

God's Rules for Marriage

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

Ephesians 5:33

Introduction:

1. Ephesians' opening about salvation is great (1:3 – 2:10), but we are saved for good works (Eph 2:10).
2. There is profit to see the distinct division at 3:21, when Paul ends doctrine and commences duty.
3. There is also profit to see the exhortation to be followers of God as dear children (Eph 5:1,14-17).
4. Paul then exhorted spouses to godliness, including lessons of our union with Christ (Eph 5:22-33).
5. The last verse of the chapter drops any spiritual lessons to specifically address earthly marriages.
6. Christ's love for His church and a man's love for his body are examples for each man to his wife.
7. Each wife is to keep God's order for marriage and society by obeying and reverencing her husband.
8. Scripture is connected – your marriage determines God's loving favor and presence (John 14:21-24).
9. The method should be preaching God's word – read distinctly, give the sense, cause understanding.
10. The manner will be positive, uplifting, encouraging, motivating, to a church with good marriages.
11. For Bible importance of your marriage ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/marriage-importance.pdf>.
12. A good sermon series about marriage ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/maximizing-your-marriage-1989.pdf>.
13. The detail work is done at men's meetings and women's meetings, not in the pulpit in God's house.

THE SETTING

- A. America in 2016 is a sick society that has corrupted marriage more than ever before.
 1. Most sex occurs outside marriage – as casual sex – with looser females than ever.
 2. Current stats: 50% of first marriages; 67% of second marriages will end in divorce.
 3. Lower divorce stats since 70s only indicate more living together without marriage.
 4. The acceptance and protection of same-sex marriages indicate a bankrupt society.
 5. There is less common sense and fundamental morality in love, sex, and marriage.
- B. The perilous times mean Christians have also compromised marriage, love, and sex.
- C. You have an opportunity to follow God's rules and maximize marital pleasure for two.
- D. You can contend with the wicked, shut mouths of gainsayers, and adorn the gospel.

THE DUTY

- A. God is not silent about marriage; He has rules, descriptions, and warnings throughout.
- B. Each married person will give full account to God how you have behaved in yours.
- C. It is true you are not your own (I Cor 6:19-20), but how much more your spouse?
- D. God's gift of the Holy Spirit has given you all the power necessary to do your duty.
- E. Man's whole duty is to fear God and keep His rules due to judgment (Eccl 12:13-14).
- F. Higher ground for you, your family, and this church includes righteous relationships.
- G. Why did Jesus die for you? Why did the God regenerate you? Why take communion?
 1. Jesus died to make us zealous of good works (Tit 2:14; II Cor 5:14-15; I Cor 6:20).
 2. The Holy Spirit also regenerates us to have good works (Eph 2:10; Phil 2:12-13).
 3. So let's embrace marriage with the zeal of Nehemiah 8 and the house of Cornelius.

OBEY GOD

- A. Any human endeavor, including marriage, should start with fervent obedience to God.
 - 1. Nothing will work right, even if employing all proper means, without His blessing.
 - 2. It is the first rule of Bible economics, because God can assist or resist your efforts.
 - 3. If God is on your side, even in relationships, He can do marvelous things (Pr 16:7).
- B. Maximize your relationship with God in order to maximize your marriage to a sinner.
 - 1. Walking in the flesh keeps you from fulfilling God's rules regarding marriage.
 - 2. Walking in the flesh precludes God's blessing upon your marital relationship.
 - 3. A cold relationship with God means a grieved and quenched Spirit withdraws help.
 - 4. Without His conviction, power, wisdom, you will not know what to do or do it.
 - 5. With His power, the fruit of the Spirit will shine in your life and in your marriage.
- C. The whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commands ... including marriage.
- D. Equally true is the fact that neglecting your marriage will hinder your walk with God.

THE BLESSING

- B. Solomon taught that enjoying labor with a wife and good food is terrific (Eccl 9:7-10).
- A. God made Eve and marriage for man's loneliness with a creative, delightful solution.
- C. A good wife is God's blessing, but many are more a pain (Pr 18:22; 19:14; 30:21-23).
- D. Two married believers in a church, anything short of joy is folly or wicked rebellion.
- E. Wives in Christian marriages, where practiced, are the best treated women on earth.
- G. If fellowship with God in a sinless world was bad, a godly marriage must be fantastic!
- I. A boy takes a girl home to do everything he never could or would with anyone else.
- J. Our God is glorious in goodness, and marriage is one of his best gifts (Acts 14:17).

