

# Strengthening Your Marriage

## Review Lesson #2: Love That Lasts

1. How have you seen God's grace in your marriage? (1 Corinthians 4:7)
2. Where does the Word of God need to have more influence in your marriage?
3. How is your spouse better off by being married to you?
4. How do you know your husband or wife loves you?  
How do you personally express your love to your spouse?  
How do they especially appreciate love to be expressed?  
Words of encouragement      Acts of service  
Special gifts                      Quality time to talk together  
Physical touch                      Other: \_\_\_\_\_
5. How are you loving each other like Christ loves the Church (believers)?  
(Ephesians 5:22-33)

## Lesson #3:

### God-Given Roles And Responsibilities:

- There is much confusion in our culture as to what it means to be masculine/man or feminine/woman.
- Where do you turn to find answers? Who says?

#### Roles and Expectations In Your Marriage:

- Issue of frustration, disillusionment, disappointment

*What are you expecting from your partner in your marriage?*

*Are these realistic or unrealistic expectations?*

*What do you see specifically are the husband's roles and responsibilities in your marriage?*

*What do you see specifically are the wife's roles and responsibilities in your marriage?*

### The Negative Effects Of The Fall:

- Failure of men to lead, instruct, and protect women – Genesis 3:6
- Women taking on a role not given by God - Genesis 3:6
- The Fall created conflict between men/women - Genesis 3:7,12,16
- Woman's wrongful desire to usurp authority over her husband  
Genesis 3:16 "desire to conquer" (and man's abusive power)
- Loss of distinction between male/female  
Deuteronomy 22:5; 1 Corinthians 11:14,15
- Isaiah 3:12 Woman ruling men was God's judgment on a sinning nation.
- Romans 5:12,19 Sinful behavior effects everyone  
- "If you keep doing what you are doing, you'll only keep getting what you get."

### The Husband's Character, Roles, and Responsibility:

- Husbands are responsible to be the head of their home and have a major influence for good over their wife and family.
- 1 **Corinthians 11:3/Eph. 5:23** "The man is the head of his home."  
(headship, lovingly leading)
- Although the final decision is the father/husband's, he will still give serious consideration to his wife and children's opinions, desires, questions, suggestions, & fears.
  - Husbands, be very careful about forcing your opinions on your family. ("We're going to do it my way... I'm in charge...")
  - Never relinquish your role to lead your family as God desires.  
Two extremes: to dictate or to abdicate

**Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21** "Fathers..."

**Genesis 18:19** (Abraham) "He will direct his children and his household... to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just..."

1 **Timothy 3:4** "He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect."

**Hebrews 12:5-11** "For what son is not disciplined by his father... we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it... our father disciplined us for a little while as they thought best... " (the father is active/not passive)

**Proverbs 14:26** "In the fear of the LORD, there is strong confidence. And his children will have a place of refuge." (spiritual leadership)

1 **Thessalonians 2:11** "as a father would his children – exhorting, comforting, urging."

**Isaiah 38:19** "The father shall make known Your truth to the children."

**Psalms 78:3-8** "Our fathers have told us..." "He commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children..."  
**1 John 2:13,14** Fathers/young men/children; Fathers are seen as those who are mature and have a deep knowledge of God.

Husbands,

- *How are you leading with love in your home?* (Eph. 5:22-33)
- *How have you sacrificed yourself for your wife and children?*
- *What kind of example are you setting for your family?*  
(1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 4:9) (earned respect and submission)
- *How are you serving your wife and children?* (Matt. 20:25-28)
- *What are you protecting your wife and children from?*
- *How are you improving in your role as husband/father?*  
(Phil. 3:12-14 "I haven't attained it...I press toward the goal")

### Summary Of Distinctive Roles Of A Godly Man/Husband/Father:

Servant leader, Initiator – (Gen. 1:28-30; 2:15,19,20; Eph.5:23,25,28,29, 33, 1 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:12; Lk. 22:26) (decisiveness)

Disciplinarian – (1 Tim. 3:4,5; Ti. 1:6; Heb. 12:7-11; Eph. 6:4; Prov. 3:12)

Instructor – (Eph. 6:4; Prov. 4:1-7; Gen. 18:19' 1 Cor. 14:35)

Sacrificially love, cherish, nurture, and purify his wife – (Eph. 5:23-33; Col. 3:19)

Protector – (1 Pet. 3:7; Matt. 19:6; Num. 1:3)(courage, boldness, strength, a buffer, a rescuer)(*Is she overcommitted, or overwhelmed, vulnerable, or under extreme stress?*)

Provider – (1 Tim. 5:4,8; 2 Thess. 3:10) (hard worker/diligence)

Sensitive, understanding – (1 Pet. 3:7; Prov. 19:22)(humility, respectful, gentleness, kindness, tenderness, courteous, transparency)

Praying for one's children – (1 Chronicles 29:19; Job 1:5)

### The Wife's Character, Roles, And Responsibilities:

**Genesis 2:18**

- Suitable helper (responder, follower, complement)(1 Cor. 11:7,9)
- Primary role (to come along side her husband)
- *Wives, how are you your husband's helper?*
- *Have you been guilty of trying to rule over him?* (Gen. 3:16)

**Proverbs 1:8; 6:20** "do not forsake your mother's teaching.." (teaching/educating the children)

- *In what ways do you educate your children? How are you training them to leave home? (leave/cleave)*

