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THE TRIUMPHANT MARRIAGE

Teaching Notes by Joyce Meyer

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THE TRIUMPHANT MARRIAGE

A Triumph Or A Tragedy

I. My People Are Not Using Wisdom.

(Therefore, many marriages are being destroyed.)

A. There is nothing better than a great marriage and nothing worse than a bad one.

1. Neither just happens – There are phases and steps that lead to both.
2. For marriages in serious trouble, this seminar will not be an overnight cure-all. You will learn principles, which, WHEN APPLIED, will work healing.
3. When a good marriage decays and falls apart, it does not happen overnight – it is often a result of people not using wisdom.

B. Wisdom is to know what to do – and to do it!

Proverbs 7:1-5, 21-27; 8:1-4 – Wisdom cries out!

1. **Proverbs 1:7** – The beginning of wisdom is the reverential fear and awe of God .

The Bible is a handbook that gives instructions on taking the manufacturer's product (man) and assembling it correctly for optimum living.

2. **Haggai 1:2-10** – Stop procrastinating!! Learn His principles and KNOW that He means what He says. **Do it HIS way and it works**; do it your own way and watch it fall apart.
3. You will learn godly principles concerning marriage, but they will not change anything if not applied. **It is easier to hear what to do than it is to go home and do it!!**

AMEN! AMEN! can become OH ME! OH ME!

- C. Coming to this seminar means **CHANGE** for most of you.
- D. What are some of the godly precepts that apply to marriage?
 1. Respect, honor, wives submitting to husbands, husbands loving your wives as Christ loved the church. Avoiding strife, forgiveness, letting go of the past, sacrifice (which requires the death of selfish, self-centeredness), communication, sex, biblical principles concerning money, disciplining children, serving one another, and serving God in ministry and priorities.

II. Watch And Pray – Matthew 26:41

- A. Satan is aggressively after the family. He fears unity, love, and peace.
- B. **II Timothy 3:1-5** – The condition of the world in these last days
 1. The divorce rate is over fifty percent.
- C. Cover your marriage with the blood of Jesus.
 1. **Revelation 12:11** – Overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.
- D. Pray for your spouse regularly. Don't complain about him or her regularly – not verbally or in your heart!

III. Sacrifice or Selfishness

A. Leave and cleave – **Genesis 2:24**

1. Marriage begins as a sacrifice because you have to **leave something**.
2. Sacrifice – To give up something of importance in order to have something you consider to be of more importance. A good marriage requires giving up things that have meaning to you.
3. Cleave – Be glued to, cemented together, to associate with a person so as to accompany him or be on his side. To go where another goes. Attached, devoted, to hang upon and express love, permanent adhesion, welded together.

B. The two become one. Legally, it is done at the ceremony – experientially, it occurs as each partner sacrifices himself or herself for the other.

Example: Pour water and coffee together and see how the two blend. They are inseparable after becoming one.

1. Each time I sacrifice for Dave, I am investing some of ME in him.
2. “I,” “ME,” and “MYSELF” is very important to all of us. There is no greater gift of love than to give up oneself.

Mark 9:49 (KJV) – . . . *every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.* (Salt = Love) Don't give under the law, but because you love Christ and your spouse.

3. **I John 3:16** – *By this we come to know . . . the [essential] love: that He laid down His [own] life for us; and we ought to lay [our] lives down for [those who are our] brothers [in Him].*
4. **John 3:16** (KJV) – *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son . . .*

5. **I Corinthians 13:4-8** – The nine facets of love will make a triumphant marriage. **Love is not self-seeking; does not insist on its own rights or its own way.**
6. Marriage is NOT “how can you make me happy,” BUT “how can I make you happy.” **Then in giving, you receive.**

C. Things you can expect to sacrifice.

1. A certain amount of **personal freedom** – You will no longer be free to only please yourself. (See **I Corinthians 7:32-34**.)
 - a. **Ephesians 5:22-25** – Wives, adapt and be subject to your husbands. Husbands, be ready to give yourself up for your wives as Christ did for the church.
 - b. Adapting is a big sacrifice (especially for strong-willed people).
2. **Time** – Unless you invest quality time in the relationship, it will never flourish. What does not grow initially stagnates and eventually dies.
 - a. **HAVE YOU HUGGED YOUR WIFE TODAY!!** She needs twelve loving, meaningful touches every day to live out her full life expectancy.
 - b. Take time to listen to those things that you may not be particularly interested in.
 - c. Take time to think about your mate and how you might bless them, or what you might do for them.

Galatians 6:10b – *Be mindful to be a blessing . . .*

I Thessalonians 5:15 – Seek to do good to others.

- d. Take time to pray for your spouse – you will see radical changes.

3. “A bite of your hamburger” or “the fudge on your ice cream” – women often don’t want any food, but they want their husband’s food when they see it. (Men can be the same way.)
4. **Emotional comfort** – Display of emotion may be uncomfortable for one partner; but if the other needs it, give it even as a sacrifice.

Hugs, compliments, “I love you,” “you are beautiful [handsome],” “you are important to me, and I appreciate you.” (If you cannot say it face to face, start with a card or letter.)

5. **Physical comfort** – Men especially may have to sacrifice in this area – giving their coat when the wife is cold; getting wet to get the car so she does not get wet; dropping her off at the door so she does not have to walk too far; waiting for her to try on twenty-five outfits and then watching her buy the first one she put on. (See **Ephesians 5:29**.)

