How to Build a Home

How much home construction experience do you have? If the average person were to construct their own home (plant it; purchase the materials and put it up), I wonder how our houses would look. Wouldn't it be a lot wiser to hire someone who knew what they were doing? Who had 20-30 years experience. . . who understood architecture, who knew about pouring cement, framing, electricity, plumbing, heating, roofing, laying brick, hanging sheet rock, etc.?
Of course we would say "Yes!" But I may be speaking to some who are building their homes all by themselves. This message is for you!

In building a Home there are some essential elements:

The Architect	(Who plans the Home)
The Builder	(Who constructs the Home)
The Foundation	(Upon which the Home will rest)
The Materials	(The framing, walls, roof etc.)

In building a Family all of the above elements come from God:

He, Himself is the Designer
He, Himself is the Builder
His Son, Jesus Christ is the Foundation
His Word provides us with the wisdom for each aspect of family relationships

***God must be the Architect and Builder of your home** (or else your labors are vain)!
Realize the ABSOLUTE NECESSITY for God to build your home
(See: Psalm 127)

A. The blessing of SECURITY only comes from God (v. 1b)
B. The blessing of PROSPERITY only comes from God (v. 2a)
C. The blessing of REST only comes from God (v. 2b)
D. The blessing of CHILDREN only comes from God (v. 3-5)

Fulfill the VITAL PREREQUISITES in order for God to build your home
(Psalm 128:1)

A. A FEAR of God
B. OBEDIENCE to God

Experience the ABUNDANT BLESSINGS of God building your home
(Psalm 128:2-6)

A. A GOOD life (v. 2)
B. A FRUITFUL life (v. 3-5)
C. A LONG life (v. 6)

Building on the Right FOUNDATION

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Foundation we must build our lives and families on!
Before you will benefit from this study, you must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Basic, Essential Elements of the Plan of Salvation

5 Facts YOU must understand & believe in order to be saved.

5 VITAL CONCEPTS YOU NEED TO KNOW	GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION	BIBLE Proof
Fact # 1 **SIN**	***You have sinned against God.***	**Romans 3:10, 23**
Fact # 2 **JUDGEMENT**	***There is a price for sin. Your sin must be punished.***	**Romans 6:23**
Fact # 3 **CROSS**	***Christ died and paid the penalty for you.***	**Romans 5:8**
Fact # 4 **GIFT**	***Jesus lives, and wants to freely give you eternal life.***	**Romans 6:23**
Fact # 5 **BELIEVE**	***If you will trust (accept, rely upon; put your faith in) Christ alone, you will be saved!***	**Romans 10:9-13**

* Facts #1 & 2 point to man's need for salvation (the necessity of salvation)
* Facts #3 & 4 point to God's provision for salvation (the arrangement of salvation)
* Fact # 5 points to man's reception of salvation (the acceptance of salvation)

LETTING GOD BUILD YOUR MARRIAGE

1. GOD'S DESIGN FOR MARRIAGE

GEN. 2:18-25

The best "Home-builder" is God! See: Psalm 127

YOU NEED TO REALIZE GOD'S DESIGN FOR MARRIAGE!

Two reasons why God designed marriage:
1. GOD DESIGNED MARRIAGE TO SATISFY NEEDS --Man needed a companion --Man needed a completer 2. GOD DESIGNED MARRIAGE TO SUPPLY ONENESS --Woman's origin shows oneness --Adam`s testimony shows oneness --God's plan shows oneness

A. GOD DESIGNED MARRIAGE TO SATISFY NEEDS (V. 18-20)

1. MAN NEEDED A COMPANION (V. 18A)

2. MAN NEEDED A COMPLETER (V. 18B-20)

"Help" = = to aid, assist

"Meet" = = suitable for, corresponding to similar but opposite

How does the wife help complete the man?

1) By being spiritual (I Pet. 3:1-7) You will not be right with him until right with God
2) By being dependable and trustworthy ("the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her" - Prov. 31:11)
3) By being a homemaker (making your house a home - Prov. 31)
4) By being part of the team (work, plan, etc. together)
5) By being interested in his life (if he can't share his problems with you, who can he share with?)
6) By being open (discuss feelings, problems)
7) By showing confidence in him (admire him; "reverence" him - Eph. 5:33)
8) By being grateful for him (don't wait until after he is dead!)

B. GOD DESIGNED MARRIAGE TO SUPPLY ONENESS (UNITY) (V. 21-25)

1. WOMAN'S ORIGIN SHOWS ONENESS (V. 21-22)

(Oneness is illustrated by creation)

Augustine said: "God did not take a bone from Adam's head from which to create Eve that she might be above him, nor a bone from his foot that she might be beneath him, but from his side that she might be **beside** him . . . close to his heart and yet under his arm for protection."

a. "God brought her unto the man" -
Every marriage must start with God.
Every believer should get his wife from God.

b. "God brought her unto the man" -
She was a gift to the man. Do you view your wife as a gift to be enjoyed or a thorn to be endured?

2. ADAM'S TESTIMONY SHOWS ONENESS (V. 23)
(Oneness is identified by Adam)

3. GOD'S PLAN SHOWS ONENESS (V. 24)
(Oneness is instituted by God)

a. Make a Break with your parents
("Leave" = shows that marriage is a priority relationship)
(In-law Problems will be discussed later in this course)

b. Make a Bond with your spouse
("Cleave" = shows that marriage is a permanent relationship)

2. SIN'S DESTRUCTION OF MARRIAGE

GENESIS 3:7, 16

Why is the marriage relationship so difficult?
ANSWER: Sin cursed it. (READ Gen. 3:1-7; 16)

*** BEWARE OF FLESHLY TENDENCIES IN YOUR MARRIAGE!**

Two sinful tendencies caused by the curse of sin:

A. SIN PRODUCED: A DISTORTED PHYSICAL (SEXUAL) RELATIONSHIP (v. 7)

In what way were Adam and Eve's eyes opened? Did they not see each others' nakedness prior? Yes. But now a selfish self-consciousness resulted from sin.
Now sin caused a preoccupation (obsession) with each other's nudity. They now focused on what made them different, rather than what made them alike.
Because of the natural tendency toward lustful thoughts (obsessions over the physical; carnal), I believe in modest clothing. (NOTE: God, knowing man's sinful tendencies, clothed Adam and Eve - Gen. 3:21).

Satan ruins things in two ways:

1) He either puts too much attention on something (making it an obsession - an idol)
or 2) He alters its God-intended design (making it a perversion)

God designed sex to be an unselfish expression of love only for marriage (Read and explain I Cor. 7:1-5).
Sex is not only for procreation but for pleasure.
--Each partner owes due benevolence.
--To hold back is to steal ("defraud") from your mate.

B. SIN PRODUCED: A DISTORTED ROLE RELATIONSHIP (V. 16)

Right from the start, God created man to be the leader of the family and woman to be the submissive helper. Adam was the head of the home from creation and Eve was the helper.

Such headship is seen by the fact that:

1) Adam was created first (I Tim. 2:11-13)
2) God named the race after the man (1:27)
3) God gave Adam responsibility to "dress and keep" the garden prior to Eve's creation (2:15-17)
4) God made Eve from Adam (I Cor. 11:8 - "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man")
5) God provided Adam with a helper (a subordinate function) (I Cor. 11:9 - "Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man")
6) God held the man responsible for the sin in the home (Gen. 3:9)

However, when sin entered the world, human nature (being under the curse) would rebel against the proper exercise of these roles. Hence, God gives (in the list of other curses) the curse on marriage.

1. IN THE FLESH, WIVES WILL DESIRE TO CONTROL THEIR HUSBANDS (V. 16B)

Since the fall, women seek to over-rule, usurp authority.

2. IN THE FLESH, HUSBANDS WILL TEND TO CRUSH (OPPRESS) THEIR WIVES (V. 16C)

Every sensible man knows he should be the leader; the problem he now has is that the woman will not always want to be led. This will tend to cause a man to be despotic, and to use his brute force to compel the weaker vessel to submit, and this is wrong! This is the way the flesh wants to fulfill a God-ordained role.

Since the fall, men seek to suppress, dominate women. Be a dictator, subdue, oppress, crush, and treat like a slave. EX: Male chauvinism.

Never abuse or mistreat your wife!

3. THE COMMITMENT OF MARRIAGE

The bottom-line, bedrock foundation of a home is commitment.
In order to have a stable and secure home -

***Both husband and wife must have a conviction that their marriage is permanent!**

In God's Word, the Bible, -

The permanence of marriage is evidenced by:

A. The Meaning of a "COVENANT" (Malachi 2:14)

(Marriage is a Covenant)
--Definition of a "Covenant"
--Examples of "Covenants" in the Bible
1) Gen. 15:6-18 - Abrahamic Covenant (cp. Jer. 34:18-19)
2) Matt. 26:28 - The New Covenant

1. The marriage covenant is an irrevocable Vow
Observe the nature of vows:
a. Numbers 30:2 - Your words are extremely important
b. Deuteronomy 23:21 - God holds you accountable
c. Example: Jephthah's vow - Judges 11:30-39

2. The marriage covenant is an unconditional Vow
"For better or for worse, for richer or for poorer"

B. The Bonding of "WEDLOCK" (Gen. 2:24)

(Marriage is an inseparable union)
1. The Cleaving of Marriage (v. 24a)
2. The Oneness of Marriage (v. 24b)
3. "Till death do we part" (Romans 7:2-3)

C. Christ's Relationship to His BRIDE (Eph. 5:22-32)

(Jesus will never forsake His wife, the Church)
1. The Church is one with Christ (Eph. 5:30; I Cor. 6:17)
2. The Church is the "Bride of Christ" (Rev. 19:7-9)
3. The Church has the promise of eternal security (Mt. 16:18; Jn. 10:28-29; Titus 1:2; Heb. 13:5)

D. God's Attitude about DIVORCE (Malachi 2:16)

(God hates divorce)
1. "He may not put her away all his days"
(Deut. 22:19, 29)
2. "Whosoever shall put away his wife. . . and marry another, committeth adultery against her" (Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18).

