



I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes

You can expect a Miracle from God Today!

Christian Marriage

Marriage Relationships

I will try to walk a blameless path, but how I need your help, especially in my own home, where I long to act as I should

Psalms 101:2 (Living Bible)

Marriage.....	1
Men ♂ and Women ♀	3
H.O.M.E.S. (Helping Our Mate Excel Supernaturally!)	6
The 10 “C’s” in Marriage.....	10
Recipe for a Rewarding Marriage	25
Three Biblical Principles of Love	27
Basic Principles of a Loving Relationship	28
Marriage Killers	28
Divorce and Re-marriage	31
Marriage Vows, Advice and Values.....	35
A Prayer For Marriage	39

Minister: Revd Paul S Fermor M.Th.

69 Mill Hill, Deal, Kent. CT14 9EW – www.dealpentecostal.co.uk

01304 380131 - 07710 182013 – dealpentecostal@gmail.com

Registered Charity N° 1054371 - Deal Pentecostal Church is in fellowship with Assemblies of God Churches (GB).

Marriage

Marriage is an example of God's love, illustrating the relationship between Jesus and the Church.

Eph.5:31-32 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

Marriage was designed for companionship and help

Gen.2:18 The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Marriage was designed for reproduction

Gen.1:28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Marriage is a covenant

Marriage is a covenant not just an agreement. This means that marriage is made before God and is permanent

Malachi 2:14 You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

Marriage is pure

Marriage is holy, honourable and pure and must not be polluted.

Heb.13:4 Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

In non-Christian marriages, the Church has no jurisdiction.

1Cor.5:12 What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside?

In spiritually-mixed marriages, if the unbeliever leaves the believing spouse, the believer may remarry.

1Cor.7:17 Nevertheless, each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him and to which God has called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches.

In Christian marriages, divorce is not an option for those living in faith. At least one of the partners has to be in total rebellion against God to get divorced.

1Cor.7:10-11 *To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.*

Marriage is only for this life. In heaven marriage is between Jesus and the Church

Luke 20:34-36 *Jesus replied, "The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection.*

Eph.5:25-27 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*

Rev.21:2 *I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.*

God introduced divorce because of people's hard hearts and unbelief but He hates divorce.

Matt.19:8 *Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.*

Malachi 2:16 *"I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.*

Marriage is built on trust

We are not responsible for the way our parents brought us up, nor for our intelligence or looks. The only thing required of us is to be found *faithful*. Once the trust has been broken it takes years of heart-ache to restore.

1Cor.4:2 *Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.*

You will only build what you believe you need

Men ♂ and Women ♀

Men and women are different

The physical differences between men and women are obvious but not everyone appreciates the emotional and thought pattern difference between the sexes. Once these differences are recognised many of the marital problems are not as large as they were thought to be. Example: Women like to set a table ascetically - to look nice, everything in its right place. Men like to set a table practically - cutlery in the middle will do. If we can appreciate how our spouse thinks, we will try to please them and take that little extra care. It is a much better way than falling out over your differences. Don't fall out over trivial things; men behave like men and women behave like women! They can't help it—it's just the way it is!

Gen.1:27 *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

We have a choice

Husbands were born male but choose to be men. So also, wives were born female but choose to be women. Many women who dress like men, often behave like them. Men often refuse to take up their responsibilities too.

Job 40:7 *"Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me.*

Col.3:18 *Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.*

♂ Husband

The husband is head of the household which means that he is responsible for its welfare. The husband is responsible for the household's provision (not necessarily to earn or spend all the income though) and protection (he should deal with trouble including unwelcome visitors). He should be willing to take the initiative (but without stifling the wife's initiative though). He should be the first to go without if there is a lack in any area. The husband should love his wife and family as Jesus loves the Church.

1Tim.2:8 *Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing.*

Eph.5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*

1Pet.3:7-9 *Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.*

♀ **Wife**

A wife should submit to the strengths of her husband (but not his weakness). Never submit to anybody's weakness. Beauty comes from your spirit not your body or clothes

Eph.5:21 *Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

1Pet.3:2-6 *when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewellery and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.*

See your spouse as your strength

Your spouse is your helpmate, your (enjoyable) lot and your strength - not your problem. Always endorse through strengths and encourage through weaknesses. Satan is trying to weaken, divide and conquer but if we keep in faith he will never succeed!

Gen.2:18-25 *The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one*

of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman', for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

Eccl.9:9 *Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labour under the sun.*

♂ Basic needs of a Husband	♀ Basic needs of a Wife
Sexual fulfilment	Affection
Recreational companionship	Conversation
An attractive wife	Financial support
Domestic support	Family commitment
Admiration	Honesty and openness (<i>women don't expect to be deceived, e.g. Eve</i>)
♂ Desires of a Husband	♀ Desires of a Wife
Reasonably good housekeeper	Kind, considerate, thoughtful mate
Reasonably good cook	Romantic & affectionate: not sexual
Interesting & exciting sex partner	Good father to children
Good mother	Good provider

What does **KIND** mean to a wife?

What does **REASONABLE** mean to a husband?

Don't judge a man by what he says (or preaches) but by what he does and also by his home and family and especially by his wife: how she looks, dresses, conducts herself and her self-esteem. A wife's glory is her husband and she will give you the true picture of the man!

Being single is good. We are born single and die single. Being alone is not good (whether we marry or not).