I Peter 3:7 – Honor her as the (physically) weaker vessel.

6. **Pride** – Say “I am sorry” when you think the other person is wrong, or at least as wrong as you were. **Strive to be first to do what is right!**

a. **Romans 12:16,18** – *Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty (snobbish, high-minded, exclusive), but readily adjust yourself to [people, things] and give yourselves to humble tasks. Never overestimate yourself or be wise in your own conceits . . . If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*

b. Humility will back down when two people are striving for the mastery (arguing over who is right). Competition is striving for the mastery. **I think I am right – but I may be wrong** is an anointed phrase that can save a marriage.

7. **Sex** – **I Corinthians 7:3-5** – One partner may not “feel” like participating, but the Word of God says to GIVE the partner their rights in this area. Think about how you “feel” when you are the aggressor.

You do not enjoy rejection, and if your body chemistry is saying “NOW,” it is uncomfortable if the need is not met.

IV. Serving One Another

- A. **John 13:1-17** – Jesus washes His disciples’ feet as an example of how we are to behave with one another.
- B. **Verse 1** – If we love to the highest degree, we must serve one another.
- C. **Verses 3-5** – Jesus could do this because He was not insecure.
 - 1. Insecure people find it very difficult to serve others with a pure heart.
 - a. They may be too proud to do it and spend their lives expecting everyone to serve them because it makes them “feel” important.
 - b. They may serve but have a martyr’s attitude.
 - c. They serve because they do not feel they have “worth” doing anything else.
 - d. They serve because it makes them feel good about themselves.
- D. **Verses 6-9** – Jesus told Peter if He did not wash his feet, they had no part in each other.
 - 1. Serving and sacrificing are an investment. We become involved together in doing for each other.
- E. Many will serve in the church, but not at home.
 - 1. Having a “ministry” can be done for self-esteem rather than out of love.
 - 2. When people are free to serve at home, as unto the Lord to be a blessing, they are taking on the character of Jesus.

Understanding The Opposite Sex

NOTE: Triumph means to be victorious, win, and succeed. It always carries the idea of victory with jubilation (joy).

I. Differences In Men And Women

- A. A new book is entitled *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*. In other words, it seems as if they are from two different planets.
- B. They look different, and the anatomy is different.
- C. Men are more logical, and women are more emotional.
 - 1. Women want to “feel” things.
 - 2. Men may be satisfied to “know.”
- D. Men are conquerors.
 - 1. A woman goes shopping, partially as an emotional experience – a man wants to conquer the project and get home. The woman wants to shop around, stop and have coffee, shop some more, and stop to have lunch at a quaint little café. She wants to try on every-thing before making a decision. She is willing to “shop” long after the money is gone.
 - 2. When traveling, a man wants to conquer X number of miles per day. His wife’s bladder may be bursting, but the man has to conquer those miles. She wants to “enjoy” the trip; he wants to conquer it.
- E. Women are communicators, and men usually are not.
 - 1. It is a scientific fact that one side of the woman’s brain is more developed than the other; and with men, it is the opposite side.

2. Women like to talk – most men do not.

Women like to get “deep” when they talk;
men definitely do not.

II. Male And Female Needs

- A. When we try to give our mate what WE need, we experience rejection.

1. On the golf course with Dave when he plays badly, he does not need comfort.
2. On the golf course with Dave when his arm was hurting, I was trying to show loving, caring concern. He intended to CONQUER the problem, and my suggestion would have meant giving in to it.

- B. A man’s number one need is sexual fulfillment – a woman’s number one need is affection.

1. Men sometimes think sex is affection, but women need affection before sex.
2. Timing is more important to a woman than to a man. A man has an urge, and he now wants to conquer. A woman wants to be prepared.

She wants to be assured the children are taken care of and that they cannot hear or even guess what you may be doing. A man is not as concerned about those things because he is in his “conquering mode.” THIS IS ONE TIME A MAN CAN BE VERY EMOTIONAL!!!

3. Men who are smart learn to “tactfully ease into sex.” Sit and talk with her awhile, hold her hand, and give the affection; she will be more willing to give the sex.

- C. A list of affectionate moves for the unlearned:

1. Hugs and kisses every morning, possibly while still in bed.

2. Tell her you love her early in the morning – definitely sometime before you leave for the day. If you forget, call her from work or the car.
3. Call sometimes during the day for no particular reason: “I just called to see how you are, what you’re doing, to say I love you, and I appreciate you.”
4. Flowers or an occasional gift – Danny brought me flowers two weeks ago when I was very angry with him. Dave gave me flowers after he had been a real stinker. This is nice and does help solve the problem – but do it for reasons other than because your wife is mad.
5. Remember those special days – birthdays, Valentine’s Day, Mother’s Day, and anniversaries. Even if you get her something she does not like and will return, you have still scored points.
6. When you leave work to go home, call and let her know you are on your way – especially if you don’t always get home at the same time.
7. When you are going to be late, call and let her know.

Example: When Dave and I were very young, he worked overtime on our anniversary and forgot to call me.
8. Arrive home, give her more hugs and kisses. Spend some meaningful time together, and ask how her day went – show genuine interest in each other’s interests.
9. Help with the dishes – it is a smooth move occasionally!
10. Bedtime – more hugs and kisses or a loving pat before going to sleep.