4. THE CONTENTMENT IN MARRIAGE

(How to be satisfied with your marriage state)

A. Be Content With Your God-Given State (I Cor. 7)

(Contentment whether married or not)

State = situation in life, circumstances, status, condition (cp. Phil. 4:11)

1. Be Content if you are single
   a. It is good to be single (desirable though not necessary) (7:1, 7-9)
   b. It may be beneficial to be single (7:26-27)
      1) Many difficulties are overcome by being single (NOTE: Lk. 21:23-24)
      2) Attention can be totally focused on serving Christ (READ v. 32-35) (v. 39-40)
2. Be Content if you are married

   a. Contentment is being satisfied with the will of God (v. 17, 20, 24)
      (It is easier to be content when you submit to the sovereignty of God and realize that what you have has been assigned by God's wisdom.)
   b. Contentment is not looking for a way out (v. 27)
      (Beware: "The grass always seems greener on the other side of the fence.")
      READ Heb. 13:4-6

B. Be Content With Your God-Given Mate (Prov. 5:15-19)

(Contentment with your relationship)

1. Be filled (v. 15-17) "Drink of your own"
2. Be joyful (v. 18) "Rejoice with your own"
3. Be satisfied (v. 19a) "Be satisfied with your own"
4. Be ravished (v. 19b) "Be captivated by your own"

C. Be Content With Your God-Given Place (Col. 3:18-19)

(Contentment with your role in the home)

1. The husband is to be the HEAD of the family (I Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23)

Being the head of the home is a tremendous responsibility. How is a husband to lead his family?

Leadership is NOT:

1. Leadership is not bossy or tyrannical
2. Leadership is not self-service but self-sacrifice for the well-being of the one you are leading.
3. Leadership is not merely giving orders but direction.
4. Leadership is not doing everything yourself, but overseeing everything.

Leadership IS:

1. Leadership is knowing the needs of the one you lead (I Pet.3:7)
2. Leadership is teaching the one you lead (both what she is responsible to do and how to do it - I Cor.14:35)
3. Leadership is serving the one you lead (Mt. 20:20-28; Jn. 13:1-15; Phil. 2:6-8; Mk. 10:45; I Kings 12:6,7)
4. Leadership is setting the right example before the one you lead (Phil.4:9; I Thess. 2:7-10)
   [note: you must be what God wants you to be; not just "appear to be" what He want you to be]
5. Leadership is making informed, correct decisions and delegating responsibility.

2. The wife is to be the HOMEMAKER of the family

(Titus 2:3-5; Prov.31:10-31)

"Keepers [lit. workers] at home" - Tit. 2:3-5.

I Tim. 5:14 - "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully."

Even widows were to be cared for, and not expected to have to go out into the work place. A woman's place is in the home! I Tim. 5:8 ff.

(EX: Christ made arrangements for his widowed mother to be cared for - Jn. 19:26-27).

Why do many wives work outside of the home today?

1) Because husbands are not doing their job
2) Because they want to live on a "higher standard" of living.

What are the problems caused by wives working outside of the home?

1) Immorality between men and other men's wives.
2) The children are affected because of the lack of Mother's attention, training, discipline, & love. The day-care is often all the care they get; and this care cannot match that which a mother can give.
3) The home suffers. Wives come home from a busy, pressure-filled, hectic day at work and are too exhausted to be much of wife to the husband or much of a mother to the children.
4) Inflation. NOTE: working women is a major cause of inflation. Because families are earning more money, the value of a dollar is less.

5. The RESPONSIBILITIES of Marriage

(How to fulfill you God-given Roles as Husband & Wife)

Today, we continually hear the clamor of people demanding their "rights." Women rights; Homosexual rights; Minorities rights; children's right; & animal rights! Many spend much of their time and energy thinking, plotting, & scheming about what others owe them and how to get it. Everyone seems concerned about what is "theirs" or about what they "deserve." What we don't hear much is talk about the word: "responsibility!" Rather than asking "what can others do for me" we should be asking "what can I do for others?" If America gave as much attention to the word "responsibility" as we do "rights" we might experience a national revival! -- at least in our domestic crisis.

For Husbands & Wives it is vitally important to know what our roles are; what our proper place is; what our responsibilities in marriage should be. Until we do the job that God has assigned we cannot expect any of His blessings to flow upon our marriages & homes.

In any team, organization, or association, each person knowing and fulfilling their prescribed role is essential for harmony and efficiency (I Cor.12:12-ff) Everyone has an "authority" for determining what the domestic roles should be. As Christians, our authority is not "old fashion tradition", popular practice, some secular school of "thought" or a renowned psychiatrist or book-writer but our only authority is God's Word, the Bible (Psalm 119:128).

The basic domestic responsibilities as outlined by God, the Architect of Marriage are found in the following Scriptures:

Wives	**Husbands**
Ephesians 5:22-24;33b Colossians 3:18 I Peter 3:1-6	Ephesians 5:25-33a Colossians 3:19 I Peter 3:7

Basically, God's roles are as follows:

The Biblical role of the wife is to be a submissive supporter.
The Biblical role of the husband is to be a loving leader.

A. The Biblical Role of the Wife

What is Biblical Submission?

What Submission is NOT

1. Submission is not just for women, but for all believers (Eph.5:21; Phil.2:3,4; I Pet 5:5; Rom. 13:1; Heb. 13:17)

   Examples of submission:
   - Believers to Christ (Eph.5:24)
   - Believers to each other (Eph.5:21)
   - Believers to Church Leadership (Heb.13:17)
   - People to Government (Rom.13:1-f)
   - Husbands to Christ (I Cor.11:3)

2. Submission does not make the woman the slave of their husband. Rather a "princess" to be cared for, provided for, led, protected etc.

3. Submission does not mean that the wife must be dormant, reclusive, or silent.

4. Submission does not mean she should never give advice or opinions -- her view are as equally valid as anyone's within the limits of God's Word (Prov.31:26; Acts 18:26; Judges 13:23)

5. Submission does not mean she is inferior to or holds an inferior position to the man (Lk.2:51; I Cor.11:3; Jn. 5:30; I Cor.12). The man's and woman's positions are different, but not inferior/superior.
   Submission implies a difference of function and not of essence (Example: The Father is the Head of Christ (I Cor.11:3), but in essence is not superior but equal (Phil.2:6; Jn.10:30).

What Submission IS

Ephesians 5:22-24 may be outlined thus:

I. The command to submission (v.22)
II. The reason for submission (v.23)
   God holds the man to be responsible for headship (leadership) in the family
III. The Pattern for submission (v.24)
   As the Church is to Christ

How Should the Church Submit to Christ?

The Church to Christ	**The Wife to the Husband**
Matthew 11:28-30	By Being Teachable (not abstinent)
John 10:27	By Following (not leading)
John 12:26	By Serving (not selfishness)
Philippians 4:6	By Requesting (not demanding)
II Peter 3:18	By Maturing (not satisfied with the world's standards)

What is Biblical Submission?

1. **Submission is the wife's responsibility to place herself under the leadership (Headship) of her husband.** (Eph. 5:23)
   The word "submit" (hupotasso) is a military term or a term of rank, which means "to rank under," to take your place under" (Cp.Eph.1:22); to "subject yourself under the authority of someone else (Lk.2:51).

2. **Submission is an unconditional obligation, not optional for the believer** (Eph.5:22)
   Note:
   This mandate is not "outdated" (Submission has been a God-ordained principle since creation)
   This mandate is not conditioned on the whether or not the Husband does his role. (Wives are to submit even when their husbands are unbelievers -I Pet.3:1)

3. **Submission is a voluntary decision on the part of the wife.**
   Wives are to choose to "submit themselves" The Husband is never told to make her submit!

4. **Submission involves attitude as well as action.**
   That attitude is the inner beauty of a "gentle and quiet spirit" (I Pet.3:4)
   This attitude is one of reverence for the husband's position (Eph. 5:23, 33)

5. **Submission is a spiritual matter.** You cannot be submissive to God without being submissive to your husband.
   God commands submission.
   Therefore if the wife does not submit:
   She sins against God.
   Her prayers will not be answered (I Pet.3:7)
   She is not a spiritual woman

   God says: A rebellious wife is a witch!
   Reason: "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (I Sam. 15:23).

6. **Submission is not a "pick & choose" matter.**
   "in everything" (Eph.5:24)
   "as it is fit in the Lord" (Col.3:18)
   "fit" = that standard which he Lord accepts.
   Wives must never submit and obey something that is unbiblical (immoral). Be careful to distinguish between Biblical conviction and personal preference. You may not think your husbands choice is the wisest choice, but unless is unBiblical God expect you to willingly submit to the decision.

7. Submission to authority brings joy & blessedness to the wife

3 blessings that come to those who submit to authority (outline by Bill Gothard):

a. You grow in wisdom and character

(See: the example of Jesus as a 12-year old boy - Luke 2:49-52).

b. You gain protection from destructive temptations

"The essence of submission is not 'getting under the domination of authority,' but rather 'getting under the protection of authority.' Authority is like an 'umbrella of protection' ." (Gothard, Basic Seminar Textbook, p. 20)

c. You receive clear direction for life decisions

How does God speak to us? Obviously through His Word the Bible. However, in the details of life, how does He direct us?

*"One of the most basic aspects of faith is to realize how God gets His directions to us through those He has placed over us. . . Our faith multiplies as we see how God speaks to us through those He has placed over us."

(Gothard, p. 20)

A wife who submits to her Husband is showing that:
She trusts God to work through the decisions of her husband.

How to be Submissive
when it goes against your old nature

1. Make sure you have been Born Again (regenerated) (John 3; Titus 3:5)
   Without the new nature, you will not have the ability or desire to obey God.
2. Believe that Submission is the will of God.
3. Be submissive to God. If you won't submit to God's authority, you won't to any other authority.
4. Be Yielded to the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) Only as He controls you will you be controlled.
5. Develop new habits of behavior patiently! (New response patterns take time & Biblical instruction)
6. Don't associate with people who discourage submissiveness. ("Evil communications corrupt good manners" I Cor. 15:33)
7. Trust God to work through the authority He has placed over you (whether you feel his decisions are right or wrong)
8. Simply let your motivation for submission be God.
   Do it for God's glory (Titus 2:5)

B. The Biblical Role of the HUSBAND

What is Biblical LOVE?

See: Ephesians 5:25-33
The word "love" is the Koine Greek word "agapao." This is a special love.
It's a love that gives (Jn. 3:16; hence it is often translated "charity" - I Cor. 13)

The love that husbands are to have toward their wives is:

1. A spiritual love
By this I mean it does not come naturally.
It is a capacity that comes only from God. This love has its source only in God (I Jn. 4:7 - "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.")
No unsaved man has the capacity (ability) to have such a love.

