

# Chapter Six

## Husband:

### Love Wife By Meeting Her Emotional Needs

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The vows of the husband to God concerning his relationship with his wife.

Chapter Five: Spiritual leadership of the family

➤ ***Chapter Six: Love wife by sacrificially meeting her emotional needs.***

Chapter Seven: Trusting and truthful relationship

Chapter Eight: Providing for your wife's material needs

Chapter Nine: Making the home and family a priority

Chapter Ten: Submission to her husbands leadership

Chapter Eleven: Creating a home which is a refuge for her husband

Chapter Twelve: Being a helpmate and companion in his life's pursuits

Chapter Thirteen: Insuring that the marriage is a sexually fulfilling one

Chapter Fourteen: Giving her husband respect in both the public and private realms of his life

# Bible Study

## Chapter Six

Scripture Memory Verse –

***Ephesians 5:33 Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.***

Back Review:

- Matthew 19:4 - 6
- Proverbs 2:16 & 17
- Malachi 2:14
- Mark 10:9
- Malachi 2:16
- Mark 10:11 & 12
- Joshua 1:8
- II Timothy 3:16 & 17
- Ephesians 5:25 & 26
- Ephesians 6:4

## Before we begin...

Needs are not imperfections nor are they sin, God created Adam perfect, “good” yet he had needs only Eave could meet. Adam was created perfect, yet it was not good that he live alone. By recognizing covenant needs we are not isolating imperfections in our spouse. By meeting these covenant needs we are desiring to be a piece of the puzzle created by God. God creates the spouse with the void that only our piece can fill. In doing so it is not simply a legal contractual relationship that we do out of a sense of burden, honor or sacrifice based on our spouses imperfections and sin. Rather we are saying, “I want to be the one used by God to meet this need for a lifetime. Out of love, I want to be the one who serves my spouse in this area.” For the husband, this means that if he, as Ephesians 5:25 commands, is to love his wife as “Christ loved the Church”, then those verses which define Christ’s undying love for the us, also define the husbands undying love for his wife. For the wife, this means that if she, as Ephesians 5:24 commands, is to be subject to her husband “as the Church is subject to Christ”, then those verses which define the Church’s undying love for Christ also define the wife’s undying love for her husband. The covenant need we are about to study in this chapter is not one which manifests itself from the selfish sinful nature of your spouse but rather it was created by God, it is good and you were created to meet this need. This means that...

**A wife's emotional needs, are created by God, as lasting and legitimate needs, for which she has no moral outlet outside of marriage.**

## **Loving Your Wife As Christ Loved The Church**

When a husband enters into the marriage covenant he agrees, as stated in Ephesians 5:25, to love his wife as Christ loved the Church. (It does not say “in the same way” but rather “as”. This has to do with intensity and not equality, not methodology.) The word of God then goes on to state in Ephesians 5:33 “*Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself*”. The first passage has to do with the spiritual needs of our wife, while this second verse specifically brings into play the concept of “self”. In this verse we are instructed to put our wife's emotions, her ego, her self esteem and emotional needs on the same level as our own. It is not that we no longer consider ourselves when making decisions, it is just that now, when making a decision, we bring our wife's emotional needs up to the same level as our own. We don't just think about what or how “I am doing”, we now think about how “we are doing”. This however goes against the culture of self – awareness, self preservation; self actualization; self conscious; self taught; self help; self made man; ... the list goes on. We are indeed a self centered culture (self centered; self pity; selfish... this list could be equally as long). It will require concerted efforts for us as husbands to love our wives as we do our selves.

The Word of God says in Romans 12:2 “*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*” But how do we do this? How do we transform our mind? The Word of God itself gives the key. Jesus Christ prayed in John 17:17 "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth." The Word of God sanctifies us. The Word of God sets us apart. If we do not want to be conformed to this world, then we must be set apart by the Word of God. Our minds must be renewed and given a new orientation apart from this present fallen culture.

The first step in this process will be understanding exactly what the Word of God says in this verse. In doing this verse study, give the meaning for each of the following words or phrases from Ephesians 5:25 & 33

*Husbands* (does not say “see to it” or “delegate” but speaks directly to husband)

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*Wives* (does not say “family”)

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*Love* (does not say “think about”)

---

*Gave Himself up for her* (does not say “purchased”)

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*Individual* (does not say “church”)

---

*Love his own wife* (does not say “house”)

---

*Even as himself* (does not say “methods”)

---

Now in the space below paraphrase this verse in your own words. When you paraphrase a passage you re-write the passage in your own words using vernacular, slang, culture and expanding on it to “flesh it out”. Re-read Ephesians 5:25 & 33 then paraphrase these two passages in the space below. Do not use any of the original key words or phrases found in the passage in your paraphrase. It should instead look completely different while presenting the core truths and meanings in a new and different way. Have Fun!!!

To help you think creatively we are supplying Ephesians 5:33 in three translations...

***Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.***

***Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.***

**(KJV)**

***However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.***

**(NIV)**

## Sacrificial Service

In the Christian family it is not uncommon for the husband to see his rule or headship in worldly terms. When the husband thinks of his headship, his leadership, his rule, his authority, it is only natural for him to translate these terms into the cultural norm of the day, to see them as the world presents them. The husband's headship, leadership, rule and authority is not to be carried out in a worldly way but rather spiritual. He is not to do that which is natural but rather supernatural, he is to lead as Christ lead, rule as Christ ruled, not as man.

In the following passages, how are we to both view and address Jesus? Circle the key word or phrase that illustrates how Jesus was addressed or how He is to be addressed.

**John 21:7** *That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." And so when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea.*

**Acts 7:59** *And they went on stoning Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!"*

**I Corinthians 1:3** *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Philippians 2:11** *and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**1 Timothy 6:14-15** *that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time-- He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords;*

**Revelations 15:3** *And they sang the song of Moses the bond-servant of God and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Thy ways, Thou King of the nations.*

**Revelations 17:14** *"These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."*

Yet how do the actions of Christ contrast with His position and titles in the following passages? Read each verse and circle the word or phrase which describes or defines Christ's exercise of His rule and authority.

**Mark 10:45** *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

**Luke 22:25 – 27** *And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.' "But not so with you, but let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as the servant. "For who is*

*greater, the one who reclines at the table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.*

**John 13:13 – 15** *"You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.*

**Ephesians 5:2** *and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.*

**Ephesians 5:25** *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;*

Christ is our "Lord" yet He comes as a sacrificial servant. If we love our wives as Christ loves the church, what will our relationship be with them and to them? Complete the chart below by filling in the correct terms for the husband.

<b>Christ Is</b> <b><u>Lord</u></b>	<b>Yet</b> <b><u>Servant</u></b>
<b>The husband is</b> _____	<b>Yet</b> _____

Many couples live at one of two extremes. In some marriages the husband is the head of the home in a worldly or authoritarian manner. In others, in an attempt to break out of this mold, the husband abrogates his position of headship and he and his wife serve as co-heads of the home. In both marriages the result is the same, a worldly marriage based on personal rather than Biblical values.. Discuss with your wife these two tendencies.

How can a husband be the head of the home, yet a loving servant?

Does the fact that Christ is a servant leader diminish His authority in our lives?

Does the fact that the husband is a servant leader diminish his authority in the home?

Does the fact that Christ is a strong leader mean that He is a poor listener?

Can the husband appeal to his role as a leader to explain his poor listening skills?

## Being A Good Listener

God is the best listener in our life. No matter our conduct, no matter the situation, no matter the circumstances, no matter day or night, God will give us His full and undivided attention. Can you imagine this scenario – “It is late at night, you are having trouble getting to sleep, you are tossing and turning, finally you sit up in bed, turn on the light and begin to pour your heart out to God. There is a moment of strained silence and then God speaks to you, “What! Not now, it is late at night. Where was all this when you prayed at the dinner table, what about your afternoon break, why not then, why now?! It is late, I am trying to sort things out on the other side of the world. I have all sorts of people getting up and praying and now you bring this up. Don’t you have any sense of timing. Listen, just put a cork on it and we’ll work this out in the morning.” No, God never says that, God will always give you His complete attention.

If we love our wives the way Christ loves the church we too will be good listeners. Our willingness to give our wife our undivided attention will be unconditional. Whether it is late at night, during a sporting event, during a TV show, when we are tired, stressed out, it will not matter. We will give our wives our complete and unconditional attention, just as God does us. We will respond to our wife as we have come to expect God to respond to us. Our wife will get to the point where she will just take this for granted, even at times seemingly taking advantage of us in this area, just as we have come to take God’s willingness to listen to us for granted and seemingly taking advantage of Him. Only we are not taking advantage of Him because He wants us to come to Him and our wives will slowly realize that she cannot take advantage of us because we too want her to come to us because we love her just as Christ loves us.

The following passages depict our relationship with God. Each illustrates what a great listener God is.

