

# THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

*A Study of God's Greatest Reflection of Himself*

## Lesson Fourteen

Memory Verse: *1 Corinthians 12:27*

Lesson Verse: *Genesis 2:24*

*"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Genesis 2:24*

### I. Introduction - No Greater Challenge Than Having a Godly Family!

- A. The Biblical type of family is the most fundamental unit in a society! Without strong, godly families, a nation is doomed (*Ps 9:17*)!
- B. When God made this world, He completed His creation with a *man* - but He did not create him to be alone (*Gen 2:18*). God created man to exist as a family. Before there were cities, thrones, space programs, banks, churches, cars, or armies, there was the family!
- C. This lesson will introduce the Christian to the Biblical structure of the family and the home. It is intended to help the Christian to transform their family life into the greatest reflection of God possible!



### II. The Family Unit - What is a Family?

- A. When the world tries to define a "family," it constantly has to change and adapt its definition to fit people's changing attitudes. Yet God has given us a perfect, never changing pattern for us to adapt to: the example of *Himself*!
- B. Notice God's titles: the \_\_\_\_\_, the Word (became *the Son*), and the Holy Ghost (*1Jn 5:7*). These three "Persons" exist as *one unit*. So is it to be in a human family, because mankind was designed like God is (*Gen 1:26,27*)!
- C. Every human has three "parts": a body, \_\_\_\_\_, and spirit (*1 Thes 5:23*).
- D. Every family has three "parts": the father, mother, and children. *There are only three*. The exceptions are when a person is not married (when a person is single, he or she is still part of the family that they were born into), and when there are no children in a relationship. These are "exceptions" - not the norm!
- E. Either you are single and under your parents, or are married and have your own children (or at least wish you could have children).
- F. Both of these places are right, and a blessing to be in. Don't let the world try to mould you to *its* definition of life, family, and so-called happiness (see *Prov 17:1; 15:17; 21:19*).
- G. The family unit is being attacked viciously today by the areas of homosexuality, and promiscuity (sexual immorality between men and woman who are not married). Both are wrong (*1Cor 7:1,2; Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:26-27*), and can only be resisted if God's design for men and women is understood and protected!

### III. Are You Single? God will take care of you (*Heb 13:5*)

- A. If a person is single, they should not \_\_\_\_\_ to be married, but seek to honour and glorify God FIRST by their life (*1Cor 7:27; Mt 6:33*), trusting He will direct their path to the person they should marry (*Ps 37:4*) as He did Adam (*Gen 2:18-23*).
- B. Being single is best, but is not for everybody.
- C. Don't be discouraged if you feel too old to be married, or *past your prime*! God brought a wife to Isaac when he was \_\_\_ years old (*Gen 25:20*)!
- D. Singleness is not a time of only waiting, but a time of **doing**. Your life doesn't start when you get married – it started the moment you got saved (*John 10:10*)!

## IV. The Confusion about Homosexuality

- A. Jesus said it is okay to not be interested in getting married (Mt 19:10-12). It is called being a \_\_\_\_\_.**
1. It is a scientific fact that NO one is born a homosexual, bisexual, or transsexual.
  2. But some are born with no interest in sex.
  3. And some decide to stay single, so that they can serve God without any distractions (1Cor 7:32-34)
  4. Everyone else is fine with getting married and having children.
  5. This section of the study on the family will explain God's purpose for all three attitudes towards sex.
- B. God designed adult men and women for each other sexually.** We are specifically designed to have sex with a marriage partner.
1. A man and a woman are marvellously designed by God in every way (Ps 139:14), and that means in *every* way.
  2. Marriage joins a man and a woman together physically (Gen 2:21-24; Matt 19:5,6).
  3. There is nothing wrong with sex **in** the covenant of marriage (Heb 13:4).
- C. Men and women are supposed to marry, and have children.** That is the general design and natural expectation of all adults, male and female (1Tim 5:14; Ps 127:3).
1. The apostle \_\_\_\_\_ was married (Matt 8:14,15).
  2. Joseph and Mary were married, and they had more children after the birth of Jesus (Matt 13:54-56), so they were a normal family – unlike the idea that Catholics have of Joseph's relationship with a perpetually virgin Mary.
- D. But there are some exceptions to being married.** Those exceptions are often confused and twisted into homosexual and lesbian concepts that ruin God's design, and especially confuse children, leading to their abuse.
- E. Jesus explained the exceptions (Matthew 19:12)**
1. A 'eunuch' is someone that either does not want to have sex with their marriage partner, or cannot have sex.
  2. Three Biblical attitudes towards being single:
    - a. Jesus said, Some people are \_\_\_\_\_ eunuchs – unable to have sexual intercourse for whatever reason. These are not interested in getting married or in having sex. And that is perfectly fine.
    - b. Other people are forcibly **made** eunuchs by men – when men are physically castrated, for whatever reason, they have been "*made into a eunuch.*" The Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:27 was forcibly made that way so that he could be trusted with the Queen's treasury, and this was a common occurrence up until recently amongst many government civil servants all over the world.
    - c. Some people **decide** themselves to be a eunuch – they do not want to be married and are fine being single and are able to serve God without distractions (1Cor 7:32). They do not seek sex with anyone. As Christians, they just live for the advancement of kingdom of God! The Apostle Paul was single all of his adult life, and wished more people would stay single (1Cor 7:8). They may later on in their life decide to get married, which is fine as well. In other words, if a young man, or a young woman does not seek to be married, that is fine. And if they change their minds, that is fine as well.

3. So, if a young woman is not interested in “guys”, that is perfectly fine. It does NOT mean they are a lesbian. And if a young man is not interested in “girls”, it is perfectly fine too. They are not queer. Not unless they have become influenced by the pressure of the homosexual culture that is wrongly promoted by society today!
4. But if you are naturally interested in sex, then by all means, marry (1Cor 7:1,2,8,9)!