SEX BEGINS WITH AFFECTION FOR THE WOMAN.

D. More of her needs:

1. She needs communication and conversation – one marriage counselor suggests 15 hours per week of meaningful time together; 168 hours in a week means 15 hours – that is 9 percent. A great marriage will probably require “pruning” your schedule.
2. She needs understanding – This is a big thing with women.
I Peter 3:7 – Married men live “considerately” with your wives.
3. She needs to be treated as valuable and precious – like an easily breakable, expensive piece of china. Women need a certain amount of pampering.
4. She needs to be able to trust you. Always tell her the truth; do what you tell her you will do. Be faithful; don’t do things that leave her “wondering.” Do not make comments about other women and their good looks or their figure. Do not whistle at other women.

E. More about his needs:

1. His second need is a playmate – a recreational companion. I learned to play golf. Dave and I still wrestle. It is a little dangerous for me, but I still try. **YOU MUST HAVE FUN TOGETHER AND LAUGH TOGETHER.**
2. He needs a helpmate – not a nag, a boss, a critic, a teacher, a potter who wants to keep him on the wheel reworking him, or a personal advisor. He does not need to be married to the head of the home improvement committee.
3. She needs financial support – she needs to be taken care of. She is created by God to be dependent upon him. He needs peace and quiet (domestic support).
4. He needs her to look her best – he feels good about himself when she looks good. Being attractive is based on what you do with what you have. I always look approximately the same.

Staying home or going out, I do what I can do with what I have.

5. She needs him to be a good father and truly committed to the family – just making the money and getting her pregnant is not enough.
 6. He needs admiration – he wants her to be proud of him.
- F. Discuss together what your individual needs are and make a commitment to begin trying to meet those needs.
1. **Ephesians 4:15** – Do it without accusation; allow one another to “speak the truth in love.”

III. Personality Differences

- A. Four major types – Each person has a predominant personality type with blendings of the others.
1. **Sanguine**
 - a. Greatest strength is an ability to enjoy life. They can make anything fun. They are the life of the party. It is difficult to stay angry with them. A sanguine child can have a parent laughing while they are trying to correct them.
 - b. Greatest weaknesses – Weak willed and undisciplined. Usually big talkers (ramblers). Frequently make good sales representatives.
 - c. Motivating factor – Fun
 2. **Choleric**
 - a. Strengths – Very strong willed and get a lot accomplished. They will finish the job. They are often key leaders.
 - b. Weaknesses – Harshness, may hurt a lot of people while reaching their goals. They are so full of what they want,

and they may be insensitive to other people's needs; controllers, manipulators, selfish, and self-centered.

c. Motivating factor – Work

3. **Melancholy**

a. Strengths – Very sensitive, creative, orderly, and organized. They do it right. Loyal – less likely to cheat on spouse.

b. Weaknesses – Self-centered, pessimistic, and hard to please; tend to make a big deal out of nothing; prone to depression; deep thinkers.

c. Motivating factor – Order

4. **Phlegmatic**

a. Strengths – Easy going and nothing disturbs them. Cast care; even-tempered, adaptable, peace lovers; not hard to please.

b. Weaknesses – Slow moving, lazy, passive, stubborn, and indecisive.

c. Motivating factor – Peace

B. **Galatians 6:2-5** – Bear one another's burdens and troublesome moral faults. Examine your own conduct.

C. Mercy

IV. **Spiritual Gifts And Talents**

A. **Romans 12:6** – We are all gifted in various ways.

B. **Matthew 25:15** – To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to every man according to his ability.

- C. Do not judge and criticize one another – do not make yourself the standard.
1. We cannot all do the same thing or even in the same way.
 2. **I Corinthians 4:7** – What have you got that was not given to you?
 3. **John 3:27** – A man can only have the gifts that have been given from heaven.

Roadblocks To A Triumphant Marriage

I. Commitment

A. **Haggai: Chapter 1** – Consider YOUR ways (not your partner’s ways).

1. Have you really been committed to your partner? Committed to discovering their needs and meeting them? Committed to edification and uplifting?

REAL COMMITMENT GOES BEYOND JUST MENTALLY ASSENTING THAT IT SHOULD BE THAT WAY – COMMITMENT PRESSES IN TO TAKE HOLD!

2. Be generous with praise and stingy with criticism. Is it possible that “your mouth” is a large part of the problem?

B. Commitment is the cornerstone of a great marriage – the place where you begin. Have you ever been or are you still truly committed to the vows you took at the wedding ceremony? When I committed and promised to obey, I did not even know what it meant.

1. The dictionary defines marriage as a ceremony, but God considers it a covenant.
2. In covenant, EVERYTHING an individual has is made available to the other. Each partner is totally responsible to do his or her part, not dependent on what the other does. GOD SWORE BY HIMSELF! There were no if’s!
3. Begin doing what is right just because it is right, not to get right results, and you are beginning to understand commitment.

- C. As a nation, we have reached the edge of total family collapse; and much of it is due to an insincere attitude toward commitment. A man's word and his honor no longer have value.
- D. What is commitment? Saying what you will do and doing it – finishing what you start – will power!
 - 1. What did you promise to do?
 - 2. To love you forever – when things are good and when they are not.

