

Chapter Five

Husband:

The Spiritual Leadership Of The Family

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

➤ ***Book Five: Spiritual leadership of the family***

Book Six: Love wife by sacrificially meeting her emotional needs.

Book Seven: Trusting and truthful relationship

Book Eight: Providing for your wife's material needs

Book Nine: Making the home and family a priority

Book Ten: Submission to her husbands leadership

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

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

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Bible Study

Chapter Five

Scripture Memory Verse –

EPH 5:25 & 26 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

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

Before we begin...

Needs are not imperfections nor are they sin. In understanding this consider the only two perfect men to live as we did here on earth – Adam before the fall and Jesus during His earthly ministry. Both Adam and Jesus had needs, yet they were both sinless and perfect. Adam and Jesus both had the need to sleep. Adam and Jesus both had the need to eat. Adam and Jesus both had the need to work. These needs were not as a result of imperfection nor of sin. Even so, 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. Our marriage is like a puzzle. We are incomplete without the other piece of this puzzle – 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 meeting our spouses needs is not simply a legal contractual relationship. It is not saying 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 desire for spiritual leadership by her husband is created by God, a lasting and legitimate need, for which she has no moral outlet outside of marriage.

If I vow to love my wife as Christ loved the church, then I vow to be the spiritual leader of the home.

I. The Husband As The Spiritual Leader Of The Home

Ephesians 5:25 – 33 is the classic passage dealing with the Husband as the spiritual leader of the home. The passage is presented for your consideration in three translations. As an overview, read the passage through as a whole.

NASB Ephesians 5:25 - 33

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of

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His body. For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. 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.

KJV Ephesians 5:25 - 33

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

NIV Ephesians 5:25-33

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church-- for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery-- but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Which translation did you enjoy the most?

Go back and underline the sentence or phrase that you feel sums up the role in terms of the husband as spiritual leader of the family?

Now we will look at the passage section by section. With each verse or passage...

The Spiritual Care of Your Wife / Loving your wife as Christ loves the church

In this passage the husband is commanded to love his wife as Christ loved the church. Notice in the passage those ways in which Christ loves and cares for the spiritual needs of the church. The husband is to love and care for his wife's spiritual needs as well. He may not be able to do exactly for his wife what Christ has done for the church but he should strive to love his wife in the same way and seek those things for his wife which Christ seeks for the church.

- First read the passage.
- Next, circle the key words in the passage as they pertain to the role of the husband as spiritual leader of the family.
- Third, choose one or two key words which are crucial to the understanding of the concept of the husbands spiritual leadership of the family and write the definition of this word.
- Then come up with a specific area of spiritual leadership or care that this passage could speak to. Lastly, write a summary statement or devotional thought as to how you feel this passage speaks to the subject of The Husband As The Spiritual Leader Of The Home.

Ephesians 5:25 – 27

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.

Passage read:

Key words in the passage circled:

In the space below record one or two key words which are crucial to understanding the concept of the husband as the spiritual leader in the home, with their definitions

Specific area of spiritual leadership or care: _____

Summary statement or devotional thought:

The Physical Care of Your Wife / Loving your wife just as much as you love and care for yourself

In the first passage we saw Christ's love for the church as expressed by His care for the spiritual needs of the church. Here the husband is to love his wife as himself. What is stressed in this passage is the husband's care for the physical needs of his wife. This speaks to her physical well being, her home her possessions, her clothes, her transportation. In all things the husband is to put his wife on an equal level with himself and put her physical and material needs on the same level as his own. There are not double standards in marriage.

- First read the passage.
- Next, circle the key words in the passage as they pertain to the role of the husband as spiritual leader of the family.
- Third, choose one or two key words which are crucial to the understanding of the concept of the husbands spiritual leadership of the family and write the definition of this word.
- Then come up with a specific area of spiritual leadership or care that this passage could speak to. Lastly, write a summary statement or devotional thought as to how you feel this passage speaks to the subject of The Husband As The Spiritual Leader Of The Home.

Ephesians 5:28 – 30

So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body.

Passage read:

Key words in the passage circled:

In the space below record one or two key words which are crucial to understanding the concept of the husband as the spiritual leader in the home, with their definitions

Specific area of spiritual leadership or care: _____

Summary statement or devotional thought:

The Family Needs of Your Wife / Loving your wife and putting her and the family above all else, including the family you have left behind

Next the Holy Spirit stresses the importance of the husband leaving his father and mother and cleaving to his wife, becoming one flesh with her. In the Christian marriage there is no question of loyalty or commitment. It is not grandmother first, then my mother, then my wife – rather in the Christian marriage your wife comes first. There is not competition, there is not subservience or humiliation on the part of the wife to her in-laws, there can be no comparisons or meddling by the mother-in-law. The husband loves his wife by leaving one family and creating another.

- First read the passage.
- Next, circle the key words in the passage as they pertain to the role of the husband as spiritual leader of the family.
- Third, choose one or two key words which are crucial to the understanding of the concept of the husbands spiritual leadership of the family and write the definition of this word.
- Then come up with a specific area of spiritual leadership or care that this passage could speak to. Lastly, write a summary statement or devotional thought as to how you feel this passage speaks to the subject of The Husband As The Spiritual Leader Of The Home.