2. Unconditional love
The kind of love God expects the husband to have is not dependent upon the worthiness of the wife. This love, as ultimately exemplified by God, is a love that gives even when the recipient of that love is an unworthy, evil wretch (Rom. 5:8).
There are "no strings attached" to agapa love. It's not, "I will love her if she . . . retains her youthful figure, cooks like Betty Crocker, cleans like the world's greatest custodian; hugs and kisses like she did on your honeymoon, etc. etc."
NOTE: Your motive for loving your wife is obedience and love for God! Not the attitude changes it may bring in your spouse, nor for any other immediate reward you may be hoping for. if your motive is what you can get, then you will tend to love as long as you are getting the desired results. Your love will be fickle, on & off, conditioned by selfish motives.

3. A Volitional love (a willing love)
Love is a choice; a decision; an act of the will.
This kind of love is possible even toward an enemy (Mt. 5:44), because it is not based upon a feeling that you conjure up about a person, but rather it is based upon a knowledge that a person (whoever it is) is made in the "image of God" and therefore is worthy of the respect, honor, dignity, and benevolence you show.

"Love" - not a mere emotional feeling, but does not exclude feeling either. It means to feel for someone (to empathize) and thereby be motivated to respond to meet their needs.

4. A Continual love
The present tense imperative emphasizes the constant year by year, day by day, minute by minute nature of the love. For someone to say, "I don't love her anymore" is to say "I do not obey God anymore."

5. A Christ-like Love

"even as Christ also loved the Church" (v.25)

Basically, to answer the question:

"How should I love my wife?"

Ask yourself another question:

"How does Christ love His Church?"

How does Christ love His Church?

Christ to His Church	**The Husband to His Wife**
Psalm 23:4	By protecting her.
Matthew 11:28-30	By teaching her.
John 10:11	By sacrificing for her.
John 13:12-15	By serving her.
John 14:2-3	By providing for her.
John 17:20	By praying for her.
Romans 8:38-39	By remaining faithful to her.

"A man was afraid that he loved his wife too much. He was then asked if he loved her as much as Christ loved the Church. When he answered, "No," he was told, "Then you must love her more." (MacArthur)

6. A Sacrificial Love

"and gave Himself for her [it]" (v. 25)

Why did Christ sacrifice Himself for the Church?

a. Christ sacrificed Himself so that He could have a special relationship with His Bride

"Sanctify" = to set apart

"The Lord Jesus cherishes for the Church a peculiar affection, which is set upon her above the rest of mankind. . . The elect Church is the favorite of heaven, the treasure of Christ, the crown of His head, the bracelet of His arm, the breastplate of His heart, the very center and core of His love." (Spurgeon)

How special is your wife to you?

You have a very special relationship with your wife which you share with no other.

b. Christ sacrificed Himself so that He could have a spiritual relationship with His Bride

He gave Himself for the spiritual purity He desired in His Church.

If you love your wife, you will desire her to be pure. You will want her to be Godly, not worldly.

Love wants what is best for the one it loves.

Love never defiles the one it loves; rather, love desires purity.

If you love your wife, you will not put her in circumstances where her purity might be jeopardized. Nor will you ever commit adultery.

What will you give up for your wife's spiritual growth?

Will you sacrifice time and effort to see that your family serves the Lord? (Joshua 24:15)

7. A Similar Love (v. 28, 29)

Love your wife as you naturally love yourself.

The better you treat your wife, the better you treat yourself. If you harm your wife, you are harming yourself. If you care for your wife, you are caring for yourself! Why? Because you are one with her.

8. A Giving Love (v. 29)

a. Provide for her (meet her physical needs)

"Nourisheth" = to feed or provide for

I Timothy 5:8 - *"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."*

b. Protect her (meet her emotional needs)

"Cherisheth" = to keep warm, to be chivalrous, to show tender love and physical affection so as to give emotional warmth, comfort, protection and security.

I Peter 3:7 - *"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."*

Know your wife - Be sensitive and considerate of her feelings and needs. A woman has unique differences from a man.

Honor your wife - Treat her as valuable, as priceless, as special! Honor her because of the worth she has in God's eyes.

That which you honor, you like. In other word,s you will come to appreciate her if you value her.

9. A Forgiving Love

"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them" (Col. 3:19)

"Be not bitter against them" - Do not allow yourself to become bitter.

Evidently the reason why God added this phrase, is because He knows that this is a tendency in marriages.

The word "bitter" is the opposite of being sweet (cp. Ja. 3:11-14). Often used of bitter water (Rev. 8:11). To have a prolonged bad, irritable, sharp aftertaste remain in your mouth. Metaphorically, it then refers to being repulsed by something. To have an aversion to something.

To be "bitter" in a relationship is to be resentful and unforgiving. Therefore, whenever you think of her a "bad taste" comes to your consciousness. Such bitterness results in evil speaking (Rom. 3:14); hatred (Eph. 4:31); and many destroyed relationships (Heb. 12:15).

How do I know when I am not bitter? Answer: When you can pray for the well-being and blessing of your spouse.

True love forgives a multitude of sins (I Peter 4:8)

Practical Ways to Love Your Wife

1. Say "I love you" often.
2. Touch, hug, and kiss her frequently (do so to unselfishly please her).
3. Lead her by setting the right example of Godliness.
4. Provide security by being the "breadwinner" of your family.
5. Talk to her (share your life plans, dreams, burdens, fears, weaknesses, and needs).
6. Carefully listen to her (Note: Listen to what she says and what she means by what she says).
7. Do acts of kindness to show her that she has great worth to you.
8. Praise her in sincerity (Prov. 31:28)
   --Thank her
   --Tell her what is good about her
9. Give tokens of affection (Example: notes, gifts, flowers)
10. Don't be a passive male. Be involved in your family.
    *Love is giving, not getting!

6. The COMMUNICATION in Marriage

(How to have intimate conversation without fighting)

Communication is so vitally important to human relationships. Sin, however, has greatly affected our ability to communicate.

See: James 3:1-12

I. THE POWER OF THE TONGUE (V. 1-6)

A. IT HAS THE POWER TO DIRECT (V. 1-4)

1. Power to direct others (therefore its use is serious) (v. 1)
2. Power to direct your own life (even though its size is small) (v. 2-4)

B. IT HAS THE POWER TO DESTROY (v. 5-6)

1. A fire starts off small (v. 5)
2. A fire heats things up
3. A fire defiles
4. A fire spreads
5. A fire is started from fire

II. THE PROBLEM OF THE TONGUE (V. 7-12)

A. THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN CONTROL (v. 7-8)

B. THE PROBLEM OF SINFUL INCONSISTENCY (v. 9-12)

A. The IMPORTANCE of Communication

(Why should I communicate with my spouse?)

1. Without it, relationships go undeveloped
   (You remain strangers)
2. Without it, feelings and desires go unshared
   (You open the door for intimate communication outside of marriage)
3. Without it, problems go unsolved (Mt. 18:15ff)
   (You multiply problems by not dealing with them Biblically)

B. The METHOD of Communication

(How should I communicate with my spouse?)

Communication is two-way: 1) Listening
2) Speaking

1. Careful <u>Listening</u> (Prov. 18:13; James 1:19)

a. Listen without <u>interruption</u>

1) Don't change the subject
2) Don't interject a quick solution
3) Don't speak abruptly without thinking first

b. Listen without <u>divided attention</u> (Prov. 4:20; 22:17)

The average person can speak 120-180 words a minute and can think at 4 or 5 times that rate.

If you are not careful, your attention will wander if you do not concentrate on listening.

c. Listen to <u>understand</u> not only what is said but what is <u>meant</u>.

"Take a look at the question or problem at hand from the other person's point of view. You may not agree with it, but you should accurately understand it" (Tim Jordan)

Note: Asking sincere, unloaded <u>questions</u> will often help you understand what the other person is saying.

2. Careful <u>Speaking</u>

"<u>Speaking</u> the <u>truth</u> in <u>love</u> . . ." (Eph. 4:15).

a. "<u>Speak</u>"

(The <u>method</u> of communication)

1) Don't give the "<u>silent treatment</u>" (Prov. 18:2)
2) Don't assume the other person knows what you want or need.
3) Make it your goal to increase your own level of communication.

Note these levels:

(1) Cliches, casual conversation
(2) Reporting of facts
(3) Ideas and judgments
(4) Feelings and emotions
(5) Open, hoses sharing on a deep, personal level

(<u>Husbands & Wives</u>; Navpress, p.28)

b. "The <u>truth</u>"

(The <u>content</u> of communication)

1) Not lies, falsehood, or exaggerations (Eph. 4:25a)
2) Christians should always speak the truth, because of our oneness with Christ and each other (Eph. 4:25b)
3) Be <u>honest</u> & <u>open</u> with each other.

c. "In love"
(the manner of communication)

1) We must always build up (with our tongue) (Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:6)

Ask yourself: "is what I am about to say intended to hurt or to help? Is it destructive or constructive?" (Prov. 20:15; Rom.15:1-3)

Simple "rule of thumb" from Ephesians 4:29 -
"If it won't build up -- Shut up!"

2) We must never blow up (with our tongue)
(Eph. 4:26-27, 30:31)
We must pay careful attention to not only the content of what we say but also to the manner in which we say it. To say the right thing in a wrong way is sin!
Sometimes the way we talk speaks so loud that the other person doesn't hear what we say.

Ask yourself: "Are the words I'm about to use the best way of saying it?" (Prov.12:25; 15:1; 16:23)

***WARNING:** Evil speech does two things:

1) It opens the door for Satan (Eph. 4:27)
2) It grieves the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30)

C. The PROBLEMS in Communication

What is the source of our problems in Communication?

1. Our Heart (Jer.17:9)
The root of our problems is not our tongue but our heart.
"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks"
What's in our heart will flow out of our mouth (Matthew 12:34-37)

2. Our Pride
Our selfish pride keeps us from:
- opening up & becoming vulnerable
- admitting when we are wrong
- asking for forgiveness & forgiving others
- saying words of affection

3. Our Apathy
We are deceived into thinking that "my communication is not that bad" We are deceived with this lie: "this is the way that it is, and the way it is doomed to remain"
We are deceived into accepting the society's "status quo" as to what should be.

