

MARRIAGE

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this lesson is to help you....

To know - God's purpose and pattern for marriage, that which constitutes a successful union, and elements that make up a strong marriage.

To feel - responsible for making individual contribution to the marriage according to the scriptural pattern.

To do - that which will build up the other partner, to grant forgiveness where needed, to meet problems constructively and scripturally, to show empathy, caring and new spiritual considerations within the marriage. To seek to add a new dimension of freshness to the relationship.

GOD'S PURPOSE FOR MARRIAGE

Marriage is that relationship between a man and a woman under whose shadow alone there can be true reverence for the mystery, dignity and sacredness of life. Scripture represents marriage not only as Mosaic ordinance and New Testament typology of the Church and Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom, but it is also part of the scheme of creation intended for all humanity. Its sacredness goes back to the creation of man.

Those who view marriage as a civil contract make it less than the Divine institution it is. There is a difference between marriage and a civil contract. In a contract, the mutual rights and obligations are the result of an agreement and their selection and implementation may flow from the momentary whim of either party. However, in the marriage relationship, such rights and obligations are high above the arbitrary will of both husband and wife. They are determined and imposed by scripture, revealing the will of God, as well as Civil Law. The contract view fails to bring out this higher sphere of duty and conscience which is the essence of marriage.

From Genesis to Revelation, God reveals an inseparable link between the Church and the family unit, or God's house and the home of the Christian. The construction of housing does not come together by accident, but by design and planning. Each construction must have a proper foundation. Jesus stated in Matthew 7:24 that "Whosoever hears these sayings of mine and does them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock." Christian values and understanding form the foundation for a good marriage. Jesus' relationship to His Church, the Bride, is pictured in the interpersonal relationships

within marriage. The Bible identifies Christian marriage as a mystery, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the Church," Ephesians 5:31-32.

Marriage cannot be defined in one sentence. In a successful marriage, each partner becomes more of an integrated and fulfilled person, better able to meet and to cope adequately with all the aspects of life. A successful marriage is based upon cooperation and mutual respect. It includes the most rewarding comradeship. In a good marriage, each partner is aided in becoming all he is capable of being. Each person, to some extent, takes on the attributes, values and capacities of their mate. Both husband and wife are aware that an interdependence exists by which the two stand together, thus making pleasures enhanced through sharing them, and the blows of life cushioned for the same reason.

Since marriage is a reflection of the relationship between Jesus and His Church, giving instead of getting, is a required behavior to obtain joy. There are daily opportunities for the man to give of himself in expressions of love to his mate, which reflect the giving of Jesus for His Bride. On the other hand, there is opportunity daily for the woman to exhibit faithfulness toward her husband in the same way the Church is to respect and be faithful to Jesus Christ. This is not some unattainable ideal, but the expected goal for Christian marriage partners as expressed by the Holy Spirit throughout the Word of God.

The union of personalities is not a gift presented at the ceremony, but it must be achieved by the marriage partners through cooperative effort over a period of time, under God's leadership and with scriptural understanding. It cannot be achieved by people who are united legally in marriage, but where each is determined to strive and go independently on his way in an effort to retain freedom. There is no absolute freedom for anyone inside or outside of marriage. In marriage each partner gives up a measure of personal freedom in exchange for the element of togetherness which is one of the permanent values within marriage. Life consists of a combination of roles played in various institutional settings by each person in the marriage. They will be part of the religious setting, live within a political nation, face the economy provided through a job, carry a role in the family unit and be a link in the family line or heritage.

The purpose of marriage is two-fold: to provide companionship and fulfillment and to provide for posterity. Early rabbinic writings looked at scripture and declared that a wife is a man's other self. She is all that man's nature demands for its completion physically, socially and emotionally. In married life man finds his truest and most lasting happiness, and only through married life does human personality reach its highest fulfillment. The Talmud, Jewish commentary writings, regarding marriage stated that "He who has no wife abides without good, help, joy, or blessing. He who has no wife cannot be considered

a whole man." At a Jewish wedding, following Old Testament custom, each new home is brought into relationship with the story of Creation and with Messianic Hope;

The rabbis considered marriage the hallowing of two human beings into life's holiest purposes. In Genesis 2:18, the Lord said that it was not good for man to be alone, and that there was no helper found suitable for him. So, God took a portion of man to make woman as a companion-helper for the man as a primary function. When you look at man's relationship with God before the creation of woman, you see many aspects that God transferred into the marriage relationship. God and Adam walked together in the cool of the day. Such companionship suggests the sharing of ideas and interchange through communication.

Adam was creative because God had him name the animals. He was involved in constructive participation that was without any labor. He had great liberty within limits, was allowed to schedule his day and work where he determined. But, there was an underlying loneliness and lack of fulfillment. God saw the need and filled it with Eve. She became an enhancement of what Adam was doing. (They had communication and sharing.) And immediately before procreation was ever discussed, God commanded that when a man married that he was emotionally to turn away from dependence upon his parents, and turn toward his wife. In this manner the two would become one unit and man would seek companionship and completion in the wife, instead of always looking back home to find it.

The wife is not a man's shadow or a subordinate, but his other self, his helper. The Hebrew term "fit for him" means someone to be at man's side, counted fit to associate with him or as corresponding to him. The woman was not formed from the dust of the earth, but from man's body. The rabbinic term for marriage literally means "the sanctities" for the purpose of marriage is to preserve and to sanctify that which was made in the image of God.

Once a couple marries, if the man continues to look to his mother for approval, encouragement, and allows her to smotheringly inquire as to whether the wife cooks sufficiently or well, if he is happy, if he is treated well--she is encouraging him to oppose the words of God. If that same young man continually asks his father what to do or what decision to make regarding every purchase the couple makes, or every crisis they face--the husband will rob the wife of what God has said is duly hers. That is, her husband turning towards her emotionally and the two of them as a unit seeking God's answer and God's direction as to what they should do. This does not mean that a young man cannot seek advice from a parent or profit from such advice, for he can gain insight through the eyes of an older individual, but his emotional dependence and satisfaction is to come from his wife.

Just as God provided for Adam to have liberty within limitation in the Garden of Eden, so God provides a liberty for the individuals within a marriage, but there are also boundaries of limitation. Each is not to seek to better himself independently with no thought of how such actions affect the other, but each has areas of their personality, achievements, goals and values that they can pursue that will provide individual enrichment and development. yet each retains a constant awareness of how their choices, actions, words and pursuits will affect the other person for good or for evil. Love is constructive so the marriage partners should never knowingly participate individually in anything that would prove destructive to the marriage unit.

God has so made the female that she has tremendous need for her mate to talk with her and share what he is thinking about particular situations or issues. This imparts understanding to her and gives a strengthening and security she otherwise will not have. God companioned and talked with Adam daily. Man and woman were made in the image of God. Therefore, communication needs are a reflection of God. The husband is to recognize the wife as his fulfillment, made in God's image and likeness and that she is of like nature and substance. The wife is strengthened by the actions, words and attitudes of her husband--or else she is weakened by them. The godly husband will recognize that he and his wife are one unit. Therefore, her reasoning, thinking, and evaluation of a matter will be sought, as well as the exercise of her godly gifts functioning in the marriage as an enhancement.

Husbands who show that they love their wives, add a dimension to the daily life of that mate. Scripture admonishes the husband to nourish and cherish his mate, thus promoting health and strength in her, just as the man nourishes his own flesh. Women thrive on time spent with their husbands, when they truly look at one another, talk, listen, share, as well as being involved in spiritual, social, mental and physical development, plus handling all types of tense and crisis situations constructively. Men likewise need the affirming that a wife can give by esteeming her husband, commending him, showing respect for him and adapting herself to please him and bring him joy. In Bible times newly married men were given one year free from ordinary demanding schedules, in order to spend more time with his wife and establish the home properly.

The wife is to understand that while she and her husband are equal persons, they are not equal in responsibility. Scripture instructs the wife to yield to the husband's discretion where there is a difference of opinion regarding a matter. She is to recognize his leadership and adapt herself to his personal needs. Just as the Church is to be subject to Christ, so a wife is to subject to her own husband, see Ephesians 5:24. The wife should grant honor to the husband by her inward thinking and outward acts. See I Peter 3:1, 6.

WHEN THE WIFE DIFFERS IN VIEWPOINT FROM HER MATE

There is liberty for the wife to think differently about a matter than her husband does. Scripture shows that Nabal was stingy, selfish and insensitive. The Bible calls him a fool. When David asked Nabal for provisions of food, after having protected Nabal's shepherds and flocks, Nabal refused. King David planned to attack Nabal's household and take provisions for his hungry men. Nabal's wife Abigail understood the situation in a manner that the inebriated Nabal did not. She saw that innocent blood was about to be shed needlessly. Therefore, she rushed to the food storehouse and gathered up plenty of food and accompanied her servants as they carried it to David and his men. David admitted that her quick action prevented him from invading Nabal's household. Abigail did not set out to counter her husband's wishes or leadership. She was allowing him honor by taking quick action to avert disaster when he was in no condition to make an accurate judgment due to his drinking. She did not rush to send David provisions with a haughty attitude or rage against her husband or in an attempt to make him look bad in the eyes of others. She acted in a manner that spared his life and the lives of innocent servants who otherwise would have been killed. See I Samuel 25. Revolt was not the heart of Abigail but protection for the household of Nabal. The attitude of a rebel is always against the purposes of God.

When a wife has a different perspective than her husband about a matter, she has the liberty to share what she is seeing, for God may have gifted her with abilities which act as further protection to her husband in decision making. God often unites a woman with a prophetic gift with a man who has a mercy gift. Or it can be the other way around. When this occurs, each will see the truth of a matter from different perspectives and both viewpoints need to be considered as a safeguard. But, after offering how she views a matter, the wife should allow the husband to make the final decision and not accuse him if he should not decide as she wishes he would. The wife has liberty to exercise decision making within the limitation of her role as wife and mother as granted by scripture and mutual consent with her husband. Then she has liberty within limitation.

WHAT A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE IS

One important element in building a good marriage is the consciousness of the fact that marriage commits both partners to a permanent relationship. In the wedding ceremony the couple is contracting for a lifetime of cooperation in all areas of living. Successful cooperation is not possible when limitations are set upon it. Commitment to marriage as a lifetime undertaking is the only logical starting point from which a successful marriage can be built. It is also scriptural.