Till death do us part – NOT “until you aggravate me or make me angry.”
- E. Marriage is a total commitment. (Tell the story of the chicken and the pig.)
 - 1. Real commitment lasts long after the goose bumps are gone.

II. Financial Pressure

- A. Maintain a balanced attitude toward money. Enjoy what God gives you, but do not love money. **1 Timothy 6:10** states that the **love of money** is the root of all evil. It is the root of much evil in families.
 - 1. Money is not as important as relationships – many men work too much in order to make more money. What the family needs and really wants is the man.
 - 2. Sometimes women go to work in order to have more, and the family suffers. They have more money – but less peace, love, and joy.

Example: A young lady came to work for us and finally realized she had not been satisfied on her jobs because God did not want her working. SHE WANTED A CAREER, and GOD WANTED HER AT HOME.

- B. Families are destroyed from the stress of having too much money (and not knowing how to properly handle it) and from the stress of not having enough of it.
1. **I Corinthians 7:31** – Do not overuse the enjoyments of this world. Live as though you are not absorbed by them.
- C. Tithe and give offerings – true financial prosperity is not possible unless you do.
1. You will either never have anything, or you will not enjoy what you have.
 2. **Malachi 3:8-12** is very plain.
- D. Who should handle the money? The husband is ultimately responsible for the “provision” of his family. **AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY GO TOGETHER!**
1. Some men want their wives to pay the bills while they spend what they want to.
 2. Both should be informed – but the woman should not have financial pressure.
 3. Be in agreement about major purchases – if you cannot agree, maybe there is no anointing to buy it.
 - a. She wants new furniture; he wants a new car.
 - b. He wants new golf clubs; she wants a new coat.
 - c. A giving attitude in a home will produce enough for all – **TAKE TURNS!**
- E. Do not live above your income – do not live below it either.
1. Charge cards – Don’t charge it if you do not have the money to pay for it.

2. Beware of “Buy now with no payments till next February.”
 3. If you can only afford the “minimum payment” on credit cards, you are in trouble.
 4. Credit industry standards – You are in trouble if more than twenty percent of your gross income is spent on consumer debt (credit cards, personal or student loans, car payment, furniture payment – everything other than the mortgage).
 5. You are in trouble when you borrow money on one credit card to make a payment on another one.
 6. You are in trouble when you start taking all the “pre-approved credit cards” because the ones you have are full.
- F. **Proverbs 22:7** – It is a plot. . . . *the borrower is servant to the lender.*
1. He that goes borrowing, goes sorrowing!
 2. Get out of debt and stay out of debt.
 3. **Romans 13:8** – Owe no man anything except to love him. (Debt and love do not seem to mix.)
- G. Alcoholism, drug abuse, and unfaithfulness are often triggered by unmanageable debt.
1. Pressure! Pressure! Pressure!

III. Poor Communication

- A. Communication is the process of exchange.
1. There is no communication if one does all the talking. Both must be allowed to express themselves honestly and fully.
- B. Communication is the lifeblood of every relationship.

1. PEOPLE CANNOT READ YOUR MIND.
- C. Many wounds are inflicted by a simple lack of communication.
1. A man forgets to call his wife and let her know he is going to be late – she has labored over a very special dinner that is ruined.
 2. A woman goes shopping and says, “I will be gone one hour.” She runs into a friend, and they decide to go to lunch. The husband is worried and offended that she placed the excitement of running into her friend above her verbal commitment to him.
- D. Communication shuts down the “accuser of the brethren.” If I tell you “I love you,” then Satan cannot bring accusation. If I tell you “I am sorry for hurting you,” Satan cannot accuse me to you.
1. If there is a possibility that something was misunderstood, it is always best to communicate.
- E. Stop making excuses!!
1. “I’m just not a people person; I am more of a loner.”
YOU CAN LEARN.
 2. “I’m just not a talker. It is hard for me to express myself.” YOU CAN LEARN.
- F. Rules or guidelines for correct communication
1. **I Corinthians 13:5** – The goal of communication is not to be right, but to understand your mate’s heart.
 2. Beware of the blame game.
 - a. **Genesis 3:12-13** – Adam and Eve
 - b. **Genesis 16:1-6** – Abraham and Sarah
 - c. **Numbers 21:5** – The Israelites and Moses

Example: Dave blamed me when he hit three golf balls in the lake. He said I threw off his timing when I was talking. But what caused all the others that day to go in the woods, in the sand, out of bounds, and into lakes?

3. **Psalm 51:6** – I desire truth in the inner being.
4. Don't drag up old garbage.
 - a. Some are like “Spiritual Bag Ladies” – they are still carrying all the garbage they have collected in life.
 - b. The devil starts pushing recall buttons on your mental computer.

Recall old wounds.

Recall the time that you did not tell me the truth.

Recall when you were unfaithful.

Recall when I trusted you, and you forgot to do what I asked.
 - c. **Hebrews 11:15** – Looking back gives constant opportunity to return to it.
 - d. **Isaiah 43:18-19** – Do not seriously remember or consider the things of old. I AM DOING A NEW THING.
5. During communication, give your spouse your full attention.
6. Words – Voice Tone – Body Language
 - a. Experts say:

93% is verbal (words alone)

68% is voice tone

25% is facial expression or body language

- b. **Proverbs 15:1** – *A soft answer turns away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger.*
- c. **Proverbs 15:4** – *A gentle tongue [with its healing power] is a tree of life, but willful contrariness in it breaks down the spirit.*
- d. **Proverbs 25:15** – *By long forbearance and calmness of spirit a judge or ruler is persuaded, and soft speech breaks down the most bone-like resistance.*

7. Timing

- a. Pray first – especially if the subject matter could be explosive. Never confront when angry!
- b. Right time – Rested, not in the middle of something else; not when other pressures are prevalent.

