



# CAPTAINS THROUGH THE STORM

REB BRADLEY

*BECOMING A MAN OF GOD*

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VERSION 2010

Reb Bradley

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# SESSION 1

## Understanding the Female Mind

### *General Differences Between Men and Women*

MEN	WOMEN
A. LIFE PURPOSE: Gen 2:15 oriented	A. LIFE PUPOSE: Gen 2:18 oriented
B. RELATIONSHIPS: 1 Cor 11:8	B. RELATIONSHIPS: Gen 3:16
C. ROMANCE:	C. ROMANCE: Song of Solomon
D. MARRIAGE:	D. MARRIAGE: 1 Pet 3:6 and
E. EMOTIONS:	E. EMOTIONS: 1 Tim 2:14; 1 Pet 3:7
F. CONVERSATION:	F. CONVERSATION: 1 Tim 5:13
G. PHYSICAL AFFECTION:	G. PHYSICAL AFFECTION:

## SESSION 2

# Men as Family Heads

### I. What does the Bible say about family order?

A. Like with all of creation, God designed the family to have \_\_\_\_\_ and

*1 Cor 14:40 But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.  
33 For God is not a God of disorder ...*

⇨ \_\_\_\_\_ occurs in any organization lacking clearly defined \_\_\_\_\_ and

B. God designed the organization of the family with \_\_\_\_\_ for its members

1. He designated men as the \_\_\_\_\_ of their homes.

*1 Cor 11:8-9; Gen 18:19; Josh 24:15; 1 Tim 5:8; Ex 6:14; 6:25; Num 1:4; 7:2; 31:26; 32:28; 36:1; Josh 21:1; 22:14; 1 Ki 8:1; 1 Chr 5:15, 24; 7:2, 7, 9, 11, 40; 8:6, 10, 13, 28; 9:9, 13, 33, 34; 15:12; 23:9, 24; 24:4, 6, 31; 26:21, 26, 32; ;27:1; 2 Chr 1:2; 5:2; 19:8; 23:2; Ezra 1:5; 2:68; 3:12; 4:2, 3; 8:1, 29; 10:16; Neh 7:70, 71; 8:13; 11:13; 12:12, 22, 23*

*Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.*

*1 Cor 11:3 Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.*

2. Wives were created as \_\_\_\_\_ to their husbands

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

*Gen 2:15, 18; Eph 5:22, 23-24, 33; Col 3:18; Tit 2:4-5; 1 Pet 3:1-6; 1 Cor 11:3-9; 14:34-35; 1 Tim 2:9-15; Prov 31:10-31*

HELP MEET ezer neged: one who stands before as a counterpart and surrounds with help

3. Adam was created for \_\_\_\_\_

*Gen 2:15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to **work it and take care of it.***

4. Eve was created for \_\_\_\_\_ -- to \_\_\_\_\_ Adam in his

*Gen 2:18 And the LORD God said, **It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help-meet for him.***

*1 Cor 11:8-9 For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; 9 **neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.***

### II. Does a man's headship demonstrate a woman's inferiority?

A. \_\_\_\_\_ – In Christ we are all

*Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

B. A position does inferiority in nature or capabilities

*John 14:28 "You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is **greater** than I. (meizon: superior position)*

*John 13:16 I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, **nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.***

*Heb 13:17 Obey your leaders and **submit to their authority.** They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.*

C. A woman a man

*Gen 2:18 And the LORD God said, **It is not good that the man should be alone**; I will make him an help-meet for him... 24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*

1. Her her husband

*Prov 31:23 Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.*

2. Her submission does not mean

*Luke 22:42 "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."*

D. Women and men were both made

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

### III. What accountability comes with headship?

A. Men -- more than women -- have the power to bring upon their families

*Ex 20:5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, **punishing** the children for the sin of the fathers **to the third and fourth generation** of those who hate me,*

*Ex 34:6-7 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, 7 maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he **punishes** the children and their children for the sin of the fathers **to the third and fourth generation.**"*

*Num 14:18... he **punishes** the children for the sin of the fathers to the **third and fourth generation.**'*

B. Men -- more than women -- have the power to bring Divine upon their families

*Deu 5:9-10 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, **punishing** the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 10 but **showing love to a thousand generations** of those who love me and keep my commandments.*

*Jer 32:18 You **show love to thousands** but bring the punishment for the fathers' sins into the laps of their children after them. O great and powerful God, whose name is the LORD Almighty,*

