

Hold Fast!

Marriage Class

Understanding Biblical Marriage

God's original plan

Genesis 2:18-25

¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, **"It is not good that the man should be alone;** I will make him a helper fit for him." ¹⁹ Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. ²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Matthew 19:4 He answered, "Have you not read that **he who created them from the beginning made them male and female,** 5 and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

God is the one who desired for a man and a woman to be joined in holy matrimony.

Contract or covenant

There are two approaches to marriage: contract or covenant.

1-A contract is an agreement between two parties where the individuals will do something to get something. They are both expected to keep their end of the bargain in order for the contract to continue. The duration of the contract is dependent on the ability of each party to fulfil the clause of the contract: meeting each other's needs and desires. The ultimate goal is the participants happiness.

2-A covenant is a solemn and binding relationship between God and a husband and a wife which is meant to last a lifetime. It is a “walk into death” that produces a supernatural oneness between covenant partners. A covenant marriage is held together by the willingness to live by the right kind of constraints that enable you to freely love.

| Contract | Covenant |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>It's limited by its benefits. Looking to get- taker Non relational Forgiveness is not pursued. Self-serving No holiness required “I will, if you” attitude 50%/50% It becomes invalid when one of the parties violates it.</p> | <p>For a lifetime Looking to give- giver Relational Forgiveness is a given. Others oriented Holiness required- set apart “I will” mentality 100% Remains intact even if one of the parties breaches it.</p> |

Covenant marriages is the original plan that God desired for his people.

Mal 2:14 *But you say, “Why does he not?” Because the Lord was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant.*

Deut. 7:6-10 ⁶ “For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. ⁷ It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, ⁸ but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹ Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand

generations,¹⁰ and repays to their face those who hate him, by destroying them. He will not be slack with one who hates him.

Purposes of Marriage

1. First purpose: Marriage is a means of grace to conform each spouse to the image of Christ.

Romans 8: 28-29 *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*

Marriage is not for the sake of conforming my spouse to myself.

2 Peter 1:3-7 *“According as his divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that has called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: **that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature...**”*

a. In every situation we should ask, “How is God using this to conform me to His image?”

b. King David saw every situation as an instrument of God’s handiwork.

Psalm 119:75 *“I know, O Lord, that your judgments are right, and that in your faithfulness you have afflicted me.”*

Psalm 51:8 *“...that the bones which you have broken may rejoice.”*

c. The weaknesses, differences, and the circumstances of life in a couple are opportunities to experience the blessing and sovereignty of God.

d. They allow us to see that we need Christ and his love to live out our married life.

e. The differences between a husband and his wife are meant to accomplish specific spiritual purposes in each one.

f. They help us discover our blind spots.

g. Total intimacy and deep unity do not mean total uniformity or sameness.

2. Second Purpose: Marriage makes the gospel relevant and revealed.

Matthew 5: 14-16 *“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”*

Ephesians 5:32 *“This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”*

- a. The purpose of the Gospel is to establish a righteous relationship between God and His creation. The Gospel becomes relevant and is revealed in our marriage as we seek to be relational.

Proverbs 27:23 *“Be diligent **to know** the state of your flocks and look well to your herds.”*

2 Timothy 2:19 *“...The Lord **knows** they that are his...”*

1 John 3:20 *“...God is greater than our heart, and **knows** all things.”*

Psalms 139:2-3 *“You **know** my sitting down and my rising up; you **understand** my thoughts afar off. You **comprehend** my path and my laying down, and **are acquainted** with all my ways.”*

3. Third Purpose: Marriage creates a team to accomplish God’s mission for us: go and make disciples.

Genesis 2: 15-25 *“...It is not good for man to be alone: I will make him a help suitable for him...”*

- a. God desires that we work as a team to demonstrate His power and sovereignty over all of creation.

John 20:24-29 *“...unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe...Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at my hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving, **but believing.**”*

- b. Sharing your life with your children (natural disciples) and others (spiritual disciples). Show yourself vulnerable and honest and allow them to do the same.

John 15:15 *“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from my father I have made known to you.”*

- c. Examples of teamwork: Zacharias and Elizabeth: John the Baptist’s Parents

Luke 1:5-6 *“There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah: and his wife was the daughter of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.”*

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Biblical Roles in Marriage
Marriage Class

1. God established it from the beginning.

Genesis 2:7, 18, 22 "then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature...Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him...and the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man."