4. Our <u>Differences</u>

Conflicts often occur because of the basic difference with the way men and women think and <u>express</u> themselves. (I Pet. 3:7)

What are some of the harmful ways of communicating?

1. Anger - Col. 3:8; James 1:20
2. Quarrelsome - Prov. 15:1
3. Nagging - Prov. 10:19; I Pet. 3:1
4. Criticizing - Gal. 5:15
5. Wrong timing - Prov. 15:23; 25:11
6. Ignoring - Prov. 18:2
7. Without thinking - Prov.15:28

What do I do and don't do to improve my communication?

1. Identify, confess, and forsake the sin of not communicating with your mate (Prov. 28:13)
2. Don't talk about your problems with other people present (Mt.18:15) unless you are seeking wise counsel or advise.
3. Talk with the present problem at hand, not the past (Phil.3:12-14)
4. Avoid using emotionally charged words (Mt.7:12; Pr.15:1)
5. Go out on a date periodically, just you and your spouse, and talk (I Pet.3:7)
6. Provide an open, permissive, accepting atmosphere (James 3:17-18)
7. Compliment each other frequently.
8. Seek to understand not just to be understood (Phil. 2:3)
9. Use courteous words.
   "Please" "Thank You" "I appreciate that" "I'm sorry"
10. Don't let pride keep you from admitting need or when you are wrong.
11. When you disagree, don't be disagreeable (Phil. 2:2-3)
12. When agreement is <u>not</u> reached, the father/husband, as the head of the home, must make a careful, correct, considerate decision and the family/wife must abide by it. (Eph. 4:22,23; 6:1; I Pet. 3:5-7)
13. The bottom line is this: **Seek to please God by everything you say!** ***"Let the <u>words</u> of my <u>mouth</u> and the meditation of my <u>heart</u> be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer."*** (Psalm 19:14)

7. The CONFLICTS in Marriage

(How to Handle Disagreements and Problems)

A. WHY do Conflicts Exist?

"Conflicts" are basically caused by friction; when two opposing forces, ideas, etc., meet together.
Friction causes heat and heat starts fires and fires destroy things!
Sin brought conflict (Gen. 3ff).

--Conflict with God
--Conflict with fellow man (Ex. Cain killing Abel)

General Factors that cause conflict:

1. The conflict of the flesh (two natures)

--Romans 7:18-19
--Galatians 5:16-17

Specific problems with the flesh:

1) Selfish Lust - James 4:1-3
2) Divisive Jealousy - I Cor. 3:1-3
3) Conceited Pride - Phil. 2:3-4
4) Tiredness, fatigue, & other physical problems - II Cor.12:7

2. The conflict of the world

--I John 2:15-17 - The world's philosophies, methods, etc., often influence the thinking and behavior of unsuspecting Christians.
--John 16:33 - "In the world you will have tribulation (conflicts & pressures)"

3. The conflict of the Devil

Our "adversary" - I Peter 5:8
Satan instigates strife and conflict.

Specific Factors that cause conflicts:

1. Conflicts are basically caused by differences.

Differences are not necessarily wrong; rather, they can be beneficial (I Cor. 12:4-20).

a. Differences of personality (differences of tastes, likes/dislikes, habits, etc.)

DIFFERENCES OF PERSONALITY

Some people are:	Others are:
Logical & objective	Emotional & impulsive
Passive & "laid back"	Active & aggressive
Feeling-oriented/sensitive	Emotionally stable/unmoved
Neat/detailed/perfectionist	Not concerned about details

It has been said, *"If two people always agree, one of them is unnecessary."*

b. Differences of <u>opinion</u> (differences of understanding)
Due to Educational background
Cultural & family differences
Unrealistic Expectations

c. Differences of <u>conviction</u> (differences of belief, values, philosophies, & methods)

(Note: Romans 14:1-15:6)
Warning: Yoking up with unbelievers is asking for trouble (conflict)! (II Cor. 6:14-18)

2. Some conflicts are caused by <u>circumstances</u>
a. Fatigue
b. Unfulfilled needs
c. Financial pressures
d. Busy schedule
e. Family background
f. Lack of fellowship with God

3. Some conflicts are caused by <u>behavior characteristics</u>
a. Unwillingness to communicate
b. Sarcasm or demeaning remarks
c. Making false assumptions
d. Jumping to conclusions
e. Inflexibility
f. Irritating habits
g. Nagging

What are some other areas couples fight about?
Name some other potential sources (objects) of conflict:

Why does God allow <u>conflicts</u> in our lives?

<u>Retribution</u> - "You reap what you sow" (Gal. 6:7)
<u>Chastisement</u> - Discipline, to correct (Heb. 12:5-11)
<u>Growth</u> - Maturity (James 1:2ff)

Conflicts can be a means to <u>growth</u> (<u>maturity</u>) if handled Biblically! Conflicts, like all trials (James 1:2ff) can either be <u>beneficial</u> or <u>bomb shells</u>. They can <u>develop</u> your relationships or <u>destroy</u> them. It all depends on how they are handled.

B. HOW do I Mend a Conflict?

1. Determine the actual cause
(the right ailment)
First determine your fault in the conflict, then your spouses (Matt.7:3-5)

2. Apply God's Medicine
(the right answer)
a. Seek God's wisdom (from the Bible) (James 1:5)
b. Follow God's advice (loving confrontation) (Mt. 5:23-24; 18:15-18)
Unresolved conflicts will become long-term "problems."

3. Respond with the proper therapy
***** Have the right attitude***
How do you respond when confronted with sin?
Contrast:
King Saul - I Sam. 15:1-15
King David - II Sam. 12:1-13
a. Respond with a humble & gentle spirit (Gal.6:1)
b. Respond with soft words (Prov. 15:1, 25:15)
c. Respond with gracious forgiveness (Mt. 6:14-15; Lk. 17:3-4; I Pet. 3:9; Eph. 4:31, 32; Col. 3:13)

*****Do the right action* (Follow these steps)**

1. Sit down and face each other (Matthew 18:15).
2. Pray for God's grace & wisdom
3. Work at clearly defining the issue so both of you understand what the conflict is about.
   a. Deal with the present problem at hand, not the past (Phil.3:12-14)
   b. Deal with one problem at a time (Mt.6:34)
4. If the discussion becomes more heated lower your voices. Avoid shouting. (Prov.15:1)
5. Come to an agreeable solution (a solution you both believe God would be pleased with)
   a. Compromise when it is a non-Biblical, or non-moral issue (Rom.12:10,16).
   b. When agreement is not reached, the father/husband, as the head of the home, must make a careful, correct, considerate decision and the family/wife should abide by it with a sweet spirit (Eph.4:22,23; 6:1; I Pet. 3:5-7)
6. If unresolvable, seek counsel from someone you respect and trust (such as your pastor or a close friend). Another person often can be more objective.
7. Make resolving the conflict a priority. Don't let anything interfere with resolving it, even if it means canceling a planned appointment or activity.

Six "don'ts regarding conflicts:

1) Don't expect the problem to "heal itself."
2) Don't have the attitude of "Why try?" ("It's not worth it")
3) Don't play the "waiting game."
   (Ex: "When you give in and apologize, I will")
4) Don't "fight fire with fire"
   (I Pet. 3:9; I Th. 5:15; Rom. 12:17-21)
5) Don't practice "character assassination"
   (Don't attack the person rather than the problem)
6) Don't dig up "old bones"
   (Don't bring up the past)
   When a conflict is settled, bury it, and don't dig it up!)

C. HOW do I Avoid Conflicts?

You can't avoid conflicts stemming from the sin of someone else, but you can keep them from starting with you.

1. Walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:13-23)
2. Mind your own business (I Pet. 4:15)
   (Fulfill your own role & responsibility)
3. Accept the differences of others (not all differences are sinful - Rom. 14)
4. Bend on non-moral issues (Rom. 15:1-7)
5. Respond Biblically (like Christ would) toward people who cause conflicts with you (Matthew 5:23,24)
6. Make it your goal to live peaceably with all men (Rom.12:18)
   (Note however, never bend on a clear Biblical or moral issue: Compromise at this point will buy you a moments peace but ruin your family and walk with God)

*Remember, you are one with your spouse (Eph. 5:29-32). When you fight against him/her, you are fighting against yourself!

D. HOW can I really FORGIVE?

King Louis XII of France articulated man's fleshly abhorrence toward forgiving others when he said: "Nothing smells so sweet as the dead body of your enemy." (MacArthur, p. 142)
"I don't get mad, I get even" (Clint Eastwood in a film)
The greatest problem in most troubled marriages is unforgiveness.
The underlying problem most counsellors deal with is unforgiveness (old, hardened, fossilized "bones of contention"). What is the cause for most divorces? Unforgiveness

4 Ways Satan gets into your marriage:
1. Anger (Eph.4:26-27);
2. Strife (James 3:14-16);
3. Sexual Defrauding (I Cor.7:5);
4. Unforgiveness (II Cor.2:10,11)

See: Matthew 18:21-35

***You should forgive your spouse the same way God has forgiven you!**

How can I forgive what he/she did to me?

1. **Compare the <u>QUANTITY</u> of sins you are asked to forgive with the great legion of sins God forgave you (v. 21-22)**
   "Seventy times seven"
   You have been forgiven far more than you will ever forgive!
   Record keeping is not the occupation of a loving Christian. *"Love keeps no records of wrongs"* (I Cor. 13:5)

2. **Compare the <u>MAGNITUDE</u> of sin God forgave you with the trivial sins you are asked to forgive others (v. 23-28)**
   "Ten thousand talents (v. 24) *. . . a hundred pence"* (v. 28)

3. **Compare the <u>COST</u> of God's forgiveness with the cost of your own forgiveness (v. 27)**
   "God gave up His Son for your forgiveness (John 3:16); all you give up is your sin of anger and resentment" (Dr. Jim Binney)
   It <u>costs</u> to forgive (when you forgive, you have taken upon yourself the effects of that person's sin and freed him/her from their obligation of personally paying you for it)

4. **Compare the <u>CONSEQUENCES</u> of unforgiveness with the blessings of forgiveness (v. 34-35)**

Compare the consequences of unforgiveness with the blessings of forgiveness: By: Dr. Jim Binney	
UNFORGIVENESS	**FORGIVENESS**
Unanswered prayer (Mt. 6:4)	Answered prayer (I Pet. 3:7)
Give place to the devil (Eph. 4:26; cp. II Cor. 2:10-11)	Freedom from Satan (Ja. 4:7)
Grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30)	Receive the comfort of the Holy Spirit
Hurt others (Heb. 12:15)	Be a blessing (Eph. 4:29)
Broken fellowship with God (I Jn. 1:5)	Intimate fellowship (I Jn. 1:6-9)
Physical ailments (Exod.15:26)	Health and good days (I Pet. 3:10)

A man's *"glory is to overlook a transgression"* (Prov. 19:11).
<u>Joseph</u> forgave his brothers (Gen. 50:19-21); <u>David</u> forgave King Saul (I Sam. 24:6, 12; 26:11). They were both blessed because of it.