- First circle the key words that in some way speak to God’s willingness to be a good listener.
- Next, below each passage summarize, **not, the contents of the passage**, but rather, **the accessibility and responsiveness of God to our emotional needs.**

**Matthew 11:28 – 30** *"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light."*

**Philippians 4:6 & 7** *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

**Hebrews 4:16** *Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.*

Now consider these same passages in the context of loving your wife as Christ loved the church. One of the ways Christ expresses His unconditional love for us is by His willingness to listen to our prayers. If we are to love our wife as Christ loves the church, how will this same love be manifested in our marriage? Consider this as you complete the project below. Read the passage, list any key words under the passage, then beside each passage, write out how this would look in terms of your accessibility and responsiveness to your wife's emotional needs.

### **As Jesus loved us, so we love our wives...**

	<b>How Jesus loves us...</b>	<b>How a husband would similarly love his wife...</b>
<b>Matthew 11: 28 – 30</b> <b>List key words below...</b>		
<b>Philippians 4:6 &amp; 7</b> <b>List key words below...</b>		
<b>Hebrews 4:16</b> <b>List key words below...</b>		

**Hypocrisy In Our Marriage**

Jesus often attacked the Pharisees of His day for their hypocrisy. One characteristic of a hypocrite is that he requires of others a standard which he on the other hand is not willing to apply to himself. An example of this is in Matthew 23:1-5 ...*" The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them. They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger . But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men..."* Many husbands are hypocrites in their relationship with their wives in the area of being a good listener. They have a completely different standard in their relationship with God than they are willing to apply in their relationship with their wife. They say they are not good listeners, they say they are not the talkative type but these statements are in reality the shallow lie of the hypocrite. These husbands pray all the time to God and expect God to listen when they pray. These same husbands expect God to speak to them, day or night, assuring them over and over of His love when they are uncommunicative with their wives. This is simply hypocrisy and it is important for husbands to recognize this hypocrisy if it is at work into heir marriages.

The project below will contrast your relationship with God and your wife. By carefully filling it out you can recognize and correct any hypocrisy in your marriage.

<b>AREA OF COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD</b>	<b>OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR WIFE</b>	<b>ARE WE CONSISTANT OR HYPOCRITES</b>
<b>Repeating the same problem or issue</b>			
<b>Going into detail with our request or problem</b>			
<b>Not getting all the facts straight</b>			
<b>Late at night</b>			
<b>When busy</b>			
<b>Unloading or expressing our frustrations.</b>			

## **Being A Good Talker**

### **A Willingness To Share Openly With Her**

Trust is an integral part of any relationship. Two key aspects of trust are communication – that you trust the person to be able to handle and respond to what is being said and the second is stewardship – that you trust the person with your possessions, you trust the person to be a wise steward of possessions. In God’s relationship with us He specifically trusts us in both of these areas, both in communication and stewardship. No matter how difficult the information may be to process God carefully and truthfully reveals to us His will and His concerns. God does not simply reveal to us the truths of heaven, but also of Hell, not simply salvation but also judgment, not simply His blessings but also the curses, God trusts us with the truth. Similarly no matter how valuable the possession, God trusts us to be good stewards – stewards of children, the spiritual care of men and women in the church, the Word of God, the list goes on. Man is continually unfaithful to God yet the stewardship is not withdrawn. Man responds incorrectly to the truth yet God’s faithfulness remains the same.

If we are to love our wives as Christ loves the church then we too must be willing to trust our wives. Trust them by revealing to them our deepest concerns. Not simply the good news but also the bad. As Christ is patient with us as we process and come to understand the truth of the Word of God so we must be patient with our wives. When as young non-Christians or young Christians we responded wrongly to such hard truths as hell, election or the persecutions and terrors of the end times - God did not say, “OK, if you can’t handle it then no more revelation, no more truth!” No God was patient with us and continues to be patient with us. In the same way we must respond with the same understanding and patience with our wives when they respond in an immature way to our transparency of difficulties in our lives..

If we are to love our wives as Christ loves the church then we too must be willing to trust our wives. Trust them by sharing in the stewardship of our possessions. Not simply token spending money or token budgeting but clear ownership and sharing in the finances and running of the family. As Christ is patient with us as we fumble with the stewardship of our children, the spiritual care of men and women, the Word of God, so we must be patient with our wives. God did not entrust these areas to us only to withdraw them as we fumbled and struggled with their stewardship. God did not say, “Forget it, I will handle these things myself!” No God was patient with us and continues to be patient with us as we learn to be good stewards and we must respond with the same understanding and patience with our wives.

In the passages below, we see the trusting relationship God has with us. God communicates freely with us about very real and difficult trusts. Can any of us honestly say, that our response to truth has earned us this trust? Consider how this translates into your open and honest communication with your wife. If God only trusted you to the degree of your proper response, how many pages would there be in your Bible? How much more should we be willing to trust our wives with open and honest communication, even though she may not respond in the right manner. If God only entrusted to us that which we cared for in a completely responsible manner, how many children would He have given you, how many spiritual gifts? Who can say they have earned the trust of God through their behavior in terms of the stewardship of the Word of God?

If God can be patient with us as we learn to accept and respond correctly to His openness and honesty, how much more should we be patient with our wives? If God can be patient with us as we learn to accept responsibility in the area of stewardship, how much more should we be patient with our wives?

Many husbands seek to protect their wives from the difficulties and hurts they are experiencing in their day to day lives. The fact is though that your wife was created and called to be your helpmate. She can't be your helpmate if you wont let her help you. She can't be your helpmate if you wont communicate to her the hurts and pains you are experiencing in life.

In the following project:

- Read the passage
- Circle the key words which reveal God's level of trust
- Next categorize it as communication or stewardship,
- Then record the area of trust God has extended to us
- Lastly record what this would look like in a marriage if we loved our wife the way Christ loved the church.

Read the passage

Circle the key words which reveal God's level of trust

**GEN 1:29 & 30** *Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food ";and it was so.*

Now categorize it as communication or stewardship: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of trust extended by God:

Did Adam prove himself trustworthy?

Application in our marriage:

Read the passage

Circle the key words which reveal God's level of trust

**Proverbs 3:9-10** *Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your produce; So your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.*

Now categorize it as communication or stewardship: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of trust extended by God:

Application in our marriage:

Read the passage

Circle the key words which reveal God's level of trust

***John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.***

Now categorize it as communication or stewardship: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of trust extended by God:

Application in our marriage:

Read the passage

Circle the key words which reveal God's level of trust

***Luke 24:27 And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.***

Now categorize it as communication or stewardship: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of trust extended by God:

Application in our marriage:

Read the passage

Circle the key words which reveal God's level of trust

***John 15:15 "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.***

Now categorize it as communication or stewardship: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of trust extended by God:

Application in our marriage:

Read the passage

Circle the key words which reveal God's level of trust

***Acts 1:8 but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."***

Now categorize it as communication or stewardship: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of trust extended by God:

Application in our marriage:

Read the passage

Circle the key words which reveal God's level of trust

***Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.***

Now categorize it as communication or stewardship: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of trust extended by God:

Application in our marriage:

Read the passage

Circle the key words which reveal God's level of trust

***Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John,***

Now categorize it as communication or stewardship: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of trust extended by God:

Application in our marriage:

Read the passage

Circle the key words which reveal God's level of trust

***Hebrews 4:16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.***

Now categorize it as communication or stewardship: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of trust extended by God:

Has man proven himself worthy of this level of access to God?

Application in our marriage:

## The Husband of the Wife of Proverbs 31

Husbands everywhere want the wife of Proverbs 31, but how many want to be the husband of this same woman? An interesting project for husbands is to read carefully through this passage looking for the character traits of her husband. One of the first traits to reveal itself is that of trust. Proverbs 31:11 begins, ***“The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain”*** and then goes on to list the responsibilities of this wife who is trusted by her husband.

Many husbands will respond, “When my wife earns my trust then I will trust her.” But by saying this they violate the command of God to love their wives as Christ loves the church. We have not earned God’s trust by our behavior, yet He continues to entrust to us great responsibilities. Lets consider two areas. Can you honestly say by your personal devotion to the Word of God and your commitment to the development of your spiritual gifts through service in your church that you have earned God’s trust in these areas? Yet He withdraws neither from you. You too must love your wife as God patiently loves you.

How do the following passages in Proverbs 31 indicate that the woman had a great deal of trust extended to her and expressed to her by her husband?

***Proverbs 31:13 & 14 She looks for wool and flax, And works with her hands in delight. She is like merchant ships; She brings her food from afar.***

Area of trust: \_\_\_\_\_

Necessary level of trust and communication:

***Proverbs 31:15 & 16 She rises also while it is still night, And gives food to her household, And portions to her maidens. She considers a field and buys it; From her earnings she plants a vineyard.***

Area of trust: \_\_\_\_\_

Necessary level of trust and communication:

***Proverbs 31:20 She extends her hand to the poor; And she stretches out her hands to the needy.***

Area of trust: \_\_\_\_\_

Necessary level of trust and communication:

## **To Love And Nurture Her Without Expecting Sex In Return**

God loves us without demanding anything in return. For many, that is so emotionally threatening that they simply cannot accept it. In their thinking all relationships are conditional and contractual. God must have conditions, God must have some sort of performance based contract before loving us as He does. Others simply cannot trust God. He says He loves us unconditionally, but once we are really vulnerable, what will He demand or take from us? What is the hidden agenda, what really does it take to stay in His good graces? How many times have we heard, “I would give my life to God but I am afraid that He will make me...”.