THE MANUAL

- A. God gave the Bible to perfect the man of God, including marriage (II Tim 3:16-17).
- B. If God invented marriage, love, and sex, only He knows how to maximize its pleasure.
 - 1. Any conduct different from God's word will hurt you, for His rules are for you.
 - 2. All the drivel and twaddle of God-haters is self-destructive rebellion. Look around!
 - 3. Any other treatment of a spouse is truly ... cutting off your nose to spite your face!
- C. Books on marital improvement by any author or only as good as presenting scripture.
- D. The Bible is as relevant for marriage as it ever was – men and women are the same.
- E. What will you do when the Bible contradicts your habits, thoughts, and the world?
- F. What is Biblical counseling? Identify sin in a marriage and correct it by the only book.
 - 1. There is no psychological or psychiatric manipulation to approach repentance.
 - 2. The foundation of a good marriage is fear of the Lord, or there is really no hope.
 - 3. Rebellion and stubbornness are like witchcraft and idolatry against righteousness.
- G. We know origins – two sexes, companions, marriage, sex, love (Gen 1:27; 2:18-25).
- H. There are no cute, simple, neat, innovative rules for maximizing marriage's potential.
 - 1. Marriages are maximized with God's word, a strong desire, hard work, and time.
 - 2. Scripture gives no advice for counseling apart from pressing God's commands.
 - 3. The basic problem is sinful living patterns and rebellion, not ignorance of truth.

IMPORTANCE

- A. A great marriage – filled with happiness, excitement, and romance – benefits you.
 - 1. Marriage is one of God's great gifts while living on earth (Eccl 9:7-10; Pro 18:22).
 - 2. Individual potential is best achieved using God's means for excellence (Gen 2:18).
 - 3. Two are better than one; what of two spouses wild about each other (Ec 4:9-12)?
- B. A great marriage – filled with happiness, excitement, and romance – pleases God.
 - 1. Our spiritual relationship with God will suffer to the extent of marital problems.
 - 2. Satan's device at the first was Adam's wife (II Cor 2:11; 11:3). Is it different today?
 - 3. Think prayer and treachery (I Pet 3:7; Mal 2:14); this is opposite of obeying God.
- C. A great marriage – filled with happiness, excitement, and romance – benefits others.
 - 1. Being the basic human relationship of authority, all others derive power from it.
 - 2. We expect our children to wait for marriage, so we should exemplify a good one.
 - 3. We may reprove our generation's despicable marriages by displaying a godly one.
- D. For the importance of marriage ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/marriage-importance.pdf>.

THE STANDARD

- A. Christian marriages should not include affliction, endurance, survival, or temptation.
- B. They should be loving, functional, and fun as God ordained, even for saved sinners.
- C. Women are treated better if a nation is Christian e.g. pagans, Islam, Hindus, Russia.
- D. We have the infallible words of the living God that created marriage, love, sex.
- E. Our marriages should be the best that those outside ever see ... why aim for less?

THE OBSTACLES

- A. There are hindrances to learn truth and do it, so ministers make war (II Cor 10:4-6).
- B. God made man upright and ordained marriage, but they have corrupted it (Eccl 7:29).
 - 1. Reading the Genesis account of marriage is the exact how and when of marriage.
 - 2. But Adam first shirked his duty and let his wife lead him into sin (Gen 3:1-12).
 - 3. Shortly thereafter they were marrying multiple wives contrary to Eden (Gen 4:19).
 - 4. And like the perverse Canaanites, today they marry the same sex (Lev 18:22)!
- C. You learned to walk and talk by your parents; you also learned marriage from them.
 - 1. But God, the Bible, and your spouse do not care how your parents had a marriage.
 - 2. Simple and/or rebellious people think that their parents are the measure of good.
 - 3. To be a Bible Christian, you must flush anything contrary to the written scripture.
- C. Each marriage in a few days and weeks falls into habits and routines for its duration.
 - 1. Hate habits, unless they are clearly taught in the Bible and learned by holy faith.
 - 2. Because you have always done something some way is no reason to keep doing it.
- D. Peer pressure by the world, friends, church, family, or Oprah try to set the standard.
- E. Bitterness by unresolved offences is a roadblock from healthy confession/forgiveness.
- F. The person married to an unforgiving, grudge-holding bitter person must live in hell.
- G. Pride keeps a person from humbly repenting to change ... and sends them to hell.
- H. The status quo or peace with dysfunction of one kind or another will be judged as sin.

1. Rebellion and pride reject truth and excuse sin as “what we are comfortable with.”
 2. You have no right to be comfortable with anything, if it is not exactly God’s way.
 3. Every couple by compromise and habit and for peace move to a place of comfort.
 4. But preaching is to disrupt and destroy such comfort for the pursuit of godliness.
- I. How you think a marriage should function is truly the belching of your deceitful heart.
 - J. What is politically correct or socially acceptable, even Christians today, is confusion.
 - K. It is my job to cast down imaginations you have contrary to God’s will (II Co 10:4-6).

INVENTION OF MARRIAGE

- A. It is not the result of cavemen sitting around a campfire and hallucinating monogamy.
- B. God saw the need for companionship and invented two sexes, marriage, love, and sex.
- C. He knows more about every single little detail of both spouses than you can imagine.
- D. To ignore His rules and wisdom for marriage is to throw two proud animals in a cage.