Follow Christ's Pattern of Forgiveness

Eph. 4:32 - *"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."*
Col. 3:13 - *"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."*
How did Jesus forgive?
Jesus forgave...

1. By suffering for the sins of others (Colossians 2:13-14)
   (In order for forgiveness to be real, someone has to pay the debt)
2. By praying for His enemies (cp. Mt.5:43-44)
   ("*Father forgive them for they know not what they do*")
   Learn to distinguish between weakness and wickedness
   Ignorance is not innocence, but it is a reason for mercy (Acts 3:17; I Tim.1:13)
   Wickedness = To be sold out to sin; Pre-meditated vengeance or rebellion; Deliberate transgression; Not caring about the cost to the offended; A desire to hurt another.
   Weakness = To be overtaken in a fault; Deceived by the Devil; Ensnared by the flesh; Concern for the fulfillment of an appetite (see: Gal.6:1-2)
3. By focusing on the principle of sin, rather than the person of sin
   ("*For this purpose was He manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil [Not the workers of iniquity Jn.3:17-18])*
4. By envisioning God's Higher Purpose
   (Heb. 12:2 - "*[Jesus envisioning] the joy that was set before him endured the cross...")*
   You can comfort others with the comfort you received (II Cor.1:3-6)
   You can see that God can even work through the evil sins of others for a good purpose (Gen.50:20)

Outline by Dr. Jim Binney

Practical Pointers on Forgiveness

1. Focus on restoration, not retaliation (Rom. 12:17-21)
2. Initiate the restoration process (Mt. 18:15)
3. Don't put a limit (ceiling) on your forgiveness (Mt.18:21-22; Luke 17:3-4)
4. Don't put conditions on your forgiveness, other than the condition that he/she repents and asks for forgiveness (Luke 17:3,4)
   (If he/she does not repent, you still must forgiven him/her in your heart and not let bitterness grow)
5. Be sincere in your forgiveness (Mt. 18:35 - *"from the heart"*)
   Not a "surface" forgiveness (EX: the plastic smile, the cold handshake, the distant hug, the shallow words "It's okay," the quick "I forgive you", etc.) Rather, when we forgive, it must come from within, from our innermost being.
6. Forgiveness is not forgetting, but it seeks to forget
   (God forgets in that He no longer holds the sin against us, nor does He allow it to come in between He and us)
7. Be willing to be made willing to forgive (Eph.4:31)
   (Pray for God to change your heart and let Him do so [cp.Phil.2:13])
8. If you need forgiveness, be forgivable
   (Its easier to forgive a humbled person)

Test of Forgiveness

By Dr. Jim Binney

1) Can I thank God for the lesson(s) I learned through the painful experience?
2) Can I talk about it (the conflict or person) without angry resentment or feelings of revenge?
3) Have I accepted my part of the blame? (Prov. 13:10)
4) Can I reward them who hurt me and pray for them?
5) Can I revisit the scene without resentment?
6) Can I grant forgiveness from the heart and verbalize it?

8. The PRACTICAL ISSUES OF MARRIAGE

(How to manage the potential problem areas of marriage)

It has been noted that the 3 greatest problems of marriage are: "in-laws, money, & sex." These 3 areas of potential conflict, have the same potential of being 3 areas of greatest blessing in marriage, if handled Biblically.

A. IN-LAWS

When you marry, you not only marry a husband or wife, but in a sense, you also marry an entire family! By being joined to a spouse you also become related to his/her family!

How do you relate to your In-laws?

1. In-laws can be a blessing (Like Moses' Father-In-law -- Jethro)

a. In-laws should allow the married couple to leave home and fulfill the will of God (Exod.4:18; 18:27)

b. In-laws should have a good relationship & communication with their son or daughter-In-law (Exod.18:7-12)

c. In-laws should have the son or daughter-In-law's best interest in mind when offering advice. (Exod.18:13-23)

d. A son or daughter in-law should not be too proud to take good advice from their in-laws (Exod.18:24)

2. In-laws can be a burden (Like Rachel & Leah's father -- Laban)

a. In-laws cause trouble when they practice deception (Gen.29:25; 31:7)

b. In-laws cause trouble when they exploit the kindness & generosity of their son or daughter in-law (Gen.29:27; 31:27).

c. In-laws cause trouble when they don't allow their child to "leave" them and begin a new, independent family (Gen.31:27).
(Laban didn't understand the "leave & cleave" principle of marriage - Gen.31:43)

3. Basic Facts about In-law relationships

a. When you marry, realize that you are no longer under the direct authority of your parents.
(Ex. An unmarried woman is under the authority of her father (I Cor.7:36-38; Num.30:3-ff); but when she marries, her husband becomes the new authority ("head") for her (I Cor.11:3).

b. When you marry, "leave" your parent emotionally and geographically (don't live in the same house)

"<u>Leave</u> and cleave" (Gen.2:24; Eph.5:31) - Don't allow parents to interfere with your marriage.

The best way to show your mom and dad that they did a good job in rearing you is--when you marry--don't be dependent upon them anymore for:

1) physical needs (cooking, cleaning, money, clothing)
2) emotional needs (approval, companionship, feeling of "home-ness")

or 3) spiritual needs (direction and advice)

c. Treat both sets of parents <u>equally</u>. (Don't play favorites)
Be as fair as possible when it comes to <u>visits</u>, <u>vacations</u>, & acts of love.

d. Never say anything unjustly <u>critical</u> about your In-laws.

e. <u>Respect</u> your in-laws and <u>listen</u> to their advice.

f. Use wisdom when handling In-laws who wrongly interfere with your marriage or family.

B. MONEY

INTRODUCTORY PRINCIPLES:

1. The Principle of <u>Ownership</u>
God <u>owns</u> everything. You and your possessions are God's.
(I Chron. 29:11; Is. 43:1, 7; I Cor. 6:19; Ps. 24:1, 50:7-11).

2. The Principle of <u>Stewardship</u>
You are God's <u>manager/steward</u> of the material resources He entrusts to you. (I Cor. 4:2; Lk. 16:1-13)

The <u>husband</u> as the head of the home is responsible to God for how he oversees the family's financial matters. (He may delegate certain tasks to his wife such as paying bills, balancing the check book etc., but he must be aware of what is going on.)

3. The Principle of <u>Dependency</u>
Your power to <u>earn</u> wealth comes from God.
(Deut. 8:18; Prov. 8:20,21; 10:22)

4. The Principle of <u>Family</u>
Your money is your spouses money and vice-versa.
(Eph. 5:28-31)

8 <u>Financial Management Secrets</u>

from Proverbs and other Scriptures:

1. The Secret of <u>WORK</u>
(God expects the husband to earn the family's money by working hard)
(Prov. 6:6-11; Prov. 10:4; Prov. 13:4, 11)

2. The Secret of <u>HONESTY</u>
(Earn your family's money honestly)
(Prov. 10:2; Prov. 11:1; Prov. 15:27; Prov. 16:11; Prov. 20:10; Prov. 20:17; Prov. 20:21; Prov. 21:6; Eph. 4:28)

3. The Secret of <u>GIVING</u>
(Your family financial practice must give priority of giving)

a. Honor <u>God</u> <u>first</u> with your money
(Prov. 3:9-10; Prov. 11:24-26; Compare: Gal. 6:6-10; II Cor. 9:6-12; I Kings 17:11-16)
Christians generally establish the <u>"tithe"</u> (10 % of your income) as the minimum standard of giving to God through your local church (Lev.27:30).

B. Help <u>others</u> in need with your money
(Prov. 19:17; Prov. 21:13; Prov. 22:9; Prov. 25:21-22; Prov. 28:27)

4. The Secret of PAYING DEBTS
(If you are in debt, get out of debt and stay out of debt!)
(Prov. 3:27-28; Prov. 22:7; Rom.13:8; Psalm 37:21)
Buy nothing on credit that you do not have the ability to pay for. The interest on credit loans will bury you!
Credit debt occurs when you borrow to purchase a depreciating item and pay high interest.

5. The Secret of SAVING
(Save during the sunshine to be ready for the storms)
(Prov. 6:6-11; 30:25; Prov. 10:5; Prov. 21:20)

6. The Secret of CONTENTMENT
(Be satisfied with what God gives you)
(Prov. 30:7-9; Compare with Heb. 13:5; I Tim. 3:3; 6:6-19; Phil. 4:11-13)

7. The Secret of MODERATION
(Control your spending, or it will control you! Have self-control)
(Prov. 21:17)

8. The Secret of PRIORITIES
(Invest your life and money in what really matters!)

a. Realize that the spiritual and eternal supersede the material and temporal. (Prov. 8:10-12; Prov. 16:16)
b. Realize what money cannot buy

Money can't buy:

1)	Deliverance from God's wrath	(11:4)
2)	Peace and tranquility	(15:16; 17:1)
3)	Righteousness	(16:8)
4)	Security	(11:28; 18:11)
5)	A prudent wife	(19:14; cp. 31:10)
6)	A good reputation	(22:1)
7)	Integrity	(28:6)

Your family needs to adopt a practical financial plan or budget
(Prov.6:6-10; Prov.30:24-28)

C. SEX

Principles about sex from I Corinthians 7:1-9

1) Sex <u>prior</u> to marriage is sin (v. 2)
(wrong <u>time</u> for sex)
Fornication refers to premarital sexual relations, whereas adultery refers to a married person who commits intercourse with someone other than mate (cp. Gal. 5:19; I Cor. 6:9 where a distinction is made; NOTE I Cor. 6:18 - Fornication is a sin against one's <u>own</u> body; adultery would be sin against two: you and your mate).