Divorce is seldom a satisfactory solution to problems. There are instances where divorce is allowed, even in scripture. But, when Jesus was asked in Matthew 19 about the family, he said that Moses allowed the writing of bills of divorcement due to the hardness of the hearts of the Israelites at that time, but that it had never been God's pattern. Malachi

stated that God hates divorce. If people enter a marriage thinking that they can divorce if they begin to be unhappy or if things become difficult, they open a door through which Satan will walk. The enemy will push to cause dissension, accusations, pettiness, and selfishness to flourish so there will be disharmony and every evil work. When the believer determines within himself that divorce is not an option and that regardless of difficulties, that he is committed to the marriage, he is more likely to look for scriptural answers, and seek God to lead him through troubled times.

In Matthew 19:3 the Pharisees asked Jesus if it were lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? Jesus replied that this was never the intent of God who had made male and female to become one flesh, and what God made one, man should not separate. In Matthew 19:9 Jesus states that a man may divorce his wife and marry another, if his wife was found to be a fornicator. But whoever marries the woman divorced due to her fornication, makes himself an adulterer. The opposite would also hold true that if a woman were to divorce an unfaithful husband and marry someone else, then whoever married the unfaithful man would be considered an adulteress. Matthew 5:32 substantiates this position. During the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said that whoever put away his wife, meaning the man was taking the initiative, and did so when the wife was innocent, caused her to remarry and commit adultery. But if the wife had committed adultery and this was the reason for putting her away, then the man was held innocent.

Paul wrote in I Corinthians 7:10 that if a believing wife finds it necessary to separate from her husband she should either remain unmarried or be reconciled to her mate, and that the husband should not divorce his wife. In the sixteenth verse Paul says the goal is to live in peace. Therefore, if the believer is married to an unbeliever and that unbeliever wants a divorce, let them have it. He continues on to state the advantage of celibacy during the time in which he lived. In verse 27 he states that if the marriage has been dissolved and the believer desires to marry, that there is nothing wrong with it. Paul continued to outline the distress of the times and urged people to give themselves with such intensity that it would be profitable not to be married so the mind would not be distracted.

There are occasions when women are mistreated physically, battered and no respect shown them by their mate due to his alcoholism, emotional imbalance or insanity. Scripture says that it is the will of God for us to live in peace. It may be necessary for a wife to flee her home in order to obtain physical safety. Scripture does not forbid this. If there is no repentance or change on the husband's part, the wife may find it necessary to enter into divorce for the protection of herself or her children. While divorce is not God's highest or best, provision has been made for it within the Christian community and scriptural limitations are clear. It must never be considered as an easy out simply because there is stress or misunderstanding. Marriage provides rich opportunity to practice various aspect of forgiving, and seeking repentance from the Lord and making restitution with one's mate. Once a marriage operates through the revelation of Jesus Christ, and how He and His bride, the Church, behave in relationship, then victory can be obtained

over the enemy who will attempt to separate and destroy Christian marriages. Love is a commitment rather than a constant emotion. Once the commitment is made, all other decisions, acts and choices should be determined as the result of the initial lifetime commitment to love, to nurture and to aid one another. Each partner must maintain respect for the other if the love commitment is to grow. When one partner sins in destroying respect the other partner has for them, there must be repentance to God and to the partner, restitution on the part of the guilty mate in as far as possible, and a willingness to grant time to pass in order to prove their worthiness and to once again earn the respect of the one they have offended and injured.

Almost all people want to achieve success in marriage. Couples need to know that all marriages are made up of both pleasant and unpleasant times and events. There are times of happiness, unhappiness, hard work and commonplace everyday living, as well as moments of ecstasy and romance. Disappointment is inevitable if one enters marriage expecting one long emotional spree of delight. At times people marry hoping that marriage will work miracles in their lives and bring them happiness when they have no happiness within themselves having never learned to be content in whatever state of being in which they found themselves. People who look for some outside influence to create their happiness have all too often developed the habit of being unhappy. It is unrealistic to believe that once you are married, your temperament, personality, values, goals and reactions will automatically change and everyone will live happily ever after without conscious spiritual effort or accommodation. That is fantasy, not reality. Those who marry with an intelligent evaluation of their own maturity, or lack of it, as well as an appreciation for their obligations and privileges are more likely to achieve greater degrees of success and happiness.

God was explicit that the Israelites were to marry within their group and not outside. The Israelite was supposed to love God with all his heart and mind and soul and strength. Therefore, marrying another Israelite assured that the believer's life did not become polluted by joining with an idol worshiper. The New Testament shows that the believer is to marry another believer. II Corinthians 6:14-15 states "Do not unite yourselves with unbelievers; they are not fit mates for you. What has righteousness to do with wickedness? Can light consort with darkness? Can Christ agree with Beliel, or a believer join hands with an unbeliever?"

In Nehemiah, restoration of worship and the city of Jerusalem was taking place and Nehemiah was so upset that the Israelites had taken unbelieving wives that he set about to right the situation. Samson was defeated because he did not remain within the believing community when he chose a wife. Solomon was lured into idolatry by acquiring wives who worshipped household gods. When Abraham sent Eliezer the servant to find a wife for Isaac, the son of promise, Eliezer promised to obtain her back among the people from which Abraham and Sarah came. They were of like faith. God knows how an unbeliever

can adversely effect a believer and pollute their faith and practices toward God. Therefore, He said for believers to marry believers.

Men find their identity in their job, in the tasks they perform and what they accomplish while they work. Women, on the other hand, find their identity in their mates. The success of the husband becomes the success of the wife. Honors bestowed on the husband become the equal honor of the wife. While her husband is living she is known and referred to by others as the wife of so and so. Upon his death she is known as the widow of so and so. Her identity lies within her husband. Therefore, the woman is made to feel complete when her husband shares not only accomplishments with her, but also expresses to her his inner feelings and thoughts about things that matter to him. She is equally willing to share in the husband's failures, fears and times of great need whether they are physical, financial, mental, emotional or spiritual. When the husband remains closed and refuses to share intimately with his wife, it acts as a perpetual rejection of her and wounds her so that she must either accept being closed out of his life and find her solace in the Lord, or else she will react toward her husband in ways that express bitterness and her disappointment in being alienated to this degree. When Samson was with his Philistine wife from Timnah, the wife was not trustworthy for she was from the enemy camp. Yet she urged a sharing of Samson's secret, as the just due of a wife and Samson complied. Judges 14:15-17 shows that this woman failed in her wifely role to be trustworthy and used pressure on her husband to get him to reveal his secret. Then supplied it to the enemy against her mate. At Gaza Samson took Delilah, another Philistine, for his wife. Delilah was also in a conspiracy against Samson, but she obtained the secret of his strength because he revealed it to her when they were in the intimacy of sharing together while alone. A godly wife would receive such privileged information, guard it and retain her silence.

In times past the institutional aspects of marriage exerted pressures that are almost nonexistent today. Law, tradition, religion and social custom all operated as external controls to give permanence to marriage. The relationship was carefully defined and regulated by society. Life was also predominantly rural in all nations at that time in history. Consequently, families were held together by many bonds that no longer exert an influence today. A farm family worked together to produce a living. Their isolated manner of life made it necessary for all members of the family to be held accountable for going and coming, and their contribution to the work load. Isolation forced the family group to provide its own recreation and social life from within.

Circumstances have now changed so that conditions under which people live in cities make it more difficult for them to maintain a stable family life. Laws and social controls have grown lax, the opportunities for recreational and social activities now separate instead of uniting the family. Selfishness is encouraged by modern emphasis on each person seeking their own satisfaction and happiness, instead of seeking to fulfill the needs of their marriage partner.

The basic needs that impel people toward monogamous marriage remain unchanged. The represent day anonymity of the individual in the city, the loosening of bonds with family members due to geographical scattering of the family members, cause the individual need for some one person with whom he can build a life of comradeship and understanding to increase. Personality needs that couples desire to have met through marriage are: someone to love them, to confide in, to show affection to them, to respect their ideals, to appreciate what they wish to achieve, to understand their moods, to aid in decision making, to be with during difficulty, to appreciate and to relieve their loneliness.

Happy marriages are those in which both husband and wife find fulfillment in a majority of these expressed needs. In many marriages both partners consciously seek to give to each other the love, understanding, and moral support that enables the mate to feel that he counts for something. In many marriages enough of these needs are met so that both partners are fairly well satisfied and the marriage can be called successful. Each partner gives up some of his personal freedom but gains fulfillment instead.

ROLE EXPECTATION IN MARRIAGE

Customary roles are learned largely from the family. It is through the attitudes, expectations and habits formed in the family that a young person gets his basic training in role attitudes and role expectations for his sex and for the opposite sex. In these days, the customary roles are often in direct contradiction to the expected role one has formed during childhood and youth.

In many countries, more young men and women are participating in similar kinds of recreation, intellectual pursuits, and job opportunities. For the past three generations the interaction of boys and girls in school has them functioning as equals. This has broken down customary role expectations of the past. Parents have watched their daughters move into types of role behavior foreign to their concept of being a "lady". This has included informality of dress, carelessness of appearance, and the devaluing of the importance of being a good mother and homemaker.

Before marriage the discussion of marriage roles is theoretical. The acid test of role compatibility comes in the first year of marriage. Each partner wants to be a good husband or wife and behave as his preconceptions lead him to believe is correct. Few of these conceptions are conscious since they were gained largely in childhood with a parental model. When the actual role behavior of the husband or wife turns out to be within the expected limits, there is no difficulty, but when there is wide variance from what is expected and what is actually performed, then there is conflict.

In 1960 a study was done within a nation and over half of the people said they felt personally inadequate as a marriage partner. They blamed themselves for inadequacies in the division of labor as the financial provider, or as the housekeeper. Secondly, they took blame for dominating the spouse and not being sufficiently protective or considerate. A person feels inadequate as a marriage partner where there is awareness of a gap between one's understanding of their role and their enactment of it. The higher the standards one sets for himself, the more likely he is to feel inadequate.

Each individual seeks to satisfy his needs through a socially acceptable role that is appropriate for his gender. If that person's needs run counter to the role expectation, the pattern of role behavior may be altered or reversed. When there is a clash of competing needs there may be reluctant submission on the part of the loser and discontent is likely if a role reversal has resulted. (Eastern European girl's name) always watched her father keep the financial books for the family. He carefully set aside certain amounts for their needs and always took out the tithe first, then dispensed the money and paid bills. But (Eastern European boy's name) had always seen his mother do this task. Therefore he assumed that his wife would do as his mother had done. His bride assumed that he would do as her father had done and there was conflict. After a heated argument, the

begrudging groom falteringly took over the bookkeeping. His happy wife felt protected, he felt abused and unmanly. Months later the couple sat down to face the fact that the husband was inept with math, was careless with the money, was angry about watching over the finances and overspent. The situation was finally resolved when the wife accepted the challenge and took over the finances.