Ephesians 5:31 & 32 *For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.*

Passage read:

Key words in the passage circled:

In the space below record one or two key words which are crucial to understanding the concept of the husband as the spiritual leader in the home, with their definitions

Specific area of spiritual leadership or care: _____

Summary statement or devotional thought:

The Emotional Needs and Cares of Your Wife / Loving your wife as you love your “self”, your ego, your own self-image.

The final way the husband loves his wife in this passage is “as himself”. The self, the self-image, the ego are strong factors in our makeup. Yet we lift our wife to the same level as ourselves in these areas. Your wife’s emotional wellbeing, her self-image, her confidence, her ability to grow and express herself, the protection of her emotions and feelings, all these and more now become your concern. It is not that you forget about your own emotional needs, it is that now your wife’s emotional needs and concerns have become equal with your own.

- First read the passage.
- Next, circle the key words in the passage as they pertain to the role of the husband as spiritual leader of the family.
- Third, choose one or two key words which are crucial to the understanding of the concept of the husbands spiritual leadership of the family and write the definition of this word.
- Then come up with a specific area of spiritual leadership or care that this passage could speak to. Lastly, write a summary statement or devotional thought as to how you feel this passage speaks to the subject of The Husband As The Spiritual Leader Of The Home.

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.

Passage read:

Key words in the passage circled:

In the space below record one or two key words which are crucial to understanding the concept of the husband as the spiritual leader in the home, with their definitions

Specific area of spiritual leadership or care: _____

Summary statement or devotional thought:

I. God's Provision For Wives Who's Husbands Betray Their Covenant With God As Spiritual Leaders of the Home

Are the commands of God something to be used to your advantage against other people? I can remember during my university years pagans who would observe me reading my Bible or witnessing coming up to me and saying, "Did Jesus really say that if someone hits you on one cheek that you should turn the other?" If I responded "yes" then they would respond, "Great, stand still while I smack you upside the head!" They did this in the hope that they could humiliate me either physically or emotionally through the words of Christ. (At a student conference I asked a pastor who was also a former Marine pilot how I should respond to this. He said that he always responded, "Go ahead, hit me on one cheek, I will turn the other and you can hit me on that cheek, then I will proceed to clean up this room with your face.").

I have seen this scenario played out in many situations and forums. Men using the Word of God to their own fleshly ends. A second illustration immediately comes to mind. I had a student in Bible study who was a graphic design major. One of the courses he was required to take was Nude Painting. When he was arguing with the Dean for permission to substitute a course that was more suitable both to his career and his moral standards the Dean quoted Titus 1:15, "To the pure all things are pure". This student replied, "But I am not pure" and was eventually allowed to substitute this class for a more suitable one.

Unfortunately I face this same type of manipulation of Scripture in Christian marriages. I can remember a marriage counseling situation where the defense of the husband was actually his condemnation. In this case the husband was a Christian, active in church but one of the most self-centered individuals I have ever come across. The entire marriage, from his perspective was centered around his life and his needs. He understood correctly the woman's role in marriage but was unwilling to fulfill his responsibilities to any degree that involved self-sacrifice or humility. His appeal, time and again, at every point of the discussion was I Peter 3:1 - "In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives," It was his contention that even if he was not fulfilling his responsibilities as a husband, his wife's only recourse was to submit quietly to his leadership and not say anything. I quickly pointed out to him that this passage is for wives of unbelieving husbands and that he was telling his wife that she should assume that he was a pagan and treat him as such. A second observation was equally as convicting, that if He did not meet his covenant responsibilities he was in fact trapping his wife by her spirituality. Her very walk with God and spiritual maturity became for her a liability and was being used by him trap her by her own faithfulness to God and subsequently to him. Her righteousness in this area compounded his sin. This of course was not to his liking. The questions remains though, what recourse does the wife have whose husband refuses to fulfill his covenant vows.

I Peter 3: 1 – 6 is the classic passage for wives of husbands who fail to fulfill their covenant vows. This passage speaks first to wives of non-Christian husbands who are disobedient to the Word of God. It has a secondary application to the wives of Christian husbands so carnal that they must be treated like the unregenerate. It is of course a great shame for a Christian husband

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to have a wife who must resort to this passage. No believing husband should ever refer his wife to this passage, should he do so, it evidences, as a rule, his failure in fulfilling the passages from Ephesians 5:25 – 33. He has failed in his vow to God.

Before continuing on to the Bible study this passage has been provided for you in three different translations.

- Read the passage through in each translation.
- Choose one which you find most easy to understand.
- As you read through the passage a second time, circle any phrases which pertain to the wife whose husbands do not fulfill their covenant vows before God.

NASB I Peter 3:1 - 6

In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. And let not your adornment be merely external--braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands. Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

KJV I Peter 3:1 - 6

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

NIV I Peter 3:1 - 6

Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

Now we will continue with the study of this passage by addressing it thought by thought. As you accomplish each task check off the appropriate box...