Many husbands take this same mindset into their relationship with their wife. They view communication skills as a way of getting something. In fact there is a whole cottage industry of research and books based just on this – how to be a better communicator so you can get what you want. For these husband’s good communication is just a way to get what they want - “Yeah, teach me all that good communication stuff so I can get more and better sex!” (A great sex life in marriage is not wrong. In fact it is just as important to the husband as communication is to the wife. That is why there is a whole section on this in this series. However at this point we are dealing with the husbands willingness to sacrificially communicate with his wife and what could be more sacrificial for a Christian husband than to love and nurture his wife without expecting sex in return?) We assume God says all this “mushy stuff” so that He can make us pliable to do what he wants and then we take this same attitude to our relationship with our wife. We are not saying that sex is bad, or even that for a couple to learn to have more and better sex is not a good goal, but what we are saying is that if a husband loves his wife as Christ loves the church he will learn to love and nurture her without expecting sex as the payoff.

We see this in Christ’s unconditional love for us. Christ loves us without expecting or demanding anything in return. Christ nurtures and cares for us, not to get something out of us but as an expression of his deep and abiding devotion to us.

How is Christ’s unconditional love for you expressed in the following passages? How would that same love manifest itself in your relationship with your wife, if you loved your wife as Christ loved the church? In the project below...

- Read the passage
- Circle the key words as they apply to Christ’s unconditional love for us
- Then fill in the chart

**Rom 5:6-8** *For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

***From the passage how this would be manifested if I loved my wife as Christ loved the church:*****Our Behavior****Christ's Response****If your wife behaved like this what would it look like?****If you loved your wife as Christ loved the Church what would your response look like?**

*Eph 2:1-5 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),*

- Read the passage
- Circle the key words as they apply to Christ's unconditional love for us
- Then fill in the chart

***From the passage how this would be manifested if I loved my wife as Christ loved the church:*****Our Behavior****Christ's Response****If your wife behaved like this what would it look like?****If you loved your wife as Christ loved the Church what would your response look like?**

*Eph 2:8-10 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His*

*workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

<i>From the passage how this would be manifested if I loved my wife as Christ loved the church:</i>	
<b>Our Behavior</b>	<b>Christ's Response</b>
<b>If your wife behaved like this what would it look like?</b>	<b>If you loved your wife as Christ loved the Church what would your response look like?</b>

- Read the passage
- Circle the key words as they apply to Christ's unconditional love for us
- Then fill in the chart

*Titus 3:3-5 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,*

<i>From the passage how this would be manifested if I loved my wife as Christ loved the church:</i>	
<b>Our Behavior</b>	<b>Christ's Response</b>
<b>If your wife behaved like this what would it look like?</b>	<b>If you loved your wife as Christ loved the Church what would your response look like?</b>

- Read the passage

- Circle the key words as they apply to Christ’s unconditional love for us
- Then fill in the chart

*I John 4:18-19 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. We love, because He first loved us.*

<i>From the passage how this would be manifested if I loved my wife as Christ loved the church:</i>	
Our Behavior	Christ’s Response
<b>If your wife behaved like this what would it look like?</b>	<b>If you loved your wife as Christ loved the Church what would your response look like?</b>

*Romans 8:35-39 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED." But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

<i>From the passage how this would be manifested if I loved my wife as Christ loved the church:</i>	
Our Behavior	Christ’s Response
<b>If your wife behaved like this what would it look like?</b>	<b>If you loved your wife as Christ loved the Church what would your response look like?</b>

If we are to love our wives as Christ loved the church then a correct understanding of our Salvation is necessary. If we do not have a Biblical understanding of our salvation then our application of this teaching will be off. In the project below reflect on how a wrong understanding of your salvation will result in wrong priorities in marriage.

Wrong thinking about salvation: Salvation by works and not by grace

Wrong thinking about marriage:

Wrong thinking about salvation: Salvation can be lost

Wrong thinking about marriage:

If you are to love your wife as Christ loves the church then describe the level of your commitment to your wife and to your marriage.

## Stability And Care

The following passages depict the stability we have in our relationship with Christ. If we love our wives as Christ loves the church, how will that same stability be realized in our marriage? In the following project...

- ❖ Circle the word or phrase which reveals the stability Christ offers us in the expression of His love towards us.
- ❖ How would this translate into your relationship with your wife if you were to love her as Christ loves the church?
- ❖ Write this out as a vow to your wife

Lamentations 3:22 & 23 (Circle the word or phrase which reveals the stability Christ offers us in the expression of His love towards us.)

***The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness.***

How would this translate into your relationship with your wife if you were to love her as Christ loves the church?

Write this out as a vow to your wife

Matthew 11:28 - 30(Circle the word or phrase which reveals the stability Christ offers us in the expression of His love towards us.)

***" Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest . Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."***

**NASU**

How would this translate into your relationship with your wife if you were to love her as Christ loves the church?

Write this out as a vow to your wife

Romans 8:15-17 (Circle the word or phrase which reveals the stability Christ offers us in the expression of His love towards us.)

***15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"***

***16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,***

***17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.***

How would this translate into your relationship with your wife if you were to love her as Christ loves the church?

Write this out as a vow to your wife

Isaiah 43:25

Romans 8:31-39 (Circle the word or phrase which reveals the stability Christ offers us in the expression of His love towards us.)

***"I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins ."***

How would this translate into your relationship with your wife if you were to love her as Christ loves the church?

Write this out as a vow to your wife

Philippians 4:19 (Circle the word or phrase which reveals the stability Christ offers us in the expression of His love towards us.)

***And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.***

How would this translate into your relationship with your wife if you were to love her as Christ loves the church?

Write this out as a vow to your wife

What do the following verses say about the stability and care that a husband covenants with God to bring to the marriage?

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

**1 Corinthians 7:33** *but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife,*

**Ephesians 5:28** *So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;*

**Ephesians 5:31** *For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.*

## Our Obedience In Action

- A. Lordship** - Husbands, do not present your wives with obstacles she was never meant to have to struggle. You do not want your wife to develop the skill of meeting this central and God given need outside of marriage, even in a legitimate way. Instead, become a student of your wife's needs. Learn from the statement of Jesus in *Luke 16:8* “...for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the son of light.”
- B. The Word** – Accept the covenant needs of your wife on the basis of the Word of God rather than subjecting them to your own ability to understand them. You desire your wife to meet your needs based on the Word of God not simply her ability to understand you. You should do the same in your relationship with her. Ask yourself continually, “Do my convictions in this area reflect the scripture?” and then seek to conform yourself to the Word of God.
- C. Prayer** – Having done this study are you now going to file it away as a Bible study or project completed or are you going to make it a part of your marriage. One of the most central ways of making this study a part of your day to day marriage is to take the Scripture memory passages and pray over them in a consistent and organized manner. You must ask yourself, “Are you willing to allow God to enlarge your heart?”
- D. Fellowship** – Not only is it essential that you talk with God in this area but it is also crucial that you talk to your wife. This is something that needs to be done together. Remember though, the covenant need for conversational intimacy is your wife's, not yours. While you will take comfort in actions, your wife first must have her covenant need for conversational intimacy met. It may seem unfair but it is a reality that some of your wife's greatest needs will be the most difficult for you to talk about. Do not get angry and give up. This will be a life long need and you have plenty of time. Be creative, take opportunities, remember this is a ministry not simply a single, one time, end of Bible study project. What are you organized in – think, how do I respond when I really want to master something on a long term basis, then approach this need with the same organization and intensity in terms of getting the information you need to bring glory to God and happiness to your wife.
- E. Obedience** – Remember, in the final analysis, these are first covenant relationships with God and only secondly with your wife. You are required by God to meet these needs on the basis of His creation of your wife with unique needs that only you can morally meet. You do this not on your understanding - but you are required to meet these covenant needs on the basis of your love for God and for your wife. Not as a reciprocal contract by tacitly saying to her, “You meet my needs and I will meet your needs”. No score card is kept, rather the needs are met to the glory of God in obedience of His Word. This is true even if your wife fails to fulfill her covenant responsibilities as regards to your needs.

## Chapter Six

### Love Wife By Sacrificially Meeting Her Emotional Needs

*The vows of the husband to God concerning his relationship with his wife.*

1. *Spiritual leadership of the family*
2. **Love wife by sacrificially meeting her emotional needs.**
3. *Trusting and truthful relationship*
4. *Providing for your wife's material needs*
5. *Making the home and family a priority*

#### Before we begin...

Needs are not imperfections nor are they sin, God created Adam perfect, “good” yet he had needs only Eave could meet. Adam was created perfect, yet it was not good that he live alone. By recognizing covenant needs we are not isolating imperfections in our spouse. By meeting these covenant needs we are desiring to be a piece of the puzzle created by God. God creates the spouse with the void that only our piece can fill. In doing so it is not simply a legal contractual relationship that we do out of a sense of burden, honor or sacrifice based on our spouses imperfections and sin. Rather we are saying, “I want to be the one used by God to meet this need for a lifetime. Out of love, I want to be the one who serves my spouse in this area.” For the husband, this means that if he, as Ephesians 5:25 commands, is to love his wife as “Christ loved the Church”, then those verses which define Christ’s undying love for the us, also define the husbands undying love for his wife. For the wife, this means that if she, as Ephesians 5:24 commands, is to be subject to her husband “as the Church is subject to Christ”, then those verses which define the Church’s undying love for Christ also define the wife’s undying love for her husband. The covenant need we are about to study in this chapter is not one which manifests itself from the selfish sinful nature of your spouse but rather it was created by God, it is good and you were created to meet this need. This means that...

