

Quality  Publications

Ten
Commandments
for
Husbands

By Benny B. Bristow

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QUALITY PUBLICATIONS

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DEDICATION

This book is affectionately dedicated with love to my wife, Gwen, who has stood by my side for more than twenty eight years. Near the beginning of our marriage, I wrote a poem to her which expresses my feelings throughout the years:

If I could have my choice in life
Of earthly things I see and know
Would I prefer a fortune of gold
To ease my mind, and reach my goals?
No, all this seems so very small
Compared to the one I love.

You could make me king on a glittering throne,
Dress me in silk with a crown of gold
Have men move at my command
To capture cities and miles of land
All this would be no thrill at all
Compared to the one I love.

For show me wealth that has a heart
To long and know when I am gone
That laughs and cries to joy and pain
And makes me feel—life isn't vain!
Away, O wealth you'll never be
Compared to the one I love.

No silk or pearls can ever replace
The warmth and thrill of one embrace.
For nature has formed in a beautiful way
A face that smiles to brighten each day.
So away with kings, they have no place
Compared to the one I love. (bbb)

Lord, when I'm weak,
Make me strong
When I hold back,
Help me press on
When I'm tempted,
Let me not yield
Guard and protect me,
With your shield.

—*Benny B. Bristow*

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INTRODUCTION

Ever since the first copy of "TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR WIVES" was published, the question has been asked, "when are you going to write a sequel for husbands?" This question was usually followed with comments about how much husbands need to think more seriously about marriage. After much prayer and serious thought, the decision was made to write this material with God's help.

Even though I have been a husband for more than 28 years, this does not make me an expert, nor do I claim such. Although I have tried over the years to be a good husband, I have fallen short in so many areas. Therefore, the material in this book represents the goals that I have for myself and all other men that desire to be a good husband.

The contents of this book are based on the discussion questions for husbands found after each chapter in: "TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR WIVES." Also you will find after each commandment in this book for husbands, an example with discussion questions following, based on true life experiences. These are not case histories, and any example which appears to be is coincidental. These fictitious examples were written to illustrate and put into life situations the teachings of each commandment.

May this book be a blessing to your life, and may you become the Christian husband that pleases both God and your wife is my sincere prayer.

COMMANDMENT I

THOU SHALT CONSIDER BEING A HUSBAND IMPORTANT

1. How can a husband keep the marriage from becoming routine?

When a man is dating and engaged to that beautiful bride to be, he will go all out to plan things to thrill his beloved; however, after marriage and all settles down to normal routine, there is a temptation to get into a rut. This can cool off the excitement of a marriage even in its early stages, for it is at this point that many marriages begin their slow death. The only difference between a rut and a grave are the dimensions. This is not to suggest that a husband (or wife) can spend all of his time in thinking and planning ways to avoid routine, however, one must not ignore this either.

In the midst of many responsibilities, special times can be planned to do things together. An occasional movie, a trip to a special park or garden, a drive into the country, a simple picnic, a shopping trip, fishing together, and many other things can break the monotony of routine. Certain routines cannot be avoided such as food preparation, employment, and household chores, but these can be less boring when they are seasoned with a variety of together experiences.

If the husband and wife can find a hobby or sport that they can enjoy together, this also adds to the excitement of marriage. Remember, it is true that "variety is the spice of life," and especially in marriage.

2. In Proverbs 31:10-12; 28,29, discuss the husband's role in helping his wife feel important.

The author of this passage certainly pictures a beautiful wife fulfilling her God-given role, and it is the perfect pattern for wives to follow. Any man that has a wife that is ever striving to fulfill her role as an ideal wife is fully blessed. Therefore, he should make every effort within his power to show his appreciation for such a wonderful helpmeet. He should remember that she is active in all these ways to first of all please God, and secondly to please her husband and family. Any husband that takes all these fine virtues in his wife for granted without continually encouraging her, is calloused in heart and is trampling under foot his prized possession.

The faithful wife as described in Proverbs 31, needs the full support of her husband. For all her efforts turn to joy when she hears him say such things as: "Honey, you bring so much joy to my life" or "how could I get along without you" or "you are truly a Christian helpmeet" or "you cause my love to grow for you daily," and even more importantly, the words spoken often, and in many ways: "I love you!"

A good wife is important, but she needs to hear this over and over, and especially from her husband since she is one with him. Husbands, don't wait until that good wife is gone from you to recognize her value and to express gratitude. Let her smell the fragrance of your appreciation now—TODAY!

3 . If husbands felt toward their wives as Shakespeare, in his quote, how would this help the wife's self-image?

The quote referred to is: "Why man, she is mine own; and I as rich in having such a jewel, as twenty seas if all their sands were pearls, the water nectar, and the rocks pure gold." One cannot read this quote without feeling a man's deep love for his wife. Be assured, if we feel this way about our wives, her self-image will reach mountain heights. She will feel loved deeply, and will never fear the threats of other women. She will also know that our loyalty to her as a husband is not forced or an entrapment, but willingly, joyfully and happily offered. This kind of love would never cause our wives to guess as to our feelings, because we would be continually reassuring them. There would be flowers and gifts given other than on routine occasions. Even our daily attitude and conversation would show her that she is loved and is very important. Remember, if we have the love of a fine woman, we have a treasure that makes gold, silver

and precious stones seem artificial, and of lesser value. Keep also in mind that the more we raise her self-image, the more she will love and appreciate us and your relationship will grow even to greater heights!

4. Talk of the damage caused when a husband takes his wife for granted.

There are many ways that a husband can sin against his wife to destroy his marriage, but perhaps this is the most common of all. There are millions of husbands that would not dare look at another woman in regard to infidelity or unfaithfulness, but feel no conscience pangs when they take their wives for granted. However, one should consider that both of these can bring a death blow to a marriage. In some cases, taking a wife for granted is even more damaging because it is not discovered until all hope and love are gone. In other cases, taking a wife for granted may drive her into the arms of another man and into the sin of adultery.

You might say, "Oh no, my wife would never be tempted to leave me or run away to another man!" Suppose she is strong enough to resist such temptations, you have still lost more than you realize. A wife taken for granted may stay with you, but feels shut-out, used and miserable! Can she really make you happy under such circumstances? Can't you see, when she loses, so do you! When she is unhappy, it will come back to you, and everyone involved will suffer. Therefore, for her sake as well as your own, never take your wife for granted!

5. How are some of the ways that husbands can show appreciation as to the value of their wives?

Husbands have been heard to say, and many very honestly, I love my wife and would like to show her often that I appreciate her, but I don't know how! Perhaps they don't know how because they have never made an effort to learn! Men, as well as women, have the ability to learn and master the many technological skills of today's complex world. God has given us minds that can learn almost anything we wish to learn. Fellows, showing appreciation for our wives can also be learned if we wish to do so. Please study the following suggestions.

REMOVE ALL NEGATIVISM

As long as we go around saying, "I can't," "I can't," we WONT! Maybe you are not as emotional and polished as that casanova you see on television, but you can be you, and after all YOU are the one your

wife chose for marriage. She, therefore, wants to hear and see your appreciation and in your own way. Don't sell your ability short—give it your best with a positive attitude and you may surprise yourself as to what you are able to do.

RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF SHOWING APPRECIATION

If you are not sold on the value of showing appreciation, you will never do it, and even if you try you will fail. We **MUST** believe in what we are doing. Remember, you like to be appreciated, and so does your wife. Others may show her appreciation in her teaching, profession, church activities, and hobbies, but all of these together cannot take your place. For her life to be complete and your marriage to be as it should, you must constantly show your appreciation.

DON'T JUST STAND THERE—DO SOMETHING

Sometimes we get very serious about our wives and feel guilty that we are not showing appreciation, but this is as far as it goes. Why not get the ball rolling—**DO SOMETHING**. Don't wait to graph out a master plan, but begin even with small acts or words of appreciation. An unexpected telephone call from work, a rose bud, a card of love and appreciation between holidays, birthdays, and anniversaries, an unexpected appreciation hug and kiss, and a gift of love will do wonders. The more you do, the easier it will become, and such will make your wife feel of great value. As time and experience go on, you will learn to be inventive!

6. Discuss husband's attitude toward wives working away from home.

Only a few years ago this was a rare problem, but today, due to the many changes in our economy and way of life, it is an issue that confronts many marriages. It is admitted that this can be a serious problem if allowed to go to extremes, but if both husband and wife will consider such a challenge to be worked out to meet their needs, most difficulties will be resolved. We should first of all remember that there are no ironclad rules in society nor in the Bible against a woman working, but there are many principles to consider. If the wife's going to work leads her to neglect her God-given role as a wife and mother, and if it is not necessary for her to do so, she would be wrong. However, if it is a necessi-

ty and she is able to keep her husband and children happy, she is praised for her effort. Remember, the worthy woman of Proverbs 31, bought a field, planted a vineyard, traded for profit, and worked with eager hands.

Assuming then that it is necessary for a wife to work away from home, what should be the husband's attitude? First of all, he should not feel guilty and continually make her miserable about it, especially if he is doing his best to provide. When this happens, an extra burden is added to her life and such is unfair and will destroy a marriage. Why not be thankful that you have a helpmeet that is doing her part to help? If she can help best at home, she stays at home, but if she can help best by working away from home, she is still willing. This should be considered one of the characteristics of being a good wife.

In the second place, as a husband you should be considerate of her heavy load and help share it. When she comes in from work, there are many jobs awaiting, and the needs of the family are to be met in only a short time even though she's tired. If you allow her to carry this burden alone, she will feel like a slave being used, and may be irritable toward you and the family. The intimacy of your marriage will grow cold and without feeling, and this can affect all facets of your marriage. On the other hand, sharing the work together can draw you closer as a team, and even though your physical bodies are tired, there will be closeness and joy because the attitude is right. Why not occasionally thank her for helping provide for the needs of the family? This can be done in words, a short note, or by gifts and flowers. All of these and perhaps other things are needful, but even more importantly, your right attitude will be her greatest gift.

7 . How can husbands bring out the best in their wives?

It is a fact of life that some wives are bad through and through, but this is the exception and not the general rule. For every bad wife, there are thousands of good ones. Both men and women have their good points and excellent traits, but such are often buried. Unfortunately, we also have our bad, and one of the two is going to surface. Thus, our wives have their good and bad traits, and we as husbands can bring either one of these out. Many husbands bring out the bad in their wives, and finally lose sight of the good. How can we bring out the best in our wives?

(1) Look for the good. Have you ever been guilty of looking over many good qualities to find the bad? We too often act like a buzzard that flies over acres of beautiful meadows in search of one dead animal. Remember, if you are always looking for the bad, you'll find it, but if your

search is for the good, you may overlook the bad. In the words of Helen Keller: "Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadow."

(2) Forgive when wronged. There will be times when your wife will hurt and disappoint you. Who would deny that this hurts and the temptation is to hold a grudge for several days. However, this adds to the problem by bringing out bad traits in both of you. At this point, a forgiving spirit can work wonders. Even though she can see that she hurt you, she can also see the forgiveness and may even show with words, hugs and kisses that she is sorry. With this attitude of love on your part, she will try to avoid the same mistake.

(3) Praise her good points. Have you ever been guilty of condemning your wife for her weaknesses, and ignoring her strength? If all she hears is condemnation for being bad, she may decide to forget doing good. Praise from a sincere loving husband can go a long way in bringing out the good in his wife.

Therefore, it is believed that these three, looking for the good, forgiving when wronged, and praising her good will bring out the best in your wife.

8 . Are husbands often guilty of wasting the income? How can he help the wife with economy?

Even though there are many husbands that take their income seriously and even sacrifice to keep the spending down, there are so many others that waste to the point of placing a burden on the family. Even though the wife often assists in earning the bread, God has given the leading role of breadwinner to the husband: "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food" (Genesis 3:19). The husband, therefore must be a provider, and when he fails, by not working when he can, or by robbing his family by waste, he has failed!

It hurts to think of the wives that have sacrificed to keep food on the table and clothes for the children while a wasteful husband is spending it on himself. It is true that we all have the need to purchase things other than the necessities of life, and both husband and wife should do this occasionally, however, real problems arise when the husband (wife) becomes selfish and wastes much of the income on himself.

The husband can help the wife with economy, and continually be communicating together on the subject. All large purchases should be discussed and weighed against the essentials for the family. Each should work together in shopping for the best buys without cutting quality, and you should never lose sight of the fact that marriage is a team effort and selfishness in any area of your lives will bring difficulties. When there is

waste and no effort is made to economize, marital problems are inevitable!

9 . Do husbands fail often in making their wives feel important?

Some of you that read these words may not be guilty, but for every husband that is innocent in this respect, there are thousands that are guilty. Even though we may know down deeply in our hearts that they are important, we may fail to show them. It seems that some husbands feel embarrassed to admit the importance of their wives, therefore, they pretend otherwise. Now that the problem is admitted, how can we correct it?

(1) REMEMBER, GOD CONSIDERS HER IMPORTANT.

The creation of woman came when God saw that man had a special need, and both Adam and God were pleased with her. Woman fulfilled a role that all the rest of God's creation could not meet, and she is still that important! Any husband, therefore, that fails to make his wife feel important is robbing her of her God-given right. If you ever doubt her value, sit down with pencil and paper and write down the many needs that she fulfills in your life. God has especially made her with tender emotion, a tender touch, and a tender body to counteract the coarseness and toughness of man. Think seriously on all of these qualities, and you will see that God did His work well when He made woman.

(2) AVOID TOO MUCH JOKING

A favorite joke of many husbands is to put his wife down before others and continually joke about her lack of importance. Some of this has its place, but far too often such is abused. Some husbands joke about this to keep from admitting her importance. If you feel the need to joke about this, why not immediately go to her and before the same people give her a big hug and say, "No, I couldn't make it without this woman," or "listen, this girl (regardless of age) is the best!" Remember, even if you don't mean it when you joke about her unimportance, if it makes her feel less important, you should avoid such.

(3) PLAN WAYS TO MAKE HER FEEL IMPORTANT.

This is another way of saying, show her often that you love her. One might say: "she should know this without me showing or telling her. If she hadn't been important, I wouldn't have married her!" Even if she knows of her importance, she still needs to be shown. That new husband that told his wife that he loved her and if he ever changed his mind, he would let her know, may have had things worked out to his satisfaction,

but certainly not to hers! Even God wishes and commands that his children talk to Him and praise Him on a daily basis, then why would woman, one of His creations, not wish to be told often of her importance?

Notice, the idea is to PLAN ways to make her feel important. This is something that we can't leave to chance or she will be neglected. We plan the many other activities of our lives, then why shouldn't we plan for the one we love? There is no way of knowing how many husbands with tear-filled eyes have said during a counseling session, "what can I do, I have neglected the most important thing in my life, and now I have lost her!" There is no coldness like the wife whose love has been quenched by neglect. A good wife is important and we need to plan ways to show her.

It does not have to be something spectacular, but rather continual small remembrances, expressions, gifts, and a continual concern for her needs as a woman. Keep her always in the position of importance in all ways possible and her life will be radiant with joy. When this happens, her love and joy will overflow onto you.

10 . Are most men concerned about being good husbands?

It is wished that the answer to this question could be "yes," but unfortunately it is "no!" There certainly are exceptions, but too many are not concerned until their marriage is in trouble, and this is often too late. Why is this sad fact true? Perhaps there are many reasons, but quite often some men feel that they are great husbands without any effort. This false concept may be present without one realizing it, but the damage is still done. It may be true that you have a lot of good things going for you as a man, but are they directed toward your wife and her needs? A common expression of wives is this: "my husband is a great man, if he only knew how to love me, and to make me feel wanted." The rows of vegetables in your garden may be healthy plants and perfectly set in straight rows, but unless the grasses and weeds are removed and the plants cultivated, there will not be the proper yield. Therefore, your positive points as a man may be excellent, but unless you show concern in being the best husband possible to your wife, your marriage will experience failure.

Why not pull away from the majority and begin now showing concern toward being the best husband possible? If you do, you have a beautiful married life ahead of you.

A TRUE TO LIFE EXAMPLE

Before Nathan and Judy were married, they had a wonderful courtship. It seemed to Judy that he just lived for the moments they were together,

and he even thought about ways to have fun and to make her feel important during working hours. She was such a beautiful girl, (inside and out) and he would do anything to keep her, and hoped to spend the rest of his life with her in marriage.

As Judy went through this period of courtship, she dreamed of the time they would be married, and longed for the years together in which she would feel important to him. When her friends jokingly told her that things would change after marriage, she said: "I know that some changes will take place, but I'll always be important to him."

The first few weeks of their marriage were wonderful. He was like a child with a new toy and she was thrilled by his special attention. However, it was not long before Judy became aware of gradual changes in Nathan's attitudes as well as his actions toward her. He got a promotion at work, and became eager to succeed. The days and weeks began to all seem alike to her. He wanted his meals on time, (especially at his convenience) and on one occasion when she was late because of an extended shopping trip, he jokingly complained.

One morning as Nathan backed out the drive way, Judy stared through the window and thought: "I am being taken for granted! My only importance to him is to fill his stomach with food and to satisfy his sexual needs. I feel more like his slave than his wife."

That night after the evening meal she told him she needed to talk. He responded by saying: "I hope it's short and sweet, because I've had a hard day at work." When she told him with tears in her eyes the feelings she had, he showed no concern for her and accused her of not knowing how lucky she was to have someone to go to work, and to bring in the money while she took it easy around the house.

With even more hurt in her heart she said, "but I'm unhappy the way things are going. I feel that we are in a rut and you don't seem to care." To this he said: "Would you listen to that! There are hundreds of women out there that would like to trade places with you. I don't think you know the meaning of happiness."

With one final effort she said, "but when we were dating you made me happy and we shared so much together. Now, I feel so unimportant to you and you don't seem to care."

There appeared a flash of anger as he said: "When we were dating that was kid stuff, now we're dealing with real life. You need to grow up. I've had enough of this kind of talk, I'm going to bed."

As the tears streamed down her cheeks, Judy felt like her world had tumbled in, and that most of her self-esteem was gone.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Commandment I

1. Discuss how Judy and Nathan could have been trained for marriage.
2. To what degree can a husband demand his meals and other things from his wife?
3. Why was Nathan insensitive to talking with Judy?
4. What was Judy looking for in her search for happiness?
5. In what ways does Nathan need improvement?

COMMANDMENT II

THOU SHALT NOT LET COURTSHIP DIE

1 . Are husbands as a whole, guilty of letting courtship die?