**F. Anything beyond those four attitudes towards sex is wrong according to God, and will be judged (Heb 13:4; Eccl 12:13,14).**

1. The Bible calls homosexuality “\_\_\_\_\_ affections” (Rom 1:26)
2. It is “\_\_\_\_\_ nature” which means it goes against how we were designed as male and female (Gen 1:27)
3. Homosexuality is a lust for someone you cannot have – like adultery and pornography is – “*the men, leaving the \_\_\_\_\_ use of the woman, burned in their \_\_\_\_\_ one toward another; \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ working that which is unseemly*” (Rom 1:27). Unseemly means, unwatchable, because it is so dark and wicked.
4. God warns that homosexuals are destined to receive “*in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet*” (Rom 1:27) – referring to God’s specific judgment upon THEM for that specific sin.

**G. Homosexuals and Lesbians CAN be saved, and CAN become “straight” (1Cor 6:9-11) – but they have got to want to be saved from their sin (Matt 1:21).**

1. How does Paul describe homosexuals in those verses? “*such \_\_\_\_\_ some of you.*”
2. Homosexuals, just like adulterers, fornicators, liars, and drunkards need to repent towards God for the awfulness of their sin, and get saved before it is too late!
3. If you have confusion about sexuality, that is normal in this day and age. So many movies and music stars are pushing homosexuality into every relationship. God commands us to get counsel, and seek forgiveness for our wrongdoings, and start following Jesus. Jesus can straighten anyone out!

**H. Final thought. Do not just expect that young men and women are pure in heart and desire – they need to be talked with and taught and humbled about any sexual sins and any abuses in their past before they ever embark on marriage so that their marriage is wonderful, and lasts like God designed it to (Heb 13:4).**

**V. Preparing For Marriage - Courtship and Marriage for Christians**

**A. God's Purpose in Marriage - Study these!**

1. **Companionship (Gen 2:18)** - Throughout creation, God balanced everything out - He created two of everything (to everything, there is a positive, and a negative; a true and a false; a light and a darkness; an up and a down; a male and a female, etc). When He created Adam, He was not finished, but knew Adam needed companionship (ie, someone that he could intimately relate to - who was just like himself). God created someone who would think like Adam, and understand Adam. None of the rest of creation could relate to Adam (Gen 2:19-23).
2. **Completeness (Gen 2:18)** - God did not just give Adam a “buddy” or “friend”, but a “completer” (ie, someone who matched Adam’s needs like a glove does a hand). Eve was not to be another *Adam*, but to be what Adam was NOT, and to “compliment” him, as he complimented her! She was called a \_\_\_\_\_, meeting his needs.
3. **Enjoyment (Heb 13:4)** The marriage relationship is the most enjoyed of all relationships because of the intimacy of companionship and completeness! Marriage

is not a duty but a thrill, and it never gets dull when based upon God's pattern! The key is the couple must operate within God's limits so trust is always maintained.

4. **Children** ([Gen 1:28](#); [9:1](#); [1Pet 3:7](#)). The natural result of human intimacy will usually be children! Adam and Eve discovered this ([Gen 4:1](#)). Believe that Children are always a blessing, and a gift from the Lord ([Ps 127:3-5](#)) to a husband and wife.
5. **Protection** The purpose of any godly relationship is for the benefit of the people *in* the relationship, not their destruction. Adam needed Eve at times, and she supplied that need as she protected his weakness. Eve needed Adam at times, and he was to supply that need as he protected her weakness ([Eph 5:25-29](#); [Eccl 4:9-12](#))
6. **Representation** - The Christian marriage relationship is to present a living portrayal of the loving relationship between Jesus Christ and believers ([Eph 5:31-33](#)).

## B. How God Sees Marriage

1. **As good.** "*Whoso findeth a wife findeth a \_\_\_\_\_ thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.*" ([Prov 18:22](#)). Marriage is not outdated, or old-fashioned. It is the greatest relationship, and is honoured by God!
2. **As pure.** In marriage, the bed is \_\_\_\_\_. ([Heb 13:4](#)) – being married is wonderful, and a blessing, and just what God designed it to be. It is not to be a place of fear, or of wickedness, but of joy, and blessing ([Prov 5:18,19](#); [Song 7:7-12](#)). If it is not honourable, it is not a marriage.
3. **As enduring.** "*The Lord, the God of Israel saith that he hateth \_\_\_\_\_.*" ([Malachi 2:16](#)). Only by seeing how God hates adultery and divorce can we see the seriousness of marriage ([Mt 19:3-6](#))!
4. **As meeting each other's needs** ([1Cor 7:3-5](#); [32-34](#)). The one person who is best able to meet your needs is the one who knows you best! The purpose of marriage is not to "obtain" but to "supply," knowing your own needs will be provided for in the process!
5. **As built upon friendship, and communication** - not on requirements, and expectations. The marriage relationship starts with friendship, and is built upon **trust**. If a person's mate is not their best friend, then the foundation of the marriage is flawed, and can collapse ([Song 5:16](#))
6. God sees marriage **as a covenant** (a binding commitment) that makes their relationship the priority human relationship in life ([Gen 2:24](#)). Marriage is **not** an experiment! It is a total commitment, and a total sharing of the total person with another until death. This most wonderful of relationships both confines and yet fulfils the human heart!

## C. Courtship or Dating ([Psalm 34:3](#)) – How to find a mate for life

1. Most people try so very hard to find the love of their life by using the feel-good methods of dating, drinking, and discos.
2. God has a much better method that has worked from the very first day! It is called Courtship.
3. What is Courtship?
  - a. Courtship is a relationship between a man and a woman in which they seek to determine if it is God's will for them to marry each other. Under the protection, guidance, and blessing of parents or mentors, the couple concentrates on developing a deep friendship that could lead to marriage, as they discern their readiness for marriage and God's timing for their marriage. (See [Proverbs 3:5-7](#))
  - b. Courtship is a choice to avoid temptation and experience the blessings of purity. It is a choice to not emotionally give away your heart, piece by piece, to many

others through casual dating relationships and instead to ultimately give your whole heart to your life partner.