**A wife’s emotional needs, are created by God, as lasting and legitimate needs, for which she has no morale outlet outside of marriage.**

#### I. **Doctrine: Loving Your Wife As Christ Loved The Church**

When a husband enters into the marriage covenant he agrees to love his wife as Christ loved the Church. Ephesians 5:25 states, “*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;*” the word of God then goes on to state in Ephesians 5:33 “*Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself*” The first passage has to do with sacrifice, while the second specifically brings into play the concept of “self”. We are to put our wife’s emotions, her ego into a par with our own. We are to love our wife even as we love ourselves and as such our wife’s emotions, our wife’s ego, our wife’s emotional needs are to be elevated and considered as if they were our own. Upon reflection you can think of many, many ways in which Christ showed His love to the Church, areas which involve our wife’s emotions and as a result must be kept on a par with our own. For our purposes I will suggest five which come to mind as they directly reflect upon the covenant of marriage.

## A. Sacrificial service

1. Mark 10:45 - *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*
  - a. Why did you enter into the covenant of marriage? Was it to be served? Was it to have someone to iron your clothes, cook your meals and make passionate love to you? Kind of a Christian geisha?
  - b. As you entered the marriage covenant did it occur to you that you were pledging to love your wife the way Christ loves the Church and gave Himself up for her?
  - c. Christ's love of the Church was and is sacrificial, He is the one who serves, He is the one who gave up His life that the Church might live, He is the one who made the sacrifice when we would and could not.
  - d. In loving your wife the way Christ loved the Church you covenant to enter into marriage as a servant, to give your life up for her, not to be served but to serve.
2. John 13:14 - *"If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."*
3. John 13:34 & 35 *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*
4. LUK 22:24 – 27 *And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest. And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.' But not so with you, but let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as the servant. For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table, or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.*
  - a. In the world system, how do things work in terms of authority?
  - b. Yet how did Jesus relate to His disciples?
  - c. In the world system, how does the headship of the husband work itself out?
  - d. Yet how would Jesus have us relate to our wives?

## B. Being a good listener

1. When was the last time you went to God in prayer and He was too busy or too tired?
  - a. When was the time when, late at night, you felt the need to unburden yourself to God and He put you off or complained that you always bring these things up at bedtime?
  - b. When was the last time you went to God in prayer and He was too preoccupied with the more important things in the world, He listened but He was just not all there?
2. If we love our wife the way Christ loves the Church, then we will be available to listen to our wife whenever she wants to talk to us.

- a. In Hebrews 4:16 we are exhorted, *“Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need.”*
  - b. Does your wife draw near to you with confidence knowing that as a loving husband, you will offer her mercy and grace to help in time of need?
  - c. In Matthew 11:29 – 31 Jesus states, *“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My load is light.”*
  - d. When your wife came to you, as she daily comes to you, is she assured of a gentle and humble heart where she can find rest for her soul? Is your yoke easy and your load light? Do you love your wife as Christ loved the church? Are you approachable and responsive to her emotional needs?
3. When you covenanted before God to love your wife as Christ loved the Church you covenanted to be a good listener. To be available to her, to be attentive to her, to be responsive to her. You covenanted to be that person to whom she could always come.

### C. A willingness to share openly with her

1. Proverbs 31:11 States, *“The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain.”* The husband, in the covenant of marriage vows before God to trust his wife and communicate openly and honestly with her.
2. Christ said in John 15 :15, *“No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”* Many men deny themselves a deep relationship with their wives and simultaneously deny their wives that deep intimate relationship with their helpmate by protecting them or in many cases the reality is controlling them, by hiding truths from them about his life, his career, their marriage, the finances and the prospects for the future.
3. This includes trust in the area of material goods and responsibilities
  - a. Christ trusts us with Gifts and callings. Hebrews 2:4 *“God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.”* He does so without regard to our worthiness as Romans 11:29 points out, *“His gifts and calling are irrevocable”*
  - b. Christ trusts us with His possessions. In Luke 15:31 in the parable of the prodigal son the father, who represents God says to his son, which depicts Christians, *“... 'My child, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours.’”* Again in Psalms 50:12 God states, *“... For the world is Mine, and all it contains.”* and again in Haggai 2:8 *‘The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,’* declares the Lord of hosts.” We often think of those possessions which we acquire as ours, but they all belong to God. Just as a jeweler, hired on hourly wage, may make many beautiful ornaments of gold, yet they all belong to the owner, so we may acquire and make many items but they all belong to God. In everything we have, we used His raw materials, His possessions and often without even asking.

- c. Christ trusts us with people. Ezekiel 18:4 states, *"Behold, all souls are Mine..."* Whether they are children, a Sunday school class, a bible study, fruit in evangelism, a husband or wife, God entrusts to us despite our unworthiness and unfaithfulness His most precious possession, people, the souls of men. Many husbands quickly forget or never even consider the injunction of God in I Peter 3:7, *"You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."* Many times we simply skim by and ignore the injunction to "grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life" God views our wife as His own possession. She is a fellow heir with us. She was God's before we married, she is under our care for a brief fifty years or so and then she is God's for all eternity. We have been entrusted with her for a brief time and if we do not care to honor her, to treat her gently, to hear her out in all things, then God does not care to hear us.
- d. We must trust our wife as well. So husbands must, if they love their wife and Christ loved the Church, trust them as well. Trust them with responsibility, trust them with finances, trust them with children and ministry. We must trust our wife and not expect perfection, we must trust our wife as Christ trusts us. Christ trusts us despite our failings and we should do no less in our relationship with our wife.
- e. To be the wife of Proverbs 31 a wife must have a husband who trusts her with responsibility. Proverbs 31:11 begins, *"The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain"* and then goes on to list the responsibilities this wife who is trusted by her husband has. A few of these are...
- 1.) Purchases needed items for the home (:13 & 14)
  - 2.) Has responsibility for the care of any domestic help (:15)
  - 3.) Has investment income and uses this to expand the financial base of the marriage (:16)
  - 4.) Has discretionary monies for charitable works (:20)

#### **D. To love and nurture her without expecting sex in return**

1. God's love for us is unconditional. He does not love us to get things. He does not love us so that we will give Him things or do things for us. He loves us simply because of His great love which dwells within Him. He loved us before we were capable of doing good. He loved us before we were capable of loving Him back. How many years did you live before you received Christ? That is how long God loved you while not only not being loved by you but being openly and publicly being spurned by you on a daily basis. John 14:24 *"He who does not love Me does not keep My words..."* How many years, how many times have you by your sin, by your disobedience by your wanderings openly, or privately confessed to God that you do not love Him? That is how many times, God loved you without you loving Him back. How many times have you let God down because of your love of this world or of the flesh? That is how many times God loved you while being openly and publicly spurned by you. The Word of God states in Romans 5:6 & 8 states, *"For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.... But God*

*demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*” God first loved us without reference to our actions and poured out His love on us without reference to our reaction to this great love. We are saved despite ourselves not because of our actions and we continue in our salvation despite ourselves. Ephesians 2:8 & 9 make this clear when the Word of God states, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.”* Where would you be if the comfort and care and attention of God was dependent upon your open and demonstrative love for Him?

2. In the same way we should love and nurture our wife as Christ loves and nurtures us. Without reference to her actions and without expecting to get something in return, and for men that often means sex. The Word of God is full of descriptive phrases of how God loves us.
  - a. Hosea 11:3 *“...I took them in My arms...”*
  - b. Psalm 73:23 *Nevertheless I am continually with Thee; Thou hast taken hold of my right hand.*
  - c. Psalm 91:1 *He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.*
  - d. Psalm 36:7 *How precious is Thy lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Thy wings.*
3. These passages all depict a loving, nurturing relationship. If we love our wives as Christ loved the Church, then we too will love her as Christ loves us. Nurturing her without the expectation of anything in return.

#### **E. Stability and care**

1. One of the great benefits of being loved by Christ is being the recipient of the great stability and care which He brings to us. In the midst of a chaotic and strife filled life, full of uncertainties and inconsistencies, Christ is always there for us. Lamentations 3:22 & 23 states this so eloquently, when the Prophet Jeremiah cries out in the midst of great sorrow, *“The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness.”*
2. So a husband if he loves his wife as Christ loved the Church will provide for her stability and care in the midst of a chaotic and changing world. God has entrusted His daughter to you for your care, for your ministry and this includes stability.
3. Because of his covenant before God a husband is no longer free to experiment and to take risks in life without reference to the stewardship of the covenant to which he has sworn.
  - a. Too often I have seen men leave their job, move to another city or seek to become independently employed with no guarantee of success. They make these decisions as if they were free and independent before God to take any risk they want, as if they were still single.