While this an acceptable resolution to a specific problem, with mutual consent, there are other matters that cannot work with role reversal. If the wife feels the need to dominate and the husband needs to submit, both will feel a love-hate toward the relationship because this is the opposite of God's pattern and plan. Therefore, neither partner will ever be truly comfortable or happy acting out their role in opposition to God's wisdom.

External circumstances can also help shape role behaviors. A man may believe in being the financial provider for the family, but become unable to do so. He may be unemployable due to an illness, accident, racial discrimination or national disaster. He is then deprived of the opportunity to fulfill his preferred role. There may be role reversal as the wife then steps in to work and support the family, while the incapacitated husband remains at home to recover. The fact that at times couples may have no choice but to violate their own perception of their role does not make it any less demoralizing. Role conflict occurs when there is a gap between one's own role expectation and how they are allowed to express that role. In the Bible, Abishag understood her role was to act as companion and nurse to King David and she was glad to accommodate him and fulfilled that role.

Even the most compatible couples discover some points at which their role expectations differ from what the partner does. Both partners may compete for the same role or do the same tasks assigned to one role. For example, if each one has always been home for Christmas, both may take for granted that marriage enlarges the pattern instead of altering it. So each partner's expectation contradicts reality because they have wrongly made an assumption. They will have to work out whose home they will visit when. Both partners may avoid a disliked task. Carrying out the garbage is a good example. Each may expect the other to do it and find no room for this activity in the concept of his own role. The husband may feel it is women's work and the wife feel it is men's work because the garbage can is outdoors.

As soon as discrepancies are discovered, there is a practical urgency in getting them resolved. The husband who violates his wife's role expectation appears to her to be shirking his duty or infringing upon her rights. Such conflicts are difficult to cope with because they are loaded with value judgments. These role expectations are acquired unconsciously in childhood. The expectations cover division of the workload about the house, the handling of finances, the leadership given the family, who has the authority, how one behaves socially, the table manners used, and how they respond to social situations. The wife likes to talk during the meal, the husband likes silence. He sees where his behavior originated. At mealtime in his home the family sat down, heads were lowered and everyone concentrated on eating quickly, refueling, and getting finished. In the bride's home the family looked forward to the evening meal, shared about their day, enjoyed each other and talked about everything as they ate. Both mates had to compromise so that a happy medium could be made for them.

Concessions need to be made by both husband and wife. Adaptation comes by changing one's behavior or else changing his ideas or both. To make concessions gracefully is crucial to work out a happy relationship. To make role changes gracefully depends not only on the maturity of the individual, but also on the encouragement and support of the other partner. Scripture says that by love we are to prefer one another. Such an attitude helps the adjustment each person has to make when their role expectation is not met by the other partner.

ROLES OF THE MATES

In most cultures and from the scriptural pattern the man is to make the living for the family, to furnish protection, shelter, leadership and to help train his children. He is also to be a firm, but not harsh, disciplinarian and to represent the person of God to his children until such time as they are able to transfer their trust, affection and faith to the heavenly Father through faith in Jesus Christ. A person who has had a poor example in their father will find it more difficult to trust God than do others. Men of various cultures usually do the outside work and women do the inside work. Yet, with the pressures of today, women often have to work outside the home and help make the living, therefore the men should also aid her with responsibilities within the home as she has physical limitations and cannot do it all.

The father is to be the leader of spiritual training. He should read the Bible to his family if he has a Bible. If not, he should tell them Bible stories and discuss what God meant for us to learn from that particular story, and then pray before his children and for his children and teach them to pray. How the parents behave will do more to teach Christian values than constantly preaching to them. Fathers should spend time with each individual child and encourage that child to share things that are meaningful to him. The father can then respond with moral input that will indelibly impress the child.

Pastors always have demands on them, and always feel the burden of faithfully ministering to God's people. But he is also a man, husband and a father. The pastor should be extremely careful that he does not minister to all others to the neglect of his wife and children who need his presence, his conversation, his undivided attention and his affirmation. They also need his spiritual oversight and encouragement in the things of God.

The husband protects his family from physical injury by foreseeing dangers, by looking to God for a warning--as God spoke to Joseph to take baby Jesus to another country for safety until it was time to return to Galilee. The father protects by keeping the home and shelter in good repair. He also foresees when a family member is going in a dangerous direction and repairs that through intercession, discussions and redirection. The father

weighs the problems that come to the family and decides what to do after discussing the matter with his wife, hearing her views and gaining her input.

It is the duty of the father to protect his wife when children attempt to usurp her authority. As he steps in to enforce discipline and to correct any disobedience of the children toward the mother, he is emphasizing that it is important to respect and to obey the mother. It displays his own respect toward his wife and it secures her position as an authority over the children, who chooses to be submissive to the husband's authority also. Most husbands endeavor to shield their wives from needless emotional stress caused by everyday unpleasantries and protect her from unnecessary conflict, social difficulty and psychological assault. When either mate demands their partner before the children, they are removing that mate's God given authority within the home as a parent and as an individual. This breeds rebellion in the children who are being shown by example not to respect the belittled parent. Jesus spoke often of the condition of the heart, of the inward person. It is important for each mate to insure that they do not allow thoughts of bitterness, rebellion or criticalness to abide in their heart against their mate, even though the thought may never be spoken. Such wrong attitudes are to be taken to the Lord, confessed as sin, renounced and asked of the Lord to remove them and wash the inner heart with His purity and holiness. The thought offender must then stand against his own thinking so as not to allow destructive and critical thoughts against his mate to remain within the heart.

Ephesians 5:28-29 shows that the husband is to nourish the wife daily by his love for her, building her up, restoring her, healing her where she is bruised as he would do with his own physical flesh. Words of praise and acts of affection and appreciation maintain the wife and strengthen the marriage relationship. Such things make her feel part of her husband and increases her respect and love for him so that his heart can safely dwell in her, knowing that she will always only do him good. Ephesians tells a father not to correct his children in a manner that breeds wrath and resentment, making the children hostile. A husband can also deal with his wife on a daily basis in such a manner that she is continually disappointed in him, angry, resentful, degraded and desires only to be away from him and the unhappiness he brings her. The bible holds the answer to such dilemmas. As each mate takes the written Word and applies it to his life with determination, change occurs and God undertakes to bring restoration where it is needed.

When the husband fails as protector, provider, nurturer, instructor, spiritual teacher and leader, the entire family suffers because this is God's pattern. His wife and children need his presence at home for he is their symbol of security as well as love and acceptance. If he spends his free time elsewhere or remains on the job needless hours, his family is robbed of time in which he could have had input and influence to turn them toward the Lord.

The woman was not created with bone from Adam's feet in order to be walked upon by him, nor was she taken from the head to be ruler over him, but from his side to go along

with, to be under his arm of protection and near his heart of love. Both male and female are heirs together of the grace of life. Peter writes (I Peter 3) that the husband is to honor his wife and live with her in such a manner that his prayers are not hindered. If the husband lives without employing scriptural principles in the marriage and family, his spiritual life will be impeded and his relationship with the Lord will suffer.

The role of the wife is supportive. She ordinarily shares in her husband's work by maintaining his clothing for his particular job, arranging cooking and meals to see that he is fed before leaving for his work and upon his return. She creates the atmosphere within the home of peace, acceptance and welcome so that her husband looks forward to returning to her at the day's end. It is her responsibility to see that the house is orderly, neat, free of blaring or nerve shattering noise, and that preparation has been made for her husband's return. If she also works outside the home, she and her husband should determine who will do what regarding all tasks within the home and outside, so that neither will be overtaxed with undue expectation. If both work equally, then both should share in labor at home.

It is God's ordained plan that the wife will joyfully yield to the husband's leadership. Ephesians 5 says that the wife is to be accountable to the husband in everything, for he is God's appointed leader in the family. The wife is to submit herself to her husband because she respects and loves him, in the same manner the church is to submit itself to the leadership, and to the final decisions of Jesus Christ. Obedience is to accompany submission. The wife is to give an apparent respect and honor to her husband that engenders respect for him by others. The Greek word for "obey" literally means to "withdraw your rights." The Bible says that we are by love, to prefer one another, to think of the other person first and above ourself. When the wife does this she often "withdraws her right" to say that which could wound, impede or intrude into her husband's area of leadership. When a situation arises where the wife sees the situation accurately and the answer to avoid further trouble, if the husband after hearing her chooses another way, the wife should then withdraw her rights and not force her opinion on her mate. To do so is equal to witchcraft according to scripture, for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and the main thrust of witchcraft is the forcing of the will of one person over that of another. The wife looses the situation to God, trusting God to deal with the husband if it is necessary. She refuses to nag or to persuade endeavoring to have the solution as she has seen it. God gifts women with the same gifts of the Spirit that he gives to men. Many times the gifting of one mate works in conjunction and balance with the gifting of the other mate. Therefore, a wise husband will hear the input of his wife regarding a matter, realizing God can speak through her to him, and then he will take all facts before the Lord and seek a final answer and solution from the heavenly Father.

In one pastor's home God gifted the wife with an amazing ability to discern the thoughts and intents of men's hearts as well as to discern spirits. When situations would arise that brought difficulty to the congregation and ultimately the pastor's home, the wife would

relate to her husband what God had shown her. For many years he refused to hear what she was saying. After repeated and recurring crisis within the congregation, the husband asked his wife's opinion and what God was saying to her about the matter. He began to listen and to recognize that God had been speaking to him through his wife, but he had been too stubborn to listen. Once he recognized the gifting and God in it, the church and the family began to be spared great heartache as plots of the enemy were unveiled before he could implement his plans. However, the wife never prided herself in this gift, nor did she attempt to usurp her husband's place of leadership. She was his facilitator and helpmate.

God made the woman intuitive, quick and emotional whereas he made the man logical, slow to move and a thinker. Eve was brought to Adam as an addition to his life, and one to help him and to provide companionship and fulfillment. What Adam lacked, Eve contained, what Eve lacked Adam was the supply. The wife is a facilitator for her husband, she makes his way easier and more pleasant in daily life. Husband and wife are partners in the marriage and have an equality before God and man, but their responsibilities and roles are different and the husband is the final word when a decision must be made.

An important function assigned to the female role in nearly all cultures is that they pass on the heritage of family backgrounds to the next generation. While preparing small children for sleep it is natural to tell stories of how things were when the mother was a child or the grandparents, of how they attended school, what they ate, how they traveled and stories of the family handed down from one generation to another. The mother is also an interpreter of behavior to the children. When the father has appeared to be brusque or preoccupied, the mother usually soothes the children who have been upset by his moods. She explains what it is that is weighing upon the father, and the circumstances he is dealing with and how that makes him stressed. Such interpretation to the children makes them become empathetic and understanding, and endeavor to be a help to the father during such times.