MARRIAGE IS GOOD

- A. God declared that a single man in a perfect world with Him was not good (Gen 2:18).
- B. Finding a woman (or a man) for companionship in marriage is outstanding (Ruth 3:1).
- D. Solomon, God’s philosopher, said it was our joyful portion under the sun (Eccl 9:9).
- E. When God says something is good, it should carry enormous weight with a Christian.
- C. The fact that some marriages have hellish pain is not the fault of God or of marriage.
- E. If your marriage is bad, it is your fault, not God’s, or marriage’s, or your spouse’s.
- F. If your husband beats you, why did you marry him, or why have you not left him?
- G. While some have been exceptions e.g. John, Jesus, and Paul, they are not the norm.

MARRIAGE CAN BE BAD

- A. Marriage to loud, opinionated, critical, negative, and odious woman is hell on earth
- B. The man in the wilderness, attic, or his workshop misses the delight and joy of a wife.
- C. A wife with a neglectful husband is herself defrauded, deprived, etc.
- D. A wife with an abusive husband (the above is also abuse) lives fearful, painful, etc.

YOU CAN DO IT

- A. The child of God is able to do everything God expects by Christ’s strength (Phil 4:13).
- B. The child of God has an inspired manual that details every aspect of marriage.
- C. Do not repeat the devil by saying it is too late, too hard, has not worked before, etc.

STARTS WITH THE MAN

- A. God invented marriage when He saw it was not good for him to be alone (Gen 2:18).
 1. Though the woman benefits by marriage (Ruth 3:1), she must yet keep the priority.
 2. The wife’s duty to make her husband happy is more a priority than her to be happy.
- B. This order of creation established a basic premise of marriage – it is for the man.
 1. Paul reasoned about men and women – she was made for the man (I Cor 11:7-12).
 2. Paul reasoned for women to be silent in church based on this fact (I Timothy 2:13).

- C. A wife should start each day and set all priorities on this simple but profound fact.
 - 1. She expects her children to do this regarding her, since God put her over them.
 - 2. She benefits by her husband doing this day, since he serves his boss (Titus 2:9-10).
- D. This has nothing to do with male chauvinism or other manmade term of rebellion.
 - 1. There is an orderly way for all of society to function together for maximum profit.
 - 2. A husband and wife maximize profit and pleasure when they understand this fact.
- E. Consider a variety of factors that confirm this order or priority for a great marriage.
 - 1. The children are the man's, no matter her conception, gestation, birth, or childcare.
 - 2. Compare her monetary value (Lev 27:1-7); he can reject her vows (Num 30:1-16).
 - 3. There are at least five facts that prove a different object of sexual faithfulness.
 - 3. The wife owes her to her husband; the husband owes his to God Himself.
 - 4. Hymen, pregnancy, polygamy, test of jealousy, and touching a man's secrets.
 - 6. God ridicules odious wives repeatedly, but does not even mention such a man.
 - 7. The virtuous woman only gets a portion of her own earnings to use (Pr 31:31).

MARRIAGE IS FOR COMPANIONSHIP

- A. Necessity is the mother of invention; Adam's loneliness brought marriage (Gen 2:18).
- B. A married man cannot be a monk, for he must reciprocate to his wife (I Cor 7:32-33).
- C. The cure for a man's loneliness is not golf buddies, video-gamers, hunting friends, etc.
 - 1. Of course, if married to an odious woman, anything outside the house is far better.
 - 2. Friendship with a man (Jonathan and David) can be good, but you owe your wife.
- D. Marriage is for more than sex, and the man that emphasizes sex over love is an abuser.
- E. Couples that do things in life without their spouse are curious, for it says evil of them.
- F. A wife can be a drain and a pain, so some were single for the Lord (Matt 19:10-12).

HELPMEEET IS NOT A WORD

- A. There is no such noun but by abuse; God made Eve to be Adam's helper (Gen 2:18).
 - 1. If the noun *helpmeet* is in a dictionary, it only documented the misuse of words.
 - 2. The point is minor, but women will use the vague word to aim for marital equality.
- B. If we are going to trust the Bible as our manual, then we must use its words carefully.
- C. The wife is her husband's helper, and that subordinate and serving role should excite.

GOD DID NOT MAKE A MOTHER

- A. Eve was not made a mother (a short, temporary role); she was made a wife (Ge 2:18).
- B. We have 50th anniversaries or more, but 50-year-old children are only home 20 years.
- C. The wife that dotes on children or grandchildren over her husband perverts marriage.
 - 1. Conceiving, carrying, and birthing a child is a gift for your husband, not for you.
 - 2. The child gets his name, not yours; every Bible genealogy gives children to men.
- D. She is selfish and creates bitterness, no matter how noble she justifies her sinful ways.
 - 1. It is infinitely easier to love and dote on a child than it is to love and dote on a man.
 - 2. Such women grow in self-righteousness for they measure themselves by children.
 - 3. The wife too tired, preoccupied, or worried by children has defrauded her husband.