Psalm 68:5-6 *A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families, he leads forth the prisoners with singing;*

Husband, your wife is your lot in this life so enjoy her!

Wife, your husband is your lot in this life so enjoy him!

H.O.M.E.S. (Helping Our Mate Excel Supernaturally!)

Marriage should produce a home

A house becomes a home when you make it your abode, your dwelling place. Spend time and make your house your home. Make it a personal place to you. Wherever you live, enjoy your home (whether renting or buying) and make it special. Some couples have a “*Bed and Breakfast*” mentality and fail to make their house a home, spending every available moment somewhere else. Children especially, need the security of a home, a place where they belong.

Jn.14:1-4 Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.

Jn.14:23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home (abode or dwelling) with him."

Marriage is a culture shock because every aspect of your life is totally affected.

It is an on-going relationship; a life-time commitment. Besides receiving Jesus Christ as your Lord, Marriage will be the most important decision you will make.

Choosing your spouse is of the greatest importance.

Courting is a careful and loving “getting-to-know-you” period with a (strict) code of conduct. It is too late after you are married to discover that you can't cope with your spouse's less refined traits!

Dating is often a lie-based relationship

1. You are out to impress - to be seen at our best.
2. You want to make a good impression even if it involves a little bit of deception: Example: She asked "*What kind of car do you have?*" He said, "*A Vet.*" She thought he meant a Corvette, however he owned a Chevette!

In marriage you can't keep up the false impressions every day for forty years

Causes of faulty spouse selection:

Getting married too quickly	Getting married too young
Too eager to be married	Choosing a spouse to please others
Experience base is too narrow	Unrealistic expectations
Un-addressed personality or behaviour problems	Conflict in values, interests and purpose

Setting Priorities

The main priorities of life:

- 1 God
- 2 Spouse
- 3 Children
- 4 Church
- 5 Work

Many times husbands put their careers (including their ministry) before their wife and wives put children before their husband. Wife, fulfil your husband more than his job.

Husband fulfil your wife more than the children.

We train by example. If Church is not important to us it will never be important to our children. A man is husband, father and minister - in that order. He is not a minister (either spiritual i.e. Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor or Teacher etc. or secular i.e. Milkman, Postman, Director, Doctor, etc.) in his home but a husband and father.

Lk.14:26-27 *"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."*

N.B. hate in this context does not mean despise or loath but rather shows our order of priority

Our life including Marriage and Family must be based on God's Word

Ps.119:27-32 *Let me understand the teaching of your precepts; then I will meditate on your wonders. My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word. Keep me from deceitful ways; be gracious to me through your law. I have chosen the way of truth; I have set my heart on your laws. I hold fast to your statutes, O LORD; do not let me be put to shame. I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.*

Your spouse is NOT your enemy

If you are going to fight - fight your own stinking thinking; satan is your enemy!

Eph.6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

Speak well of your spouse

Don't talk of your spouse or your marriage in derogatory or hurtful terms, not even as a joke. Your spouse is too precious to degrade.

Prov.26:18-19 *Like a madman shooting firebrands or deadly arrows is a man who deceives his neighbour and says, "I was only joking!"*

Lk.6:45 *The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.*

Don't participate in ungodly counsel

Ps.1:1-2 *Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.*

Love is the first to say "I'm sorry".

Love is not "never having to say I'm sorry!" - as in the film *Love Story*. Love forgives fast. There is no growth in God's Kingdom without repentance. Jesus proclaimed a message of repentance to the people because the Kingdom of God was within their grasp, not because the people were rotten sinners and going to hell! The repentance message is positive and is described as exhorting. Repentance includes:

True repentance will always include these 5 A's

Acknowledgement of the wrong

Apology for the wrong

Action of determination to change

Appreciation of God's forgiveness

Attitude of grace, gratitude and gentleness towards God and people.

***2Cor.7:10-11** Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.*

***Matt.4:17** From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."*

***Lk.3:3** He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.*

***Lk.3:18** And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them.*

Nuggets of strength

- Struggle is the proof you have not yet been conquered.
- Never speak words that make satan think he is winning.
- Adversity is the breeding ground for miracles.
- Those unwilling to be conquered rarely are.
- Immaturity is the inability to delay self-gratification.
- You can take the pressure if you have a purpose.

***Prov.24:10** If you falter in times of trouble, how small is your strength!*

***2Cor.4:8-9** We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.*

The 10 “C’s” in Marriage

1. Children

In God's mind, the home is the Church in miniature.

A child's understanding of God is modelled on their relationship with their parents. This understanding of God stays with them into adulthood. The greatest gift we can give our children is to love our spouse.

Ps.127:3 Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him.

Three major rules for training children

i Consistency — **Say what you mean and mean what you say.**

This is the foundation of trust. Never make threats that you can't or won't carry out (i.e. *if you do that once more I'll ...*). Be careful what you say (i.e. *I'll kill you; I hate you; I don't love you, etc.*)

ii Agreement

Never contradict each other or argue in front of the children. Back your spouse's decision - even if you disagree, (or at least back down from contradicting your spouse in front of the children) and sort out an agreeable decision later.

iii Relationship

Parents and children are part of the same family. Where Jesus is Lord there is unity and in His presence there is fullness of joy. This includes the family. Enjoy each other and have fun.

Training your family:

Rules and regulations without relationship breeds rebellion. Training is more than just teaching – it is rewarding and encouraging good behaviour and not allowing bad behaviour.