When there is a misunderstanding between children and the family, it is usually the mother who interprets why the offended child became offended and what the offender must do to right the situation. She then watches over the situation to see that amends are properly made which is part of training a child. God directed the fathers of Israel to instruct the children daily in the ways of God and in scripture.

Today too many fathers leave such instruction to the mother. If a father refuses to take his place of leadership in spiritual matters and will not have any part in it, then it is better that the mother do it so the children will be instructed. Paul wrote that Timothy had known the scriptures since he was a small child. It was his mother and grandmother that had instructed him for his father was an unbelieving Greek and not of the household of faith. God mightily used Timothy and he had a sound foundation taught him by the women of

the household because the father could not give such instruction as an unbeliever. Therefore, when a father will not provide spiritual instruction the mother must or else the children will develop without a foundation of beliefs and it can be stolen from them later.

Some women must maintain the home, give direction and instruction to children, make decisions that effect the entire family and make purchases when a husband is away from home for long periods of time due to his work, physical illness, ministry or other reasons. When this is the case, the children develop the habit of looking to the mother for permission to participate in various activities. When the father returns back into the home routine, it is the responsibility of the mother to adapt herself by releasing the leadership she was forced to take by the man's absence, and to direct the children away from her as the decision maker but to the father. This is not an easy adjustment for a wife in any culture or any nation. The Christian wife must want to comply with the Word of God more than she wants to exercise independence or usurp the leadership role. When she is put in charge of all decision making, she is on under authority and acting in the sphere of leadership her husband has assigned her. She is therefore accountable to him for her decisions and conduct during his extended absences.

The wife should conduct herself in a manner so that she brings honor to her husband and adds to the esteem held for him by the community.

WORK ASSIGNMENT TWO

- * When there is a gap between role expectation and enactment of the role, what can be expected to occur?

- * How can this be resolved between a couple?

- * List three specific functions the male has been assigned by God within the family unit. Then list functions the female is expected to fill.

- * Explain how husband and wife are equal yet the man is to be the leader and have the final word? Does this mean he disregards his wife's feelings or insight?

- * Name specific ways in which the wife is to aid her husband and add to his esteem in the community? How is the husband to honor his wife?

- * According to God's plan who is responsible for the spiritual training of the children and family? If that person defaults, who should step in and see that the task is done?

MATURITY FOR MARRIAGE

Emotional maturity of the partners is a very important factor as to the success or failure of any marriage. Emotional maturity is defined as the level of one's development to be able to see oneself and others objectively, and to be able to discriminate between facts and feelings. A ten year old is not expected to be emotionally mature; he is developing satisfactorily if he is as mature as other children his age. At each stage in life a certain level of maturity is essential if one is to function adequately on that level. Problems arise when the emotional growth of people is arrested at immature stages. Problems in marriage are apt to be acute if one or both partners have not achieved a satisfactory level of maturity.

Empathy is the ability to accurately perceive how someone else is feeling. The ability to empathize is important to adaptability and marriageability. The person who has great empathy can use his perceptions and understanding of the feelings of his mate as a regulator of his own responses and behavior in ways that greatly add to the success and happiness of the marriage. A wife or husband is able to inflict hurts to the mate far more serious than any outsider could, because he or she knows well the inner strengths and weaknesses of the mate. Spouses who are empathetic know what will hurt as well as what will build up and encourage their mate. To empathize is to be able to be sensitive to how another is truly feeling about a matter. So, some people reach an age for marrying, but who have difficulty understanding others, or how they see a situation, or why they act as they do. Their failure to empathize leads to misunderstandings and to tensions which grow out of misjudging the actions of another or misinterpreting their words.

The young person who is working to improve his own level of marriageability will need to be objective in observing his own interaction with others. He needs to observe if he forces his opinions on others or if he gives others the opportunity to express themselves. How well does the young person listen to what others are saying? Does he allow them to differ from him in opinions, preferences and other ways?

Family background is part of marriageability. Those who come from homes where parents were happily married, that knew childhood happiness, experienced lack of conflict with the mother and father, had home discipline that was firm, but not harsh, will tend to be happy in marriage. People are conditioned by their family background in ways that affect their marriage. Those reared in happy homes have an advantage in having seen their parents give them an example. Those reared in unhappy homes are not doomed to failure. Through the Lord, a young person can overcome many of the handicaps he may have that would work against the success of his marriage. People can break cycles of unhappiness that may run in families. Those who have not had the background of happily married parents need to be alert to danger signals that could warn of special

problems ahead due to traits in themselves or in the person they marry. Habits and personality patterns are closely related to the family practices, but can be modified.

Objectivity is an essential of maturity. This is the ability to observe oneself and our interest realistically, the way others see them. Little children are self-centered. With increased maturity there should be an ability to see things in their true relationships, the ability to judge events impartially and to recognize that one's life and experiences are not the main interest of others. Without objectivity an individual will have distorted ideas about himself, his needs and his rights. He will refuse to evaluate his own motives. The person with adequate maturity for marriage is able to be objective in his attitudes and judgments. He perceives the relative importance of events as they relate to himself and others.

The mature person comes to marriage understanding what it is. He is not seeking an easy escape from reality or from personal problems, but choosing a way of life that will bring new problems, responsibility, but also, has potential for greater fulfillment. The many legal and social regulations and prohibitions on marriage are evidence of society's stake in each marriage. Those ready for marriage are able to think independently and come to conclusions. They have a reasonable evaluation of themselves and recognize their strengths and weaknesses, and work to overcome the weaknesses. Such a person also sees his limitations in certain abilities and recognizes his giftings in other areas, and is grateful for the giftings. The mature person also is able to correctly evaluate his own family background with its strengths and weaknesses and sees its probable effects upon him. He will live in such a manner as to avoid becoming a victim where others in his family failed.

A trait that distinguishes the mature from the immature is that no matter what the chronological age, the mature person has learned to meet his problems in constructive ways. He is not easily thrown into confusion, discouragement or depression by the disappointments or frustrations in life. Past experiences are used as a means of growth so that habitual policies are established that enable him to cope with emergencies and crisis in life. The believer learns to agree with King David that our life and times are in the hands of the Lord and that our steps are ordered by Him. We agree with Paul in Romans 8, that all things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to His purpose. Therefore, when difficulty comes, the believer immediately calls upon the name of the Lord in asking for His direction as to how to handle the vent. When disappointed the mature person does not engage in infantile behaviors such as pouting, withdrawing, endeavoring to hurt another emotionally, or having fits of crying or of shouting anger. Instead, they look to the Lord. Isaiah 26:3 says, "The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace because he trusts in You." God enables us to cope and gives grace for emergencies.

The mature person not only gives thought to his own personality and family background, but has gained some understanding in human behavior and how it functions. He has

come to recognize types of behavior in himself and others that are tied to inner motivations. He can see aggressive and domineering behavior as expressions of the insecure. He sees heavy drinking, moodiness or clinging dependence as a way of escape from problems. He sees rebellion against God given authority as immaturity and self love. Jealousy is the inability to cope with feelings of inadequacy, and gossip is motivated by a desire to build up oneself and push others down. Possessiveness, when understood, is a warning sign about a sick personality instead of being charming. Paul itemizes the works of the flesh which oppose the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:16-26. A Spirit controlled life allows the character of Jesus to be formed within the believer. This means that when base emotions and motivations, as exhibited in jealousy, envy, drunkenness, anger, selfishness and other wrongs, that the believer rejects the inclination to yield to such and claims Romans 6, to account themselves as dead to their desires and alive to Christ and His desires. They choose the right act, the right words to utter and refuse to do wrong.

Marriage is a cooperative venture involving two people who are willing to sacrifice for the partnership and for each other, instead of wondering how much the other person will give and they can get. The mature person sees that much of life is made up of giving. At one level the child gives obedience in exchange for protection and approval. At another level the worker gives his time, energy and ability in exchange for the reward of money. On the far deeper level of relationships in the family or in the Church, each person gives of himself with emotional support, acceptance, cooperation as part of a mutual exchange. In return he receives a satisfying relationship. Some adults marry, never having matured to this level of thinking of the needs of others before their own. They seem unable to defer what they want in favor of someone else's preference. Parents give up sleep with infants, sick children and frightened children. The parents may be exhausted physically, yet meet the need of the child. They forego buying things they want for themselves in order to give to their child or to provide for the household.

Immature parents think only of their desires and neglect a spouse or a baby. Children are slapped for crying and disturbing them. Children are left to their won devices while the parents attempt to escape back into the freedom enjoyed before marriage, which is not reality. This type of immaturity and inability to sacrifice for others is godless and self-serving only. It accounts for many of the marital break-ups and personality deformities in little children.

The mature person is able to admit their mistakes and attempt to rectify them. Such admission is essential for the Christian to be able to go before God repentant for wrong acts or choices, seek God's forgiveness, ask the forgiveness of the injured party, and make amends in keeping with the situation, then work not to allow the same error to occur again. The immature person ordinarily cannot see his need for growth or change. The less mature a person is, the more readily he may plunge into marriage with little or no understanding of the obligations and responsibilities he is assuming.

Many people have immature attitudes toward the place of sex in marriage. This is partly due to the way sex education within the family is handled. Often negative attitudes are expressed and children learn to think of sex as dirty, vulgar or secret and sinful. Some people need many years after they are biologically sexually mature to grow out of such erroneous thinking. They need to view sexual feeling as a positive force within the personality and sexual impulses and responses as a wholesome God given expression of love between two people. The mature recognize the true value of sex in all its aspects as a factor in successful marriage.

The person who is mature enough for marriage will have reached the point where he can consider whether or not his attitudes about sex are wholesome or not. God makes plain from scripture that Sarah had sexual pleasure in her husband, Abraham, and the Shulamite responded with ardor towards the Groom in the Song of Solomon. Both exhibited healthy and mature attitudes towards sex. If attitudes need to be changed the mature person will work to accomplish that.

Studies on happily married couples have shown that those who delay marriage until they are near thirty, adjust more quickly and are happier than those who marry in their teens. Immaturity in younger couples required a longer period of time to come to a good working arrangement than with older couples. Immaturity accounts for severe difficulties in marriage which often leads to divorce. All the findings emphasized the fact that chronological maturity in age is related to the other kinds of maturity essential in making a good marriage. Those who marry extremely young often attempt to escape parental dominance. To choose marriage as a means of escape from pressures shows immature judgment and lack of ability in problem solving. The more mature person that marries has gained advantages of observing good and bad marriages of friends and profits by what is seen. Their ideas regarding marriage have become more realistic. The sex drive of the male decreases in the late twenties and the female's increases in the late twenties and thirties so sexual adjustment is more easily made if the couple marries late. Mate selection by the mature individual is based on a broader companionship basis, with sex interest exerting a less decisive influence.