- c. Courtship is a choice to **wait** for God’s best for your life. It is a decision to live your life by trusting in God, honour others above yourself, and to believe that God will do good to you, all because He is love. (Ps 9:10; Rom 12:10; 1Jn 4:8)
- 4. Understanding and applying the following guidelines will result not only in a marriage pleasing to God, but also one that will be the most rewarding for ourselves. It provides the foundation for winning the world for Christ.
- 5. The concepts presented here are helpful guidelines to consider, but the list is not exhaustive. Each person, along with their parents or other mentors, must seek God’s direction for the specific steps of their courtship.
- 6. Let’s compare Dating and Courtship – *read each row, from left to right:*

What Dating Is...	What Courtship Is...
<b>Dating is mainly for having Fun</b> (not really serious, but wanting to just “look around”).	<b>Courtship is mainly for finding a Family.</b>
<b>Starts as soon as possible</b> (these days dating starts around 12 years old or so).	<b>Starts only when spiritually ready and serious about marriage.</b>
<b>By your own choice.</b>	<b>By the wise advice of parents and godly Christians, especially the pastor.</b>
<b>Defined by the world</b> – almost anything goes when on a date.	<b>Defined by the Scripture</b> (see below).
<b>Letting the “flesh” decide</b> what is right or wrong to do on a date.	<b>Letting God’s Holy Spirit define</b> what is right and wrong to do, and obeying Him!
<b>Lots of trial and error</b> (which leads to loads of disappointments).	<b>Following careful steps</b> , leads to fewer disappointments.
<b>Lots of temptation, and guilt.</b>	<b>Very little temptation</b> , yet great joy for obeying God, and finding His will.
<b>Based on how you feel</b> about the other person.	<b>Based on how God is directing your life</b> for His glory, to the person you should be with.
<b>Usually ends in massive heartache</b> and ultimate distrust, and even divorce.	<b>Usually ends with a life-long mate.</b>

- a. As a young person, it is a good thing to have fun with people of the opposite sex, as long as you have your parent’s permission, and as long as it is when you are in a group and not alone. God does not ask you to live as a monk or a nun. But He does expect us to keep ourselves pure from fornication and from sexual temptation (1Thess 4:3)
- b. Therefore, it is not a good thing to just “hang around” the opposite sex without a Godly purpose, and without Godly supervision. It will usually lead to sinful thoughts and sinful acts that you will regret.
- 7. So, Have the Right Focus (Col 3:17; 1Cor 10:31) - in marriage, as well as every other area of life, our purpose is to glorify \_\_\_\_\_.

  - a. If something is contrary to the will of God, then we must reject it, and lose it (Lk 9:23,24) – reject it as dead!
  - b. Your desire ought to be to have the RIGHT marriage partner, that GOD gave you - not just marry the next available person!

- 8. Seek The Right Person (Gen 2:18)
  - a. God specifically created a \_\_\_\_\_ for Adam that was suitable for him.

- b. Two people are not equals (God created Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve) but rather complements; i.e., each possessed mutually affirming gifts, strengths and insights. Each was incomplete without the other. Each person had qualities that the other needed to fulfill his duties before God.
9. Get The Right Counsel (Pr 23:22; 20:18)
- a. Dating is a modern substitute for wise counsel and lots of prayer!
  - b. Too many parents do not really know their children because by the time that their kids become teenagers, they have spent virtually no time with them compared what others have spent.
  - c. But if parents have fulfilled their Biblical role faithfully, they should know their children better than anyone else in the world. They should have 20-odd years of experience with their children, know their moods, tempers, gifts, and weaknesses. They are providentially equipped to advise their children about what kind of person they should be courting. When a child reaches the age where courting is now appropriate, parents and child should sit down and do a frank analysis of both themselves and potential partners.
10. Have A Right Mind (Philp 2:1,2,5)
- a. The first thing to have is a right MIND (right way of thinking) – don't follow your heart or emotions, or do just what everybody else may be doing.
  - b. The mind of Christ seeks to not only find fulfilment and happiness, but enjoys making other people happy, and serving them as Christ taught us to
  - c. Your MIND must be in charge of the relationship, over-ruling your heart because when only you heart is in charge, it will get you in trouble (Jer 17:9).
  - d. So, always THINK as you love – don't get carried away!
11. Develop The Right Heart (Philp 2:3-4)
- a. The goal of any relationship is *ministry*, not manipulation. We are not to seek to have our own needs met, but rather meet the needs of others. Yet usually marriages are made because young people think that a certain person will meet their "needs." Instead, we must see life as a process of giving up rights, and taking on responsibilities.
  - b. A single person MUST learn how to be "other-oriented" in their thinking. Otherwise they are only going to be a taker in the relationship, and a destroyer of the relationship!
  - c. Selfishness is the cause of most marital disasters.
  - d. Both man and woman must make genuine sacrifices to make a godly marriage. If one or both of the people are not ready or able to make those sacrifices, then they are not suitable marriage partners.
    - 1) Husbands must be willing to give themselves up for their wives. Husbands don't just need a wife in order to succeed, they succeed first by sacrificially ministering to their wives!
    - 2) Wives **must submit** themselves to their husbands. You had better make sure your husband is worthy of submitting to!
12. Meet the Qualifications (Eph 5:22-31; Prov 31:10-31; 1Pet 3:1-7)
- a. The best indicator of future performance is past performance. If you want to know what a person is going to be like in the future, just take a long, hard look at where he or she has been. Now it is so true that God transforms sinners. Yet,

when deciding who is or is not suitable as a mate for our children, the past is a great indicator of what you can expect down the road.