8. Trust God to fill your mouth.

Don't practice your speech for days in advance.

9. **Genesis 2:25** – Be honest. The man and his wife were both naked, which represents having a totally open and honest relationship.

- a. **Ephesians 4:15** – Speak the truth in love.

Men: When a woman honestly communicates her need, understand her; do not respond from the left side of your brain with logic only.

- b. Don't try to be humorous when someone is being transparent with you. Some do this because intimacy makes them uncomfortable.

10. Don't try to convince.

- a. **John 16:8** – The Holy Spirit convicts and convinces.

b. **I Peter 3:1** – A man won't be won by discussion, but by a wife with a godly life.

11. State your need, not your complaint.

a. Abusive statements:

“Why don't you ever help me with anything?”

“You never seem to care how I feel.”

“We never do anything together.”

b. Beware of “always” and “never” words.

IV. Children Without Discipline

A. **I Timothy 3:4-5** – A man must rule his own household well, keeping his children under control.

1. Not negative control, positive control.

2. **Proverbs 29:17** – *Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your heart.*

Proverbs 29:15 – *The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left undisciplined brings his mother to shame.*

B. Men should be the main disciplinarian, and women the comforter.

1. Wives, back your husband up – even if you do not agree, do not tell your children.

C. **Ephesians 6:4** – Fathers are not to be hard on their children.

D. **Proverbs 22:6** – *Train up a child in the way he should go [and in keeping with his individual gift or bent], and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

- E. People from abusive backgrounds often have problems properly disciplining their children.
 - 1. Those abused may abuse.
 - 2. They may go to the opposite extreme and feel that any discipline is too much.
- F. Don't permit your children to be your whole life – be sure you build a life together.

SOMEDAY YOUR CHILDREN WILL BE GONE!

V. Sex

- A. **I Corinthians 7:3-6** – Give your marriage partner their rights.
 - B. Do not withhold sex as a form of punishment.
 - C. A woman who does not meet her husband's sexual needs is inviting the "loose woman" to draw him into her trap.
 - 1. **Proverbs 7:15-27** – The loose woman entices the wounded.
 - D. Talk, communicate, and study some Christian books together. Do whatever you have to do, but be healthy in the sexual area of your marriage.
 - E. Don't just perform under obligation.
 - 1. You reap what you sow – I was giving nothing, so I was reaping nothing.
 - 2. Give yourself!
- II Corinthians 8:5** – The Corinthians gave not only their money, but also themselves.

VI. Trying To Change Your Mate

- A. Communication and manipulation are two different things.
- B. Love is not the “real God kind of love” unless it is unconditional.
 - 1. This is a big hurdle to get over.
 - 2. The world tells us the exact opposite. In the world, we are accepted IF we keep everyone happy and meet their needs and demands.
- C. Christians can love because the love of God is in them and must flow through them.
 - 1. Only a child of God who lives the crucified life can do this.
 - 2. **Galatians 2:20** – It is no longer “I” who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life I now live, I live by faith.

Faith that if I love you unconditionally because of my love for God and His unconditional love for me, He will reward me.
- D. People cannot change people. True change is from the inside out, not the outside in.
 - 1. **Romans 12:2** – Conformation or transformation
- E. The Law increases sin – it does not ever remove it!
 - 1. The Law may partially control behavior (out of fear); but it NEVER, NEVER changes the heart.
- F. If I cannot change them, what do I do while I am waiting for God to do it?
 - 1. Remember how much mercy God gives us every day!
(Psalm 103:8-14)

Lamentations 3:21-23 – It is because of His mercy that we are not consumed.

2. Pray for them. Most people that are hard to get along with are in bondage to something.
3. Enjoy your life!
4. Stop repeating over and over to yourself (and possibly to others), “I cannot stand any more of this; I am not putting up with this much longer.”

Instead, you should say: “Lord, I want Your will; give me grace. I believe that You will not allow more to come on me than I can bear. I am here as long as You say for me to stay. I will leave only if You tell me to go!”

5. Think creative, loving thoughts. Thoughts operate in the spiritual realm – read fig tree story!
6. Do not pray for positive things and talk about the negative things to your friends.

G. Humble yourself and realize YOU could not change a flea!!!
(Jeremiah 17:5-8)

1. **I Peter 5:5b** – God opposes, frustrates, and defeats us until we humble ourselves; and then He gives grace. GOD HELPS THE HUMBLE – not those who help themselves, as the world states!

H. Methods used to change people

1. Nagging – **Proverbs 21:9, 25:24**
2. Conversation – Talk about it, but do not be ALWAYS talking about it. **I Peter 3:1** – You cannot win the man with conversation alone.

3. Guilt – Conviction is the Holy Spirit’s ministry.
4. Threats
5. Punishment – Withholding sex, conversation, or companionship; not taking care of yourself physically; not taking care of the house or cooking decent meals
6. Fits – Pouting, screaming, yelling, prolonged anger, etc.

