. Man and woman are the only two of God's creatures that become one face to face

TOTAL GROUP EXERCISES

A. Objectives

1. Self examination
2. Self revelation to spouse
3. Group sharing and rapport building
4. Increasing transparency within the group
5. Information gathering for the leaders

B. Procedure

1. Each individual is given a copy of the exercise
2. Each individual marks his answers on the exercise sheet. Instruct the participants to mark the first response which comes to their minds.
3. The group leader reads the first question aloud
4. Each individual shares his answer to the first question with the total group (go around the circle, not on a volunteer basis)
5. Leader reads the second question aloud...and so on
6. On exercises where scripture references are given encourage members to look these up at home and make personal application

SMALL GROUP EXERCISE – 1ST MEETING

(Five People Per Group Maximum)

All members of the small group answer the first question verbally, beginning with the appointed leader for the small group. The leader sets the tone for openness, self-revelation and more than one-word answers.

After all members have answered the first question then all go around and answer the second question, etc.

The leader can draw out the other members with questions, comments directed toward the individual responding to the question.

1. In my spare time I like to...
2. Something which really annoys me is...
3. The person I was closest to in my parental family was...why?
4. The way in which I came to know the Lord was...

MARRIAGE INVENTORY

Rating Scale: 1 – Never
2 – Seldom
3 – Sometimes
4 – Usually
5 – Always

Please circle your rating to the questions below.

- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you enjoy spending time alone with your spouse?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you tell your mate what you're really feeling (not just what you're thinking)?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you know where your mate is spiritually?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Does your mate know where you are spiritually?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do the two of you have things which you enjoy doing together?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you and/or your mate place limits upon subjects which you can discuss openly and honestly together?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Is your sexual relationship rich, fulfilling and intimate?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Are there subjects about which you repeatedly argue?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you feel that you rank first in importance with your spouse?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you feel that you and your mate are romantic with each other?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you and your mate agree about how your money should be managed?

BECOMING ONE GROUP CONTRACT

I. Group Objectives

- A. To facilitate open and fruitful communication within the marriage context (Eph. 4:15,29)
- B. To assist couples in finding solutions to specific areas of conflict (Heb. 10: 24-25)
- C. To foster personal and spiritual growth
- D. To encourage interaction between couples within the group on an intimate level

II. Requirements

A. Attendance and Punctuality

Each couple is expected to attend every meeting. Two “unexcused absences” will be considered withdrawal from the group. An “unexcused absence” can be earned in the following ways:

- 1. By missing a meeting for any reason other than
 - a. death (your own)
 - b. car explosion
 - c. giving birth
 - d. infectious (deadly) disease
- 2. Failure to complete homework assignments – one third absence
- 3. Tardiness – one third absence
- 4. A bad attitude regarding 1,2, and 3 (just kidding)

Perfect attendance, punctuality and homework completion have their own reward!

B. Confidentiality

Issues, words, situations, etc. which are brought up in this group are privileged information. The only person allowed to talk about someone’s personal data is the person himself/herself – even among members. Without this commitment of confidentiality an atmosphere of trust will never be established.

C. A Willingness to Work

This means each person must be willing to open up and share and to participate in the total group experience. If you are here as a spectator you will neither be significantly helped nor will you be able to help anyone else.

III. Assignments

- A. Book Each couple is urged to obtain a copy of *Love Life* by Ed Wheat, M.D. Various concepts from this book will be discussed and practiced.

- B. Notebook It is helpful to bring your notebook to each meeting to record insights gained, areas you want to work on, assignments given and reflections on yourself or your marriage. This notebook will also be used in the completion of your homework.
- C. Homework Each couple will be expected to complete together daily homework assignments. The assignments will require a minimum of 20 minutes per day. Each day's assignments should be completed on the day assigned, not lumping two or three days' work into one day. Each couple will be held accountable for their homework and will report back to the group as to problems encountered in doing it or insights gained in completing it.

IV. Ground Rules

A. Sharing

In sharing from your joys or problems within the marriage relationship, please be specific; don't ramble. If you have a problem in an area share it with the group. It is necessary to get the problem areas out into the open for healing but we won't stay there. The emphasis of the group will be a positive one. Be patient with others. Their problem may not be yours but we all need to listen in order to support one another as solutions are explored.

B. No Hitting Below The Belt

Our goal would never be to injure our partner or someone else in the group. Honesty is essential and not everything we say may be flattering, but our goal must be to work toward a resolution of the problem, not merely to perpetuate the problem or to get others on our side.

C. Honesty

This does not mean everything you say will be completely accurate all the time, but you will be expected to "tell it as you see it." Sometimes our perceptions get distorted; that we can't always change. We must be as accurate as possible. Lying will not benefit anyone.

D. Exemption

If a question is too painful or an activity is too threatening you don't have to answer or participate. Exemptions from activities should be held to a minimum.

E. Openness

I will strive to reveal who I am – my hopes, hurts, background, joys and struggles – as well as I am able. I'll share a story not a sermon. I can help others more by risking to be known and telling what is real in me than when I repeat a teaching I heard from someone else.

F. Prayer

During the course of this group I will pray for the other members and bask in the confidence that they are praying for me.

Signed _____

COMMUNICATION FOCUS SHEET

Rating Scale 1 = Never

2 = Seldom

3 = Sometimes

4 = Usually

5 = Always

Circle your rating to the questions below.

1. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you find it difficult to talk to your spouse without quarrelling or bickering? (Prov. 20:3)
2. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you honestly try to understand your spouse's opinion when communicating? (Prov. 14:6)
3. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you ever sever communication with your spouse by using the "silent treatment?" (Prov. 12:25 & 15:23)
4. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you take the time you need to have meaningful communication with your spouse? (Eph. 4:1-3)
5. 1 2 3 4 5 Are you ever nasty or sarcastic in your remarks to your spouse? (Eph. 4:15)
6. 1 2 3 4 5 In communication with your spouse, do you find yourself dwelling on your reply rather than listening to your spouse? (Phil. 2:3-4)
7. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you ever hold back from communicating because of a "what's the use" or "why bother" attitude? (Eph. 4:2-3)
8. 1 2 3 4 5 While communicating with your spouse do you have a tendency to jump to conclusions? (Prov. 29:20)
9. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you accept constructive criticism from your mate without becoming defensive? (Prov. 12:18)
10. 1 2 3 4 5 Are you afraid or embarrassed to tell your spouse how you really feel? (1 John 4:18)
11. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you interrupt your spouse? (Prov. 29:20)
12. 1 2 3 4 5 Can you and your spouse discuss differing viewpoints, values, priorities, etc., without getting irritated or upset? (Phil. 2:3-4)