There is no way of knowing what percentage of husbands are guilty, but it is safe to say that at least the majority are. To prove this, you have only to listen to the testimony of many wives, and this seems to be a problem. Certainly, one cannot expect courtship to be the same after marriage as before, however, it is a tragic thing when courtship dies altogether. Many husbands fall into the trap of thinking, now that we are married, courtship is not that important. This is wrong and if pursued, such an idea will take the spark out of marriage. Once you are joined in marriage, you are given opportunities to grow in closeness, oneness, and courtship with your wife if you are willing to invest yourself.

Sometimes husbands complain that their wives no longer care about the way they dress, nor do they wear special day and night apparel for their benefit. Certainly the wife may be at fault, but as a husband you may have made her feel that romance is not important. It is wondered just how many husbands and wives reach the point (even early in marriage) where they have the attitude, now that we have each other trapped, who cares! When this attitude is reached, you can be certain that all courtship is dead. At this point, a couple faces two serious problems: (1) their marriage becomes "boredom city" without any real happiness. Even the love they have for each other is threatened. (2) This couple begins running the high risk of either separation or divorce. There are many factors that can cause these major problems, but allowing courtship to die claims its share.

2 . In what ways do they (husbands) most often fail?

It would be impossible to list all the ways that husbands fail by letting courtship die but let us take a look at some of the most common ones:

(1) By having the wrong attitude about marriage. There seems to be a mistaken idea floating around in all generations, that when a couple marries, their courting days are over, and consequently no effort is made to keep such alive. Even if a desire to do so appears, it is hurried away and replaced by the what-is-expected-of-me routine. Have you ever driven down the street behind a dating couple sitting close together and said, "you can tell they're not married!" The sad thing is that this is usually true. Would it do any harm to occasionally do this with your wife? Do I hear you say that she was the one that moved over after marriage! Why? Did you expect her to? How long has it been since you asked her to sit close to you while driving? If we don't enjoy the closeness of our wives, then something is seriously wrong.

(2) By failing to plan special dates with wives. It is still a thrill for most wives to have their husbands ask them for a date. It may be simply going out to eat, going bowling, miniature golfing, going for a drive, or seeing a special movie. The place is not as important as the invitation and being together. Going out with one's wife must be planned and considered by both important, or else the routine of a nightly dose of television will become a way of life.

You may think of other things that cause courtship to die in a marriage, but these can help you see that the problem is present often, and needs to be solved. When both husband and wife work together to keep courtship well and alive, their marriage will be going in the right direction.

3 . What happens when a husband feels that cooking, children, and housekeeping are enough attention for his wife?

The wife will feel neglected and each day will bring friction between the husband and wife. Cooking, children, and housekeeping have their place and can help make a wife show her importance, but please remember that she finds joy in these because she wishes to be a true wife for the man she loves. However, when these are isolated from her relationship to her husband, something important is missing. God made man and woman to need attention from each other, and when this is not present, there is a void in their lives. Therefore, don't ever feel that other things, regardless of their importance, can take your place with your wife. There are cer-

tainly times when you will want to follow your hobby or favorite sport away from your wife, but this must not be too often, or she will feel neglected and used. Try to avoid extremes that pull you away from her. It's not that she can't stay busy with her many responsibilities as a wife, but nothing can take the place of the attention of her husband. To make the mistake of neglecting her, can prove costly even to the point of a broken marriage.

4 . How important is the husband's apparel? Cleanliness?

At first thought one might say, "after we are married, it doesn't matter." This is certainly incorrect—it does matter! Why is the way we dress so important before marriage? This is easy, because we want to win her and impress her. How true, but why do things change after the "I do?" Don't we still wish to impress our wives? This is not to say that a husband must dress up all the time he is at home. Surely our wives expect us to wear less than our best when we mow the yard, repair the mower, and paint the house. There are those times when we want to dress "sloppy," and on an occasional basis, most women don't mind. However, suppose our dress is always like a bum, and suppose we leave the impression that around others I will dress properly, but at home with my wife, who cares? Then in such cases, we are harming our marriage and the high respect that is needed.

Just because a woman marries doesn't mean that she loses her taste to look at a well dressed man, and especially her husband. She wants to be proud of you, who you are, where you work, your skills, and the way you dress. Don't you like to receive a compliment from your wife? This should mean more to you than all others. Therefore, occasionally be a slouch, but as a rule, think about your wife.

Cleanliness is probably more important than most husbands realize in a marriage relationship. You see, there is what we might call getting dirty or greasy, from certain jobs that we perform, and then there is getting dirty from poor hygiene and neglect. The former (dirt from certain jobs) may even be appreciated by your wife. She is pleased that you can repair the car or any other thing around the house, but when one is dirty because he neglects showering, and the other essentials for cleanliness, she feels differently. In fact, this can be repulsive to her and will eventually form a poor image and feeling in her mind. Remember, your wife is worth the effort required to look your best. Why not keep your body bathed, shaved, (if you don't have a beard) shampooed, and put on good smelling lotions just for your beloved. The dividends will be great for both of you.

5 . Discuss some of the ways husbands have the “don’t care” attitude.

It is true that a “don’t care” attitude has ruined the world, and it has also destroyed many marriages. Before marriage, most men show great care and concern, but far too many reverse this after a few months of married life. The wife may at first try to live with this attitude, but sooner or later she will develop the same and the marriage falls apart even if they choose to live under the same roof. Study carefully the following ways that some husbands have the “don’t care” attitude:

(1) BY THEIR DISPOSITION

Did you know that our disposition tells a lot about how we live, think, and love? Some husbands present to their wives grouchiness and rudeness day by day, and leave the impression that to show kindness to their wives would be a painful thing. Without hearing a word, she imagines a voice saying, “don’t bother me or I’ll bite your head off.”

(2) BY THEIR NEGLECT

Marriage is a team effort or there is neglect and unhappiness. One of the first signs that a husband or wife does not care is when he or she purposely neglects the other. There are times when one becomes pre-occupied and neglects, but this should be rare, and even then, a great effort should be made to apologize. Neglect brings loneliness to a wife, and loneliness brings unhappiness, and unhappiness may tempt her to seek the company of another man.

(3) BY THEIR ACTIONS

It is said that actions speak louder than words, and this is certainly true in marriage. When a husband shows daily his failure to demonstrate love, concern, and the giving of his time, the message of “don’t care” comes through loud and painfully. The husband that continually tells his wife that he cares, but I’m just not good at showing you, is wasting his breath. Wives demand “show and tell” before they are convinced.

(4) BY THEIR PRIORITIES

There are many things in life that bargain for our time and energies such as our jobs, church work, hunting and fishing trips, hobbies, and television sports, but the happy wife must have a place among these that makes her feel important. When our priorities are always somewhere else, it does not take her long to feel that the “don’t care” attitude is present.

6 . How important are flowers and gifts from the husbands after marriage?

From the time that most of us can remember, gifts have been important. As children, receiving a gift was important because we enjoyed that bright new toy, and the fact that someone remembered may not have been noticed, although important. In the case of a wife receiving a gift from her husband, it is different. She may be thrilled over the actual gift (especially if it's something she wanted) however, be assured that the being remembered is far more important. For you see, the wife associates a gift from her husband with love, and especially if you purchase a gift without it being a forced occasion. The wife that received a gift from her husband and asked, "what's this for, it isn't my birthday or anniversary" and his answer, "just because I love you, that's the occasion," must have been very happy.

Flowers are beautiful and give forth a pleasant perfume, and can you think of anything that is more appropriate to express love? The wife loves to be considered by her husband, and to be associated with beautiful flowers, and therefore these should be given often.

7 . Discuss the improper ways for husbands to give gifts.

Some husbands make the mistake of thinking that there is magic in giving his wife a gift regardless of the circumstances. This is not correct, because there are times when gifts do more harm than good. Let's look at some of the improper motives and ways to give gifts:

(1) BECAUSE OF GUILT

It is wondered how many husbands have neglected their wives and then tried to cover their guilt with gifts and flowers? Most wives are able to see through this plan and in many cases think less of their husbands. When you have wronged your wife, the best thing to do is first make an effort to correct things, and once you have done this, a gift will help heal hurt feelings. However, the gift or flowers will not solve anything by themselves.

(2) FOR YOUR OWN GAIN

Another wrong motive for gift giving is for one's own gain. There are times when a husband may be tempted to give gifts to his wife with the hope of more sexual favors, or to buy the right to be away more often on a fishing or hunting trip, or to be praised for his thoughtfulness, but this is wrong. It takes only a short time for a wife to feel used.

(3) GRUDGINGLY

For a gift to be loved and appreciated, the wife must know that her husband gave it willingly and not grudgingly. To receive a gift, she may have

applied pressure by pouting and nagging, and a gift may be purchased simply to get her off his back. Neither the giver nor the receiver will be happy in this case.

Therefore, you can see that the way gifts and flowers are given is important. When you as a husband lay aside all impure motives, and give because you love your wife and wish to show it, then you will know the true joy of giving and receiving gifts. Occasionally when you are taking your wife out on a date, surprise her with a gift or flowers. This will help her experience some of the feelings she had before marriage and also will make her feel very important.

8 . How should a husband react when the wife turns him down for a date?

If we are not careful, we will feel hurt and rejected, but these feelings should be set aside unless the rejection is continually repeated. For there are times when she is too tired, emotionally drained, or perhaps she's having some type of physical pain, and it is best to decline. If you pout, refuse to talk or speak some cutting remarks to make her feel badly for not going, you have harmed your relationship. On the other hand, if you say to her that you are disappointed, but you understand and will ask her again soon, she will look forward to the next time, and will appreciate the fact that you asked her. In this case, as well as all others, try hard to keep selfishness out of your life. If selfishness is allowed to take over, your reaction to being turned down will be destructive.

9 . Where are some of the places that wives like to go with their husband?

A list of places to go is rather long, and since wives are different, what would apply to one might not apply to another. Therefore, each husband must learn what pleases his wife, as well as what doesn't! Notice some of the places from which to choose: Movies, bowling, fishing, picnics, miniature golfing, sports events, sight seeing, the zoo, special flower gardens, antique shopping, walking in the park, horseback riding, bike riding, playing tennis, the fair, musical events, school plays, car racing, and to eat out at all kinds of restaurants. These are only a few, and remember that each area where you live may have something to offer that cannot be found in others.

1 0 . What should husbands do to keep courtship alive?

In the first place, husbands should resolve very early in their married

life to work at staying young at heart and at keeping courtship in their marriage alive. There will be many valleys, but when this happens he should climb out toward the mountains. He can also work to keep his wife thinking correctly about courtship in marriage.

Then secondly, he should refuse to fall into the trap of thinking that when one marries, courtship dies. To accomplish this, he should show his wife daily that he wants to be with her, and that even when he must be away she is missed.

To keep courtship alive, the husband should give a lot of hugging, kissing, touching, and should seek to have a loveable disposition so that all these efforts on his part are accepted by his wife. Togetherness is an essential ingredient to help keep courtship alive. Add to all this the special dates and gifts, and courtship will find its proper place.

A TRUE TO LIFE EXAMPLE

After almost two years of courtship and dating, Victor and Colene were married. All that were acquainted with them said that they would have a happy marriage, since both of them were very mature in their thinking, and Victor had advanced to a good position at the local bank. They had not rushed into marriage, and were able to move into their new house in a beautiful part of town.

For the first three months, Victor and Colene found all the happiness they had expected. It was fun to decorate the new house as Victor gave his extra time to the yard. However, once they had experienced all the facets of marriage, and had gotten their house completed, things began to change. Each month that passed seemed to make them feel farther apart. Each seemed to just settle down to routine and thought that this was the way married life should be.

One day while Victor was alone he did some serious thinking. He began to compare their marriage to the two years of courtship, and he was shocked. Then the thought came to him, "who says that courtship should stop just because two people get married? We are acting like a couple that is half dead and we are both miserable." With these shocking thoughts, Victor decided to map out some plans. Basically, he planned to simply carry out courtship with his wife as he did before marriage.

He dialed his home phone and as Colene answered he could hear the depression in her voice. After a short time he asked, "honey, would you accept a date with me tonight?" After a stutter or two from shock, she asked, "what do you mean by a date?" Enthusiastically he replied, "How about dinner out and a movie?" With a happy tone in her voice she said:

"I'd like that." After she hung up the receiver, she began to feel alive as thoughts of their past before marriage flashed through her mind. That afternoon found her getting bathed and dressed for the occasion. Victor felt great as he worked the hours away, and even took time to order some flowers for his beautiful wife.

This was the beginning of courtship and romance in their marriage. After enjoying themselves so much on this first date, they both began giving courtship priority in their marriage, and they never again resigned themselves to a life without it. They planned many things together, and whether at work or play, they tried to keep this type of courtship alive. They each had times when they needed to be alone, but this was always temporary, and both took advantage of all positive things to keep their marriage filled with romance and love.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Commandment II

1. Why did Victor and Colene become bored after the house was completed?
2. Why had courtship died in their marriage?
3. Discuss why courtship must be planned.
4. Why do you feel that courtship in marriage is important?
5. Discuss why it is important for both husband and wife to initiate courtship.

COMMANDMENT III

THOU SHALT NOT MAKE THY WIFE FEEL REJECTION

1 . Are husbands too sensitive in regard to rejection?

There are times no doubt when husbands are too sensitive to rejection, but this may be true because rejection is a serious thing. There are two areas that husbands need to think about concerning rejection. First of all, he needs to be sure that he doesn't make his wife feel rejection. It is not humanly possible for a wife to please her husband if she feels rejected. This is not to say that the husband can meet all his wife's expectations and demands, but even those times when it is necessary to refuse her, it must be done in a way that will not destroy her self-image or make her feel rejected. When you refuse her on a certain thing, do so with love, and all will be well.

In the second place, we need to learn to cope with rejection as husbands. Even though rejection is very serious, there are times when we are too sensitive. Please keep in mind that women are extra sensitive to life, and this may cause them to seem austere toward our needs. However, with patience and understanding, time will restore them to gentleness, and all will be brighter between you. On the other hand, if we over-react to their rejection, it will cause us to reject them, and this will place our marriages on thin ice. Thus, we cannot help being sensitive to rejection, but we can strive not to be OVERLY sensitive.

2. How can husbands deal with depression in the presence of their wives?

Depression can become a real problem if it is not controlled in a marriage. The kind of depression referred to here is not the kind caused by mental illness, but rather, the kind felt when things don't go well. All of us at times are going to be depressed, but how we deal with such is important. We have one of two courses we can follow: (1) We can make our wives feel miserable by taking it out on her, and since depression is contagious, the chances are great that she will become depressed. When both become depressed at the same time, many other problems are inevitable. (2) The second course is to try to get out of the depression. What will help one man may not necessarily help another, but generally speaking, time and involvement will help. Avoid sitting around feeling sorry for yourself. Find something to do to get your mind away from self!

Even though your wife may know that you are depressed, don't dwell on it or become irritable toward her. Things may seem dark at such moments, but never lose sight of the fact that the sunshine will come from behind the dark clouds.

If you are a Christian, talk it over with God your Father because He understands. There is no problem or enemy that can depress you to the point that God cannot help! He will shield you from harm. These thoughts were in my mind when writing this poem:

Lord, when I'm weak,
Make me strong
When I hold back,
Help me press on
When I'm tempted,
Let me not yield
Guard and protect me,
With your shield.

3 . Discuss why turning to another woman is not a solution for rejection.

When things get wrong at home and depression comes, some men feel that the solution can be found in turning to another woman, but this is not true. In fact, the problems really multiply when this happens. Consider carefully the following problems:

(1) WRONG WITH GOD

The Bible teaches plainly the principle: "What therefore God hath

joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6). Millions over the years have ignored this great principle and have found much heartache and pain. Leaving your wife and committing adultery with another woman only make things more complex. How can you be happy doing that which God's Word condemns?

(2) MORE REJECTION

In most cases the woman you seek will make you feel rejection. At first you may feel that this new attention is just what you need, but once the newness of the experience is gone, you will sink even deeper into depression because of guilt and failure.

(3) LOSS OF SELF-IMAGE

Due to the teaching of the Bible, the high moral standard is satisfying and still respected by many in society. Even though the world in general has crossed over these high biblical standards, thousands have not. Once you leave your wife for another woman, you lose some self-respect. At those moments when you are depressed, thoughts of your unfaithfulness to your wife will further depress you. In cases where children are involved, you would be concerned about your example before them. Add to all this the dangers of venereal diseases and pregnancy, and surely all can see that turning to another woman is not the solution.

4 . Why is it so important for husbands to find acceptance at home?

The world in which we live is filled with stiff competition and many disappointments. Try as hard as we may, some of these winds of difficulty will blow our way. Suppose though, that after this happens that we go home and find the same rejection? Thus, it is easily seen that acceptance at home is very important.

Many men have said, "I can take a lot at work so long as I have a comforting wife waiting for me at home." As he enters the front door, he can close the world out for several hours with one that understands. However, if the wife is not understanding, and even makes him feel rejection, his whole life is in trouble.

5 . How do husbands reject their wives?

Anyone that does marriage counseling, either on a large or small scale, will tell you that many wives come to them complaining that they have been rejected by their husbands. It has been my experience that when a wife tells of her being rejected that tears flow and it is obvious that she

feels deep pain. Sometimes this rejection was intended by her husband, and other times it was not, however, in either case the pain is real.

What are some of the ways that rejection comes from a husband? A husband may reject his wife by giving either all or most of his attention to other things. It may be his work, his hobby or his recreation, but whatever the case, she is left out. His time with her under such circumstances is only for his benefit, and when she complains of rejection he may become angry causing a fight, and thus the rejection goes deeper. These arguments and fights may be used by the neglectful husband as an excuse to be away and involved with other things even more. If this is not turned around quickly, all hope of saving such a marriage will disappear.

Other husbands reject their wives by becoming interested in another woman. By having his needs fulfilled by the other woman, he doesn't need the attention of his wife. When she tries to get close to him even hoping to meet his and her needs in an intimate way, he refuses. To keep up a front, he may occasionally become sexually intimate, however, with her intuition and sensitivity, she is aware that something is missing, and consequently feels rejected.

There are still other husbands that reject their wives, not because they intend to do so, and not because they seek another woman, but because they don't take the time to show their love and concern. These husbands take her for granted, and believe that she can survive regardless. In fact, they often are shocked to learn that her world has caved in due to rejection. Wives often say of such husbands: "I don't really believe he intends to neglect me!" Thus, this is a case of ignorance toward woman's needs.