2. It demonstrates His character.

1 Corinthians 11:3 "But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband¹ and the head of Christ is God."

3. It is a visual of something greater.

Ephesians 5:32 "This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church"

4. Submission is to willingly and joyfully arrange myself under someone else. It's a demonstration of our trust of the Father.

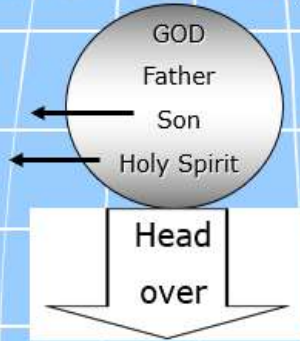
5. God commanded us to submit one to another.

Ephesians 5:21 "submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ."

*But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ;
and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.*

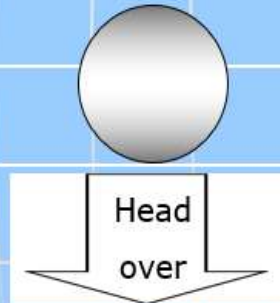
1 Cor. 11:3

**Willingly
places self
under**



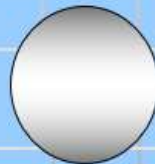
**Glorifies by
submission**

**Willingly
places self
under**



**Glorifies by
submission**

**Willingly
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under**



**Glorifies by
submission**

HOW DOES A WIFE WORK OUT HER ROLE?

Ephesians 5:24, 33 “Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.... and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”

Respect:

Regard, prefer, esteem, praise, admire exceedingly, reverence.

1. Keeping your eyes fixed on Jesus as Shepherd and Bishop.

1 Peter 2:21- “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”

2. Communicate clearly.

Letting your husband know how he can protect you.

Proverbs 31:26 “She opens her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.”

Physical

Mental

Emotional

Spiritual

3. Loyalty

Demonstrate greater loyalty to your husband's leadership than to any other.

Parents

Friends

Church leaders

Relatives

Ephesians 5: 24 "Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands".

- a. Encourage your husband to share his deepest desires and thoughts

Proverbs 31:11-12 "The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life."

- b. Share your spiritual inquiries with him.

1 Corinthians 14:35 "And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

4. Trust

Demonstrate trust that God is working through him.

- a. Encourage him to fulfill his God-given responsibilities and to put to use his gifts.

Proverbs 31:26 "She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue."

- b. Share with your husband how God has used his mistakes to benefit your life.

Romans 8:28 “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”

- c. Keep in mind that your husband is only a channel of blessing or correction to conform you to Christ.

Romans 8:29 “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.”

Proverbs 31:25 “Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come.”

- d. Show loyalty during times of adversity.

Job’s wife was not loyal to her husband in his time of need.

- e. Share his enthusiasm for the direction and vision God has given him.

Example: Sarah went with Abraham to a land she didn’t know.

- f. Let him know you are grateful for the challenges he takes on, even if he fails.

Proverbs 31: 12 “She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.”

5. Let him know how he has demonstrated Christ to you in practical ways.

Hebrews 12: 1-3 “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.”

Praise examples taken from Psalms 15

- When he refuses to be a gossip
- When he doesn't do evil to his neighbor
- When he doesn't take up an offense
- When he keeps his promises

Praise examples taken from 1 Timothy 3:2-8

- When he demonstrates honesty by having a clear conscience
- When he displays wisdom
- When he is hospitable
- When he is generous
- When he shows patience

6. Sanctify him.

Jeremiah 31:22 "How long will you waver, O faithless daughter? For the Lord has created a new thing on the earth: a woman encircles a man."

Psalms 93:5 "Your decrees are very trustworthy; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore. "

- a. Look at him with admiration and attentiveness when he speaks to you and others.
- b. Intercede for him.
- c. Share your verbal blessings with him.
- d. Make your commitment to him very clear to your friends and relatives.

7. Be trustworthy.

Proverbs 31: 11-12 “The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.”

Make available to him the full use of your talents and abilities.

Proverbs 31:13-14 “She seeks wool and flax and works with willing hands. She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar.”

- a. Show interest in his struggles and goals.
- b. Promote loyalty and admiration to your husband in the children. Your children are susceptible to your attitudes.
- c. Share with enthusiasm God’s vision for your household.

Titus 2:5 “...to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.”

Your home is the center for:

Learning

Hospitality

Craft

Health

Ministry to the lost

8. Continue to develop inner and outward beauty.

Beauty starts in the heart.