## SESSION 3

# Following Christ's Example of Leadership Part 1

*Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.*

I. As the head of the church, Christ \_\_\_\_\_ for her

A. Headship means to \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of running the home

⇒ Headship does not mean \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

*Mat 20:25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

B. Christ is responsible to \_\_\_\_\_ for his Bride

*Ps 33:11 But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.*

*Prov 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.*

*Jer 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

C. The existence of a "head" indicates a wife's need for \_\_\_\_\_

1. Remember that the side effect of good leadership is \_\_\_\_\_ for followers

2. Set \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for your family

II. vs 25 Christ expressed his love through \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

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

*John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.*

A. Nothing was \_\_\_\_\_ him -- he sacrificed his \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and came as a human  
*Phil 2:6-8*

B. He \_\_\_\_\_ with our \_\_\_\_\_

*1 Cor 13:7 [love] ...bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

C. The call to sacrifice indicates the extent of \_\_\_\_\_ required to love your wife properly

D. How can we show our wives self-sacrificing love?

1. Loving her takes \_\_\_\_\_

2. Loving her may not be \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

3. Sacrificing for her communicates to her \_\_\_\_\_

➤ Inconveniencing yourself says to her \_\_\_\_\_

## SESSION 4

# Following Christ's Example of Leadership Part 2

III. vs 26-27 Christ \_\_\_\_\_ her spiritually

*Eph 5:26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*

A. He \_\_\_\_\_ us from \_\_\_\_\_ by his death

*Heb 10:22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

B. He \_\_\_\_\_ our \_\_\_\_\_ through the Word

*Titus 3:5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,*

*John 15:15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father **I have made known to you.***

C. He continues to invest himself in \_\_\_\_\_ us – we are his

*Phil 2:13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.*

*Eph 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

D. The call to spiritual nurturing reveals a wife's

E. How can we nurture our wives spiritually?

1. Make certain she is in the \_\_\_\_\_
2. Take her to the Lord in \_\_\_\_\_
3. Make sure she is in \_\_\_\_\_

IV. vs 28-29 Christ regarded his \_\_\_\_\_ in the same way he \_\_\_\_\_ for his own

*Eph 5:28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.*

A. He came for \_\_\_\_\_ – not \_\_\_\_\_ -- he has no needs that we meet – He lacks nothing

B. He sought us \_\_\_\_\_ we \_\_\_\_\_ him

*John 15:16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.*

C. He \_\_\_\_\_ us when we were his

*Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us ... 10 For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!*

D. The call to meet her needs as we do our own, reveals the importance of \_\_\_\_\_ her first



E. How can we care for our wives in the same way we care for ourselves?

1. vs 29 Do not exempt yourself because of

2. her -- don't talk her out of them.

*John 11:35 Jesus wept*

*Heb 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin.*

a. Do not her when she needs

b. Do not yourself when she accuses you of not her. Express

3. Do not her for her -- her from them

4. We must treat our wives -- as the

*Col 3:19 - not be harsh with his wife*

*1 Pet 3:7 - be considerate and respectful of his wife as the weaker partner*

5. Pray that you will your wife through God's

*Phil 1:9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, (Prov 2:2, 3; 3:5, 13; 4:5, 7; 16:16, 22; 23:23)*

V. vs 29,33 Christ and his bride

*Eph 5:29 Eph 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church... 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband*

A. He saw our and condition, and came to us

*Rom 8:3 For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man,*

B. He elevates his love to us, because he knows we cannot without it

*Eph 3:16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

C. The call to be a reveals your wife's

> and means physically, emotionally, morally, spiritually

D. The call to **cherish** reveals a woman's \_\_\_\_\_ for it

1. Break the habit of communicating that she is \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ value to you and the kids
3. \_\_\_\_\_ to her when she speaks to you. Try to \_\_\_\_\_ her.
4. Touch her without \_\_\_\_\_
5. Allow her to catch you \_\_\_\_\_ at her from across the room.
6. Affirm her about her \_\_\_\_\_
7. Learn to speak her \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_ her.

VI. vs 31 Christ is a \_\_\_\_\_ to his Bride

*Eph 5:31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be **united** to his wife, and the two will become **one flesh**."*

A. Christ is faithful to us when we \_\_\_\_\_

*2 Tim 2:13 if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.*

B. He \_\_\_\_\_ everything he \_\_\_\_\_

*Phil 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

C. He \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ when we attack or complain

*Mark 4:38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" 39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. 40 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"*

D. Her need for security is rooted in her \_\_\_\_\_

E. How can we help our wives find security?

1. We must remember that a woman's greatest need is for \_\_\_\_\_

*1 Pet 3:6 like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and **do not give way to fear**.*