The teenage girl may enter into marriage flippantly and without a strong incentive to make the marriage work, thinking she will remarry if the first marriage fails. Whereas the older woman has had adequate time to enjoy single life and deliberately decides to work at achieving a happy marriage. Ultimately it takes years of living to bring into the marriage the elements for its success.

WORK ASSIGNMENT THREE

- * Name two measures of maturity.

* How does the mature person evaluate himself and his family background?

* Can you differentiate between facts and feelings about yourself? Do you act on facts or on feelings?

- * If someone is always blaming others for their mistakes, what does this indicate? How will it effect the family unit?

- * What does the mature person see about human motivation? Give a scriptural reference where such motivations are listed.

- * If one marriage partner is emotionally mature and the other is not, how will this effect the relationship?

LOVE

The Greek language, in which the New Testament was written, had the ability to present a picture to the mind. There are three Greek words used to express different aspects for the one word "love." "Philio" (FEE-lee-oh) means friendship love as Jonathan had for David in I Samuel 18:1-3, where one person delights in another. Jesus said in Revelation 3:19 that as many as he loved (phileo) he chastened and rebuked. In John 21:17 after Peter had denied Christ, Jesus inquired of Peter, "Lovest (philio) thou me?" And Peter assured Jesus that he did have the esteem emotion, respect, brotherly affection and caring of friendship for him. Husbands and wives have philio type love between one another also.

"Agape" love is the love God has for Jesus and for us. It is sacrificial and constant. It is not conditional love. Conditional love creates conditions upon which love is granted. Certain things must be said and done to warrant the giving of conditional love from the whim of one person to another. It is not constant. In the Law of First Mention, agape is first used in Matthew 24:12 where Jesus is describing the signs of His second coming. He said, "Because lawlessness will be increased, most people's love (agape) will grow cold." Romans 5:8 declares, "God demonstrates His love (agape) toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Men are to love their wives as Christ loves the Church with agape love, according to Ephesians 5:25. In Colossians 3:19 Paul again writes for husbands to love (agape) their wives.

This is a giving and forgiving type love that remains constant regardless what is done to it. This is a commitment type love that is unwavering and is not founded upon emotion, but upon the characteristic of faithfulness, dependability, and charity. This type love remains and is expressed in caring concern when one marriage partner is struck with serious illness or accident and becomes incapacitated for a period of time, or for life. This type love remains loyal when circumstances separate the couple. Agape love remains when unemployment hits the family and there is not sufficient money to buy necessities and undue stress is placed on everyone.

Love is not infatuation, nor the first flush of romance. Real love remains within the commitment originally made by one partner to the other. Nor is it a matter of gritted teeth endurance. Emotions are variable and affected by many outside influences within any one day. So, the Christian does not live by his emotional feelings toward God, but lives out his love commitment to God, through Jesus Christ the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. In the same manner a couple lives out their love commitment daily and they are not dependent upon feelings to dictate how they will act toward one another. This type love forgives injuries done to it, encourages, endures, is kind, is patient, endures and is not envious, and does not behave in a self-serving manner. Such agape love is described throughout I Corinthians 13. When believers cling to the ideal of agape love, and go to

God for refreshings in it by His grace, their emotions come in line with the truth of the Word.

"Eros" is the third type of love, which is filled with passion, emotion and is sexually motivated. This is an important aspect of the marriage union. The Shulamite woman in the Song of Solomon delighted in the love of the groom as he pursued and loved her and expressed it in eros love. Sarah enjoyed Abraham physically. When she was past the age of reproduction and the angel told her she would bear a child, she asked, "Shall I again have pleasure in my husband?" See Genesis 18:12.

Love is the concern of two people for each other which includes all three aspects of the words agape, philio and eros. When you love a person, his well being-his growth toward his greatest potential in personality and character-matters as much to you as your own well-being. A love that clutches and clings in an attempt to control, is not love, but ungodly characteristics. If one partner dominates, demands and requires while the other person does most of the giving, adjusting and peace keeping, love will not grow and it will wither to become mere bondage.

Two people who love each other can work together. Their motivation to cooperate is strong. This is a chosen relationship so it differs from that of other family members. A second motivation towards cooperation is based upon the fact that the love relationship brings security and reassurance to the individual. The emotional support which comes as the result of loving and being loved is worth working for and sacrificing to maintain. This motivation develops into a permanently sustained relationship.

ADJUSTMENT

Just because you love someone does not mean there will not be conflict in some areas of living and differences of opinion, for there will be. Conflict will arise in one or more areas and need resolving. That is normal. The quality of a couple's over-all relationship will be determined by their ways of meeting these times. How conflict is resolved and how quickly it is resolved are fundamentals to the happiness of the marriage partners. There are basically three ways such dilemmas are settled. First, some couples are able to develop a compromise by both parties and establish a satisfactory middle ground agreement whereby each is comfortable and mutually happy.

Secondly, another type of compromise is when two people find seriously opposing views or encounter antagonistic characteristics, but accept the fact of these differences. They accommodate themselves to the situation by reaching a compromise that is entirely satisfactory to them both and involves little or no outward expression of antagonism. They tolerate the behavior of the other with little or no protest. During the process of accommodation the couple may discuss issues and attempt to reach mutuality of views.

Although the undesirable conditions still exist, those conditions are not allowed to hinder cooperation toward mutual ends.

A third type of adjustment to conflict is a state of hostility where constant quarreling and bickering continue about the points on which the two differ. Tension is produced by the antagonisms and are sometimes expressed in words and made evident in behavior. The couple does not cope in any satisfactory manner with these differences so they reach an impasse and the relationship becomes static and inflexible, and characterized by hostility. The wife may nag, endeavor to thwart the husband's enjoyment in some specific activity and this resentment finds expression in a refusal to participate in other activities the husband enjoys as well as refusal in sexual intercourse. The husband may then retaliate by spending more and more time with friends outside the home. Thus the couple settles into a permanent state of antagonism and conflict. This is a self-destructive type of adjustment to the marriage, and certainly not Christian, therefore, should not be accepted as an alternative.

Throughout life the marriage partners will be required to make adjustments at various life cycles. There is the adjustment of early marriage, when children come, in middle life when children leave home, when old age occurs and when crisis comes, such as death, serious illness or financial disaster. The faith each person has in God and the practice of looking to Him to see them through strained and difficult times will always be of benefit in adapting to the changes in the life cycle and as each phase affects the marriage.

COMPANIONSHIP

Companionship is part of love. In a love that is adequate for a lifetime, the two need to be congenial friends. They may each enjoy doing separate activities and not always the same thing. But, it is essential that they share feelings about some values that matter to both of them. It is more important to share in the realm of the spiritual, intellectual, artistic and the general welfare of others than mutually to enjoy the same interests in athletics or general activities that involve less of the whole personality. The two should enjoy each other's company due to congeniality, desire to confide in one another, to talk matters over and to share in ideas, disappointments, dreams, grief and spiritual gains.

Some couples marry out of sex impulse and have no basis of companionship or friendship. They manage to work out an arrangement that enables them to make a home and rear children, but there are elements missing from their life that would add joy and confidence to the relationship. They become heavily weighted down with duty and obligations. Duty and obligation have a place in any sustained relationship, but when love is based in companionable friendship, the words take on a pleasant meaning. It is to be expected that the Christian believer exerts faith for God to lead them to the person that is ordained to be their mate. The Christian should seek God to confirm that they are making the right

choices of His choosing and fulfilling His will for their life. God was able to cause the servant of Abraham to know by the Spirit of God that Rebekah was to be Isaac's wife. He made arrangements for her to return with him to Abraham's house and marry Isaac. There was not a courtship nor an engagement. God has ordained it.

Questions to consider in evaluating love are:

1. Are you comfortable and at ease with this person, and able to be yourself without strain?
2. Since feeling love for this person, are you more inclined to live up to your best concept of yourself and your abilities?
3. Are you aware of a continuing stable bond between the two of you, even when you are not aware of a feeling of love?
4. Does this person matter greatly to you regardless of emotion or lack of it at the moment?
5. Would you be able to love this person in the same manner if they were very sick instead of well? If their physical appearance were to change, be disfigured by accident or disease?
6. Is this person sufficiently attractive to you so that you are not apologetic or defensive about them to others?
7. How well do you agree on things that matter in life and may require sacrificing for each of you?
8. Are you able to talk over points of disagreement and come to a conclusion?
9. Do your disagreements result in a better understanding of each other?
10. Do you have confidence in this person's judgement? Do you respect their spiritual life? Their general mental ability?
11. Do you freely confide in this person with complete confidence that what you say will be understood and not divulged?
12. Are you happy in the manner with which they show you affection?

WORK ASSIGNMENT FOUR

- * Define the three types of love expressed in Greek. Which of these are to be found in marriage?

* All marriages will encounter conflict. List the three ways in which people adjust to that conflict. Which way is best for the Christian?

* In your own words write a definition of what love is. Then read I Corinthians 13 and compare what you have written to what Paul has written. Compare what you practice to what Paul wrote. List where you are lacking. Stop and pray over that list and ask God's help in changing.

SEX IN MARRIAGE

A mutually satisfactory sex relationship is one of the important factors that contributes to happiness in marriage. Sexual union is only one of a complicated set of relationships and activities that make up the entire pattern of marriage. Conflict in other areas sometimes causes the failure of marriages in which the sex factor was satisfactory. The inability to agree on the use of money and recurring quarrels over finances may cause a couple to become distant and hostile. Moreover, if conflict exists in other areas of a marriage, it is likely to be reflected in the sex life of the couple.

If antagonism exists between them, sex may stop altogether as sexual union is the most intimately cooperative activity in marriage. The personality traits that each partner takes into marriage will have much to do with the degree of sexual mutuality achieved. People who are cooperative and perceptive to the reaction of others will seek to share gratification instead of seeking their own goal. Those who are selfish, impatient and unaware of the needs of others will have far less to contribute to the marriage's success.

The uninformed of past days thought that men were to enjoy sex and women were to tolerate it. It was not recognized that husbands have an obligation toward attempting to achieve pleasure in the sex act for the wife as well as himself. Women often accepted the passive role thinking sex was their "duty." Yet the response of Sarah in the Bible at the announcement that she would bear Abraham's child, indicates pleasure was part of the woman's expectation in physical union with her husband. So, the attitude that women were merely endurers of sex was injected into cultures after Bible days.

Solomon writes to his son to be delighted in the sexual fountain of his wife and elight in her breasts, and not ot participate in immoral sex. Paul recognized the sexual drive God has placed within and wrote in I Corinthians 7:2-5 for each man to have his own wife and each woman to her own husband and for each to grant sexual affection to one antoher, and each to yield their body for mutual sexual satisfaction.