- b. Many times this decision is spiritualized because it has to do with a ministry opportunity. Yet the Word of God states in I Corinthians 7:32 & 33 *“But I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife,”*
- c. *“...but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife.”* This is a fact that few men make when they consider a risky career, financial or ministry move. Yet God’s Word is clear. When you are on an outing, be it in the city, in the mall or out for a day in the country, your actions are different in terms of both caution and risk taking, if you have been entrusted for the day with another’s child. If you were to go camping or hiking, the places you would go, the things you would do and the risks you would take will be completely different if you have with you the child of another, than if you were on your own. If you were entrusted with money of the child of a close friend or relative to invest, the risks you would take are greatly different than if it were your own. In the same way, we have been entrusted with God’s child for her care. How much more should the risks we take in life be muted by this fact? How much more should the caution we take be multiplied by the care of a child of God over the care of our own child or a child of a close friend or relative?

## II. Practical Applications

### A. Sacrificial Service

1. Most single men, when they think of the role of the wife, certainly include in their fantasy a cross between a paramour, a maid and a mother. A paramour, because she is supposed to mirror the sexual desires of her husband, with no thought to her own moods, feelings or needs, a maid, because she does all the dirty work, a mother, because she does it with love and in fact can be verbally abused while she does it and not quit, as a maid most certainly would.
2. In fact it is a phenomenon of marriage that a husband will give himself permission to treat his wife in a way that he would never dare treat a co-worker, neighbor or member of the church, a maid or a secretary, mainly of course because if he did he would not have any friends.
3. Yet if we love our wife the way Christ loves the Church we will sacrificially serve her.
4. In what ways can you serve your wife?
  - a. Do you view her “honey -do” list as you expect Christ to view your supplications?
  - b. Is her success a preoccupation with you?
  - c. What are her goals and desires in life?
  - d. In what ways do you sacrifice to make your wife successful?
  - e. What are reoccurring desires of your wife that have gone unheeded by you?
  - f. Can you list, off the top of your head, the ways in which you show honor to your wife? The ways in which you ensure your wife is honored by your children and family?

## B. Being a good listener

1. Are you as good a listener to your wife as you expect God to be to you?
2. Which do you think is the greater discrepancy in righteousness, your faithfulness to God or your wife's faithfulness to you? Yet, despite your unfaithfulness to God you expect God to dote on your every word while despite your wife's continued faithfulness to you, you by contrast do not do the same for her.
3. How would you rate God as an excisable and good listener, how would your wife rate you as an accessible and good listener?
4. Does God in His Word encourage you to express yourself, to come boldly into His presence, does He actively draw you out? Do you actively draw her out, communicating that what she has to say is important, that you want her to boldly come into your presence, that you will drop what you are doing and concentrate on her?
5. Is she fearful to bring up matters, not knowing how you will respond?
6. How often does she hear, "Not now honey, I am just too tired."
7. Can you honestly say that you strive to be as good a listener to your wife as Christ is to you?

## C. Willingness to share openly with her.

1. Does the level and depth of your communication with your wife reflect trust and respect?
2. Does your own truthful openness about your feelings, fears and hurts draw her out to share with you?
3. Many men share more openly about their fears and problems with their co-workers than their own wife. Can you honestly say that you share openly with her?

## D. To nurture her without expecting sex in return.

1. How does your wife like to be nurtured and cared for? Perhaps it is a back rub, a foot rub, having her back scratched, her hair stroked, whatever it is, do you know what it is.
2. Can your wife expect you to love her, hold her, talk intimately with her, without it leading to sex?

3. If for some reason sex is not a possibility, do you still treat your wife in a nurturing and loving manner. Can she still expect you to hold her, caress her and tell her that you love her?
4. Can you honestly say that your goal is to make your love and affection as expressed towards you wife is as unconditional as Christ's is towards you?

E. Stability and care

1. Does your presence or your absence lend stability to the home?
2. Does your wife, your family, eagerly anticipate your return from work or a trip because of the stability and care that will accompany you.
3. Does the way you handle your emotions, your finances and your responsibility bring stability to the home and a real sense of caring to your wife and family?
4. Do you come home at night, are you there on weekends, do you have a strong presence in your home, making you the anchor, the caregiver?
5. Some men bring more stability to their job, their church or their extracurricular activities than they do to their own home. What about you? Can you honestly say that you strive to bring the same stability and care to your home that Christ brings to the church?

**III. Reflection: Who do you want to meet this need if you do not?**

- A. If you decide that you are not individually responsible for any of the covenants mentioned. Who do you want to step in and do it in your place?
  1. A Readers Digest poll found that while most men had extra marital affairs because of physical attraction, most women succumbed to the affair so as not to loose their conversational partner. They finally gave up their virtue, degrading as it was, so as not to loose the only person in their lives who took an active interest in what they had to say.
  2. There are men who continually have their antennas up. They are looking for women who respond like starved puppies to men who take an interest in what they have to say.
  3. Have you, by your unwillingness to share openly and deeply with your wife, placed your wife in this spiritually dangerous situation?
- B. Who do you want to model these responsibilities for your spouse? Who do you want to step in to fill the void which your negligence has created?

- C. If you are unwilling to respond responsibly to your vows, to the covenant you have made with God, who do you want to take your place?

#### **IV. Conclusion:**

- A. The Word of God, in Ephesians 5:25 admonishes the husband to love his wife as Christ loved the Church while Ephesians 5:33 speaks to our responsibility to elevate her emotions, her ego to a point where her needs in this area becomes our own.
- B. There are five areas of responsibility when fulfilling this admonition
  1. Sacrificial service
  2. Being a good listener
  3. Willingness to share openly
  4. Nurture her without expecting sex in return
  5. To bring real stability and care to the marriage, the family and the home.
- C. If you decide that you are not going to meet these covenant needs, what man do you want to step in and take your place?

# POST STUDY PROJECTS

## CHAPTER SIX

**Remember:** You do not have to do what I do but you have to do something. In terms of your application of Scripture, you do not have to do it my way. My applications are in no way inspired by God, they are simply given to you as a service. Perhaps you will find them helpful, perhaps they will stimulate your thinking as creative ideas and you will use them as a stepping stone to your own creative applications. You do however have to do something. If you respond, “Rev. Mahon, that is your way, it reflects your age, gifts and calling, that is just not me.” That is perfectly OK, I have no problem with that, as long as I when I ask you, “Fine, what is ‘your way?’” that you do not respond, “nothing”. You do not have to do what I do but you have to do something, “nothing” is not an acceptable answer, the Word of God demands an application. You do not have to use my application but you have to do something.

Scripture Memory Verse –

*I Peter 3:7 You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.*

Back Review:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 19:4 – 6   | <input type="checkbox"/> Joshua 1:8           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 2:16 & 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> II Timothy 3:16 & 17 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Malachi 2:14       | <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 5:25 & 26  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mark 10:9          | <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 6:4        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Malachi 2:16       | <input type="checkbox"/> Ephesians 5:33       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mark 10:11 & 12    |   |

## Before we begin...

Needs are not imperfections nor are they sin, God created Adam perfect, “good” yet he had needs only Eve could meet. Adam was created perfect, yet it was not good that he live alone. By recognizing covenant needs we are not isolating imperfections in our spouse. By meeting these covenant needs we are desiring to be a piece of the puzzle created by God. God creates the spouse with the void that only our piece can fill. In doing so it is not simply a legal contractual relationship that we do out of a sense of burden, honor or sacrifice based on our spouses imperfections and sin. Rather we are saying, “I want to be the one used by God to meet this need for a lifetime. Out of love, I want to be the one who serves my spouse in this area.” For the husband, this means that if he, as Ephesians 5:25 commands, is to love his wife as “Christ loved the Church”, then those verses which define Christ’s undying love for the us, also define the husbands undying love for his wife. For the wife, this means that if she, as Ephesians 5:24 commands, is to be subject to her husband “as the Church is subject to Christ”, then those verses which define the Church’s undying love for Christ also define the wife’s undying love for her husband. The covenant need we are about to study in this chapter is not one which manifests itself from the selfish sinful nature of your spouse but rather it was created by God, it is good and you were created to meet this need. This means that...

**A wife’s emotional needs, are created by God, as lasting and legitimate needs, for which she has no moral outlet outside of marriage.**

## Sacrificial Service

One of the ways in which we love our wife as Christ loves the church is to sacrificially serve her in the meeting of her covenant needs. This is how Jesus loves us and this is how we should love our wife. The fact that Jesus loved us and sacrificially gave Himself up for us in no way diminishes His Lordship. Similarly we must be secure enough in our own spiritual leadership of the family to be a sacrificial servant to our wives. This service no more diminishes our leadership of the home than Jesus’ service to the church diminishes His Lordship.