Training means to mould the character, instruct by experience, drill, to make obedient to orders, to put or point in an exact direction, to prepare for a contest. **Teaching** means to instruct or inform the mind. We are preparing our children for the contest of life. All parents train their children: either consciously or unconsciously. We can even train our children to ignore us until we get cross or worse! You don't need to shout - they can be trained to obey a normal conversational tone.

The promise to the parents who **train** their child is, "*when he is older he will not depart from it.*"

Gen.18:19 *For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him."*

Prov.22:6 *Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.*

Why train or discipline your children?

Remember that our children's understanding of Almighty God as their Father will be formed by our relationship with them and especially by the way we discipline them. Just as God rarely uses physical discipline with us, **so smacking is a last resort and not the first option.** Our children can be trained to obey us because they want to and not because they are made to! **It is God's love that changes us, not His wrath!**

2Cor.5:14 *For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.*

1Jn.3:1 *How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.*

1Jn.4:16-19 *And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us.*

1Pet.4:8 *Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.*

Jn.13:1 *Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.*

To train our children properly is to obey God.

Love will pay the price A selfish love wants an easy way out If God doesn't discipline us, we are illegitimate (i.e. He is not our Father). We are not being godly parents if we don't discipline our children.

Heb.12:6-7 *because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father?*

Discipline now, will deliver us from disaster later.

Any discipline (including spanking) is unpleasant, however after correction, reaffirm, comfort, hug and love. Speak your forgiveness, love and acceptance. Scolding and nagging keeps building resentment. Never send your child to his room as a punishment – he or she will only learn rejection from you, and also by implication from God. Discipline done correctly should **never** be associated with **anger**. Training is for the good of a child. Tyranny has no place in training

Lam.3:27 *It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young.*

Prov.3:11-12 *My son, do not despise the LORD'S discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the LORD disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.*

Col.3:21 *Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.*

Eph.6:4 *Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

Heb.12:11 *No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.*

Here are some excuses commonly used to avoid training children

Our child doesn't mean to be bad - he just has a mind of his own!

Prov.22:15 *Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.*

I love him so much. If I correct him, he will think that I don't love him anymore

Prov.13:24 *He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.*

Discipline is not acceptable today.

Prov.23:13-14 *Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death.*

But they are so young and little.

Prov.19:18 Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death.

If I correct him he will rebel.

Prov.29:17 Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul.

Don't be afraid to let your children undergo hardships

As parents we want to shelter our children from suffering but we must never be afraid to let them suffer hardships

Acts 14:22 strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said.

Rom.5:2-5 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

2Cor.12:10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

“No” is not rejection - just a change of direction

When you say “No” try to give a positive alternative. A person who has not learnt to handle “no” as a child, is rarely able to receive correction as an adult. Undisciplined children develop into undisciplined adults. When God shuts a door it is always to open another one:

Rev.3:7-8 What he opens no-one can shut, and what he shuts no-one can open. I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no-one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

God's Word is the standard for our home

<u>Discipline</u>	<u>Punishment</u>
Builds relationships by correcting the behaviour while accepting the child	Rejects the child who has behaved undesirably; the result is alienation
Focuses on present learning experience without harshness	Focuses on misbehaviour, causing hurt
Displays anger appropriately against the deed & not the doer	Displays anger against the doer and uses power to gain own way
Allows for co-operation and mutual respect to develop	Sets up power struggles and cycles of revenge and counter-revenge
Motivates by firm kindness and consistency	Motivates by fear

2. Cash - £.p.

Money is the unseen force destroying most marriages.

Learn to separate money from everything else. Money is your servant not your Lord. Most people experience a financial crisis sometime in their life. A crisis is only a dangerous opportunity. You have had a crisis before - you will survive. A financial crisis is usually caused by one or more of these factors

1. poor budget
2. excessive spending
3. no job
4. sickness
5. unplanned emergencies

1Tim.6:10 *For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.*

You need a budget

It is a necessary good. When your outflow exceeds your income, your upkeep becomes your downfall.

Sample budget:

10% God - tithes

2-5% offerings and gifts

25% tax (income, council etc.), housing (rent or mortgage)

20% food

30% utilities (heating, water, telephone etc.), clothing, material expense, transportation.

10% entertainment, gifts, home improvements etc.

[By the way don't employ a Christian who does not tithe - they are too great a risk! If they steal from God, they will have no qualms about stealing from you! (*Mal.3:8*) Tithing is giving cheerfully and in faith, the 1st percentage of your income to God through your local Church.]

Stay in agreement

Happy is the couple who live on what they need, not what they want. What seems so necessary today may not even be desirable tomorrow. Many people fail because they want the rewards without working for them. This is the principle of gambling and a recipe for problems and disaster.

Lk.22:35 *Then Jesus asked them, "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?" "Nothing," they answered.*

Marriage is a partnership

If one of the partners cannot be trusted to keep to the budget, it will be very difficult to have a happy and successful marriage. By becoming one flesh within marriage you lose **your** possessions (including money) and gain **our** possessions. **There should be a joint account for the home budget**

Amos 3:3 *Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?*

Discuss purchases and bills

Make a plan and set a level of money that either of you can spend without discussing the purchase with your spouse. Any purchase over that amount must be a joint decision which then means that there is joint responsibility!