Sex is not sin. It is the second strongest drive within the human frame and God put it there. Hunger is the first. When God created Eve, it was His intent that there would be sexual union and offspring. This is clear from his instrucion immediately after Eve's formation that a man would leave his mother and father and cling to his wife. This reveals the intent of God for the two to hav sexual union and procreation. Before the curse, Eve was apparently not fertile for pregnancy as often as once a month. As part of the curse her cycle for bearing children was increased and the pain of childbearing increased. Thank God that Jesus bore the payment for the curse of death when on the tree and through reliance on Him and His blood, both male and female are loosed and brought into the Kingdom of His dear Son. They are free to enjoy one another sexaully, and to respond to

one another. I Timothy 2:15 states that the woman, just like the man, is saved through the "motherhood" or birth of the child Jesus and His ensuing death and resurrection.

Paul goes on to discuss the deception into which Eve fell so the resulting curse from that fall is inferred. Childbearing was originally meant to be as effortless as it is with the animal kingdom. But, the willful sin of Eve caused God to curse womanhood with pain and hazards in childbearing. But, due to the perfect work of the Cross, a woman with faith in that Cross is brought safely through the childbearing experience and spared. Faith in the finished work of the Cross is the only way any person is saved--man, woman or child.

Neither mate is to withhold sex from the other except for an agreed season of concentrated fasting and prayer. Paul then instructs them to come back together quickly so that Satan will not tempt either of them. The male is not to be an overbearing demanding overlord in his home, or in the sexual relationship. Paul states that the man's body belongs to his wife who has the right to request sexual union, and the woman's body belongs to the man who also has rights. Therefore, each is submissive to the other according to Scripture and love desires to make the other person happy.

Rarely is there a physical reason causing poor sexual adjustment. Problems usually arise from a lack of information on physical differences and needs as well as psychological ones. Both mates usually come to marriage with vast amounts of misinformation concerning the role and function of sex. Therefore, relearning is necessary. Some bring certain attitudes toward sex into the marriage which has resulted from unfortunate training in childhood. This can handicap the establishing of a good sex relationship. Girls are often conditioned to look upon sex with shame and aversion or fear. When a couple has difficulties in this area it is sometimes difficult to distinguish if the cause of failure is due to a lack of knowledge or wrong social conditioning. If husbands were better informed, most wives would respond positively and aid in building a good sex relationship.

The sexual experience in marriage is above the animal performance of mating. At first there is awkwardness, uncertainty and tension. It ordinarily takes about a year for a newly married couple to reach a satisfactory adjustment in the sexual aspect of their marriage, as well as others. The three main areas of conflict in marriage are sex, religion and finances. Any contention within any one of these areas can drastically affect the other aspects as well and sour what otherwise would have been a good relationship.

This is why Christian marriage is graced. Each partner should take their hostility to God and repent of it as ungodly. They should then ask forgiveness of Him. Next, they should restructure their thinking where it is out of line from the scripture. They should go to their mate and calmly discuss where the conflict was, study, research or read what God says on that subject from the Word, and then readjust their behavior and thoughts to match the scripture. Both must exhibit forgiveness toward one another, both must desire

restoration in the relationship and both continue to change and adapt as needed to fit into God's pattern regardless of how they have been instructed individually in the past. The Word is our final authority.

The differences in sex response often create a difficulty. Women's sex drive varies with the success of daily affairs. The average man finds that he can enjoy sexual gratification regardless of how other phases of his marriage are going. The wife's ability to respond warmly to her husband is affected by her general response to his personality. To the woman, intercourse is the ultimate expression of a love that includes the entire personality. If there are personality clashes or antagonisms over things in daily association, the wife is not responsive to sexual union. The fact that her husband can desire it in spite of their strained relationship baffles her. On the other hand, the husband is equally puzzled at his wife's attitude and may feel she purposefully behaving out of revenge or retribution. Both need to better understand how the other thinks and responds.

It is to be hoped that the Christian woman enters marriage sexually unawakened. Time will be required for her to learn to achieve full response and the couple will need to allow time for adjustment to be made. Pastors can greatly aid young people in pre-marital counseling by showing them the scriptural purpose of marriage, God as creator of the sex drive and those in scripture who enjoyed the marriage relationship.

Then the pastor can help the couple understand how male and female are different in reaction to sexual stimulus, and the husband's role in helping the wife adjust to that sexual role.

By Biblical standards, the male is also to be a virgin when he comes to the marriage bed. Patience needs to be practiced by both partners as each is initially awkward, apprehensive, trying to overthrow inhibitions of a lifetime, and also struggle against misinformation or total lack of information. Pastoral counseling before the wedding can offer some guidance and help for the couple.

Sex is more than procreation. Scripture shows that the joy of closeness, intimacy and delighting in one another is also part of the sexual relationship. Genesis 26:8 relates that Isaac was observed "sporting" with his wife Rebekah. This means to delight himself, play with and create a laughing joy with her. In the sexual act, God has made the two bodies fit together and become literally one.

WORK ASSIGNMENT FIVE

- * Is sex sinful? Upon what do you base your answer? Write your response.

- * What two main things contribute to difficulty in the sexual adjustment of newlyweds? How can they remedy this?

- * List some specific scripture that shows God's attitude about the gift of sex between a husband and his wife.

- * How can the pastor aid the couple in having less difficulty in their sex life?

SPIRITUAL ELEMENTS IN MARRIAGE

Couples approaching marriage need to consider whether they are together in their spiritual attitudes. Their agreement or disagreement and the extent of their religious life will affect the happiness of their marriage.

Research studies show that those who enter marriage with spiritual faith have a better opportunity for the marriage's success than those who have no religious faith. Regular church attendance and a living relationship with Jesus is a factor associated with happiness in marriage. When each partner knows the Lord Jesus Christ in a living and personal relationship, and are filled with the Spirit of God, their desire is to foremost please God, then one another. It is the will of God that marriages flourish for scripture states that God hates divorce. His plan was for one man to be joined to one woman as a representation of his relationship with natural Israel, and Jesus' relationship with the Church. Ezekiel 16 shows in allegory how God took Israel as a wife and gave sacrificially to her. The church flowed out of Jesus' side just as Eve came from Adam's.

The couple should agree before marriage on how they plan to feed their spiritual life daily, where and when they will worship, and upon the plan for religious instruction of children when they come. Before marriage the couple should agree on a constructive plan through which to work out differences and problems. They should also agree on someone to be their counselor who is older in the Lord and able to give sound spiritual and practical advice. Such a person should be proven in character, able to keep confidences, and known to be wise in the wisdom of the Lord.

It is to be expected that the result of a couple having spiritual values, and seeking to please the Lord, have harmony in the home as a byproduct. Family bonds are strengthened when each individual seeks God, hears from Him, exhibits faith to believe God will move amid the most distressing of times, and practices foundational Bible principles in daily life. The observance of times around religious holidays and personal spiritual achievements, as immersion, create strong family ties and bonds, as well as making happy memories for the next generation.

People who make the Bible their standard learn quickly not to live by emotional feelings for such feelings are deceptive. Instead, the daily life is ordered around what God said and choices are made to correspond to that. This gives emotional stability to the individual and to the relationship. Spiritual input causes the individual to become self-disciplined as the result of the Word working effectually in them. Paul wrote plainly that we are to put off the old man with its former manner of life. Something new is expected of us (Ephesians 4:22).

The old self is to be removed with its self-loving demands, and we are to be renewed in the mind and spirit, thinking differently, and put on the new nature of God's creation which shows itself in the just and devout life demanded by the truth. then Paul gets specific in how to do this: throw off all falsehood, speak the truth to each other. If you become angry do not let the anger lead you into sin. Don't let the day end still feeding that anger and leave no loophole for the devil. All stealing must stop. Work hard and honestly so there will be something to share with the needy. Do not use bad language, but that which is helpful to the occasion. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Be done with spite and malice, be different than the world. When the Christian partners in a marriage take seriously the instructions on how to live out the Word of God in daily life, self-discipline is a natural consequence. Such people grow under the impact of daily situations in life instead of being overwhelmed by them.

The belief system of a person will be passed on to their children by what they say, but more by how they behave in daily life. A security is given in God that is not otherwise obtained. This affects little children. The spiritual individual has attitudes that differ from those of the world. His faith keeps him from finding it necessary to strike out at others, to be critical, aggressive or bitter. Consequently he is far easier to live with. As a parent, he will consider the individuality of each child, as God does, and not selfishly see the child as it relates to him. The Christian individual seeks to understand the child and seeks God's help in wisdom in handling daily routines and decisions with the child. Spiritually is an enhancement to the marriage and to parenthood, contributing to the success of each.

It is vital that the wife seek God for herself and be able to hear Him for guidance instead of totally relying upon the husband to do so for her. For we live in times when separations are at times forced on couples due to outside circumstances. When this occurs, the wife needs to know how to believe God for protection, provision, and seek His guidance regarding decisions to be made daily so she can maintain stability within the home with a minimum of interruption while the husband-father is absent. This gives inner peace to the believing man for he knows that his wife will rely upon God and exercise her faith to see God move in the family's behalf while he is forced to be absent.

If a couple marries with no thought of the place of their religious faith in daily life, they are headed for conflict. If there should be a difference between the belief system of the man and woman, conflict will be inevitable, and magnified upon the arrival of children. Therefore, serious differences should be settled amicably before the wedding instead of hoping everything will work out peaceably afterward.

Many marriages take place between people of widely differing backgrounds. The success of such marriages varies with the individuals who make them. The chance for success of such marriages varies with the individuals who make them. The chance for success is greater if those who marry across lines of differences are aware at the outset that they will have to work harder for success than others do. While all couples will have some

problems after marriage, in a mixed marriage the number of problems increase and are intensified. Any marriage that involves extreme difference in religion is termed mixed, as well as those of differing races who marry. Interfaith marriages are opposed by Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths. The two individuals entering marriage are not the only ones concerned with the marriage contract. The resulting children will be tremendously affected, as well as the emotional well being of the in-laws concerned.

Couples of mixed marriages or interfaith marriages would of necessity need to differ on points of religious belief without those differences having any major effect upon the marital happiness of either. The divorce rate is higher where there is interfaith marriage than when the couple are of like backgrounds. The couple during courtship tends to minimize difficulty ahead. With some, their religion is not as important pre-nuptially as it becomes after the birth of children. Even a non-devout person becomes concerned and is not indifferent about the training of his children. While he may never give his children religious training in his own faith, he may become resentful of their being brought up in a contrasting faith. The attitudes and feelings of the two families and the in-laws will add to the conflict here.