2. Consistent \_\_\_\_\_ can alleviate their \_\_\_\_\_

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

3. Aim her at the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ all the time -- not just in times of crisis

4. Never threaten \_\_\_\_\_

# SESSION 5

## OVERCOMING COMMON OBSTACLES TO LEADERSHIP

I. What obstacles commonly hinder men from assuming proper oversight of their families?

A. We misunderstand \_\_\_\_\_, so remain \_\_\_\_\_ as leaders

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ either applauds our \_\_\_\_\_ or directly \_\_\_\_\_ to us

*John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

⇒ We must get \_\_\_\_\_ in our \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

2. We mistakenly think strong leadership is \_\_\_\_\_ not \_\_\_\_\_

*1 Pet 3:7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner...*

*Col 3:19 Husbands, love your wives, and do not be embittered against them.*

⇒ We are too \_\_\_\_\_ and fear that \_\_\_\_\_ our wives makes us \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ them

*Mat 20:25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

*John 13:14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.*

⇒ We must follow Christ's example as a \_\_\_\_\_

B. We \_\_\_\_\_ in some way and \_\_\_\_\_ our family's \_\_\_\_\_

*Gen 3:1-6 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"... 5 "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

C. We become \_\_\_\_\_ our leadership calling.

*2 Cor 11:3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*

1. We are drawn to \_\_\_\_\_ of self

*1 John 5:21 Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.*

⇒ An \_\_\_\_\_ is anything other than God in which we \_\_\_\_\_

a. Career/ministry

b. Hobbies/pastimes

c. Possessions

d. Accomplishments/reputation

e. Family

2. We are \_\_\_\_\_ up in

*Gal 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.*

D. We become \_\_\_\_\_ – depression, guilt, self preoccupation

*Revelation 12:10-11 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For **the accuser of our brothers**, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. 11 They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.*

*Zechariah 3:1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and **Satan standing at his right side to accuse him.***

1. We must \_\_\_\_\_ that God is

*Rom 8:31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? **If God is for us, who can be against us?** 32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? 33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36 As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 **For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

*Eph 3:16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And **I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.***

2. We must believe that our weaknesses \_\_\_\_\_ from God's love or power

*2 Cor 4:7 But we have this treasure **in jars of clay** to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.*

*2 Cor 12:9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for **my power is made perfect in weakness.**" Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.*

*Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10 For if, when we were God's enemies, **we were reconciled to him** through the death of his Son, how much more, **having been reconciled**, shall we be saved through his life!*

⇒ We must believe that God \_\_\_\_\_ as weak vessels

E. We have no leadership \_\_\_\_\_ so merely \_\_\_\_\_ the

*Prov 29:18a Where there is no vision, the people perish...*

1. True leaders have a \_\_\_\_\_ and seek to \_\_\_\_\_ there

2. Every leader must first have a \_\_\_\_\_

⇒ General goals: Long range objectives based on personal values

3. To accomplish the general goal a leader must have a \_\_\_\_\_ made up of \_\_\_\_\_

## II. What is God's top goal for family leaders?

*Mal 4:6 He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."*

We must give our families the \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus Christ

1. Receiving the gospel is more than our children \_\_\_\_\_ the

2. It is daily \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus is Lord

3. It is daily \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ for them that God is \_\_\_\_\_ and

⇒ A child who grows up seeing that Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ will come to believe he is \_\_\_\_\_

⇒ The generation who believes that Jesus is worth living and dieing for will \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ at them.

## SESSION 6

# TAMING LUST

*"He who is a slave to another cannot rule his home, for the one who rules him rules his home."*

### I. Biblical Prohibitions Regarding Lust

- A. Matt 5:27-28 Looking with lust is \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ as  
*Mat 5:27 "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*
- B. 1 Peter 4:3 Lust is to be part of \_\_\_\_\_  
*1 Pet 4:3 For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do--living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry.*
- C. Col 3:5 Put lust \_\_\_\_\_  
*Col 3:5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.*
- D. 2 Tim 2:22; Rom 13:14 \_\_\_\_\_ lust like the \_\_\_\_\_  
*2 Tim 2:22 Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*  
*Rom 13:14 Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.*
- E. Eph 5:3-5 Our lives should give no \_\_\_\_\_ of sexual \_\_\_\_\_  
*Eph 5:3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. 4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. 5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person--such a man is an idolater--has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

### II. Defining Lust and Sexual Purity

PURITY: akatharsia -- *to be clean; the absence of anything which defiles; void of contamination*

LUST: *Epithumia, orexis, einai, pathos, hedone* -- *strong or passionate desire*