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I Peter 3:1 & 2 *In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.*

Read the passage

Circle the key words in the passage

In the space below record one or two key words which are crucial to understanding the concept of the wife of disobedient husband, with their definitions

Specific area of spiritual leadership or care: _____

Summary statement or devotional thought:

I Peter 3:3 & 4 *And let not your adornment be merely external-- braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.*

Read the passage

Circle the key words in the passage

In the space below record one or two key words which are crucial to understanding the concept of the wife of disobedient husband, with their definitions

Specific area of spiritual leadership or care: _____

Summary statement or devotional thought:

I Peter 3:5 *For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands.*

Read the passage

Circle the key words in the passage

In the space below record one or two key words which are crucial to understanding the concept of the wife of disobedient husband, with their definitions

Specific area of spiritual leadership or care: _____

Summary statement or devotional thought:

I Peter 3:6 *Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.*

Read the passage

Circle the key words in the passage

In the space below record one or two key words which are crucial to understanding the concept of the wife of disobedient husband, with their definitions

Specific area of spiritual leadership or care: _____

Summary statement or devotional thought:

II. The Basics Of Spiritual Leadership In The Marriage

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,”

Ephesians 5:25 & 26

Husbands have basic responsibilities of discipleship. These are areas the Word of God holds every man responsible in terms of the spiritual leadership of his wife and later his family. In today's fast paced world most men feel a strong responsibility towards their jobs. Many give concentrated and focused time to financial planning. Still others can be constantly found engaged in home improvements. Yet many do not think through and plan in detail their spiritual goals for their family. Men who would not for a moment think of “farming out” or delegating their secular roles to relative strangers do so on a weekly basis in terms of their spiritual roles and responsibilities. For instance, I know many men who would not for a moment consider letting a stranger have regular access to their check book or online banking service to balance their accounts and review their financial situation who contrastingly leave the day to day spiritual care of their family, the week to week spiritual instruction of their family to relative strangers. They would never give their banking PINs to stranger but then turn their wife and children over to those they barely know for the most important and intimate spiritual care and instruction.

The details of their car and home loans, their cell phone contracts, their contractual relationships with their employers, their bank and the establishments with whom they do business loom far more real and the responsibilities far greater than those marriage vows they have bound themselves with to the omnipotent God who will judge both the living and the dead. A man who regularly reviews his cell phone contract to make sure he is optimizing his usage, who reviews his home and auto loans to make sure he is getting the best deal, who knows his credit rating to make sure that he is in the best shape to do business often has never reviewed his marriage contract with God nor evaluated his standing with God based on these vows.

In the project below...

- first read the passage,
- then circle the key words which deal with how the love of God is demonstrated by His ministry to us
- lastly record how your responsibility to love your wife as Christ loves the Church, thus assure her sanctification, her spiritual growth in this area, would be expressed. You are not looking for concepts of how this passage would be expressed to others in the church but rather you are looking at the concept in terms of God's love and ministry to you and then in turn your ministry and love of your wife.

The Word of God / The Bible:

- first read the passage,
- then circle the key words which deal with how the love of God is demonstrated by His ministry to us
- lastly record how your responsibility to love your wife as Christ loves the Church, thus assure her sanctification, her spiritual growth in this area, would be expressed. You are not looking for concepts of how this passage would be expressed to others in the church

but rather you are looking at the concept in terms of God's love and ministry to you and then in turn your ministry and love of your wife.

Acts 20:32 "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

The husbands responsibility to his wife: Since the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church, from these passages how would this ministry be expressed...

Prayer:

- first read the passage,
- then circle the key words which deal with how the love of God is demonstrated by His ministry to us
- lastly record how your responsibility to love your wife as Christ loves the Church, thus assure her sanctification, her spiritual growth in this area, would be expressed. You are not looking for concepts of how this passage would be expressed to others in the church but rather you are looking at the concept in terms of God's love and ministry to you and then in turn your ministry and love of your wife.

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.

The husbands responsibility to his wife: Since the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church, from these passages how would this ministry be expressed...

Fellowship:

- first read the passage,
- then circle the key words which deal with how the love of God is demonstrated by His ministry to us
- lastly record how your responsibility to love your wife as Christ loves the Church, thus assure her sanctification, her spiritual growth in this area, would be expressed. You are not looking for concepts of how this passage would be expressed to others in the church but rather you are looking at the concept in terms of God's love and ministry to you and then in turn your ministry and love of your wife.

Lamentations 3:22-23 The LORD'S lovingkindness indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness.

The husbands responsibility to his wife: Since the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church, from these passages how would this ministry be expressed...

Witnessing:

- first read the passage,
- then circle the key words which deal with how the love of God is demonstrated by His ministry to us
- lastly record how your responsibility to love your wife as Christ loves the Church, thus assure her sanctification, her spiritual growth in this area, would be expressed. You are not looking for concepts of how this passage would be expressed to others in the church but rather you are looking at the concept in terms of God's love and ministry to you and then in turn your ministry and love of your wife.