LISTENING

Directions: The **YES** response is to be used when the question can be answered as **generally so**
The **NO** response is to be used when the answer is **seldom or never**

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| 1. | In conversation with your partner do you listen more than you talk? | YES | NO |
| 2. | In dealing with your partner do you have a tendency to jump to conclusions (without having all the facts)? | YES | NO |
| 3. | Are you aware of how you are feeling and reacting to what he/she is saying? | YES | NO |
| 4. | When you have a misunderstanding do you consider that your partner could be right? | YES | NO |
| 5. | In conversation do you let your partner finish talking before reacting to what he/she says? | YES | NO |
| 6. | Do you find yourself not paying attention while in conversation with your partner? | YES | NO |
| 7. | Do you try to notice the nonverbal communication and body language of your partner? | YES | NO |
| 8. | In a discussion is it hard for you to see things from his/her point of view? | YES | NO |
| 9. | In conversation can you tell the difference between what your partner is saying (words) and what he/she may be feeling? | YES | NO |
| 10. | Do you pretend you are listening to your partner when actually you are not really listening? | YES | NO |
| 11. | Do you try not to over respond to criticism or to emotionally charged words? | YES | NO |
| 12. | Is your mind made up as to what you are going to say before your partner is finished talking? | YES | NO |
| 13. | In a disagreement with your partner do you paraphrase or feed back what you think he/she is saying? | YES | NO |
| 14. | Do you allow enough time for listening to your partner? | YES | NO |
| 15. | Are you impatient when listening to your partner? | YES | NO |

EVALUATION

1. Atmosphere in the group:
 - a. Tense
 - b. Relaxed
 - c. Inhibiting
 - d. Accepting
 - e. Other _____
2. Balance between teaching and participation:
 - a. Too much teaching
 - b. Not enough teaching
 - c. More discussion needed
 - d. More 1 on 1 exercises needed
 - e. Good balance achieved
 - f. Other _____
3. Leader Evaluation:
 - a. Rate the leaders' effectiveness as facilitators
(1 is terrible, 10 superb)

2	4	6	8	10	
1	3	5	7	9	
 - b. Please make any comments you feel might benefit the leaders regarding performance (areas to improve, what you like or dislike about their leadership, etc.)
4. Do you feel as though you are being heard in the group? YES NO
If not, why? _____
5. Do you feel threatened by the leaders? YES NO
If yes, why? _____

6. Do you feel that you can presently trust the group enough to open up and share honestly?

YES NO

7. Have you really opened up to the group? YES NO

a. If not, why?

(1) I'm afraid of rejection

(2) I'm afraid people will violate my confidence

(3) I've never been too good at opening up, period

(4) Other_____

8. Do you feel accepted by the group? YES NO

9. What areas would you like to discuss which have not yet been covered?

10. Any other comments you'd like to make? Feel free! It's your golden opportunity!

HANDLING ANGER EFFECTIVELY

(Go to Curriculum File-Advanced Marriage-Charts File)

ANGER AND ARGUING FOCUS SHEET

Rating Scale: 1 = Never
2 = Seldom
3 = Sometimes
4 = Usually
5 = Always

Please circle your rating to the questions below.

1. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you take out your aggressions and frustrations on other people and inanimate objects when angry? (Prov. 29:11)
2. 1 2 3 4 5 When you start to disagree with your spouse do you become defensive and evasive?
3. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you find yourself blowing up at your spouse when you argue or become angry? (Prov. 14:29)
4. 1 2 3 4 5 When you argue with your spouse do you find yourself going to bed angry? (Eph. 4:26-27)
5. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you find yourself arguing over little things? (Eph. 4:1-3)
6. 1 2 3 4 5 If your spouse verbally attacks, criticizes or blames you do you respond in the same manner? (Prov. 15:1, I Pet. 3:9)
7. 1 2 3 4 5 Do you find yourself accusing harshly when you argue? (Eph. 4:29)
8. 1 2 3 4 5 When you argue do you bring up past "sins" which were supposedly forgiven? (Phil. 3:13, Prov. 17:9)
9. 1 2 3 4 5 When you argue do you find yourself losing control and saying things you wish you hadn't? (Prov. 21:23)
10. 1 2 3 4 5 When you argue do you threaten separation or divorce? (Prov. 29:20)
11. 1 2 3 4 5 When you argue do you find yourself attacking your spouse's character instead of the problem? (Prov. 15:28)
12. 1 2 3 4 5 After an argument with your spouse in which you were wrong do you ask for forgiveness? (Prov. 28:13, James 5:16)
13. 1 2 3 4 5 When a problem arises and you become angry do you leave the room or refuse to talk? (Eph. 4:27)
14. 1 2 3 4 5 When you argue do you find yourself just trying to win the fight by proving you're right? (Phil. 2:3-4)

LEARNING TO TALK ABOUT SEX

(Go to Curriculum file-Advanced Marriage-Charts File)

ONE-ON-ONE EXERCISES

A. Objectives

1. To provide an instrument for personal application of subject matter being taught
2. To promote sharing of feelings between husband and wife

B. Procedures

1. Each individual is given a copy of the exercise.
2. Upon receiving their copies each couple draws aside to a "secluded" area within the room, turning their chairs to sit facing each other knee to knee
3. Each formulates their answers to the questions. It is optional as to whether or not the answers are written.
4. When both are ready each shares their answer to the first question. Discussion may follow.
5. Each then shares their answer to the second question, etc.

MALE AND FEMALE COMMUNICATION INVENTORIES

(Go to Curriculum File-Advanced Marriage-Charts File)

ACCEPTANCE (INDIVIDUAL EXERCISE)

Pray, asking the Lord to show you how He sees you in relationship to your spouse. Ask Him to show you the specific ways or areas in which you are unaccepting of your spouse.

List them below.

Now, ask God's forgiveness for each specific.

Ask the Lord to renew you mind regarding each of these specifics.

EXPECTATIONS

Write down five partially or totally unfulfilled expectations which you have for your husband/wife. These should be things which you desire him or her to do or to be which you have perhaps hinted at, not verbalized to him/her but assumed that any "good" or "sensitive" husband/wife would do or be.

Exchange your lists. Read them.

Pray together, asking the Lord to show you which of these are valid expectations, which are unrealistic.

Now discuss them together. Beware of self-defensiveness!

Keep your partner's list for future reference...and action!

AFFIRMATION

List below all of the traits, qualities, characteristics and habits which you admire and respect in your spouse.