B. RECOMMENDATION #2: Women Must Guard Against Children Replacing Husbands.

1. Women who emphasize children inordinately show far more than love of children.
 - a. They show clearly that they missed their calling and do not love their husband.
 - b. Inordinate affection is giving the children attention even close to her husband.
 - c. Consider food selection for meals, willingness for special requests, physical affection, driving them here and there, interest and questions in their activities, thoughtful little surprises, emotional support when they're discouraged, strong defense when they're attacked, helping them with projects, adjustments to please friends, compromising expectations to accommodate failure, bear much, etc., etc.
2. God made the woman to be a wife, not a mother; and parental duties are temporary.
 - a. A woman's primary calling in life is to serve a man - her husband (I Cor 7:34).
 - b. Women who replace their husbands with children find trouble when they leave.
3. When marital conflict occurs, it is easy for women to find fulfillment in motherhood.
 - a. They can avoid confrontation with their husband; it is easier to seduce a child; it is a way to hurt her husband; the demands do not usually hurt her pride; etc.
 - b. They pour their emotions, physical affection, and ambitions into their children.
 - c. With a daughter, they play out their fantasies of the carefree life they desire.
 - d. With a son, they pursue the affection and friendship missing from their husband.
4. Young mothers with new babies must also carefully oppose this deceptive error.

MARRIAGE IS ABOVE YOUR PROFESSION

C. RECOMMENDATION #3: Men Must Guard Against Their Careers Replacing Their Wives.

1. Men who emphasize their careers inordinately show more than diligence in business.
 - a. They show that they missed the true riches in life and cannot manage their wife.
 - b. Inordinate affection is devotion to business and work that neglects the marriage.
 - c. Consider exhaustion for marital activities, constant postponement of marital plans, mental preoccupation with business, priority on monies for professional pursuits, single topic of conversation, greatest enthusiasm and interest, any price for meeting professional approval, extensive time away from chief companion, etc.
 - d. In effect, men are prone to treat their professional pursuits as their mistress.
2. Read how God's law placed a definite priority on marriage over business (Deut 24:5).
3. Business is the means God ordained to support a wife and other goals, not an end.
4. When marital conflict occurs, it is easy for men to hide from responsibility in work.
 - a. Solomon knew the escape syndrome well (Proverbs 19:13; 21:9,19; 25:24; 27:15).
 - b. Phlegmatic and melancholy dispositions are particularly susceptible to withdrawal.
 - (1) Fear of confrontation and tension is so great - escape is worth any price.
 - (2) A workaholic is often a man crushed by his wife but edified by his work.
 - c. They pour their emotions, physical efforts, and ambitions into their jobs.

TRUST GOD'S PROVIDENCE

A. God specifically created Eve for Adam, not any other; He is matchmaker (Gen 2:22).

1. No man meets a woman, or vice versa, by chance; it is all by God's providence.
2. God arranged a very large number of circumstances for you to meet and marry.
3. Where both spouses do their part, we can easily see God's perfect matchmaking.

B. Your spouse is the one God planned for you, fulfill the duties to him/her accordingly.

1. Could this be true, if you now think you made a mistake marrying him/her? Yes!
2. God could easily have kept you from making the mistake you now think you made.

3. Now that you are married, it does not matter what you think about that decision.
 4. Furthermore, you were absolutely certain your spouse was the only one for you.
- C. For more about God the matchmaker ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/magnificent-matchmaker.pdf>.

BECOME ONE FLESH

- A. By their creation, a husband and wife are one body, tightly connected (Gen 2:21-23).
1. We first understand this by the creation account and Adam's words about his wife.
 2. We then understand it by Paul's comparison of it picturing Christ and the church.
 3. A man should treat his wife as his own body on several levels of intent or meaning.
- B. Though trivialized, a saying about Eve's creation has some merit (M. Henry altered).
1. Eve was made of a rib out of Adam's side to be beside him, not to be in front of him or behind him; not from his head to dominate him, nor from his feet to be trampled on, but from under his arm to be protected, near to his heart to be loved.
 2. A man loves himself and his body, and since she came from it, he should love her.
- C. A husband and wife are to be one body and sympathetically committed and connected.
1. Paul used this body analogy about empathy for other church members (Heb 13:3).
 2. A husband and wife should get inside each other to participate in their soul/life.
 3. A wife may excuse herself her husband does not care, but she condemns herself.

LEAVE AND CLEAVE

- A. Marriage requires leaving parents – *leave them!* – for parents and children (Gen 2:24).
1. A separate family is formed by marriage, and all the focus is to be on the spouse.
 2. This is far more relational than geographical; proximity in the O.T. was common.
 3. Emotional comfort must end, though a child loves flattery of a dysfunctional home.
 4. A dysfunctional home is where too much attention and affection is put on children.
 5. Spoil your children now with misguided affection and you ruin them for later life.
- B. A very destructive error in marriage is a spouse still clinging to a parental relationship.
1. Do not modify the rule for homesick or spoiled children who were not trained well.
 2. In the case of immature children, parents must take initiative to turn them away.
 3. Children poorly trained for emotional independence or unduly flattered will grieve.
- C. When the still-love-to-be-with-mommy-and-daddy is wife, marital damage is greater.
1. This is because a daughter joins another family, taking their name and family tree.
 2. This is because a wife is made for her husband, and her love and loyalty must shift.
 3. This is because most sons have stayed connected to fathers for business or religion.
- D. There is more intended by being one flesh than merely uniting in physical intercourse.
1. The leaving and cleaving of this context is emotional and relational, not sexual.
 2. The affection, comfort, dependence, love, loyalty, and trust must be the spouse's.
- E. Of course parents are still honored, but there must be a very real severing of closeness.
1. Let the other spouse direct and lead as to how and when you connect with parents.
 2. It should be rare. There does not need to be frequent conversation with parents.