Romans 5:6-9 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. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

The husbands responsibility to his wife: Since the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church, from these passages how would this ministry be expressed...

Ministry:

- first read the passage,
- then circle the key words which deal with how the love of God is demonstrated by His ministry to us
- lastly record how your responsibility to love your wife as Christ loves the Church, thus assure her sanctification, her spiritual growth in this area, would be expressed. You are not looking for concepts of how this passage would be expressed to others in the church but rather you are looking at the concept in terms of God's love and ministry to you and then in turn your ministry and love of your wife.

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."

The husbands responsibility to his wife: Since the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church, from these passages how would this ministry be expressed...

Our Obedience In Action

- A. Lordship** - Husbands, do not present your wives with obstacles she was never meant to have to deal with. 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 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 make them a part of your prayer notebook. 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. Not only are you 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, 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, 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, even if your wife fails to fulfill her covenant responsibilities as regards to your needs.

Chapter 5

The Vows of the Husband to God Concerning His Relationship With His Wife: The Spiritual Leadership Of The Family

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. God would use us to make our wife's complete. They need us not because of sin but rather the design of God...

A wife's desire for spiritual leadership by her husband, is created by God, a lasting and legitimate need, for which she has no morale outlet outside of marriage.

I. **Doctrine: The husband as spiritual leader of the home.**

A. **Doctrine**

1. The Word of God presents the husband as the spiritual leader of the wife and with this comes certain responsibilities on his part.
 - a. In Ephesians 5:25 & 26 the Word of God states, "*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,*"
 - b. To be sanctified means to be set apart, to be dedicated to, in this case to the Lord. In John 17:17 Jesus prays, "*Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth.*"
 - c. This presupposes three things about husband
 - 1.) First He earnestly desires with all his heart that his wife have a close relationship with God.
 - 2.) Second, it presupposes that the husband has the type of relationship with God that will allow for the spiritual leadership of his wife. When the wife obeys the admonition of the Word of God in I Corinthians 14:35 "*And if they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home...*" The husband will have something significant to say based on his own study and application of the Word of God.

- 3.) Third, it presupposes that the husband comes home at night so that he is available and able to teach and lead his wife and then later his children in the Word of God.

B. What if the husband fails to live up to his end of the bargain?

1. I Peter 3:1 & 2 is very explicit in this area, *“In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.”* The wife is not free to become the spiritual teacher and leader in the home should her husband be unable or unwilling to fulfill this role.
2. The Bible however does not leave the wife adrift in the world should her husband abrogated his responsibility in this area.
 - a. In Titus 2:3 & 4 the Word of God teaches, *“Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,”* .
 - b. Similarly she may turn to the teachings of the church, the Word of God exhorts in Titus 2:1, *“But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.”*
3. The husband must ask himself, “If I do not meet this need, then what man do I want to delegate this responsibility to?”

II. Practical applications

A. Husbands can commit themselves to a nurturing form of leadership

1. God’s leadership of us has four important characteristics
 - a. First it is interactive.
 - b. Second, the freedom to fail. Christ taught in Luke 6:31 *“And just as you want people to treat you, treat them in the same way.”* Christian husbands can take this one more step. *“Just as you want God to treat you, in the same way treat your wives.”*
 - c. Third, co-laborship. We co-labor with God in the ministry and in our walk with God. I Corinthians 3:9 states, *“ For we are God's fellow workers.. ”*
 - d. Fourth, we are entrusted with responsibility.
2. We, in the spiritual leadership of our wives, should treat them in the same manner as we desire God to treat us.

B. Husbands can commit themselves to being men of the Word of God.

1. **Hearing** - Romans 10:17 states, *“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*

2. **Reading** - Deuteronomy 17:19 states, *"And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes,"*
3. **Studying** - The Bible says of Ezra in Ezra 7:10, *"For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel."*
4. **Memorizing** - Psalm 119:9 & 11 states, *"How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word... Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee."*
5. **Meditating** - God's advice to Joshua, the young new ruler of Israel is found in Joshua 1:8; *"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success."*
6. **Teaching** - There are some spiritual gifts, which even if we do not have them, we are required to use them. I Corinthians 13:35, *"let them ask their own husbands at home"*; husbands are required to teach their children, Ephesians 6:4, *"And, fathers... bring them up in the... instruction of the Lord."* As the spiritual leader of the home the father must commit himself to becoming a teacher of the Word of God.
7. **Together** -
8. **Christian Books** -

C. Prayer

1. Spiritual protection – God's Word states in Job 1:1 & 5, *"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God, and turning away from evil.... And it came about, when the days of feasting had completed their cycle, that Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, "Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. There are several opportunities for this which the husband can take advantage of.."*
2. Avoiding the traps of small group whining and gossip sessions.

D. Fellowship

1. A decision that is so basic that I am ashamed to have to say it is that the couple should worship together at the same church.
2. The same thing goes for the Sunday School class, if your church has these for adults. I strongly encourage husbands to be with their wives in the same class or Bible study, studying and talking about the same issues.

3. The husband should take the initiative in the couples having strong Christian friends which they share in the same social circle.