2) Sex <u>apart</u> from marriage is sin (v. 2)
(wrong <u>kind</u> of sex)

The word fornication comes from the Greek "porneia" from which we get our English word "pornography."
You must guard your eyes and mind (Job 31:1 - "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?").
Jesus said Lust is the same as adultery (Mt. 5:28)

3) Sexual relations within marriage are <u>holy and good</u>.
Sex was God's invention, not Satan's (Gen. 1:27, 28, 31; 2:25; 4:1).
Heb. 13:4 - "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge"

Sex is for procreation, but it is primarily intended for <u>pleasure</u>
(Prov.5:19)

4) Sexual relations within marriage are to be <u>regular (habitual) and continuous</u> (v. 3)
"Render" = present tense - to <u>pay</u> your debt to your mate on a <u>continual</u> basis.
-- Such satisfaction will prevent temptation to find satisfaction elsewhere.
-- Such satisfaction will prevent burning (unfulfilled sexual desire - v. 9)

5) Sexual relations are to be <u>unselfish</u> (v. 3 & 4)
"Due benevolence" = obligation or debt.
You are obligated to please your spouse.
If you are married, you can't say, It's my body, not yours" (v. 4).
God is teaching us "mutual dependence." Each is the other's property.

Your goal in sexual relations is not to please yourself but your spouse.

The Purpose for sex: Your physical relationship is a reassurance of love and affection.
Technically, Sex should not be called *"making love"* but *"showing love"* This is because God intended sex to be an expression of the oneness, love, & affection you have for each other.

6) There is to be no sexual bargaining (controlling or manipulating) (v. 5)
Abstinence must be with consent (agreement).
God says to the bride and groom on honeymoon, "Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." (Song of Solomon 5:1).

7) A couple must seek to keep each other sexually satisfied to decrease the chances of Satan tempting in the area of lack of self-control (v. 5)

If you keep your mate satisfied, you greatly lessen the temptation to look for greener grass elsewhere.
Prov. 27:7 - "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."

LETTING GOD BUILD YOUR CHILDREN

1. HOW TO VIEW YOUR CHILDREN

A. The Value of Children

1. Children are a gift from God.

a. Jacob said regarding his children: *"The children which God hath graciously given they servant"* (Gen. 33:5)

b. He . . . *"maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord"* (Ps. 113:9)

c. Ruth 4:13 - *"So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son."*

2. God uniquely forms and gifts each child.

a. Psalm 139:13-18 -

1) God forms the child's body parts (v. 13 - *"possess"* = to form; *"reins"* = inner parts)

2) God joins each body part together (*"covered"* = to weave)

3) God sees the child's development (v. 15-16a)

4) God plans the child's development (v. 16) (Ps. 94:9 - *"He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?")*

Even those with mental problems or physical deformities are formed for God's glory (Exod. 4:11; John 9:1-3)

b. Jer. 1:5 - *"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."*
(cp. II Cor. 4:7)

3. God loves children and desires that they come to receive salvation at an early age (Mt. 19:13-15)

B. The Nature of Children

In order to understand a child, and to know how to teach, discipline, and control a child's negative behavior traits, it is essential to comprehend what the bible teaches about the nature of children.

The Bible teaches that. . .

1. Mankind was originally created in the image and likeness of God.
Gen. 1:26a - *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"*

Man bears the image of God in three senses:

a. Man is like God in that he is a person (with personality).
A "person" is a being who possesses self-consciousness, self-determination, intellect, emotion, will, world-consciousness, etc.

b. Man is like God in that he has a spirit
(Jn. 4:24; I Cor. 6:20; cp. Eph. 4:23-24)

c. Man is like God in that he has a moral nature (a basic, innate comprehension of right and wrong - Rom. 2:14; Eccl. 7:29).

*Since mankind (although fallen) still retains this sense of the image of God, his life has a dignity and is to be respected, honored, and protected. Doing so honors the Creator (Gen. 9:6; James 3:9). Your children are to be valued because of their self-worth in God's eyes.

2. Adam sinned against God and thereby died spiritually and adopted a sin nature.
". . . in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17).
"And you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).
When Adam sinned, the image of God in man was not obliterated, but became marred, defiled, and depraved.

3. Adam's descendants were reproduced in his likeness and image.
Gen. 5:3 - *"And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth."*
Rom. 5:12 - *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*

4. Each child is born with this sinful human nature.

Ps. 51:5 - *"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."*
Ps. 58:3 - *"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."*
Job 14:4 - *"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."*
Is. 48:8 - *". . . I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and was called a transgressor from the womb."*

5. Because of inherited sinful human nature, each parent can expect the following traits in his/her children:

a. Each child is prone toward sin.
"A child need not be taught how to lie, to be selfish, or to do wrong; these things come naturally. Every sweet, innocent, cuddly baby possesses within his flesh the constant temptation to fulfill the strong desire of sin." (Fugate, p. 49)

b. Each child is basically self-centered.
"He wants what he wants when he wants it. A child wants to be fed what and when he wishes, to have the total attention of others, to play always, and generally to have his every desire fulfilled without regard for anyone else. . . Even when a child conducts himself with acceptable behavior, he may be acting out of self-interest to gain attention or future reward. . . The nature of sin will motivate a child to do whatever bad, or even good, that he thinks will cause benefit to himself. When parents recognize that the natural, normal tendency of their child is to satisfy his own sinful nature, they are ready to become successful parents" (Fugate, p. 50).

c. Each child must be trained and restrained.
   1) Children cannot be left to themselves
   (Prov. 29:15 - *"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame")*
   2) Children must have their sinful tendencies controlled
   (I Sam. 3:13 - *"For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not")*
   The most cruel form of "child abuse" is to ignore your child's needs for self-control and to do nothing to help him/her learn how to restrain the sinful tendencies that seek to enslave him/her.
   3) Children are most moldable when they are young
   (Prov. 22:6 - *"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it")*
   Our children are like arrows (Ps. 127:4) -- they must be pointed and launched in the right direction.
   Our children are like wet cement - they take the impression of whatever you do to them.
   Our children are like unhardened clay - pliable to the way you shape them.
   Our children are like a tender twig - that we want to bend toward a certain direction. The twig "is to be bent with caution, not broken in the efforts of a rude and hasty zeal" (Eadie, p. 262).

C. The Needs of Children

Since all children have the same nature, they all have the same basic needs. Due to personality differences, some children require more attention in certain areas than others.
The following is a list of needs that must be met by both parents. Your children need:

1. Love

2. Security

Children need the security of knowing that mom and dad are:

a. Committed to God through Jesus Christ
(they need to know that He is your ultimate priority)

b. Committed to the Bible and its principles of truth
(they need to know that you will never bend on a Biblical truth)

c. Committed to each other for life
(they need to know that divorce or separation is never an option in Mommy's or Daddy's mind)

d. Committed to them
(they need to know that nothing can sever the relationship and love you have for them)

3. Time and Attention

". . .A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Prov. 29:15).
Because King David did not give Absolom the forgiveness and attention he needed, his son became bitter and rebellious (II Sam. 14:24; 15-17)

4. Patience

(Eccles. 7:8; Rom. 12:12; Ja. 1:3-4)

a. Realize how patient God is with you (Ps. 86:15)
b. Realize that your labors will be rewarded in God's time (Gal. 6:9)
c. Realize that nagging, yelling, and complaining accomplish nothing good (Ja. 3:16-18).

5. Encouragement

(Prov. 25:11; Eph. 4:29)
Look for any area of positive character to praise.

1) For initiative (when a child responds to needs without being told to)
2) For achievement (when a child does his best, although the job may not be perfect)
3) For obedience (When a child does what he is told with a good attitude)
4) For skill (when a child displays giftedness, compliment him/her, but be careful to give the glory to God - I Cor. 4:7)

6. Example

(I Timothy 4:12)

a. *"In word"* - what you say
b. *"In conversation"* - how you live
c. *"In charity"* - how you love
d. *"In spirit"* - how you have zeal and enthusiasm
e. *"In faith"* - how you believe
f. *"In purity"* - how you are holy and set apart

Note: In setting the example, this does not mean that you never admit the wrong you commit. You must. Parents need to be real and transparent in front of their children. They need to see that you make mistakes, seek forgiveness when needed, admit fault.

2. WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR CHILDREN

The old saying: "you get what you expect" is true of parenting. The reason why many parents get respect & obedience from their children is because they expect it. They know it is proper and right. In the early years of our Country, even unsaved parents required their children to respect authority. Today, however, many saved parents have accepted America's shifting trends and no longer require, much less expect, their children to respect authority.

The fifth of the ten commandments is this: *"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee"* (Exodus 20:12; cp. Deut.5:16)

Parents should expect three responses from their children:
1. **Respect (for authority)**
2. **Obedience**
3. **Honor**

A. Respect (for authority)

All of life is structured around a "chain of responsibility" (cp. Mt. 8:10).

Three basic divinely established institutions to provide structure (order) and safety (protection) to society:
1) The Home (I Cor. 7:2ff; Eph. 5:22-6:4)
2) The Government (Rom. 13:1-f)
3) The Church (Heb. 13:7, 17, 24; I Peter 5:1-5)

These institutions involve submission and authority.

An "AUTHORITY" is someone with a position of oversight.

The position of authority is ultimately given by God.
This position of authority is one of service (an "authority" is a servant)
This position of authority is to provide leadership, training, and/or protection for the well being of the one(s) served.
The one who holds such a position of authority is responsible to God and will answer to God.

The one who is expected to submit to the authority will also be accountable to God for how he/she responded to the authority.

Respect for parents is so serious that God told Moses:

*"He who **strikes** **(physical disrespect)** his father or his mother shall surely be put to death";*
*and "He who **curses** **(verbal disrespect)** his father or his mother shall surely be put to death"* (Ex. 21:15, 17; cp. Lev. 20:9; Proverbs 30:11-f).
Proverbs 20:20 - *"Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness"* (ie. his life will be snuffed out)

* Colossians 3:20 says:

"Children, obey your parents in all things:
for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."

Such obedience is to be:

1. **Submissive -**
   "Obey" = hupokouo" - lit. to listen with a submissive heart. Hence, to hear what your parents say and do it.
   (Attitude is just as important as action)

2. **Continual** (present imperative)
   Young men, as long as you are under their roof, you are obligated to obey them; young ladies, as long as you are under your parents' authority (until you get married), you are obligated to obey them.