- A. 1 John 2:16 Lust has 2 basic expressions  
*For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 1 John 2:16*
1. Lust of the eyes -- I \_\_\_\_\_ what I see  
⇨ Difference between enjoying the sexual beauty of a woman and appreciating sunsets is \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Lust of the flesh -- I \_\_\_\_\_ what I see
- B. Eph 5:4 \_\_\_\_\_ are impure and are always inappropriate  
*Eph 5:4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.*
- C. Eph 5:12; Prov 8:13 \_\_\_\_\_ of sexual sin shame us and entice us  
*Eph 5:12 For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.*

### III. Effects of Lust

*"Lust makes the powerful weak and the wise fools."*

A. Lust hinders one's ability to

1. 1 Sam 13:14; 2 Sam 11:2-17 -- King David
2. Judg 16:6-20 -- Samson
3. Deut 17:17; Prov 6:23-35; 7:5-27; 23:26-28; 30:20 -- Solomon

B. Lust \_\_\_\_\_ a man and thereby

*2 Pet 2:19 "... a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him."*

*1 Ths 4:4 "... each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable."*

*1 Cor 6:12 "I will not be mastered by anything." (Rom 6:6, 16-22)*

⇒ Those ruled by their habits are not ruled by Christ -- Mat 6:24

C. Lust promotes \_\_\_\_\_ breaking down self-discipline vital to marital

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

D. Lust \_\_\_\_\_ women, making them into \_\_\_\_\_ for gratification

1 Cor 13:4-5; Phil 2:3; John 15:13 -- Love is not self-seeking -- it is considerate and respectful; selfless and sacrificial; deferring to the other's needs first

E. Lust breeds

Gal 5:19; Mark 7:22; Rom 13:13; 1 Pet 4:3

Lasciviousness: aselgia -- *unrestrained sexual interest; preoccupation with turning oneself on*

F. Lust creates \_\_\_\_\_ in the marriage bed. (Heb 3:13)

1. Lust creates a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ makes impure sex more  
Prov 9:17; 20:17
3. Lust cultivates an appetite for \_\_\_\_\_

G. Lust defiles the conscience, destroying \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim 1:19 )

H. Lust creates a \_\_\_\_\_ with a \_\_\_\_\_ other than your

I. Lust \_\_\_\_\_ sex and marriage

### IV. Conquering Lust: The path to freedom

*"Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned?" Prov 6:27*

A. Gal 5:16, 23 Walk in the Spirit and \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of self control

⇒ Walk in full \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to Christ

## B. Devise new disciplines

### 1. Break old

*1 Tim 4:7 ... train yourself to be godly. 8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come*

### 2. \_\_\_\_\_ your flesh

*2 Tim 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. (KJV)*

*Rom 8:13 ... put to death the misdeeds of the body ...*

*Rom 13:14 ... do not think about how to gratify the desire (Also, 1 Pet 2:11)*

### 3. Pray for the \_\_\_\_\_ of evil and \_\_\_\_\_ for your heavenly father

*Prov 8:13 To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech.*

*Rom 12:9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.*

*Gen 39:9 "... How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?"*

## C. 1 Cor 10:13 Have a \_\_\_\_\_ for temptation

### 1. \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_

*Job 31:1 "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl."*

### 2. Mat 5:44 \_\_\_\_\_ for those who tempt you

1. You will see them through God's eyes

2. You will see them as souls in need of Jesus

3. You will grow in selfless compassion

### 3. Prepare a \_\_\_\_\_ for flirtatious women. (See next page.)

### 4. \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_ regarding inappropriate fantasies

*2 Cor 10:5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

### 5. Be on your guard against \_\_\_\_\_ with female coworkers

## D. Remember Paul's

*Gal. 5:19-21; Eph 4:19; 5:5 Lust is characteristic of the unregenerate*

## E. Make yourself \_\_\_\_\_ to someone

*James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed...*

## F. Have frequent \_\_\_\_\_

*Prov 28:13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*

## G. Pursue \_\_\_\_\_ for your wife

*Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ... 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.*

## H. Remind yourself the \_\_\_\_\_ Christ paid to \_\_\_\_\_ your forgiveness

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



# Preparing Yourself to Respond to an Aggressive Woman

## WARNINGS FROM PROVERBS ABOUT TECHNIQUES OF FLIRTATION

### Their words

5:3 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her **speech is smoother than oil**;

6:24 keeping you from the immoral woman, from the **smooth tongue** of the wayward wife.

7:5 they will keep you from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her **seductive words**.

7:21 With **persuasive words** she led him astray; she seduced him with her **smooth talk**.

7:18 Come, let's drink deep of **love** till morning; let's enjoy ourselves with love!

- Hints of love or commitment; ie: "Hi, Sexy." "Now, remember - I'm first in line if your wife ever leaves you."
- Pours out praise and affirmation
- More than others, compliments and flatters you, ie: "You're so good at that!" "You look so good in that!"