Whatever causes rejection, be assured that it will deteriorate a marriage, and if the husband or wife is guilty, steps should be taken to correct it before permanent damage is done.

6. Discuss how a husband can keep his wife from feeling rejection.

Very obviously, to avoid the feeling of rejection, an effort must be made. It helps just to be aware that rejection is a problem. Thus, in a general sense, a husband must invest himself to avoid this problem. The following efforts on his part will help:

(1) HE MUST SHARE HIS LIFE WITH HER AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

It is understood that in many areas this is impossible, and a good wife will understand, but the problem arises when no effort is made to share things together. Although he will not need to go into details about his

work, he can at least share with her his successes and how things are going in a general way. Since he spends so many hours at work, she desires to be aware, at least on a small scale, what is going on. It is good to share a hobby when possible. From this there can be a mutual interest and closeness obtained. If you are interested in sports, try to involve her. If you like to play tennis or other related sports, invite her to participate or at least go with you and observe. In all areas of life, think togetherness!

(2) HE MUST SHOW LOVE DAILY.

This can be done by expressing special words, by the squeezing of her hand, by an unexpected hug or kiss, and by spending time with her when possible. Some husbands like to leave notes for her to find after they are gone. A small gift expressing love, and especially if you are out of town, is also great. Be inventive and original in expressing love. It doesn't have to be purchased to be important. Perhaps something you made with your own hands or a rosebud picked from the yard. Give of yourself and of your love in all ways possible.

(3) HE MUST NEVER GIVE HER REASON TO SUSPECT ANOTHER WOMAN.

This can be done by refusing to get involved in any way romantically with another. Some men have made the mistake of flirting a little just to spice up their lives, but this can lead to other things. Take your stand for fidelity, and never toy around with something so sacred. Samson of the Old Testament lost his God-given strength because he joked about it, and toyed around with Delilah until she finally broke him down. Some husbands threaten their wives with another woman, or say things to make them jealous when nothing is going on, but this can make a wife feel rejection. If she fears the threat of another woman, let it be in her mind, and not because you have given her any reason to doubt.

When both husband and wife work at keeping the other from feeling rejection, there is such a warm and beautiful feeling toward each other, all the storms of life that blow their way will not destroy their love.

7 . In what ways are the three suggestions for wives in this chapter applicable to husbands?

The three suggestions to avoid rejection as applied to wives can be likewise applied to husbands. May we look at them from the husband's viewpoint:

(1) WORK TO KEEP HER IMPORTANT TO THE FAMILY.

Since the wife is often at home and more personally involved with the

children, her importance is felt by all, however, she is also one of the easiest to take for granted. Efforts should be made continually to make her feel important as a wife and mother. The husband and father should set the example before his children in showing appreciation, and then he should insist that his children give their respect. Thank her for cooking the various meals, compliment her for food that is special. Utilize every opportunity to help her with her heavy load of running a cafeteria.

Some families eat a delicious meal which required hours to prepare, and without a word, they all leave (husband included) for her to clean up the mess alone. Why not share? Don't make her feel like the maid, but rather like someone special enough to help and share!

(2) SAY NO IN A KIND WAY.

If a husband is to carry out his God-given role as the head of the wife (Ephesians 5:23), there will be times when he must say no to his wife. Does this mean that he must become angry and express his "no" in unkindness? Certainly not, it means rather, that he says "no" in kindness and explains why to say it was necessary. She may be disappointed and even in some cases hurt, but once she realizes that you are sincere and trying to look out for her best interest, she will not feel rejected, but protected and loved. Even if your "no" proves to be a mistake, if you are sincerely seeking her best, she will understand. The apostle Paul's statement "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another" (Ephesians 4:32), certainly needs to be practiced between husbands and wives!

(3) BE INTERESTED IN HER ACTIVITIES.

Even though there are many things that can be shared together, there are others which will only involve her. They may be activities that do not interest you as a man, but it is still of great value for you to show interest for her sake. Some wives are all enthusiastic about a project and wish to talk about it to their husbands, but they let them know that they are not interested. This makes them feel rejection. Only a few moments of your time would mean so much to her. Remember, love is unselfish, and will consider her needs—her interests, and will help avoid her feeling rejection.

8 . Discuss how rejection from a husband can tempt a wife to think of another man.

God has placed within a woman a desire to be accepted by a man, and this desire is met by a faithful loving husband; however, when this breaks

down and the wife feels rejection from her husband, she may be tempted to seek another man. Even if she is a Christian and refrains from involvement, her thoughts may still be driven to another. Why is the temptation for another man so great? After months of rejection by her husband, the stranger will shower her with attention. He may make her feel all the things that she has longed for, and thus the feeling is wonderful. It is so easy at this point to fall in love with him and totally fall out of love with her husband. Therefore, rejection by a husband can tempt his wife to seek and even marry another.

9 . Name some ways that husbands can make their wives feel more accepted.

The husband can make his wife feel more accepted by loving her and showing her daily of her importance. One of the best ways to show love is by togetherness.

In my file of poems and beautiful thoughts, I found the following entitled: "WHAT IS MARRIAGE?" It expresses how to make each other feel more accepted.

"Marriage is living together in a wonderful world of love, promising to care for each other through a lifetime. It's planning for the future and working together to make your dearest dreams come true. It's understanding each other and having faith in yourself, trusting each other with your deepest thoughts.

Marriage is learning a new and more wonderful meaning of togetherness, being proud of each other's accomplishments but willing to share disappointments as well. It's never being lonely or afraid of tomorrow, because of the strength you derive from each other. It's being in love with life and placing a special value on each moment. Marriage is belonging together through years filled with cherished memories, years that are never quite long enough to hold all their tears and joy." (Unknown).

10 . Do you agree that rejection is often the foundation of broken marriages?

The answer to this question is yes! In fact, this entire chapter has been devoted to prove this fact. Marriage and rejection do not mix, and those that allow such will sooner or later realize the truth of this statement.

A TRUE TO LIFE EXAMPLE

As Kyle sat alone in his one-room apartment and looked back over his married life, he could not believe what had happened. Kyle had loved

Mage when they married, but both had drifted apart over the years. She reached the point where she seemed too busy to give him the attention he loved. Marriage became to her a partnership and she could not understand why Kyle felt differently. When he made an effort to be romantic as in earlier years, she refused him and always had a way of making him feel stupid and cheap for trying.

Kyle had a job that was demanding and highly competitive, and some days he could hardly wait to get home where life would be smoother. However, he was disappointed to find that almost every time his wife had her own problems, and was not interested in his. His rejection really became hard to bear when Mage lost interest in him sexually. It seemed to Kyle that she showed interest in him only when she had a need and this was not too frequent, and on all other occasions, he was refused in a way that made him feel like the expression, the dirty old man."

Week after week, Kyle became more and more depressed, and this rejection colored all facets of his life. One day at noon while he was sitting in the cafeteria after his lunch, his thoughts were on Mage and the pain he felt in her rejection, when a beautiful lady, neatly dressed, walked up to him and said: "You look like you've just lost your best friend, is there anything I can do?" "No, thank you," Kyle said, as he forced a smile. After exchanging a few words, he learned that she worked on the first floor in the same building where he worked. Her name was Joan, and she told Kyle while walking away that she hoped things would be alright for him.

This was the first of many such conversations as they became close friends. He found in Joan the attention that he needed from Mage. Each week found him less concerned about Mage, and more interested in Joan. After several weeks of friendship, they entered into an intimate sexual relationship as Kyle became unfaithful to his wife.

On one occasion when Mage showed interest in her husband sexually, he told her that he had lost interest in her. It was at this point she realized that Kyle had become unfaithful to her. After hours of arguing, shouting, tears, and the blame being shifted back and forth to each other, Kyle moved out to an apartment.

Now that four months had passed, Kyle had just heard that Mage was going out with another man. What about Joan? She is now interested in another man and tries to avoid Kyle in every way possible.

Life to Kyle has become a burden and he has no desire to face another day. While staring through the dusty apartment window he wonders, where did it all go wrong? What could Mage and I have done to have kept our marriage alive and within the bounds that God has set? While trying

to find the answers, a tear came from his eye, rolled down his cheek onto the window sill. A tear of rejection, pain, loneliness, and guilt!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Commandment III

1. Give some of the reasons that could have caused Mage to withhold attention to Kyle.
2. How important is it for a husband to come home and find his wife interested in his work, and his sexual needs?
3. Did Kyle's involvement with another woman solve his problems?
4. To what degree is Mage at fault?
5. What could be done to save this marriage?

COMMANDMENT IV

THOU SHALT NOT CRITICIZE THY WIFE

1 . In what ways do husbands tempt wives to criticize their actions?

In a marriage relationship there are many hours spent together in almost every type of circumstance in life. Therefore, it is easy to become irritable and out of patience with each other. This sets the stage to criticize each other. In some cases, wives may be more exacting and more orderly in doing things than their husband, and consequently his actions cause her to criticize. Criticism is a very delicate matter and so often, that which is labeled constructive criticism turns out to be destructive. Thus, it becomes important for the wife to avoid the wrong kind of criticism against her husband, and the husband should avoid tempting his wife to criticize. Since criticism is defined by Webster: "to examine or judge as a critic; censure," we should be able to see that this can be a damaging thing to a marriage, and both husbands and wives should avoid destructive criticism. Please note some of the ways that husbands can avoid tempting their wives to criticize:

(1) NEEDS TO BE AN UNDERSTANDING

First of all, there needs to be an understanding between the two in regard to criticism. Each one should express his or her feelings about criticism as to how it can destroy and how to help each other without resorting to destructive criticism. Being aware of potential problems can often avoid them. Good communication can go a long way at this point.

(2) GO THE EXTRA MILE

In the second place, husbands should go the extra mile in avoiding things that irritate their wives, and wives should not be too sensitive. When both work as a team in this respect, much destructive criticism can be avoided.

(3) FULFILL GOD-GIVEN PLACE

Also, husbands need to fulfill their God-given place in the marriage. They certainly cannot be perfect in this regard, but if they will take their responsibility seriously, and will give it their best, the wife will not be tempted as much to criticize. It is true that some wives will criticize regardless, but this does not represent the majority, and those that criticize when the husband is sincerely trying, need to be taught their role as a wife. They need to study and apply Paul's command to wives: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22).

The husband that neglects his responsibilities at home to engage in a hobby, sport events, and fishing and hunting trips, is tempting his wife to criticize. If she is carrying her load and part, and all of her husband's, she will naturally cry out in rebellion. Therefore, be concerned about your home, your house and its up-keep, and the needs of your family. Do the best you can, and if the wife still criticizes you, she is at fault.

2 . Do most husbands carry out their roles of headship?

It would be impossible to know what percent do and what percent do not, however, this seems to be a serious weakness among many husbands. It is true that God has placed the headship of the wife on the husband: "For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is savior" (Ephesians 5:23). Man had nothing to do with the arrangement of things, since this came from God: "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3). Even though millions have rebelled against this arrangement, God has not changed—the responsibility is still there, and when we fail as the head of our wives, we have disobeyed God. Perhaps failure has come on the part of both husbands and wives because they have the wrong concept as to what is involved in the husband being the head. What exactly is his responsibility as head of the wife:

(1) NOT TO BE A TYRANT

It does not mean that he is a tyrant that rules with an iron fist. Some

husbands have used their headship as a license to selfishly rule with rude and boastful speech, and in some cases to practice wife beating. Does this sound like the headship that God wants? Certainly not! As we shall presently see, this is opposite to what God accepts from husbands.

(2) NOT TO BE A MASTER OVER HIS SLAVE

Nor does it mean that he is a master ruling over his slave. Some men lord it over their wives by making them stay at home doing hard labor while they go out and spend the family's money on drinking, gambling, and any other thing that pleases their fancy. If the wife complains, he lets her know that as head, he can do as he pleases, and she must submit to his wishes. These same slave drivers feel that the wife should fulfill their sexual desires on command without her wishes being considered.

This is the kind of headship that the devil approves, but such could never be approved of God! In fact, the only kind of headship approved of God is the headship that compares to Christ and His church. If a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is to the church, his wife will be delighted to submit. Consider carefully the principles that must be present for true headship:

(1) HE MUST LOVE HIS WIFE

What kind of love is taught here? Is it a shallow type which is expressed today and forgotten tomorrow? Is it mere words spoken out of lust and infatuation? No, far from it! Paul says that it must be the kind of love that Jesus had for His church when he died for it (Ephesians 5:25). If a husband loves his wife enough to die for her, will he ever purposefully harm her or abuse her? Won't he sacrifice to make her happy? Even when as head he makes a decision against her wishes, he sincerely believes that it is for her best interest. Love will lead him to meet her wishes or to decline them, depending on what he feels is best for her.

(2) HE MUST SEEK HER GOOD.

Paul further states in Ephesians 5:26,27, how Christ reacted to the church because He loved it enough to die for it: "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." You cannot read these passages without seeing that Christ wanted the best for His church, and this is the kind of love that He had.

As head of your wife, do you seek her good? Are your many decisions made with her best interest at heart? When she seeks something that will help her and make her life more beautiful and happy, do you go all out to help and encourage even to the point of sacrifice? On the other hand,

when she seeks something that you sincerely believe will harm her and take from her worth, are you man enough to be her head, and do you refuse her out of love?

(3) HE MUST LOVE HER AS SELF.

The real test of love in a husband's headship is whether or not he loves her as himself. As Paul wrote of Christ's love for the church, and the husband's love for his wife as her head, he said: "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh" (Ephesians 5:28,29). Whether we recognize it or not, we think highly of ourselves. We make efforts daily to see that we have the necessities of life, and even as many luxuries as possible. As a rule, we take every step possible to keep ourselves from harm and seek happiness. Husbands that love their wives this way, will always seek her best.

With this kind of headship, it is believed that most wives will gladly submit to their husbands, and will find the happiness their heart desires. As you look at God's idea of headship, do you feel that you are carrying out your role as the head of your wife? Do you feel that most men do?

3 . How do most men rate as to kindness?

Kindness is usually practiced by most men before marriage, but far too often it is lost after several weeks or months of marriage. If there is any magic that accompanies love in marriage, it is kindness. This beautiful trait properly displayed by either husband or wife, can just about accomplish the impossible. When it is necessary to correct each other and help improve weaknesses, it must be done in kindness. As a husband, we often profit by a wife pointing out our failures if she does so in kindness. Likewise, the husband will fail as the head of his wife unless he uses kindness. When Paul wrote his great chapter on love in 1 Corinthians 13, he began his description of love by saying: "Love suffereth long, and is kind." Therefore, how can we say that we love our wives unless we have kindness?

Looking at this from another standpoint, if you claim to be a Christian husband, you must be kind to everyone, and especially the wife that you love. To the Christians at Ephesus, (husbands included) Paul wrote: "Be ye kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32). Your kindness will make it easier for her to be kind and all concerned will be blessed. "A kind heart is a fountain of gladness, making everything in its vicinity freshen into smiles" (Washington Irving).

If therefore, you find that you are among those that do not rate highly in kindness, let this be among the priorities of your life. Kindness is not a sign of weakness, but of strength! Remember, the strongest character in all history was the kindest—Jesus the Christ! Be strong, be the head, but be kind, and your life will be richer and happier for both you and your wife.

4 . Is it true that husbands respond to kindness?

This is definitely true. In fact, this is true in the case of everyone in all walks of life. Those who do not respond favorably to kindness are hard and callous in their hearts, because even animals respond favorably.

It is on this point that husbands and wives need to communicate. It needs to be understood by the wife that husbands respond to kindness, and each should have the goal of practicing such.

The men that brought a woman to Jesus, caught in the act of adultery, must have been unkind to her, but Jesus wasn't! They were using her for their selfish gain of finding fault with Jesus, but our Lord had in mind helping her to overcome her weakness. Therefore, with kindness he forgave her and sent her on her way forgiven. We don't hear about her again, but it is logical to believe that her life was changed after this. Had Jesus been unkind, she would have been driven deeper into sin. So it is with a husband, kindness from a wife will lead him to greater heights. As the wife extends kindness to her husband, he should respond with kindness to her.

5 . Do most husbands overreact to criticism from their wives?

Yes, and especially if it is done with the wrong motive and in the wrong manner. Whether right or wrong, men do not like to be rebuked by women when it makes them feel inferior, but if the same criticism is done with kindness, concern, and discretion, such is appreciated. It is safe to say that husbands overreact if the wife is not careful and tactful. The husband can be gently led by his wife to correct his mistakes, but he will not stand for being driven. Let it be remembered that the husband should give the same consideration to his wife when helping her overcome weaknesses. When both respect each other enough to build up instead of tear down, both will compliment each other, and will grow stronger together.

6 . Discuss husbands in regard to keeping clothes picked up and in place.

Some of you that read these words are not guilty of this, but based on the testimonies of many wives, this must be a problem to them. You may feel that the wife is out of place in complaining, and that picking up your clothes is part of her duty as a wife, but please consider also the other side of the issue.

There are so many things that a wife does for a husband which he cannot conveniently do for himself. Take for example his clothes. If she keeps them washed, ironed when needed, mended, and sent to the cleaners, she has done you a great service. All of this added to the other responsibilities can keep her busy. These things she normally does without complaining; however, there is something about the husband's dirty underwear left in the bathroom floor, and his shirts and pants decorating the chairs and bed in the bedroom that bring out fire in her, and this practice she usually cannot understand.

Even more importantly, are we as husbands right in imposing these kinds of demands? Now, be assured that there are occasions when you are in a great rush that she would not complain, but when this becomes a way of life, it is a different story. Is it really so difficult for us to take a few moments after a bath to place our towel, wash cloth, and underwear in the hamper? Does it require much of our time to hang up our pants, suits, and coats as we place our shoes in the closet? Would we want to put up all the clothes that our wives wear—would we resent such?

Should the time come when we are ill, they would do all this and more for us, but while we can, shouldn't we respect her wishes and show our love for her by helping out? Remember, marriage, along with many other things, is helping each other to be happy. Why not look at this issue through the eyes of love and you will make your wife pleased that you care enough to help.

7 . When a husband fails to show love, does this promote unkind criticism from his wife?

Surely we can all agree that the answer to this question is yes. Love is a powerful thing in our lives and the absence of it leaves a great void. The wife that longs for the love of her husband and fails to find it, becomes frustrated, cheated, and unhappy. These feelings all tied up with emotions can lead her to unkind criticism. Be assured also, that when the situation is reversed, the husband will respond in the same way.