Never marry for money

BUT...a woman needs (and expects) to be supported by her husband as well as (or better than) her father did while she was growing up. Most married women resent **having** to work and often “short circuit” when they are the bread winners of the home. Wives who do work, don’t want the family’s needs to be **dependent** on them. If the wife has to work to supplement the family income it should be with a goal, an objective or a span of time in mind

Options available to compensate for insufficient money:

1. Husband can work longer or take 2 jobs and see less of his wife and family.
2. His wife can go to work
3. Lower the standard of living
4. Sow a seed by faith and believe God for the harvest

Normally the answer lies in option 4 and at least one other option as well.

Proper attitude regarding money

***1Tim.6:6-10** But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.*

Prosperity

Prosperity means to have a good journey; to be helped along the road (of life). The definition of prosperity depends on personal preference and geographical location.

You can gain by faith what you cannot buy with money

You don’t need faith for what you can afford - just go and buy it!

You need faith for the things you cannot afford!

The key to prosperity is that God gives seed to sow and bread to eat. His Word is better than wealth

2Cor.9:10-11 *Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.*

Ps.119:72 *The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.*

Matt.18:19 *"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.*

3. Christ

Put God and His kingdom first - Christ should be central to your life and marriage.

Matt.6:33 *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

Matt.22:36-38 *"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment.*

Don't marry an unbeliever

Marriage to an unbeliever is a recipe for disaster. You will have little in common and never be able to share your most precious asset - your faith.

2Cor.6:14-15 *Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever?*

Don't give any place to satan in your home

The devil accuses believers and opposes God, His Word and His Kingdom. Don't help or emulate satan.

Eph.4:27 *and do not give the devil a foothold.*

Obey God's Word

Jas.1:22 *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.*

Ps.119:9-11 *How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

4. Commitment

Marriage Commitment is two wills together, saying “I will”.

Don't look back to the past or live in regret for the past. The words “if only” should not be part of the Christian’s vocabulary.

Lk.9:62 *"No-one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."*

Leave the single life and the single thinking.

You can't live as a married person and think as a single person.

Don't marry, thinking that you'll change your partner. Those annoying foibles and peculiar quirks will be 100 times worse afterward the wedding!

Rom.12:1-2 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Commitment is not a feeling

Don't marry just for emotional love: marry because of God's will.

Commitment is not based on circumstances but on a grounded, founded decision for life. **Don't try to change your partner - change yourself and your spouse will respond to the change in you.**

5. Communication

Communication is a decision

Make it work. It will not change overnight but it will change.

Deut.30:19 *This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live*

Eph.6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

1Pet.3:7 *Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.*

Prov.18:21 *The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

The tongue is your steering wheel:

Bridle your tongue and control your body.

Jas.3:2 *We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check.*

Jas.3:6 *The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.*

Prov.23:7 *for he is the kind of man who is always thinking about the cost. [or, for as he thinks within himself, so he is^{AV}] "Eat and drink," he says to you, but his heart is not with you.*

Matt.12:34 *You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.*

Prov.16:24 *Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.*

Prov.15:30 *A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones.*

Stop using words to destroy.

Decide to do it now! Make a decision to love each other. Consider each other of great value. There is no such thing as a word void of power.

Lk.1:37 *For nothing is impossible with God."*

Rom.10:17 *Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.*

Appreciate - don't depreciate:

Value your spouse. Deciding to love means working at communication. Communication is making relationships with each other more important than one's own personal desire. Familiarity can breed contempt; be on your guard!

Matt.13:56-58 *Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" And they took offence at him. But Jesus said to them, "Only in his home town and in his own house is a prophet without honour." And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith.*

Make up your mind never to marry, or to be married to, a “nobody”! Your spouse is very special and deserves to be treated as such.

Disagreement does not mean rejection.

Disagree agreeably. Don't pretend you're somebody you're not. Keep trying to impress each other for the whole of your marriage not just the period before the wedding! When you were courting you always wanted to make an impression by being your best and looking your best; by putting your future spouse's welfare and comfort first - don't change!

I feel like I'm losing my identity:

You are! You do lose your identity in marriage but gain far more: all your dreams and visions are wrapped up together in “ONE FLESH”; **BUT** you never lose your individual value The spirit of pride wants identity - don't give it any!

Managers and Leaders

Managers manage what exists

Leaders create what doesn't exist - vision

You must be able to manage yourself before you can become a leader in your home

You must be able to manage your home before you can become a leader in your Church.

Be best friends before sex partners:

Sex gets old if you don't like your partner. Love is spelt TIME: whatever you love you will give your time to. Hug and hold each other every day, it gives security. Be each other's playmates and helpmate.

Listening is the key to communication

Hindrances to communication:

External: TV, paper, book, hobby, computer, phone, etc.

Internal: having prejudice, already have your mind made up, hearing only what you want to hear, or think you will hear.

How to improve communication:

1. Encourage your spouse to tell you more.
2. Don't interrogate
3. Summarise what you have heard
4. Avoid defence and judgement
5. Listen to the tone of their voice (and your voice too!)
6. Realise criticism is a plea for help

Ways to avoid trouble:

1. Never use cutting sarcasm (from Greek: *tearing the flesh*)
2. Never resort to name calling or assassinate your spouse's character (especially by making comparisons)
3. Never confront to bring guilt.
4. Never fight out of anger, get to the root and fight your own “*stinking thinking*”.
5. Get to the point: what are we fussing about? How can we fix it?
6. Don't try to be right - just solve the problem.
7. Forget who's to blame: relationships are more important than who's right.
8. Avoid criticising
9. Avoid absolutes (always, never, every time etc.)
10. Don't dig up the past when God has forgiven it!
11. No public arguments (even if you call them animated discussions!). Discuss disagreements in private
12. Your spouse is not a mind reader. Don't just leave it to their imagination - explain what you mean
13. Stay physically close including non-intimate touching (Helpmate and Playmate)
14. Always encourage, exhort, edify and esteem

Remember that if you disagree with God, you are always wrong.