### Their gaze

6:25 Do not lust in your heart after **her beauty** or let her captivate you with **her eyes**,

- Stares longingly
- Twinkles and smiles when listening
- Laughs extra-hard at jokes

### Their appearance

7:10 Then out came a woman to meet him, **dressed** like a prostitute and with crafty intent.

- Groom themselves to capture sexual interest or admiration

### Their aggressiveness

7:11 She is loud and defiant, her **feet never stay at home**;

7:12 now in the street, now in the squares, at every corner **she lurks**.

7:15 So I came out to meet you; **I looked for you** and have found you!

23:28 Like a bandit **she lies in wait**, and multiplies the unfaithful among men.

- Is "on the make"
- Manages to always be around
- Finds you and sits next to you at lunch; walks with you to your car
- Calls with a need as an excuse for a chat
- Goes out of the way to say hello

### Their touch

7:13 She **took hold of him** and **kissed him** ...

- Brushes her body up against you
- Frequently touches you -- uses any excuse
  - during conversations puts her hand on leg, grabs your arm, etc.
  - helps you on with your coat
- Looks for you when the mistletoe comes out
- Gives backrubs without asking

### Their provision for relationship

7:17 I have **perfumed** my bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon.

- boldly declare to you their interest in you
- tell you they want to have an uncommitted relationship with you

### Their lack of conscience

30:20 "This is the way of an adulteress: She eats and wipes her mouth and **says, 'I've done nothing wrong.'**"

- justifies impure behavior and attitudes
- "God meant us to be together."

# SESSION 7

## Resolving Anger and Unforgiveness

### I. Why don't we want anger in our homes?

- A. Eph 4:31; Col 3:8; Jam 1:19 It God
- B. Prov 15:18; 29:22; 30:33; Jam 4:1 It bad

### II. What is righteous anger?

#### A. Mk 3:5; 10:14; Mt 21:12 **Selfless -- other oriented**

*Mark 3:5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.*

*Mark 10:14 When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.*

*Matthew 21:12 Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves.*

#### B. Prov 29:8,11; 14:17 **Self Controlled**

*Proverbs 29:8 Mockers stir up a city, but wise men turn away anger... 11 A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.*

*Proverbs 14:17 A quick-tempered man does foolish things, and a crafty man is hated.*

### Five Elements and Expressions of Anger (from Eph 4:31):

**BITTERNESS:** *Pikria*; polluted, contaminated, sour, smelly

When anger is left unresolved, it turns to bitterness, *completely* infecting our spirit and outlook on life. It ultimately hardens our heart.

**RAGE:** *Thumos*; wrathful outbursts, impassioned agitated *feelings*, anger in its first-stage

If left unchecked, our initial feeling of inner indignation, will produce an abiding and active anger.

**ANGER:** *Orge*; fierce passion

While *rage* is more indicative of an *inward* impassioned *response*, *anger* suggests an abiding condition of the mind, often with a view to vengeance.

**BRAWLING:** *Krauge*; noisy, like a raven's cry

Those ruled by their rage can be tempted to clamorous arguments and fights.

**SLANDER:** *Blasphemia*; to blaspheme, revile, rail

The natural fruit of bitterness is to verbally attack the object of our anger, either confrontationally or by gossip and slander.

### III. What is forgiveness?

of a

### IV. What results from remaining unforgiving?

We become

*Pikria*; polluted, contaminated, sour, smelly

*See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. Heb 12:15*

## Manifestations of unforgiveness:

- Constant irritability, always snaps, easily angered
- Nit-picking, critical, faultfinding
- Rudeness, constant sarcastic cuts and digs
- Over-willingness to tell others of the offense, rallying them to our side
- Dwelling on the offense, reliving the cause of "injury" -- rehearsing it in our mind over and over
- Impatience, intolerance
- Vengeful, wants to hurt back
- Competitive, wants to see them lose
- Rejoicing when the other is humbled
- Intentionally hurtful -- in words and actions
- Degrading and embarrassing them in front of others
- Harping on past failures
- Over-willingness to give "low blows," using past confessions of weakness as ammo against them
- Hateful, demeaning, scornful thoughts
- We want them out of our lives

## V. What is the most self-deceiving symptom of bitterness?

*Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God. 1 Cor 4:5*

1. Only **God** has the authority to \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ .
2. Only **God** has the ability to accurately \_\_\_\_\_ someone's \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGNS OF HEART JUDGMENT:

- Extreme mistrust; total refusal to believe good of them
- Hypercritical of all much of what they do
- As mistrust grows, their motives are frequently assumed to be evil; if something can be taken two ways, the worst is automatically assumed
- Perceive the offender as being *completely* and *thoroughly* evil
- In misunderstandings you respond with *immediate* frustration and judgment of their motives before the facts are fully sought or verified
- Self-deception

## VI. WHY IS FORGIVENESS SO DIFFICULT AND HOW CAN WE OVERCOME IT?

A. We \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ our resentment and call our bitterness \_\_\_\_\_

SOLUTION: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ it \_\_\_\_\_

*Proverbs 28:13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.  
James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.*

B. We \_\_\_\_\_ for our responses to them, making ourselves

SOLUTION: we must \_\_\_\_\_ our

1. We are responsible for how we \_\_\_\_\_ to others

*1 Corinthians 4:13 when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world.*

*1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,*

2. We are expected to \_\_\_\_\_ our

*Matthew 5:44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,*

*Luke 6:27-28 "But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.... 35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.*

*Romans 12:17-21 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. 20 On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

3. They are responsible for their \_\_\_\_\_ but not our

C. Unforgiveness makes us

SOLUTION: \_\_\_\_\_ yourself \_\_\_\_\_ to Jesus

*Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*

*Colossians 3:5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.*

*James 4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

D. We are filled with \_\_\_\_\_ and self

SOLUTION: Own your \_\_\_\_\_ remember

*Jam 4:6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."*

1. See yourself as GOD does -- a

*1 Tim 1:15-16 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst.16 But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.*

2. as God has

*Eph 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

*Colossians 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.*

a. Remember the great God you

*Romans 5:10 For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!*

*Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.*

*Job 25:4-6 How then can a man be righteous before God? How can one born of woman be pure? 5 If even the moon is not bright and the stars are not pure in his eyes, 6 how much less man, who is but a maggot-- a son of man, who is only a worm!"*

b. Allow that fresh dose of mercy to

*John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.*

*Luke 7:47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven--for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."*

*Luke 19:8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."*

3. Go to them and (Do not or them)

*Rom 12:18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*

*Mat 5:23 "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.*

*Prov 6:3 then do this, my son, to free yourself, since you have fallen into your neighbor's hands: Go and humble yourself; press your plea with your neighbor!*

4. Pursue for them. Be a -- not a

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

*1 Corinthians 13:5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.*

5. See

*Hebrews 12:1-3 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

E. We ignore God's

SOLUTION: Trust in Offenders

*Job 1:21-22 and said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised." 22 In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.*

*Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

# SESSION 8

## Plotting a Course

### GOALS WORKSHEET

The difference between **general goals** and **specific goals**:

General goals: Long range objectives based on personal values

Specific goals: Smaller, shorter range goals which help accomplish long range goals

#### **SAMPLE AREAS:**

##### GOALS FOR ONE'S FAMILY

Home projects

New residence

Spiritual development

Health

Finance

##### GOALS FOR ONESELF

Career

Marriage

Personal growth/Disciplines

Ministry

##### GOALS FOR ONE'S WIFE

Spiritual nurturing

Stress relief

Rest and leisure

Household order/help

##### GOALS FOR ONE'S CHILDREN

Education

Child Training

Character

Habits

Discipleship

Life skills

Future Roles

Marriage

Parenting

Courtship

## Sample Goal and Plan:

GOAL 1 *Get finances in order*

---

---

PLAN *No more checks – start cash-in-envelope system*

---

*Buy envelopes on way home today*

---

*At 11 AM create a budget to determine how much cash is needed each month*

---

*Cut up VISA*

---

*Starting this month deposit paycheck on payday, withdraw needed cash*

---

### Goal Planner Tips

Key element to goal setting:

Goals have action dates and completion deadlines

Do not try to implement all new ideas and changes immediately

Implement one new goal one per month

How to remember and stay consistent:

Put the planner where you will find it for easy referral:

In Bible as bookmark

Hang in desk area

On night stand

Purchase a Palm Pilot type device and set alarms for goal reminders

Transfer entire goal planner into palm device

Make yourself accountable to a brother

Elders

Undershepherds

Chosen friend

Accountability partner can keep in touch by means of

Weekly phone call, Weekly breakfast, Church, E-mail

Staying consistent

Schedule weekly planner meetings with wife

Establish regular routine

Establish consistent bedtimes for yourself and family

Identify habits or practices which rob you from the captain's chair,

ie: TV, sports, internet, etc.

# GOALS FOR THE YEAR

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 5 GOALS FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY THIS YEAR?  
WHAT PLANS DO YOU HAVE TO ACHIEVE THEM?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



WHAT GOALS DO YOU HAVE FOR **YOURSELF** THIS YEAR? WHAT PLANS DO YOU HAVE TO ACCOMPLISH THEM?