1 Peter 3:3-4 3 "Do not let your adorning be external- the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear- but let your adorning be the hidden man of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious."

Titus 2:5 "..to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled."

Meek: Yielding your rights to God and trusting Him with the desires of your heart. Willingly limiting your freedom.

Quiet Spirit: Trusting your fears and worries to God.

b. Your outward appearance is an expression of reverence.

Proverbs 31:22 "She makes bed coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. "

Modesty is always in style.

9. Present a wise appeal when your husband steps out of his God-given limitations.

1 Peter 3:1-2 "Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct."

- Make your appeal based on scripture, family goals, his reputation, and authority.
- Make it at the right time.
- Share all necessary information clearly.

10. Be his passionate lover.

1 Corinthians 7:3 “Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.”

- * A wife can't respond sexually to her husband if there is no emotional unity or forgiveness.
- * Your husband is your priority.
- * Save some of your energy for him.

Helper: Being so committed to Christ in your marriage that you will be willing to risk the security of self-protection without being given to fear of showing yourself vulnerable, while constructively and with precision sharing the deepest feelings of your heart; honestly expressing your evaluation of your relationship- positive or negative- in such a way that your husband could live with you in an understanding way and could tend to your needs as Christ does.

HOW DOES A HUSBAND WORK OUT ROLES?

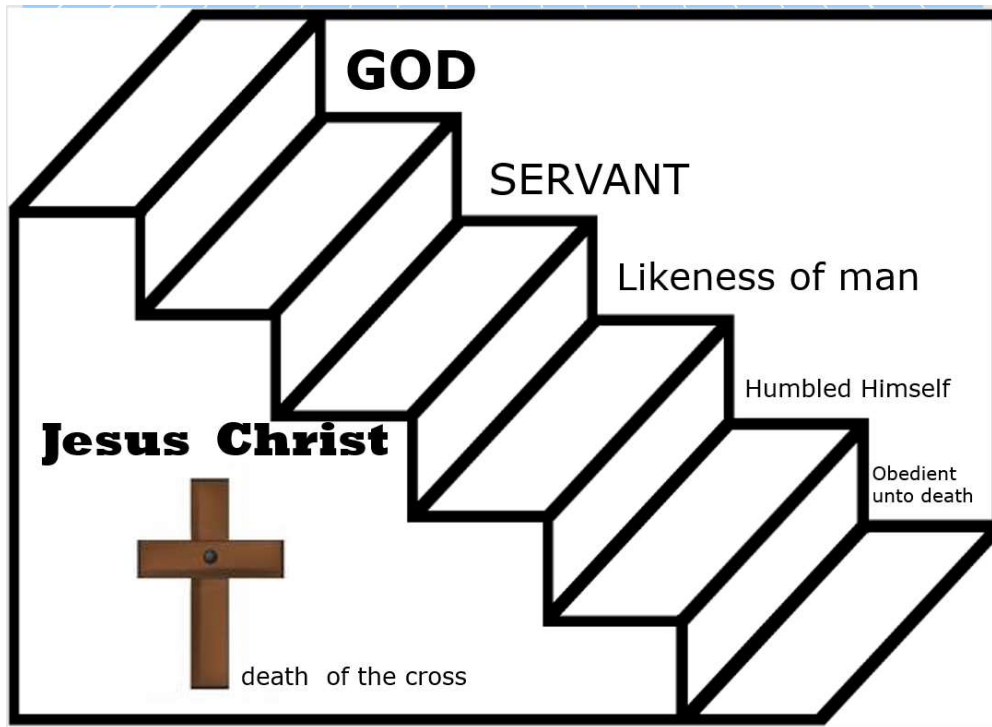
1. Loving her.

Ephesians 5:25-27 “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.”

2. Dying to self- humbling yourself- yielding rights.

a. *Ephesians 5:25 “..and gave himself up for her.”*

Philippians 2:5-11 “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”



b. There is no such thing as a 50/50 marriage.

c. *Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."*

3. By living with her in an understanding way.

a. Learn to live with her according to God's design for a woman

1 Peter 3:7 "Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."

Psalms 116:11 "I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy."

b. Giving credibility to your wife's comments.

Genesis 2:18 “Then the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”

4. By nourishing and cherishing her.

Ephesians 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church,

Nourish: To feed and bring to maturity.

- a. Providing for basic needs.