Service though must meet the needs of the one being served. I can think of two examples of this from our marriage. One is the dishes. If I offer to do the dishes but do them in such a slipshod manner that Eleanor has to come back and do them over I have not served her. In fact I may have made the task even harder. The answer to this is not for me to respond, “Fine, if you don’t like the job I do on the dishes then just do them yourself!” but rather to learn to do the dishes in such a way that it is indeed a blessing and service to my wife. I share this not as a hypothetical case but through first hand experience.

When we were involved in the student ministry one of the women in our college ministry called Eleanor on the phone and offered to come over and help her out on a “cleaning day”. She wanted to express her appreciation for all the acts of service Eleanor had done for her. We had a dining room table with a beveled edge. We had purchased this table with some money given as a wedding gift and now, twelve years later, with four children under the age of 10 and an active student ministry centered in our home, well you can image that that table had seen it’s share of

use. El asked this young lady to carefully clean and polish the table, but to first get out anything that had collected in the beveled edge. This young lady took one of our flatware knives and carefully scraped the beveled edge all the way around. This of course dislodged every bit dirt but it also scraped the finish right off the edge. She had done a great job, but when she finished it was not an act of service as she had essentially ruined our table.

In both cases the principle is clear, an act of sacrificial service must actually serve and bless the person to whom the action is expressed. Christ, in serving us, meets our needs and we, in serving our wife must meet hers. Christ in serving us, fulfills this service despite our unthankfulness, ungratefulness and even when His service goes unrecognized and we must do the same. But most importantly, to serve our wives we must know what their needs are. Christ, knowing the needs, the thoughts, the very wishes of all men, even better than they themselves does not need to investigate or to learn from man. However we are not omniscient and must be willing to learn from our wives how we might best express to them this loving servant heart. (Remember you would need to be a homosexual to intuitively understand the feminine mind. Man has no feminine side and as a result we must ask our wives. We will not be able to intuitively understand and meet her needs from a feminine perspective.)

In the following project we will seek to learn from our wife how as a godly husband, a sacrificial and serving spiritual leader of the home, we might meet her needs.

In the following project, first, on a separate sheet of paper list what you feel to be the five most important areas of service to your wife. As the head of the home, what are the most significant ways in which you can serve your wife?. Similarly, your wife, on a separate sheet of paper will make the same list, the five most important areas to which she looks to you for in terms of her care. She will record what are the most important areas of service from her perspective. Now compare the two lists. How does your list compare with hers? Record the results below...

### **My Wife's Five Most Important Areas Of Service**

<b>WHAT I THINK THEY ARE...</b>	<b>WHAT SHE THINKS THEY ARE...</b>
<b>I.</b>	<b>I.</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>II.</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>III.</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>IV.</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>V.</b>

**Now compare your list with your wife's. How close did you come? What adjustments need to be made in terms of your service to your wife?**

Together with your wife come up with a list of five major responsibilities in your marriage and how by fulfilling these you can love and serve your wife. . Next to each consider how you can serve your wife more effectively. (Areas of responsibility may be as varied as budgeting and paying bills, helping with the children, maintenance of the home, care and upkeep of the family car or other possessions, etc,. You may be surprised to discover that your wife's list does not include hunting, fishing, golf, football, sports, fantasy leagues, working in your shop, the list goes on...)

Primary Areas Of Responsibility	One Application Of How I Love And Serve My Wife In This Area
<b>I.</b>	<b>I.</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>II.</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>III.</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>IV.</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>V.</b>

## **Your Wife, Their Mother and Her Position of Honor in the Home**

Back in the 70's at the time of our marriage an entertainment cultural shift was taking place in terms of the family and the T.V.. Up until this time in both the entertainment industry and society at large marriage in the family was held in high regard, the position of husband generally was lifted up as a position of wisdom, the role of the wife as mother and homemaker were respected and the humor was generally derived by from the actions of the children or slapstick comedy. A family show titled, "Father Knows Best" best typifies the spirit of this era.

It was while I was in college that a dramatic change took place and the family sitcom moved to deriving its humor from razor sharp barbs and repertoire. The dialog between husband and wife became sharp and cutting and the "come back" line reigned as king. More and more the male came up on the losing end of these exchanges. Sarcasm, biting humor and one-upmanship held sway over the dialog. More and more the husband was depicted as only the figure head of the home, being immature and uncultured. Eleanor and I began to realize that this was effecting our marriage as well and we made a pact to rid our conversation of this verbal parrying and to remind each other of this when we slipped into it. Not only that, I began to work very hard at praising Eleanor in public and not criticizing her, as she did for me as well. This sarcasm and biting humor has become so much a part of our culture that in social gatherings I notice that others will bait a wife or husband in order to criticize them. Often the group will pair off, husbands against wives, as all join in referring sarcastically and with anecdotes to the roles and responsibilities of their spouses. Not only do we not participate in these I will go out of my way to honor Eleanor. Not only do I not refer to her cooking as "burnt offerings" but I praise her cooking.

It amazes me that couples engage in this type of activity without any inkling of the long term damage it will do to their marriage and their family. When I think of the injunction by God the Holy Spirit in Romans 12:2, "***And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.***" I can think of no better place to begin than the public criticism, verbal sparring and sarcasm that many Christian couples carry from the TV to their marriage relationship.

As husbands, and as the spiritual leaders of the home we should take the lead in this area of offering both to our families and to the world a valid alternative to the verbal sparring that passes as good natured humor by the failed values espoused on TV.

In the project below, first read the three passages and circle the word or phrase which describes the special position of honor and respect the wife and mother have in the home.

*1 Peter 3:7*

*You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; **and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered?***

*Proverbs 31:28*

28 *Her children rise up and bless her; her husband also, and he praises her, saying:*

*Proverbs 31:31*

31 *Give her the product of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.*

Now the husband can ask himself...

“How do I grant my wife ‘honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life’?”

“How do I insure to her that her children ‘rise up and bless her’?”

“How do I insure that in the public arenas of life that I ‘let her works praise her’?”

An example of this is the phrase in Proverbs 31:28 **“Her children rise up and bless her...”**. My application for this was for the children to stand behind their chairs at the dinner table till Eleanor was seated. I would seat Eleanor, when she sat the girls would take their seats and then lastly Sam and I would sit. What is your application to this passage. You do not have to do what I did but you have to do something.

In the project below are basic areas of married life. In each record how you could show honor to your wife, then ask you wife for other ideas.

**Meal Time:**

**How can I insure her a place of honor and praise in the home?**

My Ideas	My wife’s thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that the children bless her?**

My Ideas	My wife’s thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that she receives praise and honor before others?**

My Ideas	My wife’s thoughts on this area

**Budgeting:**

When Eleanor was growing up her father did all the financial planning, budgeting and bill paying. When he suddenly died El's mom was left to sort out all the details of their life and this was very difficult for her. We decided that our lives would be different in this area. Eleanor and I had a working lunch each week. We would bring the family budget, the check book, the bills, the calendar, all that pertained to the running of the family and together make these decisions. She had complete and total access and knowledge of all our finances. Remember, you do not have to do what I did but you have to do something.

**How can I insure her a place of honor and praise in the home?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that the children bless her?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that she receives praise and hone before others?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**Social Events:**

**How can I insure her a place of honor and praise in the home?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that the children bless her?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that she receives praise and hone before others?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**Church and spiritual activities:**

**How can I insure her a place of honor and praise in the home?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that the children bless her?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that she receives praise and hone before others?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**Extended Family Gatherings And Relationships:**

**How can I insure her a place of honor and praise in the home?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that the children bless her?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that she receives praise and hone before others?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**Work and Career:**

**How can I insure her a place of honor and praise in the home?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that the children bless her?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that she receives praise and hone before others?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**Leisure Time, Hobbies, Crafts, Sports:**

**How can I insure her a place of honor and praise in the home?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that the children bless her?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that she receives praise and hone before others?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**Family Time, Atmosphere of the Home:**

**How can I insure her a place of honor and praise in the home?**

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My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that the children bless her?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

**How can I insure that she receives praise and hone before others?**

My Ideas	My wife's thoughts on this area

## **Being A Good Listener/Openness and Honesty**

Some married couples simply decide not to discuss certain areas of their lives because they are too complicated or painful. “Why bring up this subject if all we do is disagree?” or “Things are going so smoothly right now, why even bother talking about things that cause us to argue?” or “To tell you the truth, I don’t really want to know if my wife is unhappy in one of these areas, I like things the way they are so why start into it?” A husband may think that by not discussing these areas and by avoiding the subsequent discomfort or even emotional pain they are helping their marriage. Nothing could be further from the truth. Problems do not simply go away, they fester, become sources of irritation, bitterness and finally heartache as they cause divisions in the marriage.

Below are listed a series of areas which commonly are avoided by husbands. As you discuss each area listen carefully to your wife’s thoughts and then verbalize a summation of her concerns or feelings on the topic. Then write this in the space below.