- b. In generalities, the future mate should pass the following test:
  - 1) Is he or she truly saved? And does he live like he is saved? ([Matt 7:20-27](#))
  - 2) Is he or she strong in their trust in the Lord? ([Prov 3:5,6](#))
    - a) Do they trust God, pray about their needs, and rest in the Lord's answers, or do they fret and worry and panic?
    - b) Do they praise God a lot, or do they find fault, and complain?
    - c) You should seek someone who is more spiritual than you are, and loves God more than you do!
  - 3) Is he or she yielded and submissive to God's will for their life ([Acts 9:6](#))? Do they know their calling and are they working diligently at it?
  - 4) Is he or she consistent, or does he or she change their mind constantly, and do things impulsively ([Prov 24:21](#))? Are they ever happy just where they are at, or always complaining?
  - 5) Do they truly love you, or do they really only love themselves? ([Eph 5:25](#); [Titus 2:4](#))
  - 6) Are they trustworthy? Do they exhibit integrity? Do they keep their promises? ([Psalm 7:8](#); [Prov 11:3](#))
  - 7) Are they a hard worker? Both the woman and the man must love hard work, or they will pull the relationship apart with their laziness ([Gen 3:19](#); [Prov 20:4](#); [2Thes 3:10](#)).
- c. When looking for a potential husband:
  - 1) Look for a man who possess leadership ability. Someone who wants to lead his family, and be an example of serving, instead of just being lazy and letting the wife make all the important decisions!
  - 2) Look for a man who works very hard. Make sure that he can save and manage money and thus financially provide for the family ([1Tim 5:8](#)).
  - 3) The Bible asks:
    - a) Is he good FATHER material ([Col 3:19-21](#), [Eph 6:1-2](#))?
      1. Look at his own father for insights as to how he will handle frustration, anger, fear, etc.
      2. Does the young man's father trust his own wife, love her ([Eph 5:21-25](#)), nurture and care for her ([Pr 31:11](#)), granting her honour as an equal heir ([1Pet 3:7](#)), understanding her and being gentle with her ([1Pet 3:7](#))?
      3. The way the young man's father treats his mother is likely the same way he will treat you or your daughter.
    - b) Is he A ONE-WOMAN man ([1Tim 3:2](#)) or has he had lots of previous entanglements that could come back and haunt you both?
    - c) Is he sensible ([Tit 2:6](#)) and does he possess the general godly character qualities of an elder / mature Christian ([1Tim 3:1-7](#))? If not, then no matter how friendly, charming or attractive, look somewhere else.
- d. In the same way, potential wives should be:

- 1) Submissive in spirit (Eph 5:21-22) and respectful in their attitude and demeanour. Most women are extremely assertive because of the training of the feminists!
- 2) Sensible, looking forward to working at home, kind, loving their husbands and children (cf. Tit 2:3-5).
- 3) They are able to do good to their husbands because they are industrious, charitable, skilled in their work, well-dressed (modestly so), good managers of resources and, of course, they must fear God (1Tim 2:9-10; 1Pet 3:3,4; Pr 31:22,30).
- 4) If a woman lacks the qualities necessary for any of these before marriage, there is no way of knowing if she will ever develop them afterwards. Therefore, parents ought to make it a point to examine potential mates according to objective, Biblical criteria. If they don't meet the qualifications, then no matter how attractive they are, they are not suitable for marriage.

#### 13. Keep The Right Distance (1Cor 7:1-5; Gen 2:24) – VERY IMPORTANT!

- a. If all the other issues are dealt with, then this issue will be easy. If the heart is not submissive to God's way, then no amount of warnings, and walls will stop two people from committing fornication.
- b. There is a right amount of distance that must be maintained between two unmarried people (Pr 6:27-29) – no touching. Touching, clinging, cleaving to each other is for when married – period!
- c. If you start to violate this principal, no amount of determination and repenting will stop you from God's judgment (Heb 13:4)!

#### 14. Conclusions

- a. Parents must teach, and nurture these truths into their young children.
- b. Young men and women need to evaluate just how much they are willing to "wait" until marriage, and to let God prepare them for this most important of all life's treasures – a family!
- c. The fruit of living godly is eternal. The pleasures of sin, are only for a season (Heb 11:24,25)!

### D. Principles of a Happy Marriage

1. **Make sure both persons are \_\_\_\_\_** (Mt 7:21-27; John 3:3,7; 2Cor 6:14; Amos 3:3)! No Christian should ever think that they can be happy married to someone who doesn't care about Christ! It is next to impossible to change a person after marriage!
  - a. A woman marries a man, hoping he will change, but he doesn't.
  - b. A man marries a woman hoping she never changes, and she does!
2. **Give 100%! The marriage life is NOT 50/50, but rather 100/100% of each partner!** You no longer are two persons, but \_\_\_\_\_ (Gen 2:24)!
3. **Delete from your vocabulary words like: hate, divorce, mine, yours!** Don't remain angry, or vengeful with you mate (Eph 4:26,27), but rather take the time and talk the problem through until it gets settled! This takes prayer, and humility on your part (Pr 16:32)! Study **1 Corinthians 13** together, and implement each phrase into your relationship!
4. **Have a LOT of grace (tolerance) with each other** (1Pet 4:8; Heb 12:28)!
5. **Both must agree to submit** to the Biblical pattern for their home as found in the word of God, with the husband as the loving head of the home, the wife as the help