UNIFY YOUR CONSCIENCES

- A. The first man and wife had equal consciences unstained by sin and guilt (Gen 2:25).
 - 1. They were both naked, Adam and his wife, and there was no squeamish reticence.
 - 2. Since the fall there is much damage to undo from habits, heresies, and home life.
 - 3. The conscience has been used as an excuse by some wives to justify their rebellion.
- B. Agreement is very important and should be mostly or entirely settled before marriage.
 - 1. Consciences can definitely be taught in both directions, more liberal or careful.
 - 2. A wise husband fulfilling his role rightly can lead and train his wife's conscience.
 - 3. He must not be Rehoboam or his ilk, but rather sensitive and sympathetic to her.
 - 4. The real source for every conscience should be the word of God and nothing else.
 - 5. A wise wife may also meekly modify a husband's conscience if he is wise for it.
- C. Read the Song of Solomon to see that both husband and wife were sexually liberated.
 - 1. This was not due to America's sexual revolution of the 60's, for it was 1000 B.C.!
 - 2. This was due to God being far ahead of the puritanical prudes of the Victorian era.
 - 3. Sexual inhibitions not found in the word of God are equal to heresy about baptism.
- D. A couple should agree on everything by thorough communication and God's word.
 - 1. The Bible has settled most issues, from child training to house cleanliness to sleep.
 - 2. What the Bible has not settled, the wife should submit to her husband's conscience.
 - 3. A wife has no more right to her own Christian liberty than children do toward her.
 - 5. The wife expects the children to submit to hers, so it should not be a hard matter.
 - 6. Children should never detect or be able to exploit any difference between parents.
- E. The greatest act of conscience together should be mutual service and worship to God.
 - 1. The happiest couples are always those that have a priority on serving Jesus Christ.
 - 2. The more united a couple is in service to God the more united they will be in love.
 - 3. No matter what you think, dedicated holiness by both in all ways maximizes love.
 - 4. There are no manuals of natural romance that can match God's Spirit of His love!

YOU CANNOT HIDE

- A. Adam and Eve thought they could hide their marriage issues from God (Gen 3:7-8).
- B. God sees marital treachery and tears, and He will judge accordingly (Mal 2:10-16).
- C. God sees how you love and treat your spouse and may ignore your prayers (I Pet 3:7).
- D. These two passages are husband oppression, but wives must tremble for two reasons.
 - 1. She was made for him; your husband was not made for you; you may be guiltier.
 - 2. Arguing from greater to the lesser means that it applies to the wife at least as much.
- E. Neglect of marital sex gives place to the devil – your body is not yours (I Cor 7:1-5).
 - 1. Notice that the privacy of your bedroom is not off-limits to the devil himself.
 - 2. If bedroom curses are dangerous (Eccl 10:20), then so is any sexual defrauding.
- F. The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding all evil and good (Prov 15:3).

STOP THE BLAME GAME

- A. Adam and Eve went straight to work blaming each other or yet others (Gen 3:11-13).
 - 1. This is part of depravity – self-righteousness condemning others instead of self.

2. This is part of depravity – that God is an austere taskmaster we cannot please.
 3. Adam blamed God for giving him Eve that had led him into sin; it was his fault.
 4. Eve blamed the devil for beguiling her; it was her fault for giving him any place.
- B. It is very common for foolish and wicked spouses to justify sin by their spouse's sins.
1. Wives foolishly say that they would submit and reverence more, if he loved more.
 2. Husbands foolishly say that they would love and romance more, if she revered.
 3. God has clearly told us that obedience to froward authority is truly thankworthy.
 4. Difficult spouses, like difficult bosses or other authority, are by God's wise plan.
- C. It is very common for foolish and wicked spouses to blame parents, children, etc.
1. I have heard about growing up in bad homes ... 10, 20, 30 years after conversion!
 2. I have heard about health, jobs, difficult children, church issues, etc., etc., etc.
 3. Try your excuses on God the Judge of all when you stand before Jesus Christ.
 4. The Spirit and the word are more than enough for us to do anything (Phil 4:13).
- D. A few simple things to practice will stop the blame game to be adults and Christians.
1. Bitterness is specifically condemned in husbands, but it applies to both (Col 3:19).
 2. Bitterness is the result of earlier offences not correctly or completely resolved.
 3. Husband, if your marriage is not all it can be, it is your fault. Buck stops with you!
 4. Husband, recall and use *Manage Your Wife* study to allocate her limited resources.
 5. Wife, if your husband is bitter, lazy, moody, it is likely your fault; romance him!
 6. Communication, properly made, can correct things your spouse does not know.
 7. Even one minute of thought or words about your spouse's faults is profane sin.
- F. For *Manage Your Wife* study ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/managing-your-wife.pdf>.
- E. **MYTH #5: I WOULD DO BETTER IF MY HUSBAND (WIFE) WOULD CHANGE.**
1. As Adam and Eve in Eden, men love to shift the blame to others (Genesis 3:12-13).
 - a. Listening to one side of a marital conflict usually leads to ignorant confusion.
 - b. If you must hear one side of a marriage, limit it to that person's shortcomings.
 2. Men can love wives into submission, and women serve their husbands into love.
 3. If a man will not "do better" for God and His word, he will not if others change.
 4. Consider that true obedience in relationships is shown best when they do not change.
 - a. God requires faithful service to froward masters and husbands (I Pet 2:18-20; 3:1).
 - b. God makes specific illustration of unconverted husbands (I Cor 7:13; I Pet 3:1-6).
 5. Instead of withholding obedience until they change, change them by your obedience.
 6. Are you in a hostile marriage? Consider your ways! Do they please God (Pro 16:7)?