Thus we can see that a husband's love for his wife is very important

and becomes the basis for solving many problems. Could this be the reason why Paul called upon husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church? When marriages break up, all kinds of reasons are given, but usually it all comes from a lack of love on the part of the husband, wife, or both! Don't let love die in your marriage. It will if you don't keep it glowing and active. When you begin seeing an excessive amount of unkind criticism from your wife, chances are that you are failing in showing her love. If you are positive that you love your wife, and are showing this love and still unfair criticism is present, then there could be something lacking in her love for you. Never forget that love is the antidote for all difficulties, and as Milton expressed it: "Mutual love is the crown of all our bliss." Again, in the words of another writer: "To love is to place our happiness in the happiness of another" (Leibnitz).

8 . Discuss whether or not husbands nag.

Perhaps there is not a problem in marriage that is applied to women that cannot be applied to men. Who could deny that some husbands nag just as surely as some wives; however, it would be impossible to know what percent are guilty. It is true that society in general has placed this problem more on women, but it is a fact that some men are just as guilty. Looking at this subject even further, it should also be noted that some husbands give their wives cause to nag, while other women nag just for the thrill of it. Whether it is a husband or wife that is guilty of nagging, be assured that it brings pressures to bear on a marriage and should be avoided.

What causes either a husband or wife to nag? A long list of suggestions might be given, but surely a lack of true love is at the root of all causes. Those that practice nagging know that their mates detest such, and that nagging is harmful. Love seeks the best interest and happiness of the one loved. If there be excessive nagging on the part of either, check your love for each other. Remember, when love takes over, nagging will be replaced with kindness and constructive speech.

A TRUE TO LIFE EXAMPLE

Ned and Karen were both reared in the church and became active Christians. As they grew up, they had no idea of ever dating, but one night at a youth party they found themselves talking. It was discovered that both had high ideals about life and religion plus each one that night, for some strange reason, seemed attracted to each other. Almost without

thinking, Ned placed his hand on hers and said, "you are really beautiful tonight with the moon shining on your face." This sent a thrill through Karen that she had never felt before, and this was the beginning of a beautiful courtship.

After several months of dating, and graduation from college, the week for marriage that they had planned for had arrived. As they looked back over their courtship, they had no regrets. They were considered "ole fashioned" by others since they kept themselves pure for their wedding, and now that the occasion had arrived, they had the deepest respect for each other.

When the beautiful wedding was over, they spent a happy week together before getting down to the business of normal life.

Even though they did not write them down, they had talked often of some guidelines that each would follow in marriage. They agreed that there would be temptations to criticize each other, but if each would correct the other with love, that they could grow together. Likewise, it was agreed that Ned would be the head of their house. He told her that there would be times that his decisions would not agree with hers, but that she could count on the fact that he would have her best interest at heart.

Another guideline for their marriage that was discussed was that each would try to be kind. They admitted that on occasions due to the many stresses of life there would be unkind moments, but that they would both work to avoid such.

Then came up the subject of nagging. Karen said, "traditionally, the wife is accused of nagging, but as you know, the husband can not only be guilty of nagging, but of causing his wife to practice such." Ned agreed, and each promised that they would try to be aware of this problem, and endeavor to avoid it.

Ned told her as they thought further about the various guidelines for their marriage: "For most of my life, I have left my clothes all over my room and in the bathroom, but during the past few weeks I have worked hard to correct this bad habit. You see, my mom told me that this often causes friction and criticism in a marriage. With only a few exceptions, I have been able to change and I wanted you to know that I will continue to try."

As the years passed, this couple grew together in every way. They would often stray from their original guidelines, but they would always with kindness help each other to get back on the track. Two beautiful children were born to this marriage which brought some pressures to bear, but they were able to solve them and found great joy in their Christian home.

When Ned and Karen are asked the secret of their beautiful home they always respond: "LOVE! LOVE FOR GOD, AND LOVE FOR EACH OTHER!"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Commandment IV

1. Discuss how Ned and Karen experienced falling in love.
2. What is involved in Ned being the head of this marriage?
3. Why is nagging so destructive to a marriage?
4. Discuss the problem of husbands leaving clothes in the floor.
5. How important are guidelines in a marriage?

COMMANDMENT V

THOU SHALT KEEP THY WEDDING VOWS

1 . Are the marriage vows important to most husbands?

Unfortunately, the answer to this question is no! This is proven by the fact that America is leading most of the world in divorce. In the figures for divorce rates in 1981-82 among 20 leading countries, the United States led them all with the highest rate of divorces. Our nation had 1,800,000 divorces. That is 5.10 divorces per 1,000 people. Russia had the next largest rate with 3.48 per 1,000 people. On the other end of the score, Italy had only .19 per 1,000 people. The blame for divorces cannot be placed on women alone, but the blame must be shared together.

In far too many cases, the husband to be, standing before the marriage altar does not realize the seriousness of the vows. If all husbands did, many marriages that break up in divorce would make it. Among other things, he promises to take that wife and to live with her after God's ordinances. He promises to keep God's laws of marriage, and yet, when the going gets rough or when he finds a woman more beautiful and exciting, he pulls out. What does God command husbands (wives) to do? "I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery" (Matthew 19:8,9).

As the groom takes his vows he also promises to be true and loyal to her as long as they live. However, thousands in America advocate that it is alright for a husband to have his occasional fling. Even some wives that are interviewed on this subject on television, say that they are not too disturbed if their husband has an occasional affair with another. As one

put it: "We have that kind of understanding." Those husbands that engage in such did not mean their vows—they lied before man and God!

Thank God that among the multiplied thousands of husbands that do not consider their marriage vows important, there are still a great number that do. Even when the going gets rough, and difficult problems arise, they hang in there. These are to be commended for their integrity and fidelity, and be assured that God is pleased.

2 . Discuss the importance of teaching boys the importance of the marriage vows.

Like father like son contains more truth than we care to admit. Our sons get their first lesson on the importance and sacredness of marriage, and the marriage vows by observing their parents. The father that believes that he can show his son by example one thing, and teach him the opposite, is deceived. There would certainly be much profit in sitting down with your son and reviewing the wedding vows while emphasizing their sacredness, but it is believed that far greater lessons are taught when a son sees them lived by his father.

That son can see whether or not you have sincerely taken his mother to be your wedded wife in a solemn way. He can see and hear whether or not his parents are honestly following God's laws of marriage. Perhaps even more so, he can see whether or not you love, honor, and serve his mother in sickness and in health. Do you want your sons (daughters) to consider the marriage vows important? Then live them and they will.

Some children grow up thinking that marriage is not a permanent thing, and if divorce becomes necessary, so what! After all, it happened to my parents, and it's alright if it happens to me. Is this the way you want your sons and daughters to feel? Then teach them in every way possible, and especially by your life, the importance of the promises at the marriage altar before man and God.

3 . Who promotes and causes divorce the most, men or women?

If you were to ask this question to women, they would say men, if you were to ask men they would say women. The question is not who files for divorce the most, but rather who promotes and causes divorce the most. It would be impossible as well as unfair to single either out and say you are the most guilty. For you see, marriage with its happiness, and divorce with its many heartbreaks involves two people, not one. Even though they are to be one in marriage, they are still two people, and both of these

have an input into the success or failure of their marriage.

It is true that when a divorce occurs, that one of the two usually takes the lead, or one of the two may have become unfaithful to the other, or one out of the two may have a drinking problem, etc. However, both have been involved in the marriage, and each has contributed some weaknesses.

If your wife leaves and seems to be the only guilty one, ask yourself, "did I really give my best to this marriage? Was I the best husband possible, or was I selfish, neglectful, and in some cases indifferent to her?" Yes, she is wrong in seeking another man, and she is wrong in perhaps many other ways, but if you discover that you had a part (large or small) in her turning to unfaithfulness, then you are also wrong.

We must admit that there are cases where the husband (wife) does everything to the best of his ability to have a good marriage, but his mate leaves because she is seeking more exciting things. These cases are very difficult and painful, but in many other instances, the so-called innocent party is not all that innocent.

Therefore, if you will give 100 percent to your marriage, and if your wife will likewise give 100 percent, neither will be guilty of promoting or causing divorce!

4 . What is involved in the words: "leave" and "cleave" in Genesis 2:24?

In this passage, Moses recorded God's law for marriage after Eve was made and presented to Adam: "And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man LEAVE his father and his mother, and shall CLEAVE unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:23,24).

The two words capitalized, "LEAVE" and "CLEAVE" are very important for a successful and happy marriage. What is involved with these two words?

The word "LEAVE" father and mother must be obeyed. First of all, you must physically leave your father's house. There is not a roof large enough to properly cover your parents and your new home. There may be enough square feet to accommodate both, but this is not all that is involved. Your father is the head of his wife, and you are the head of yours, and those that live in the same house face the danger of serious problems with a conflicting headship.

There may be emergency situations where such is advisable, but be sure

that there is no other way, and likewise make sure that such arrangement is as brief as possible. You may have the best parents in the world, however, you, or your parents should not be placed under this type of pressure. Even if you have to live in a one room cottage, take it and begin building your own Christian home. Don't stay with your parents until problems arise before seeking your own. Sometimes, couples harm their marriage deeply, before they awaken to the truth of the scripture: "Leave father and mother."

In the next place, a husband should cleave to his wife in the sense of cutting the apron strings that bind. Some wives become sick of marriage early because they never feel that they have a husband—he still belongs to his mother. Please understand that we don't stop loving and respecting our mothers (fathers) when we get married, and Moses in this verse is not suggesting such. In fact, our love and respect moves on to a more mature level. The warning here is to leave your parents and cleave to your wife in the sense of assuming your own responsibility as head of your wife. Even though your parents may give advice, you're the one that must make the final decision.

The husband that runs home every time there is a ripple on the waters of their marriage, or the husband that uses every opportunity to disparage his wife by constantly exalting his mother as a model that she should follow, is not cleaving to his wife, and is preparing for war. Your mother may be the best cook, and may even have most of life's problems under control, but this was not the case when she first married. She grew to this strength by your father cleaving to her and giving her love, patience, and room to grow! Doesn't your wife deserve the same consideration? Continue therefore, to love your parents, but leave them in the sense of building your own home, and cleave to your wife in the sense of standing by her in her weakness as well as in her strength, and you will be surprised how much happiness can be shared between two people.

5 . In many marriages, husbands are not Christians. How does this affect such marriages?

In one word—GREATLY! It has been my experience to hear husbands say after conversion, "I had no idea of how much my becoming a Christian would affect the happiness of our marriage and home." The word converted was purposely used, because this is what's under discussion. Those that go through a pretense simply for the sake of pleasing their wives or other people have not changed, and consequently there will not be a positive change. Note carefully some of the ways that true conversion affects marriages:

(1) THERE IS A MORE COMPLETE ONENESS.

You may feel that you are one with your wife, but without being a Christian, there is something lacking. Our religion affects all facets of our lives whether we want it to or not. It affects the way we talk, the way we act, the way we feel, and even our attitudes. For a marriage to be at its best, these are important and need to be shared.

(2) HE WILL NOT FEEL GUILTY.

A non-Christian father has an effect upon his wife and family by his feelings of failure. Down deep in his heart, (even though he never admits it) he feels that he is shirking his responsibility, and he feels this way because it is true. As the head, he should be taking the lead—he should be taking his children to learn about the higher way of life, but instead, his wife is shouldering his load. Some try to hide their guilt by saying, “I don’t go, but I sure insist that my children go with their mother.” Imagine how the father felt when his little boy said, “Daddy, I’ll be glad when I’m old as you!” His dad asked, “why, son?” “So I’ll be too old to need church.”

(3) SHARES THE SAME HOPE.

When a husband is not a Christian, he and his wife do not share the same hope after this life. His hope is limited to physical things, while his wife thinks more deeply about things eternal. To believe or not believe are opposite extremes and bring division. Some husbands say, “It would be better for us to both be Christians, but we have an understanding—we’ve worked it out.” He is saying that we have learned to survive, but in seeking happiness, this should not be enough. A couple should never stop seeking to unite on those things that divide them. When both are Christians, they share the same hope and are united in purpose as God intended.

Even more importantly, the non-Christian should count the cost of being lost eternally. In our society, the idea of “hell” and eternal punishment is mocked and joked about every moment, but in the Bible, it is a real and serious subject. Before deciding against becoming a faithful Christian, ponder seriously Christ’s question: “What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26).

Thus, the non-Christian has an astronomical effect upon his wife, his children, and the destiny of his own soul.

6 . How do most husbands cope with the poor health of their wives—well or poorly?

Even though most husbands promise in the marriage ceremony that they will love, honor, trust, and serve her in sickness, it is believed that the majority fall short. This is sad because sickness is one of the facts of life that must be considered. When a husband is sick, he wishes in most cases, the undivided attention of his wife, but when the situation is reversed, he may not be too anxious to serve her. It is true that most men are not good nurses and may be awkward even in giving an aspirin, but it is not just the skillfulness that counts. If he is concerned and doing the best he can, the wife will usually understand.

Serving one's wife while she is ill is one of the ways that love is shown. Remember also, that your skill to serve her while ill can be improved if you really care and take this responsibility seriously. If you are a Christian husband, you will also want to serve her because the Lord commands it (Matthew 25:35-40).

7 . Discuss husbands loving their wives as themselves.

This concept is a scriptural one because Paul guided by the Holy Spirit, commands: "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself" (Ephesians 5:28). It is a beautiful thought when one reads it from the Bible, but too often it is never translated into life. Was Paul only wishfully thinking when he made this statement, or is such possible? It is believed that thousands of husbands throughout the years have demonstrated this principle in their lives. They have reached the point where they can put the needs and wishes of their wives before their own. Yes, this is rare, but truly possible.

The husband that loves his wife as himself, receives much for himself. For a wife worth loving to this degree will respond in an unselfish way, and will bring more happiness to her husband. The husband that gives such unselfish love to his wife believes that it is more blessed to give than to receive. He has a love that would even die for his wife.

Just think of the many problems that would be solved with this type of love. Most of the problems that arise between husbands and wives come from selfishness. Their thoughts, talk, and actions center around themselves, and this brings conflicts. The unselfish husband will consider his wife's needs and will seek to fulfill them. In short, he will follow the golden rule of treating her the way he likes to be treated. This concept can go a long ways in making any marriage a success.

8 . In our modern age, is adultery mostly a husband problem?

Many can recall when the adultery problem was mostly centered

around an unfaithful husband, but this is no longer the case. Although the percentage of husbands involved in adultery may still be greater, each year finds more wives guilty. As a general rule, wives seek this type of relationship only if things are not right with their husbands; however, there are still more wives than one might imagine that keep themselves pure from such relationships regardless.

For many years, society has had a double standard, one for husbands and the other for wives. The husband was permitted to have his occasional affair without too much concern, but never the wife! Now, a segment of society says that it is permissible for the wife to do the same. Please remember, though, that God has always had one standard and His laws for moral purity apply to both men and women. His word plainly states: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14; Matthew 5:27,28). The New Testament plainly teaches that adultery is one of the sins that will cause a soul to be lost eternally (Galatians 5:19-21). The population of hell will be made up of adulterers and adulteresses, (Revelation 21:8; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10), and those that practice such are not friends of God (James 4:4). Adultery is the only sin that gives one the right to put away his wife in divorce (Matthew 19:9; Mark 10:11,12; Luke 16:18).

We must not allow the world to set our moral standards, because the standards that the world set are NOT approved of God. Adultery then, is a problem today among husbands and wives, and the sin must be avoided to be acceptable to God, and to make marriage have its rightful place.

9 . How should a husband handle the unfaithfulness of his wife?

Perhaps one of the most heartbreaking experiences that a husband (wife) can experience is to learn that his wife is sexually unfaithful. This can bring out things from within him that he didn't know were there. How does one deal with this?

(1) TAKE PLENTY OF TIME.

First of all, don't rush into anything, but give yourself time to think as rationally as possible. Remember that you will probably first have a burst of anger, jealousy, hurt, and in some cases an urge to harm the man responsible. If you doubt the serious consequences that can follow such emotions burning out of control, just listen to the daily news. It is not unusual to hear about an angry husband killing the man that took his wife. Thus, before doing anything, get yourself under control as much as possible.

(2) THINK THINGS THROUGH.

In the next place, think it all the way through. Is the man that took your wife the only guilty one? Unless it is rape, she was a partner in the sin, and must share some of the blame. Then finally, look within! Has your marriage fallen apart, and to what extent are you at fault? Have you neglected your wife, and been involved in other things? Have you refused to communicate with her? No, this didn't give her the right to do such a thing, but did you help promote her temptation? Once you have the whole thing in the proper perspective, you are better qualified to seek the solution.

(3) MARRIAGE IS WORTH SAVING.

As you tackle this most difficult problem, keep in your mind that your marriage is worth saving. When there is adultery, something went wrong—something happened between you and your wife, and the truth, regardless of how painful, must come to the surface. In some cases it is advisable to seek the help of a Christian counselor, but you may wish first to attempt a solution yourself. If so, ask your wife to meet with you at a specific time and place away from interruptions to discuss your marital problems. Let her know that this is important and very serious. Once you have met begin by asking her to help you keep things as calm as possible so that solutions can be found.

(4) HAVE A PLAN.

Begin by asking her to list the things that drove her away from you, or the things that caused your marriage to go wrong. As she mentions problems, jot them down for future thought when you are alone, and for further discussion after she has finished. Try not to respond until she has finished all grievances. Then ask her if you may respond to each of these. If she agrees, begin with the first one, and in the event that you are guilty, admit such and to what extent. Should one of the grievances against you be an error, make an effort to correct it in honesty and sincerity.

Once you have covered all of them, discuss how improvements can be made. Let her make suggestions and help her feel that she is a part of the solution. Somewhere in the conversation she needs to know that you will forgive her if she is willing to make things right, and then ask her to forgive you for failing her if in the event you have.

In some cases, the wife may not have any desire to correct her adulterous relationship, nor to restore your marriage. Even if this be the case, you must try your best to change her mind. Should all efforts fail on your part and with the help of a counselor, you will eventually have to accept the inevitable. However, you will at least feel better for having made a sincere effort, and God will reward you for seeking the right way.

A TRUE TO LIFE EXAMPLE

After several months of dating, John and Lenora decided to get married. Lenora wanted a big church wedding, but John said that a Justice of the Peace would suit him fine. However, Lenora insisted and all the arrangements were made for a church wedding. The couple was asked to meet with the preacher one week before the wedding to talk about what was involved in this serious step. Without reading the vows word by word, the minister talked to them about most of the principles involved. The both wanted to be polite, but felt that they were sitting through a private sermon that was not needed.