God is looking at our heart not just appearances. You can be technically correct but still be wrong if you have a wrong attitude! All that is not of faith is sin - so you even if you are “right” you can be in sin!

Rom.14:23 ...everything that does not come from faith is sin.

Three ways we react to situations:

1. **Rejection** (“*you are stupid*”, “*I’m sorry you feel that way*”)
2. **Toleration** (showing a minor interest in what they are doing but with no real awareness)
3. **Acceptance** (total attention, eye to eye)

6. Caring

We need to care and communicate that we care

It doesn't cost to touch, talk, smile. You reap the benefits. Don't stop doing what attracted your spouse to you in the first place. You must **earn** respect and **build** your relationship

Prov.19:22 What a man desires is unfailing love; better to be poor than a liar.

The difference between relationship and fellowship:

Relationship is based on respect of position, office and experience

Fellowship is based on equality among equals

7. Creative

Romance - keep at it!

Romance takes creativity in dating and sex. Do new things - anything that is repetitive ceases to be romantic. Discover what romance is to your spouse. Being practical is not romance (like a can-opener for a birthday present). You can be romantic: learn how! Practice makes perfect but spontaneity is the key.

Four ingredients to romance

1. **Unexpected** - anything that repeats itself loses romance
2. **Dating** - husbands: plan it - get a baby-sitter
3. **Impractical** - practical kills romance
4. **Creative** - change everything but your mate

8. Chasing

Keep the dating or chase

Work on new impressions and surprises. Set aside time to date and romance. Don't feel guilty about children, money or time to minister to each other. Cleave - means never stop chasing

9. Caressing

Everyone needs to be hugged or touched. If you don't touch your spouse, someone else will. Everyone knows that babies want hugs. Women need hugs too, so husbands, hold your wife, hug her and be tender. Actually men need hugs as well, so wife, hug and hold your husband.

10. Copulation

Divine aspect of sex

Heb.13:4 Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

God designed and thought up sex

God created us in His image, He blessed the union and called it very good. Shame has no part in marriage

Gen.1:26-31 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it..." God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Gen.2:25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

See sex from God's Word

Intercourse means intimate communication. Sex doesn't need to be liberated but made Biblical. The Biblical term isn't sex but to "*know*" or to "*lie with*" The act of marriage is not the wedding service; it is the consummation or sexual intercourse. Modesty has no place in the bedroom. Sex is not something carnal, a lustful experience that you endure at night, lights out and under the blankets. Copulation was the first command God gave Adam & Eve: "*Be fruitful and increase in number*". God designed, ordained and commanded sex

Sex is a God-like act because we give ourselves totally 100%

1+1=1 God gave Eve to Adam. He did not give him Dolly, Molly and Polly (nor did He give him Steve!)

Rom.8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Matt.19:4-6 "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female', and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

Get the Biblical ideas of sex

For most of your life, pleasure is the goal, not pregnancy

Gen.18:12 So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?"

Caressing. However this is not a spectator sport

Gen.26:8 When Isaac had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked down from a window and saw Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah.

Every wife should be an uninhibited participator with her husband.

(Some have erroneously thought: "I have to endure this; I shouldn't enjoy it; only bad girls enjoy sex.")

Every husband should be a tender romancer with his wife

God commanded sex to be a delight.

Sex is the highest and most powerful emotion for man

Nothing builds self-confidence and self-esteem more; nothing makes you feel better. (*I'm loved, accepted. I'm beautiful. We are one.*)

There is no shame in sex. It is God given and sanctified in marriage.

Don't make it a chore; a hobby maybe, but never a chore.

When, where and how often? None of these are set in the Bible. Don't wait until you are exhausted in the evening. You can make love early morning or in the afternoon!

Defer rather than "*shut the door*" Mum's cooking, Dad comes home, gives Mum a pat or squeeze. he says "*not now*". Better to say "*later*"!

Only withhold sex from each other by mutual consent

1Cor.7:15 do not cheat each other of sexual intercourse ^{Phillips}; Do not withhold sexual intercourse ^{Moffat}

If you are not there yet, use your faith and watch your confession to advance

Frustration will lead to loss of interest which is the quickest way to kill your marriage. It is important that you don't demand something that makes your partner uncomfortable.

Some questions to ask yourself about your relationship

1. Is it positive?
2. Is it relaxed?
3. Is it pleasant?
4. Is it romantic?
5. Is it satisfying?

Men and Women

♂ Men	♀ Women
want sex	want romance
want a technique of how to make love	don't care about the technique of sex but feelings. <i>"How does he make me feel?"</i>
get tired of being told "NO"	don't say what they want because they don't want mechanics
Sex allows a man to feel his need for love	Receiving love helps a woman to feel her need for sex.