3. **Respectful** - *"your parents"*
   Respect their God-given position over you. Even if you are bigger than them, smarter than them or stronger than them, you are to obey them because they are your parents.

4. **Total** - *"in all things"* (KJV)
   Obedience is not to be partial, but total (God does not qualify the obedience). However, the only exception is if your parents ask you to sin (to directly violate a Scriptural principle - cp. Acts 4:19-20, 5:29).

NOTE: God did not say "obey for this is popular" (II Tim. 3:2) or "for this is easy" (indeed it is often difficult) or "for they are worthy" (many are not).
Rather, He said, *"for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."* The reason for obedience is simple. It pleases God. It is right! (Eph. 6:1)

B. Obedience

See: Ephesians 6
CHRISTIAN CHILDREN MUST RESPECT THEIR PARENTS - GOD'S WAY (v. 1-3)

To respect is to obey and honor and to obey and honor is to respect.

GOD REQUIRES RESPECTFUL ACTION (A child's duty is obedience) (v. 1)

"Obey" = implies a readiness to hear; a humble listening so as to do what you're told.

Delayed obedience is disobedience.

Incomplete obedience is disobedience.
(Example: Doing something half way or in the wrong way - not according to the parents instructions)

"your parents"

A child is to respect based on the position of the parents, more than because of parent's personal character. EX: We submit to a police officer because of his position. We submit to our elders because of their position. We submit to our teacher because of his position.

The phrase ***"in the Lord"*** teaches three things:
It shows that the children being addressed are Christians.
It shows that the obedience is for the Lord's sake, to please the Lord.
If shows that the obedience is to model the same pattern as you would obey the Lord.
Children are to obey their parents just as all believers are to obey the Lord. Why? Because parents are the authority, just as the Lord is your authority.
The only time you can disobey your parents is if they ask you to do something sinful (Our Lord would never ask this of His children).

"for this is right"

The reason to obey parents is brief and simple: "For this is right" (correct, just, righteous).

If a contemporary, modern, liberal Bible was written by man, Eph. 6:1 would say, "Parents, obey your children, for this will keep them happy and bring peace to the home" (Wiersbe, p. 150).

One problem - This is not right! Contrary to God's order in nature (even baby animals are taught to obey their parents).

Obedience is good for children!

Obedience not only provides a better and longer life, but also:

1) Obedience teaches children patience
(to learn to trust and wait on God)
2) Obedience quips children with self-control
3) Obedience gets children ready for a career that will demand respect for authority
4) Obedience gets children ready for life, which will not always be "fair" or "just"
5) Your children will reap in their children what they themselves sowed as a child

C. Honor

GOD REQUIRES A RESPECTFUL ATTITUDE (The child's disposition is honor) (v. 2-3)

"Honor" = to view as very valuable, or precious.

Today, far too many children treat their parents like garbage. No respect for those who brought them into this world, fed, clothed, and schooled them.

How do children show honor?

1) By obeying them without complaint
(Having the right attitude will produce right action)

2) By providing for parents (when they cannot)
(Mt. 15:3-6) (NOTE: Money is no substitute for love)

Even if they are not believers, they are your parents, and you owe them love and respect.

God's Promises to children who honor their parents:

a. Such an attitude results in a top quality life - *"well with thee . . ."* (v. 3a)

Paul is quoting one of the 10 commandments (Ex. 20:12). This is the only one of the 10 that deals with the family. Why only one! Because if this command was kept, a child would learn the most important lesson of his life -respect for authority.

From this would flow respect for others, for leaders, and most of all for God!
"Well with thee" - they will stay out of things that shorten life and that take the real fun out of life!

2. Such an attitude results in a <u>long quantity</u> of life - *"live long . . ."* (v. 3b)

"This does not mean that everyone who died young dishonored his parents. Paul is stating a principle: When children obey their parents in the Lord, they will escape a good deal of sin and danger and thus avoid the things that could threaten or shorten their lives" (Wiersbe, p. 152).

"How to Raise a Brat"

When an infant, always feed on demand.
When crying, always pick up.
When having trouble sleeping, always rock to sleep.
When throwing a fit, say, "Isn't that cute?"
When the child disobeys, overlook it.
When he/she has a conflict with a little friend,
always defend your Child.
When the child wants something,
always give it right away.
(NOTE: A <u>good</u> parent always gives the child what he/she <u>needs</u>!
--But what he/she sometimes needs is a NO!)
When the child sins, never spank or teach.
If you do spank, do it inconsistently.
When you want obedience, barter for it
(EX: "If you're good, I'll give you this")
The child learns to be a manipulator.

3. How to DISCIPLINE Your Children

Years ago, the then Duke of Windsor (who referred to the rod as a switch) said, "Everything in the American home is controlled by switches -- except the children!"

A. The PATTERN of Discipline is our HEAVENLY FATHER

"My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."(Proverbs 3:11,12)

1. Job 5:17, 18 -
2. Psalm 119:65-72
3. Heb. 12:5-11

B. The MOTIVE of Discipline is LOVE for the Child

"For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." (Proverbs 3:12)

1. Prov. 3:12 - "delight"
2. Prov. 13:24 - "love"

C. The TIMING of Discipline is EARLY

"He that spareth (withholds) his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chastenth him betimes." (Proverbs 13:24)

"Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare (hold back) for his crying" (Proverbs 19:18)

1. Prov. 13:24 - "betimes"
   "Betimes" = at dawn; at first light" (the word means disciplining early)
   "betimes" (early) = 1) young in life (diligence from toddler age)
   2) early in the offense (right away in the offense).
   "Correction begins when the child begins to resist the will of the parent. Generally, this is when the child begins to crawl around or reach for things that would be harmful to him or are valuable (such as lamps, cords, TV tuning knobs, china, etc.)" (Victorious Ventures, p. 13)

2. Prov. 19:18 - "while there is hope"

D. The REASON for Discipline is REBELLION to AUTHORITY

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15)

1. "Foolishness" -
2. "Heart" - rebellious attitudes must be disciplined as well as actions

When do I discipline?
Answer: ***For every act of rebellion against authority.***

Examples of Rebellion:

1) Rebellious Attitude

When the child pouts or whines (throws fit).
Never call sin "cute" or view it as "funny". Disobedience is nothing to laugh at. It seems small now, but this attitude will manifest itself on a greater scale later.

2) Rebellious Action

a. When the child disobeys by omitting right action [Passive Rebellion]

When a child consistently says, "I forgot" - this shows he rebelled against putting an effort into learning the lesson.

When you give instruction - say what you mean, and mean what you say (Ezzo,p.43).
(Don't speak rashly, because you must hold them accountable for whatever you said)

If I ask my child to do something, and he does not respond (assuming he heard me), he/she is in sin. But if I call him twice, **I** am the one in sin!
Why? By repeating my request, I am reinforcing and encouraging my child's disobedience. This is, in fact, training them in unrighteousness. (Ezzo, p. 43)

For obedience to be real obedience, it must be:

1. Immediate - Delay is disobedience. Children are to obey the first time you ask (immediately). The reason they don't respond until the fourth time is because you have trained (conditioned) them that they don't have to until then (that you aren't going to do anything about their disobedience until then).
   After God teaches us something from His Word, what percent (%) of the time does God want immediate and complete obedience? 100%
   As parents, if we expect less than 100%, we are teaching our children disobedience.
   When we tell our children to be quiet, and they are quiet 80% of the time, we put up with it. What will you do when you tell your children, "Don't sleep with your girlfriend" and they only obey 80% of the time??

2. Without Question The Child can ask "What" to clarify command, but never "Why"
   For example we as believers are to ask God "Why" about trials, but never about obedience. Sometimes God provides a reason, but we have no right to ask Why.

3. Without Complaint — Attitude is just as important as action. Grudging compliance reveals a heart that is not willing to obey.

4. Complete - — Partial obedience is not obedience.

Rebellious Action (Continued)

When has my child rebelled?

b. When the child disobeys by committing wrong action [Active Rebellion]

When a child talks back, he has rebelled.

When a child does what he/she knows was a violation of the parents rules or standards. [Before you can rightly hold a child responsible for disobedience, you must make sure that you have informed the child regarding that offence.]

If a dad gives a command, and the child appeals to mom. That child has just undermined Dad's authority.

Another example of challenging authority: The reply, "Why can't I" or "Do I have to?"

E. The BALANCED METHOD of Discipline is PHYSICAL Correction and VERBAL Training

"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." (Proverbs 29:15)

1. "The Rod"

The Bible uses the word "rod" in these ways:

a. A symbol of guidance and protection (Psalm 23:4)
b. A symbol of authority and rulership (Exodus 4:20; 17:9)
c. A symbol of chastisement (II Sam.7:14; Job 9:34; 21:9; Is.9:4; 10:5; 30:31; Psalm 2:9)

"The rod, as used in a physical sense, came from a branch of a tree or the stem of a bush. The context rules as to which rod is implied. Just as the rod in "*Thy rod and thy staff*" is not a thin off-shoot of a bush, the rod in the "*Rod of correction*" is not a five pound branch. Context and common sense points to a rod of correction which has flex to it. We should not chastise our children with anything that is stiff and unbending. A wooden spoon could possibly break fingers that get in the way, cause vertebrae damage if struck too high and damage shin tissue. However, an instrument with flex will sting without inflicting bone or muscle damage since the flex itself absorbs much of the shock at contact." (Ezzo, p.74)

2. "And Reproof"

Discipline is more than spanking.

There are two parts to discipline (Prov. 29:15): "The Rod and Reproof" --

physical chastisement	(negative)
verbal instruction	(positive)

Ephesians 6:4 - "Admonition" = lit. "to put into the mind" (not merely factual information, but right attitudes and principles of behavior)

The rod without reproof will not be effective to properly teach your children. This is sure to "provoke them to wrath" (Eph.6:3)

The STEPS of the discipline process

1) Before spanking, make sure that the child knows what he did wrong.
2) Spank with a thin, flexible rod that will sting not damage.
   (5-7 spanks usually enough; This depends on the age of the child)
   Make sure you are <u>not</u> spanking out of anger; or in a violent manner.
   [Note: A wooden or a plastic dowel (thin round stick) may be used in cases when you cannot obtain a good useful "rod")
   Spank firm enough to outweigh the pleasure of sin.
   Parents should not chastise through clothing that is too thick.
3) After spanking,
   a) <u>Talk</u> to him about what he did wrong (explain it as sin against God; warn him not to repeat the offense)
   b) <u>Pray</u> with him;
   c) <u>Reaffirm</u> your love for him; then
   d) Consider the issue <u>resolved</u> and <u>over</u> (providing the child's attitude and action conform to what you desired)
4) The child should then willingly do what you asked; or not do what you prohibited (a repentant attitude is your goal)

Practical teaching about the use of "The Rod"

a. The spanking should sting not damage -

Is spanking child abuse? No - not if it is done in the Bible way.