Research has shown that where there is mixed marriage, the couple attempted to resolve their differences over religion by one of the spouses accepting the faith of the other or else both joining an entirely different group as a compromise. The divorce rate lowers among couples who become of the same faith, which is due in part to the removal of conflict over the religious training of the children. The greater the number of contrasts, the more hurdles that will have to be surmounted to achieve happiness in the marriage.

IN-LAWS

When a person marries, they marry not only their mate, but the entire family of that mate and the behavior patterns set within that family. Some people have been conditioned for years by exposure to mother-in-law jokes and marry with a fatalistic attitude that in-law trouble is part of marriage. Others look forward with pleasure to associating with a larger family group. A person who had no sisters or brothers may hope to have that lack filled by their in-laws. Whatever the attitudes of those marrying, in-laws will be a factor in the marital adjustment.

A survey was made of couples married for twenty years. They were asked what had been their most serious problem in achieving happiness in marriage and the women mentioned in-laws as the second most difficult thing and the men mentioned it as third among six chief areas of difficulty in daily living.

Those who felt that in-laws were a source of friction in their marriages were asked to specify which in-law relationship was at the center of the trouble. The friction seemed to

be equally divided between the mother-in-law and all other family members combined. More often it is the mother of the groom that is identified as being troublesome.

Where the in-laws gave difficulty only 18% of the marriages queried said they were happy, whereas 67% who had no in-law difficulty said their marriage was happy. This came from a study of 409 marriages.

The ability to create and maintain pleasant and peaceful relationships with in-laws seems to be part of the total personality make-up which is more likely to achieve happiness in marriage.

For the first 20 years of a child's life the mother is wrapped up in the daily life of that child from the time it is born until they leave home. As small children, they look to her for every need. She represents security. She influences their decisions and many mothers sponsor the idea that "mother always knows best." The father is usually more occupied outside the home and is not so closely associated with the children. He also has many interests outside the home and the mother, of necessity, must center more of her interests within the home. This pattern can develop dependence upon the mother. A 20 year pattern is not easily thrown over immediately after the wedding ceremony.

Following the wedding, most mothers will continue to give helpful suggestions to the son. It is routine for the son to consult with his mother and the same pattern is found in the wife's family. But here is where the problem begins. This is why God said for the husband to emotionally leave his dependency upon his parents and turn toward his wife so that they become emotionally unified. Parental advice may appear to be parental interference. The fact that the spouse seeks parental advice may be interpreted as an indication that the husband has more respect and confidence in the parents than he does in his mate. Or it may give the signal of weakness and being unable to make his own decisions, thus causing his wife to lose respect for him.

When misunderstandings develop, both the children and the parents are inclined to lose their objectivity. This is why Christians are so blessed for in times of such stress, they can choose the higher and better way of God's grace in their life to forgive unkind words and acts of an in-law, which occurred in the heat of a disagreement.

Couples find it difficult, if not impossible, during the early years of marriage to discuss with each other their feelings concerning the in-laws. Each fears he will appear motivated by jealousy. The fact that some element of jealousy is present does not make objective discussion any easier. Here are some of the complaints of the wives against their in-laws:

"His mother insists on first place with my husband."

"My mother-in-law calls everyday and asks my husband if I am feeding him properly, and what he had to eat."

"They don't accept my status as daughter-in-law."
"They try to steal my place as his wife and the mother of his child."
"They still think he belongs to them and not me."
"They are always trying to plan our Sundays and holidays for us."
"They give too much advice and hover over us."
"They treat us like children."

When there is competition towards the wife from the groom's mother, the wife may seek relief from her emotional turmoil by talking it over with her parents or friends who can lend a sympathetic ear. She is ordinarily fearful to discuss it openly with her husband. While the above remarks were made by daughters-in-law regarding their husband's mother, husbands find it difficult to tolerate close affectional bonds between the wife and her family. Husbands become very emotionally upset when the wife shows continued dependence upon her parents for advice or help. It is an unwise wife that allows her parents to dominate her married life and to alienate her emotions away from her husband. It is also unfair if the parents of the wife always expect the couple to defer their plans to those of the in-laws instead of allowing the newly marrieds to function as a separate household and build their own routine of life.

Some parents, as well as children, show signs of immaturity in their in-law relationships. Some mothers unhealthily cling to their children and refuse to let them grow up or to make decisions for themselves. This type mother has not matured to accept life as it is. She resists the natural course of events. Some children on the other hand, are late to mature and continually cling to their parents. The husband or wife married to an immature spouse may have difficulty in adjusting to the in-law situation.

As one looks back upon a past level of life, it may seem things were easier and simpler than in the present. In early marriage the inevitable problems to be solved surprise and baffle some people who thought that marriage would end all problems. When it does not and new problems emerge, they long to go back home and be emotionally dependent. Some parents unwisely encourage their married children to turn to them with all their troubles.

Mothers tend to experience a crisis in their lives when children marry and leave home. Once their lives were full and they were needed and busy. Suddenly the house is quiet, no one is calling out to them and they deeply feel the emptiness. So, if the married daughter runs home to mother and finds her waiting with welcoming arms, she may be instrumental in turning the daughter away from her husband. In such cases, both mother and daughter have regressed and the young husband suffers. The loneliness a mother feels when her children depart has to be considered as one element contributing to in-law difficulties. The fathers on the other hand were not so emotionally involved with their children due to the demands of daily routine. Therefore, their adjustment is not as acute.

When a newly married couple is forced by circumstances to live with in-laws, conflict is inevitable. The new wife is striving to establish herself in the new status as wife, cook, purchasing agent and whatever her tasks. She will be quick to resent the mother-in-law who suppresses her and continues to hold the dominant place.

Sometimes friction develops because the parents are critical of the changes that come over their child after marriage. It is to be expected that the thinking of both partners will be modified after marriage. When parents cannot accept these changes, it is hard for them not to speak reproof or warnings which the child-in-law will resent.

When one spouse is jealous of his in-laws he may without cause behave in an unpleasant manner to them, making them feel unwanted, alienated, and unwelcome in the home of their child. The jealous individual may openly criticize, refuse to talk to the in-laws, or pick an argument with them to give an overt expression of their feelings. Few sons-in-law engage in this type behavior as a conscious effort to offend the in-laws. Often the offending actions relate that the spouse is ill at ease and unsure of himself in the presence of the in-laws. Since they hope to give the impression that unity and solidarity exists in the marriage, any direct or implied criticism from the partner in the presence of the behavior is to openly criticize the wife for some failing or inability in the presence of her parents in an effort to belittle her and to "put them in their place." It would be equally wrong if the situation were reversed and the wife demeaned the husband before his parents.

The ability to get along with the in-laws is one of a number of characteristics that are found in those who have the capacity for meeting adjustment problems constructively. NAME OF AN EASTERN EUROPEAN GIRL returned from work daily to hear her mother criticizing the young husband. There was always a slur about him, criticism, and an effort to divide the daughter from her mate. Finally _____ had taken all she could in remaining respectful and quiet to her mother. She made a biblical statement to her mother which silenced all such behavior after that. She said, "Mother, EASTERN EUROPEAN BOY'S NAME and I are one flesh according to God's Word. When you tear him down, you tear me down. When you say mean things about him, you are hurting me and being mean to me. I will no longer listen to this. I will not be divided from my husband, I have chosen him and no human flesh can divide us." This scriptural stand silenced the mother's tirades.

The most successful couples in their relationships with in-laws were those who willingly compromised in the interests of harmony, or who made friends with the in-laws and actively liked them and had on going relationships with them. Those who accomplished this were quoted as saying:

"I fit in with their ways of doing things."

"I made up my mind to get along with them."

"I treat them as my own family."

"I made a point to know and appreciate them as people and love them."

"I overlook their faults because I have faults too."

The best solution is for the young couple to strive to be mature and generous in their attitudes because pleasant in-law relationships can contribute to the happiness in the marriage.

From scripture we see that Ruth was the daughter-in-law of Naomi, in Ruth 1. When economic conditions worsened in Moab, Ruth's hometown, Naomi decided to journey back to Bethlehem which was her home. Both Naomi and Ruth were widowed. Ruth determined that she would accompany Naomi back to a land foreign to her. Ruth was solicitous of Naomi and deferred to her out of a true love relationship. Naomi gave wise counsel to Ruth as to how to procure food for them and Ruth followed the advice. Naomi understood the customs and helped Ruth to understand and fit in. By looking to Naomi for counsel, Ruth was married to Boaz, a kinsman of Naomi. Although Ruth had made a new marriage, she continued her responsibility for Naomi as if she were yet her mother-in-law. That is how the love relationship should ideally be within a marriage and the extended family.

Jacob was respectful and had a good working relationship with his father-in-law Laban, even when Laban was not honest with him. God gives us grace to realize the limitations of others, to forgive, to refuse to be offended and to seek after the broader goal of peace within the family unit and to remove undue stress from in-law difficulty between a husband and wife. Successful relationships are those that reflect Christlikeness by overlooking slights, poor behavior and unkind words. Instead, they endeavor to build and encourage others.

FINANCES AND MARRIAGE ADJUSTMENT

Spending money becomes a problem in marriage when each partner brings to the union a different hierarchy of what is important to purchase and a difference in the handling of money. Most married couples find it necessary to compromise and adjust in order to arrive at a peaceful settlement on financial matters. Family discord is frequently attributable to a failure to agree on how money is to be spent.

Since most families do not have sufficient money to purchase all they desire, they must carefully choose how the money will be spent. This necessity for choice is the key to the problems that arise. For each mate has come from a family that has different priorities and different standards of living.

The man may come from a family where the priorities for spending were on clothes, a good car and frequent entertaining. His values centered around making a good impression on others. The wife may come from a family where the chief aim was getting

an education and saving for the future. Before marriage the girl may have been charmed at the lovely restaurants in which she dined. The fact that her family was much more conservative in spending money for such things meant she enjoyed them all the more when provided by her fiancé. But, after marriage this same free spending by the husband proved to be a source of friction. The wife desired limitations on income spending and wanted to save the larger portion of the salary for the future, to buy things she considered important. The husband, who was not accustomed to thinking of money as a means of securing the future, proved unhappy at his wife's priorities. These two needed to set mutual goals.