Peace, Order, And A Pleasant Atmosphere

I. The Importance Of Unity And Peace

- A. **Psalm 133** – How pleasant it is when we dwell together in unity.
 - 1. The anointing flows.
 - 2. Blessings flow.
- B. **II Timothy 2:23-24** – The servant of the Lord MUST NOT strive.
- C. **I Peter 3:10-11** – If you want peace, you have to PURSUE PEACE.
 - 1. **Hebrews 12:14** – *Strive to live in peace with everybody . . .*
- D. **John 14:27** – Jesus left His peace. Stop allowing yourself to be agitated, disturbed, and upset.

II. Order Precedes Peace.

- A. God favors order – we see it in creation (seasons, the sun, moon, and stars). There is a certain order of events that must take place before a seed will produce a harvest (seed planted in fertile ground at the correct time of year, with the correct amount of water and sunshine).
 - 1. **Genesis: Chapter 1** – The earth was in chaos, and God brought order. It was WITHOUT FORM, and it was an empty waste. Many lives are the same way!
- B. Keep your house in order – have some schedule, require some discipline, and plan ahead.
- C. Do not be vague – family members should know what is expected of them, and they should be required to do it.

D. No order means strife.

III. God Established Authority For Order.

A. **Ephesians 5:21-24** – Wives submit to your husbands.

1. **I Peter 3:1,5** – Wives submit to husbands, be secondary to and dependent upon them. Adapt!

2. **Submit** (defined/Greek) – To retire, withdraw, or yield.

(Webster's) – To surrender to the will of another; to commit something to the judgment of another; to yield to another's opinion; or GIVE IN.

Subject (defined/Greek) – To stay under another. Primarily a military term referring to rank. To be subdued, to obey or be subject to under obedience.

3. **James 4:7** (KJV) – *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

We win the war when we stay under proper authority and leadership.

B. **Colossians 3:18** – Submit as is right and fitting in the Lord.

1. I should resist and confront manipulation and control.

2. I should never submit to things that would be against the Word of God.

Examples: Being forbidden to go to church, watching pornographic movies, allowing perversion in sex, stealing, lying, etc.

C. **I Corinthians 11:3-13** – Head covered and uncovered can also be symbolic of being under authority.

1. Adam harkened to his wife, and the world has never been the same.
 2. Abraham listened to Sarah, and they had to deal with Ishmael for years and years.
- D. **Romans 13:1-5** – Obey all authority for it keeps things flowing in divine order.
1. **I Peter 2:13** – *Be submissive to every human institution and authority for the sake of the Lord . . .*
- E. **II Thessalonians 2:7** – Rebellion is the antichrist spirit.

IV. Learn To Manage Anger.

- A. **Ephesians 4:26-27** – Anger mismanagement is one of the major causes of marriage breakups.
1. Anger mismanagement causes abuse – physical in some cases, emotional (shutting people out), and especially verbal abuse.
- B. Anger is an emotion – a negative emotion.
1. You must manage it, or it will manage you!
 2. Anger (defined/Vine's/Greek) – A natural impulse that came to be known as the strongest of all passions. Wrath!
 3. **Proverbs 29:22** – *A man of wrath stirs up strife, and a man given to anger commits and causes much transgression.*
- C. **Proverbs 14:29** – *He who is slow to anger has great understanding . . .*
1. What does he understand? The emotion of anger has destructive qualities.
- D. **Proverbs 16:32** – *He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty . . .*

1. To have control over negative emotions makes one stronger than having a strong arm or a highly educated mind.
2. Satan cannot control such a person.

V. The Truly Wise Are Stingy With Advice.

A. **I Thessalonians 4:11** – *To make it your ambition and definitely endeavor to live quietly and peacefully, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands . . .*

1. Mind your own business! Is everything your spouse does your business?
2. Respect privacy (my purse/Dave’s wallet).

B. Respect your spouse’s opinions and individuality.

1. Learning to respect Dave’s opinion was a major breakthrough for our marriage relationship.
2. Pride causes disrespect of others.

Proverbs 3:7 – *Be not wise in your own eyes . . .*

C. “I THINK I AM RIGHT, BUT I MAY BE WRONG” was a big breakthrough for us!

D. Why men do not like advice from their wives

1. They do not feel trusted or admired. He needs to feel admired, but instead he feels put down.
2. God has put in them “headship” – they want to “lead” their family. Some may resort to “control” because the wife will not follow their “lead.”

E. Why women like to give advice

1. They are called in a supportive role – they may feel they are supporting or helping him.
2. Must learn when you are helping your mate and when you are helping to make a mess.
3. I am called as a teacher, but I had to learn when and who to teach (not my husband, grown children, or other teachers).

F. What about constructive criticism or advice that is really needed?

1. Timing – approach – attitude – voice tone – right choice of words are all important. Do not be harsh, hard, sharp, pressing, demanding, bossy, insistent, or threatening. (Let us examine our ways.)

USE A LITTLE PSYCHOLOGY – the Apostle Paul did!
(II Corinthians 9:1-3)

2. Example: If he is wearing clothes that don't match, do not say, "That really looks dumb together; you can't wear that out on the street."

You may say, "Honey, you look great in most everything you wear; but that purple shirt and those pants together just don't do you justice. Would you put on the blue one if I get it for you?"