E. Ministry: Aquila and Priscilla

1. Commitment to the Church
3. Missions

IV. Conclusion:

- A. The Word of God presents the husband as the spiritual leader of the wife and with this comes certain responsibilities on his part.
- B. There are five areas of application which the husband should focus upon when seeking to fulfill his vows, his covenant of marriage before God.
 1. Nurturing leadership
 2. Men of the Word of God
 3. Men of Prayer
 4. Faithful in fellowship both in the Church and in the social pursuits of the family.
 5. Commitment to the Church and it's ministry.
 6. Commitment to the Great Commission.

III. Reflection:

- 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?
- 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?

POST STUDY PROJECTS CHAPTER Five

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 –

Ephesians 6:4 And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Back Review:

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

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 desire for spiritual leadership by her husband, is created by God, a lasting and legitimate need, for which she has no morale outlet outside of marriage.

Nurturing leadership

Matt 7:12

"Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them..."

Matt 22:39

"The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Eph 5:33

“Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself...”

Interactive

One of my oft used rules of communication is that the person receiving the stimulation is the one who gets to define the stimulation. The words, action, comment or environment can be substituted for stimulation. Thus the person to whom the comment is made gets to decide if it is hurtful or not. The person to whom the action is directed gets to determine how it feels. The person who is living in the environment gets to decide if he or she likes it or not. The person who gets slapped on the back gets to define whether or not it is a friendly greeting or an unwanted hurt. The person poked gets to define whether it is a playful tickle or an inappropriate intrusion. The person kidded gets to define whether it is an act of playful familiarity or public humiliation. Even so it is our wife and not ourselves who gets to define how we are doing in terms of spiritual interaction. This is hard for many young husband’s to comprehend. Thus, one of my oft used rules of communication is that the person receiving the stimulation is the one who gets to define the stimulation.

I can remember vividly in a counseling situation the husband making a comment. I turned to the wife and asked, “When your husband said that how did you feel?” She replied that it hurt her,

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she felt like crying. The husband was incredulous, he almost laughed at her response and protested that what he said was not hurtful, that it was helpful, that his wife should not feel that way about his comment.

I remember as well an argument being carried out at the dinner table between a fellow minister and his wife. He was insisting that his tickling was an act of playful love and foreplay while she was trying to express to him that she simply hated it. He could not accept this and kept insisting that it was fun and playful.

I remember the bafflement of a young husband who surprised his wife by decorating their living room like a hunting lodge. He spent long hours on this only for his wife to respond by bursting into tears. He could not understand her insensitivity. After all he had done it all for her.

I still cringe at the memory of the husband whose wife joined a weight loss and exercise club. He wanted to encourage her and motivate her so he went out and bought her clothes in the next size down - only to have her throw them back at him in anger.

I have seen this over and over again. Those who make a statement, do an action, provide an environment which is meant to express love, but do so by their standards. You fail to take into consideration an understanding of the one to whom the word, action or environment is expressed. You do not express love to others in a way that you would want love expressed if you were them. Simply put – you are not them, you are you. If you do something for another as if they were you, you are thinking of yourself, not of them. You are assuming that because you feel a certain way, respond a certain way, live a certain way, that others would naturally want to be treated as you do. That is called loving yourself, narcissistic self love. Rather you express love to others as they would be blessed, as they would desire, as they would be honored and pleased. You study and understand the other person and then love them in a way that is special and meaningful, not to you, but to them. That is called loving others as you would love yourself.

In the following project...

- Each take a separate piece of paper and rate the job you (the husband) are doing in each of the areas on a scale of 1 – 5; 1 = Needs Improvement to 5 = Doing Fine.
- Next, each of you record in the space below your responses.
- Lastly sit down with your wife and discuss with her your spiritual leadership.

Rate each area on a scale of 1 – 5 : 1 = Needs Improvement ... 5 = Doing Fine.

Area	My View Of Myself	My Wife's View Of Me
Listening to her spiritual needs		
Attentive to those spiritual issues which concern her		
Accessible when she has questions, doubts or fears		
Aware of her spiritual gifts and callings		
Helpful in developing her spiritual walk with God		
Faithfulness in family fellowship such as meal times.		

Freedom To Fail

We all know what the “good” sins are. These are the sins we struggle with so we are not critical of them in the life of our spouse or those in our ministry. The “bad” sins are another matter. These are the ones we live in victory over, we are unrelenting in our criticism and unwavering in our opposition of these sins.

If we have trouble with anger but not weight, then anger is an understandable response of the righteous when vexed, something that all struggle with but being overweight is the heinous sin of gluttony, akin to drunkenness and must be dealt with.

If we have trouble with our weight but not anger, then, being overweight is not gluttony, just a question of metabolism. Anger on the other hand is akin to murder and cannot be tolerated.

Do you have a “good sin” / “bad sin” list which you use in criticizing your wife while at the same time excusing yourself?

Ask your wife to share with you openly and honestly if you give her the same room to fail in her weaknesses as you do your own.

What are three sins in your life that you find yourself continually asking God to forgive.

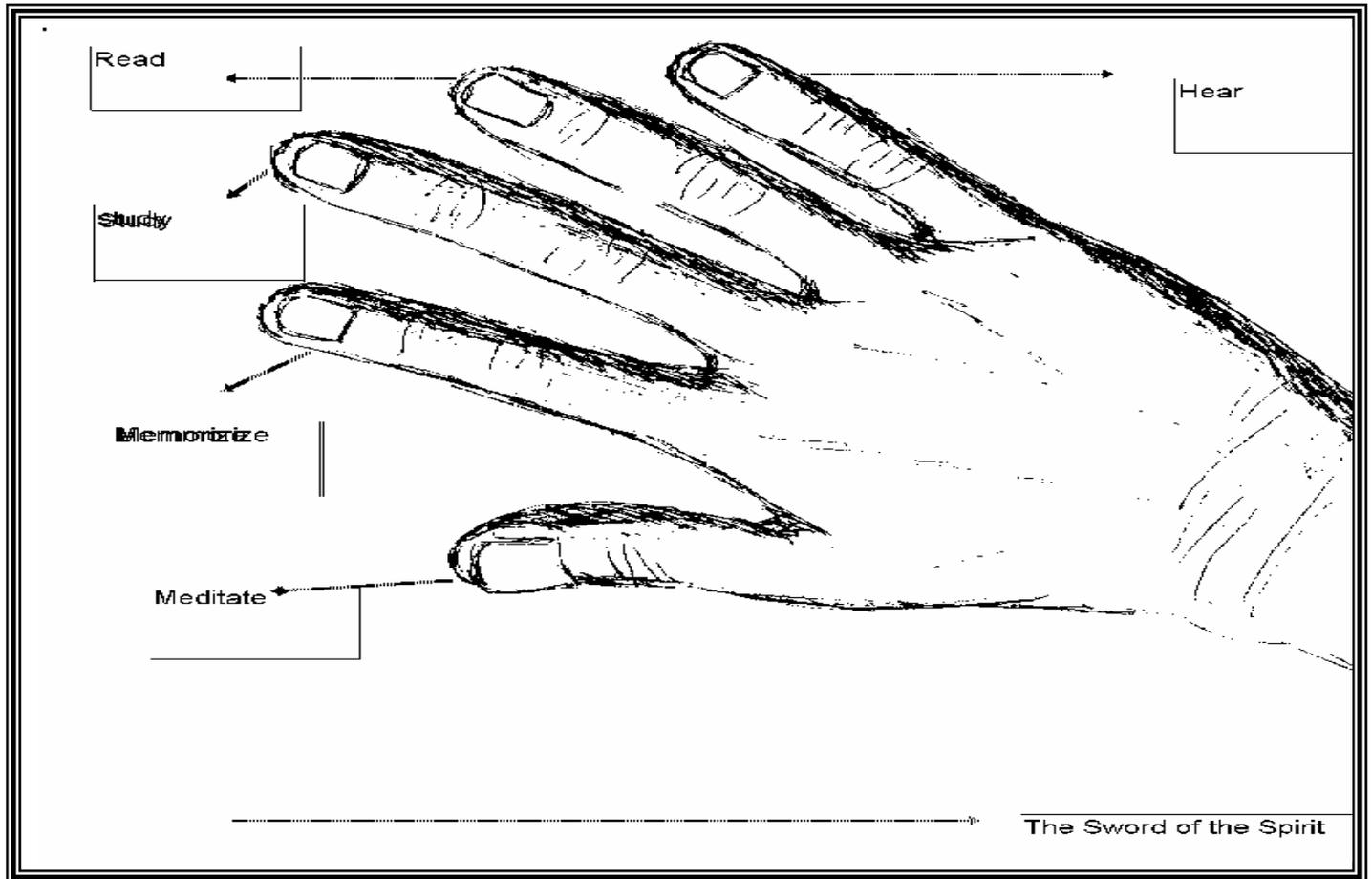
Now consider your relationship with your wife. According to Ephesians 4:32 ***“And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”*** - *what should your response be to her repetitive sins?*

What are three repetitive sins in your life that your friends and family continually excuse, forgive and overlook? Have you come to expect them to overlook and forgive these eccentricities, these sins, these engrained fleshly tendencies?

Now consider your relationship with your wife. According to Matthew 7:12 ***“Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”*** - *what should your response be to her repetitive sins?*

If you were as outspokenly critical of your friends as you are of your wife would you have any friends?

Men of the Word of God



The above illustration is called the Word Hand. We use the Word Hand to take up the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Each of the fingers stands for one of the disciplines necessary for the warrior of God to effectively take up the Word of God. Below are listed seven passages of scripture. As you read the passages write the reference in the illustration to which it belongs...

Ephesians 6:17 *“And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”*

Joshua 1:8 *“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it...”*

Ezra 7:10 *“For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD...”*

Deuteronomy 17: 19 *“ And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes,”*

Romans 10:17 *“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”*

Psalms 119:11 *“Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee.”*

In The Word Hand illustration you can see that each finger is important if we are to pick up and hold on to the Word of God, the Sword of the Spirit. You can imagine what it would be like to try to pick up a real sword and go in to battle if some of your fingers were missing. Take a look at the key disciplines of a man of the Word of God. Do you have any fingers in your Word Hand which would be missing or severely deformed? Without using those fingers, try to pick up your Bible. This illustration represents what the hand of a perfectly disciplined disciple of the Word would be like. Of course, none of us are that.

I can remember the first time I drew my own "Word Hand" as it represented my week to week Christian life. The Hearing finger was huge! Reading a little smaller, study was a stub and memorize and meditate nonexistent. When I positioned my fingers on my actual hand to represent my illustrated Word Hand I could not pick up or hold my Bible. It was a vivid illustration to me as to why I was not living in victory. How could I have victory if I could not take up the Sword of the Spirit? For me this has become an excellent diagnostic tool for self evaluation.

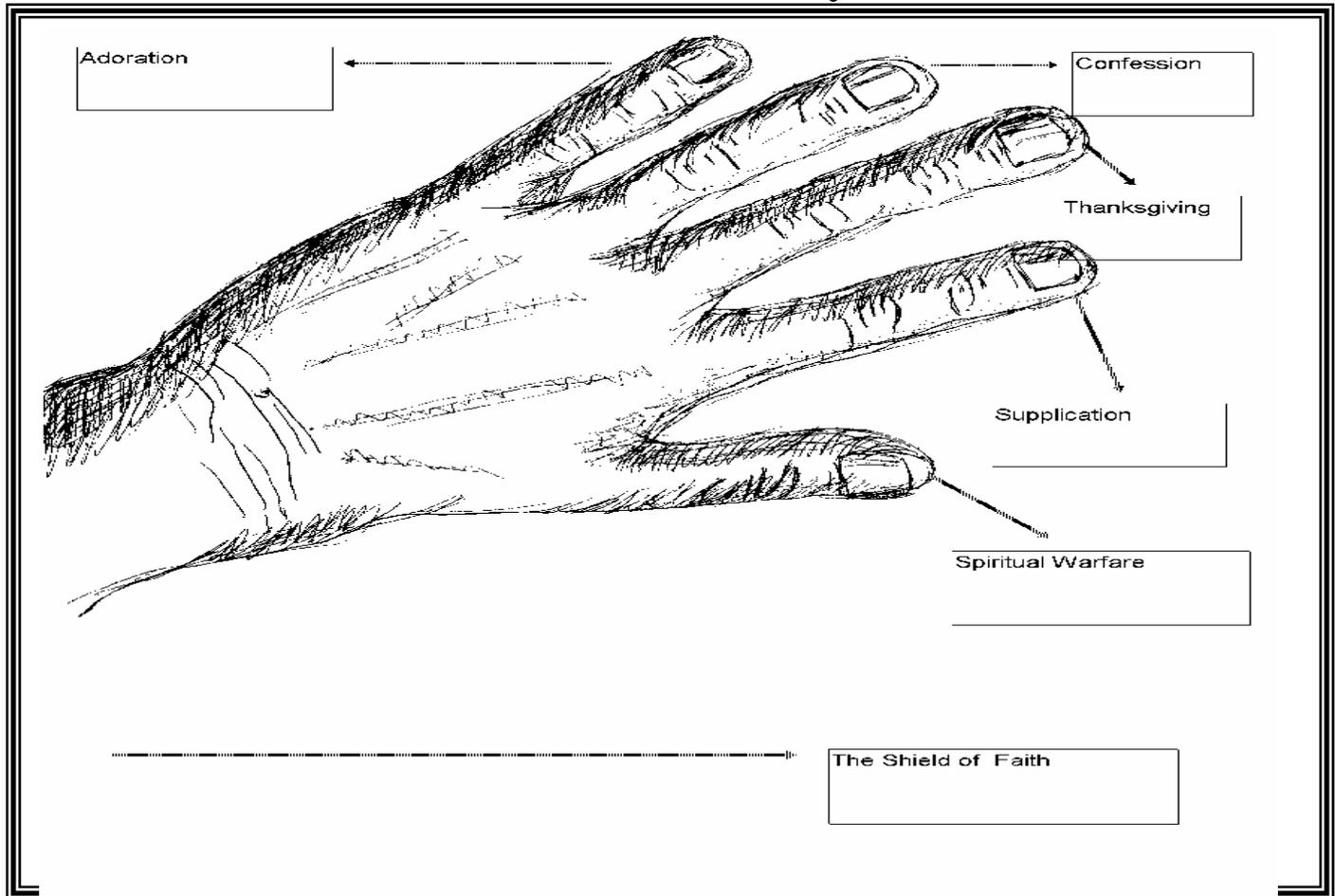
In the space below draw your hand as it represents your week to week walk with Christ. Think back the last few weeks. Draw your hand as it reflects your actual experience in the last few weeks.



Take a good look at your hand, are you fit to go before your wife as her spiritual protector?

What changes need to be made in your commitment to the Word of God in order for you to be the spiritual protector of your wife? Circle those disciplines which you need to further develop and strengthen in order to be the spiritual protector of your wife.

Men of Prayer



(Change Hand – S.W. to Intercession) Similar to the Word Hand is the Prayer Hand. With the Prayer Hand we are able to pick up the Shield of Faith. With this shield we protect not only ourselves but also our wives from the spiritual onslaughts of satan. As with the Word Hand project, first look at the verses listed below and place them in the appropriate box with the hand.

Ephesians 6:16 *“in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one.”*

Psalm 95:6 *Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our maker.*

Psalm 116:1 *I love the LORD, because He hears My voice and my supplications.*

Ephesians 6:19 *and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,*

Psalm 32:5 & 6 *I acknowledged my sin to Thee, and my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; and Thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin.”*

Psalm 140:13 *Surely the righteous will give thanks to Thy name; the upright will dwell in Thy presence.*

Now take a good look at the prayer life of the Man of Prayer. If each finger were to represent your daily prayer life would you have any fingers missing or deformed. If your actual hand looked like your prayer hand, would you be able to pick up and hold a shield against the attacks of an enemy on your wife?

I can remember my own prayer hand, the first time I drew it. The Supplication “asking” fingers and Confession fingers were huge. The rest were virtually nonexistent. I realized that with a spiritual hand as deformed and undeveloped as this I was in no condition to protect myself in spiritual warfare, much less in a position to be the spiritual protector of my wife.

In the space below, draw your Hand of Prayer as it represents the daily discipline of prayer in your life.



With this hand can you take up the shield of faith in defense of your wife?

Can you fulfill your covenant before God as the spiritual protector of your wife?

The military has a term for a man who is always unprepared. He is a “Slacker”. His weapon consistently fails inspection. His equipment is not in ready. He consistently scores low in his weapons evaluation. Are you a “Slacker” as it pertains to your spiritual readiness?

Circle the disciplines of prayer which you must begin to develop and grow in if you are to be the spiritual protector of your wife. **Worship, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication, Intercession.**

Faithful In Fellowship... Both in the Body of Christ and In Your Social Pursuits.

(Since your spiritual leadership in the area of fellowship is intricately linked to your relationship with your wife these following projects will need to be done as a couple.)

Hebrews 10:24 & 25

“and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.”

In the project below list your church the and ministries in which God has called you to participate. Next under the Biblical injunction which best describes your participation rate yourself on a scale of 1 – 5. One being negligent and Five being active obedience.

CHRUCH / MINISTRIES (NAME)	ACTIVELY STIMULATE AND ENCOURAGE (1 – 5)	NOT NEGLECT TO MEET TOGETHER (1 – 5)

I Corinthians 15:33

*“Do not be deceived:
Bad company corrupts good morals.”*

According to I Corinthians 15:33 it is a principle of the Word of God that relationships descend to the lowest common denominator. As a couple, think through on those people with whom you spend the most time socially. Put a plus by the names of those who are more spiritually mature than you. As you and your wife pray through these relationships can you really say that spiritual maturity has played a role in your social friendships. Circle any name which you feel are a bad influence on your walk with God or marriage.

Names of Friends

Their influence on our walk with God and marriage

PASSAGE	PRINCIPLE	OUR CONDUCT	OUR FRIENDS BEHAVIOR	CHANGES NEEDED, IF ANY
Ephesians 5:3				
Ephesians 5:4				
Ephesians 5:5				
Ephesians 5:11				
Ephesians 5:15 & 16				
Ephesians 5:18				
Ephesians 5:19 & 20				

Commitment to the Great Commission... Availability To God For Mission Service Both Short Term And Career.

Aquila was a businessman, a tentmaker by trade. He and his wife came into contact with the Apostle Paul and subsequently came to faith in Christ. They are mentioned six times in the New Testament, all in conjunction with their relationship with this great Apostles and missionary. It is under the influence of Paul that they themselves became active lay missionaries and leaders in their church. Have you and your wife ever considered of making the kind of commitment and sacrifice that Aquila and Priscilla did?

First read each of the six passages which refer to Aquila and Priscilla

Acts 18:1-3 After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working; for by trade they were tent-makers.

Acts 18:18-19 And Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow. And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

Acts 18:25-26 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John; and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

Rom 16:3-5 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; also greet the church that is in their house.

1 Corinthians 16:19 The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

2 Tim 4:19 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

Now go back and underline all that is said about this couple which indicates their availability to God in terms of the Great Commission

Questions for mutual thought and discussion...

- † What about you as a couple. Have you ever considered how your profession could be used to aid a mission agency or ministry?
- † If a missionary were to spend a year in your church, can you honestly say that you would consider going with him when he returned to his mission assignment?
- † How could God use your careers skills and personal gifts on the mission field?

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 depraved 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 you 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: Spiritual Leadership Of The Family

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Ephesians 5:25 & 26; 6:4

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: Ezra 7:10

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: Job 1:1 - 5

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: Spiritual Leadership Of The Family****PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Hebrews 10:24 & 25; I Corinthians 15:33****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 Corinthians 16:19; Acts 18:24 - 26****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: Acts 18:18; Romans 16:3; II Timothy 4:19****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?**