One week later when these vows were read, each said, "I do," but neither realized the seriousness of such promises, and were considered by them only words to a wedding ceremony that must be said before marriage. They were too excited and anxious to get this over and to get away on their honeymoon, to be that serious.

The first few weeks went by smoothly with only a few minor arguments, but the real test came when they had their first major disagreement. Lenora was considered by her friends as being a fair cook, but she realized that she still had a lot to learn. Almost every day, John had a comment to make about her cooking. He always had a way of encouraging her to call his mother saying "she'll tell you what to do, she's an expert cook." Lenora was almost at her boiling point when his parents dropped by one evening after they had eaten. During the course of the evening while all were together in the den, John's mother said: "Son, I'm worried about you, have you lost weight? You must not be eating right. Why don't you come by the house occasionally and let me fatten you up?" Lenora felt the slap as it were on her face, and John didn't try to defend his new wife. He simply said, "I'll be alright, Mom, Lenora will improve as time goes by." After a long list of advice, John's parents left and a real war broke out. This was one of many fights engaged in, as this couple grew colder and colder towards each other.

John became more involved in his work with overtime, and then almost every week some of his buddies at work asked him to go fishing, golfing, and bowling. As to bowling, the company formed a league and this became a weekly affair. Needless to say, the months brought more and more loneliness to Lenora's life. As her loneliness increased, there were some nights when John was away that she felt as though she couldn't stand this kind of life any longer.

The neighbors on the north side of their house had a large lawn, and they hired a young man to come by two days each week to mow, edge,

and care for the flower beds. One day while Lenora was hanging out some clothes, they became acquainted, and during the weeks that followed, they became close friends. Since she felt so neglected and lonely, she anxiously anticipated the days for Tom to work. As she grew more bitter toward John for his neglect, she became closer to Tom.

One hot day after Tom had finished his yard, she invited him to come to her house for a cold glass of tea, and during the weeks that followed, this became a routine. It was on one of these occasions that Lenora and Tom became involved intimately. She could not believe that this had happened, and felt guilty even though her husband had neglected her. She told Tom that she must not continue their involvement, that she must not again break their marriage vows, but each week when he insisted on seeing her she was not strong enough to refuse.

After this affair went on for about six weeks, the neighbor called John and informed him of what he thought was going on. John left work immediately, slipped quietly into the house, and found the two together in bed. His first impulse was to kill him on the spot, but rather decided to rush out of the house to think things over.

John talked this problem over with the minister that had married them, and he advised them to sit down together and try honestly to face their problems. He cautioned John that even though she had committed adultery, he must take a long honest look at his own life. He must not try to talk to her while feeling that he is without blame. Just honestly sit down together and discover what went wrong.

John and Lenora did this and were able to work through their problems. Their marriage had its rough places, after this, but at least both were trying hard to make it work. They both made things right and became active in the church trying to please God, and this helped so much. They also associated with other Christian couples which added a positive example to their marriage. With God's help, they are now honoring their marriage vows.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Commandment V

1. Discuss John's attitude toward the wedding vows even before marriage.
2. How should a husband deal with his wife's problem of cooking?
3. How could John have avoided neglect toward his wife in regard to his work, fishing, golfing, and bowling?

4. Was Lenora wrong in her relationship with Tom? How could she have avoided this?
5. Discuss John's actions after his wife's adultery. Did he do the right thing? Should he have divorced her?

COMMANDMENT VI

THOU SHALT NOT FAIL IN LOVING THY WIFE

1 . At what level of love are husbands usually weakest?

Before answering this question, let us review the three levels of love. There are three Greek words used in the Greek language to define the different levels of love. These three translated love are: Eros, Philia, and Agape. Eros means a sexual type of love, Philia is a tender love of friendship, and Agape is a love which considers the needs of the person loved. Each of these has its place in marriage, but which level is most often neglected by the husband? It is believed that the last one, Agape is usually the weakest. There is usually a temptation for husbands to display a selfish type love—what is in this for me! There is certainly nothing wrong in seeking happiness for self, but wrong is committed when we lose sight of the happiness of the wife. When love does not take into consideration the one loved, it cannot be Agape love.

What happens to the other levels of love when husbands have a strong Agape love? They are also made strong. Those that have the unselfish Agape love will also have Philia, a tender love of friendship, and the more the wife experiences the Agape love from her husband, the deeper her friendship will grow. Likewise, the other level of love, Eros, sexual love, will have a more beautiful meaning when Agape love is present. Thus we can say that Agape love is the foundation on which the other levels of love are built.

Therefore, if you want to increase the happiness of your wife, yourself, and your marriage as a whole, develop that powerful, unselfish level of love, Agape love. Failing to consider the needs of your wife is a weakness that you can't afford.

2. Discuss what is involved in the command: "Husbands, love your wives.

Paul could have chosen any of the three Greek words for love. He could have said, husbands, love your wives (Eros—sexually) or he could have said, love your wives (Philia—as in family and friendship), but he chose rather to use the word Agape a love which considers the needs of the wife. Since Paul in this verse (Ephesians 5:25) was comparing the husband's love for his wife to Christ's love for the church, this is the only level of love that would suffice. What is involved in a husband loving his wife on this level?

(1) SACRIFICE

He will make sacrifices for his wife. Before marriage he may have been concerned only for himself and his own needs, but now he will give up many things for self to make his wife happy. For her, he is willing to work even extra hours to make her happy, and the extreme sacrifice would involve giving even his life to protect her.

(2) DEVOTION

This Agape love causes him also to be devoted to his wife. He refuses to allow anything or anyone to make him neglect her. He devotes himself to seek for her the things that will make her happy. He may or may not enjoy going with her to visit her mother, but he still goes along because she wants him to. When temptations come to pull him away from her or if another woman seeks his attention, he turns away and leaves no doubt of his devotion to the wife he loves.

(3) UNSELFISH

The husband that loves his wife as Paul commanded is unselfish. It is hard to lay aside our own desires and needs in life, but the husband with Agape love is able to accomplish such. He will not waste the pay check on himself, but considers his responsibility to his wife, children, and home.

Do you have pity for a husband that has this type of love? Is he the underdog because he is willing to sacrifice, is devoted, and is unselfish toward his wife? Certainly not! His life will be richer, he will receive submission and respect from his wife, and she will respond by returning her love in ways that will excell his own. Love begets love, and especially is this true with Agape love.

3 . How do the statements, “husbands love”, and “wives submit” go together?

These two words go together because God put them together. They represent God’s assignments to man and woman and be assured that God knew what He was doing. Some see a conflict in the two concepts, but they are wrong. These two principles compliment each other when understood and practiced as God intended. Each statement is dependent upon the other. It is difficult for the wife to submit to her husband if he does not love her, and it is difficult for the husband to love his wife if she does not submit to him.

There are those in this modern generation that wish to break down any differences between husbands and wives. They ignore any responsibility that God has given to the husband (wife). They don’t know what they are trying to do! There is nothing wrong with God’s arrangements for husbands and wives. The problems arise when we ignore God’s plan, either by totally denying it, or by failing to practice it.

Husbands love your wives, and wives submit to your husbands can be compared to a lock and key. For a lock to be used properly and as it was designed, it must have a key. A lock or key by itself has very little value. Therefore, when a husband loves properly a wife that submits, there is a happiness that is based on a heavenly design.

4 . Why are many husbands weak in loving their wives?

(1) NEVER BEEN TAUGHT

Many husbands are weak in loving their wives because they have never been taught how. Most husbands base their love on simply “doing what comes naturally,” and this is usually a selfish type of love. Certainly our natural instincts are important and have an important part, but these must be controlled and channeled in the right direction.

(2) WRONG CONCEPT

Too many husbands love their wives only if they feel like it. The idea of initiating love, and loving for the sake of one’s wife is an unknown concept to millions. They are, therefore, weak in loving their wives because they don’t understand the deeper meaning of love.

(3) WARPED THINKING

Other husbands are weak in loving their wives because the world has warped their thinking on the subject. If you talk to many husbands about loving their wives, they think primarily of “making love” sexually. As long as the fires of desire are burning for their wives, they believe that

they truly love her. Now this is important in loving one's wife, but if love begins and ends here, great problems will come. This is only one level of love, and when it burns out there must be other levels to fall back upon. Millions of husbands never seek out the more permanent type of love, and this accounts for much weakness in husbands loving their wives.

5 . What kind of classes would help husbands to initiate the proper love for wives?

There is a pressing need for more men's classes to be organized for the purpose of teaching about his responsibility in marriage. For many years the ladies in the church have conducted classes and have spent hours learning about their responsibilities as wives; however, as a general rule, men have not conducted such classes. This is a great weakness on our part. It would be impossible to count the times that women have said: "We go to all these classes and learn how to be better wives, and then we go home to husbands that don't care! Why don't they learn how to be good husbands?"

Please consider carefully some suggestions as to how we can provide more training for men to be better husbands:

(1) ORGANIZE A WEEKLY MEN'S CLASS.

This class should meet at night to avoid less conflicts with working schedules. It can be taught on Wednesday evening, Sunday evening, or on other nights of the week. In some cases, a Saturday class might be advisable. The time of meeting should be worked out to accommodate the best attendance. The subject matter should be aimed at husbands, and not at wives. Material, such as contained in this book (and others) should be used. Time should not be wasted by a lot of related material, but get down to the bottom line: "How to love your wife."

(2) HAVE A MEN'S CLASS DURING VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL.

During the week of your Vacation Bible School is a good time to have a class for men. If you don't have a qualified teacher, bring in one! Can you think of anything more important to improve marriages than to teach husbands how to love their wives?

(3) HAVE A MEN'S DAY OR SEMINAR.

Just as the ladies have a ladies day on Saturday, the men can do the same. Schedule classes in the morning and evening, and have a "salad luncheon" for the noon meal. Design the classes so that the major facets of loving your wife will be covered. Why not bring in expert teachers for

the occasion? This will pay great dividends to the homes and the church where you live. An alternate plan would be to have a men's seminar in the morning followed by a ladies seminar in the afternoon. This would allow the wife to keep the children in the morning and the husband in the afternoon.

Finally, be sure that you encourage your older teenage boys to be present. Sooner than you realize, these boys will be facing marriage, and while they are maturing toward that goal is an EXCELLENT time to teach them the meaning of loving one's wife.

6 . Do you feel that as a whole, husbands are willing to sacrifice for the cause of love?

Based on the increased problem of broken marriages over the years, the answer would be: "No, most husbands are not." It is so easy to become caught up in self and what it takes to please self that we fail to show an unselfish love. The greatest example of sacrifice in love is Christ. When you consider the cross, love is written on every action. Just recently there appeared a cartoon in a local magazine which said: I asked Jesus, "How much do you love me?" "This much," He answered, and He stretched out His arms and died.

Remember that love for our wives will never be as it should be until we learn the meaning of sacrifice and put it into practice.

7 . Are husbands more selfish than wives?

This is a difficult question to answer, because all of us have known husbands and wives that are extremely selfish. This is an argument that could go on and on; however, the point that needs to be recognized is that many marriages are broken because husbands (wives) are selfish.

It is admitted that both husband and wife need some time for their personal hobbies or for those things in which they are personally interested, but one must not allow these things to get out of control to the point of selfishness. It is believed that when we each have the right kind of love, that selfishness will not be a problem.

The question then is not so much who is the most selfish, men or women, but rather, what about individual cases? To make it even more to the point, how about you? How about me? If selfishness is found with either husband or wife or both, it is a destructive thing that needs to be removed.

8 . Do you agree that love is the ingredient that holds marriages together? If yes, discuss your reasons.

Surely we can all agree that the answer is yes, and especially is this true when all levels of love are present. Love can help hold a marriage together because the proper characteristics are present which seek the good of each other. Love is not just a word spoken or defined, but something that is seen, lived, and demonstrated in our daily actions. As Longfellow so beautifully described it: "There is nothing holier in this life of ours than the first consciousness of love—the first fluttering of its silken wings—the first rising sound and breath of that wind which is so soon to sweep through the soul, to purify or to destroy."

Thus, when things go wrong in a marriage, and the valleys of despair appear, love is the bridge that spans the chasm and makes it possible to keep going until the mountain tops appear. Love has a power that cannot be equated by any other virtue on earth. "No cord or cable can draw so forcibly, or bind so fast, as love can do with a single thread." (Burton) Therefore, seek the God-given love for it is the ingredient that holds marriages together!

A TRUE TO LIFE EXAMPLE

Steve and Gail had been married eighteen years, but instead of getting closer together and enjoying each other's company, they grew farther apart. There seemed to be something missing in their marriage. One day Steve was surprised beyond words when Gail told him that she was thinking about leaving. When he asked her why she would consider such a thing, she said, "I'm bored, unhappy, and don't feel that I'm important to you."

Steve had been with her so many years that he could not imagine being alone. It is true that in recent months they had gone their separate way in most areas of their lives, but they managed to stay at least under the same roof. After he had gotten over the shock of her statement, he decided to make an effort to get things right. They sat up until 1:00 A.M. discussing things, but they seemed to only go around in circles. Finally Steve asked her if she would be willing to meet with their preacher, Brother Jones, and perhaps he could point out some things that they were missing. She told him that she didn't feel that it would help, but if that was what he wanted, she would go along with it.

The next day they were able to meet with Brother Jones in the afternoon. At first it was awkward to talk to him about their personal problems, but after a few minutes they realized that he had their interest at heart, and it was not so difficult.

After Brother Jones heard thirty minutes of accusations, and (in some cases) heated arguments, he told them that he would like to give them something to consider. He took a tablet and wrote on it the three Greek words for love: EROS, PHILIA, and AGAPE. He showed them how Eros is a sexual type love, Philia is a tender love of friendship, and Agape is a love which unselfishly considers the needs of the one loved. Then he looked at Steve and said, "do you feel that you still have sexual attraction for Gail?" This was easy, of course he did, and this seemed to be the only time that he felt closeness to her. He continued by saying that in the past few years she had lost interest in this part of their marriage. Gail listened quietly as Brother Jones continued. "What about Philia, a tender love of friendship?" "Oh, I guess we are friends," Steve replied. It was obvious to Brother Jones that his answer was weak and without feeling. Brother Jones asked further: "Are you really close friends and enjoy being together—doing things together?" With his head dropped, Steve said, "I'm afraid we're not that close to be honest with you."

"Let's move on to the next one," Brother Jones continued. "How about Agape love, do you unselfishly consider the needs of Gail?" Half-heartedly he said: "Well, I have always provided food on the table and a place for her to live." Brother Jones asked further, "but have you shown her that she is important and that you are devoted to her in every way? Is your love self-centered around what you want or what she needs?" Steve replied: "I've really never thought of it that way. I guess I thought that she was supposed to make me happy, but I haven't thought much about how she felt."

Brother Jones turned to Gail and asked: "Is this why you feel unhappy?" With tears in her eyes she said, "As I looked at these types of love, I could see our problem clearly. I have felt for years that Steve's love was mostly sexual, and these other two have been so weak. Because of this, I must admit that I don't have the right kind of love for him. I wish we had Agape love, but we just don't have it!"

After several minutes of explaining its importance, he asked if they would be willing to give this a try. Would they try each day to seek the best for each other and to be more devoted to each other. They each agreed, and the following weeks found them sincerely trying! They had their difficult times, but at least they were striving to improve.

This couple never reached the high peak that they had dreamed about, but they developed enough love that they found fulfillment being together and sharing life's good and bad together. It was the right kind of love—Agape love—that kept this marriage from destruction.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Commandment VI

1. Discuss how Steve and Gail's problem is repeated today, and what causes such.
2. How important are the three levels of love in marriage?
3. Why is Agape love so permanent?
4. Why is sexual love, without other levels a failure?
5. Can all three levels of love be learned? How?

COMMANDMENT VII

THOU SHALT NOT DEPRIVE THY WIFE SEXUALLY

1 . Do you feel that husbands are too demanding in sex? Do they place too much emphasis on it?

It is believed that many wives would answer yes to both of these questions. God has made man, by nature, very demanding when it comes to sex, and if this is kept under control, it can be used to keep sex alive in marriage. However, like all other facets of life, this is often abused. Sometimes husband's demands are unfair, selfish, and even lustful in nature. Any kind of love between husband and wife needs to be shared and not forced. The husband that truly loves and respects his wife will be understanding, and will lead his wife to the point where she wishes to express sexual love to him. At this point, his demands or requests will not seem too demanding.

It is true that many husbands have been accused by their wives of placing too much emphasis on sex, and one must admit that such is the case far too often. It is at this point that husbands and wives need to seek the truth rather than extremes. The husband is often guilty of carrying his emphasis on sex to the extreme. He may ignore all the important things that lead to the sexual union with his wife, and think only of the act itself, and this seems to be resented by most wives. They do not wish to feel that they are mere objects to be used by their husbands. They want the sexual union as a culmination of love expressions, kindness, and togetherness. Wives often express that they want to view sex with their husbands as an act of love rather than just a physical act performed.

The other extreme is sometimes carried out by wives. They may be

guilty of not putting enough emphasis on sex for the sake of their husband. This can be done by coldness in regard to his advances, and in ridiculing him for desiring sex. Such expressions as: "You are a dirty old man," can be a form of ridicule! Both of these extremes should be avoided, for the truth lies between these two extremes. The husband should be very gentle and understanding in his demands, and continually strive to associate love with the sexual union, and the wife should realize that by nature sex is important to the man and should avoid making him feel cheap for desiring her. When this is done, each will feel his or her place in this important part of marriage.

2 . In what areas do husbands need the most improvement in regard to their sexual relations?

Should this question be asked to several wives, there would be many answers because husbands have different types of weaknesses. However, there are some areas of improvement that would surface which are needed most, and may we consider some of these:

(1) UNSELFISHNESS

Like all other facets of marriage, unselfishness in sex is vitally important. A husband must get rid of the idea that sex is for his benefit only. You have your needs, but so does your wife, and it is cruel and unChristian to seek your fulfillment and to ignore hers. Remember, your selfishness will drive her away from you and eventually your marriage will be harmed.

It is good for husbands and wives to talk over their own needs and how to be considerate of each other. When you show enough love to let her know that you are concerned about her fulfillment, she will return the same concern for you.

(2) UNDERSTANDING

Each husband should make an all-out effort to understand the needs of his wife. Some husbands make the mistake of thinking that their wives are like themselves in regard to sexual satisfaction. This is not true! God made man and woman different in this area no doubt for a purpose, and a concerned husband will do his best to understand.