1 Timothy 5:8 “But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

- b. Affirming her spirit and providing for her emotional needs.

Song of Solomon 4:7 “You are all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.”

Ephesians 5:26-27”...that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.”

Cherish: To give warmth, to provide a tender love, to appreciate, to value, to esteem. To go out of our way to show it off, to protect it, and honor it. To hold it dear.

- a. By reviewing and approving of commitments.

Numbers 30:13-15 “Any vow and any binding oath to afflict herself, her husband may establish, or her husband may make void. But if her husband says nothing to her from day to day, then he establishes all her vows or all her pledges that are upon her. He has established them, because he said nothing to her on the day that he heard of them. But if he makes them null and void after he has heard of them, then he shall bear her iniquity.”

b. Be alert at her attempts to please you- praise her. Tell her how she has blessed you.

c. Don't laugh at or belittle the little things she does for you.

d. Express appreciation and respect for her insights, ideas, questions, prayers, character, opinion as well as her cooking, etc.

e. Purpose to not let your wife face her enemies alone.

-Depression

-Wounds

-Misunderstandings -Lies from the enemy, etc.

5. Serve her.

a. It's not about you.

Matthew 20: 25-28 "But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

"IF YOU HAVE A SERVANTS HEART; YOU WILL ACT AS A SERVANT; AND WILL RESPOND AS A SERVANT WHEN TREATED AS A SERVANT."

b. Jesus washed the disciples' feet. John 13:1-15

6. Show determination- be a leader

Hebrews 12: 1-2 let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

- a. A spiritual leader is a man that has the ability to perceive the spirit of his wife; understands the need of her spirit and knows how to care for that need. He is made ready and able to serve God by caring for the spirit of his wife in such a way that it would cause her to mature spiritually. (Ken Nair)

Model what needs to happen in your home-Christian disciplines= prayer, reading and studying scripture, service, fasting, etc.

7. Communicate the Word of God to your wife.

- a. Present God's vision for the family clearly.

Genesis 1 and 2- God gave specific instructions to Adam to communicate to Eve.

Genesis 12:1-5- Abraham communicated God's vision for them to Sarah.

- b. Take initiative to seek the Lord in prayer and in the Scriptures together daily.

Matthew 4:4 "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

8. Be her passionate lover.

1 Corinthians 7:3 "Let the husband render unto his wife due benevolence and likewise also the wife unto the husband."

- a. "Be benevolent"

- b. Let her know you are satisfied with her.

Proverbs 5:15 "Drink water from your own cistern, flowing water from your own well."

- b. Don't make comparisons.

Proverbs 5: 18 "Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love."

- c. Honor, protect, and encourage her during her cycle or through menopause.

- d. Go to God to have all your needs met, remember she is a channel of God's blessing not the source.

Psalms 23:1 "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

Psalms 73:25 "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you."

COTV

Trust and Intimacy

Marriage Class

How do we develop trust and intimacy?

1. Forsake all others.

Avoid “twoness thinking”

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become **one flesh**. Gen 2:24*

-Self - Parents -Hobbies - Friends - Careers

You must make your spouse priority.

Avoid things that will distract you from cultivating your relationship with your spouse.
Do not let the good things in life keep you from the best—your spouse.

2. Be HOT.
 - a. Honest – Open-Transparent

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 1John 1:7

- b. Whether we realize it or not we filter our communication.

Gender History Past trauma

Spiritual Gifts Personalities Upbringing

- c. Be accountable to your spouse first then others.
Understand the difference between accountability and confession.
- d. Deal with the issue as soon as possible- Do not ignore the elephant in the room.

3. Become a refuge.
 - a. Always invite God into every situation
 - b. Do not overreact when your spouse brings issues or concerns to you.
 - c. Don’t shut out or tune out your spouse when they are speaking.

- d. Ask questions that will develop your understanding of where your spouse is coming from or the particular situation you are facing.
- e. Focus on your spouse's perspective and discern the real need.
- f. Encourage each other in the Lord.

4. Forgive one another.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Col. 3:12-13

5. Develop rules of engagement.

- a. Learn to fight fair.
- b. Develop a plan of action for when the crisis comes.

6. Keep short accounts.

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger... Eph. 4:26

Intimacy

Back in Genesis God set the stage for Adam's relationship with Eve to flourish.

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." ... So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed." Gen 2:18-25

Adam had a spiritual realization after he woke up from the sleep God put him under. God had made a being from his flesh. This awakening was the beginning of their spiritual intimacy. Both realized that their purpose was to reflect God in their oneness.