Actually, a lack of spanking is permanent injury to their character and thus true abuse.

Child abuse occurs most often in cases where the parents do not properly spank their children. Such permissive parents allow their children to "go wild" and "get on their nerves," and then in frustration and anger strike out in a violent manner at their children.

A proper spanking should sting, not damage. It is pain for the purpose of healing. (EX. a doctor cuts a person with a knife; an attacker does the same thing -- but the motive (purpose) and method is different.

Never slap a child's face or strike other parts of the body, pull hair, ears, or drag by an arm.

Abuse of physical discipline: In superstitious Dark Ages (8th - 12th cent.), it was believed that crying children were possessed by demons and that beating them was the only way to exorcise those demons. Hence the phrase: "Beat the devil out of them" was born (Ezzo, p. 52).

Ephesians 6:4 speaks about the "Nurture . . . of the Lord" - we are to discipline our children the same way the Lord disciplines his children.

Their body is a temple and we don't want to damage their temple, but we do want to send it a message.

b. The spankings should be private not public

c. The spankings should be consistent not haphazard -

1) Prov. 19:18 - "Let not thy soul spare for his crying"

2) Prov. 23:13 - "Withhold not correction"

This means: Don't look for reasons or excuses not to spank (EX: "They're tired;" "He's just being a child," etc.)

F. The NEGLECT of Discipline is CATASTROPHE!

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child..." (Proverbs 22:15)
"Thou...shalt deliver his soul from hell" (Proverbs 23:14)
"...a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Proverbs 29:15)

1. Prov. 22:15 - "Foolishness" -

2. Prov. 23:14 - "Hell" -

3. Prov. 29:15 - "Shame" -

G. The GOAL of Discipline is the Child's WELL-BEING

"Withhold not correction from the child: for is thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." (Proverbs 23:14)

"The rod and reproof give wisdom" (Proverbs 29:15)

1. Restoration - The child and parent will be close

The result of discipline is that the child will be brought back into line with what he should be.

Spanking is not punishment (to pay back), but discipline (to teach) right from wrong and to change attitude and action (Heb. 12)

2. Instruction - The child will learn "the wages of sin"

a. Your child needs to learn the difference between right & wrong

Many are living in the depths of sin today because of parents that didn't care enough to say: "No!" and restrain their children by discipline.
One teenage girl gave this testimony: "I never knew how far I could go . . . because my parents never cared enough to discipline me. I figured that if it wasn't important to them, why should it be to important to me?" (Wiersbe, p. 155).

b. Your child needs to learn the price for sin

Physical discipline teaches that sin always has consequences. Sin will always sting! There is a price for sin. The child sees himself as a law-breaking sinner in need of God's grace.

3. Discipline - The child will have sterling character and an ability to say no to selfish impulses

"Discipline in a Biblical sense is training your children in the art of self-control. As parents, you need to help your children acquire the skills necessary for controlling their emotions." (Gary Ezzo, "Whatever Happened to Discipline?" [Masterpiece, Summer, 1992], p. 15).

H. The BENEFIT of Discipline is BLESSING

"The rod and reproof give wisdom..." (Proverbs 29:15)
"Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul." (Proverbs 29:17)

1. "Wisdom" -

2. "Rest" -

3. "Delight" -

What if I have failed to discipline properly in the past?

Is there hope for parents who have been delinquent in training their children? Yes. it's never too late to make corrections. This is a giant step toward successful re-parenting.

First - Call a Family Conference; explain you have made errors in their lives; apologize for them.

Second - Explain what God requires in the areas of obedience and respect.

Third - Explain new course of action from this time forward. Join in prayer for wisdom to do what is right (Ezzo, p. 81)

The best way to insure that your kids turn out right is for you (as parents) to be right.

If you are tolerant of sin in your life, you will tend to be tolerant with your children.
If you are overindulgent - your kids will generally get whatever they want.
If you are selfish - so will your kids be.
You will feel like a hypocrite trying to correct something in your kids that you are.

What the Bible says about…
Courtship & Marriage

1. Teach your children the basic virtuous characteristics that will prepare them for courtship and marriage.

Teach your teenagers about:

a. Genuine love (I Cor. 13)
b. Accepting God's timing and will (Gen. 29:20; Prov. 3:5-6; Ja. 4:15)
c. The importance of good friendships (I Cor. 15:33)
d. Priorities (Mt. 6:33)
   Parents must explain to their teen what to look for in a mate.
   --Godliness over glamour
   --Personal character is priority over personal appearance (Prov. 31:30)
e. Design for sex in marriage and standards of moral purity
   (I Thess. 4:1--8; Heb. 13:4; I Cor. 7:1-5; Prov. 5:18-21; Ps. 101:3)

2. Teach your children about proper courtship:

What procedure should Christian girls follow in a courtship relationship?

1) Remember you are under the authority of your father until you marry (I Cor. 7:36-38).

2) Before starting to date, meet with your father (whether or not he is a Christian) and share with him your goals for marriage: that yours will be the kind of marriage God wants, and thus be the happiest possible.

3) Agree that any boy who wants to date you must first ask your father for permission.

   a) It makes the boy appreciate you more because what is easily gotten is not usually appreciated.

   b) It decreases the temptation of the boy to mistreat you. If he thinks you are completely on your own, it increases the risk that he will try something.

   c) It proves to the boy that your father loves you.

   d) It gives your father a chance to discern the boy's intentions. A woman is more affected by actions than by motives, but a man discerns first the motive.

   e) It places the boy under your father's counsel, which is exactly where he should be if the relationship grows into marriage.

4) Agree that anytime a fellow starts talking to you about marriage you will say, *"If you are thinking about marriage, you had better talk to my father."* This is tremendously important because so often talk about marriage is just camouflaged lust.

3. Teach your children about discerning God's will.

How can your children know who is the right one for marriage?

Follow God's principles for courtship:

a. Be submitted and obedient to the advice and discretion of your parents (Eph. 6:1-2).

b. Determine that you will "date" only Christians (I Cor. 7:39; II Cor. 6:14-18). God forbids the intermarriage of a believer with a non-believer (SEE: Gen. 24:3-4, 28:1-2; Ex. 34:12-16; Deut. 7:3-4; Ezra 9:10-12; Neb. 10:30).

c. Determine that you will strive to be the right one, rather than focusing on meeting the "right one" (Rom. 12:1-2).

d. Be busy doing the general will of God, and He will guide you in the specifics of His will (Phil. 2:12-13; Prov. 3:5-6).

e. Purpose in your heart that you will not defile yourself or defraud the one you date (I Cor. 7:1-2; I Th. 4:6).

f. Decide that the one you marry must enhance your ministry, not diminish or destroy it (Is she a "helpmeet" [Gen. 2:18] or a hindrance?).

g. Yield your plans to God's will in the vital area of courtship and marriage (desire His will above all else) (Mt. 6:33).

h. Wait for God's timing (Eccl. 3:1). Patience is a key virtue. It requires absolute trust in God and His timing.

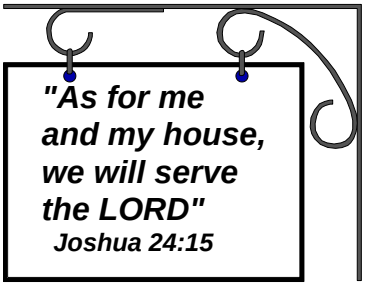
4. Teach your children what to avoid in a dating relationship.

a. Avoid the "steady" relationship until the time is right.
(Have several friends and let God bring the right one alone in His time)

b. Avoid situations and circumstances that might involve temptations and trouble (don't be alone in secluded places).

c. Avoid physical involvement (lust can't wait until marriage; but true love can).

A COMMITMENT TO DEDICATE YOUR HOME TO CHRIST



What makes a house a home?

The true importance of a home...

--is not the physical beauty of each room, but the spiritual beauty of those who occupy each room.
--is not the architectural structure, but the Biblical structure of the family - each performing his/her God-given roles (Eph. 5).
--is not the stability of its construction, but the stability of the family that resides within the house.

Many live in magnificent houses, but few have contented homes.
Many husbands and fathers can afford to manage the mortgage of a house, but few know how to manage the relationships in the home.

A home is:

I. A place where <u>CHRIST REIGNS SUPREMELY</u>
Psalm 127:1a - "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it."
Rev. 3:20 - "Behold, I stand at the door and knock..."
Josh. 24:15 - "...As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

II. A place of <u>FAMILY UNITY</u>
Amos 3:3 - "Can two walk together except they be agreed?"
--Unity around a common <u>faith</u>
--Unity around common <u>convictions</u>
--roles of husband and wife (Eph. 5:22-25)
--child-training (Eph. 6:4)
--Unity around common <u>goals</u>

"Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands" (Prov. 14:1).

III. A place of <u>QUIET REFUGE</u>
"It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house" (Prov. 21:9)
--Shelter from the storms of life
--Peace from the pressures of society

IV. A place for <u>SPIRITUAL GROWTH</u>

David's words should be our motto at home: *"I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes" (Ps. 101:2-3).*

--A place for your personal quiet time (Ex. Daniel in his house - Dan. 6:10)

--A place for your family devotions (Ex. Timothy - II Tim. 1:5; 3:15)

1. Husband to teach his wife at home (I Cor. 14:35)
2. Father to teach his children at home (Deut. 6:7-9; 11:19-20)

V. A place of <u>CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY</u>

--Hospitality = To have an affection for strangers.

Rom. 12:13 - "Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality."

Example: The house of Mary, Martha & Lazarus (Lk. 10:38-39; Jn. 12:1-3).

*To show hospitality to one of the least of Christ's servants is to show it to Him (Mt. 25:35, 37, 40).