MEDITATION ON COVENANT

Our relationship with God is based on covenant. It is vital that we understand and practice covenant relationship with Him. Review and meditate upon what you have learned about covenant.

Are you practicing covenant relationship?

When two people entered into covenant they did several things. First, they exchanged robes indicating the putting on of one another.

Have you put on Jesus Christ?

Are you allowing Him to transform you into His likeness?

Second, they exchanged belts, the symbol of strength.

Are you allowing Christ to be your strength and ability?

Or are you walking in independence, secure in your own abilities?

Third, they exchanged weapons which meant that they took on each other's enemies.

Are you standing against the enemies of God?

Or does the world welcome you with open arms because you have adopted its' philosophies and standards?

The covenant relationship was to take preeminence over all other relationships.

Is there anyone or anything in your life that is more important than Jesus Christ is?

Who or what consumes your time and energy?

Jesus Christ, the unblemished Lamb, has been slain; the veil of His flesh has been ripped in two.

Have you walked between the pieces?

Have you walked into death – death to self, death to independent living, death to your rights?

After having walked through the pieces the covenant partners cut their flesh and allowed their blood to mingle, signifying that the two had become one. The members of your body are now the members of Christ.

Is Christ pleased with everything that His members are participating in?

The covenant partners then gave each other the blessing; the total resources of one were at the disposal of the other.

Are you looking to God to supply all your needs?

A foreign substance was then rubbed into the cut so that a permanent mark remained to be a reminder of the covenant agreement. Jesus Christ bears the marks of covenant in His body as a constant reminder of you. He will never leave you nor forsake you, and nothing is able to separate you from His love.

The covenant partners then exchanged names.

Are you bringing honor to the name of Christ?

Have you counted the cost of entering into covenant?

Are you willing to walk into death?

Are you willing to totally surrender so that you are no longer your own?

Are you willing to be completely submitted to your covenant partner, Jesus Christ?

Are you willing to live by the difficult statements of your Lord?

“Take, eat; this is My body” (Matt. 26:26b)

“Drink from it,...for this is My blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.” (Matt. 26:17b-28)

The above is taken from *Your Day and Mine, a Devotional Study Guide* by Kay Arthur, pg. 33, March 1990, published by Precept Ministries, Chattanooga, TN.

DECISION MAKING

First read through statements (a) through (f) below.

- (a) I like my spouse to take the lead and make decisions in this area
- (b) I let my spouse make decisions in this area but often resent it and subtly resist it.
- (c) My spouse makes decisions in this area. I go along with it but sometimes suffer and feel that I'm sacrificing.
- (d) We mutually reach a decision with good give and take.
- (e) I assert my opinions in this area but I can compromise.
- (f) I assert my opinions in this area but have a difficult time when compromise is required.

Below is a list of decisions that commonly get made in marriages. Next to each decision place the letter corresponding to the statement above which is most suited to how you feel about the way the decision gets made in your marriage.

- _____ Choosing what leisure activity to do together
- _____ Deciding how often we clean our home
- _____ Making major purchases for our home – like furniture, dishwasher, etc.
- _____ Making major purchases for outside our home – like cars, lawn mowers, etc.
- _____ Deciding when and how often we have sex
- _____ Deciding how often to see our extended families
- _____ Deciding how much money we save
- _____ Deciding how often to entertain friends and family
- _____ Deciding where to live
- _____ Deciding how to celebrate special occasions like birthdays and holidays
- _____ Choosing gifts and cards for family members
- _____ Deciding on methods of disciplining our children
- _____ Other (please identify the area)

If you feel satisfied with the way the decision is handled in your marriage place a check next to it on the list.

Circle each decision not being handled to your satisfaction.

AGAPE LOVE

1. I feel most accepted by you when...

2. I feel least accepted by you in the area of...(Explain)

3. I would really feel that you unconditionally loved me if...

BELONGING LOVE

1. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being lousy and 5 being great, I would rate your belonging love as a _____.

(Explain)

2. As I see it we could improve our rating by...

ROMANTIC LOVE

1. When we were dating it always made me feel special when you...

2. Three things which seem romantic to me are:

FRIENDSHIP LOVE

1. (a) I would really feel that we were best friends if...

[or if you already feel that you are best friends then answer (b) instead]

(b) I feel that we are best friends because...

2. List any activities which you and your spouse enjoy doing together. Jointly choose one of these to do together this week.

3. List new interests or activities which you think you might develop together. Share your ideas with your mate.

4. Pray together right now asking the Lord to give you new mutual interests or things which you might have fun doing together.

SEXUAL LOVE – II

1. If I could prescribe two things which to me would make our sexual encounters more than just a physical experience they would be...
2. If I'm honest I think my attitudes about sex have been colored by...
3. "Out of bed" things which, for me, enhance our sexual relationship are...

SEXUAL LOVE – III

1. Two things which you do when we make love which especially please or satisfy me are...

2. One thing which you do in our sexual relationship which I do not particularly like or enjoy is...(Explain why you do not like or enjoy if you can.)

3. I most like to make love when...

I least like to make love when...

SEXUAL LOVE – IV

1. Write out the answer to the following:

My scenario of our lovemaking as I would like to experience it from beginning to end including exactly what I would like you to do is as follows:

FIRST WEEK

First day

I've always wanted to...

Second day

If I'm objective I can see the negative influence of my parents on some of my attitudes. Two of those parentally affected attitudes of mine which I'd like to change are...(Explain how you feel that your parents have negatively affected your attitudes in these areas.)

Third day

I feel most fulfilled when...

Fourth day

When we were dating, the times I enjoyed most were when...

Fifth day

The best childhood vacation or trip I had was... (Tell why it stands out in your mind.)

Sixth day

As a teenager I remember feeling...

Seventh day

Two things which I wish we could do together are... (Tell why you would like to do these.)

SECOND WEEK

First day

If I could change two things about myself they would be...

Second day

One thing about you that I'd never want to change is...(Go into detail as to why.)

Third day

To me, the best thing about our marriage is...(Tell why you feel that way.)

Fourth day

I'm most selfish in the area of

Fifth day

I feel most afraid when...

Sixth day

The saddest time I remember as a child is...

Seventh day

The biggest stumbling block for me in leading a Christian life is...

THIRD WEEK

First day

I feel angry when you...

Second day

Three things which I need from you are...(Explain why.)

Third day

I feel hurt or unloved when you...

Fourth day

As a child I always wished that...

Fifth day

I like it when you...

Sixth day

I'm most unsure of myself in the area of...(Explain.)

Seventh day

When I look at myself I see that I, as a wife or husband, fail most frequently in the area of...