Recipe for a Rewarding Marriage

Eight ingredients of conflict resolution

a Recognise marriage as a "WE" business:

This is in number one position because I've never seen it fail. Any couple who gains a "we" perspective eventually experiences great success in marriage. But a marriage starts to shrivel when it becomes a matter of two "I's".

b Process the data as quickly as possible

Even though conflicts can lead to expansion and growth, there's nothing wonderful about prolonged conflict. The secret is to get it out in the open and deal with it. All the facts and feelings are expressed quickly and unequivocally.

c Stick to the subject

Nothing is quite so frustrating in the middle of a conflict as an emotion-laden comment that is total unrelated to the subject at hand. Such comments are thoroughly distracting, and they stall any effort to move toward resolution.

d Don't intimidate

When the heat is turned up and things get a little mean, some people become forced to self-preservation. They fear losing part of themselves in the process of thrashing out a disagreement. Panic builds, and they start throwing verbal punches. They become obsessed with winning - or at least not losing.

e No name calling

Not a single marital conflict in the history of mankind was ever resolved because one person called the other a derogatory name. It doesn't matter how creative the disparaging label is - if it is meant to depreciate and demean the other party, it isn't going to help over-come the problem. Every couple should establish this rule: **in the middle of conflict, no matter how heated or intense, there will be no name calling.**

f Turn up your listening sensitivity

In the midst of conflict, there is absolutely nothing that produces gains as dramatically as listening. When I open myself to what my partner is saying, resolution has begun. It works like magic. When you are listened to, you aren't nearly so eager to win at the other person's expense. To be listened to makes you want to listen.

g Practice give and take

Many of us have grown up yearning after, and fighting for, individual attainment. So we enter marriage with an inclination to take. What we must understand is that marriage is a partnership and therefore requires both give and take to be successful.

Rom.12:10 *Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves.*

h Celebrate every victory

Why is it that we often fail to recognise our victories? After the dust has settled and peace is restored, take your lover in your arms and say: *"We did it, Honey. We were totally at odds and yes, it was tense there for a while. But we overcame the hurdle. Congratulations!"*

2Cor.2:14 *But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.*

Three Biblical Principles of Love

1 Motive of unselfish love

Love can turn to lust when we demand. Do I make my spouse feel used just for my own pleasure? Abuse is abnormal use!

1Cor.13:4-7 *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

1Cor.6:12 *"Everything is permissible for me"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"—but I will not be mastered by anything.*

2 Mutual agreement is the basis of love

Phil.2:1-4 *If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

3 Mutual submission is the principle for limits

Passion can't grow in the presence of judgement or criticism. It needs to feel safe. Great sex is God's gift to those who are committed to creating loving and supportive relationships. Great sex is God's special gift to those who work hard to make love a priority in their lives. Sex can bring us together or push us apart. What we need is better, deeper understanding about sex. Women love great sex as much as men. The difference is, she doesn't feel her strong desire for sex unless her need for love is satisfied. She must feel loved and special to a man. To her love is more important than sex

Eph.5:21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Basic Principles of a Loving Relationship

1 The Principle of need

God commands us to meet our spouse's needs sexually. When a husband and wife have this concept and try to do everything they can to meet their spouse's need, they will develop a great relationship

2 The Principle of authority

When we marry, we give up the rights of our own body and turn the authority over to our spouse. It requires trust and applies equally to husband and wife. The easiest way to hurt someone is to withhold physical affection

3 The Principle of habit

We must not cheat our mate. God knew that if we did not have habitual sexual relationships, it would open the way to the devil. This is not a debatable issue. Make every effort to provide your mate with a good sexual release as an habitual part of your life together

Marriage Killers

1 Over-commitment and physical exhaustion.

No one ever said on their death bed, "*I wish I spent more time at the office! (or doing house-work!)*"

Psalms 127:2 In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves.

2 Financial Commitment

There are three classes of people:

1. The “*have’s*”
2. The “*have-not’s*”
3. The “*have not paid for what they have’s*”

3 Immaturity and Pettiness

People are only young once but they can be immature for a lifetime. Immaturity is basically selfishness because you think more of yourself than you should. Bear injustice with no ill will. Attitude is everything to God and your marriage. True maturity is to be able to suffer loss and keeping a sweet attitude. Most people can’t submit to God because they don’t believe that He will defend them! Two characteristics of maturity are generosity and forgiveness. Pettiness is also a symptom of immaturity. Pettiness is more concerned with the little things than the important things i.e. complaining about dust on the windows - clean it yourself if bothers you that much!

Heb.12:14 *Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no-one will see the Lord.*

Eph.4:15 *Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.*

4 Pride

"Temper is what gets us in trouble. Pride is what keeps us there." Mark Twain Pride is the original sin. If it was the downfall of Lucifer it can surely be your downfall!

Ezek.28:17 *Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendour. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.*

5 Spiritual disobedience

You can’t expect to live in harmony with your spouse if you are not prepared to obey God. Don’t complain if you get splinters when you go against the grain of Gods will.

1Pet.3:7 *Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.*

6 Being boring

The inability to enjoy life. *If you can find humour in anything you can survive it.*^{Bill Crosby}

Ps.16:11 *You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

7 Unreal expectations

Use your common sense and live in the real world. Don't set unreal standards for yourself or your spouse.

Ps.119:125 *I am your servant; give me discernment that I may understand your statutes. (Give me the common sense to apply your rules to everything I do.*^{TLB})

8 Lack of intimacy

Share your precious moments with your spouse, not your work-mates!