THE DAMAGED MARRIAGE

- A. Marriage now had to deal with guilt, shame, malice, bitterness, pride, selfishness, etc.
- B. For Adam, making a living and providing would be more vexing, tiring, frustrating.
- C. For Eve, childbearing would be hard; her desires would be subject to husband rule.
- D. For both, everything they should do toward each other would be hard or undesirable.

MORE BLESSED TO GIVE

- A. The Lord Jesus Christ taught this rule in red writing in the middle of Acts 20 (20:35).
 1. If Jesus taught the rule, then it must be absolutely true and very necessary for you.
 2. If Paul concluded his most intimate instruction to Ephesus this way, it must be key.

3. This is especially true for a child of God, who has God's giving nature within him.
- B. Real love is not getting; it is giving; both parties benefit far more than any other way.
 1. When you read the definition of love in I Corinthians 13:4-7, it is all about giving.
 2. Review John 3:16 a moment; it reads, "For God so loved the world, that he gave."
 3. Giving is more blessed by pleasing God better ... and ... by satisfying you better.
- C. Anyone that waits around for his/her spouse to give is a selfish and wicked infant.
 1. Can you imagine if two spouses both chose this course of action at the same time?
 2. Marital destruction is waiting for more from your spouse, rather than giving more.
- D. The cure to restore first love at Ephesus did not mention Jesus giving more (Rev 2:5).
 1. The idea is outrageous – restoring love in yourself is you giving more of yourself.
 2. It is to remember how you used to give, repenting for not giving, and giving again.
- E. If your spouse never gave back, it is still totally more blessed to give than to receive.
- F. Can you imagine if two spouses were independently obsessed to love the other?

CARE ENOUGH TO CONFRONT

- A. Walking together requires agreement (Amos 3:2); agreement requires confrontation.
 1. How can two walk together except they be agreed, so good communication is key.
 2. Two sinners from two different backgrounds only agree by one or both changing.
- B. If you care for God's rules and your marriage, confront your spouse to change things.
 1. When there is any problem or tension in a marriage, fix it by wise confrontation.
 2. The way you go about this is drastically different between the husband and wife.
 3. Each spouse should consider the other spheres of authority to help dictate manners.
- C. Reconciling relationships is a very important and large part of being a real Christian.
 1. Think John Baptist's ministry to reconcile fathers and sons (Mal 4:5-6; Luke 1:17).
 2. God does not want your worship until after you reconcile parties (Matt 5:23-26).
 3. This is very true of marriage, where He commands love (Mal 2:13-14; I Pet 3:7).
 4. For more about relationships ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/righteous-relationships.pdf>.
 5. For life's personal relationships ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/relationships-chart.pdf>.
- D. The husband is at all times CRM – conflict resolution manager, and he should lead it.
 1. It is his responsibility to lead, manage, or rule the marriage to be what it should be.
 2. As manager, he must not allow a situation to fester or simmer; he should correct it.
 3. He should identify his wife's faults and correct them by their Bible and covenant.
 4. He must confess his own faults and correct them – this is wisdom, not weakness.
 5. He must manage the correction of any situation until all is peaceful and loving.
 6. He must follow up on any changes made and lead his wife to marital perfection.
 7. This is a delicate job involving love and authority and the application of wisdom.
 8. The buck stops with the man. Marital problems are his fault – abuse and/or neglect.
 9. Do not let the sun go down upon your wrath (Eph 4:26). Reconcile before sleep.
- E. If the wife sees a problem in the marriage, she should be very discreet and humble.
 1. It is not her job to correct her husband for every fault he has or mistake he makes.
 2. She should not even consider confronting him unless very serious or he asks for it.
 3. Matters of liberty, regardless of her dislike of them, are his to choose (Nu 30:3-16).