G. If you ask him to carve the Thanksgiving turkey, and then proceed to advise him on how to do it – he feels mistrusted and is more determined to do it his own way. Let him go until he asks for advice! Then he still feels he is in the lead.

Women like help. If she is carving the turkey, and he offers to help – she feels loved and cared for.

BEWARE OF TRYING TO GIVE WHAT YOU NEED!!!!

H. If a woman suggests her husband seek the advice of an expert, he may feel insulted.

1. I always thought Dave was just proud and stubborn, and it made me mad that he would not go to other people.

MEN NEED TO FIND WAYS TO SHOW THEY CARE!
WOMEN NEED TO FIND WAYS TO SHOW THEY TRUST!

VI. Humility Precedes Peace.

- A. **James 3:13-18** – Humility is the fruit and attribute of true wisdom.
 1. Without wisdom, the home will never be built properly.
- B. **Verse 14** – Strife is not wisdom; do not deny the truth and be in pride.
- C. **Verse 16** – Where there is strife, there will be confusion, rebellion, and every evil work.
 1. **Ephesians 4:27** – Do not give the devil an open door or an opportunity.
- D. **Verse 17** – Wisdom has attributes you can look at and see. If they are missing, wisdom is missing. Without wisdom, things eventually cave in or fall apart.
 1. Pure, peace loving, courteous, considerate, gentle; willing to yield to reason, full of compassion and good fruit, and straightforward
- E. **II Timothy 2:23-24** – Humility can stay out of conversations that are leading to strife.
- F. Humility can apologize (even when the person does not think he or she was wrong). Remember, love “sacrifices” its right to be right.

Build Your House On The Rock

I. Are You Building On The Rock Or Sand?

- A. **Matthew 7:24-27** – Hearing the Word and doing it is the key to success.
- B. Satan will attack (the rain, flood, or wind).
 - 1. **Ephesians 6:12** – *For we wrestle not with flesh and blood . . .*
- C. **Psalms 119:105** – *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*
- D. **James 1:22** – If a person looks into the Word and does not “do” the Word, he is deceiving his own self.
- E. **John 13:17** – If you know about “washing feet” (serving) and do it, you will be blessed.

II. The Virtuous Woman

- A. **Proverbs 31:10** – *A capable, intelligent, and virtuous woman . . . She is far more precious than jewels and her value is far above rubies or pearls.*
 - 1. **Proverbs 12:4** – *A virtuous and worthy wife [earnest and strong in character] is a crowning joy to her husband, but she who makes him ashamed is as rotteness in his bones.*
 - 2. **Proverbs 18:22** – *He who finds a [true] wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.*

If you have a good wife, God has shown you favor; you should appreciate her and thank God.
 - 3. **Proverbs 19:14** – *House and riches are the inheritance from fathers, but a wise, understanding, and prudent wife is from the Lord.*

B. **Proverbs 31:10-31** – The qualities of the virtuous woman! Some of the most outstanding qualities:

1. **Verse 11** – Her husband can trust her, rely on her, and depend on her. She is faithful; she does what she says she will do. If he leaves her with a responsibility, she makes sure she takes care of it.
2. **Verse 12** – She comforts and encourages him (not chastise, nag, or advise).
3. **Verse 13-15, 27** – She is a hard worker (not lazy).
4. **Verse 16** – She keeps her priorities in line.
5. **Verse 17** – She stays strong spiritually, physically, and mentally.
She prays, exercises, and does not worry!
6. **Verses 18, 25** – She does not give up or become negative and depressed in difficulty.
7. **Verse 20** – She cares about other people showing her heart attitude.
8. **Verse 21** – She keeps her family covered with the blood of Jesus Christ. She watches and prays.
9. **Verse 19, 22** – She is a sharp dresser. She would not look like an old hag when he comes home at night.
10. **Verse 26** – She uses great wisdom with her mouth.
11. **Verse 23, 28** – Her husband is well known because of her. Her children rise up and call her blessed.

C. **II Peter 1:5-7** – All seven Christian virtues are seen in this woman.

1. Diligence, excellence, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness (which is patience and endurance), godliness, and Christian love.

III. The Spiritual Man

- A. David was a man after God's own heart.
 - 1. A worshiper – He loved God and was bold about it.
- B. A man of prayer – One who seeks God.
 - 1. The head of every man is Christ.
- C. The man is the head – He gives direction, but he must also take responsibility.
 - 1. When strife tries to get in, he must deal with it.
 - 2. **Matthew 12:25** – Any kingdom divided is coming to destruction.
 - 3. Must confront and deal with issues. Cannot be passive.

Your job in the home is not the television.
- D. Men should rise up and be the spiritual head of their home.
 - 1. Lead the family in giving.
 - 2. Lead the family in serving.
 - 3. Lead the family by example, as well as instruction.
- E. You have the logistical responsibilities of financial support, parenting (correcting the children), etc. but being “THE SPIRITUAL HEAD” sets everything in order.
 - 1. Wisdom comes from seeking God.
 - 2. The beginning of wisdom is the reverential fear and awe of God.
 - 3. You know He means what He says, so you do what He says.
- F. You build your house on “The Rock,” not the sand!

Living With An Insecure Person

I. Low Self-Esteem

A. Low self-esteem and negative treatment of others is closely related.

1. **Hurting people hurt people.**
2. If I do not like myself, I cannot like others.
3. If I do not value and appreciate myself, I cannot give it to others.
4. If I do not love myself, I cannot love others.

B. People cannot give away something they do not have.

1. People get married and promise to “love one another.” They intend to do so, but quickly discover they have no love to give away.

They can spend all of their life dealing with bad fruit without ever getting to the root.

2. Many do not know what love is when they marry. They have never had any, and may have never seen any real love displayed.
3. **I John 3:18** - . . . *let us not love [merely] in theory or in speech but in deed and in truth (in practice and sincerity).*

C. The unloved person has an unlimited source available to them.
GOD LOVES YOU.

1. **I John 4:16-18** – Learning to receive the love of God brings healing and removes fear.

2. People who abnormally fear being hurt cannot properly love. Love means a certain measure of emotional pain.
- D. Receiving the love of God and properly loving yourself are vital to loving others.

II. Will Marriage Fix The Problem?

- A. Do not expect your partner to give you a sense of self-worth. Only God can give you that!
1. Unrealistic expectations pressure relationships.
 2. The secure partner will eventually feel overwhelmed, and it will turn into resentment. There will be a sense of unfairness.
 3. People with consistent problems eventually “drain” the other person.
- B. What happens when your family has to keep you “fixed”?
1. No one can dare be honest with you.
 2. They “must” like and applaud everything you do.
 3. They live under the law. They are not giving to you (compliments, gifts, help, etc.) out of desire, but out of demand.
 4. The constant nagging fear is ever present, “If I do this or don’t do that, (name) will get upset.”
- C. Insecure people are easily offended.
- D. Their life is controlled by their “feelings.”

- E. Insecure people are either:
 - 1. Very selfish
 - OR
 - 2. Martyrs (self-sacrificing but for wrong motives)

III. Other Pressures That Insecurity And Low Self-Esteem Bring

- A. An insecure person often looks for worth in what they own.
Philippians 3:3 – “Put no confidence in the flesh.”
 - 1. This can pressure a husband to get his wife many things he really cannot afford.
 - 2. It could send Mom out working when really the entire family would be better off if she were home. Insecurities in husband or wife could cause this. Some men insist that their wives work simply because they have an unhealthy desire to keep up with their friends.
- B. Insecure people either become workaholics, or they are so insecure they fear trying to succeed at anything.
 - 1. I was a worker, but I blamed my family because “I” had to work all the time.
- C. They are frequently perfectionists.
 - 1. They have an unbalanced perspective concerning reality.
 - 2. **Ephesians 4:1-3** – They live in unrealistic expectations. They must learn to make allowances for weaknesses and flaws.
 - 3. When their surroundings are perfect, they “feel” better about themselves. But it is only temporary. As soon as perfection disappears (which it always does), they are feeling unstable again.

- D. They are desperate to “impress” others; therefore, they try to earn love and acceptance by what they do.
 - 1. People in relationship with them never truly feel loved; they feel manipulated. The insecure person is more concerned with avoiding rejection than building healthy relationships.
 - 2. THIS IS A SPIRITUAL PROBLEM THAT CAN BE FELT AND SENSED IN THE SPIRIT.
 - 3. They are “doing” for others in order to be loved – not to give love.

IV. How Can You Help A Partner With Low Self-Esteem?

- A. **Ephesians 5:29** – No man hates his own flesh, but nurtures (nourishes) it.
 - 1. Nourish (Greek) – To rear or feed, as in God’s care for Israel. To nurse, bring up, to bring from out of. To train up.
- B. Example: Show two plants – one that has been nourished and one that has not.
- C. God did not give up on Israel – nourish refers to God’s care for Israel.
- D. Edify, assure of your love in a variety of ways (verbally, loving acts, loving touches, and affection).
- E. Confront (be sensitive to God’s timing).
 - 1. God gave me time to get grounded in His Word; then He began speaking to my nourisher (Dave).
 - 2. Nurture (Greek) – To nurture also means to train. See chastisement.

Chastisement – To train children, educate, instruct; training that is gracious and firm.

F. Men with low self-esteem can be built up by their wives following the scriptural pattern for wives.

1. **Ephesians 5:33** – Respects, reverences, notices, regards, honors, prefers, venerates, esteems, defers to, praises, loves, admires – and does it all exceedingly!
2. (Share example of a couple who was making no progress until the woman heard from God to begin treating him the way she wanted him to be.)
 - a. He had never been honored. She, by faith, began honoring him before he acted honorably.
 - b. She began respecting his opinion, even though she frequently did not agree with it.

G. Do not allow your insecure partner to make you co-dependent.

1. If their joy is dependent on their problem, do not let your joy be dependent on how they are responding to their problem on any given day.

H. A false sense of responsibility will not help.

1. Being a spouse does not make one a savior.
2. Pray and realize that only God can be God.

V. **Dysfunctional Husbands And Wives**

A. Dysfunction causes us to live below what God intended.

B. When we function according to His pattern, we receive all that He purchased.

1. Righteousness, Peace, and Joy – life abundant in every way!
- C. Character disorder – There are generations of people today with deeply flawed character simply because no one is taking the time in school or at home to “train children according to God’s ways.”
1. Without the Word of God, people will spend their lives reacting to old wounds, emotions, feelings, and wrong mind-sets, etc. Reacting, reacting, reacting – trying to find a partner who will react properly when they react improperly.
 2. With the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, dysfunctional people can learn to function according to the Word of God and have superior lives.