FOURTH WEEK

First day

I most often become angry when we're communicating about...I think this is because...

Second day

When I'm depressed or "down" what I need from you is...(Go into detail.)

Third day

Sometimes I have trouble sharing with you what I feel about...because...

Fourth day

When you are flirtatious with me I...

Fifth day

In our marriage I am happiest when...

Sixth day

In our marriage I am saddest when...

Seventh day

In my opinion our marriage would be strengthened if...

FIFTH WEEK

First day

Some defense mechanisms (masks) which I use are...

Second day

How do I feel right now about myself?

Third day

I feel I need your help specifically in...

Fourth day

Do I see and accept you as you really are? (Explain in detail.)

Fifth day

Do you see and accept me as I really am? (Explain in detail.)

Sixth day

When we really can't share an interest I feel...

Seventh day

I am most full of self-doubt when...

SIXTH WEEK

First day

My most sensitive feeling area right now is...

Second day

Two things which I enjoy about you are...

Third day

When there's no time for making love...

Fourth day

I feel upset when you...

Fifth day

The feelings which I can most easily share with you are...(Explain why.)

Sixth day

Write out a simple list of your own personal rules for communication with your spouse. Write them in first person singular (I will... I will not...) Share your lists with each other.

Seventh day

My greatest concern/fear for our marriage is...

SEVENTH WEEK

First day

I am least open to listening to you in the area of... (Explain.)

Second day

Some things about you which I have trouble understanding are...

Third day

Three specific instances when I felt closest to you are...

Fourth day

On a scale of 1 to 10 I would rate our spiritual unity a _____ (one being totally out of touch with each other and/or poles apart and ten being flowing together with like focus and openness with each other.)
Some things which I feel we could do to improve it are...

Fifth day

I most need to reach out to you in the areas of...

Sixth day

Wife: Scripture says that I am to respect you and submit to you. Of these, the one which gives me the greater problem is... (Explain.)

Husband: Scripture says that I am to love, lead, nourish, cherish and live with you with understanding. Of these, the one which gives the most problem is ... (Explain.)

Seventh day

I feel that as a result of this group we are growing in regard to... I challenge myself to continue that growth by pledging to you that I will...

EIGHTH WEEK

First day

Two things I appreciate about you lately are... (Explain.)

Second day

In the next few weeks it would help our relationship if...

Third day

Our communication breaks down when...

Fourth day

Currently my greatest spiritual struggle is...

Fifth day

I am incomplete without you. I especially recognize this in the following areas: (Tell the specific ways in which you need your spouse.)

Sixth day

To me, spiritual intimacy for us would be... (Describe specifically what its' ingredients would be.)

Seventh day

Three specifics in which I most need to change are... (Explain how these changes would strengthen our marriage relationship.)

NINTH WEEK

First day

How do I feel when I know I am sharing only "safe" feelings with you?

Second day

To me, intimacy in marriage means...

Third day

How do I feel when we make love when one of us really doesn't want to?

Fourth day

I tend to withdraw into myself when...

Fifth day

Am I truly open with you in expressing my sexual desires? How does my answer make me feel?

Sixth day

I have to admit that I "cop out" when...

Seventh day

When someone does not "approve" of me...

TENTH WEEK

First day

I feel appreciated when you...

Second day

On a scale of 1 to 5 (five being very important, one being of little importance), I would rate the importance of romance in the marriage relationship as a _____. I feel that the romance in our relationship is... (Describe and explain.)

Third day

Explain whether or not you feel that good physical appearance of a spouse is important. Give your reasons.

Fourth day

I would order our financial priorities as follows:

Fifth day

Are we shifting our awareness from "I" to "we"? How does my answer make me feel?

Sixth day

Wife: I see you as priest of the family most when you...

Husband: You support my role as priest of the family most when you...

Seventh day

How does our lovemaking affect me the next day?

ELEVENTH WEEK

First day

One of the things I want from you and don't know how to ask for is...

Second day

The scary thing about telling you what I want is...

Third day

One thing that's bothering me is...

Fourth day

As I see it, two things which we repeatedly argue about are...As an alternative to arguing I suggest that we deal with these subjects by... (Be specific...no generalizations!)

Fifth day

Ways in which I've seen you grow during the past year are as follows:

Sixth day

In my opinion "in-laws" have affected our marriage in the following ways:

Seventh day

What one thing do I want to change about myself that I think would please you? How does that make me feel?

NEEDS

1. From the very beginning God planned for two-way intimacy
 - a. Intimacy between Himself and man
 - b. Intimacy between man and his wife
 1. Let's look at how it all began
2. The Garden of Eden
 - a. God and Adam – the only two on the scene
 - b. Adam's condition
 1. Perfect situation
 2. Possessed it all
 3. Position (top dog)
 - c. The world tells us that if we have those three P's going for us, we have it made
 - d. God, however, says "not good"
3. The God-Adam Relationship
 - a. Let's examine it
 - b. Adam had the perfect relationship with God
 - c. He walked and talked with God constantly – ultimate intimacy
 - d. God says "not good" for Adam to be alone
 - e. God said that He alone was not enough for Adam
 1. he had created Adam to need intimacy with meaningful others
 2. Part of God's Plan
4. God creates Eve
 - a. Provides for complete meeting of Adam's intimacy needs (God plus Eve)
 - b. God says "I will make a suitable helper"
 - c. Ordained the marriage relationship to minister to Adam's neediness
 - d. God looked at Adam and Eve
 1. For the first time said, "It is very good"
5. What This Shows Us
 - a. It is not only O.K. to experience emotional, intimacy neediness from our spouse
 - b. God planned for it to be that way
 - c. Lie = "If I'm a strong Christian I only need God to directly meet my needs"
 - d. Truth = My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory
 1. Some He supplies directly
 2. Some He supplies through my spouse
 - e. This was His provision for us from the beginning
6. Fully Human, Fully Divine Jesus Had Needs
 - a. Matt. 26:37 Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane
 - b. Jesus' "soul is deeply grieved" – He's experiencing feelings, neediness