The second thing Adam experienced was an emotional connection with Eve. He exclaims, “bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.” Although his words may not sound like much to us today, they show Adam’s emotional response to what he just experienced and was a witness to.

Third, the Bible says Adam “joined” with Eve, which is understood to be a physical union. That was the beginning of their physical intimacy, an expression that first began spiritually and then emotionally.

How do we develop intimacy?

Spiritual intimacy.

1. Pray together.

Prayer creates spiritual intimacy because listening to your spouse’s conversations with God allows you to see deeper inside them.

- a. Don’t use big words or your prayer voice or flowery words which can seem pretentious and make your spouse feel that they don’t know how to pray.
- b. There’s no formula to praying together: either spouse can start, you can pray more than once, your prayers can be short or long, etc.
- c. Find a convenient time. If you don’t plan you will not pray together.
- d. If you miss a day, don’t allow inner condemnation, start up the next day.

2. Worship together.

Do you worship together? Do you regularly seek and experience God’s presence with your spouse? Do you sing together? If you answer, yes, at church! Then, you are missing the point.

Worship should happen more often than just on Sundays.

Sing together out loud, raise your hand, kneel, cry unto the lord, etc.

3. Meditate on God’s Word together.

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Heb. 4:12

- a. Use a reading plan.
 - b. Study specific passages.
 - c. Listen to sermons together and discuss what is God saying to you.
4. Bearing and sharing each other's burdens.

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Gal. 6:2

5. Encourage each other unto good works.

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing. 1Thes. 5:11

But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Heb. 3:13

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Heb. 10:24-25

Emotional intimacy

1. Be affectionate.
 - a. Tell him/her how much you love them and appreciate them.
 - b. Use the love languages to communicate love to your spouse:
 - Act of service
 - Physical touch
 - Words of affirmation
 - Gift giving/receiving
 - Quality time
 - c. Be attentive
 - Be mindful of their effort to please you and the family.
 - Pay them compliments-

“Your hair looks amazing.”
“You look beautiful in that dress.”
“I love the way you handle that situation.”
“Your calmness really blesses me.”
“Thank you for cleaning/cooking/washing etc.”

2. Be known

The purpose in a person's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out. Prov. 20:5

Emotional intimacy is being known and being sure that you are fully accepted, loved, and respected.

- a. Give credibility to each other's emotions.
- b. Ask question to know their true feelings-
 - What are you thinking and feeling?
 - When was the first time you felt like that?
 - How often do you feel this way?
 - What happened in your life that made you feel that way?
 - When you feel like this, what does it make you want to do?
 - What do these feelings make you feel about yourself?

3. Have empathy and compassion.

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Heb. 12:5

Empathy is the ability to understand and relate to another person's feelings.

Compassion is when you care for the other person in a deeper way.

We feel emotional connected with those that mirror our emotions.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Col. 3:12

4. Listen to understand

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger. James 1:19

Listen:

To hear intelligently, diligently, to discern, to perceive, to understand.

Physical intimacy

1. It's like a "mountain climb experience"

Our physical intimacy is an all-day ongoing development that might culminate on sexual release.

- a. How are you connecting to your spouse throughout the day?
- b. Are you aware of the spiritual and emotional components of your sexuality?
- c. Healthy nonsexual touch:
 - Morning kiss
 - Holding hands when walking or driving
 - Hugs
 - Caresses
 - Massages
 - Stroking of the hair

2. Take ownership of your own sexuality- God created you as a sexual being.

- a. Take responsibility for sex before marriage.
- b. Deal and resolved your body issues.
- c. Look for healing from any sexual trauma or abuse from your past.
- d. Learn to be comfortable with your sexuality.

3. Overcome lust.

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

1 Thes. 4:3-8

Porn
Masturbation

Fantasy

- a. Humble yourself
- b. Confess your sin- be open about your struggles and failures.
Be willing to be known.
- c. Find true repentance about your sins- walk in brokenness.
Do not demand forgiveness.
- d. Stop blaming others. Take personal responsibility.
- e. Seek help to overcome.
You must have the belief and desire in order to be free.

4. Love sharing: sexual act.

Remember that our sex is three dimensional where we nurture each other's spirit, soul, and body.