Christians need to make as priority, the tithe which comes from the amount of money netted. God declares that those who refuse to tithe live under a curse (Malachi 3:8-10). In Luke 11:42 Jesus reaffirmed that tithing was expected, but that the Christian was to give from love and not a sense of duty. A young couple should agree on this point first regarding expenditures of finances. Then the two need to talk openly about their differences in how they view money, and where they are together and compromise to work out a liveable arrangement. No married woman should be made to feel penniless just because she is not employed outside the home. The virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 had some amount of money of her own with which to purchase a field, to make financial gains from her investments and to be a wise purchasing agent, as well as, director of the household. When a man fails to see that his wife has money for necessary expenditures, and occasionally, nonessential ones, it is a method of demeaning control that makes her feel worthless regardless of his provision for her to have sufficient food and clothing. If he controls the money in a manner that forces her to come to him and ask for money for even small purchases, she is made to feel like a child and totally controlled and not trusted. This will injure her respect for her mate and provide additional conflict for her to deal with emotionally although she may not make an issue of the matter.

If such a man marries a girl from a family where the money was controlled by the mother, or controlled equally by both parents, there is a good chance that misunderstandings will arise and the wife will feel humiliated if she is forced to ask for money and to account to her husband for every coin. The husband may be unaware of her viewpoint and at a loss to understand why his wife should react emotionally to a financial arrangement that seemed logical to him. The couple faces the problem of harmonizing their ideas concerning the handling of money.

One husband always complained to his wife that they did not have enough money to do things she would like to do, but there was always enough for him to do as he wanted. He kept their finances so hidden that he banked money she did not even know they had for he did not have proper trust for her. When couples differ greatly on how money is spent, the feeling of frustrated irritation may result and reflect in behavior in a variety of ways.

To avoid emotional explosions, the couple should talk over how they see the money should be spent and come to a workable conclusion. This should be done before the situation reaches the battling and accusing point. The couple should plan their spending to get the most for their money. Marital tension is sometimes increased through attempts to budget. If they cannot make the budget work, it is too easy to blame the other person for the failure. Conflict may develop over failure of one spouse to record expenses. The budget should never be seen as a means for one partner to force the other into line in spending money. If that attitude exists, something more fundamentally is wrong than the budget. Like every other facet of the marriage relationship, the finances can be handled in a manner satisfactory to both mates if they are determined to come to a Christian and kindly conclusion.

CHANGES THAT COME WITH CHILDREN

Couples that have worked out congenial and happy adjustments are often baffled that upon arrival of the first baby there are major changes that call for readjustment.

This phase would be easier to handle if young parents could objectively view the social, psychological, and emotional interactional changes that will take place in any husband-wife relationship upon the arrival of the first baby. The child's arrival will change the routine and the couple must again achieve a satisfactory working arrangement. There will be new interaction patterns involving the different roles for each of them. The husband has been accustomed to the wife centering her attention around him. Or she may have been a working wife who helped with the income. Now he must adjust to his wife being a parent and not having much time to give to him, and the former working wife may now appear inexperienced and helpless as the mother of his child. The wife also makes adjustments. A new interaction pattern will be established which will never again be static. Changes will continue to occur as the child matures and as other children are born.

Studies of marriage adjustment among long-married couples agreed in the findings that training children ranks high as a problem for adjustment, with sex ranking second. When two young people enter marriage, each comes with a vast array of "old wives tales", superstition, hearsay and little scientific information regarding a child's birth and upbringing. Upon the arrival of the first baby, the differences in their attitudes, produced by different family backgrounds become evident. The most common cause of tension was the feeling on the part of one parent that the other was pampering and spoiling the baby. Young fathers made the complaint more often. Husbands complained that wives were too permissive and the wives complained that the husbands were too strict or harsh. When parents differ over child training both are inclined to react emotionally to their differences. Neither appreciates the way the other believes.

Too often one parent will countermand orders given by the other and this is unhealthy for the child. If the mother tells the child not to bounce a ball within the house and the father tells the child it is fine, to continue, several undesirable effects have been achieved. The wife feels defeated because her authority is undermined and the child learns it is possible to pit one parent against another. The husband who incurred his wife's displeasure and weakened her authority has also weakened his own future authority with his child. This is not God's pattern. The husband is the final authority but should stand with the wife, and the wife with the husband in matters of discipline. Their difference in viewpoint should be discussed between them and a conclusion reached.

Christian wives complain that husbands do not take enough responsibility in training and caring for their children. God instructed the Jewish males to instruct the children as they walked together in casual ways and as they entered the house, laid down to sleep and upon awakening. It was the mothers who added to the training. But, in most cultures it is the mothers who give all the training and the fathers add somewhat to it. The father needs to instruct their children and enrich their lives by allowing their children to truly know the father and what he believes.

New mothers can become so absorbed in the new baby and added responsibilities with consuming routines that the father feels he has lost his wife's affection. He may complain that she spends too much time with the child. He may criticize her methods in training and disciplining because he feels he has to take second place. Such behavior is immature, but common. The understanding husband will realize that the young mother's body is undergoing intense hormonal changes that may reflect in sudden mood swings, sudden tears and inability to cope. She may be tattered at the day's end from constant crying of the infant, rushing to care for the child and continue her regular duties of cooking and washing as well as securing food. An understanding father will take the time to cuddle and rock his infant while the mother gets a breather and completes the meal. She is deprived of sleep and has the additional drain of nursing the infant. An understanding and loving husband will remove needless responsibility from his wife during this time of adjustment and manifest his love by helping in practical ways, realizing it is not "her" child, but "their" child.

One hundred and fifty young people were asked what home circumstances brought them the greatest happiness when they were between the ages of 5-12. The top seven were:

1. The happiness of their parents as a family.
2. Parental expressions of love for them.
3. The awareness of the family's interest in them as a person.
4. Religion in the home.
5. Mother was a good cook.
6. Companionship with the parents.
7. Family doing things together.

Children need overt expressions of love from their parents. They are reassured that they are loved by how parents respond to them, as well as, overt expressions. Emotional security needs are strong in children and when they are properly met a person is given a solid foundation for life. Nothing can be substituted for parental happiness, love and companionship in the life of the young child. When young people were asked what ranked as bringing them the greatest unhappiness as children it was:

1. Death and severe illness in the family.
2. Parents quarreling.
3. Conflict with parents' view.

Successful parents accept their responsibility for guiding their children. They try to avoid making arbitrary rulings and work instead for understanding and agreement regarding that which is desirable behavior from their offspring.

Even children from happy homes have fears and worries. These troubles are not permanently serious in a happy home. If the home is not happy, the child will lack inner security and exhibit problems all his life except where Jesus is allowed to bring revolutionary change.

Children are often made to feel they are inadequate because of some physical appearance emphasized by the family or relatives. Some children have defects and handicaps, yet if the matter is handled properly in the family, the child does not suffer for it.

One of the finest gifts a parent can give a child is the feeling that the child is a credit to the family and that they like him and are proud of him. Other childhood anxieties have to do with the child feeling he has lost face before others as when his parents discuss him and his traits in the presence of others. Little children often have needless fears such as their house burning, that their parents might die, that they are adopted, that they will be deserted or kidnapped. Parents need to realize these anxieties are common and minister to the child so that they will not needlessly be distressed. Fathers and mothers can lay their hands upon the infants and young children, bless them, and declare that the blood of Jesus is sufficient covering for the household to receive peace, sweet sleep and pure rest.

Children may have all physical needs satisfied from birth to adulthood yet be unhappy people because the emotional needs of the parent-child relationship were never met. Children are amazingly tough, physically and emotionally. Parents who through lack of experience, knowledge or understanding make mistakes with their children when they are young, can overcome them as they themselves mature and gain more insight into child development. There is nothing to substitute in infant care for truly wanting the child, understanding him as an individual and making him feel valued and an asset to the home.

MARRIAGE

CM-106

Final Exam

1. What is a successful marriage based upon?
2. What is the two-fold purpose of marriage?
3. The Bible teaches that the husband and wife are equal as persons. According to the Bible, what are they not equal in?
4. How is the husband to reflect the relationship of Christ to His church?
5. What two things should a wife do if she differs in viewpoint from her mate?
6. How does God feel about divorce?
7. According to II Corinthians 6:14-18, is a believer free to marry an unbeliever?
8. Who should be the leader of spiritual training in the home?
9. If both husband and wife work equally outside the home, how should the labor at home be divided?

10. Who has the role to pass on the heritage of family backgrounds to the children?
11. The ability to meet your problems in constructive ways is a characteristic of what?
12. Thinking only of your own desires is a characteristic of what?
13. The three Greek words for love are phileo, agape and eros. Which of these kinds of love has an important place in marriage?
14. Is a mutually satisfactory sex relationship an important factor in a happy marriage?
15. Should the wife seek God for herself, or rely totally upon the husband?
16. What do Christian couples need to make as a priority in their finances in order to avoid living under a curse?
17. What Biblical chapter shows that a woman may have money of her own in order to make purchases and investments?
18. What should couples do to avoid emotional explosions over the handling of money?
19. What event usually brings to the surface underlying differences of opinion in handling children?

20. Is it important for children to receive overt expressions of love from their parents?

MARRIAGE

CM-106

Final Exam Answer Sheet

1. What is a successful marriage based upon?
Cooperation and mutual respect
2. What is the two-fold purpose of marriage?
To provide companionship and fulfillment
To provide for posterity
3. The Bible teaches that the husband and wife are equal as persons. According to the Bible, what are they not equal in?
responsibility
4. How is the husband to reflect the relationship of Christ to His church?
In loving, and "laying down his life" for his wife.
5. What two things should a wife do if she differs in viewpoint from her mate?
 1. She should share with him what she sees.
 2. She should leave the final decision to him, and not accuse him if he chooses differently than she would.
6. How does God feel about divorce?
He permitted it because of the hardness of men's hearts, but He hates divorce.
7. According to II Corinthians 6:14-18, is a believer free to marry an unbeliever?
No
8. Who should be the leader of spiritual training in the home?

The father

9. If both husband and wife work equally outside the home, how should the labor at home be divided?

Equally

10. Who has the role to pass on the heritage of family backgrounds to the children?

The mother

11. The ability to meet your problems in constructive ways is a characteristic of what?

Maturity

12. Thinking only of your own desires is a characteristic of what?

Immaturity

13. The three Greek words for love are phileo, agape and eros. Which of these kinds of love has an important place in marriage?

All three

14. Is a mutually satisfactory sex relationship an important factor in a happy marriage?

Yes

15. Should the wife seek God for herself, or rely totally upon the husband?

It is vital that the wife seek God for herself and be able to hear Him for guidance.

16. What do Christian couples need to make as a priority in their finances in order to avoid living under a curse?

The tithe (Malachi 3:8-10)

17. What Biblical chapter shows that a woman may have money of her own in order to make purchases and investments?

Proverbs 31

18. What should couples do to avoid emotional explosions over the handling of money?

Talk over ahead of time how the money should be spent and come to a workable conclusion.

19. What event usually brings to the surface underlying differences of opinion in handling children?

The birth of the first child.

20. Is it important for children to receive overt expressions of love from their parents?

Yes