1. Took Peter, James and John with him
 2. Needed them with him – “watch and pray”
 3. When he said that his soul was deeply grieved they didn’t say, “Why don’t you just go have a quiet time?”
 4. We tend to condemn others (spouse included) when they express needs saying, “You have the Lord. That’s enough.”
- c. Jesus’ Baptism
1. God said, “this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.”
 2. Not said solely for the gathered crowd
 3. Showed approval for His son and Jesus hadn’t done anything yet
 - a. Not performance or works
 - b. He met Jesus’ need for affirmation
- d. Pattern with the disciples
1. God arranged for Jesus to draw encouragement, support from his disciples
7. Validity of Having Needs
- a. Phil. 4:19 My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory
 - b. This says we’re going to have needs
 - c. Working definition of emotional/intimacy need
 1. A need is anything which God himself meets for us therefore it is O.K. to need it from others as well as from Him
 - d. Neediness is not “unChristian” or self-centered
 - e. God made us needy to highlight our dependency
 1. Upon Him
 2. Upon others
 - f. The horizontal and vertical bars of the cross typify this double dependency
8. Admitting Our Needs To Others
- a. Matt. 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit (the humble)
 - b. The essence of humility is admitting our needs
 1. James 4:6 God gives grace to the humble, resists the proud
 - c. Intimacy = vulnerable self-disclosure to which the response is communicated care
 1. The first part of the definition must happen (vulnerable self-disclosure) before the second part can take place
 2. No admission, no intimacy
 - d. Admission of neediness
 1. Can be risky, threatening
 2. “What if I lay it out there then he/she doesn’t respond to my need?”
9. Eight Primary Intimacy Needs
- a. ACCEPTANCE – deliberate and ready reception with a favorable positive response Rom. 15:7
 - b. AFFECTION – communicating care and closeness through physical touch and loving words Rom. 16:16

- c. APPRECIATION (Praise) – communicating personal gratefulness with words and feelings I Cor. 11:2
 - d. APPROVAL – expressed commendation: thinking and speaking well of Rom. 14:18
 - e. ATTENTION (Care) – taking thought of another and conveying appropriate interest and support; entering into another’s “world” Acts 27:3
 - f. ENCOURAGEMENT – urging forward and positively persuading toward a goal I Thess 5:11 Heb. 10:24
 - g. RESPECT (Honor) – valuing and regarding highly; conveying great worth Rom. 12:10
 - h. SECURITY (Peace) – confidence of harmony in relationships; freedom from harm II Thess. 3:16
10. Giving To The Needs Of Your Spouse
- a. Eighty percent of the couples in a room like this have 0 to 1 needs in common when listing their three neediest areas
 - b. I’m married to someone with needs different from mine
 - c. Problem = I often try to supply to my mate what I need
 - d. My primary focus must be GIVING
 - 1. Codependence = a mutual taking from the other
 - 2. Love = pouring out to the other, not leeching
 - a. I Cor. 13:5 Love is not self-seeking
 - e. We’re back to admitting our needs
 - 1. It’s very difficult to discern another’s need until you admit that you have needs
11. Response To Needs Shared
- a. The last portion of the intimacy definition = “to which the response is communicated care”
 - b. Hooking into another’s feelings and needs = entering into another’s world
 - c. Rom. 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep
 - d. Emotions/needs expressed require emotional response
 - 1. Conveys recognition, caring re: that expressed
 - 2. “If you hurt, I care”
 “If you have a need, I care”
 “I’m hearing your heart, I care about you”
 - e. Unproductive responses
 - 1. Logic, facts or reasons
 - 2. Criticism
 - 3. Complaints (citing your own hurts/needs)
 - 4. Neglect
 - f. Productive response always includes:
 - 1. Understanding
 - 2. Empathy
 - 3. Gentleness
 - 4. Reassurance

- g. Productive emotional responses
 1. "I can see you're low"
 2. "I don't like to see you hurting"
 3. "I deeply care about you and love you"
 4. "I hear your hurt. Let's work through this together"
- h. When you've been part of causing the hurt
 1. The immediate response must be caring – not justification or defensiveness
 2. "Will you share with me how I've hurt you/failed you? Tell me how it made you feel. I want to understand and make it right."

12. Need Meeting By Wives

- a. 1 Cor. 11:9 Woman was created for the man (a la Eve)
 1. You are his completer
 2. You have a very unique function re: his needs
- b. Husbands are designed to need the respect of their wives Eph. 5:33
 1. No one's praise is more important to him than yours
 2. All of the good reviews at work can't match heartfelt praise from you
- c. Husbands value the encouragement of their peers
 1. He treasures your support more
- d. Your husband may receive affection or comfort from his children, family
 1. Great as these are, those needs are never met as fully as when you meet his needs for affection and comfort

13. Need Meeting By Husbands

- a. 1 Pet. 3:7 Tells us to live with our wives with understanding
- b. An attitude of understanding requires
 1. Investment of your time
 2. Sacrifice of your own "agenda"
 3. A divine shot of insight and power
- c. Intimacy needs = keys to understanding your wife
 1. Hearing, understanding her intimacy needs gives you insight into how she thinks, feels, behaves
 2. This serves as the beginning of your discovering how you can truly love her