GOAL 1 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 2 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 3 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT GOALS DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUR **WIFE** THIS YEAR? WHAT WILL YOU DO TO HELP HER ACCOMPLISH THEM?

GOAL 1 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 2 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 3 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT GROWTH GOALS DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUR CHILDREN THIS YEAR?

#1 CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 2 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 3 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#2 CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 2 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 3 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#3 CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 2 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 3 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#4 CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 2 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GOAL 3 \_\_\_\_\_

PLAN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# RESTORING A BROKEN RELATIONSHIP

Here are some tips excerpted from my booklet Reconciling With Your Wife. The booklet was originally prepared for men who have been abandoned by their wives, but contains much practical help for all men. I have extracted a few sections which will help any man know how to repair a broken relationship with his wife.

Sadly, most husbands have few memories of “hurting” their wives. But let all such men consider – if a woman claims she cannot handle the emotional pain, isn’t it likely she is, in fact, in pain? (If emotional feelings could bleed, a man would see a trail of blood following his wife as walks away.) Here is problem – most women believe that they have communicated their hurt to their husbands, but most husbands only have memories of their wife’s bad attitudes. All those times a wife thought she was simply expressing the cry of an injured heart, her husband only perceived hostility, coldness, or hatred. She felt like she was begging for tenderness and sensitivity, and he backed away because he thought he was being attacked. My experience is that most women leave their husbands, *because they entered marriage with expectations of feeling treasured and cherished, and their husbands unwittingly have sent the message that they are not*. Hence, those women end up feeling defrauded, then bitter and hardened. (Many Christian wives will not believe it is bitterness they harbor – they think they merely hold feelings of "hurt." At issue here, however, is not the wife’s inability to see her bitterness, but the husband’s contribution to it.) Rather than concentrate on what his wife is doing wrong, it is better that an abandoned husband think about what he must do facilitate the softening of her heart and help her to forgive him.

## The Wrong Ways to Reconcile

### 1. Apologize in a self-centered way.

- ⇒ Do not offer explanations as to why you are so blind and why you hurt her. It will only sound to her like you are excusing what you have done.
- ⇒ No matter how excited you are, do not share with her new-found revelations you may have discovered about yourself, related to why you do what you do. It will only sound like an excuse.
- ⇒ Don’t try to make her understand you. She’s not interested in why you did what you did.
- ⇒ Do not tell her of your present emotional condition
- ⇒ She already believes you are self-absorbed. Do not talk about yourself and prove her right. (Besides, putting the focus back on yourself is really a sign that you are indeed self-absorbed.

### 2. Be certain she is aware of her contribution to the problem

- ⇒ Blame or discredit her in some fashion.
- ⇒ This will put her on the defensive, causing a negative reaction.
- ⇒ Apologize that you didn’t respond that well to her offenses

### 3. Communicate to her that you have not changed

- ⇒ Repeat familiar unfulfilled promises to change
- ⇒ Ask forgiveness again for the same old things will only remind her of unfulfilled expectations

### 4. Express anger or annoyance when you speak with her

- ⇒ Yes, she may be hurting you, so yes, it is natural to be angry, but she believes she is simply reacting to your offenses, so in her eyes, you are the last person qualified to point out her sin
- ⇒ She believes you owe her, so she will be even more offended when your anger suggests that she owes you
- ⇒ She will view your attitude as a further expression of the same thing that drove her away.
- ⇒ Your anger will express a lack of understanding concerning her and the pain you have caused her (The presence of anger reveals pride in you that has not been dealt with, and the fact that you have not accepted your part in the problem.)

5. Make a good speech or write a nice sounding letter without proper follow up.
  - ⇒ If you write a beautiful letter of repentance, but have no change in your heart, your wife may at first get her hopes up and begin to soften, but when she spots your inconsistency she will become even more angry and possibly harden her heart beyond your reach.
  - ⇒ If you make promises of change, you must be certain to follow through – perfectly!  
(If you write a good letter, but lack the love and humility of Christ in your heart, you will express annoyance at her rather than concern. And she will feel it.)