Ingredients for intimacy

- a. Desire. Set your desire on your spouse put him/her first
- b. Approachability. Always make time for your spouse
- c. Trust
- d. Time

SoS.2:14 *My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding-places on the mountainside, show me your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.*

9 Hindrances to the wife's response

1. Husband's stimulation in foreplay is mechanical
2. He is more concerned with technique than emotional intimacy
3. Overly anxious for his wife to reach an orgasm
4. Husband is boring in his approach
5. Not sensitive to wife's preferences
6. Deadly serious about sex

10 Avoid long absences

1Cor.7:2-5 *But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfil his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

11 50% of adultery begins at the work place

A smiling mate is more attractive than a grumpy one. Sex is a ministry - a body ministry. A ministry is done by faith and love not feelings. Examples of body ministry:

Gen.24:67 *Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebekah. So she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.*

2Sam.12:24 *Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and lay with her. She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The LORD loved him;*

We don't want to disappoint our partner, nor do we want to be demanding or be expected to do what doesn't feel comfortable or natural to us. Keep an open mind. It may be too much for now but consider it. A great sex secret is to build on the strengths you have and not focus on the problems or what you are missing

Divorce and Re-marriage

1 Marriage is so holy, pure and sacred that God will not sanction abuse

The Bible describes strong sanctions against people who abuse their marriage:

1Cor.5:4-5 *When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.*

1Cor.5:9-13 *I have written to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. But now I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."*

2 Marriage is under attack

The devil has always tried to destroy God's work, especially everything that involves or represents a relationship with God. When you are not trusting God completely, satan will attack your mind.

Gen.3:1 *Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"*

BUT we have the victory

Lk.10:18-19 *He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you."*

1Cor.15:57 *But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

3 Divorce is not an option for Believers

Violence is how God describes divorce. There has to be violence to separate what God has joined together

Mal.2:14-16 *You ask, "Why?" It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. Has not the LORD made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.*

4 Scriptural grounds for Divorce

a Marital unfaithfulness

Marriage is so holy, pure and sacred that God will not sanction abuse. If abuse becomes intolerable and continues to occur, God has made a way out: divorce. Abuse is abnormal use and includes violence, pornography, lust and other acts of immorality. Jesus states that marital unfaithfulness is ground for divorce. Here the phrase "marital unfaithfulness" is translated from the Greek word, *porneia*.

This word means more than just the physical act of sex outside of marriage. It also means pornography, lust and other acts of immorality.

Matt.5:31-32 *"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.*

Matt.19:9 *I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery."*

b Violence

Violence within marriage is linked with divorce. Violence is more than just physical abuse and includes mental, emotional and spiritual abuse as well. Physical, mental, emotional and spiritual abuse must not be tolerated, but most situations are never only black and white. We aim to build people up in the faith within the clear teachings of Jesus Christ. If we do err, I trust that we always err on the side of grace. However, **continued abuse constitutes scriptural grounds for divorce.**

Mal.2:16 *"I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.*

5 Don't let the world squeeze you into its mould

Divorce is socially acceptable now - including in the church; even preachers get divorced! The world treats marriage lightly and makes it the brunt of many jokes. Don't conform to the world's standards. The Word of God is our standard. **It is better to be “spiritually correct” than “politically correct”!**

Rom.12:2 *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Rom.12:2 *Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-make you so that your whole attitude of mind is changed. Thus you will prove in practice that the will of God is good, acceptable to him and perfect.* ^{Phillips}

6 Re-marriage - Believers may remarry when divorced for scriptural reasons.

You can't unscramble scrambled eggs. You cannot alter history but you can change the future. All sin can be forgiven and Jesus has already paid the price in full but without repentance there will never be a working knowledge of forgiveness.

God's way is always the high way of love.

But when one or both partners are in rebellion against God, they will rarely listen or yield to the Holy Spirit nor conform to God's way of love.

***1Jn.1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

***1Jn.4:18** There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.*

***1Cor.6:9-11** Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

7 Divorce for unscriptural reasons

Here, the only option is reconciliation or celibacy until the death of one of the partners. To marry a person already married is dangerous

***Gen.20:3** But God came to Abimelech in a dream one night and said to him, "You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman."*

***1Cor.6:9** Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders*

***Heb.13:4** Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.*

Adultery

➤ is wicked and a sin against God

***Ps.51:4** Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.*

Gen.39:9-10 *How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even to be with her.*

➤ **despises God**

2Sam.12:10 *Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.'*

➤ **is a serious matter**

Prov.6:28-29 *Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched? So is he who sleeps with another man's wife; no-one who touches her will go unpunished.*

Also read Proverbs 7

Marriage Vows, Advice and Values

In the Marriage Service, husband and wife pledge faithfulness to each other by their words and promise to live together in marriage according to God's laws by respecting, loving, comforting and honouring each other; and to keep each other, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health till they are parted by death; and forsaking all others, to keep to each other as long they are both are alive. But a good marriage must be created and the little things are actually the big things. It is being never too old to hold hands.

It is remembering to say "*I love you*" at least once a day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

It is standing together and facing the world.

It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.

It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.

It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.

It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.

It is not only marrying the right person - it is being the right partner.

Five emotional love languages

There are at least five different ways in which people commonly speak and understand emotional love: **words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time and physical touch**. Most people communicate love in just one or two of these ways, and often we aren't even aware of our particular '*love language*' because it is something that simply comes naturally to us.