14. Key Verse For Husbands And Wives

- a. Matt. 10:8 Freely I've received, freely I give

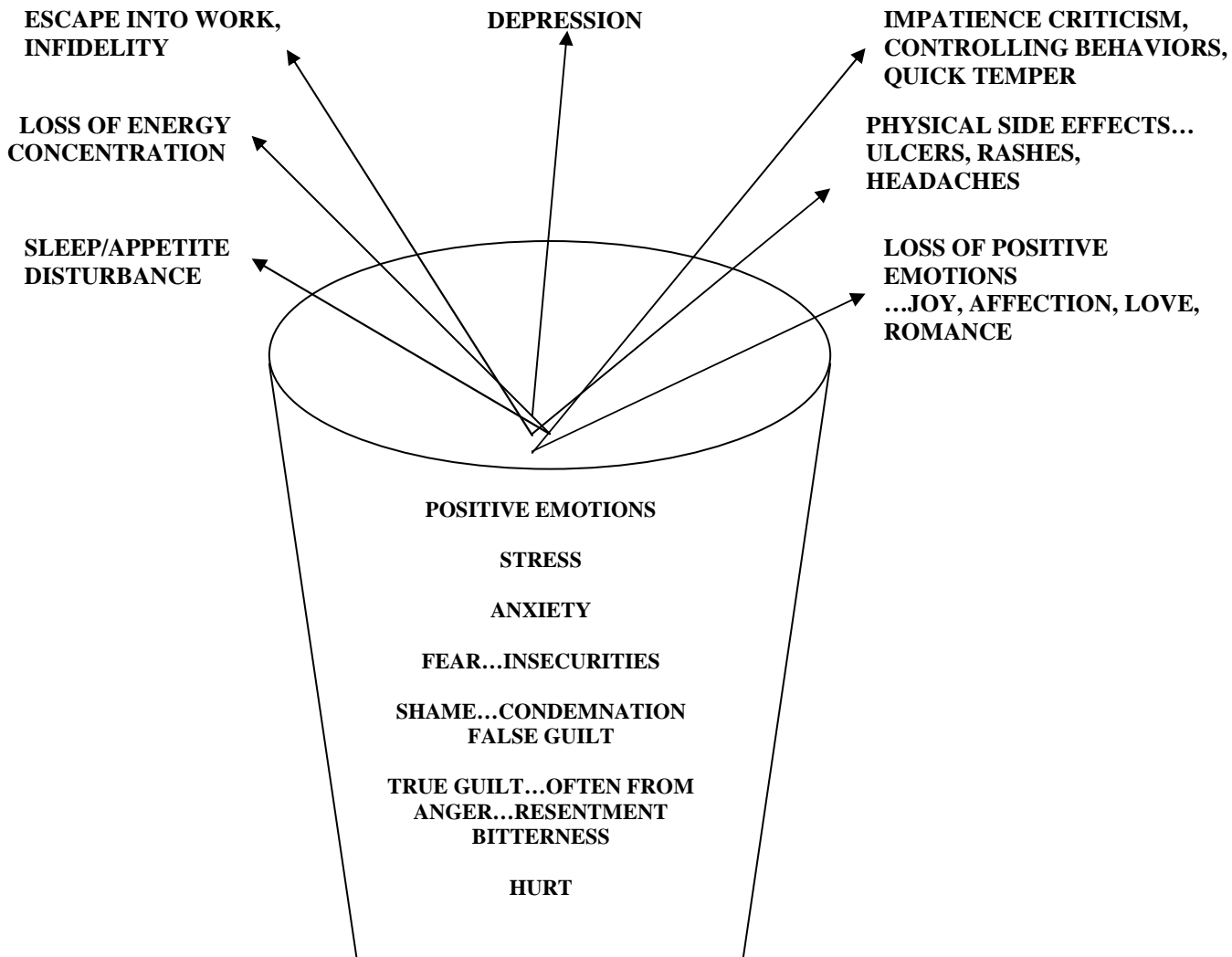
15. Three Dangers In Needs

- a. Selfishness
 1. "I have needs. I'll get it from you."
 2. Phil. 2:3 "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself. "

- b. Self-sufficiency
 - 1. "I don't have needs" or "I'll take care of my own needs."
 - 2. Rev. 3:17 "You say, 'I am rich and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,' and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked"
- c. Self-condemnation
 - 1. "I'm very needy but I feel guilty. There must be something wrong with me."
 - 2. Rom. 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"

UNMET NEEDS – UNHEALED HURTS

1. When our basic emotional needs are met we experience intimacy. When our needs are unmet we experience hurt and loss.
2. Emotional Cup
 - a. We each have an emotional cup
 - b. Our cup can only hold so much
 - c. If needs go unmet or unacknowledged, the cup overflows



3. Hurt
 - a. The pain we feel from unmet needs is often masked by anger
 1. Hurt lies underneath the anger
 2. It hurts too much to focus inward on my hurts
 3. Hide our vulnerability and loss by turning outward = anger

4. Anger Forms
 - a. Impatience
 - b. Depression
 - c. Jealousy
 - d. Suspicion
 - e. Passive-aggressive anger
 1. Procrastination
 2. Silence
 3. Sarcasm
 4. Avoidance

5. Fear Forms
 - a. Withdrawal
 1. Avoid a situation exposing you to a new hurt
 - b. Perfectionism
 1. Reduces the chance of failure/hurt
 - c. Control
 1. Minimize chances for pain by being in charge
 - d. Addictions
 1. Numb the pain and fear

6. Mutual Cup Emptying
 - a. Must be lovingly honest with each other
 - b. Focus = identifying what's inside my cup
 1. Not blame
 - c. Self-examination
 1. I must own my part of what's in my spouse's cup
 - d. Together we must first experience the pain inside
 1. Drain it off by forgiveness sought and granted
 2. Then have room for the good emotions, have hope

7. How To Empty The Cup
 - a. Alone with God
 1. Let Him show you the ways you've hurt your spouse, ignored his/her needs
 2. Ask the Lord to let you feel his/her pain
 - b. With your spouse
 1. Acknowledge your wrongs
 - a. Example: "I can see I've been selfish, insensitive, work absorbed..."
 2. Encourage your spouse to share his/her pain with you
 - a. This helps drain the hurt
 - b. Example: "I need for you to talk to me about your pain, how I've hurt you."

3. Asking forgiveness
 - a. Three specifications for good confession to spouse
 1. Be specific
 - a. Tell him/her how you can see, feel what your actions, words or lack of both have done to him/her
 2. Acknowledge the wrongness of it
 - a. Don't use the word "sorry"
 3. Put a period after the word "wrong"
 - a. No "buts"
 - b. No explanations = justification (leads to blaming)
 - b. "Please forgive me for these hurts I've caused you."
 - c. Always allow input from your spouse
 1. "Please tell me about the other ways in which I've hurt you. I want to know."
 2. Ask forgiveness for these also, acknowledging your wrong
4. Forgiveness extended
 - a. A choice – turn loose
 - b. Tell him/her as you touch him/her. "I forgive you and I turn this loose."
 - c. Remember: You are sharing God's forgiveness as you have received it – grace!
 - d. The forgiving one may need opportunity to drain the pain
 1. Can be a valid part of the forgiveness process
 2. May say, "It would help me to talk about the pain."
 3. Not done blamingly, this can heal and drain
5. Defusing fear of repetition of the negative
 - a. In the wife's presence, the husband out loud asks God to change him out of love for his spouse
 - b. The wife does the same
 - c. This commits the process to God
 1. Each one opens himself to Him to work change
 2. Perfect love casts out fear and now it's in the hands of Perfect Love
 - d. This is vulnerable, intimate prayer

UNMET CHILDHOOD NEEDS

1. Most Marriage Partners Enter Marriage With Partially Full Cups
 - a. Intimacy needs unmet in childhood result in deposits in the cup
 - b. This residue is added to from unmet needs/unhealed hurts within the marriage relationship

2. Unaware/Denying You Have Unmet Childhood Needs
 - a. Denying
 1. The person knows he missed something in life but believes that it didn't matter all that much
 2. Example: "No, I never felt approval from my parents, but I don't think it really makes a difference."
"Yeah, I got hit quite a bit, but not as much as my brother."
"No, no one ever told me they loved me, but I never missed it."
 3. Underneath the words lies unrecognized pain
 - a. Before dealing with the pain he must recognize he has a need and it does matter
 - b. Unaware
 1. An adult unaware that he has any current unmet intimacy needs is often a person who had unmet needs in childhood
 - a. Can be a clue that he missed a lot growing up
 - b. Perhaps there was little love expressed, lack of affection, no affirmation, much ignoring, etc.
 - c. Goal = Understanding the needs of our loved ones
 1. Prov. 2:2 Tells us "...apply your heart to understanding..."
 2. We gain knowledge with our heads
We understand with our hearts
 - d. In marriage when we don't know our own needs
 1. Tend to focus on the other person's behavior
 - a. Think if this would change, all would be O.K.
 - b. Often don't have a clue as to what we really need
 2. Example: Asked a couple, "What do you want to see changed/different in your lives?"
She: For him to quit drinking, be home on time
He: For her to quit nagging about drinking, being home on time.