### **The Right Way to Reconcile**

1. Remember that you are trying to reach someone with a mistrusting and possibly hardened heart.
  - ⇒ Her condition was caused because she has felt unloved, un-cherished, not cared for, despised, neglected, unimportant, and pushed aside for your self-love and self-interest.
  - ⇒ Your goal must be to contribute to the softening of her heart, which will require you to regain her trust
2. Die to pride and self concerns.
  - ⇒ You have been proud and selfish now it's time to "take the beam from your own eye."
3. Understand her hurt condition.
  - ⇒ She doesn't want to be right – she wants you to understand the way she feels.
4. Own your failures.
  - ⇒ The things that you did to help cause her hurt condition.
5. Communicate to her that you empathize with her and do not blame her.
  - ⇒ Come alongside and comfort her. Look to one of her girlfriends as an example of understanding, ie: A girlfriend would likely look at her, feel her pain, and express compassionate understanding for what she is probably feeling.
  - ⇒ Feed back to her how she is probably feeling
  - ⇒ Let her know that you understand what it is like to walk in her shoes as one who feels hurt, ie: "Honey, you must feel conned. Before we were married I communicated to you that I would cherish you for the rest of our lives. But since the first week, I know I sent you the message that you weren't important to me. Whenever you wanted to do \_\_\_\_\_ together, I would never do it. Whenever you wanted to go with me to \_\_\_\_\_ I wouldn't go. By choosing my own comfort and convenience over yours I have left you feeling that you weren't important to me, and I was a fool to send you that message. You deserve more than that."
  - ⇒ Listen to her, don't just correct her
6. Have an insightful counselor show you how you contributed to her pain.
  - ⇒ The following section will be helpful.

### **How can a man determine what he has done to hurt his wife?**

Many abandoned men are in this predicament, because they have always discredited their wives' "complaints" as emotionally based and therefore, unfounded. It is a wise man, however, who recognizes that whether or not his wife bases her feelings on an accurate view of the facts, she still truly holds those feelings. To *her* they are valid. For example, she may not have actual grounds to fear for the family's financial future, but if she is afraid, then it is important to understand that those feelings of fear are real to her, and deserve compassion. Her feelings may be unfounded and not based on facts, but she feels them nonetheless.

Consider in Scripture, how Jesus responded to those who wept over the loss of Lazarus (John 11:33-35). Although he knew he was going to resurrect Lazarus from the dead, he empathized with their heartache. He didn't try to talk them into a more chipper attitude, by presenting them with the fact of Lazarus' forthcoming resurrection. He didn't remain perky, although he knew he had a great surprise in store for them. Verse 33 says that when Jesus saw them weeping, "...he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled," and verse 35 says, "Jesus wept." Although their grief was unfounded, he didn't invalidate their pain, he *felt* it with them.

It is a wise man who will learn to validate his wife's emotional condition. He can do so by communicating his understanding of the genuineness of her feelings of distress, fear, heartache, etc. It is a foolish man who tries to talk a woman out of her feelings – worse, who belittles her for them. If an abandoned man is to repent to his wife of what he did to cause her hurt, he must do some intense soul searching and investigation.

1. Determine what she would likely say the offending actions are, if asked by another.

Since your wife is the one who took offense at you, your ultimate goal is to see the situation through her eyes. You may view her perspective and subsequent accusations as groundless, but if you want to regain her trust, you will need to communicate to her that you understand what she has gone through.

2. Review her various accusations from over the years.

She has probably told you many times why there is a problem. Perhaps only a sentence, or it may have been greatly exaggerated, but the nugget is probably there to be drawn out.

3. Review your actions that seem to have caused her retreating reactions.

Selfishness, angry outbursts, periods of neglect, unfulfilled promises, quiet bitterness, or any other offensive actions need to be considered carefully.

4. If your wife refuses to tell you what you have done wrong, ask someone close to your wife what the things are that she has shared with them.

Discretion must be observed here. You are merely gathering information, so be certain you don't end up trying to win this person to your side. It's *reconciliation* you are seeking – not victory in a conflict.

5. Have a counselor help you dissect your life, opening each closet of your soul.

One or two visits won't accomplish the task. You must drop your guard and be willing to receive reproof, instruction and encouragement.

6. Commit daily times to prayer and the Word, allowing Jesus to reveal your blind spots.

An insightful counselor will be able to help you discover your blind spots, but only Jesus can bring you into full acceptance of your true spiritual position and help you to accept responsibility for the course you must take.

7. Set aside a time each week to increase your spiritual sensitivity through fasting and prayer. Remember, the best you can do for your wife and children is walk humbly with God.







## Other materials by Reb & Beverly Bradley

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### BOOKS AND BOOKLETS BY REB BRADLEY

**Child Training Tips** -- What I wish I knew when my children were young -- An absolutely invaluable tool for helping parents shape children's behavior and identify their own blind spots; book

**Solving the Crisis in Homeschooling:** Exposing seven major blind spots of conscientious parents that increase prodigal tendencies in children; booklet

**DATING: Is it worth the risk?** -- An examination of modern dating practices and their contributions to sexual promiscuity and divorce; booklet

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