- participating in decisions, yet not forcing her way, and the children in nurtured obedience. The husband must be in submission to the word of God (1Cor 11:3).
6. **Look forward to \_\_\_\_\_**. Focus your energies no longer on yourselves, but rather on raising *God's* heritage (Ps 127:3). Don't spend time worrying about affording children, but on loving them!
  7. **Burn the bridges back to your single life!** Your mother should not "*keep your room,*" and you should destroy all the letters and notes you may have from old lovers! You cannot serve \_\_\_\_\_ masters (Mt 6:24)!
  8. **Realize that your marriage and your family is your FIRST ministry**, before your job, your church, or even your *self*! This is the hardest task! And yet the most enduring, and rewarding!
  9. **Have family Bible-time (Deut 6:6-9)!** This means a time where you and your family sit down together and read out of the Bible for about ten or fifteen minutes, and then you pray for each member of the family. Have different members of the family pray each time. Sometimes, act out what is being taught in the Bible. Always make it a special time. The goal is to develop a godly home atmosphere all day!
  10. **Romance your mate regularly (Gen 26:6-8; 1Cor 7:1-3).** *Continue* to date each other, admire one another, woo each other's attention, read the Song of Solomon together; purchase your wife flowers! Do crazy things just to show each other how crazy you still are for them!
  11. **Listen to one another (Eph 5:21)**, without grudging (Eph 4:31,32)! There MUST be specific time set aside for each other, just where you talk and listen to each other's heart concerns, gripes, dreams, etc.
  12. **Purpose to have times of fun with just your family, weekly!** This is so important to their emotional health! It lets them know that they mean something to you, and that you really find joy with them, instead of only out of the house!

**VI. The Dangers in Marriage.** Marriage by nature can be full of problems because there is more than one flawed human being in the relationship! But God has balanced that out thankfully, when He is invited to be the focus of the relationship.

- A. **Wrong Expectations (Mt 11:7-9, 16-19).** This is the source of the majority of problems in marriages. People naturally expect things of each other, and when those expectations are not met, problems arise (Ps 62:5; 37:4; Pr 11:7).

**How to defeat wrong expectations:**

1. Learn from Christ what He wants of YOU! Focus on becoming what Christ intended for *you* to be, instead of what you think He meant for your mate to be! Surrender your expectations to the Lord, and love your mate as a gift from Him.
  2. Begin to nourish and develop your spouse into the best that they can be -- not brow-beating, or nagging them, but encouraging, and equipping them with what they need to be their best!
  3. Communicate. Tell your mate what you need, and listen to the needs of your mate. Learn about each other. Don't just demand!
  4. Then start meeting your spouse's needs, instead of so desperately wanting him or her to meet yours!
- B. **Stubbornness** - not yielding - not allowing God to change you in any way BY your partner. God put the two of you together NOT because both of you were already perfect, but because each of you, when combined, made a stronger team than any one individual could have ever been! God wants BOTH people in a marriage to affect each other for good (Jam 4:6). Both partners MUST allow the other person the authority to help mould and shape them (1Co 7:4; Eph 5:21; 1Pet 5:5).

- C. **Over-sensitivity.** Intimacy naturally means *vulnerability*. And vulnerability often-times results in *hurt* (Ezek 16:45). Extreme emotional hurt must be given to God (Isa 53:3,4). Don't take it upon you to revenge any hurt you may receive from your partner. You must learn to take the situation as God's way of getting you to rely on Him to handle the "pay-back." He assures us He will do a very good job of it (Rom 12:17-21). In other words, suffer \_\_\_\_\_ (1Cor 13:4), and endure some \_\_\_\_\_ (2Tim 2:3), and develop the ability to love and be \_\_\_\_\_ when the other person does not deserve it (Eph 4:31,32), simply because that is how God treats you!
- D. **Complacency.** Your relationship with your spouse is a living, and growing relationship - it never sits idle. It is either growing closer, or farther apart, based upon your efforts. The lack of effort by BOTH people will result in decay setting in. Vigilance must be maintained. There is never a time that a person can just sit back and say, "I got it made. Everything is perfectly under control." This is not to say that you should be happy with a relationship *out of control* (1Cor 14:40). In other words, work hard at your relationship. Don't just take it for granted, and draw from it, while not investing into it! Both of you must work at this!
- E. **Being focused on short-term gratification.** This is where evolution has taught 99% of all married couples that they are in a relationship only to *get*. And instant gratification turns into demand. And demand creates slavery. And slaves revolt! Maturity is required in the heart and desires of each partner so that gratification is found in supplying the others' needs before themselves (1Cor 7:33,34; Acts 20:35). At the start of any marriage, it is expected that the two people will not automatically know how to give more than they get, but over time, this attribute should fully develop!
- F. **Disrespect.** This is vital to conquer (Eph 5:33; 1Pet 3:1-7)! Honour each other, and \_\_\_\_\_ each other \_\_\_\_\_ than themselves (Phlp 2:3)! Disrespect is formed by *distrust*. Therefore, have very short memories about past failures, and always completely forgive each other when asked (Lk 17:3,4; Heb 10:17). This will allow you to maintain respect and praise for your mate even though they are imperfect. Keep your love and respect **fresh** (like God does, Lam 3:22,23). Both of you are commanded to work at earning and maintaining each other's trust! If the other person has problems with you, then try and fix those problems to the best of your ability (Mt 5:23,24)!

## VII. Dealing with Hurts in the Home

### A. What Offends You?

1. Has anyone physically Bullied you? Yes / No
2. Has anyone said unfair words and actions against you? Yes / No
3. Has anyone ever taken you to court? Yes / No
4. Were any of the above a close friend, or your husband, your wife, your parents?  
Yes / No Name one person: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Who was also rejected, bullied, hurt? Isaiah 53:3; Psalm 55:12-14 \_\_\_\_\_

### B. How easily do YOU take offense? (Prov 18:19)

1. Some things ARE clearly offensive – physical abuse, pornography, sexual abuse
2. But MOST things should NOT be offensive / upsetting to the Bible believing Christian! Why? Because we trust in the Lord, and not in people's goodness towards us. (Psalm 119:165)
3. Some people live as if they are entitled to being constantly offended... to being upset all the time! Ask yourself if YOU are constantly upset.
4. Do you feel that you have to 'defend' yourself when somebody says something you take personally, and so you usually take offense?