Asked her: If tomorrow he's home on time, sober, sitting in the chair, are you saying you'd feel abundantly loved?

She: No. But, I never thought I'd get that.

Asked her: Would you want him to talk to you? Be interested in you and your life?

This gets down to the need, away from the other's behavior of drinking, etc.

3. Healing Unmet Childhood Needs
 - a. Why?
 1. I must drain what was in my emotional cup before my spouse came along
 2. Clears the way for positive emotions
 - a. Makes more room in the cup
 - b. Helps get rid of childhood triggers which my spouse can unknowingly press

3. Purpose
 - a. Not to blame or accuse
 - b. To acknowledge the truth of your pain feeling

- b. Sharing jointly with your spouse
 1. Builds intimacy through self-disclosure
 - a. You each know what perhaps no one else knows about you
 2. Clues your spouse re: needs to meet, how to love you
 3. Provides opportunity to give comfort to your hurting spouse

- c. Steps for healing
 1. Acknowledge the loss
 2. Grieve the loss
 3. Receive comfort from your spouse
 - a. Comfort = hurting as you hurt
 - b. Is not a pep talk, not advice
 - c. Comfort blesses
 1. Matt. 5:4 Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted
 - d. Example: "I hurt for you that...because I care, because I love you."
"It saddens me that..."
 - e. The one being comforted acknowledges the comfort
"Thank you for caring."
"Thank you for loving me."
 4. Make the choice to forgive those not meeting your childhood needs
 - a. Verbalize this as though they were present
 - b. "I forgive you for..."

4. Marriage Patterns Can Evolve From Childhood Patterns
 - a. Important needs met by parents
 1. Have the expectation of receiving the same in marriage in the same ways
 - a. Affectionate, supportive parents – expect spouse to be the same
 - b. Needs unmet by parents, caregivers
 1. Expect these missing things will be supplied by our spouse
 - a. Little attention from parents – expect partner to make up the deficit

The information on Needs was derived from *The Pursuit of Intimacy* by Dr. David and Teresa Ferguson & Dr. Chris and Holly Thurman, Nashville, Tenn., Janet Thoma Books, a division of Thomas Nelson, Inc. Publishers, 1993

HUSBANDING

1. Leadership Role From Day One – Expected of Husbands by God
 - a. He was the responsible one from the beginning
 1. Eve ate first. Adam followed but it was for Adam's sin that the race is condemned
 2. Rom. 5:12,16 "Just as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin...the judgment arose from one transgression..."
 - b. Adam evidently was held responsible for failure to be the man God intended
 1. He didn't lead Eve, protect her
 2. He didn't provide
 - protect
 - teach
 - care well
 3. His passivity got him in trouble then...as ours does today!!!
 - c. The husband's responsibility over his wife is a trust from God
 1. God pointed it out in the first marriage (Adam, Eve, apple eating)
 2. The man is to manage, to husband, to care for the gifts of his wife
 - a. He is to encourage her to develop her giftedness to its' fullest
 - b. He is to affirm repeatedly every gift and talent he sees within her
 3. In his role of provider, protector and caregiver for his wife he has responsibility relevant to the emotional, intimacy needs of his wife
 4. A husband who abuses or neglects that God-given responsibility fails at the very heart of his manhood
2. What A Godly Husband Is Like
 - a. He realizes that his wife as a totally different design from his
 - b. He operates a la I Peter 3:7
 1. Can't expect to always understand – can always be understanding
 2. Can't expect to identify – can care and relate to her from that caring
 - c. He doesn't have to be macho
 1. Knows it's O.K. to be tender
 2. Knows it's O.K. to be sensitive
 3. Knows it's O.K. to let her know you have weaknesses
 4. Knows it's O.K. to let her know you have fears
 5. Knows it's O.K. to let her know you don't have it all together
 - a. This tenderness, vulnerability and sensitivity on your part doesn't minimize you in her eyes – it maximizes you!
 - b. Maximum vulnerability = confessing your sins to her
 1. Your thought life
 2. Your attitudes
 3. Your actions
3. Initiator - Responder
 - a. Hebrew word for man = piercer
Hebrew word for woman = pierced
 - b. This reflects the husband's role
 1. He leads, is the point man, the responsible one
 2. He initiates; she responds

3. He is the spiritual head of the home
 4. He initiates sharing of feelings with his wife
 5. He takes the lead in putting romance into their relationship
 6. He loves; she automatically loves in return
 - c. There's nothing passive in the connotation
 1. Jesus as model
 - a. There was nothing passive in his interactions with the world
 - b. Eph. 5:25 "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church."
 - d. The act of sexual intercourse is representative of the man/piercer, woman/pierced
 1. The physical is merely a parable of the spiritual design for husbands and wives
4. Women's Needs Are Different From Men's
- a. Clinical psychologist and family therapist, Dr. Willard Harley states:
"A man can have the best intentions to meet his wife's needs, but if he thinks her needs are identical to his own, he will fail miserably."
 - b. Eleven Needs of a Wife
 1. Companionship
 - a. Conversation
 - b. Sharing you heart with her
 - c. Relating at the feeling level
 - d. Doing things with her
 - e. Letting her inside you and your world
 2. Relational commitment (priority in your life)
 - a. It's important for her to know that other than spending time with the Lord, you want to spend time with her more than with anyone else
 - b. She needs to feel she's very valuable in your life
 - c. She needs to know she's more important to you than
 1. Your mother
 2. Your work
 3. Your children
 4. Your golf game
 5. T.V.
 6. Your ministry
 7. Your friends
 - d. She needs affirmation/praise
 1. This helps her feel valuable to you
 2. She can't read your mind!
 3. Honesty and openness
 4. Compassion
 - a. Comfort her when she needs it – "weep with those who weep" Rom. 12:15
 1. Comfort isn't a pep talk, isn't advice
 2. Don't analyze or be logical
 - b. When she's stressed or hurting she needs to know you'll comfort her and that
 1. You won't demand explanations
 2. You won't give a lecture
 3. You won't try to "fix it"