It is likewise important for husbands to understand the anatomy of women, and what is needed to give her sexual fulfillment. He can go to the public library and find special books with detailed information and diagrams. When your wife realizes that you love her enough to consider her needs, she will have a healthy attitude toward you, your needs, and the sexual union.

(3) PATIENCE

In research done on this subject, it seems that one of the most often complaints from wives was that: "My husband rushes things, reaches his satisfaction, and I'm left out." Sometimes this cannot be avoided; however, too many times such happens because the husband is impatient, inconsiderate, and selfish. Since man can be ready for sexual union quickly, he assumes that his wife can do the same. This is not normally true! All husbands should recognize that it requires more time, more thought, and more feelings of love for his wife to reach sexual excitement.

There are other areas wherein husbands need improvement, but may these become a foundation on which to improve other areas. Once you convince yourself to improve your part in your sexual relationship with your wife, other ones will likewise improve.

3 . What attitudes can most husbands improve upon in regard to the sexual union?

Attitudes can be defined as that which relates to our feelings, thinking, and opinions. Thus, the attitudes that a husband has toward the sexual union may go all the way back to childhood. Without the proper training, most of our attitudes are wrong, because in too many cases, attitudes toward sex have been influenced by evil jokes, corrupt literature, and filthy speech. Only when we turn to the Bible do we learn the proper attitude:

(1) ATTITUDE OF PURITY

The Bible pictures the sexual relationship as being pure within marriage and impure without: "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4). When God says that something is pure and undefiled, it is that way. We should never cheapen this God-given relationship, but rather help our wives to honor and respect it. There should be no guilt associated with the sexual union between husband and wife, and as head of the wife, the husband has a responsibility to keep this relationship on a high and honorable level.

(2) ATTITUDE OF APPRECIATION

The husband should have the attitude of appreciation toward his wife. A good wife will be aware of her husband's needs, and will make a sincere effort to meet them. Since the man usually requires more frequency in this union, the wife will often submit herself especially for his benefit, and on such occasions, she will be giving of herself out of love. Be grateful to

her and express your love and gratitude for such. Some husbands have the attitude that you owe me this kind of attention, and thus they never show any appreciation. This is wrong and very destructive to a happy marriage.

(3) ATTITUDE OF KINDNESS

Also, the husband must have an attitude of kindness and gentleness. He will consider the fact that her body is more delicate and tender than his, and will respond accordingly. True love will always keep her best interest at heart, and will always try to help rather than to harm.

4 . Do most husbands recognize their wives' sexual needs?

Surely all can agree that there have always been husbands that do. In fact, these husbands seek the best for their wives in all areas of life; however, it is unfortunately true that most husbands do not. History reveals that in centuries past, it was a common belief that women's needs sexually were not important, and her only function was to meet the needs of her husband. It is believed that this unfair and unChristian attitude has improved today, but there are still so many husbands that refuse to recognize their wives' sexual needs.

The same God that created man also created woman, and even though their needs are somewhat different, such needs are still just as real and important as that of man. Each husband should seek to know these needs, and then lovingly try to meet them.

The woman's needs go deeper than the sexual act itself. The husband may have a heated argument with his wife and still be able (very soon) to desire a sexual union with her. This is usually not the case with his wife. The many other relationships with her husband enter into her desire for lovemaking. Such things as her husband's concern, thoughtfulness, helpfulness, attitudes, and love are important to her in lovemaking. This is an important need of wives that many husbands never understand or recognize. Failing to recognize her needs keeps their union from being mutually enjoyed, and can bring about a broken marriage.

5 . Are husbands selfish when it comes to the sexual part of their marriage?

This is certainly one of the major temptations that husbands face. The sexual needs of a husband are so strong that his actions may point only to himself, and he may feel that his wife's needs are not all that important. When selfishness is present, he rushes to seek his satisfaction, and then may ignore his wife. Not only does he fail to give her fulfillment, but

may afterwards lose interest in her completely. Some husbands selfishly reach an orgasm and then almost immediately go to sleep leaving her unsatisfied. Thus, selfishness is one of the most damaging problems in marriage, and especially is this true in the sexual union.

6 . To what degree are you in sympathy with the seminal fluid build-up causing a heightened desire?

This is a question that needs to be answered especially by wives. It is so important for wives to recognize this so they can better understand the needs of their husbands. This is a case where the husband should explain to his wife the nature of man. Since this is not a part of woman's nature, it is not easy for her to understand, but with good communication between husband and wife, her understanding will improve.

7 . Name some weaknesses husbands may have in their role of initiators of sex.

As a general rule the husband is expected to be the initiator of sex with his wife, but this should not always be the case. Keep in mind that the wife has needs just as surely as the husband. As we have already found, they are often somewhat different from the husband, but they are still just as important. Remember, Paul did not stop when he said: "The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband." He continued: "In the same way the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to the wife" (1 Corinthians 7:4). Here, Paul is teaching that the wife has her needs in regard to her husband's body, and he must not deprive her of this right.

When the husband is the only initiator in a husband-wife relationship, he may feel that he is the only one that determines when this important part of marriage is practiced. If the wife is not allowed to have this union at a time when she has a special need, then the whole relationship is centered around the husband. Married life in all facets must be a sharing, and neither party should ever feel that they are left out. Therefore, when the husband is the only initiator, selfishness may be a weakness for him in the marriage.

The husband needs also to feel that the sexual union is important to his wife. When she is allowed to initiate and take the lead occasionally, she can let him know that she enjoys his love. While taking the initiative, she will feel more at liberty to seek the kind of lovemaking that pleases most. Once a couple recognizes that each party has his or her rights, many of the damaging failures often found in this union between husband and wife will disappear.

As a general rule, the husband is more receptive to the idea of having sex than his wife. Since he usually desires such more frequently than she, he will seek the union many times when she has no interest. However, when the wife becomes the initiator, there will be only rare occasions when the husband will not gladly respond. It is a fact that this God-given intimate union is more enjoyable when both parties are interested.

The husband then should continue to initiate the sexual relationship with his wife, but he should also allow and encourage his wife to do the same.

8 . Do husbands or wives really believe that their bodies belong to the other as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7:4?

In the context of this verse, Paul is showing that a wife has the responsibility of protecting her husband from sexual immorality, and the husband must protect his wife from the same. In the previous verse he wrote: "The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband." This is done on the part of both by recognizing that the wife's body must be shared with her husband and the husband must share his body with his wife. The real question for consideration is do husbands and wives practice this?

There are no doubt thousands of couples that do, but it is believed that the vast majority do not. Generally, the rule is this: "I will share my body with my wife (husband) if it will help me." It is a fact that there are times when either a husband or wife has more than a normal desire for the sexual union with their mate. Suppose, for illustration, that a wife has an extreme sexual need for her husband, but at this time he has no interest. She lets him know her wishes, but he turns her away and shows interest in other things. He could become interested in her if he tried, but he refuses. Does that rejected wife feel that his body also belongs to her? Suppose the situation is reversed, and the husband has been without a relationship for several days, and the seminal fluid has built up to the point that he has physical pain. He lets his wife know his needs, and she could become interested if she put her mind to it, but she shows interest in everything else other than her husband's needs. Does he feel that his wife's body also belongs to him?

We may know what Paul is teaching here in 1 Corinthians 7:4 about sharing our bodies, but do we put it into practice? In too many cases the answer is no!

9 . If husbands are deprived of sexual union by their wives, does this give them the right to have an affair?

Should you ask this question to the average person of the world that claims no Christianity in their lives, they would say yes. Many television programs portray the rejected husband seeking another woman. Some programs have even had the wife suggest to him that he should find someone else since she was refusing him at home. To carry this a step further, when a husband (wife) is deprived, even if he is a Christian, he may be tempted to seek another. The temptation comes because he may be angry with his wife for depriving him, plus the pressing physical need he has for sexual attention. Such temptations may be so great that he yields even though he knows that such is wrong.

Yes, this often happens, but does he have the right to do so? Again, the world says yes, but God's word says no. The husband and wife, as we have already found in 1 Corinthians 7:4, are commanded NOT TO DEPRIVE each other to avoid such temptation. However, when they do and temptations come, neither is given the right to yield. Keep this fact in mind, when you yield to another woman, even though sexually deprived by your wife, you have committed adultery, and all the warnings and punishments promised in the Bible for adultery will be brought against you. The husband (wife) is never given the right to commit adultery under any circumstances in God's word!

10 . Should adultery occur by a deprived husband, is the wife guilty of sin also?

Regardless of all the biblical commands to keep husbands and wives from sexual immorality, a deprived husband or wife may sin. He or she does not have the right, but sometimes they ignore God, and sin. In such a case, the one that deprived the other is also guilty of sin. The same Bible that says: "Thou shalt not commit ADULTERY," (Matthew 5:27), also says: "Do not DEPRIVE each other except by mutual consent and for a time" (1 Corinthians 7:5). It is therefore, sinful to disobey either or both of these commandments.

When Paul writes of depriving one's mate, he is assuming that both are able to engage in the sexual union. There are times due to physical problems, when it is impossible for a wife (husband) to respond. The husband that would insist under such circumstances is less than a man and does not love his wife. However, the husband or wife that is able to submit their bodies, but through selfishness refuse to do so are the ones that are guilty of sin.

A TRUE TO LIFE EXAMPLE

Before their marriage, Roy and Jan thought often about the happiness they would receive from their sexual union together. Jan went to the library and checked out several books which she felt would help her be a faithful partner to her husband. She told Roy one night about this and then asked him if he would be interested in studying the same books. He gave a forced laugh and said: "I think I can do alright without all that scholarly training. Those big shots that write those books don't know the first step in making a woman happy. You don't have to worry your pretty little head about me."

When the first night of their marriage arrived, like most couples they were anxious to enjoy their first sexual union. Jan wanted to spend some time in preparing for their first time, but Roy didn't give her any time to prepare. In only a few moments he had finished his part, and wanted to see what was on television. Jan felt so empty and neglected, but she told herself that it took time to adjust. Since the idea of marriage was so new and exciting, she was able to accept this disappointment although unsatisfied.

During the time of their honeymoon, things became improved, but Roy had some attitudes that bothered her. She began to feel that this whole business of sex was for Roy's benefit, and that she was expected to be ready at his command. On one occasion after lovemaking, she thought, "I believe Roy is selfish! He never considers my needs and I'm getting where I don't enjoy it. From hearing different wives talk and from reading books, I thought this part of marriage would be satisfying, but each time, I feel depressed afterward."

The following months found her making more and more excuses for turning Roy down sexually. Those longer periods of time when she refused, caused him to feel depressed and irritable. The arguments became more frequent, and usually they argued over things that were not important. When they tried once to discuss their problem she simply said, "I just don't desire you any more." He asked her if it was his fault, and again she said, "I'm not sure."

This made Roy feel that his manhood had been destroyed. He was very religious and had been taught all of his life that adultery was wrong, and besides this, he wanted their marriage to work. Therefore, the following weeks brought rejection, heartaches, and frustration to both Roy and Jan.

One day Jan was talking to one of the ladies of the church in a confidential way about her marriage. She told her that if something was not

done quickly, there would be a separation. This Christian lady told her of a lady in the next town that was a marriage counselor, and that she had helped others with similar problems. The desire to seek this counselor's help became even greater when Jan learned that she was a faithful Christian.

When Jan first mentioned it to Roy he had a negative attitude until Jan pointed out that if something wasn't done our marriage won't make it. Roy got quiet for a few moments and then said: "Do you think this doctor could help us?" Jan said, "we won't know until we try."

The following weeks found this couple meeting with Dr. Cook, and she reviewed with them their problems. To Roy's surprise, he had been very selfish with his wife in their sexual life. The good doctor reviewed step by step the needs that must be met by each other. Roy was surprised to learn that the sexual relationship was more than a simple act, (especially to Jan) and he was ashamed that he had been so unthoughtful.

When they came to the final session, Roy told the counselor and Jan that based on all that he had learned, he had been very selfish. Jan also admitted that she had been wrong in many areas, but that she was willing to try to be more patient as they sought a happy relationship.

The following weeks found them both trying hard to have a happy marriage, and even though they both made mistakes, they were able to overcome them. Once they were able to lay aside selfishness, the other problems could be worked out. The following years brought much happiness to Roy and Jan as they learned to enjoy a happy sexual union in their marriage.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Commandment VII

1. Discuss how Roy had the wrong attitude about books on sex in marriage.
2. What were some of Roy's problems in their sexual union?
3. Discuss how a Christian marriage counselor can help in improving the sexual relationship between husbands and wives.
4. In what important ways are men and women different in their sexual feelings?
5. How can a husband and wife work together to improve their sexual problems?

COMMANDMENT VIII

THOU SHALT SEEK AN IDEAL MARRIAGE

1. Do you feel that most husbands really want an ideal marriage?

It is believed that many husbands want an ideal marriage, but are not willing to pay the price to have one. An ideal marriage does not come by chance, but only to those that are willing to put love with all of its positive characteristics into action. The cost may seem great at first, but after one sees and experiences the fruits of love, it is well worth the effort. Those who find the true meaning of love, and live its principles in their lives, find the joy and happiness that God intended when He designed marriage. Those who think that happiness can be found without the principles of real love are in for a big disappointment. Millions live and die without ever finding the happiness and satisfaction that come from love. The more we learn of love and practice it, the more we become like God. "The heart of him who truly loves is a paradise on earth; he has God in himself, for God is love" (Lamennais).

When a husband pays the price for true love toward his wife, he is not only making her happy, but he is also improving himself and adding to his happiness. "Love is never lost. If not reciprocated it will flow back and soften and purify the heart" (W. Irving). As one man looked back over his life, he was able to write: "I have enjoyed the happiness of the world; I have lived and loved" (Schiller).

2 . Does the husband's definition of love often differ from that of the wife?

Yes, and this causes a great conflict in many marriages. To some husbands, the fact that they are faithful to their wives, and are providing her with necessities is enough proof of their love. Even though a wife may be appreciative of all this, she needs a more personal love, and needs to hear and see it in her husband's life daily. Even God will not settle for an ordinary love from a husband toward his wife. The Holy Spirit guided Paul to write: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). Love doesn't get any stronger than this! The wife does not wish to force her husband to love her, but rather desires him to offer it from his own heart. "Love sought is good, but given unsought is better" (Shakespeare).

This is one of the areas of life that we can honor women above that of men—she seeks and knows a deeper and better love. As one writer put it: "It is not decided that women love more than men, but it is indisputable that they love better" (Dubay).

3 . What of the husband's statement: "I love you, but don't know how to show it?"

It is true, just as in all areas of life, that some husbands seem to have an art for showing their love to their wives more so than others. This is illustrated by the fact that some men have a more natural ability to paint than others with the same amount of training. However, this is a statement also used to cover up a husband's negligence. Some don't know how to show love, because they don't really love. Have you not seen a man married to a woman for several years that never showed his love, and later after her death he married another, and showered her daily with acts of love? With the first wife he did not truly love, but he did with the second. Sometimes the order is reversed, he is able to show love toward his first wife, but not his second.

There are still others that do not show love because they refuse to learn what is needed. They never read a book, never attend a special class, but take the easy road out and hide behind the excuse, "I don't know how to show it."

4 . What of the husband's statement: "I love you, even though I don't get around to telling you?"

Being able to say these words and mean them is a very important thing for wives; however, it is not easy for some men to say them. Some of this

is determined by whether or not they have been reared in homes where this is not heard. It is also a fact that some men say these words often, but show by their actions that they don't mean them, while others may not speak the words, but show by their actions day by day that they have love. The ideal situation is to tell your wife that you love her and then back the words up with actions.

Again, some husbands don't tell their wives that they love them because they don't. They may have some love and respect for them, but not the kind that gives them the desire to speak the words. This is felt by the wife and such a marriage will never find happiness until love enters.

Finally, a wife may feel that she knows that she is loved, but still enjoys hearing it. One time a Scottish woman lay dying. Her husband holding her hand said, "Janet, if ever a woman was loved, I love you." A smile lit up the face of the dying woman as she replied, "I knew it, John; but, oh, to hear you say it" (G.B.B. Hallock).

5 . Give some examples of an unkind impatient husband.

As Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13 what love will do, he says that love is patient and kind. These two words often go together and are so important in showing love, but when they are missing, many problems arise.

The unkind, impatient husband is one that does not like to wait for anything. He wants his meals on time, his clothes always clean, and his wife to be home when he comes in from work. When these are missing, she is attacked with unkind words. When a wife lives in this kind of environment, she is shown daily a lack of love from her husband. She lives in fear even though she may or may not fear bodily harm, but she fears displeasing him and his unkind temper fits.

An unkind, impatient husband does not take into consideration the many hours required for a wife and mother to keep the house in order. She may be buried in work and he makes her feel that she is lazy and unable to keep things going. When this happens, because love is missing, he may be guilty of the things in which he accuses her. There is no way that she can be happy under such circumstances, but on a daily basis will feel that love is missing.

6 . Does Solomon's statement in Proverbs 21:9 apply to men as well as women? Discuss.

Solomon laid down a principle that certainly applies to men as well as women. He says: "It is better to dwell in a corner of the house top, then

with a brawling woman in a wide house.”

Both men and women as a general rule desire a nice spacious house, but if the couple living there are not happy—always fussing and fighting, even the corner of the house top would be better. Men can be guilty as well as women in this regard. A certain amount of disagreement will come between husband and wife, but Solomon has reference to the case where the wife (husband) follows this course as a way of life. When this happens, all hope of love disappears and even the children grow up in an environment of hatred.

We need to ask ourselves as husbands, “do I promote arguments? Do I purposely say things that will make my wife angry? Do I continually look for things that upset me and then take them out on my wife?” If you must answer yes, remember, the only cure for this is LOVE. If you wish your wife to be happy, and if you are seeking happiness for yourself, you will resolve to follow after peace and kindness rather than being known as a brawling husband.

7 . Discuss the damage that can be done by a jealous husband.

One of the definitions for jealousy is “suspicious fear.” The husband that is jealous will find things that are not there, and this is a sin that reaches out to encompass others. Jealousy leads to hatred, unkindness, and in some cases to murder. Some husbands say that they are jealous because their wife is so beautiful, or because they love her, but the only love in jealousy is self-love. “Jealousy is said to be the offspring of love; yet unless the parent makes haste to strangle the child, the child will not rest till it has poisoned the parent.” (Hare).