5. Why do people take offense? Usually because we feel an injustice against US. And we feel we MUST bring “balance” back to our lives through an equal response!
6. Most people feel weighed down with past offenses against us:
  - a. All the HISTORY of abuses and hurtful words said, and destructive things done against us can haunt us all our lives
  - b. All the HURTS... INJUSTICES... All the BAD MEMORIES...
  - c. But each offense that we hold onto WILL become our own chain and prison if not released / or let go of!
7. Jesus works backwards to what you would think about handling offenses
  - a. Our natural reaction is to TAKE control – be in charge of bringing about justice concerning our lives – because we believe no one else will!
  - b. But Jesus says to get control of your life, you have to LOSE it (Luke 9:23-25)
  - c. RELEASE it! And leave it to who? \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 12:19)



### C. Handling Past Offenses

1. Forgive the Person in the same amount that YOU have been forgiven (Eph 4:32)
  - a. God has given us THREE Great Examples of Forgiving
    - 1) \_\_\_\_\_ (Gen 45:1-5) forgave his evil, uncaring brothers
    - 2) \_\_\_\_\_ (Lk 23:34) forgave ALL those who had just beat Him and whipped Him, and nailed Him to the cross and left Him there to die!
    - 3) \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 7:59,60) forgave those who were stoning him!
    - 4) All of them were intensely hurt and offended and abused, and great injustices were done against them! And yet they forgave without hesitation! Even though their enemies first asking to be forgiven!
  - b. So, it is **mandatory** of a Christian to Forgive –it is actually commanded (Matt 18:21-22), NOT SUGGESTED.
  - c. Forgiveness must be absolute and total (Matt 18:23-27)
  - d. Unforgiving-ness is a WICKED SIN (Mt 18:28-35) to get out of your heart!
  - e. There is NO forgiveness for you without you forgiving others! (Mk 11:25,26)
  - f. It Must be Total, or it is NOT Forgiveness (Psalm 103:2,3,11,12; 85:2)
  - g. You are NOT forgiving their SIN against you (only GOD can forgive sin); but you ARE forgiving THEM of sinning against YOU!
2. Forbear the Justice (Eph 4:2; 6:9; Col 3:13)
  - a. To forbear means to hold off getting even
    - 1) Whoever hurt you, did wrong.
    - 2) But by God’s amazing grace, you can put off getting even, and leave the vengeance to God to take care of (Rom 12:19).
    - 3) David put off repaying his enemy king Saul, for all the injustices against him (1Sam 24:16-19).
  - b. God forbears/puts up with US - is longsuffering towards us (Rom 2:4; 3:25)!
  - c. If He has been slow to act against YOU, then, YOU must become SLOW to act against those who have hurt you as well! VERY SLOW (James 1:19)!

3. Now you can Forget the Offense – each of them, one by one
  - a. Holding onto every memory of every hurt, and every reason why someone cannot be trusted, and every reason why someone ought to be punished, will only kill the spirit of your mind! It will burn you out; twist your thinking; drain your spirit and your joy.
  - b. You were not made to carry all those memories and hurts (1Peter 5:7).
  - c. So, Forget some things of your past on purpose (Philp 3:12-14).
    - 1) You can leave behind, ALL your past failures
    - 2) And ALL the Hurts against you – how? By forgiving them all!
    - 3) All the failed parenting, relationships, marriages, decisions and debts!
    - 4) Even ALL the disasters that seemed to ruin your life – trusting instead, that GOD was actually in control and making everything work together for “\_\_\_\_\_” (Romans 8:28) – like Joseph trusted!

#### D. On-Going Offenses – if there are ongoing offenses...

1. Confront the Person – don’t just ignore what people do to you. Tell them they hurt you / or did wrong towards you. Be respectfully honest with them.
2. Forgive the Person – right on the spot. See all the above!
3. Expect the Person to do right. Tell them they should take responsibility for what they did against you.
4. After that, you must go ahead and love them anyway – bless them – pray FOR them (Matt 5:43,44).

#### E. Getting Counsel

1. Not everyone can do the above (Rom 12:18).
2. If you find all this hard, then get counsel / spiritual help, so YOU can do right, whether anyone else does or not.
3. Beware of holding grudges (Lev 19:18; James 5:9).
4. Your family, your home, and your future is at stake!

#### F. Fear What Anger is Doing to Everyone in Your Home

1. First, see YOUR anger for what it is – a way for the \_\_\_\_\_ to take over your heart, and our home (Eph 4:26,27).
2. Remember what God did with ALL His anger towards YOU!
3. Repent of staying angry instead of forgiving offenses
4. Then, replace the anger with the RIGHT way of thinking about offenses against you! Replace it with forgiveness, love and dependency on God.
5. If another person is the one full of anger, they need to work through this section of Discipleship. If they are unwilling, then YOU need to pray and fast for their heart to be broken and softened and made like Christ’s!