4. She should be very meek and patient, using Bible wisdom (Pr 15:1; 25:15; 16:14).
 5. She cannot blow off when she feels like it any more than a private to a general.
 6. She waits for an opportunity in season to respectfully, submissively state her case.
 7. Writing is helpful ... cool off, no confrontation, time to compose, time for him, etc.
 8. Commentary and letter from Abigail ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/abigail-commentary-letter.pdf>.
- F. A wise man knows that a godly wife can give a different perspective and assist him.
- G. Wise couples use the rule of ten to adjust or modify what they hear from each other.
1. If you have a choleric spouse, divide what they say by 10, for they do not mean it.
 2. If you have a phlegmatic spouse, multiply their words by 10, for they mean more.

LOVE IS NOT A FEELING

- A. But anyone in the 21st century has been taught that love is always and only a feeling.
1. They say, “I just love being with Bobby,” or, “I love her so much, I can’t stand it.”
 2. They also say, “I just don’t love him anymore,” or, “I love someone else now.”
 3. There is no record of a generation so addicted and obsessed by feelings, not duty.
 4. By media gone to seed – music and movies, love is feelings of desire or pleasure.
 5. Love to a modern American is merely chemistry, desire, or situation of attraction.
 6. What triggers these love feelings? A look, status, touch, word? It is but fleshly lust!
 7. All the world has is lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, and pride of life (I John 2:16).
 8. Hollywood has fed, by ignorance and devilish design, the rule – *follow your heart*.
 9. Sodomites justify sin by love for the same sex, but yet murder is still frowned on.
 10. What feelings did Jesus have in Gethsemane? An agony over the torture coming!
 11. If Paul did what he did against his will, was he doing it for the precious feelings?
 12. Can music make you feel or think things? Sad? Militant? Sex? Intense? It is lust!
 13. What do you feel about cutting your yard or a large pile of dishes? Before? After?
 14. What does the prettiest girl in class need to do ... look, touch, or word! Its all over!
 15. What about the ugliest girl? If you invested in her by choice, feelings would come.
 16. Why do feelings require attractiveness, flattery, libido, or status? They are but lust!
- B. Love is a choice to direct care, kindness, and mercy to another for their profit and joy.
1. The Bible says that you can choose love, set love, and prioritize love of anything.
 2. Love is a duty, a commandment, a precept of conduct acceptable to God and men.
 3. No one naturally loves enemies, but the Lord commands it anyway (Matt 5:43-48).
 4. The Bible says you can set your affection on things above, not on earth (Col 3:2).
 5. Discipleship is learning to love Christ over other love relationships (Luke 14:26).
 6. Love is an investment in another person to make them better for them and for you.
 7. The definition of love in I Corinthians 13 has no feelings but duty against feelings.
 8. The whole message of the Bible is against feelings, named flesh, lusts, your body.
 9. The gospel of Christ gives us duties, which if done, result in profit and pleasure.
 10. Love produces feelings. Bowels of compassion are taught, invested, and do return.
 11. Rather than feed feelings, feed duty and responsibility; they will bring feelings.
 12. Do not forget it is more blessed to give than to receive ... and it returns fulfillment.

- C. Sex is not love. Do not measure love by sex, by giving or receiving. Are you a dog?
1. Most sex has nothing to do with love, only lust. Little sex is actual lovemaking.
 2. For sex to be love, it focuses on the other person to please God and to please them.
 3. Many, many foolish guys and girls have been seduced into sex by claims of love.
 4. The adulteress of Solomon's parable spoke of love, but it was only lust (Pr 7:18).
 5. The whore says, if you love me, you will make love with me. But it is fornication!
 6. Good sex does not prove a marriage good, but a good marriage likely has good sex.
- D. If you wait for feelings, you will ruin relationships and never fulfill responsibilities.
1. You are an immature, selfish infant, screaming to be fed, demanding your lusts.
 2. If you are feelings driven – you are a city with walls broken down and a real mess.
 3. You are a fool or a scorner; you will ignore an instruction that does not move you.
- E. Do you mean any two people could love each other and have positive feelings? Yes!
1. I would have more confidence in a marriage based on duty than one on feelings.
 2. How did arranged marriages worked in the Bible? Did Isaac truly love Rebekah?
 3. For more, *Love the One You're With* ... <http://www.letgodbetrue.com/pdf/love-the-one-youre-with.pdf>.