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Notes As My Wife Shares And A Summary Sentence</u>
<b>Finances:</b>	
<hr/>	
<b>Home:</b>	
<hr/>	
<b>Children:</b>	
<hr/>	
<b>Extended Family:</b>	
<hr/>	
<b>Social Life:</b>	
<hr/>	

**Church and/or Spiritual Life:**

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**Work / Career:**

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**Focused Attention/ Meaningful Conversations:**

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**Big Picture / Long Term Planning**

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## “Let’s Get Together!”

Life can be very hectic. It is all too easy to look around and suddenly realize that it has been a month or more since you and your wife really sat down and talked about your marriage, your concerns, your future. You begin simply reacting rather than moving in a unified and purposeful direction. Because of this tension fewer and fewer discussions are held at a meaningful level. More and more discussions deal with everyday life needs and the needs and problems of the children. Then one day you wake up and realize that you really no longer know each other.

Early in our ministry while serving as campus minister at Texas A & M university Eleanor and I met a very special couple. Dr. Jack Lunsford was a tenured professor, elder in his church, very active as our campus sponsor and had a large family, yet he and his wife had a wonderful relationship. They would sometimes ask us to their home for lunch after church and I was always amazed at the wonderful dynamics of their personal and family relationships. When I asked Jack about this he and his wife answered almost simultaneously...

Family Night

Date Night

And a Honeymoon every year without the kids!!

It was then that I first began to realize that I can and should be proactive in insuring that El and I are always functioning as a team in our marriage and family. I realized that you can build a number of activities into your schedule to avoid this dilemma of you and your wife going in different directions and experiencing a loss of unity. Businessmen do it, social clubs do it, politicians do it, church ministries do it. They all know that to maintain close bonds and unified goals they must meet regularly for interaction and, most importantly, to listen.

Eleanor and I took Dr. Lunsford’s advice and have three weekly “listening times” built into our schedule. Family Night, Date Night and Working Lunch. In addition we have two extended times away, Honeymoon and Family vacation.

For our Date Night, Family Night and Working Lunch - we do this weekly because by the nature of things, schedules get jostled around. If you plan to meet weekly, you end up meeting about two or three times a week, biweekly and you end up meeting monthly, monthly and it becomes quarterly, quarterly and you will do good to meet biannually, and so it goes. We take one “Honeymoon” and one “Family Vacation” each year.

Below are listed these “listening times” with a brief description. Discuss each with your wife and set up a time when you will meet on a regular basis.

**FAMILY NIGHT:** For those with children.

When our adult children get together and discuss their favorite memories one thing they all agree on is their love for Family Night. For our family this was Friday night. All children had to come to Family Night. This was the rule in our home until they were old enough to participate in Youth Group activities at church. Then if there was a conflict they were excused.

This was a time of play as a family based on the ages of the children. Characterized by fun and interaction. Games, activities and sharing, no TV or passive events. We carefully chose the games so that the children could enjoy themselves. All games have winners but we purposefully screened the games or adjusted the rules so that the children were competing to win without having to do something bad to their brothers or sisters. An example of a game where you win by doing in your brothers and sisters is Monopoly. What a fun game for a family to play. Brothers and sisters all try to drive their siblings bankrupt. One by one a child is tearfully eliminated from the family time and has to just sit back and watch while an older brother or sister drives the last person out of the game. When we played Monopoly we all played until everyone had property and a home. Then I would announce, "OK, we have all reached our goals in life, now lets play another game."

There are many fun and interactive games on the market where children do not have to do bad things to their siblings to win. Parents can also set the pace when they play. I would often let the children win even though I could have won every time. There is no glory in beating a five year old at Shoots and Ladders or a ten year old at a card game such as UNO.

Family night should be a fun time characterized by laughter and interaction. Each child got to choose a game they wanted to play. We popped popcorn, threw in some M&Ms and then all sat around on the floor for a good time together. All children got to join in. When we played cards our toddler was given cards to play with and chew on while we all played together. No child was allowed to ruin family night by a sullen or resentful attitude. That was my responsibility as the father, to discipline the children and ensure their foolishness did not deprive them of a fun night together. The older children learned to love and help the younger ones as they grew up playing games with a loving mother and father for whom the time with the child was more important than winning or loosing, so the older children learned to be gentle with the younger ones on family night through this modeling. The younger children were taught that they were not the center of the universe, that this was Family Night and that we were all enjoying a family time together. They came to understand and love their older brothers and sisters because of their gentleness and participation. (Note: We had four children. I often think that couples who just by reflex stop at two do so without thinking through on the joys that a larger family brings to events such as family night.)

**Our Regular Family Night Will Be:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Some easy treats we can have on family night are:

Some games we can play that will be fun:

**Special Times Together:**

What are things which are special to your wife when you are together? When you watch TV together or read together you can often do something to make this special to her. For some wives this will might be rubbing her feet with a lotion or cream. For others it would be a back rub. For others it might be just cuddling together. What about when you are walking? Does your wife like you to hold her hand or walk arm in arm? What about physical affection? Do you kiss your wife affectionately (not passionately) in public. For many women this immediately raises their status among their friends – if they have a wife who walks into a social group holding the wife’s hand, gives her an affectionate kiss and says I love you before parting. What about your wife. What things are important to her?

**Ask you wife which of the following are important to her...**

- A foot massage with oil
- A back rub
- Holding hands when walking
- Walking arm in arm
- Cuddling on the couch while reading or watching T.V.
- An affectionate kiss in public
- A kiss goodbye whenever you leave her

**Now ask her to add to this list**

- 
- 
- 
- 

**Now go back and below each of these write out an application.**

**Last but not least, put this sheet in your Bible and look at it every day**

**DATE NIGHT:** A time when you as a married couple go out, get away from the routine of home and life, and spend a relaxed evening together.

Eleanor and I maintained our date night after we were married and even when our children were too young to be left alone for more and a couple of hours. This time together, even if it was to be spent at the nearest doughnut shop or window shopping was very important to our marriage.

Many young parents ask, “Doesn’t it damage your children for them to be left with a stranger when they are young?” We always respond, “No, our children learn that we go away and then we come back”. It is as simple as that. What is more a more healthy and realistic view of reality in terms of the child – “My mother will never leave me, I am the center of the universe and she will always be there at my beck and call” or “My mother loves me but has a life of her own as well, sometimes she goes away but she always comes back to me and someday I will grow up and go away but will always maintain a loving relationship with my mom and dad”?

What to do on a date night is always a question. When we were broke, we did things broke people do – window shop, go to the park, visit at a friends house, just be creative. When we were able to treat ourselves to a dinner out or entertainment we would rotate from week to week who got to choose. Eleanor and my tastes are so different that when we tried to pick something the other liked we ended up doing something neither of us really liked. So we hit on this plan, each week we rotate what we do, one week she chooses without reference to me, knowing the next week I will choose. One benefit of this is that both of us as a result have experienced many aspects of life that we probably never would have otherwise. I like Mexican food, she likes Chinese, I like action movies, she likes romance, I like baseball games, she likes plays and musicals, I like historical museums, she like impressionist art and the list goes on. Now you and your wife may be very similar in your tastes and that is great but the wife should get to have a good time as well. Many young wives will do anything just to get a night alone with their husbands, so guys make sure your wife is getting to do some of the things she deprives herself from experiencing by making a family and a home for you.

On our date nights kids and family concerns, budget, extended family and problem issues are off limits. This is a time to concentrate on each other and romance. In every sense of the word it is a date. We get dressed up, we go out on a date and I treat her like I did when we were courting, as she does me. The only difference being that when the date is over I get to go home with her and have a wonderful night together. Which brings us to another important point. Date night should always conclude after the kids are in bed. Let the romance begin!!!

**Our Regular Date Night Will Be:** \_\_\_\_\_

How will we decide what we will do?

## Are You Free This Saturday Night?

In the chart below fill out what you would like to do on your dates. Take a moment to discuss your different tastes and expectations. No doubt the wife is thinking about long and meaningful conversations and the husband about great post date sex. In the context of these and other expatiations you put together a fun date night. The starting point though is what you will do on the date. Both should add to the list, each taking turns. You can use this as a check list going through your fun date nights or simply as a way of discovering how similar or different your tastes are. You may want to take turns putting together the date or the wife may want the husband to put it together, just like when they were first dating and he began to court her. There is no right or wrong way as long as a fun and romantic evening is experienced by both partners.

	Husband	Wife
<b>Cheapo dates</b>		
<b>Night on the town</b>		

**WORKING LUNCH:** A time when the week to week “business concerns” of the family can be discussed and decisions made.

Eleanor and I discovered that we just could not keep our thoughts off the day to day “business” needs of our marriage and family on our dates. Life was so hectic that we felt this might be the only chance we had to talk about schedules, events and budgets. We decided that this must be an important aspect of our marriage, to be on the same page in terms of the family business and schedule, yet we did not want to spend our date night talking about these mundane day to day issues, especially when some of them were emotionally draining. As a result we began to meet once each week for a working lunch.