#### G. Overcoming Anger – Let the word of God change the way you handle anger!

1. Write down what the following verses say about **THE WRONG WAY** to handle anger. You are handling anger in a sinful and unbiblical manner when you:
  - a. Ephesians 4:26,27: *Refuse to admit that you are angry. Clam up and pretend nothing is wrong. Make this your normal way of dealing with anger.*
  - b. Proverbs 17:14: *Pick a fight as soon as you can. Be as nasty as you can.*
  - c. Proverbs 29:11, 20: \_\_\_\_\_

- d. Matthew 5:21, 22: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- e. Ephesians 4:31: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- f. Proverbs 26:21: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- g. Proverbs 15:1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- h. Colossians 3:8: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- i. Romans 12:17, 19: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- j. 1 Peter 3:9: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- k. 1 Corinthians 13:5: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- l. Philippians 4:8: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Can you see yourself doing ANY of the above when YOU get angry? Yes / No
3. Now write down what the following verses have to say about THE RIGHT WAY to handle anger. Some of these are repeats of above Scriptures, but now you are looking for instructions on the RIGHT way to respond to offenses,
- a. Romans 12:19-21: *Never take your own revenge; turn the matter of punishment over to God; seek to help your enemy in specific ways.*
- b. Ephesians 4:26: *Acknowledge that you are angry and seek to solve the problem immediately. Don't allow unresolved problems to pile up.*
- c. Ephesians 4:29: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. Ephesians 4:32: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- e. Matthew 5:43, 44: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- f. Proverbs 19:11: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- g. Proverbs 15:1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- h. Proverbs 16:32: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- i. Proverbs 25:28: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- j. Proverbs 14:29: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- k. Proverbs 29:11: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- l. Galatians 5:16-23: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- m. 1 Thessalonians 5:18: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. All of the above is God's way of looking at your anger and how YOU now need to see it and manage it.

### VIII. The Role of The Husband/Father (Prov 17:6) – To Be A Team Leader!

- A. A husband is to \_\_\_\_\_ his wife (Eph 5:25) as he loves his own \_\_\_\_\_ (Eph 5:28,33). Men are the main problem! God directs most of His words at men because men are stubborn and rebellious, and need the most encouragement to do right!
- B. The pattern for this kind of love is to be as \_\_\_\_\_ loved the \_\_\_\_\_ (Eph 5:25) when He died so we could live! A wife will only thrive spiritually when her husband loves her beyond everything else!
- C. This love will be shown by a husband accepting his responsibility to be the \_\_\_\_\_ of his wife and family (Eph 5:23). The Husband is the head of the home *positionally* (1Cor 11:3), leading, and making the important decisions with his wife's input (he is not dictator). The head of the man is \_\_\_\_\_! Therefore, how can a man expect his wife to be in submission to *his* decisions, if he himself is not in submission to God's word?!!!
- D. The purpose of a husband's love is shown in how Christ gave Himself for the church that He might \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ it with the washing of the \_\_\_\_\_ (Eph 5:25,26). Therefore, the husband is responsible for maintaining the wife's purity and love for God, by not damaging her emotionally, physically, or spiritually! He is to care for, and nurture his wife and family like a farmer does his soil and plants!
- E. According to 1Peter 3:7, a husband must:
1. *Dwell* with (live with, spend time with, get intimate with, but not dominate) his wife according to \_\_\_\_\_ - i.e., he will work to know her needs, and weaknesses, and strengths, and seek to build her up and strengthen her.
  2. Give "\_\_\_\_\_" to his wife (only in Biblical Christianity is the woman elevated to that of royalty). Do this in public! ***That's an order!*** Listen to your wife! Include her in the decisions, and allow her to be right!
  3. He will recognize that she also is an \_\_\_\_\_ of the grace of life - she is just as important, and as much a beneficiary of God's gift of children, and family, and life itself as the husband is!
- F. If a husband loves his wife, he will not allow himself to get \_\_\_\_\_ against her (Col 3:19), and will work to keep her from getting bitter against him! But remember, the two of them must work together at this!

### IX. The Role of the Wife

- A. God made the woman as an \_\_\_\_\_ meet for the man (Gen 2:18).  
Define *help*: \_\_\_\_\_  
The word '*meet*' means *match*, or fitting to his needs (Mt 3:8; 2Tim 2:21).
- B. God made the woman \_\_\_\_\_ the man (1Cor 11:9).
- C. A woman is to \_\_\_\_\_ herself to her husband. (Eph 5:22).
1. A wife is supposed to be subject to her husband in \_\_\_\_\_ (Eph 5:24).  
If she is not married, then she is still subject to her father while at home.
  2. One exception to this is that we ought to obey \_\_\_\_\_ rather than \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 5:29). The wife is to disobey when the husband gets abusive or directs her to go against the word of God.
  3. A man will not respect a woman who does not respect and obey God more than she does him. And for sure, a woman will not respect a man who does not respect and obey God more than his selfish wants!

- D. The wife is also to \_\_\_\_\_ her husband (Eph. 5:33). She is to honour her husband as she should honour Christ.
- E. According to 1Peter 3:1,2, a woman should have a chaste \_\_\_\_\_ (her life and language should show forth purity) coupled with \_\_\_\_\_, *not disrespect*. The woman should not live in fear of her husband, but in fear of falling short of God's design for her and her husband.
- F. A woman should have a \_\_\_\_\_ (soft) and \_\_\_\_\_ spirit (1Peter 3:3,4). She needs to refrain from a loud, clamorous, demeaning, and nagging attitude (Pro 21:9, 19).
- G. God said to the first woman (Eve) that her \_\_\_\_\_ would be to her husband and that he would \_\_\_\_\_ over her (Gen. 3:16). This is part of the curse that Satan brought into the world, but it also is part of the way that God designed the Christian woman to defeat Satan by his own devices