There is not room in a marriage for both love and jealousy. If love abides, jealousy disappears, and if jealousy remains, love will move out! Therefore, jealousy destroys that all-important ingredient called LOVE, and replaces it with fear. Should you find jealousy creeping into your marriage, sit down together and work things out. If it is found that there is cause for your suspicions, this must also be resolved. If all doubts and suspicions are unfounded, then they must be removed. Don't bottle your doubts up inside, (whether true or untrue) but bring them out into the open and deal with them. The longer you wait, the more damage will be done.

8 . In what ways are husbands tempted to have pride in their marriage?

The Bible condemns sinful pride, and suggests that destruction is in its

path. The wise man writes: "Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin" (Proverbs 21:4). "The Lord detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished" (Proverbs 16:5).

Anything that God hates so severely will certainly destroy a happy marriage. In what ways are husbands guilty of sinful pride?

(1) MALE EGO

Sometimes their male ego becomes a stumbling block in their marriage. Both man and woman have so many things about them that are superior since God did the creating; however, God never intended that such would cause sinful pride. As a husband, you can be a true man without allowing such to destroy. If your masculinity is natural, it will be respected and appreciated by your wife, but if it is nothing more than inflated pride, it will become a source of destruction to your marriage.

(2) CAN'T SAY, "I'M SORRY."

Sinful pride also becomes destructive when a husband reaches the point that he cannot say the words: "I'm sorry!" Each couple that lives closely together in wedded love will make mistakes. The wife will sometimes do wrong to her husband, and the husband will do wrong to his wife. These wrongs will not destroy when there is apology and forgiveness. Due to pride, some husbands (wives) will not say and mean the words, "I'm sorry." Remember, unforgiven wrongs against your wife build up to bigger things, and leave behind scars upon her heart.

(3) WILL NOT ADMIT WEAKNESS

Pride, with all its ugly nature, also rises up when a husband fails to admit his weaknesses. We all have them, you know, and when a man reaches the point that he can't see his, then he is blinded by pride.

What is the antidote for sinful pride? LOVE! When the battle against pride is fought, and lost, both lose, but please remember that love is the only game where two can play and both win. The next time you are tempted to follow the way of pride, bring in love, and this evil monster will fall in defeat. "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, IT IS NOT PROUD" (1 Corinthians 13:4).

9 . Discuss ways in which husbands are often ill-mannered.

It is true that husbands come in all sizes, shapes, and backgrounds, and will naturally be different from others, but there are some things that are considered ill-mannered regardless of one's background. Common courtesies toward wives are expected and appreciated by most wives. Such things as opening the car door, seating her at a restaurant, allowing

her to enter doors before you, and thanking her for her many acts of kindness toward you, may seem insignificant to you, but never to your wife. This is one of the many ways to show her that you love her, and that she is important to you.

Many husbands are ill-mannered by having a loose tongue when speaking to others about their wives. Even though such is associated with joking, it often makes the wife feel less loved. You should never talk about your wife to others unless you are praising her and giving her the honor that grows out of love. Some husbands get their wives before others and embarrass them to tears. Some are even rude to the point of alluding to their intimate times together, or to her mistakes in cooking, or perhaps to other shortcomings. This not only shows a lack of respect and love, but such is highly ill-mannered. You may feel that your wife has let you down, but what is accomplished by telling the world? Ill-manners will drive you farther apart, and will destroy the precious ingredient of love!

10 . On a score of one to ten, how would you rate husbands in regard to being able to forgive?

Should this question be asked to individual wives, you would get various answers, because some husbands are excellent in forgiving while others are not. It is believed by this author that in a general sense, husbands are able to forgive. It is certainly hoped that on the average husbands could rate a 5 or perhaps above. How would you rate yourself as a husband? Anything below a 5 would certainly be in a dangerous zone, and such could bring problems to your marriage. Anything above 5 would certainly be a plus for your marriage.

Forgiveness is not only essential for happy marriages, but it is a must if we are to be Christians. Paul writes: "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32). Jesus was able to forgive His crucifiers as He looked down upon them with eyes filled with pain. He gave Peter another chance when Peter denied Him three times, and our only hope of being saved and being right with God is to forgive.

Emerson once wrote of one able to forgive: "His heart was as great as the world, but there was no room in it to hold the memory of a wrong." Why should a husband forgive his wife? Because there will be times when he seeks the same forgiveness from her. "He that cannot forgive others, breaks the bridge over which he himself must pass if he would ever reach heaven; for everyone has need to be forgiven." (Herbert)

If you find yourself weak in your ability to forgive, seek to be strong. Let

your wife see your strength in your ability to forgive. "Never does the human soul appear so strong and noble as when it foregoes revenge, and dares to forgive an injury" (E.H. Chapin).

1 1 . What happens when husbands hold grudges?

In short, love leaves the marriage, and serious problems are ahead. Have you ever been guilty of telling your wife that you forgive her and then weeks, months, and in some cases, years later you bring it up? Some husbands have a storage bank in their minds of the wrongs committed against them and recall them when needed. When wronged, we may not forget the incident, (especially if we are hurt deeply) but we can refuse to bring it later against her. It is totally impossible for forgiveness and grudges to reign in the same heart. Grudges and love are antagonistic to each other, and without love a marriage is doomed for misery. Someone might say, "I just can't bring myself to forgive her." Then you don't love her! "We pardon as long as we love" (Rochefoucauld). Beecher once wrote: " 'I can forgive, but I cannot forget,' is another way of saying, 'I will not forgive.' Forgiveness ought to be like a cancelled note—torn in two, and burned up, so that it never can be shown against one." Do you want to improve your marriage, then a step in the right direction is to learn to forgive and remove all grudges.

1 2 . How does Paul's statement: "Love never fails" apply to all facets of marriage?

Many men and women before marriage dream of a perfect situation after marriage; however, this is not the case. In addition to the problems each bring to the marriage, there are many pressures of life that often put on the squeeze. How does a couple deal with all these difficulties? If they are to deal with them and come out happy, they must do so with love. Love is an everlasting concept, and contains the power of survival. It will not necessarily eliminate the problems, but rather will help bear them. Love holds up our hearts when all things seem to be crashing down around us. It is an eternal beam that keeps us striving on the proper course for happiness. When life's difficulties and disappointments turn us aside, love draws us back in line.

"Love covers a multitude of sins. When a scar cannot be taken away, the next kind office is to hide it. Love is never so blind as when it is to spy faults" (South).

Do you want an ideal marriage? Then let love be felt and practiced toward your wife, and happiness will be as refreshing as a mountain stream.

A TRUE TO LIFE EXAMPLE

David and Bobbie were in their late twenties when they first met, and both were faithful Christians. David was transferred to Bobbie's home town, and it wasn't long afterward that he was introduced to her after a worship service. Very shortly after this, Bobbie's friends began to play cupid. Special parties were arranged so that they could be together. They seemed to enjoy this since they were both lonely, but neither heard any fireworks going off. However, the following months found them dating. There seemed to be every reason for them to get married: they were both Christians, both had good jobs, and after all, Christian mates were difficult to find.

One night the subject of marriage came up and they each agreed that they weren't sure if they were in love. David said, "you are fun to be with, but it seems that something is missing when I observe other couples." Bobbie agreed, but neither had the solution. They even talked about breaking off their relationship, but agreed that this might be a mistake.

Bobbie had been close to their preacher, Brother Lane for several years. He was a man in his sixties with many years of experience with teaching the Bible and about life. She asked David if he would be willing to talk with him before making their decision. He thought it would be a good idea since it never hurts to have another opinion.

Brother Lane agreed to meet them at his office on the following Monday evening. All were on time and after a few minutes of talking about various things, it was decided to get down to the business at hand.

Since Bobbie knew him better, she began the conversation. "Brother Lane, David and I have been seeing each other now for nearly a year and we seem to get along well and enjoy each other's company, but we're not sure that we're in love. We just don't seem to have a lot of emotions in our relationship. We have discussed marriage, but we're not sure if this would be wise."

Brother Lane straightened up in his chair, folded his hands together on his desk, and began: "Now, Bobbie and David, I think I understand where you're coming from. I can't tell you what you should or should not do; however, I can point out some principles that might help you decide. If I read you correctly, you are hung up on the subject of love. Love is a very complex word and I might add, the most abused. There is a level of love that deals with sexual attraction, and this affects the emotions in a forceful way. It is closely associated with physical excitement. This type of love has its place between man and woman, but if it's the only level of

love present, it will soon burn out. Many couples get caught up in all this physical emotion, and come to the conclusion that they are deeply in love, but this level, by itself, doesn't last.

Then there is a level of love which brings tender friendship. A couple enjoys talking together and sharing their thoughts and experiences. This kind of love grows deeper as the years pass, and as a couple matures. As important as these two levels are, there is still another that must become the foundation for the other two. It is the level described by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13. It is the kind of love that sets oneself aside and considers what is best for the one loved."

Brother Lane handed each one a Bible and asked them to turn to 1 Corinthians 13. Then he continued: "You will notice that love on this level is demonstrated. Look at some of the principles found in love. Love is patient and kind, love is not jealous, conceited or proud, love is not ill-mannered, selfish or irritated, love keeps no record of wrongs, and love is happy with truth—unhappy with evil."

Brother Lane closed the Bible, removed his glasses, and after rolling back a ways from his desk, continued: "Let me say something further about love and marriage. Love can be learned and practiced. Now, knowing you two as well as I do, (especially Bobbie) I believe that your love will grow. If each of you will give yourself, to the best of your ability, to each other and will put into practice the principles found in Paul's description of love, I feel confident that you will find happiness."

He continued: "Most couples want love to strike like lightning, without any effort on their part, but love with all its levels must be initiated by both! If you decide to get married, each of you should consider love a challenge—Bobbie, your challenge is to make David happy, and David, yours is to make Bobbie happy."

They thanked Brother Lane for his time and assured him that he had opened some avenues for thought. The following weeks found this couple discussing the principles of love and making plans to spend their lives together as husband and wife. They now believed that with God's help, and with their goal of seeking all levels of love, and by each one giving his or her best, that they would have an ideal marriage!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Commandment VIII

1. Why were the fireworks missing between David and Bobbie?
2. Discuss why both being Christians, and having good jobs is not always enough for a happy marriage.
3. Can love grow throughout the years?
4. To what degree is Christianity a factor in developing the right kind of love?
5. Discuss whether or not David and Bobbie were right in getting married.

COMMANDMENT IX

THOU SHALT HAVE THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARD THY WIFE

1 . Do husbands respond more readily to being driven or led?

It can be said of both men and women that we resent being driven, and this is especially true with men. History bears out that men have been led by good women to accomplish great things by gently leading them. One of the marks of a good wife is to be able to help her husband without making him feel driven.

Why do some wives drive instead of lead? There may be several reasons given, but looking at it from a husband's standpoint, she may drive because he has a poor attitude. Some husbands neglect their responsibilities until the wife loses her patience and drives. This causes her to feel miserable, and makes the husband resent her. Therefore, team work is necessary for the proper relationship to be obtained. Be sure you are doing your part as a husband, and then if a driving attitude is displayed by your wife, you have the responsibility to talk this out with her and to make her see that you resent being driven. Let her know that you welcome her encouragement, but will she please make an effort to avoid a driving attitude.

Once she sees that you resent her wrong attitude, chances are that she will work to improve. There may still be times when she will forget or times when she is upset, and will revert back to driving, but love and understanding will help her overcome. Please keep in mind also that the

wife will respond more lovingly to you if you seek to lead her instead of driving. Kind words and gentle requests go a long way to improve good attitudes in marriages.

2 . To what degree do husbands pout?

The degree of pouting would vary among different husbands. Some almost never pout while others spend much of their lives doing so. A certain amount of pouting may be natural, because we are all sensitive human beings. Since we are not machines, our feelings and emotions become involved, and pouting occurs. However, when pouting is present to a greater degree, there can be harmful effects to your marriage. Husbands usually pout when they are depressed, when they feel rejection, and when they don't get their own way. Other husbands pout when they have an argument with their wives. Thus, we can see that pouting can occur frequently. Let's look briefly at each of these:

(1) DEPRESSED

All of us know the bitter feelings that come from depression. A certain amount of depression seems to be natural, but how we deal with it is important. When we are depressed, it is true that we don't usually want to talk, and if we do it is about "Gloom City." What is the answer? Allow a little time for depression, and then resolve to overcome. Force yourself to get involved in something, and make a special effort not to take it all out on your dear wife.

(2) REJECTION

Husbands (wives) are creatures that love to get their way, but in marriage, as well as other areas of life, this does not always happen. There are times when wives reject their husbands for other interests, but perhaps the most sensitive area is to be rejected sexually. You just can't understand why she's not interested in you—her own husband, and why she may have become rude in her refusal. Consequently, you become angry and pout! You may even feel that you will never again ask her for sexual favors. To get even with her, you may later reject her when she wants to hug and kiss you, and in all other areas—even talking. This kind of pouting can bring permanent damage to your relationship if it is not controlled.

(3) ARGUMENTS

All husbands and wives sooner or later will have their arguments. My uncle once said: "If a man says that he has never had an argument with his wife, you had better watch that man, he'll lie about other things."

Some arguments are natural, and may even serve a purpose, but only if they are controlled! After a heated argument, there is a time for pouting, but not for too long. Once you have allowed the fire to die down, go to that wife and apologize for anything you did wrong, and the chances are she will do the same. Once this is done, what is left to be angry over? Thus, a close embrace and a few gentle kisses will do wonders. One man said that the best part of his marriage are those times when he and his wife kiss and make up after a fight. Remember, the words, "I'm sorry" are powerful when sincerely spoken. Don't let pouting become your master, but rather through love and sincerity, master pouting!

3 . Why is the term "being in the dog house" applied to husbands instead of wives?

Certainly there is a sense in which wives get in the dog house since the figure implies falling out with one's mate, but it is also true that wives seem more sensitive toward the actions of their husband, and this gets him in trouble often. Some wives say, "I don't ever remember being in the dog house with my husband." In so many cases, when a husband is displeased with his wife, he simply blows off some steam and it is usually over; however, this is not the case with many wives. The real "dog house" is when the husband displeases his wife and she turns away in every respect. There is very little conversation between them and at night in bed they sleep back to back acting as though it would be a terrible thing even to accidentally touch each other!

Again, it can be said that some of this in married life is expected, but there is a great danger of such getting out of hand. When husbands are inconsiderate, they deserve some coldness, but such should not be too extreme and too long. Anything that closes the door to good communication for a long time is wrong. It would be better to discuss it together, and if the husband is in the right, the wife should understand, but if the husband is wrong, he should be man enough to admit it and to apologize. Don't let the "dog house" concept get out of hand to the point of harming your relationship. Both husband and wife can solve this problem with love.

4. Are more husbands selfish in regard to their hunting, fishing, gardens, etc.?

Although this could be a debatable question, selfishness with husbands in regard to these things is often found in marriage. Every man needs a diversion from his routine of work, and the wife should recognize this, but selfishness is present when the husband carries his hobbies, hunting,

and fishing to the extreme. There are some possible solutions if a husband wants to be fair.

First of all, he can include his wife when possible, on some of his trips. When you ask her, let her know that you really want her to go, and provide for her comfort as much as possible. If your wife happens to be one that detests the things you love to do, then you must take another approach. Try to be away on the occasions when she plans to be away shopping or whatever she enjoys. Make a special effort to plan some things with her. Once you have shown concern for her wishes, she will not feel that you are selfish in pursuing yours.

Selfishness is one of the forceful enemies of marriage, and should be avoided by both husband and wife. It will require sacrifice on the part of both, but the results are well worth the effort.

5 . Discuss how a wife should deal with her husband's hobbies.

A wife can deal with her husband's hobbies first of all by recognizing that they are important to him. No two husbands are alike, but all have a need for an outlet. The one they choose may or may not be the choice of the wife, but as a husband (wife) he has the right to choose his own hobby.

In the second place, she can deal with the husband's hobby by either participating or by encouraging him. If she chooses to do something different, you must also support her. Even though husbands and wives are one flesh, they are still different personalities and each should respect the other.

If the husband carries his hobby to the extreme in regard to money and time, the wife should discuss this problem in a kind and gentle way. Perhaps the wife knows of needs in running the home that are being deprived and the husband isn't aware of the problem.

When a wife (husband) follows the principles of love, and abides by the golden rule, things will have a way of working out for the betterment of both.

6 . Is it possible for a wife to overlook good traits in her husband because of his weaker ones?

Yes, because it is done every day. Point your finger at any husband (wife) and you will be pointing out a man with weaknesses. There is a temptation for the wife to dwell on this weakness and overlook the stronger ones. A husband can be guilty of the same with his wife! What

then is the answer? The answer is to praise your mate for his (her) strength and help him (her) overcome his weaknesses.

Have you ever compared your wife's weaknesses to another? If so, you probably compared your wife's weaknesses to the other woman's strength. Please realize that if you could compare all facets of life between the other woman and your wife, your wife might come out stronger, and the same is true with husbands.

Jesus could see the weaknesses of the apostle Peter, but he could also see his strength. Our Lord could see in him a diamond in the rough, and the Bible proves that Christ's faith in him was profitable. The man that, in weakness, denied his Lord at death, preached the same Lord after His resurrection! Therefore, we should let the stronger points of our mates overshadow the weaker ones.

7 . To what extent do husbands take their wives for granted because they don't feel that they could ever lose them?

Among the many weaknesses of husbands, this one must be near the top of the list. It is wondered how many times husbands have said too late: "I never believed that it could come to this." The sad part is that most husbands never realize the possibility until it is too late. A wife will usually give her all for her marriage and home, but if she ever reaches the point where she feels UNWANTED, and taken for granted by her husband, she may stop trying.

Some husbands will neglect their wives, seek their own selfish gains, and even go as far as to commit adultery, and still expect their wives to be waiting for them when they come home. They have a standard for their wives, and another one for themselves. Be assured that this kind of thinking accounts for many broken marriages.

Other husbands take their wives for granted by using them like slaves. They want to be the masters with their wives meeting their every command. This is the kind of headship that women hate and God disapproves. One may search and search, but can never find love in husbands that act this way.

Still other husbands take their wives for granted by expecting them to rear the children alone. The burden may be great, but she struggles along to the best of her ability because her husband expects her to do so. This is not right! Children need the guidance of both parents, and that faithful wife and mother needs the help of her husband.

Each husband should take a close look at his life to see if he is guilty of taking his wife for granted, and if he finds himself guilty, he should make

a change before he loses the respect of his wife, and possibly loses her in separation or divorce. Remember, even our greatest possessions can be lost!