- c. Comfort may be conveyed through touch
 - 1. Hold her
 - 2. Touch her hand as you speak words of comfort
 - d. Most men must cultivate this aspect of their husbanding
 - 1. In many of us this doesn't pop out naturally
 - 2. Pray about this
 - 3. Then it becomes very possible – His spirit is alive within you and He is compassion
5. Romance
- a. Romance doesn't = sexual foreplay
 - b. Romance, dating, courtship don't end with the marriage vows
 - c. Create romantic settings, experiences
 - d. Have dates – not just every five years or just on your anniversary
 - e. For a woman, romance is essential in the relationship to keep sexual desire at an active level
6. Affection (Tenderness)
- a. This is what lets her know that you're protecting her
 - b. Gives her a sense of security in your faithfulness and love
 - c. Touching assures her that your strength and love are guarding her
 - d. She needs to be tenderly held often just to be near you, apart from times of sexual intimacy
 - e. Is more than just touching; should also be expressed in words
7. Passion
- a. If you don't meet the other needs of your wife, forget about this one
 - b. In scripture: "fountain" represents the man sexually
"well or cistern" represents the woman sexually
 - 1. Both contain water
 - 2. Water = a symbol for the gift of sexual pleasure
 - 3. A fountain = water under pressure
Well, cistern = calm water, needs to be stirred up
 - c. The fountain is naturally flowing, the well needs to be stimulated
 - d. Your wife needs you here
 - 1. She cannot conjure up passion on her own
 - 2. You generate it within her
 - 3. It's your job to agitate the waters!
 - e. Romance plays in here – dying romance, dying passion
 - f. Making love to your wife begins when you get up in the morning, not when you go to bed
8. Freedom to help her husband
- a. Help him, not control him!
 - b. Freedom to help him means without fearing anger/retaliation
 - 1. Because his manliness feels threatened
 - c. God designated wives as helpmates
 - d. She is a needed part of you and needs to be treated as such
 - e. Allow her to function in her role as your completer (1 Cor.11:9)

9. To be defended, protected
10. To know that her opinions are valued
 - a. That you'll discuss decisions with her
 - b. That you'll prayerfully weigh her input
11. To have her husband enter her world
 - a. This means – care enough about her to encourage her to share her life with you
 1. Her feelings
 2. Her thoughts
 3. Her experiences
 4. Her outside/individual interests
 5. Her concerns, her joys

THREE THINGS EVERY HUSBAND HATES

-John Fichtner

A. Three Things Every Husband Hates

1. To be pushed
2. For his wife to be burdened
3. For his wife to resist him in disciplining the children

B. To Be Pushed

1. Imperative Statements
 - a. Often women do this unconsciously by using imperative statements
 - b. Husband reacts every time
 - c. Imperative statements = commands
 - d. He generally punishes you for every imperative statement you make
 1. Shutting you out is the most common way
 - a. Withdrawing
 - b. Ignoring you and what you've said
 - c. Determining to do it "his" way
 2. Because God designed the husband's role as He did, even the littlest imperative statement will impact him negatively
 - a. "Pass the salt."
 - b. "Shut the door"
 - e. The woman never may boss her husband I Tim. 2:12
 1. When she tries this he may deal with it in a godly or ungodly way
 2. The more godly he becomes, the more he hates it when his wife attempts this authority over him
 3. The Spirit must really kick in for him to deal with it in a godly manner
 4. Eph. 5:22-23 clearly delineates the roles
 - a. The husband is clearly the head
 - b. This means that he bears chief responsibility before God for his family
2. Disrespectful, bossy tone
 - a. Using a sarcastic, cutting tone can be a part of pushing
 - b. Public put downs – bad news
 - c. Eph. 5:3
3. Nagging
 - a. A repetitive attempt at pushing
 - b. Prov. 21:9
Prov. 21:19
Prov. 25:24

C. For His Wife to Be Burdened, Tense

1. Antidotes for being burdened, uptight, tense
 - a. I Cor. 11:3 The husband is the head of the wife
 - b. Eph. 5:23 The husband is the head of the wife

2. Headship = Responsibility (almost synonymous)
 - a. If the wife is not the head then she is not responsible
 1. For the health/success of her marriage
 2. For her husband (his moods, successes or failures)
 3. For him and his parents, him and your parents, etc.

3. Root of tension, being burdened
 - a. Taking responsibility for things not designed by God as your role
 - b. If he's acting like a jerk and you take responsibility for the fallout then he never has to take responsibility for it
 - c. We try to self-protect (often more than protecting him!)
 1. Try to avoid disaster happening
 2. This is not our job

4. "Wrong direction" and he's unwilling to work toward agreement with God?
 - a. Give him the freedom to fail
 1. Men's ears work best when their faces hit the concrete, wax pops out then
 - b. Pray fervently
 - c. Appeal to your joint spiritual covering
 1. Home group leader
 2. Elders

5. Giving your husband freedom to fail - how
 - a. Make it clear that you disagree
 1. State "I disagree about the direction...", not "Could we talk more about this?"
 2. He is insensitive by male nature so doesn't hear you if you're indirect
 3. It's your responsibility to meet him at his level
 4. Say, "You can do what you want and I'll support you, but I don't agree with you."
 5. I Cor. 14:7-9 When you make a point make it clear (read this!)

 - b. Cheerfully support him
 1. You walk off the cliff with him, not stand back and watch him fail
 2. God's word says if you do it this way your husband will get up off the concrete praising you
 - a. No blame, recriminations
 3. Only possible is you cry out to God in the midst of the disaster you see coming
 - a. Trust His sovereignty
 - b. No anxiety
 - c. No nagging

- D. Resisting Him In Disciplining The Children
 1. God has placed him as head of the family and gifted him in insight
 - a. Regarding rebellion in a child, etc.
 2. Because of this positional gifting 99% of the time he's right in sensing rebelliousness, insolence, etc.
 3. Wife's gifting is in nurturing
 - a. Wants to move in with that
 - b. Discipline comes before nurturing – both are needed
 4. Godly husband sets the standard for discipline, wife supports it

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APPENDIX

SECTION VI

AGENDAS

SECTION I

NOTES

SECTION II

TOTAL GROUP EXERCISES

SECTION III

ONE-ON-ONE EXERCISES

SECTION IV

HOMEWORK

SECTION V