There have been times when because of my hectic schedule I could not get away for lunch. During these periods El would bring lunch to my office and we would meet there. Other times we met halfway at a park or coffee shop. It was always an atmosphere where we could get work done. As the children grew and left home we found afternoons were free, now that El did not have to be home for the kids when they back from school and we began meeting in the late afternoon at a favorite coffee spot. We still call it our Working Lunch even though it is in the late afternoon. We have found that it is better to meet early than late so you minds will be fresh and creative juices flowing freely. We also know that if we do not get everything taken care of we will be meeting again the very next week so every problem does not have to be solved. This will be a great burden off your wife’s mind. Once she realizes that you are going to be faithful in this those late night “dump sessions” will be fewer and fewer because she will say to herself, “This can wait till Thursday lunch”. No matter how hectic the schedule, Eleanor knows that she can address any marriage or family issue or need on Thursday at lunch. If I am at a conference table and someone says, “We need to get together for lunch this week, when would be a good time for you?”, I pull out my calendar and say, “This week looks good except for Thursday lunch, I already have an appointment that day that has been in place for quite a while, it would really inconvenience the other party to change it at the last minute”.

We bring the calendar, the budget and our concerns. This way these are all taken care of once a week, before Family Night or Date Night.

**Our Regular Working Lunch Will Be:** \_\_\_\_\_

What we will bring to our Working Lunch...

Check book

Husband’s appointment calendar

Wife’s family calendar

To do lists

Kid questions, problems and decisions

Other???

In addition we take one **Family Vacation** and one **Honeymoon** each year. Most understand a Family Vacation. Sometimes we did not have the money to actually go places but we did plan ahead a whole series of day trips and events and faithfully did these each day. As for the Honeymoon, each year Eleanor and I get away for a few days without the children to rekindle our romance and relationship. Now get out the calendar and set your two dates.

## Stability: Putting Marriage On The Altar

In more than one setting I have heard mature Christian men speak of putting home, family or marriage, “on the altar”. There lives have been so devoted to providing for their family or to the service of God that they have had to deny even this most basic need – their family.

Unfortunately for these men, their sense of sacrifice is based on a false presumption that by denying home and family that they have given up something rather than denied both God and their family of their faithfulness. I Timothy chapter three gives a list of the qualifications of an spiritual leader. In the project below, read each qualification and then indicate whether you think it would be acceptable to place this area on the altar, give it up for the sake of the career, be it secular or ministry. Circle Y if yes, this is acceptable and N if no this is not acceptable.

<u>Area Required By God</u>	<u>Circle Y if yes, this is acceptable and N if no this is not acceptable.</u>	
<b>Above reproach</b>	Y	N
<b>Husband of one wife</b>	Y	N
<b>Temperate</b>	Y	N
<b>Prudent</b>	Y	N
<b>Respectable</b>	Y	N
<b>Hospitable</b>	Y	N
<b>Able to teach</b>	Y	N
<b>Not addicted to wine</b>	Y	N
<b>Pugnacious</b>	Y	N
<b>Uncontentious</b>	Y	N
<b>Free from the love of money</b>	Y	N
<b>Manages his household well</b>	Y	N
<b>Children under control</b>	Y	N
<b>Not a new convert</b>	Y	N
<b><u>Good reputation</u></b>	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>

Look at the above list. Many who would not think of putting soberness, honesty or spiritual gifts on the altar, easily put marriage, home and family, “on the altar”. Why do you think they separate out these covenant responsibilities. God obviously does not. Circle all responsibilities that have to do with marriage, home and family. Recommit these to the same level of the others.

## **Personal Evaluation**

### **In Doing This Evaluation Consider The Key Points Of This Chapter**

**Husband:**

If you decide that you are not individually responsible for any of the covenants mentioned, who do you want to step in and do it in your place?

If you are unwilling to personally fulfill your responsibilities towards your covenant vow what alternatives does that leave your wife with in terms of a man meeting these needs in her life?

If you are unwilling to respond responsibly to your vows, to the covenant you have made with God, are you willing for another Christian woman, who is your age and equally compatible with your spouse, to step in and to take your place?

**Wife:**

If you decide that you are not individually responsible for any of the covenants mentioned, who do you want to step in and do it in your place?

If you are unwilling to personally fulfill your responsibilities towards your covenant vow what alternatives does that leave your husband with in terms of a woman meeting these needs in his life?

If you are unwilling to respond responsibly to your vows, to the covenant you have made with God, are you willing for another Christian man, who is your age and equally compatible with your husband, to step in and to take your place?

## A Pause For Reflection...

- A. No Moral Outlet** – as previously stated there is absolutely no moral outlet for the wife should her husband neglect or refuse this covenant need. The husband therefore literally traps his wife with her marriage vows, which then become a source of punishment rather than blessing. This is not limited to the outright refusal, the benign neglect has equal consequences in the life of the wife. The husband who refuses to become a student of his wife's needs does so in the context of a fallen world which gladly meets this need. It is one thing for a Christian husband to neglect his duties to his wife, it is a double blow to the Christian wife to have a neglectful husband when all around her the deprived and fallen world recognizes her needs and cries out to him.
- B. What You Are Saying By Not Meeting That Need** – the Christian husband must understand that his decision to neglect this need in his wife's life reflects both on his love for his wife and his love for God. The covenant is made with his wife but the covenant is also made with God. To refuse to meet this covenant need is to break both your covenant with your wife and with God. It is not simply a matter of not seeing or understanding the importance of your wife's needs, it goes deeper than that, it is to say to God that your needs, your values, your understanding of your role as the husband in your relationship with your wife supercedes God and His Word as given to us by the Holy Spirit.
- C. Are You Willing To Live With The Same Alternatives When It Comes To Your Needs** – each husband must ask himself if he is willing to subject his covenant needs to the same subjective value as he is placing on his wife in this area. Are you willing to allow your wife to place those emotional, material and family needs of yours, which she has covenanted with God to meet, on the same subjective level as you are now putting her covenant needs. Are you willing to give your covenant needs up to her ability and willingness to see their importance and understand them and accept them or do you wish her to accept God's Word and your word as to their importance? In the same way you must be willing to subject your understanding of your wife's needs to both the Word of God and his expressions of these needs. You must in fact love her and meet her covenant needs as created by God in the same way that you desire and expect her to love you and meet your covenant needs, which are created by God.
- D. If You Do Not Meet These Needs, Who Do You Want To Meet Them** – as you look about your church, your neighborhood, if you do not meet this covenant need, to whom do you want to delegate it? What brother, what man in your church, what neighbor, what friend, what co-worker of your wife do you want your wife to go to in order to have this God created need ministered to and met? If then you are unwilling to give this ministry out to another, then you must become a student of your husband, her covenant needs and your skill in meeting these needs, to her joy and to God's glory.
- E. Do You Want Your Spouse To Be Trapped By Their Own Integrity** – if you do not meet these needs willingly, joyfully and with a sincere heart then you trap your wife with her moral integrity and use this virtue and a club with which to beat her. You say to your wife, "You stupid woman, if you were a pagan you could divorce me, but your are not,

you are a Christian. Hah- you are stuck with your obedience to God! Now this need will never be met, you poor stupid woman! Now you have to walk with God as best you can, without your needs as created by God being met and there is nothing you can do about it. Too bad your not a pagan, but your not, I've got you, and your doomed to this marriage. As a result the very virtues of a godly wife, her commitment to look to you and your alone to meet her covenant needs have become a club with which you beat her and punish her.

**F. What If Your Spouse Will Not Meet Your Needs** – spiritual blackmail is not an alternative in marriage.

Although many counselors recommend this approach to get the attention of your spouse, it is done in disobedience to God. Many actions may be pragmatic and as a result even effective but only on the surface, in the true spiritual development and growth of the family only that which is in accordance with God's Word is blessed of God. It may be effective for a wife to leave her husband and go live with her parents. It may be effective for a husband to say, "When you start losing weight I will start talking again", it may be effective for a wife to announce, "when you start coming home from work at a decent hour then I will start having sex with you again", it may be effective for a husband to say, "when you start cleaning the house, then I'll start doing the fix it up projects" the list goes on and on. However what is pragmatic, what is effective, what works, is not always spiritual and in some cases is outright sin. Vengeance is both pragmatic and effective but it is not only not spiritual, it is sin. This tit for tat approach is in violation to of God's Word in several areas.

1. First God reserves vengeance for Himself. The Bible specifically commands the Christian in Romans 12:17, "Never pay back evil for evil to anyone..."
2. Second, such revenge strategies are almost universally driven by anger and again the Word of God states in James 1:20, "for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God."
3. Lastly both the wife, (I Peter 3:1 – 6) and the husband, (Ephesians 5:25 – 27) are commanded to minister to their wayward spouses as opposed to manipulating them.
4. In the Christian marriage we may pray, we may minister, we may seek to stimulate one another to love and good works but all revenge, anger and conditional love is forbidden.

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**  
***JEREMIAH 15:16***  
**THEME: Love Wife By Meeting Emotional Needs**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Ephesians 5:33**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: I Peter 3:7**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Ephesians 5:25**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD**  
***JEREMIAH 15:16***  
**THEME: Love Wife By Meeting Emotional Needs**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Mark 10:45**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Proverbs 31:11**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**

**PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: I Corinthians 7:32 & 33**  
**How does this passage relate to the theme?**

**When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?  
Explain why:**

**How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?**