For some couples, problems can arise when they have different love languages. For example, even if they have very similar interests and a lot in common, they may find that one person communicates love through acts of service, and the other through words of affirmation. Because most people show love in the way they like to receive it, they may each think they are expressing their love to their partner frequently, but the message can get lost in translation.

The person whose love language is acts of service is most likely to show love through the things that they do for their partner. Whether it's cleaning the house, preparing a meal, or washing the car, nothing says '*I love you*' more to them than doing, or having done for them, these practical acts. However, the person who communicates love through words of affirmation longs to hear their partner say '*I'm so proud of you*', '*You mean the world to me*', or simply '*I love you*.'

Husband and wife seldom have the same primary emotional love language and if we don't recognise this we can become confused when our partner does not understand what we are communicating. We are expressing our love, but the message does not get through to them. It is easy then to see how a couple could begin to feel frustrated, or even un-loved, by their partner.

Words of affirmation: If your love language is words of affirmation, reassuring and encouraging words or compliments will communicate love really powerfully to you. An insult or unkind word will also have a greater effect on you than for someone who doesn't find words as important.

Receiving gifts: If your love language is gifts, you will tend to appreciate the thoughtfulness and effort behind a gift as much as the gift itself.

The value of the gift isn't necessarily important to you – you will appreciate small, spontaneous gifts that show that you are cared for as much as you would appreciate expensive presents. A forgotten birthday or lack of thought in choosing a gift is likely to make you feel hurt or unappreciated.

Acts of service: If your love language is acts of service, you probably show your love for someone through the things that you do – things like offering to wash up for your partner after they've had a tiring day, even though it's not your turn. You will feel really loved and appreciated when your partner does things for you, and you may feel especially hurt by laziness or broken commitments from them.

Quality time: If your love language is quality time, you will feel particularly loved by the periods your partner spends alone and uninterrupted with you. It won't necessarily matter to you if you go out for the day and it rains; the important thing is your time together. You are likely to find it particularly frustrating if you don't have your partner's undivided attention when you are together.

Physical touch: If your love language is physical touch, then holding hands, a hug, or a back rub will be particularly important to you. You will feel really special when your partner physically connects with you, but may feel hurt or neglected if they pull away from you or brush you off when you try to hug them.

Advice To Wives

Way down in the depths of a man's soul lies a longing; a longing to be wanted, a need to be wanted. A loving wife will see that need and meet it with joy. In marriage, a wife should love her husband in deepening intimacy:

- 1 By being an encourager to her husband. (Remember, Eve was created as a helpmeet to Adam).
2. By showing admiration of him.
3. By complimenting him for his 'manly' characteristics. (i.e. physical strength, ability to lead, wisdom)
4. By being a grateful wife — accept his gifts with love and pleasure.
5. By sharing his thoughts, desires and aspirations.

6. By honouring him as the head of your home/family.
 7. By making him know, feel and be the number one man in your life.
- Women tend to compliment other women and receive admiration from others, but men seldom praise each other. Perhaps this is why they have a greater need for admiration. Therefore, admire your man in every way you can. If you are not the source of this encouragement he needs, someone else may be.

Advice To Husbands

A woman needs to be in harmony with her husband through a deep intimate relationship. Therefore, every husband should make the following his top ten in loving his wife.

1. Your wife needs to feel that she is very valuable in your life, more important than your mother, your children, your friends, your secretary and your job.
2. When your wife is stressed out and hurting, she needs to know that you are willing to share an intimate moment of comfort without demanding explanations or giving lectures.
3. She needs open or unobstructed communication.
4. She needs to be praised so she can feel a valuable part of your life.
5. She needs to feel free to help you without fearing retaliation or anger.
6. She needs to know that you will defend and protect her.
7. She needs to know that her opinion is so valuable that you will discuss decisions with her and act only after carefully evaluating her advice.
8. She needs to share her life with you in every area — home, family and outside interests.
9. She needs you to be the kind of man her son can follow and her daughter would want to marry.
10. She needs to be tenderly held often, just to be near you, apart from times of sexual intimacy.

When her needs are met, a woman gains security and glows with a sense of well-being. Some of her glow will rub off on you, especially if you are responsible for it in the first place.

A Prayer For Marriage

Father, it is written in Your Word that You have poured out Your love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom You have given to us. Your love endures for ever and is new every morning. Great is Your faithfulness.

We know and rely on the love You have for us. Because You loved us, we can truly love each other. There is no fear in love but perfect love drives out fear. You have given us a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. Thank You that our love for each other abounds more and more in knowledge and depth of insight. We clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience, forgiving every grievance we may have against each other just as You have forgiven us. And over all these virtues we put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

We will stay completely humble and gentle, remaining patient and bearing with each other in love that nothing may hinder our prayers. We desire above all things that our lives are worthy of You and please You in every way, bearing fruit in every good work and growing in our knowledge of You.

Our love for each other is patient and kind. So we will not be jealous or boastful or proud or rude. Neither will we demand our own way or be irritable. We will not keep any record of being wronged but will rejoice whenever the truth is spoken. We will never give up, never lose faith, always be hopeful, and so we will endure through every circumstance.

Father, in flesh and in spirit we are Yours. Our marriage is honourable and our marriage bed remains pure. You have united us, so we have become one flesh. We will not permit anything - person, possession or pursuit - to separate what You have joined together. And we will guard ourselves in our spirits, so we will never break faith with each other. You are our witness.

We love and respect each other as Your Word says and we will follow the way of love which never fails. **Amen!**