8 . How do you feel about a rejected husband desiring to live alone?

Every Christian couple should make every possible effort to live together until separated by death; however, there are times when a husband (wife) makes every possible effort to be a good husband and he is still rejected. If the rejection continues over a long period of time, he may be tempted to live away from his wife. Before such a serious step is taken, one should ask the following questions: (1) Have I done my best to correct our difficulties? (2) Has she rejected me because of my failures? (3) Are all sexual activities discontinued between us? (4) Will our separation cause both of us to be tempted to seek another? (5) To what extent will this separation harm our children? (6) What will it do to our influence as Christians?

You see, separation is perhaps more serious than most people realize. This is why no stone should be left unturned in an effort to restore a marriage that has gone wrong. Only after everything has been tried, and all problems thought through should a couple consider separation. Please remember that God does NOT want separation, He wants lifetime faithfulness (Matthew 19:6-9).

9 . Why do husbands get divorces?

Those that study the Bible know that God hates divorces, but it is still a fact of life that thousands of husbands (wives) get divorces each year. There are many reasons why this happens. May we consider a few of them.

(1) DON'T CARE ATTITUDE

Some men get divorces because their wives reach the point where they don't care any more. This is reflected by the way they dress and act around their husband. He sees ladies at work all day well dressed and full of life, but comes home to a wife that is dressed as sloppily as possible without any desire to please her husband. In some cases this is an every-day experience.

(2) LOVE IS DEAD

Others get divorces because the fire of love goes out. The wife loses her desire for his affection. Their hugs and kisses become a formality to mark

his leaving for work or the time to go to sleep. He may long for the warmth and excitement that has long been lost in their marriage.

(3) REJECTION

Still others get divorces because they are rejected and deprived sexually. She may desire to go for weeks without a sexual union, and is very impatient, rude and lacks understanding in regard to his needs. Since this part of marriage is very important to him, he may seek a way out.

(4) AN AFFAIR

Finally, some men divorce their wives because they learn that they are having an affair with another man. Some make an effort toward reconciliation, while others end their marriage as quickly as possible.

The list of reasons could go on and on, but these should be sufficient to help us see that holding a marriage together is a big responsibility for both husband and wife, and that each one should work daily to keep their relationship close and their marriage happy.

1 0 . Discuss the value of laughing and kissing a lot in regard to holding a marriage together.

Laughter is a sign of joy and happiness. When a couple is dating and during the first few months of marriage, there is usually much laughter and happiness; however, in too many cases, when the pressures of life come, and the newness wears off, the laughter ceases. One cannot expect the same feelings of joy to continue throughout marriage as found in courtship, but one can expect some laughter! Laughter is good medicine, but evidently thousands of married couples do not believe this. They get soured on life and each other, and turn to misery and gloom. How long has it been since you and your wife laughed together?

Laughter does not have to be just something funny, but it can be a way of life—a disposition. Some couples act as though they feel that they are expected to be serious, grouchy, unhappy, and without laughter. The following story illustrates this:

One time an elderly couple had been married for many years and had reached the point where they fussed nearly all the time. The woman was hard of hearing, but they managed to carry on their disagreements. One morning the man decided he had been a bit hard on this dear wife who had been faithful to him for so many years and resolved that he would begin changing his ways. Instead of fussing, he would express thoughts of appreciation. So that evening they were rocking away on the front porch and he broke the silence by saying, "Ma, I'm proud of you!" She looked up and said, "What did you say?" "I said, I'm proud of you!" She replied

the second time, "You are what?" This time much louder, "I'm proud of you!" She looked him in the eye and said, "Well Pa, I'm tired of you too!"

This little story may bring a smile, but won't you agree that it also relates truth. There is no law against a married couple laughing together and enjoying each other's company. The young dating singles do not have a monopoly on laughter!

Kissing is another valuable asset to holding a marriage together. With the exception of the sexual union itself, hugging and kissing can help keep a couple close and as one as much as anything else! If a husband gets too busy for this, or if other marital problems build a wall between the two and kissing is not desired, such a marriage is in trouble. Remember, kissing is a partnership experience. As a husband you may wish to kiss your wife as you did before marriage, but she may have lost all interest. Again, unless this is changed, you will grow cold toward each other.

Kissing between husbands and wives should be engaged in before and during sexual union. Almost any book you read on improving this intimate relationship includes the importance of kissing.

Therefore, why not restore the laughter and kisses as you both work together to keep your marriage happy and alive?

A TRUE TO LIFE EXAMPLE

When Tom and Alice announced to their friends that they were going to get married, there were mixed emotions. Tom was in his early thirties and had never married, and his life was wrapped up in being a sportsman. He eagerly awaited the fishing season, and then one by one he took hunting trips as the various seasons arrived. When Alice was asked about Tom's interests as a sportsman, she simply said, "Oh, I'll get his mind off all of that." She was too anxious to get married to think of any problems. When Tom's friends asked him how married life would fit in with his hunting and fishing, he replied: "She is getting what she sees, I have no intentions of changing my lifestyle!"

During the very first month of marriage, Alice realized what Tom meant when he said that he had no intentions of changing. Alice found herself alone for a full week during deer season. It was difficult, but she told herself that men have to be men, so she patiently waited for him to return. After being home only one night, he announced that the boys wanted him to try a new area where the deer are plentiful. This was where the fireworks began. They had their first big argument, and before Tom's leaving, they refused to speak to each other. He left without kissing her goodbye, and didn't even tell her when he would be home.

Three days later Tom returned, but pouting continued. They slept in the same bed, but each chose the outer edge and refused even to touch during sleep. Tom thought, "Now I know the meaning of being in the "dog house."

After Tom had been home for several hours, they finally made up and tried to bury their recent hurt. However, when another trip arrived, the problem renewed, and each month drove them farther apart.

Tom finally decided that he was going to enjoy life whether that woman wanted him to or not. Then he thought: "She can just stay at home and pout if she likes, it doesn't bother me."

What Tom didn't realize was the fact that Alice was thinking about divorce. Her nerves had become a problem, and she had cried so many hours that her head was swelled as though it would pop. To her, she had experienced in their marriage, far more unhappiness than joy, and she was ready to get out. She thought: "He is married to his hunting and fishing, not me. All I'm doing is nagging him without any success, and I'm finished."

When Tom came home that night he saw an expression on Alice's face that he had never seen. After he finished eating, she sat down across from him at the table and bluntly announced: "I'm getting a divorce." Tom could not believe what he was hearing. It had never crossed his mind that he might lose her. He knew she was unhappy with him but never thought it was really serious.

The next few hours found them discussing the problem with high emotions and tears, and Alice helped him see that he had been selfish and negligent toward her and their marriage. This all hit Tom like a bomb because he had thought only of himself.

Finally, after a long quietness, Tom said, "Would you be willing to stay if I give up all my hunting and fishing?" Alice thought for a few moments and replied: "Tom, I have never wanted you to give up all your hobbies! I don't mind sharing you occasionally with these, but I resent them taking over your life to the point of leaving me out."

Fortunately, this couple was mature enough to freely talk out their problems, and both agreed to make a new beginning. Each realized now that they could not take each other for granted—that she didn't have the right to deprive him of the things he enjoyed, and he didn't have the right to pursue them to the point of neglecting her. They were able to work out some guidelines to follow so that each could help keep the other on course. They began to do more things together, and to Alice's surprise, she even enjoyed a fishing trip with Tom. They still had their moments of difficulties, but these were few compared to their times of

laughter, hugging, and kissing.

Remember, a happy marriage requires effort and concern on the part of a husband, (wife) and to act otherwise brings heartaches. "Marriage! Nothing else demands so much from a man!" (Ibsen).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Commandment IX

1. To what degree should Tom and Alice have discussed his hobbies before marriage?
2. Discuss as to what degree Tom was wrong? Alice?
3. Why did Tom feel that he could never lose Alice?
4. What was Tom's real problem?
5. Discuss how husbands and wives can enjoy the same hobbies, etc.

COMMANDMENT X

THOU SHALT LEARN TO COMMUNICATE

1 . Why is it difficult for many husbands to talk to their wives about marital problems?

Perhaps there are several reasons, but at the top of the list would be the fact that marital problems suggest weakness and failure. Most men have a desire to be strong, and resent things that suggest otherwise. It is commendable to want to be strong, but when there are problems in our marriages, there is still weakness even if we choose to ignore such. We must realize then that we have a pressing need to remove the weaknesses. Another way to look at this is that, it is the mark of strength to deal with problems. The cowardly way is to pretend that nothing is wrong and to go along as a hypocrite by acting strong, but this only adds to the problems.

It is difficult for some husbands to deal with marital problems because they don't consider such important. They take the attitude, "why get all up tight about this, just ignore it and it will go away." This is wrong, it won't go away! It may be tabled for a time, but as additional problems arise, they are added, and sooner or later there will be an eruption. Some marriages are like an active volcano that threatens constantly, and then one day it blows and lives are shattered.

Thus, we should lay aside all difficulties and work out our differences when possible. Don't wait until you reach the point of no return to try.

2 . Are husbands more apt to “put off” communication hoping things will be alright?”

Even though both husbands and wives may be guilty, it is believed that husbands are the most guilty in this regard. We seem to have a tendency to avoid confrontation with problems. When we do this, there is a sense in which we are gambling, and be assured that the stakes are extremely high. Some men are more concerned about losing a dollar than losing a wife. Why not consider communication with your wife top priority, and arrange other things secondly? These things that you consider so important, even to the point of neglecting your wife, may not seem so important when you lose her.

3 . To what extent does selfishness affect husbands?

Selfishness among husbands is perhaps a greater enemy to a happy married life than one can imagine, and this is a sin that must be controlled at all times. Selfishness means that we have let self get out of control, and when this happens, there is a one-sided marriage—if it is a marriage at all. How can we compliment our wives, and meet their needs if we are wrapped up in self? F. W. Robertson sums up the marriage relationship in the following words:

“Marriage is not a union merely between two creatures—it is a union between two spirits; and the intention of that bond is to perfect the nature of both, by supplementing their deficiencies with the force of contrast, giving to each sex those excellencies in which it is naturally deficient; to the one, strength of character and firmness of moral will; to the other, sympathy, meekness, tenderness; and just so solemn and glorious as these ends are for which the union was intended, just so terrible are the consequences if it be perverted and abused; for there is no earthly relationship which has so much power to ennoble and to exalt. There are two rocks, in this world of ours, on which the soul must either anchor or be wrecked—the one is God, and the other is the sex opposite.”

Consider selfishness as one of your greatest enemies, and remove the awful sin from your life and marriage.

4 . Should the wife wait for the husband to plan a time for communication?

She should certainly give him ample time to do so, and even with love and kindness encourage him; however, once she sees that he is going to ignore such, she should try making plans. If as a husband you have neglected this in your marriage, you should go along with your wife when

she makes the plans. The ideal way is for the husband (as head) to take the lead, but if you fail to do so, why not accept your wife's invitation to talk.

It is true that the wife is often more sensitive to the need to talk. Some men will not plan a time to communicate because they are so wrapped up in their vocations or avocations that they don't sense that anything is wrong. Since the wife is to be your helpmeet (suitable help), she will encourage you in every way possible to deal with threats to your marriage.

Sometimes it is learned after talking, that no real problem existed. Perhaps it was only a misunderstanding; however, you owe it to each other to talk. When there is love, you will both welcome the opportunity to talk out any threats to your marriage whether they be real or not, and you will wish to go the extra mile.

5 . What usually happens when problems are discussed without a plan?

Usually nothing of a constructive nature. It is so easy to go around in circles and accomplish nothing. There is usually a temptation to turn aside to other issues which may lead to heated arguments and hurt feelings. A simple plan should be made and either written down or well-defined before discussion, and each should agree to follow it. When another subject is introduced, the other should point out that we are dealing now with the problem stated at the beginning. This doesn't have to be a complicated thing, but the principle of solving the immediate problem is important.

6 . Why is it important to communicate often?

Time has a way of changing things. You may have met with your wife, talked out the things in your marriage that need improvement, and for a time all went well. But be assured, things may in the future revert back to where they were before. Therefore, getting together often to communicate gives you an opportunity to review your old commitments, and to deal with new ones.

Likewise, it is good to have a talk later even if things are going great. Commend one another for his or her changes. This may keep the old habits that harmed in the past from reoccurring. Remember, a marriage never reaches the point where it does not need a maintenance program. We grow weary in well doing even in married life, and need a good shot of communication often with the one that we love.

7 . To what extent should husbands display love while talking to their wives?

If a husband or wife talks without displaying love, there will be failure. You see, without love some very important attitudes will not be present, but with love their presence will be felt. "One hour of love will teach a woman more of her true relations than all of your philosophizing" (Margaret Fuller).

How can you properly talk to your wife without kindness, patience, and without the right kind of heart? Without the principles that spring forth out of love, doors will be slammed in your face at every step of the way. With love, problems can be talked about and solved which seemed insurmountable. One cannot expect to have a talk with his wife when there are weaknesses and problems without being highly emotional, but such will not do permanent damage if cushioned with love.

Thus, it is believed that any effort for communication will fail, and even greater damage be done, unless love is present.

8 . Discuss some of the areas hardest to talk about with your wife.

This would perhaps vary with different husbands, but let us look at some that may prove difficult:

(1) SEXUAL PROBLEMS

Some husbands find it extremely difficult to talk about their sex life with their wives. Failing to do so can cause much damage in a marriage, because no solutions are sought. Keep in mind that achieving satisfaction for both is sometimes a difficult thing and can be accomplished only when two people share their needs.

When you have things bothering you about this relationship, talk it over with her, and you may be surprised how understanding she can be. This will also give her an opportunity to discuss her needs. When both sides of the issue are discussed, it will become easier for you. In fact, some of your problems may be tied in with hers.

(2) UNFAITHFULNESS

There are husbands that get caught up in temptation and have a sexual relationship with another woman. He may regret it and will never be guilty again, but talking to his wife is most difficult. She may already know about it, but it is still a subject hard to face. Remember though, this is a problem that must be corrected if you ever expect to save your marriage. You must show your wife that you are honest and want her to

know the truth, and this can be very painful. Secondly, you must seek her forgiveness. It is perhaps the most difficult thing for a wife (husband) to forgive, but it can be done. It will require much time in talking, and reassuring, but refusing to deal with it will not solve it.

(3) UNHAPPINESS

Some husbands and wives become unhappy in their marriage, but refuse to talk about it. It is not an easy subject to talk about, but it is even more painful to just grit your teeth and ignore it. Chances are that if you are unhappy—so is she! To bring the subject out into the open makes it easier to seek solutions.

There are other things that may be difficult to talk about such as problems with the children and in-laws, but regardless of the nature of the problem, being able to talk it out with love is the answer.

As you talk together, (especially if you are Christians) ask God's help. He wants us to work at solving our problems, but also to trust His power and guidance to help. "God governs the world, and we have only to do our duty wisely, and leave the issue to him" (John Jay).

A TRUE TO LIFE EXAMPLE

It was not long after Zane and Nell began dating that they had their first argument. Two days passed and Zane did not call her. Finally he came by and even though there was a coldness between them, they tried to ignore their problem. They were finally able to continue their courtship, but some damage had been done to their relationship because they did not talk.

After several months of courtship, this couple got married, and the problem of being unable to talk was carried over into their marriage. When arguments arose, Nell tried to talk them out, but Zane would say, "just forget it, I don't want to talk about it." This seemed to be a wall that continually kept them from being close. Each time they had a disagreement, it seemed to be added to all the previous ones.

Each year the company where Zane worked sent all employees to a one week training seminar in Florida. During this week while Zane was away from his wife, one of the women on the trip became interested in him. As this relationship began, she assured him that she was aware that he was married, and that she only wanted to be his friend. In her words: "After all, we are adults, and what is wrong with us having some fun together." She was extremely attractive and lots of fun to be with, so Zane didn't see any harm in this. After all, in one week he would be back home with his wife.

During the first part of the week, all went well. They were together often, but she seemed to respect the fact that Zane was married. However, the last two days became different. It all began when they were walking together on the beach. She took Zane's hand as they walked, and step by step led them to a sexual affair.

Shortly afterward, Zane began to feel guilty. In spite of their differences, he loved his wife, and why had he allowed this to happen? He returned home feeling that his whole world had caved in.

Almost immediately when Nell saw her husband, she realized that something was wrong. She asked: "you look as though you lost your job! What happened, did you?" He assured her that all was well with his job, and that they had a profitable seminar. Nell told herself that he was just tired, and after a good night of rest, and some special attention from his wife, all would be well. But to her surprise, he was cold and showed very little interest in her.

The following days became even colder, and Nell knew that something was wrong. She waited for him to talk, but he became quieter. Finally she realized that something had to be done or their marriage was over. She told Zane that morning before he left for work that she wanted to make plans for them to eat out at a quiet restaurant, because they needed to talk. When he tried to put this off, she said seriously: "It's either talk, or I'm leaving."

Since there was no other way out, that following evening Zane accompanied his wife to the restaurant for dinner. They were both extremely quiet while eating together. As Nell glanced up and looked into his eyes, she realized that their marriage was in trouble.

Once they had finished, Nell removed the plates to one end of the table, reached across and took Zane's hand and said, "What has happened?" As each word came out, Nell could see the pain and sadness associated with guilt. He assured her that this thing happened because of a moment of temptation, and that he was wrong in allowing this to happen. Then he told her that he truly loved her and pled for her forgiveness.

After Nell shed her tears, and got over the initial shock of knowing that her husband had been intimate with another woman, she said: "Zane, this has hurt me more than you will ever know, but evidently it has also hurt you, and you seem to be truly sorry. Even though it is hard for me, I do love you and forgive you, and in time will try my best to forget. Can't you see that when things go wrong, large or small, they must be talked about and removed? If we had been closer and related our needs to each other, maybe this wouldn't have happened."

Zane agreed and promised that he would try hard, and in the future, they would sit down together and point out the things that came between them and their happiness. He reached over and kissed the wife that he loved, and thanked her for giving him a second chance.

This occasion had been filled with sadness, but the seed for happiness and joy had been planted. As they drove toward home, each felt that a heavy burden had been lifted, because they were now able to talk.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Commandment X

1. Discuss how failing to communicate can begin while dating.
2. How could Zane have avoided the affair while away from home?
3. How should Zane have handled this mistake when returning home?
4. Was Nell out of place when forcing him to talk?
5. Discuss her forgiveness. Did she do right, or should she have divorced him on the grounds of adultery?

Ten Commandments *for* Husbands

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