- a. Be a giver not a taker.
- b. Remember that our sexual experience involves all 5 senses
 - Touch-** caress one another, use essential oils. Take the time to know your spouse's body.
 - Taste-** Songs of Salomon speaks of the many tastes of their love
As an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. With great delight I sat in his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. Songs 2:3
 - Smell-** *Awake, O north wind, and come, O south wind! Blow upon my garden, let its spices flow. Songs 4:16*
 - Hearing-** praise and nurture one another, go deeper than just complementing the body- speak of your spirit and souls. Sex is a time of verbal celebration of your spouse.
 - Vision-** Lights on, have a light on so you can enjoy and appreciate each other. Look into each other's eyes during orgasm. It creates a connection of your souls. "Sex glue"
- c. Stay with in holy parameter and boundaries. Do not defraud your spouse.
Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. 5 Keep your life free from covetousness, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you. Heb. 13:4-5

COTV

FORGIVENESS

Marriage Class

*Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
as God in Christ forgave you. Eph.4:32*

1. Forgiveness does not mean you will forget the offense, or you pretend that it never happened.

“For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jer. 31:34b

2. *Forgiveness does not mean that there are no consequences for wrongdoing.*

3. Forgiveness does not mean you automatically trust your offender completely.

4. Forgiveness does not mean that you are automatically healed of your emotional pain.

5. Forgiveness is not the same thing as reconciliation.

Forgiveness is the willingness to release the one who has wounded you into God’s hands, to stop trying to extract payment for their wrong deeds, and the willingness to live with the scars resulting from the offense.

Offenders Should Take The Opportunity To Ask For Forgiveness

1. Offenders should ask for forgiveness not demand it- a beggar's attitude.
2. Don't blame, explain, or complain-take full responsibility for your actions.
3. Ask your spouse how your offense made them feel- touch the wound.
4. Acknowledge your spouse's emotional pain.
5. Commit to not let the offense happen again.
6. Agree on action steps that will build greater intimacy.

COTV
Conflict Resolution
Marriage Class

Conflict: A clash, contention, or sharp disagreement

“INTENSE FELLOWSHIP”

Couples often differ in their beliefs, ideas, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors. Like with many things, the differences are not the problem but rather how we deal with them. Most people do not deal openly/well with conflict because no one has ever taught or model effective ways to do so. Conflicts handled properly can provide growth and strength to a relationship. On the flip side, unresolved and buried conflicts arise from their graves and interfere with growth and satisfying relationships.

Think of an area of conflict in your life, now with that in mind:

What does “completely resolved” mean to you?

Some people have learned to use behavioral, nonviolent weapons in dealing with conflicts.

What are some unfair weapons?

- a. Anger results from three basic triggers: hurt, fear, or frustration.
- b. What effect does anger have upon resolving conflicts?
- c. What do the following verses have to say about how to handle anger?

Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city. Proverbs 16:32

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger. Ephesians 4:26

DEALING WITH CONFLICTS

We choose to approach conflict using these five styles:

1. Withdrawing/Avoiding

Choosing not to get involved in conflict; let others make decisions about the conflict situation. (Conflict? What conflict?)

2. Competing

Pursuing your own interest before anyone else's interest (Do it my way or not at all)

3. Accommodating

Puts the interest and desires of others in front of their own. ("Whatever you say.") Relationship is maintained but goals are sacrificed. "Peace" at all costs.

4. Compromising

Satisfying some personal interest, but willing to give things up for a mutually acceptable decision. ("I'll give you this if you give me that.")

5. Collaborating/problem-solving

Conflicts are changed by open and direct communication. The relationship is strengthened as you seek to meet personal needs. Instead of demanding to be heard, you choose to listen carefully (Prov. 18:13 and James 1:19). You seek to understand your spouse's point of view. You are open to their feelings, observations, suggestions and honor their vulnerability. You are willing to take responsibility for your contribution to the problem. You are willing to defer to each other's strengths and to cooperate to come up with creative solutions.

Helpful hint on resolving conflicts

"Apply your heart to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge." Pro. 28: 12

1. Listen to your spouse.

2. Select an appropriate time to approach the issue.

To make an apt answer is a joy to a man, and a word in season, how good it is!
Prov. 15:23

3. Both should state the problem from your perspective and find areas where you agree.

4. P R= Personal Responsibility- take ownership of your part in the conflict.

5. Ask your spouse to shares their feelings, be open to their feelings, observations, and suggestions. Watch out for defensiveness.

Develop rules of engagement:
