

Marriage Oneness

M O D E L

INDIANA BIBLICAL COUNSELING CENTER

9780 Lantern Road, Ste. 330, Fishers, IN 46037

www.indianabcc.com / 317.585.1845

Developing Marriage Oneness

<p>Marital Surface Problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of understanding, • Difficult time in communication • Lack of trust • Lack of genuine giving • Lack of love • Lack of respect • Lack of romance • Little or no desire in enjoying to be with each other • Financial problems 	
<p>Surface Cause</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reaction to Unmet Needs</i> • <i>Person Feels Rejection</i> 	<p>Wives Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closeness • Openness • Understanding • Peacemaking • Loyalty • Esteem 	<p>Husbands Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conquest • Hierarchy • Authority • Insight • Relationship • Physical Intimacy
<p>Root Problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strongholds</i> • <i>Blind Spots</i> • <i>Generational Tendencies</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride (Jas. 4:6; Prov. 3:5-7) • Rejection (Matt. 5:22; 18:5-6; Jas. 3:9-12) • Bitterness (Eph 4:26,27,31,32) • Performance-based Acceptance (doing vs. being) (Gal. 2:20; John 15:1-10) • Unresolved Guilt (fear, anger, anxiety) (1 Tim. 1:18-19; Acts 24:16) • Rebellion (1 Sam. 15:23; Rom 13:1) • Idolatry & Generational Strongholds (sexual sin, unhealthy soul ties, sinful habits, temporal values, cult, occult) (Gal. 5:19-21) 	
<p>Root Cause</p> <p><i>Walking in the Flesh</i> vs. <i>Walking in the Spirit</i></p> <p>Galatians 5:16</p>	<p>Our flesh is selfish to its very core and always manifests itself in sinful behavior (Romans 7:18). Our flesh is incapable of pleasing God and bringing life (Galatians 6:8). Marriage like no other relationship will cause me to deny myself. For us to be doers of the Word, we must learn to live out of our new heart in Christ. Paul describes it as walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16).</p>	

Key Characteristics of Those Who Find **Freedom & Healing**

Rev. Jeff and Suzette Pokone

The road to freedom and healing in a marriage relationship is not a road for the passive or the faint-hearted. It is a road that demands initiative, humility, honesty, transparency, and determination. It is a road that leads through the valley of pain—not around it. Certainly the counselor plays a part in helping couples come to freedom and healing in Christ; but the greater responsibility lies on the shoulders of each counselee in their individual relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The following is a list of key characteristics we have found to be true in the life of anyone who truly finds freedom and healing in their marriage:

They surrender themselves to God with humility and courage.

- Psalm 139:23-24—*“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way [Heb. way of pain] in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”*

They understand they are a child of God and they belong to the Heavenly Father.

- Romans 8:16—*“The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”*

They separate themselves from any influence that will hinder their freedom and healing.

- 2 Corinthians 6:18—*“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters.”*

They read the Bible, pray, meditate, and personalize the scriptures, and journal as part of developing an intimate relationship with God.

- Jeremiah 29:13—*“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”*

They are willing to hear God speak to them; they look to God for wisdom and revelation through His Word and Holy Spirit.

- Hebrews 3:15—*“While it is said, today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.”*
- James 1:5—*“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that gives to all men liberally, and upbraided not; and it shall be given him.”*

They take responsibility for the works of their flesh and repent of their sin.

- Psalm 51:4—*“Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou might be*

justified when You speak, and be clear with judgment.”

They are willing to open up their past wounds and allow God’s healing.

- *Luke 4:18—“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,”*

They understand that healing is a process directed by God.

- *Jeremiah 17:14—“Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for Thou art my praise.”*

They take responsibility for their own maturity.

- *1 Peter 2:2—“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”*

They apply the Armor of God in their spiritual battle against Satan.

- *Ephesians 6:11-12—“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”*

They are involved in a community of life-giving believers.

- *Hebrews 10:24-25—“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”*

They understand how to live out of their new heart in Christ.

- *Ezekiel 36:26-27—“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”*

Notes:

God's Design for Oneness

Genesis 2:18, 20-25

Companionship: A universal need for oneness

- It is not good for man to dwell alone. Adam needed someone who was equal in creation, someone who was spiritually alive and created in the image of God, someone like himself (Genesis. 2:18).
- We all have a need for love, acceptance, security and significance. After the Fall of man and his perfect communion with God was lost, sin, fear, rejection, and insecurity entered mankind (Genesis 3).
- We must understand that only Christ can meet my need for oneness completely. A relationship with Christ and a healthy identity in Him enables me to love myself properly and express that love to others (I John 4:7-11).

A Covenant Relationship: The basis of oneness

- Marriage was designed by God to fulfill the needs that He created within a person and to accomplish His will in the world. It was the first and most important act of God following creation. Therefore God designed marriage as a covenant to reflect both the unchanging and unconditional love that Jesus Christ has for each one of us.

Covenant vs. Contract Marriage

In today's society, marriage is often regarded as a legal contract between a man and a woman. While this certainly is true, God regards the marriage relationship as more than just a legal contract between a man and a woman. It is a covenant relationship between God and the couple and cannot be broken. Notice some of the decisive distinctions between a contract marriage and a covenant marriage:

Covenant Marriage

- Established with God
- Based on trust
- Parties commit in spite of circumstances (vows)
- Honoring commitment in spite of breach (unlimited responsibility)
- Unconditional commitment

Contract Marriage

- Established between people
- Based on distrust
- Protect parties in case of default
- Can be broken because of breach (limited liability)
- No obligation to keep

Criteria For A Successful Marriage: Maintaining oneness

- Both the husband and wife need to leave Mom and Dad—physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and financially (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:7-9).
- They need to bond together in such a way that they become one.
- They need to have no unresolved issues between themselves and God, so that intimacy and transparency are the norm for their relationship (Acts 24:16; 1 John 1:5-9).

Evaluation Questions

1. Does the approval of relatives mean more to you than the approval of God?
2. Are you still trying to live up to the expectations of your parents or siblings?
3. Is your relationship with God the most important relationship in your life?
4. Is your relationship with your spouse the second most important relationship in your life?
5. In what ways have you not left your mother or father: physically, spiritually, mentally, emotionally, or financially?

Becoming One

- Bonding takes place between a man and a woman when there is a total commitment of spirit, soul, and body to each other without reservation (1 Corinthians 7:33; Proverbs 5:18).
- Bonding takes place as each spouse meets the needs of their mate by fulfilling their God-given responsibilities (Ephesians 5:21-27; 1 Corinthians 7:3-5; 1 Peter 3:1-7; Colossians 3:18-21).

Seven Areas that Satan Wants a Husband and Wife To Be in Disagreement

1. Children (character goals, education goals, career goals, etc.)—Psalm 127:3
2. Child discipline and training methods—Ephesians 6:4
3. Finances (budget, purchases, etc.)—2 Corinthians 9:7-15
4. God's direction and church involvement for the family.
5. Relational boundaries (in-laws, extended family, friends, children, etc.)—2 Corinthians 6:14
6. Biblical roles for husband and wife
7. Marriage bed—1 Corinthians 7:3-5

The Preeminence of Christ in Our Lives

Scripture: Matthew 10:34-39

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”

The key to marriage oneness is ultimately summed up in the necessity of making Christ the preeminent love and focus of life. When He is the all-consuming passion, a husband cannot help but love his wife, and a wife cannot help but respect her husband. Christ is their point of connection.

The sad reality is that spouses often look to appearance, performance, and status as the key to oneness with their spouse. Instead of finding lasting approval, they are met with disappointment, disillusionment, and conflict. Notice the wrong focuses defined:

- **Appearance**—finding approval from my spouse based on how I look.
- **Performance**—finding approval from my spouse based on what I do.
- **Status**—finding approval from my spouse by titles, positions of significance, and achievements.

Because Christ is the perfect summation of every good thing, He has the ability to meet needs in our lives that no other human can fully and consistently meet. The following is a list of needs that Christ is free to meet as we make Him preeminent in our lives:

- **Life**—He is the source of abundant life in Christ (John 10:10).
- **Joy**—He came that our joy might be full (John 15:9-12).
- **Identity**—We are in Christ (Ephesians 1:18-20).
- **Acceptance**—We are accepted in Christ (Ephesians 1:5, Colossians 2:10).
- **Security**—We are secure in Christ (Romans 8:35-39).
- **Significance**—We are significant in Christ (Philippians 4:13, John 15:16).

God works in our lives primarily through committed relationships (marriage, family, church, friends, etc.). It is through these relationships that we give and receive love and through conflicts in these relationships that our maturity will be tested and challenged to grow in Christ.

Fulfilling the Law Through Love

Matthew 22:36-40—“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

1 John 3:23,24—“And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.”

1 John 4:19-21—“We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.”

Galatians 5:13-16—“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”

Ephesians 5:33—“Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.”

Three Faces We Evaluate

We often evaluate our acceptance in the light of three faces:

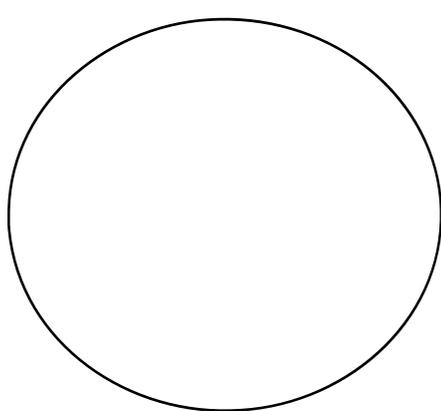
- God’s face (how we perceive God feels toward us)
- My face (how I feel about myself)
- Our neighbor’s face (how we perceive those around me feel about me)

Often our individual attitude and perspective about ourselves is directly influenced by what we perceive in the other two faces. Many marriage partners perceive God’s attitude toward them being dependent on their external performance, and thus feel shame and sadness. Furthermore, husbands often try to measure their accep-

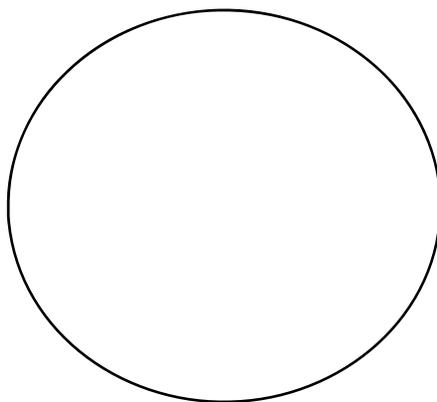
tance by their wife's respect, and wives measure their acceptance by their husband's love. The key to finding acceptance is in having meaningful relationship with a Heavenly Father Who loves us unconditionally. When a spouse's acceptance and identity is based on a Scriptural understanding of the Heavenly Father's love for them, they are free to love their spouse the way God designed, regardless of how that spouse treats them.

In the respective circles below, draw the face that illustrates the following:

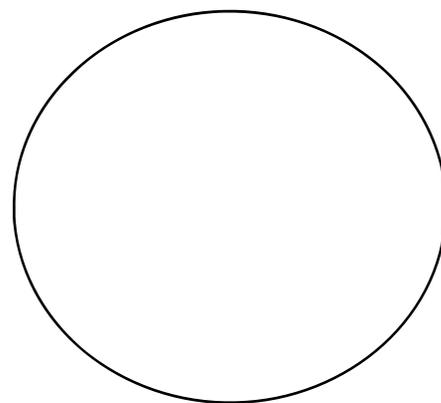
- How you perceive God feels about you.
- How you feel about you.
- How you perceive your spouse feels about you.



GOD



ME



SPOUSE

Trace Present Problems to Root Issues

When many couples seek counseling, they often are looking for resolution of communication problems, financial conflicts, or lack of spiritual, emotional, and physical intimacy. What couples fail to realize is that these surface problems stem directly from unresolved root issues that may go back long before their marriage.

Simply introducing a couple to a list of Biblical responsibilities for a husband and a wife will often not bring lasting change, because the root problems underlying the surface issues are still unresolved. Consequently, couples find themselves totally incapable of living in the freedom that Christ provided. They struggle to walk in the Spirit. And the power to fulfill their biblical responsibilities to each other seems to elude their grasp.

To help a couple experience lasting solutions, it is necessary to help them identify and resolve their root issues through the power of the Holy Spirit and the living Word of God. Both spouses must be willing to follow the Lord's direction in this process of conviction, genuine repentance, and healing (Psalm 81:10-16).

Three Sources of Spiritual Conflicts in Marriage

- **Satan**—Ultimately Satan is out to steal, kill, and destroy us, our marriages, and our families. His desire is to influence us to believe the lie that our spouse is the enemy. In truth, our spouse is not our enemy. Because of our sinful nature and the selfishness we are capable of, we must focus on the power of God changing ourselves and the unresolved issues within, instead of focusing on our marriage partner and the changes they need to make. Focusing on ourselves can free the Holy Spirit to convict our spouse more effectively than we ever could.
- **Strongholds**—Strongholds are those areas of continual struggle in our lives that are weaknesses within our minds and emotions and sins of the flesh that Satan can use to bring destruction in our lives. Some of these strongholds are passed down as generational iniquities (tendencies to go in the same direction as our forefathers).
- **Blind-spots**—Blindspots are aspects of our behavior that we do not understand. They cause us to have difficulties in our personal life and marriage. They can include generational iniquities, strongholds, personality traits and behaviors, and an inability to understand others. An example of this would be a husband understanding his wife at an emotional level.

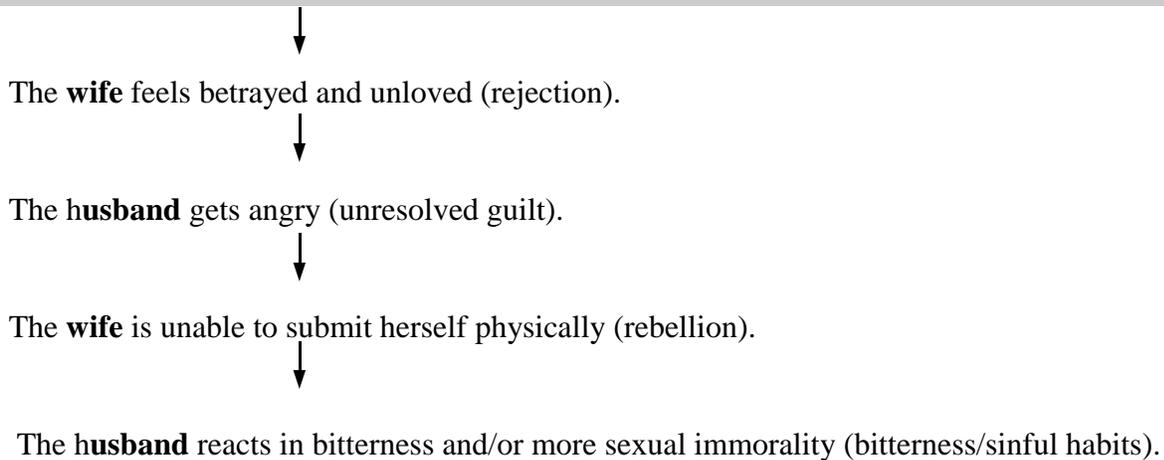
Root Problems (Strongholds, Blind Spots, Generational Tendencies)

The root problems listed below are key issues that often underlie many marriage conflicts. In the pages ahead, we will discuss each of these root problems, giving you some practical and biblical help for lasting solutions.

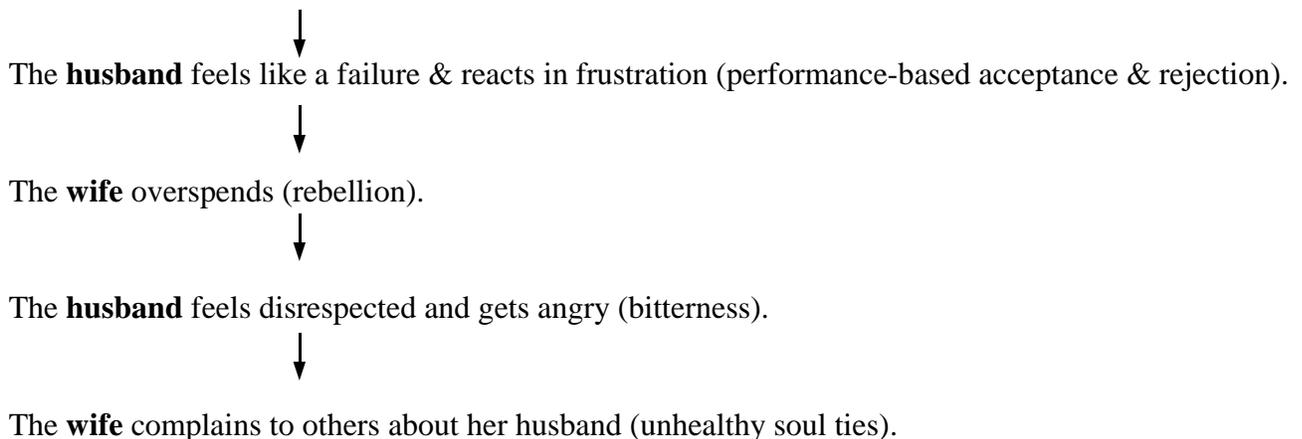
- ❑ **Pride** (James 4:6; Proverbs 3:5-7)
- ❑ **Rejection** (Matthew 5:22; 18:5-6; James 3:9-12)
- ❑ **Bitterness** (Ephesians 4:26, 27, 31, 32)
- ❑ **Lies about my Identity in Christ**
- ❑ **Lies about God**
- ❑ **Performance-based Acceptance—Doing vs. Being** (Galatians 2:20; John 15:1-10)
- ❑ **Unresolved Guilt—Fear, Anger, Anxiety** (1 Timothy 1:18-12; Acts 24:16)
- ❑ **Rebellion** (1 Samuel 15:23; Romans 13:1)
- ❑ **Idolatry & Generational Sin—Sexual sin, Unhealthy Soul Ties, Sinful Habits, Temporal Values, Cult, Occult** (Galatians 5:19-21)
- ❑ **Temporal Values**

Cause-Effect Relationships in Marriage

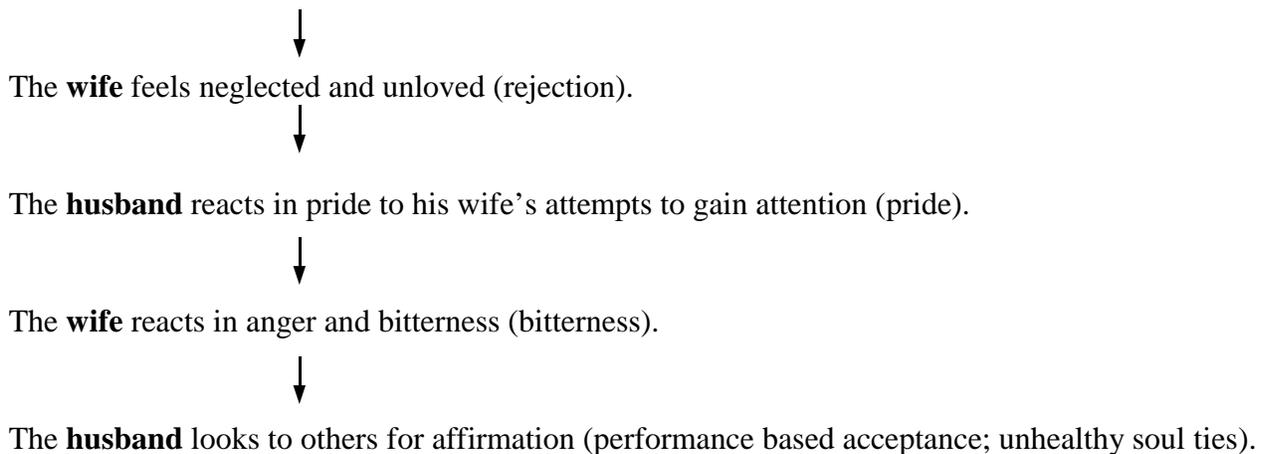
When the Husband is involved in pornography (idolatry)...



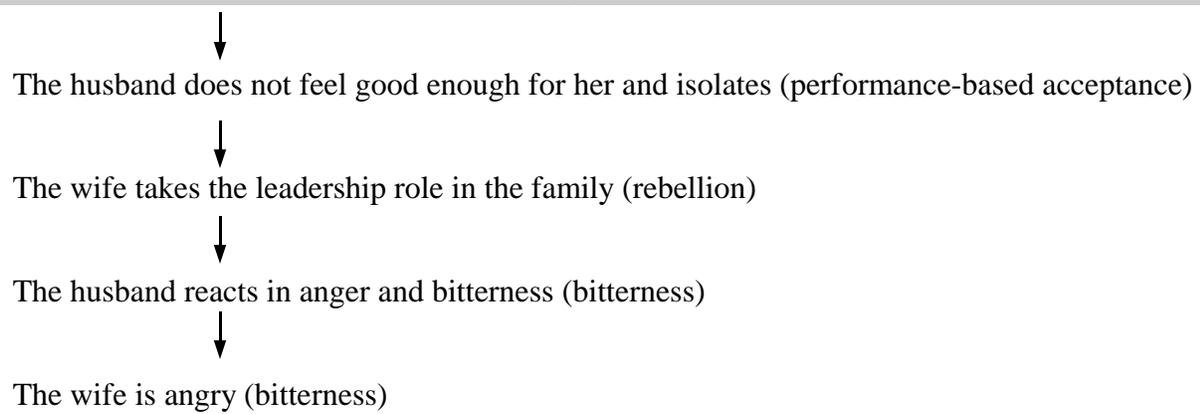
When the Wife is not content with God's provision (temporal values)...



When the Husband is preoccupied with his career and/or hobbies (temporal values)...



When the Wife endeavors to control the marriage and family (pride)...



Notes:

RESOLVING PRIDE

Philippians 3:3, Proverbs 3:5-7, James 4:6-10, 1 Peter 5:1-10

In Proverbs 13:10 we read, “*Only by pride cometh contention....*” Regardless of the conflict in marriage, pride is sure to be at the root. Many individuals view pride as arrogant bigotry and egotism, and automatically conclude that pride is not a problem for them. The reality is that pride can reveal itself in more subtle and even religious ways. Resolving pride is imperative to building marriage harmony. The following prayer and the list *Symptoms of Pride* are designed to help you identify and resolve areas of pride that may be blocking marriage harmony.

“Dear Heavenly Father,

You have said that pride goes before destruction and an arrogant spirit before stumbling. I confess that I have been thinking mainly of myself and not of others. I have not denied myself, picked up my cross daily, and followed you. As a result, I have given ground to the devil in my life. I have sinned by believing I could be happy and successful on my own. I confess I have placed my will before yours, and I have centered my life around myself instead of you.

I repent of my pride and selfishness and pray that all ground gained in my members by the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ would be canceled. I choose to rely on the Holy Spirit’s power and guidance so I will do nothing from selfishness and empty conceit. With humility of mind, I will regard others (fill in the blank with specific names) as more important than myself. And I choose to make You, Lord, the center of my life.

Please show me now all the specific ways I have demonstrated pride in my life. Enable me through love to be sympathetic to others and not react in pride. I ask this in the gentle and humble name of Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.”

Please check off all the ways in which you have demonstrated or struggled with pride in your life.

The Symptoms of Pride

- Perfectionist—I set up standards for myself that are beyond the normal requirement.
- Lack of love—I am indifferent to the needs of others; I am hasty in judgment, insensitive and critical.
- I am self-righteous. I often think that I am more humble, spiritual, religious, or devoted than others.
- I have a poor relationship with God (God resists the proud).
- Legalism-I believe that I can gain more favor with God or those in spiritual authority by performing.
- I am selfish with my time and possessions.

- I am constantly comparing myself to others.
- I am discontent and ungrateful. I have a hard time accepting my suffering.
- I am unforgiving and bitter—I cannot release my offenders to God.
- I cannot forgive myself for the past—I cannot receive God’s forgiveness.
- I desire the acceptance of men rather than having God’s approval in the choices, I make.
- I am self – willed, rather than seeking the will of God.
- I lean on my own understanding rather than seeking God’s guidance.
- I rely on my own strength and abilities rather than depending on the power of the Holy Spirit.
- I am more concerned about controlling others rather than developing self-control.
- I am too busy doing “important” things to take time to spend with God and my family.
- I have a tendency to think that I have no needs, spiritual or otherwise.
- I am overly concerned about getting the credit I feel I deserve.
- I am driven to obtain recognition and significance by attaining degrees, titles or positions, rather than finding my significance in Christ.
- I become defensive when criticized by those that really care about me.
- I have difficulty recognizing and admitting when I am wrong. I tend to want to deflect blame.
- I talk most often about myself and I am not interested in others when conversing with people.
- I draw attention to my abilities and achievements in a boastful way.
- I feel sorry for myself when I really should not (pity parties)

“Heavenly Father, I come to you in the name of Jesus Christ. I thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I ask now that you would cleanse my of my sinful pride.

Your Holy Spirit has convicted me, and I renounce that I have been prideful in the following ways (List those checked). I repent and renounce these ways I have lived out of the flesh in pride. I ask that you would take back the ground I have given the enemy in this area of my life. I ask you Lord Jesus Christ that you will continue to convict me when I am responding in pride in the future. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.”

RESOLVING REJECTION

Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-4

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.”

The Importance of Belonging

- Adam had a place to belong in the Garden of Eden where he fellowshiped with God (Genesis 2:8).
- God called out a people from the seed of Abraham to belong to Him (Genesis 17:7).
- Jesus came to the disciples and brought them the kingdom of God (Matthew 4:17).
- Marriage is a relationship where we belong to another person (Genesis 2:24,25).
- As individuals we are God’s children and we belong to him (Romans 8:14-16).
- Because God created us to belong to someone we have deep needs to feel loved and accepted by others.
- We experience joy in our lives when the personal people (life long relationships) we belong to take joy in our existence. Joy relationally means that we are “glad to be together”. This is the outcome of true Biblical fellowship (1 John 1:4).

The Curse of Rejection

When rejection enters a person’s life, they are denied love, security, acceptance, identity and recognition. Humanly speaking, it is now very difficult for that person to receive or give love. The result is crippling and destructive to a person’s soul.

Satan uses the curse of rejection to impact many people’s lives. Satan himself is eternally rejected by God. I believe he is jealous of us and would like to use rejection to bring harm to us as God’s children. The wounds of rejection go deep into our soul.

God does not take rejection of one of His children as a light matter. In Matthew 5:22, Jesus said, “...*whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*”

Regarding the seriousness of mistreating a little child, Jesus said in Matthew 18:5-6, “*And whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.*”

Furthermore, Peter warns of unanswered prayer as a divine consequence for mistreatment of others (1 Peter 3:9-12).

The Source of Rejection

A. Parent-child relationship.

1. Before birth
2. Adopted children
3. Parents who cannot communicate love
 - a) Parents who suffer from rejection
 - b) Alcoholic parent
 - c) Substitute giving things for love
 - d) Child meets their emotional needs
 - e) Preoccupied
 - f) Critical
 - g) Abuse—physical, sexual, emotional, or spiritual
 - h) Absence of necessary good things in bonding; taking joy in their existence, unconditional love, care that matches needs, helping children return to joy when upset)

B. Peer relationships

C. Society

D. Abusive relationships

E. God relationship

1. Man is susceptible to rejection because of sin
2. The guilt of sin brings rejection
3. Because of guilt, man is more capable of receiving rejection than love.
4. Conclusion: Rejection is the way of life for the sinner.

Results of Rejection

A. Emotional immaturity—There is a little girl or little boy that enters marriage.

B. Love vacuum — No person can fill this vacuum. In marriage, the person who struggles with rejection will

put unreasonable demands on their spouse.

1. Love vacuum in marriage. A girl who has not received a father's love will seek that love in marriage.

2. A person who has a history of broken relationships has fallen into the tragedy of a love vacuum.

C. Loneliness and fear of rejection (walls built around their heart).

D. Self-rejection—they dislike themselves.

E. Identity confusion—they have difficulty understanding themselves, and how they think and feel about things

F. Pride—they protect themselves by leaning on their own understanding.

G. Unstable relationship with God. (They transfer unresolved anger and bitterness towards God.)

H. Rejection makes people more vulnerable to medicating their pain of rejection through substances like drugs, alcohol, sex, etc.

Steps to Resolve Rejection

1. Acknowledge the impact of your rejection and grieve the loss. Accept the loss as a part of something that God can use for good in your life (Romans 8:28).

2. Forgive those who have rejected you (Ephesians 4:32).

3. Release all rejection to Christ and ask him heal you (Isaiah 61:1).

4. Replace the lies from your pain with the truth of God's Word (John 8:32).

5. Accept the fact that you are accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1:6).

6. Find your identity in Christ (Ephesians 1:3-10).

7. Build healthy life giving relationships with others (1 John 1:4).

Notes:

IMPACT OF REJECTION IN MARRIAGE

Scripture: Romans 15:7

"Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God."

Rejection

Think or feel unloved



Determined to please spouse to gain their approval



More Rejection Comes

Take Over

"control"

"I am going to..."



Give In

"passive"

"It's ok if..."



Give Up

"leave"

"I don't need..."



Emotional Impact

Inability to express feelings

Emotional Wall

Performance and Perfection

Fear and Worry



Worthlessness

Self-Condensation

Subjectivity

Introspective



Regrets

Irresponsibility

Bitterness

Rebellion



Spiritual Impact

Refuses to trust in God

Spiritual appearance

Unable to trust in God

Condemnation



God is a tyrant

Rebellious

Life According to the Flesh

1 Corinthians 3:3



Solution

Understand fear and control

1 Peter

Understand God's love

3 John 4

Resolve bitterness

Ephesians 4

Agape Love Bonds vs. Fear Bonds in Marriage

Scripture: 1 John 4:16-18

“And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.”

Agape Love Bonds	Fear Bonds
1. Based on love and characterized by truth, closeness, intimacy, joy, peace, perseverance and authentic giving.	1. Based on fear and characterized by pain, humiliation, desperation, shame, guilt, and/or fear of rejection, abandonment, or other detrimental consequences.
2. Are desire driven. I bond because I am glad and want to be with you. Holy Spirit-filled living brings life to relationship.	2. Are avoidance driven. I have to, out of duty. (I bond to avoid negative feelings or pain.) Out of the flesh, leads to death in relationship.
3. Grow stronger both when we move closer and when we move farther away. Desire to be together grows. (When we move closer, I get to know you better. When we move farther away, I am still blessed by the memory of you.)	3. Grow stronger by moving closer or by moving farther away. Emotional wall is built, with feelings of emptiness and sadness. (The closer we get, the scarier it gets, so I have to avoid the closeness. The farther away we get, the scarier it gets, so I have to manipulate closeness.)
4. Allow us to share both positive and negative feelings. This truthful sharing strengthens the bond. We understand each other at a heart level and value each other.	4. Hinder us from sharing both positive and negative feelings. Hide true feelings for fear of upsetting them. We can only avoid positive or negative feelings, or seek only negative feelings, or seek only positive feelings.
5. Encourage all to act like themselves. Participants on both ends of the bond benefit. It is win, win for both people.	5. Inhibit people from acting like themselves. Participants on only one end of the relationship gain the advantage. It is a win, lose situation.
6. Are pervaded by authentic giving and truth in the relationship.	6. Require deceit and pretending in the relationship.
7. Continually grow and mature people in Christ, equipping them to find their “new” hearts.	7. Restrict and stunt growth, keeping people from finding their hearts. Live according to the flesh.
8. Operate from the joy center of our brain and govern “how do I act like myself?”	8. Operate from the back of the brain, and govern “how do I solve problems?”

Replacing Fear Bonds with Agape Love Bonds

Ephesians 5:15-32; 1 John 4:7-21; 1 Peter 3:1-17; 2 Timothy 1:7; 1 Corinthians 13

Accept fear bonds as your first connection.

Stay calm during intense emotion and then move close after the intensity has started to subside slightly. James 1: 19 reminds us, "...let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath..."

Expect pain and suffering. The stronger the bond the more pain it will have to sustain. We cannot experience loving others from our hearts without also feeling pain.

- ❑ Returning to Joy—meeting people in their unhappy feelings, sharing the feeling, and letting them know you are still glad to be with them, returns people to joy. Six emotions to return to joy from are shame; disgust, anger, fear, sadness, and hopeless-despair.
 - Remember bonds form best during difficult times (Proverbs 17:17).
 - Admit failures and forgive each other, but do not break bonds. (Ephesians 4:32).
 - Learn to connect with someone who is out of tune with me; this brings joy (Psalm 126:5).
 - Return to joy at the end of every day (Ephesians 4:26-27).
 - Be glad to be with them in their distress, even if they caused it (Galatians 6:1).
 - Share their distress and help them calm down (Galatians 6:2)

- ❑ Building Joy—Joy comes from attachment and produces love bonds when people are genuinely glad to be together. The main sources of joy are nonverbal—a face that lights up to see us, and a warm tone of voice. Touch is third but may have opposite results with sexually abused people (they can initiate).
 - We all have part of our brain that craves food, water, air.... Guess what else it craves? Attachment! Attachment to someone who is genuinely glad to be with me.
 - Know when your spouse's "attachment light" comes on.
 - People with angry faces/angry tone of voice are the scariest people to attach to. If you want to attach to someone in a meaningful way you must not be scary to them.

How to Bring Reconciliation in Relationships

Scripture: 1 Peter 3:8-12

“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For “He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”

What Brings People Together

1. Face “lights up” and says, I am glad to be with you
2. Encouraging words
3. Many smiles and warm tone of voice
4. Enjoying quiet times together
5. Feeling safe
6. Loving touches
7. Surprises that bring joy
8. Spiritual, Emotional intimacy building experiences
9. Times in which you were genuinely glad to be together on a every day basis

How Walls are Built Around Our Hearts in Marriage & Family Relationships

1. Unresolved hurts that bring rejection (lack of emotional understanding and heart forgiveness).
2. Most people do not know how to resolve ruptures in relationships so that they both feel better.
3. Each hurt is a brick in the wall they build around their hearts.

How to Respond to Others to Bring Reconciliation (*Heart Felt Living and True Forgiveness*)

1. **“Be ye all of one mind”**—to think the same regarding the need to love each other; have empathy for one another.
2. **“Having compassion one of another”**—five English

Heart to Heart Communication

The key to reconciliation is heart-to-heart communication. It requires courage for each spouse to ask the hard questions eye to eye with each other, and to listen to the answers with a non-defensive spirit. A couple will never reconcile until they can face each other honestly and be willing to hear without reaction. The following questions can be helpful in beginning a heart-to-heart conversation:

- What has been your favorite time period in our relationship together?
- Why was it your favorite time period together?
- Do you miss the closeness we shared back then?
- Did you feel that I was glad to be with you? Why?
- How would you know that I am glad to be with you now?
- Are there any walls around your heart that keep me out? What are they made out of?
- Would you like the wall to come down?
- Is there any way that I have hurt you, that you feel I have a hard time understanding? What is it?
- How have I hurt you?
- How did it /does it make you feel?
- What are your greatest fears?

words for one Greek word: Verb form of *sumpatheo* (*sumpathes*) literally means, “to feel together with; to have sympathy for one another.”

3. **“Love as brethren”**—*phileo* love- as a fellow countryman (family type)
4. **“Be pitiful”**—compassionate heart, desires to act
5. **“Be courteous”**—demonstrate humility and good manners

Four Response Options

1. **Evil for evil** (1 Peter 3:12)—This kind of relationship is characterized by conflict and contention by both spouses. Each reacts to the other in an attempt to mete out justice and retaliation. Instead of solving any problem, the conflict only intensifies and the division between both spouses widens. According to 1 Peter 3:12, God will be against those involved in an evil for evil relationship.
2. **Evil for good** (Proverbs 17:13)—In this relationship, one reacts in meanness to any act of kindness. Solomon warns in Proverbs 17:13 that evil will never depart from such an individual’s house.
3. **Good for evil** (1 Peter 3:9)—This relationship is the test of a person’s character. In a good for evil relationship, a spouse responds to the wrong of their mate with attitudes and actions that communicate genuine love. Instead of being overcome by the evil and reacting in retaliation, such a spouse chooses to be an overcomer by using offenses as launch pads for good. It is this kind of response to evil that frees God to convict and transform the offending spouse. The reward for overcoming evil with good is access to the following five divine blessings (1 Peter 3:9):
 - We will inherit a blessing “inherit” obtain what is rightfully ours in being God’s child
 - We will enjoy life
 - We will see good days
 - We will be watched over by God
 - God will answer our prayers
4. **Good for good** (Luke 6:31)—This is the ideal relationship—when both spouses are walking in oneness with the Heavenly Father and in oneness with each other. Jesus describes this relationship by saying, “*And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.*”

Notes:

Ways I Have Hurt My Spouse

Describe Each Hurt You Have Caused	Describe the Emotional Pain You Caused

“I was wrong in _____, making you feel _____.”
(Specific hurt) *(Describe the hurt it caused)*

Would you choose to forgive me?”

Ways My Spouse Has Hurt Me

Describe Each Hurt They Caused	Describe the Emotional Pain They Caused

“I choose to forgive _____ for _____, causing me to feel _____.
(Person's Name) (Hurt They Caused) (Pain You Felt)

I choose to accept the emotional pain and the consequences that _____ has caused me.
(Person's Name)

I ask You in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ to take back the ground I gave to Satan through my bitterness, and I yield that ground to Your control.”

Emotional Pain Words

- Abandoned
- Accused
- Afraid
- Alone
- Angry
- Anxious
- Apathetic
- Ashamed
- Attacked
- Bad
- Belittled
- Betrayed
- Bitter
- Blamed
- Cheap
- Cheated
- Condemned
- Confused
- Controlled
- Deceived
- Defeated
- Defenseless
- Degraded
- Defrauded
- Despair
- Destroyed
- Devalued
- Don't belong
- Dirty
- Disappointed
- Disgusted
- Disrespected
- Dominated
- Embarrassed
- Empty

- Exposed
- Failure
- Fearful
- Foolish
- Frustrated
- Guilty
- Hated
- Hurt
- Inadequate
- Indecent
- Inferior
- Insecure
- Insensitive to my needs
- Insignificant
- Invalidated
- Lied to
- Lonely
- Manipulated
- Mindless
- Mistreated
- Misunderstood
- Molested
- Neglected
- Not cherished
- Overwhelmed
- Pressure to perform
- Pressured
- Rejected
- Repulsed
- Revenge
- Ruined
- Sad
- Scared

- Secluded
- Self-disgust
- Stressed
- Stupid
- Suffocated
- Suicidal
- Taken advantage of
- Torn apart
- Trapped
- Trash
- Ugly
- Unaccepted
- Unloving
- Unloved
- Unclean
- Unfairly treated
- Unfit
- Unimportant
- Unlovable
- Unnecessary
- Unprotected
- Unsafe
- Unsympathetic
- Unwanted
- Used
- Violated
- Vulnerable
- Wasted
- Wicked
- Worthless
- Wounded
- Wrongly judged

Consequences of Emotional Trauma

- Loss of reputation
- Loss of money
- Loss of job
- Loss of security
- Loss of love
- Loss of childhood
- Loss of trust
- Loss of good years
- Loss of relationships
- Loss of family

RESOLVING BITTERNESS

By John Regier, *Biblical Concepts in Counseling*, Used by permission

Circumstances and relationships have hurt each of us. Those hurts cause wounds that can easily fester into a bitter spirit leaving us with scars of emotional pain that we can carry for years. Unless we understand and resolve the bitterness through genuine forgiveness, we will not be able to face similar circumstances in the future. We will block the pain, causing us to emotionally lock-up when confronted with a new hurt in a relationship. More emotional pain is then buried in our hearts leaving us void of inner peace.

Bitterness is a tool of Satan to defeat believers. When unresolved within a person's spirit. Bitterness creates resentment, anger, and emotional damage. Paul traces the development of unresolved bitterness in Ephesians 4:31. Bitterness leads to wrath (outbursts of anger), wrath leads to anger (rage, constant state of anger), anger leads to clamor (making a public scene), clamor is followed by slander (derogatory, injurious speech), and slander leads to malice (inner hatred of heart). The natural consequence of harboring an attitude of bitterness is that it eventually controls you.

Scripture warns against bitterness. Paul warns that bitterness is like a "root." The longer it is allowed to grow, the more difficult it is to get rid of. Hebrews 12:15 states that a root of bitterness left to grow will bring defilement to many. This root will produce the blighted fruit of anger, ungratefulness, a critical attitude, insensitivity to others, revenge, mistrust and depression. Unresolved bitterness is also like a highly contagious disease that has a contaminating and destructive effect on others.

The cure for bitterness is forgiveness. In order to resolve bitterness, we must first understand and experience God's forgiveness of our sin. God chose to focus on His desire to forgive us rather than to hold us accountable for our failures (Isaiah 43:25; 55:7; Psalm 103:12). He could have demanded justice and required us to pay for our sins, but instead, placed them on Jesus Christ. He satisfied the payment on our behalf. The moment we believe by faith that Christ died for us, we are set free from the penalty of our sins.

Forgiveness demands a payment. When someone has sinned against us and hurt us, our sense of justice demands that a fair payment be made to us for their failure. If that person cannot pay or chooses not to pay, we resent the injustice and either become bitter and angry, leading to depression, or we can exercise forgiveness leading to peace. If we choose to forgive, as God forgave us, and assume the emotional debt or payment for the pain that person caused us, we will be free from resentment, bitterness, anger, and depression. As we free the offender through forgiveness, we become free from the effects of holding on to those damaging attitudes.

Forgiveness isn't easy. We never feel like forgiving someone who has hurt us because deep inside we believe they deserve to pay for the damage they caused us. Forgiveness involves our willingness to go to the cross for the person who has hurt us and to embrace the emotional pain they have caused us. Jesus didn't feel like going

to the cross, but chose the Father's will (Matthew 26:39). Forgiveness is taking the focus off of ourselves and graciously choosing to go to the cross on behalf of the wrongdoer.

Bitterness can be directed against

Others for the pain they have caused us

...leading to resentment and anger.

...leading to putting up walls to protect ourselves from further pain. Leading to broken relationships with others.

...leading to revenge against them.

Ourselves for our own failures

...leading to negative thoughts of condemnation.

...leading to feelings of despair and worthlessness.

...leading to rejection of oneself.

...leading to suicidal thoughts.

God for the events He allowed to occur

...leading to resentment and anger toward God.

...leading to feelings of rejection from God.

...leading to inability to be intimate with God.

...leading to the questioning of one's relationship with God.

...leading to an inability to trust God.

...leading to questioning God's goodness.

Forgiveness involves:

A choice: The person who has been wronged can choose to forgive or not to forgive.

Releasing: It is the voluntary act of releasing someone from the emotional damage caused by his sin and no longer holding him responsible for the consequences of that failure.

Substitution: One person pays for the emotional pain that another caused. In doing so, the debt of emotional damage is paid (assumed).

Resolving bitterness involves...

Choosing to forgive.

Releasing the pain from within our hearts.

Paying the emotional pain others have caused us by forgiving them.

Allowing the Lord to heal the pain we are experiencing within our hearts.

PRAYER

“Lord, I acknowledge that over the years, I have developed resentment and anger toward others who have hurt me. This has caused me to experience inner pain and to build walls between others and myself. It has kept me from being open with them.

“Lord, I choose to forgive each individual who has hurt me. I am willing to pay the price for the emotional pain they caused me. I desire to be free to love and be emotionally open with each person who has hurt me. I want to show them kindness, a tender heart, and a forgiving spirit.

“Lord, reveal to me those areas of bitterness, resentment, and anger within me that have been buried for so long. I want to identify and resolve each one of them. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Notes:

Family Members Who Have Hurt Me

	Release	Pay
List each family member who has hurt you in the past.	How did they hurt you? (List Issues)	Describe the emotional pain caused by the hurt.
Father • • • Mother • • • Step-parents • • • Siblings • • • Others • • •		

“Lord, I choose to forgive _____ for _____ causing me to feel _____, and I am willing to pay for the emotional pain and consequences that _____ has caused me. I ask You Lord Jesus, to take back the ground I gave to the enemy through my bitterness and I yield that ground to Your control.”

People Who Have Hurt Me

	Release	Pay
List each family member who has hurt you in the past.	How did they hurt you? (List Issues)	Describe the emotional pain caused by the hurt.
<p>Friends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>Teachers, students, classroom experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>Employer, Employee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>Believers, church situations, pastor, leader, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>God (List the ways you think God has hurt you)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>Myself (List each area for which you cannot forgive yourself.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 		

“Lord, I choose to forgive _____ for _____ causing me to feel _____, and I am willing to pay for the emotional pain and consequences that _____ has caused me. I ask You Lord Jesus, to take back the ground I gave to the enemy through my bitterness and I yield that ground to Your control.”

RESOLVING FLESH-DRIVEN PERFORMANCE

- THE EXCHANGED LIFE
- RESOLVING LIES ABOUT MY IDENTITY IN CHRIST
- RESOLVING LIES ABOUT GOD

Flesh-driven Performance vs. Spirit-dependent Relationship

A necessary key to marriage harmony is understanding the difference between flesh-driven performance *for* God and Spirit-dependent relationship *with* God. In John 15:5, Jesus said, “...without Me ye can do nothing.” To apply this text to marriage, without Christ, no husband or wife can make their marriage relationship a God-glorifying, world-impacting relationship. Yet many believers are approaching their God-given roles as husbands and wives, from a solely flesh-driven perspective. This is often a symptom that they are also approaching their relationship with God from a flesh-driven perspective. They see themselves with the identity of a sinner saved by grace, still trying to gain God’s acceptance. Consequently, many are discovering the feebleness of the flesh in the misery of personal defeat, marital divorce, and family conflicts. The road to victory begins with identifying and resolving flesh-driven performance, and appropriating the divine power of a Spirit-dependent relationship with God.

Flesh-driven performance has two faces: one blatantly sinful and the other subtly religious. It is easy to recognize flesh-driven performance manifested in the overt sins of immorality, dishonesty, substance abuse, anger, etc. Galatians 5:19-21 outlines a whole list of such flesh-driven performance.

But there is another flesh-driven performance that appears more spiritual, yet is also destructive (2 Corinthians 3:6). It is that performance for God that manifests itself in a show of godliness but lacking the power thereof, in an effort to gain God’s favor. It is a performance that focuses on the letter of the law versus the spirit of the law. It is a performance that measures achievement and acceptance on the fulfillment of high and noble do’s and don’ts. In Jesus’ day, the Pharisees were characterized in this way. The Apostle Paul in Galatians 3:3 reprimands the Galatian believers on this issue of flesh-driven performance: “*Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*”

White knuckling our Christian responsibilities in the power of our flesh always ends in failure. In reflecting on the flesh-driven performance in his own life, the Apostle Paul concluded, “*O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*” From this dismal conclusion, Paul launches into the secret of a Spirit-dependent relationship in Romans 8. In Romans 8:11, we find this concept summarized: “*But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.*”

Paul’s prayer for the Ephesian believers illustrates Paul’s understanding of this: “*The eyes of your understanding being enlightened that ye may know...what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe,*

according to the working of His mighty power.” (Ephesians 1:17, 19).

A Spirit-dependent relationship with God is based on the fact that we are “in Christ.” We do not become victors in life, marriage and family, based on our performance. As heirs together with Christ, we are victors. He has already won our victory and is now leading us in His triumph (2 Corinthians 2:14). We have only to live out of our new identity in Spirit dependence (Ephesians 4:22-24). As a result, it will not be us living our own life for Christ, but Christ living His own life through us! This is exactly what Paul had in mind when he said, “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me....*” (Galatians 2:20). Only then are we empowered by God’s grace to do His will.

Often, the reason so many Christians are locked in a cycle of flesh-driven dependence and defeat is because they have believed lies about God as their Heavenly Father, and lies about their own identity. Furthermore, they have never come to personally understand the dynamic of the exchanged life. The following pages are designed to help you identify these lies and replace them with truth. These pages will also further develop this concept of a Spirit-dependent relationship *with* God versus a flesh-driven performance *for* God.

The Exchanged Life “in Christ”

The Spiritual Life Is NOT...

- ...A crisis, but a continual process
- ...Based on knowledge, but on obedience
- ...External, but internal
- ...Automatic, but cultivated
- ...The product of energy, but of divine enablement
- ...A dream, but a discipline
- ...A list of rules, but a life relationship
- ...To be endured, but enjoyed
- ...Theoretical, but intensely practical

The exchanged life concentrates on the reality of a new identity through being in Christ. This relationship in Christ can drastically transform us as we grasp it in our experience.

1. We substitute Christ’s life for the self life (Colossians 3:10, Ephesians 4:24).
2. We are identified with Christ in his crucifixion, burial, resurrection and ascension (Romans 6:2-11; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:5,6).
3. We are free from the law of sin and of death through the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2; Romans 6:14).
4. We must acknowledge these truths by faith and present ourselves to God as people who are alive from the dead (Romans 8:6-13).
5. The basis of our salvation is also the basis of our sanctification (Galatians 3:2-3, Colossians 2:6). Just as we are justified by grace through faith, so we are sanctified by grace through faith. Good works are not attained by our own fleshly efforts; they flow from the power of the Spirit of Christ who indwells us (Galatians 5:16-25).
6. Brokenness and unconditional surrender are part of the process of appropriating Christ’s life (Romans 7:14-25; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10; Galatians 5:24).
7. Only Christ Himself can live the Christian life, and He does this in us and through us (John 15:1-8; 2 Corinthians 2:14).

The exchanged life requires “a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him” for us to move from a cognitive knowledge to a personal and experiential knowledge of these truths (Ephesians 1:17-19, Colossians 1:9). The eyes of our hearts must be enlightened in order to grasp the nature of our calling, inheritance, and power (Ephesians 1:18-19).

Understanding Our New Identity in Christ

Ephesians 1:3-13

Identity refers to who we are in essence and character. Before salvation, every individual has the identity of a sinner, an enemy of God, an alien of grace. Our father is the Devil and we are slaves of unrighteousness. After salvation, however, our identity completely changes. In fact, we take on an identity in the Lord Jesus in which we are without condemnation, friends of God, and slaves of righteousness. This new identity does not become us based on our Christian performance. It is us instantaneously at the moment of our spiritual birth! Understanding what this new identity looks like and living out of this reality will totally change the way a couple approaches the marriage relationship. Ephesians 1:3-13 is one of several New Testament Scriptures that paint the portrait of this new identity in Christ. To experience the personal impact of who you are in Christ by virtue of His redemptive work, read through the following passage and insert your name in the blanks:

³Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed _____ with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: ⁴According as He hath chosen _____ in Him before the foundation of the world, that _____ should be holy and without blame before Him in love: ⁵Having predestinated _____ unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made _____ accepted in the beloved. ⁷In whom _____ [has] redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; ⁸Wherein He hath abounded toward _____ in all wisdom and prudence; ⁹Having made known unto _____ the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: ¹⁰That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in Him: ¹¹In Whom also _____ [has] obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will: ¹²That _____ should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ. ¹³In Whom _____ also _____ *trusted*, after that _____ heard the word of truth, the gospel of _____ salvation: in Whom also after that _____ believed, _____ [was] sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.

Who am I?

My Identity in Christ	Reference
<p>I am the salt of the earth I am the light of the world. I am a child of God. I am part of the True Vine, a channel of Christ's life. I am Christ's friend. I am chosen and appointed by Christ to bear His fruit.</p>	<p>Matthew 5:13 Matthew 5:14 John 1:2 John 15:1, 5 John 15:15 John 15:16</p>
<p>I am a slave of righteousness. I am enslaved to God. I am a son of God; God is spiritually my Father. I am a joint heir with Christ, sharing His inheritance with Him. I am a temple—a dwelling place—of God. His Spirit and His life dwell in me.</p>	<p>Romans 6:18 Romans 6:22 Romans 8:14-15; Galatians 3:26; 4:6 Romans 8:17 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19</p>
<p>I am united to the Lord and am one spirit with Him. I am a member of Christ's body. I am a new creation. I am reconciled to God and am a minister of reconciliation. I am a son of God and one in Christ.</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 6: 17 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 5:30 2 Corinthians 5:17 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19 Galatians 3:26, 28</p>
<p>I am an heir of God since I am a son of God. I am a saint. I am God's workmanship—his handiwork—born anew in Christ to do His work. I am a fellow citizen with the rest of God's family. I am a prisoner of Christ. I am righteous and holy. I am a citizen of heaven, seated in heaven right now. I am hidden with Christ in God. I am an expression of the life of Christ because He is my life. I am chosen of God, holy and dearly beloved.</p>	<p>Galatians 4:6-7 Ephesians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:2 Ephesians 2:10 Ephesians 2:19 Ephesians 3:1; 4:1 Ephesians 4:24 Philippians 3:20; Ephesians 2:6 Colossians 3:3 Colossians 3:4 Colossians 3:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:4</p>
<p>I am a son of light and not of darkness. I am a holy partaker of a heavenly calling. I am a partaker of Christ; I share in His life. I am one of God's living stones, being built up in Christ as a spiritual house. I am a member of a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.</p>	<p>1 Thessalonians 5:5 Hebrews 3:1 Hebrews 3:14 1 Peter 2:5 1 Peter 2:11</p>
<p>I am an alien and stranger to this world in which I temporarily live. I am an enemy of the devil. I am a child of God and I will resemble Christ when He returns. I am born of God and the evil one—the Devil—cannot touch me. I am not the great "I Am" (Exodus 3:14; John 8:24, 28, 58), but by the grace of God, I am what I am.</p>	<p>1 Peter 2:11 1 Peter 5:8 1 John 3:1, 2 1 John 5:18 1 Corinthians 15:10</p>

Identifying and Confronting the Lies Regarding Our Identity in Christ

Taken from Dr. Neil T. Anderson's book, Helping Others Find Freedom in Christ

Go through the list below and check the lies that you believed, lies that Satan has used to shape and control your life, your view of yourself, and your view of God.

I Renounce the Lie That...

I Announce the Truth That in Christ...

I'll never be accepted by God or others.

I'm already accepted.

Everyone, including God, accepts me if I work hard to please them. All love must be earned.

God accepts me because I'm His child (John 1:12).

I must be accepted by certain others to feel okay about myself.

I am accepted by Christ as His friend (John 15:5).

I must do everything well or right to be accepted.

I am justified, made right with God through Christ (Romans 5:1).

Sooner or later God will reject me and turn away from me.

I am united with God, one spirit with Him (1 Corinthians 6:17).

I have no real value to God, so He will reject me sooner or later. I feel worthless as a person.

He bought me with the price of His Son, I am of infinite value to Him (1 Corinthians 6:20).

I can't break free from sin because I'm just a sinner.

I'm a saint, a holy one who may struggle with sin, but need not be mastered by it (Ephesians 1:1).

No sane person would choose to love me.

God chose to love me for all eternity and to adopt me into His family (Ephesians 1:5).

God loves other Christians more than me. If I were like them, I could get closer to God.

I have the same direct access to my Heavenly Father as all other believers (Ephesians 2:18).

Some things I've done can't be forgiven. God can't keep on forgiving me. I'm a hopeless case.

I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins (Colossians 1:14).

I Renounce the Lie That...

I Announce the Truth That in Christ...

I'll always be abandoned.

I'm already secure.

I'm unworthy of love and deserve to be condemned and abandoned. God is basically angry with me and always wants to punish me.

I am free forever from condemnation (Romans 8:1-2).

Sooner or later, my life always falls apart. If God really loved, life would be easier.

I am assured that all things work together to make me more like Christ, and that is good (Romans 8:28-29).

Others tell me I'm bad or worthless, so I must be bad or worthless.

I am free from any condemning charges against me (Romans 8:31ff).

Sooner or later, God will give up on me and abandon me.

I cannot be separated from God's love (Romans 8:35ff).

My relationship with God depends on me trying harder to please Him.

I have been established, anointed, and sealed by God (2 Corinthians 1:21-22).

Sooner or later, people will find out about me and reject me, abandon me, or hurt me.

My life is hidden in Christ, and therefore secure (Colossians 3:3).

Since I still struggle with sin, God will quit working in my life and give up on me.

I am confident that the good work that God has begun in me will be perfected (Philippians 1:6).

I'll never know if I'm going to make it to heaven.

I am already a citizen of heaven (Philippians 3:20).

I'm afraid I'll be abandoned, so I have to be weak, meet everyone's demands, or pretend I'm dumb.

I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7);

When the chips are down, everyone always leave me.

I can find grace and mercy in my time of need (Hebrews 4:16).

I can't really defeat Satan because he has me under his control.

I am born of God, and the evil one cannot touch me (1 John 5:18).

I Renounce the Lie That...

I Announce the Truth That in Christ...

My significance or success is based on something I do. I'm already significant.

I have nothing of real value to offer others.

I am the salt and light of the earth (Matthew 5:13-14).

The only way I can make an impact in this life is by being in control and asserting myself. My significance comes from what I do, not who I am.

I am a branch of the True Vine, a channel of His life (John 15:1-5).

My life will never really amount to anything.

I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit (John 15:16).

I have no right or ability to tell others about Christ because my life isn't perfect.

I am a Spirit-empowered witness of Christ (Acts 1:8).

Significance is found only in a beautiful appearance, superior intelligence, or an image of success.

I am God's temple, significant because I have God indwelling me (1 Corinthians 3:16).

I have to be perfect for God to really use me.

I am a minister of reconciliation for God because I am His new creation (1 Corinthians 5:17ff).

If people really knew me, they wouldn't want to work with me.

I am God's co-worker (1 Corinthians 3:9).

God has no use for me. I must put myself down or others down to make me feel better.

I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realm (Ephesians 2:6).

I am an accident, a cosmic mistake, and therefore worthless, I wish I were someone else.

I am God's workmanship (Ephesians 2:10).

I can only be significant through much effort and hard work. I can never be really sure of God's love.

I can approach God anytime with freedom and confidence (Ephesians 3:12).

I can't change. It's just too hard, so I give up. I can't take risks because I might fail.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 3:6).

RESOLVING LIES

ABOUT GOD

The Exchanged Life “in Christ”

The Spiritual Life Is NOT...

- ...A crisis, but a continual process
- ...Based on knowledge, but on obedience
- ...External, but internal
- ...Automatic, but cultivated
- ...The product of energy, but of divine enablement
- ...A dream, but a discipline
- ...A list of rules, but a life relationship
- ...To be endured, but enjoyed
- ...Theoretical, but intensely practical

The exchanged life concentrates on the reality of a new identity through being in Christ. This relationship in Christ can drastically transform us as we grasp it in our experience.

1. We substitute Christ’s life for the self life (Colossians 3:10, Ephesians 4:24).
2. We are identified with Christ in his crucifixion, burial, resurrection and ascension (Romans 6:2-11; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:5,6).
3. We are free from the law of sin and of death through the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2; Romans 6:14).
4. We must acknowledge these truths by faith and present ourselves to God as people who are alive from the dead (Romans 8:6-13).
5. The basis of our salvation is also the basis of our sanctification (Galatians 3:2-3, Colossians 2:6). Just as we are justified by grace through faith, so we are sanctified by grace through faith. Good works are not attained by our own fleshly efforts; they flow from the power of the Spirit of Christ who indwells us (Galatians 5:16-25).
6. Brokenness and unconditional surrender are part of the process of appropriating Christ’s life (Romans 7:14-25; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10; Galatians 5:24).
7. Only Christ Himself can live the Christian life, and He does this in us and through us (John 15:1-8; 2 Corinthians 2:14).

The exchanged life requires “a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him” for us to move from a cognitive knowledge to a personal and experiential knowledge of these truths (Ephesians 1:17-19, Colossians 1:9). The eyes of our hearts must be enlightened in order to grasp the nature of our calling, inheritance, and power (Ephesians 1:18-19).

The Father Image of God

The Truth About our Heavenly Father

Taken from Dr. Neil Anderson's Book, *Freedom from Fear*

The Lie

I renounce the lie that my Heavenly Father is...

The Truth

I announce the truth that my Heavenly Father is...

Distant and disinterested

Intimate and involved
Psalm 139:1-18

Insensitive and uncaring

Kind and compassionate
Psalm 103:8-14

Stern and demanding

Accepting and filled with joy and love
Romans 15:7; Zephaniah 3:17

Passive and cold

Warm and affectionate
Isaiah 40:11; Hosea 11:3, 4

Absent or too busy for me

Always with me and eager to be with me
Hebrews 13:5; Jeremiah 31:20; Ezekiel 34: 11-16

Never satisfied with what I do; impatient and angry

Patient and slow to anger
Exodus 34:6; 2 Peter 3:9

Mean, cruel, or abusive

Loving, gentle, and protective
Jeremiah 31:3; Isaiah 42:3; Psalm 18:2

Takes all the fun out of life

Trustworthy; He wants to give me a full life; His will is good, perfect, acceptable
Lamentations 3:22, 23; John 10:10; Romans 12:1, 2

Controlling or manipulative

Full of grace and mercy
Hebrews 4:15, 16; Luke 15: 11-16

Condemning or unforgiving

Tenderhearted and forgiving; His heart and arms are always open
Psalm 130: 1-4; Luke 15: 17-24

Nit-picking, exacting, or perfectionist

Committed to my growth and proud of me as His growing child
Romans 8:28-29; Hebrews 12:5-11; 2 Corinthians 7:4

A Life-giving Relationship With Our Heavenly Father

Scripture: Romans 8:1-15

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

Our life-giving relationship with our heavenly Father should not be just an “intellectual knowing,” but an experiential knowing. The Greek word for know is “*Ginosko*.” It means to become aware of, to understand, to be conscience of things as they really are. In personal relationships it means to know someone personally. Understanding the Heavenly Father’s love for us in a “ginosko” way will enable us to love our spouse and others in the same kind of way (1 John 4:16).

Aspects of Our Love Relationship with the Heavenly Father

- ❑ Our Heavenly Father takes Joy in our wonderful and unique existence (Ephesians 1:3-13; 2 Chronicles 9:8; Psalm 16:11; Isaiah 65:19).
 - With this understanding we experience true joy.

- ❑ Our Heavenly Father loves us with unconditional love (1 John 4:10; 1 John 4:16; John 3:16).
 - With this understanding of love comes the ability to trust.

- ❑ Our Heavenly Father meets our needs without asking (Philippians 4:19; Isaiah 58:11; Matthew 6:8).
 - He brings us life and care that meets our needs, we learn how to give and receive.

- ❑ Our Heavenly Father helps us to understand the characteristics of our new heart in Christ (Ezekiel 36:26;

Romans 5:17; Galatians 2:20; Romans 7:14-26).

- As we understand how to live out of our new heart in Christ we can have life giving relationships.

☐ Our Heavenly Father provides us a place of safety and companionship in our time of upset and difficulties

Psalm 9:9; Psalm 59:16; Psalm 30:5; Psalm 126:5; Jeremiah 31:13).

- We learn how to handle emotional upset and still “act like ourselves”.

In our relationships we can only give what we ourselves have received. If we struggle with believing and receiving God’s love for us we will have difficulty in demonstrating that love to our spouse.

Scripture: 1 John 4:9-12, 19-21

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us....We love Him, because He first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.”

Notes:

RESOLVING PAST GUILT

Having a Clear Conscience

Jim Logan, Reclaiming Surrendered Ground

1 Timothy 1:18, 19

This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck.

Acts 24:16

“And herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offense to God, and toward man.”

Having a clear conscience allows us to be at peace with God, family, relatives, employers, teachers, former friends, and others, so that no one can point a finger and say, “You have wronged men and you’ve never made it right.” Because of the guilt we carry, it is natural to blame other people or circumstances in order to rationalize away our offenses. The greater the guilt the more we tend to blame, which will result in bondage to bitterness.

Dear Heavenly Father, I realize that the enemy will use a defiled conscience to defeat me in temptations and that guilt will only take me deeper and deeper into sin. I ask that right now Your Holy Spirit would bring to my mind those people who I have wronged. I ask this in the precious name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

1. If someone you know was making a list of people who had hurt them and never asked their forgiveness, would you be on that list? Pray, asking God to reveal anyone who might feel you hurt them.
2. Make a list of all the people God brings to your mind whom you have offended and have not sought forgiveness from.
3. If possible, go over your list with a mature Christian and identify the basic offense against each person on that list. If you need to ask God’s forgiveness for those offenses, do so now. It’s always the right time to get right with God.
4. Rule out those people in whose lives your reappearance now would cause serious difficulty; for example, an old girlfriend who is now married.

5. Contact those individuals by telephone if possible, and be brief. Tell the particular person that as you have been looking back over your life, you realize that you failed him in _____ way, naming the offense. Then ask for forgiveness.

Make a plan to go to each individual and ask their forgiveness. Do not write a letter; this documents the offense. Do not mention their offense or responsibility in the matter. An example of how to convey genuine repentance is: “God has convicted me of how wrong I have been in [my attitudes and actions]. I know that I have sinned against God and you in these areas. Will you forgive me?” Refrain from statements such as, “I was wrong, but your were too,” “If I was wrong, please forgive me,” “I’m sorry,” etc.

When asking forgiveness, keep in mind the following:

- Confess only to those offended
- Avoid sensual details
- Be as brief and clear as possible
- Clear your conscience quickly
- Clear the greatest offense first
- Be willing to accept possible rejection of your request
- Do not include others in your confession

6. Make restitution where needed.
7. If certain people have benefited you but you’ve never shown appreciation, express to them gratitude for what you have gained. If you have a problem with being grateful, start sending than-you notes to people who have benefited you, sharing how God has used them to build, strengthen, or challenge you.
8. Ask God to take back all ground give to Satan because you have purposed in your heart to contact these people and make things right.
9. Receive Christ’s forgiveness. I John 1:9 states, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

RESOLVING REBELLION

Rebellion

An important element to marriage oneness is submission to God-ordained authority. We live in a time when everyone wants to be independent of all types of authority. People want to make their own decisions and direct their own lives. Submission to authority is not respected. This tendency has caused serious spiritual problems in people's lives and is destroying many marriages.

In Ephesians 5:21, the Apostle Paul writes under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, "*Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*" Paul then outlines God's ordained structures of authority in the marriage relationship, in the home, and in the work place. In Romans 13, Paul addresses the believers responsibility to government as an authority ordained by God in our lives. Hebrews 13:7 challenges us to submit to our pastors as our spiritual authorities. Ultimately, every individual is in a place of accountability to their Creator, God Almighty.

Rebellion in any of these scopes makes a marriage very vulnerable to enemy attack. In 1 Samuel 15:23, we find this strong statement: "*For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry....*" The one thing rebellion and witchcraft have in common is that both open the door for overpowering enemy influence and destruction. Notice the following:

A rebellious attitude toward authority produces negative consequences. Rebellion causes people to resent and reject correction. Anytime a directive is received, it triggers an internal reaction to do the opposite of what should be done. If rebellion is not dealt with, decisions will be made based on a reaction to being told what to do. An adult who responds in this way may still be reacting to negative feelings from childhood.

Rebellion gives ground to the enemy. In the same way that a person gives ground to the enemy through participating in witchcraft or occult activities (I Samuel 15:23), ground is given to the enemy through rebellion. It opens the door for the enemy to control our lives.

Rebellion leads to unmet needs. In Psalm 68:6, David describes the rebellious as living in a dry land. Those with rebellious hearts will always have unmet needs. They are constantly reacting to others and are never able to enjoy life or relationships. When a rebellious couple marries, the rebellion is turned toward each other and each partner reacts to the control of the other like opposite poles of a magnet. It is essential that an engaged couple resolve any rebellion prior to the wedding. A couple having unresolved rebellion toward parents will begin reacting to each other within the first two weeks of marriage.

God exerts pressure on us to break our rebellion. I Samuel 12:15 states, “If you rebel against the Lord... then the hand of the Lord will be against you.” Because God cannot use someone who exhibits a rebellious spirit, He seeks to uproot it and will often use calamity (Proverbs 1:24-25) or other measures to bring that person to a place of usefulness to Himself. A reaction against the authority of others is an indication of rebellion against God’s authority.

God has established boundaries to protect us. The principles in God’s Word are given to protect us and to lead us into lives of fulfillment and joy. God designed the world to operate smoothly according to His rules, but if these rules are violated, life becomes chaotic. In the same way, a basketball game would be chaotic if each player made up his own rules. Respecting and submitting to the rules actually makes it more enjoyable.

Submission

In contrast to rebellion, submission to God-ordained authorities prepares the way for divine blessing. In Ephesians 6:3, Paul specifically points out the long-term impact of choosing to honor parents based on God’s promise at Mount Sinai. “Honor thy father and mother...That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.” Many marriages suffer great conflicts because of one or both spouses have never resolved the authority conflicts with their parents. Resolution of past rebellion is integral to future success.

Submission brings peace and fulfillment in relationships. Submission means yielding my personal rights. It is a lie of Satan that we have the right to be independent of authority. God designed authority to be exercised in our relationship to the family, to church and to government. Our responsibility is to submit with a proper attitude unless the authority violates the principles in God’s Word. Humbly submitting to God and to those He places over us leads us to experience the peace, joy and fulfillment of His design.

The following prayer and the list *Symptoms of Rebellion* is designed to help you identify and resolve those areas of rebellion hindering freedom in your own life and marriage.

PRAYER

“Lord, I ask You to reveal to me each area of rebellion that I have demonstrated toward those in authority over me. I am willing to acknowledge the rebellious attitudes that I have demonstrated toward You and others. I desire to be free to respond with an open heart and a Godly, Christ-like attitude toward each person or authority You have placed over me.

Forgive my rebellious attitude and cleanse my heart. Please give me the proper response from a pure heart toward those people to whom I am to submit.

In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen.”

Rebellion Against God-Ordained Authority

Symptoms of Rebellion

Check the ways you have demonstrated rebellion toward each of the following:

Toward Government

- Failing to be honest in paying taxes
- Engaging in illegal activities
- Disregarding traffic laws
- Disrespecting police officers and elected officials
- Other _____

Toward Husband

- Taking control of the leadership of the home and children
- Highlighting the husband's faults to the children
- Being critical of any suggestion or positive direction given by the husband
- Not supporting his vision and leadership
- Other _____

Toward Parents

- Leaving home against parents' wishes
- Participating in activities that parents did/do not approve of
- Resisting discipline
- Communicating disrespectful toward them through attitude and behavior
- Other _____

Toward Employers

- Bad-mouthing employer to other employees
- Not following instructions as directed
- Always suggesting an alternative to the direction given
- Other _____

Toward Spiritual Leaders

- Reacting to spiritual leaders over petty differences of individual preference
- Being critical of the pastor to other members of the congregation
- Participating in cliques within the congregation that cause division
- Other_____

Toward God

- Disregarding the promptings of the Holy Spirit and conscience
- Engaging in activities that you know did/do not honor God
- Neglecting God-given responsibilities in not loving my wife and leading my children
- Refusing to be a part of a local church and group of believers
- Other_____

“Lord, I acknowledge my rebellious attitude toward _____ by responding with (Area of rebellion). I ask Your forgiveness for my rebellion. I choose to submit to the authority of (Area of rebellion). Take back the ground I gave to Satan. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.”

Notes:

RESOLVING IDOLATRY & GENERATIONAL STRONGHOLDS

Resolving Idolatry & Generational Strongholds

Taken from The Steps to Freedom, by Dr. Neil T. Anderson (Gospel Light, 2001, pp. 15-16, 19-20)

Many times we feel trapped in a vicious cycle of sin-confess-sin-confess that never seems to end. We can become very discouraged and end up just giving up and giving in to the sins of our flesh. To find freedom we must follow James 4:7: “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” We submit to God by confession of sin and repentance (turning away from sin). We resist the devil by rejecting his lies. Instead, put on the full armor of God and walk in the truth (see Ephesians 6:10-20).

Sin that has become a habit often requires help from a trusted brother or sister in Christ. James 5:16 says, “Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” Sometimes the assurance of 1 John 1:9 is enough: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Remember, confession is not saying, “I’m sorry”; it is openly admitting, “I did it.” Whether you need help from other people or just the accountability of walking in the light before God, pray the following prayer aloud:

Dear Heavenly Father, You have told me to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lust. I confess that I have given in to fleshly lusts that wage war against my soul. I thank You that in Christ my sins are already forgiven, but I have broken Your holy law and given the devil a chance to wage war in my body. I come to You now to confess and renounce these sins of the flesh so that I might be cleansed and set free from the bondage of sin. Please reveal to my mind all the sins of the flesh I have committed and the ways I have grieved the Holy Spirit. In Jesus’ holy name, amen.

The following list contains many sins of the flesh, but a prayerful examination of Mark 7:20-23; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:25-31 and other Scripture passages will help you to be even more thorough. Look over the list below and the Scriptures just listed and ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your mind the ones you need to confess. He may reveal others to you as well. For each one the Lord shows you, pray a prayer of confession from your heart. There is a sample prayer following the list. (Note: Sexual sins, divorce, eating disorders, substance abuse, abortion, suicidal tendencies and perfectionism will be dealt with later in this step. Further counseling help may be necessary to find complete healing and freedom in these and other areas.)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stealing | <input type="checkbox"/> Swearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Drunkenness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quarreling/fighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Apathy/laziness | <input type="checkbox"/> Cheating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jealousy/envy | <input type="checkbox"/> Lying | <input type="checkbox"/> Procrastination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Complaining/criticism | <input type="checkbox"/> Hatred | <input type="checkbox"/> Greed/materialism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lustful actions | <input type="checkbox"/> Anger | <input type="checkbox"/> Others _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gossip/slander | <input type="checkbox"/> Lustful thoughts | |

Lord, I confess that I have committed the sin of _____ (name the sin) Thank You for Your forgiveness and cleansing I now turn away from this sin and turn to You, Lord Strengthen me by Your Holy Spirit to obey You In Jesus' name, amen.

It is our responsibility not to allow sin to have control over our bodies. We must not use our bodies or another person body as an instrument of unrighteousness (see Romans 6:12, 13). Sexual immorality is not only a sin against God but is sin against your body, the temple of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 6:18,19). To find freedom from sexual bondage, begin by praying the following prayer:

Lord, I ask You to bring to my mind every sexual use of my body as an instrument of unrighteousness so that, in Christ, I can renounce these sexual sins and break their bondage. In Jesus' name, amen.

As the Lord brings to your mind every wrong sexual use of your body, whether it was done to you (rape, incest, sexual molestation) or willingly by you (pornography, masturbation, sexual immorality), renounce every occasion:

Lord, I renounce _____ (name the specific use of your body) with _____ (name any other person involved). I ask You to break that sinful bond with _____ (name).

After you are finished, commit your body to the Lord by praying:

Lord, I renounce all these uses of my body as an instrument of unrighteousness, and I admit to any willful participation. I choose now to present my eyes, mouth, mind, heart, hands, feet and sexual organs to You as instruments of righteousness. I present my whole body to You as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable. I choose to reserve the sexual use of my body for marriage only. I reject the devil's lie that my body is not clean or that it is dirty or in any way unacceptable to You as a result of my past sexual experiences. Lord, thank You that You have totally cleansed and forgiven me and that You love and accept me just the way I am. Therefore, I choose now to accept myself and my body as clean in Your eyes. In Jesus' name, amen.

The next step to freedom is to renounce the sins of your ancestors as well as any satanic assignments directed toward you or your ministry. In the Ten Commandments, God said,

You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing loving kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments (Exodus 20:4-6).

The iniquities of one generation can adversely affect future generations unless the sins of the ancestors are confessed and renounced, and your spiritual heritage in Christ is claimed. You are not guilty for the sin of your ancestors, but because of their sin, you may be predisposed to certain strengths or weaknesses and influenced by the physical and spiritual atmosphere in which you were raised. These conditions can contribute to causing someone to struggle with a particular sin. Ask the Lord to show you specifically what sins are characteristic of your family by praying the following prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, I ask You to reveal to my mind now all the sins of my ancestors that are being passed down through family lines. I want to be free from those influences and walk in my new identity as a child of God. In Jesus' name, amen.

As the Lord brings those areas of family sin to your mind, list them below. You will be specifically renouncing them later in this step.

In order to walk free from the sins of your ancestors and any assignments targeted against you, read the following declaration and pray the following prayer aloud. Remember, you have all the authority and protection you need in Christ to take your stand against such activity.

Declaration

I here and now reject and disown all the sins of my ancestors. I specifically renounce the sins of

_____ (*name the areas of family sin the Lord revealed to you*). As one who has now been delivered from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of God Son, I choose to believe that all the sins and iniquities of my ancestors have been confessed and I now stand forgiven and cleansed in Christ. As one who has been crucified and raised with Jesus Christ and who sits with Him in heavenly places, I renounce all satanic assignments that are directed toward me and my ministry. I choose to believe that Jesus has broken every curse that Satan and his workers have put on me. I announce to Satan and all his forces that Christ became a curse for me when He died for my sins on the Cross. I reject any and every way in which Satan may claim ownership of me. I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who purchased me with His own blood. I reject all blood sacrifices whereby Satan may claim ownership of me. I declare myself to be fully and eternally signed over and committed to the Lord Jesus Christ. By the authority I have in Christ, I now command every enemy of the Lord Jesus to leave my presence. I commit myself to my Heavenly Father to do His will from this day forward. In Jesus' name, amen.

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, I come to You as Your child, bought out of slavery to sin by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. You are the Lord of the universe and the Lord of my life. I submit my body to You as an instrument of righteousness, a living and holy sacrifice that I may glorify You in my body. I now ask You to fill me to overflowing with Your Holy Spirit today and everyday. I commit myself to the renewing of my mind in order to prove that Your will is good, acceptable and perfect for me. All this I pray in the name and authority of the risen Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes:

SPECIAL PRAYERS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

Taken from The Steps to Freedom, by Dr. Neil T. Anderson (Gospel Light, 2001, pp. 16-17)

Divorce

Lord, I confess to You any part that I played in my divorce (ask the Lord to show you specifics). Thank You for Your forgiveness, and I choose not to condemn myself. I renounce the lie that divorce affects my identity in Christ. I am a child of God, and I reject the lie that I am a second-class Christian because of the divorce. I reject the lie that says I am worthless, unlovable and that my life is empty and meaningless. I am complete in Christ who loves me and accepts me just as I am. Lord, I commit the healing of all hurts in my life to You as I have chosen to forgive those who have hurt me. I also place my future in Your hands and choose to seek human companionship in Your Church. I surrender to Your will, should there be another spouse. I pray all this in the healing name of Jesus, my Savior, Lord and closest Friend, amen.

Homosexuality

Lord, I renounce the lie that You have created me or anyone else to be homosexual, and I agree that in Your Word You clearly forbid homosexual behavior. I choose to accept myself as a child of God, and I thank You that You created me as a man (woman). I renounce all homosexual thoughts, urges, drives and acts, and renounce all ways that Satan has used these things to pervert my relationships. I announce that I am free in Christ to relate to the opposite sex and my own sex in the way that You intended. In Jesus' name, amen.

Abortion

Lord, I confess that I was not a proper guardian and keeper of the life You entrusted to me, and I admit that as sin. Thank You that because of Your forgiveness, I can forgive myself. I recognize the child is in Your caring hands for all eternity In Jesus' name, amen.

Suicidal Tendencies

Lord, I renounce all suicidal thoughts and any attempts I've made to take my own life or in any way injure myself. I renounce the lie that life is hopeless and that I can find peace and freedom by taking my own life. Satan is a thief and comes to steal, kill and destroy. I choose life in Christ who said He came to give me life and give it abundantly. Thank You for Your forgiveness that allows me to forgive myself. I choose to believe that there is always hope in Christ. In Jesus' name, amen.

Driveness and Perfectionism

Lord, I renounce the lie that my self-worth is dependent upon my ability to perform. I announce the truth that my identity and sense of worth is found in who I am as Your child. I renounce seeking the approval and acceptance of other people, and I choose to believe that I am already approved and accepted in Christ because of His death and resurrection for me. I choose to believe the truth that I have been saved, not by deeds done in righteousness, but according to Your mercy. I choose to believe that I am no longer under the curse of the law because Christ became a curse for me. I receive the free gift of life in Christ and choose to abide in Him. I renounce striving for perfection by living under the law. By Your grace, Heavenly Father, I choose from this day forward to walk by faith in the power of Your Holy Spirit according to what You have said is true. In Jesus' name, amen.

Eating Disorders or Self-Mutilation

Lord, I renounce the lie that my value as a person is dependent upon my appearance or performance. I renounce cutting or abusing myself, vomiting, using laxatives or starving myself as a means of being in control, altering my appearance or trying to cleanse myself of evil. I announce that only the blood of the Lord Jesus cleanses me from sin. I realize I have been bought with a price and my body; the temple of the Holy Spirit, belongs to God. Therefore, I choose to glorify God in my body. I renounce the lie that I am evil or that any part of my body is evil. Thank You that You accept me just the way I am in Christ. In Jesus' name, amen.

Substance Abuse

Lord, I confess that I have misused substances (alcohol, tobacco, food, prescription or street drugs) for the purpose of pleasure, to escape reality or to cope with difficult problems. I confess that I have abused my body and programmed my mind in a harmful way. I have quenched the Holy Spirit as well. Thank You for forgiving me. I renounce any satanic connection or influence in my life through my misuse of food or chemicals. I cast my anxieties onto Christ who loves me. I commit myself to yield no longer to substance abuse, but instead I choose to allow the Holy Spirit to direct and empower me. In Jesus' name, amen.

RESOLVING TEMPORAL VALUES

Resolving Temporal Values

Another root problem at the source of many marriage conflicts is temporal values—a problem of valuing material possessions, positions, hobbies, goals, or career above relationship with God, your spouse, and children. It is impossible to maintain divided loyalties between temporal values and your spouse (Matthew 6:24).

When temporal values become the all-consuming passion of a husband’s life, he leaves his wife feeling neglected and unloved. Furthermore, a temporal focus can result in many financial pressures in an effort to live higher than one’s income, thus adding additional undo stress to the marriage relationship. When a wife is driven by temporal values, she makes her husband feel inadequate to provide. The reality is that she has not learned the difference between needs and wants. I Timothy 6:6-8 reminds us, *“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”*

To overcome temporal values, it is necessary to make Christ the central focus. When Christ has His rightful place in your life and when your family is second to Christ, Christ promises to meet your temporal needs. Matthew 6:31-33 states, *“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”*

Check the areas that you view as more important than your relationship with God or others.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job/work/career | <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive focus on entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money | <input type="checkbox"/> TV/video games/computers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Possessions/things | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal goals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prestige | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational activities/sports/hobbies | |

PRAYER

“Lord, I acknowledge that I have placed a higher value on (Item checked above) to the neglect of my relationship with You and others. I ask Your forgiveness and I make a commitment to value my relationship with You and others above (Item checked above).”

Understand the God-given Needs of Husbands and Wives

Inherent within every husband and wife are God-given needs that God intended to be met, first in Himself and secondly through their spouse. As each spouse looks first to God to meet these needs in their lives, they will find a greater capacity

Six Needs of a Wife that Enables Her to Feel Loved and Secure

Adapted from *Love & Respect* by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs

Closeness —*A wife wants her husband to be close to her.*

- Deuteronomy 24:5 “When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.”
- Song of Solomon 3:4—“...but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house...”

Openness—*A wife wants her husband to open up to her.*

- Deuteronomy 2:10—“My beloved spoke, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.”
- Ephesians 4:25—“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.”

Understanding—*A wife does not want her husband to fix her, but to listen and understand her.*

- Malachi 2:15—“...Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth...”
- 1 Peter 3:7—“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

Peacemaking—*A wife wants her husband to say, “Will you for-*

WIVES

How to overcome your fears?

1. Write down a list of all of your fears, worries, and concerns.
2. Take a sheet of paper and make three columns— one for God, one for your husband, and one for yourself.

GOD	HUSBAND	ME

3. Take your list of fears and write it in the appropriate column for who is responsible to resolve it. (Anything that has to do with changing your husband goes into God’s column.)
4. Pray and release each fear to God.
 - Those in God’s column are your prayer requests
 - Those in your husbands column need to be shared with him in a respectful way.
 - Those in your column are your responsibility. Ask God for the strength, wisdom, resources, and time to resolve them.

give me?”

- Colossians 3:19—“Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.”
- Ephesians 4: 29-32—“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

Loyalty—A wife wants to know her husband is committed.

- Proverbs 5:15-20—“Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.”
- Malachi 2:14-16—“Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not He make one? Yet had He the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That He might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that He hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.”

Esteem—A wife wants to know her husband honors and cherishes her.

- Proverbs 31:11—“The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.”
- Ephesians 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.”

6 Needs of a Husband that Enables Him to Feel Respected and Affirmed

Adapted from *Love & Respect* by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs

Conquest—A wife needs to appreciate her husband's desire to work and achieve.

- Genesis 2:15 “And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.”

Hierarchy—A wife needs to appreciate her husband's desire to protect and provide.

- Ephesians 5:22,23 “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband

is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.”

Authority—*A wife needs to appreciate her husband’s desire to serve and lead.*

- Nehemiah 4:14—“And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the LORD, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.”
- 1 Peter 3:1—“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”

Insight—*A wife needs to appreciate her husband’s desire to analyze and counsel.*

- 2 Corinthians 11:3—“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”
- 1 Timothy 2:11-14—“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”

Wife

Needs love & security (“I am safe enough”)

- A wife who feels insecure will be greatly influenced by fear, and will begin to try to control her husband and family to help her meet her needs for security. Her controlling will never bring about what she needs and she will become very frustrated and begin to react in anger. This will only make matters worse, undermining the very thing she needs as her husband reacts to her controlling behavior.
- Because fear is a very powerful emotion, Satan will use fear in a woman’s emotions to deceive her. She must learn that not everything she is true. Fear is the antithesis of faith.
- Ultimately, the wife must find her needs for security by trusting in God with her fears and concerns.
- It is imperative that the husband understand his wife’s needs and do his best to meet them as God intends. If he fails, he makes her vulnerable to more spiritual and emotional attacks.

Husband

Needs respect & affirmation (“I am good enough.”)

- A husband who does not feel affirmation will often look to success, work, money, and approval from other women to find it.
- Satan will use a man’s pride to deceive him with the lie, “It’s *all up to me.*” This lie, when acted upon, causes a man to live life totally dependent on his own resources instead of God. Consequently, he becomes deceived and lean on their own understanding and wisdom.
- A husband ultimately must find his affirmation in his identity in Christ and not in his performance.
- A husband needs to have a multigenerational vision for his marriage and family.

Relationship—*A wife needs to appreciate her husband's desire for shoulder to shoulder friendship.*

- Proverbs 31:11,12—“The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.”
- Genesis 2:18—“And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.”

Physical Intimacy—*A wife needs to appreciate her husband's desire for sexual intimacy.*

- Song of Solomon 1-8
- 1 Corinthians 7:3-5—“Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.”

How Husbands and Wives React Out of Unmet Needs

Most marriages today are manipulative in origin. A man marries a woman to receive love and admiration from her, or a woman marries a man to get love and security. Both motivations are manipulative, and both lay a poor foundation for marriage and family.—Bruce Thompson (*Crown Ministries*)

Spiritual, emotional, and physical intimacy is essential if a couple is to experience the oneness that God planned for marriage. This intimacy in relationships (or lack thereof) greatly impacts the children. There is an ability to give and receive love. This intimacy is only possible if an individual's heart is engaged in a love relationship with the Lord and people around him or her. If a person is emotionally locked, they will struggle with allowing God's love to flow through their lives.

HUSBANDS

How to develop a multi-generational vision for his marriage and family?

1. Ask God for a vision of what your family and marriage would practically look like in the future.
2. We all have core values that we live by. Some are godly and some are unwise. Ask God to help you understand what core values He wants you to live by for each relationship and area of your life.
 - Relationship with God
 - Relationship with wife
 - Relationship with children
 - Relationship with ministry/work
 - Relationship with friends/extended family
 - Relationship in discipling other
3. Under each relationship, list the convictions/core values that God gives you.
4. Ask God for grace and wisdom to apply them.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Four Rules of Communication

Ephesians 4:25-32

Good relationships don't happen automatically! Neither are they immune from problems!! All men are sinners (Romans 3:10-12, 23), meaning they are selfish and finite—and that's what it takes to set the stage for conflicts.

Take heart! Good marriages and solid, lasting relationships can be built by people who follow Jesus Christ and follow His principles for communication, especially as they relate to problem solving.

In Ephesians 4:22-24 Paul stresses the importance of laying aside the “old man” and his way of doing things, and putting on the “new man”, which is God's way of handling matters.

The following verses (25-32) detail the “Four Rules of Communication” which we are to use in all our relationships. They are good for both preventing and solving problems.

1. BE HONEST (vs. 25)

A. Speak

- 1) Greek imperative—i.e. a command—“You speak!”
- 2) People cannot read our minds. “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?” (I Corinthians 2:11).
- 3) Clamming up is out for the Christian!

B. Speak truth

- 1) “Speaking the truth” in 4:15 is a verb form that involves continuous action. We are to always speak truth!
- 2) Examples of dishonesty
 - a) Outright deceit
 - b) Incongruence: when “halo” communication and content communication conflict
 - c) Disguised communication: when the real message is masked; innuendo
- 3) Honesty is more than not lying—it is being open and truthful.
- 4) “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds” (Col. 3:9)

C. Speak truth lovingly (4:15)

- 1) You can be brutal with the truth!

- 2) Christians are to speak the truth with the other person's best interests in mind.
- 3) Care must be given to not only what you say but also how you say it. (e.g. tone of voice; volume; facial expressions, etc.)
- 4) "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." (Colossians 4:6).

2. KEEP CURRENT (vv. 26,27)

- A. "Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath; Neither give place to the devil."
- B. Failure to solve each day's problems that day means we are:
 - 1) Guilty of sin
 - 2) Opening the way to resentment and hatred
 - 3) Distorting subsequent problems
 - 4) Endangering your sexual relationship
- C. "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

3. ATTACK PROBLEMS, NOT PEOPLE (vv. 29, 30)

- A. "Unwholesome words" ("corrupt communication" —KJV)
 - by-passes the conflict
 - zeroes in on the person's character (cf. Matthew 5:21-22)
 - tears down or rips apart (cf. James 3:5-12)
 - grieves the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)
- B. "Edifying" communication—encourages or builds up;
 - zeroes in on the conflict
 - centers on personal responsibility (cf. Matthew 7:1 if)
 - expresses solutions in terms of action
 - gives "grace" (i.e. the desire and ability to do God's will) to those who hear.

4. ACT! DON'T REACT (vv. 3 1-32)

- A. The natural tendency of our Genesis 3 nature is to be defensive about dealing with our own sins, to blame shift, run, react etc. (Genesis 3:8-13; Ephesians 4:3 1).
 - Note: We will never solve problems or grow as Christians by being a Genesis 3 person.

B. We, through God's Spirit, must learn to be kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving (v. 32)

- Note: Changing habits is not easy, but can be done (I Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 4:13)!
- It is much easier than the "way of the transgressor" (Proverbs 13:1 Sb).

C. Arguments are possible only if each person reacts.

D. No matter how irresponsible the other person is, you must act biblically!

Communication

Three Forms of Communication

- 55% non-verbal behavior (facial expressions & body language)
- 38% tone of voice (inflection, how it is said)
- 7% Literal words used (content)

Purposes of Communication

1. Inform—Educate
2. Persuade—Convince
3. Motivate—Encourage
4. Build Relationships
5. Entertain

Common False Beliefs about Communication

1. If you speak loud or raise your voice, then people will listen
2. People will always pay attention when you speak to them.
3. If you repeat something over and over again, then that ensures people will listen and understand what you are saying.
4. If you speak clearly, then people will understand you.
5. When people say: "*I understand,*" then that means they really do understand.
6. If you speak in a sweet tone of voice, then people will listen and understand you.
7. If you give people all the facts, then they will understand you and change their behavior.

8. If you criticize people, then they will do what you expect.
9. When you define the meaning of words, then people will understand what you are saying.
10. People will always listen and understand everything you say.
11. If you threaten people, then they will understand you and conform to your expectations.
12. Whenever you argue with people, then they will always understand you and do what you want.

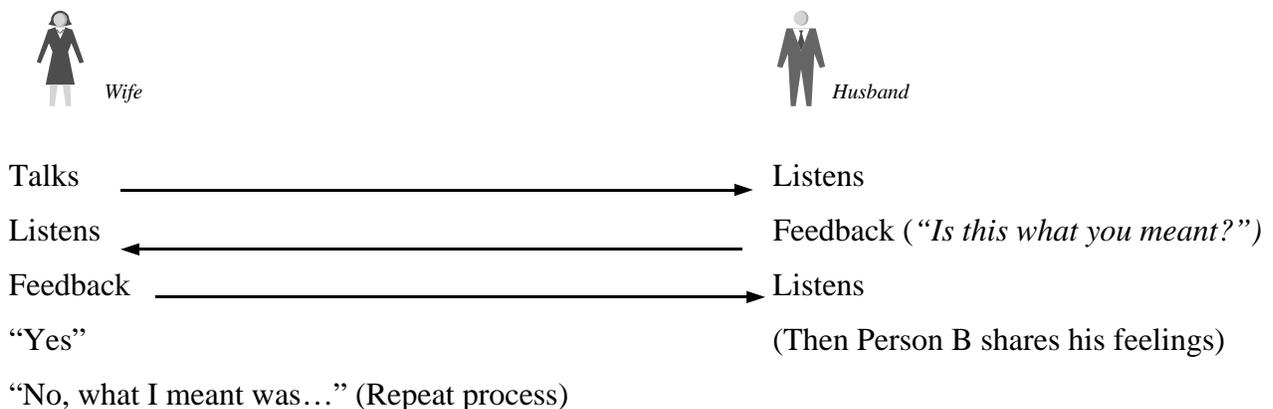
Six Possible Message Every Time You Try To Communicate

- What you actually said
- What you meant to say
- What the other person hears you say
- What the other person think he hears you say
- What the other person said about what you said
- What you think the other person said about what you said

Effective Communication

One of the most difficult things in life is communication. Effective communication has not occurred until the following things happen:

- Person A (wife) tells the message to Person B (husband)
- Person B listens to the message of Person A
- Person B repeats the message back to Person A and says, “Is this what you meant?”
- Person A then responds by either “Yes” or “No.” if the answer is “No” then the whole process is repeated.
- Then Person B shares his message or feelings with Person A and the whole process is repeated.



Elements Assumed If Not Communicated Effectively

Perception of Events

- Specific details of circumstances as you perceived or understood them.

Mood

- What mood are you in?

Meaning of Words

- Meaning of words is in the person—not in the dictionary.

Values

- How important something is to you on a scale of 1-10

Motives

- Reasons or why!

Meaning of Tone of Voice Used

- What was meant by your tone of voice?

Meaning of Body Language

- What did your body language express?

Anticipated Response

- How do you think others will respond?

Personal Preferences

- What you would prefer to be done

Reasons Why Listening Is Difficult

1. Thinking of your response instead of listening.
2. Assuming you understand what was said without verifying it.
3. Upset with the person
4. Distracted by noises or movement
5. Worried or anxious about other things

6. Listening for the purpose of criticism
7. Assuming you know what they are going to say

Four Fallacies About Listening

Intelligent People are good listeners.

- **Reality:** Pride may hinder from learning listening skills.

Everyday listening builds listening skills.

- **Reality:** People naturally practice bad habits and repeat mistakes.

Reading develops listening ability.

- **Reality:** Reading is a solitary experience you can do alone.

The words *Hearing* and *Listening* are synonyms.

- **Reality:** Hearing is *the process whereby a sound wave travels through the air, hits the ear, is translated into neural current, and proceeds to the brain.*
- **Reality:** Listening is *the sorting out process by which we choose and describe which stimuli will have our attention.*

Steps to Effective Listening

Focus

- Concentrate only on what the person is saying.
- Put everything else out of your mind.
- Do not think of your response.

Attention

- Listen without interruption.
- Pay close attention to what the speaker is trying to communicate.

Response

- Think carefully before you respond.
- Do not respond impulsively and say hurtful things.
- Express your feelings calmly.

Openness

- Try to understand the other person's point of view.
- Everybody has a right to their opinion even though a majority of people would not agree with it
- A Native American said, "*Never criticize someone until you have walked a mile in their moccasins.*"

Paraphrase

- Put what you think they said in your own words

Reflection

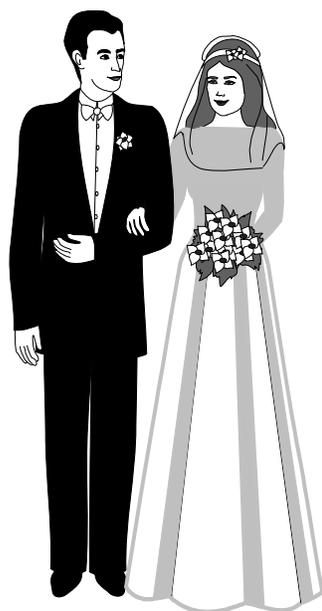
- Use reflection to understand how the speaker feels about what he is saying.
- How does this speaker feel? What is he trying to say to me?
- Ask questions to better understand what the speaker is saying or to obtain more information.

Eye Contact

- Look the speaker right in the eyes.
- Stand or sit as close to the speaker as possible.

Divine Guidance

- Ask God to help you say the right thing in the right way. Speak the truth with love.



MARRIAGE COUNSELING *Model*

By Rev. Jeffrey Pokone

INDIANA BIBLICAL COUNSELING CENTER

9780 Lantern Road, Suite 330, Fishers, IN 46038

Phone: 317.585.1845 / www.indianabcc.com