## X. Children - *The MOST intensive (and rewarding) part of a family's energies*

- A. **What are Children as far as God is Concerned?** In marriage, "*children are an \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his \_\_\_\_\_*" (Ps 127:3). Therefore, they are an opportunity for Christians to raise up a Godly generation! Why is it that Christians want all of God's blessings, except for children? Children are God's **greatest blessing!** *Remember the blessing of being HIS children!*
- B. **Establishing A Child's Proper Relationship with God.**
1. A \_\_\_\_\_ can and should trust Christ at a young age (2Tim 3:15)!
  2. Fathers are not to \_\_\_\_\_ their children, but bring them up in the \_\_\_\_\_ (tender training) and \_\_\_\_\_ (encouragement) of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the father to instruct his children in *spiritual* things - it is not the church's, school's, or the Government's job! Provoking children (yelling at them) only \_\_\_\_\_ them (Col 3:21)
  3. A parent should teach the word of God \_\_\_\_\_ unto their children (Deut. 6:6,7). That means with a lot of time and effort!
  4. List the four areas that a child should mature and develop in, according to Luke 2:52 (*note: it is the parent's job to develop these areas*)
    - a. \_\_\_\_\_ - Bible learning and general education
    - b. \_\_\_\_\_ - by healthy eating and exercise for growth
    - c. \_\_\_\_\_ - pleasing to God – living by faith
    - d. \_\_\_\_\_ - being a blessing to others – hard working
- C. **Disciplining Children - The orderly and controlled manner of training (Titus 2:1-4; Eph 6:4) "*Bring them UP...*"**
1. **In their thoughts.** Have a Bible-centred home, with lots of Scripture and good books surrounding them. Also, HAVE DAILY DEVOTIONS!
  2. **In their daily walk.** Help them choose good friends, work on their composure, as well as to be clean, and look clean.
  3. **In their talk.** Develop their manners (to be courteous and say "*please,*" and "*thank you,*" and "*may I*").
  4. Children are **commanded** to \_\_\_\_\_ their parents (Eph 6:1), and not just in a few things but in \_\_\_\_\_ things (Col 3:20). *Teach them this!*
  5. Parents are God's representatives to their children. The fifth commandment **commands** children to \_\_\_\_\_ their parents (Exodus 20:12). The home is the training ground for the children, and there must be a consistent, spiritual atmosphere there for them to be able to see *how to live*, and *what is expected of them*.

6. Learn from *your own* \_\_\_\_\_ (Prov 13:1; 6:20)! Don't waste your life trying to prove you know better! Talk to them, and listen to them!
7. Our example of this is the Lord. "*Whom the Lord \_\_\_\_\_, He chasteneth*" (Hebrews 12:6) which means, "corrects" not punishes!
8. Is chastening supposed to be pleasant? \_\_\_\_\_ (Heb 12:11)
9. God chastens us as His children in order for us to be partakers of His \_\_\_\_\_ (Hebrews 12:9,10). That is the purpose of parental correction - to mature a child, and develop in them godliness!
10. The pattern in discipline - note that the Bible emphasizes *correction*, and not just punishment (Prov 22:15):
  - a. Set down clear and understandable rules in your home! Let your children know what is expected of them, and what will happen if they disobey. They don't need to live in fear of you!
  - b. Identify each violation - they have to know what they did wrong. Give patient and clear instructions when the child does wrong.
  - c. "*Chasten thy son while there is \_\_\_\_\_*" (Prov 19:18). Don't get into the habit of letting them "slide" by in their disobedience. It will come back and haunt you later!
  - d. Never yell or threaten! Speak firmly and exact the punishment right away (Eccl 8:11)! Don't repeat commands, and *don't count!*
  - e. Use a "rod." Not the hand, or a board, or a belt. A **Rod** is a small branch off a tree that *stings but does not bruise*.
  - f. **Love** your children after each time of chastening. This is a must!
11. Don't be afraid to have rules in your home. Not too many, but loads of them are just fine. Change the rules as the children grow older.
12. Never let the children think they have their own privacy. You must always have access to their emails if they have them, and their mobile/cell phones.
13. Reasons why a parent should discipline their children
  - a. Correction delivers the soul from \_\_\_\_\_ (Prov 23:13,14)
  - b. Correction establishes righteousness. "*\_\_\_\_\_ is bound in the heart of a child, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of correction will drive it far from him.*" (Pr 22:15)
  - c. "*A child left to himself bringeth his \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_*" (Pr 29:15)
  - d. Correction provides \_\_\_\_\_ for the parent. (Prov 29:17)
14. Some tips for disciplining children:
  - a. There is a certain method God gives parents to use in discipline. "*Thou shalt \_\_\_\_\_ him with the \_\_\_\_\_.*" (Prov 23:14) The corrective use of a small "stick" is not being abusive.
  - b. He that loveth his children chastens them \_\_\_\_\_ (Pr 13:24). This means *early* before their character is formed, and over and over (not just on occasion).
  - c. Should a parent withhold discipline when a child starts to cry? \_\_\_\_\_ (Prov 19:18). The child is smarter than you think!
  - d. Recognize children do not become perfect with one spanking - discipline is a long term process.
  - e. Never withdraw affection and love from your children.
  - f. Never spank in anger or out of embarrassment (Eccl 7:9)!
  - g. Never compare children with other children - this crushes them!
  - h. Don't ridicule or make fun of their weaknesses or handicaps.

- i. Allow children to express their viewpoint, keeping avenues of communication open. Let them know they are important to you!
- j. Admit mistakes when you make them. Live honestly and humbly.
- k. Give them nothing they cry for, and only that which they ask for politely. Don't be afraid to say "**no**" to your children when they want things they do not need.
- l. Be creative in your discipline - as they grow older:
  - 1) Restrict (ground) them from activities
  - 2) Give additional chores – this is always great!
  - 3) Restrict them from the telephone or other important items
  - 4) Remember making rules to protect them is your job! Don't be shy!

**XI. Lastly, Enjoy Your Children** – Make sure they know you love and enjoy them!

- A. When everything is said and done, rules and discipline without love only hurts a child.
- B. The greatest thing that God ever did for this world was LOVE it (**John 3:16**)! So make sure that everything you do, you do in great love for your children!

<i>Date Lesson Completed</i> _____	<i>Discipler</i> _____
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