REVERENCE IS REQUIRED

- A. Wives are ordered to *reverence* their husbands, which is not submission (Ep 5:33,22).
1. Obedience and submission are not the issues here, though they are commanded.
 2. Children must obey their parents, but then they are to also honor them (Eph 6:1-3).
 3. Honor of parents, reverence of husbands are similar – exalt with special treatment.
 4. **Reverence.** To hold in high respect or esteem; to venerate as being of an exalted or superior kind. See Bible use in Lev 19:30; II Sa 9:6; I Kg 1:31; Ps 89:7; Heb 12:9.
- B. Sarah called Abraham *lord*, a thing separate and distinct from obeying him (I Pet 3:6).
1. This was none of, “Yes, my lord,” or, “Yes, my lady,” of stuffy movie material.
 2. However, some of such language could be consistent with applying this scripture.
 3. Sarah did not use this title for public deference; it was in her thoughts (Gen 18:12).
 4. You speak out of the abundance of the heart, so start reverencing him in your heart.
 5. David was reverenced by Abigail (I Sam 25:39-42) and Bathsheba (I Kgs 1:11-31).
 5. The issue is not an order to call your husband *lord* but to reverence him similarly.
 6. If you do not call your husband lord or sir, how do you how him godly reverence?
- C. Some say, “I can't reverence him, when I don't respect him.” Lack of respect is a sin!
1. Husbands do not have to earn your respect to get reverence; God demands both.
 2. Wives want reverence from their children, but they still resist giving it (Heb 12:9).
 3. Reverence is not mere icing on the cake of submission; it is a cake in its own right.
 4. Staying with him and doing what he wants is not reverence by a long country mile.
- D. You can learn to reverence your man to obey God, please him, prepare for Judgment.
1. You know how to honor judges with “Yes, your honor,” and policemen, “Yes, sir.”
 2. Why do you think a boss on a job deserves reverence, but your husband does not?
 3. Why and how can you reverence a doctor, but ignore or blow off your husband?
 4. Women sure can recognize insolence in children, but can they recognize their own.
 5. You should never answer again, or talk back, like good employees (Titus 2:9-10).

6. Do you treat him like a god? Do you praise him? Are you humble with him? Are you silent when he criticizes you unjustly? Do you keep your face reverent?
 7. Never toss your head, turn away, roll your eyes, slam a door, or hide in a room.
 8. Your duty is to adore him like the girlfriend of the high school quarterback does.
 9. Christian women expect men to get down on a knee to propose, which is inversion of honor, but they revolt at getting down on their knees to reverence in marriage!
- E. Everything in this generation and our society screams against reverence of husbands.
1. It is not ignorant insanity of Neanderthals sitting around a fire demanding worship.
 2. It is by order of the living God clearly stated and fully consistent with all authority.
 3. Husbands are to be feared (I Pet 3:1-6). Today's familiarity destroys any fear.
 4. Odious women, like civil and job rebels, make excuses to justify lack of reverence.
 5. She say, "If I don't protect myself, no one will." God will! He demands reverence!
 6. Today's television sitcoms inanelly mock husbands and the reverence they deserve.
 7. Today's pulpits are not far behind, coming short of the Biblical standard of honor.

FORGIVE AND FORGET

- A. Forget past faults of your spouse you have forgiven or have not forgiven. It is right.
1. Covering personal offences is love; repeating a matter ruins relationships (Pr 17:9).
 2. Real love, fervent charity, covers all sins, so learn to do it (Prov 10:12; I Peter 4:8).
 3. The degree you forgive a spouse will return on your head (Mat 6:14-15; 18:21-35).
 4. If you do not forget past offences, they cause bitterness and will fly out in anger.
 5. Piling on when you are angry is further evidence you have a cruel, hateful heart.
- B. Be glorious in your marriage by deferring anger and passing over offences (Pr 19:11).
1. The nature of marriage means faults are known, so forebear (Eph 4:2; Col 3:13).
 2. Do you know love? Can you believe, hope, bear, endure all things (I Cor 13:4-7)?

WORDS HAVE RESULTS

- A. Words are powerful, especially in the intimate relationship of marriage (Pr 18:20-21).
1. You can kill a person or relationship or revive a person or relationship. Choose!
 2. Your speech will affect you as much as it does others, but you likely cannot see it.
 3. If you love to talk, you will reap the sure consequences of your kind of speech.
 4. Your speech will either help or hurt you (Pr 12:14; 13:2-3; 18:6-7; 24:26; 25:11).
 5. A gracious man can win kings, a woman is always loved by all (Pr 22:11; 11:16).
 6. Solomon warned about speech ... http://www.letgodbetrue.com/proverbs/commentaries/18_21.php.
- B. If there is a disagreement or offence, a soft answer will end fights (Prov 15:1; 25:15).
1. Some have never learned this rule, so they continue their wicked family tradition.
 2. Learn to return blessing for railing at all times with your spouse (I Peter 3:8-11).
 3. A truly Christian spouse will overcome evil speech with good speech (Rom 12:21).
- C. Praise is an easy and powerful tool to build up a spouse and promote your marriage.
1. Remember how Shechem loved Dinah and spake kindly to the damsel (Gen 34:3).
 2. Give your spouse credit they deserve for their good points, in private and public.
 3. Jesus honored wicked churches (Rev 2-3); Paul praised Corinth (I Cor 1:4-9; 11:2).

4. It is a fact of man's existence that praise is a positive reward that highly motivates.
 5. Women are very highly motivated and responsive by the praise of their husband.
- D. Learn use gracious speech that comforts or edifies your spouse (Ep 4:29-32; Col 4:6).
- E. Women must learn to hold their tongues, for their speech problems are well known.
1. The odious woman condemned by Solomon loves to criticize (Pr 21:19; 27:15).
 2. However, the virtuous woman has wisdom and the law of kindness (Prov 31:26).
 3. Is God's order for women to be meek and quiet hard to understand (I Pet 3:3-4)?
 4. Young man, instead of looking at a girl, listen to her in all places to multiply by 10.
- F. For those of you that hardly say anything, no communication can be the worst of all.