**Proverbs 14:1** "A wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears her's down."

- Criticism and how a woman responds to her husband can either build up or tear down what she longs to have.
- *In what subtle ways can wives tear down their home?*

- *In what ways can wives wisely create an environment that builds up their husband and children? (cause to flourish)*

**Proverbs 31:10-31** (She provides a loving home environment.)

- 10 Virtuous (moral excellence/noble character -Ruth 3:11; Prov. 12:4)
- 11 Trustworthy (honesty, integrity, reliability, loyalty)
- 12 "She does him good and not evil all her days..."
- 13 Hard Worker/Diligent/Provides/Joyful/Balanced
- 15,17 Self-disciplined/Healthy/Stamina/Enduring (1 Cor. 6:19,20)
- 16,18 Economical/Frugal/A good steward/Not wasteful/Content
- 20 Unselfish/Hospitable/Thinks of others/Compassionate/Generous
- 21,27 Prepared/Plans ahead/Responsible for a well-managed home
- 25 Honorable/Dignified/Respected/Integrity/Reputation (23,31)
- 26 Prudent/Wise/Kind/Controls her tongue
- 28,29 Loved/Loving
- 30 God-fearing

- She sets an example for her children in the management of her home.

- *Is home a safe place?* (a place of refuge/encouragement/ a place of order/peace/appreciation/modeling a servant's heart, a quiet and gentle spirit/humility)

**Acts 9:36** Tabitha (Dorcas) "always doing good & helping the poor." "full of good works and acts of charity."

**Ephesians 5:22,24,33; Colossians 3:18,19; 1 Peter 3:1**

She lovingly submits to her husband's leadership (joyfully yields)

- under divinely appointed authority (Matt. 8:9)
- a wife's obedience or call to respect is not conditional on her husband's obedience or worthiness of respect.
- submission ≠ slavery, silence, or inferiority
- similar to Christ and the Church (Eph. 1:22)
- "in everything" (can't pick and choose)
- a wife is not bound if a husband leads her to sin "as is fitting to the Lord" (Acts 4:19; 5:29; 1 Pet. 3:6)
- "The wife must respect her husband." (right attitude) respectful thoughts (2 Cor. 10:5), words, & deeds
- responding to an unbelieving husband (1 Pet. 3:1,2 ; 1 Cor. 7:12-14)
- making a proper appeal to one's husband
- "mutual submission" (Eph. 5:21; Gal. 3:28)(Lk. 2:51)
- *Wives, what are ways you can practice submission and yield the final making of decisions to your husband? Example: Honey, what would you like me to do?*

- *Wives, when you disagree with your husband as to what to do as a couple/family – what is your normal pattern of exchange and what is the Biblical pattern to follow? How could this be a place of growth for your husband to learn to lead and you to learn to follow?*

*Questions to ask:*

- 1. Am I more aware of my husband's deficiencies or his strengths? (am I blind to my own shortcomings)*
- 2. Am I more inclined to criticize my husband or commend him? (verbally or in my thoughts)*
- 3. Have I failed to express respect for my husband because I'm so concerned about a particular area of sin in his life?*
- 4. What am I more aware of – my husband's efforts to lead or where he falls short in leadership?*
- 5. Do I honestly want to bare the responsibility to lead our home and think that role is best suited for me?*
- 6. Do you really trust God to lead your husband to lead you?*

**1 Timothy 2:9,10** Modesty/Decency/Propriety

Good deeds appropriate for Christian women

**1 Timothy 3:11** (Deacon's wives) "women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers, but temperate and trustworthy in everything."

**1 Timothy 5:9,10,14**

Faithful to marriage/husband

Good reputation (raising children/hospitality/service)

**Titus 2:4-5** "Train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husband..." ("husband-lovers")

- priority of women is their children and their home

- ways we can "leave" our home or be distracted (being idle and not industrious) (computer/phone/magazines/novels)

**1 Peter 3:1-6**

Submissive/obedient to husband (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; Titus 2:5)

Exemplary behavior (purity/reverence)

Modest in dress

Internal beauty (gentle/quiet spirit)

- "do not give way to fear"

**2 Timothy 1:5** "I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and I am persuaded, now lives in you also." (generational faith)

## Summary For Godly Wives:

Lovingly submit to their husbands and wisely nurture their home. Things a wife can do: pray for him, look for ways to understand and serve him, complement his weakness, learn to enjoy what he enjoys, treat him with respect in your thoughts, words, and deeds.

## Questions For Couples:

- *In what ways do you demonstrate your primary desire is to please your mate? (1 Corinthians 7:2,3,33,34)*
- *Do you delight in each other more than anyone or anything else? What means more to you? What would an outside person say? What would your kids say? (Prov. 5:18)*
- *How does your husband or wife complement your weaknesses to make your marriage relationship stronger as a couple?*
- *In what ways have you had unrealistic expectations of your mate?*
- *What goes on inside your mate's mind and heart? What questions do you need to ask to draw out those inner thoughts/feelings?(Prov. 20:5)*
- *What roles are you grateful for your spouse being obedient to the Lord?*
- *List 25 things you greatly appreciate about your spouse. Spend some time this week thanking God for His gracious gift of your spouse to you. Write a letter of love and thankfulness to your spouse.*

2 Corinthians 3:5 "Not that we are adequate in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God." (2 Tim. 3:17)