

DR DIRK H

MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE

**A
PRACTICAL
GUIDE TO
BECOMING
A WORLD
CHANGER**

**BOOK - 11
LEVEL
LEADER**

ENGLISH

MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE

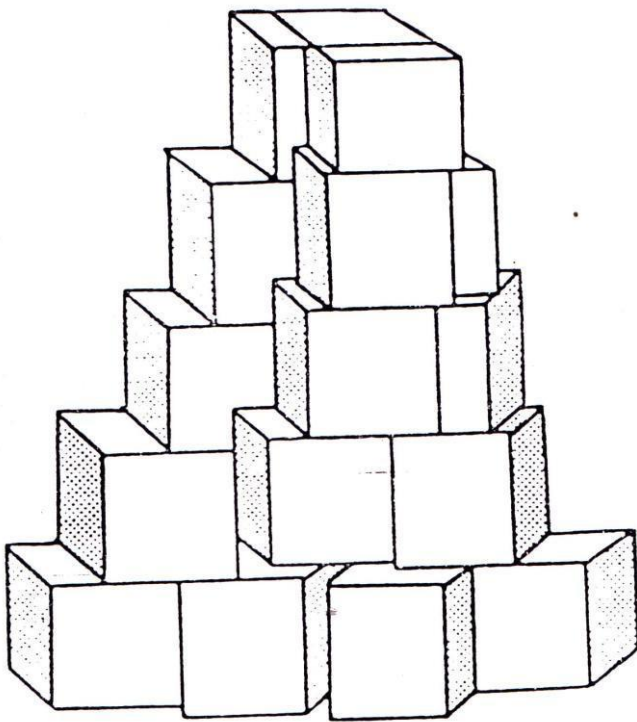
Level:

LEADER

Study book no: 11

LEVELS:

5. Minister
4. **Leader**
3. Group or cell leader
2. Disciple
1. Beginner



Bible Study Course to grow to spiritual maturity making every believer in Christ a minister and to increase in effective and efficient ministry!!!

Easy to use for self-study as well as to teach others!!!

MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE

PURPOSE:

TO KNOW HIM, THE ONLY TRUE GOD

(Growing / Maturing)

Josh. 1 : 8, "This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success."

II Pet. 3 : 18, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

II Tim. 1 : 15, "Study to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

Col. 1 : 27b - 28, "Christ in you, the hope of glory, Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ."

AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN TO OTHERS!

(Multiplying / Reproducing)

II Tim. 2 : 2, "And what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

II Tim. 3 : 16 - 17, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

Eph. 2 : 10, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

II Pet. 1 : 8, "For if these things are yours and abound, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

PRINCIPLE: "For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things!" (Rom. 11 : 36)

(INCREASING IN KNOWLEDGE; MATURING IN CHARACTER; USING SPIRITUAL GIFTS)

INDEX Study book no: 11

| | <u>PAGE NO.</u> |
|---|-----------------|
| - Keys to a successful Christian marriage | 1,546 |
| - Wise decisions of a husband and wife | 1,556 |
| - The perfect husband and wife | 1,558 |
| - How to be a blessing to your wife / Ways to honor your husband | 1,560 |
| - Guidelines for communication in marriage | 1,571 |
| - Avoiding "wedges" in relationships and marriage | 1,573 |
| - Is sex less spiritual? – A Biblical view | 1,576 |
| - Leading worship - musicians (their life and ministry) | 1,582 |
| - Leading in worship | 1,591 |
| - Welcoming a visitation of the Holy Spirit (Biblical basis) | 1,604 |
| - Breaking bad habits | 1,613 |
| - Overcoming problems in the believer's life (breaking strongholds) | 1,616 |
| - How to tear down strongholds | 1,623 |
| Counseling strategies and solutions for the following issues: ○ | |
| The home: issues between parents and teenagers | |
| ○ Counseling those with marriage problems | |
| ○ Counseling those for Holy Spirit baptism | |
| ○ Counseling those needing physical healing | |
| ○ Counseling those needing inner healing (dealing with rejection) | |
| ○ Releasing hurts through forgiveness | |
| ○ Dealing with homosexuality | |
| ○ Delivering from evil spirits and the occult | |
| ○ Counseling the demon possessed and demon oppressed | |
| ○ The ministry of deliverance | |
| ○ How to maintain deliverance | |
| ○ Ministering deliverance to children ○ | |
| Roots of rebellion / Pride? The occult | |
| ○ The counterfeit of the occult and its origin | |
| (spiritism, psychic phenomena, E.S.P., divination, magic, mysticism) | |
| ○ Deliverance from occult oppression | |
| ○ Counseling those in grief and bereavement | |
| - Can Christians eat food offered to idols? | 1,701 |
| - Glossary of Non-Christian words and concepts (e.g. guru, karma, mantra, etc.) | 1,702 |

KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

IT ALL BEGAN WITH GOD

Marriage was made in heaven. It all began in Paradise. God saw that man's aloneness was not good, so He made him a "helper comparable to him." And when God brought the woman to him, the first marital relationship began. Adam and Eve shared the wonderful garden paradise God had created for them as husband and wife. Here is how the Bible says it is began:

"And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."...And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man." (Genesis 2:18, 21- 22). Eve was made to be Adam's "helper comparable." As his helper, she was given to him to help him find fulfillment. The English word helper does not express all this poured into the Hebrew term. It refers to someone who helps another find fulfillment. In one instance, it was used to the rescue of another. In that first marital relationship, then, the woman was brought to man to fulfill him, in a sense to rescue him from his aloneness.

As a comparable helper, Eve was Adam's qualified, corresponding partner. God made her to be a suitable companion to the man He had made. She was the "missing piece in the puzzle of his life." That's how God began it all in Eden. And to have a marriage that works, we need to go back to His principles – those building blocks for marriage that are found in God's Word.

The Genesis account of the beginning of marriage concludes with a statement that expresses four elements that should be part of every marriage (see Genesis 2:24-25). They are as follows:

- **A Cutting Off.** "There fore a man shall leave his father and mother." The marital partners leave their parents.
- **A Bonding.** "And be joined to his wife." The picture of the first marriage includes the idea of a gluing, a permanent bonding.
- **A unity.** "And they shall become one flesh." The two are to see themselves as one. The old family units are broken and a new one begins.
- **An Intimacy.** "And they were both naked.....and they were not ashamed." Their absence of self-consciousness enabled them to enjoy one another and to meet each other's needs without any sense of embarrassment or rejection.

Ten Biblical Building Blocks

When God made marriage, gave the command to replenish the earth, and insisted that marriage be a lifelong relationship, He did not leave us on our own to make it work somehow. He told us in the Bible how to make our marriages work. In this study we will look at 10 Biblical building blocks for a successful marriage. These are the following:

- Lifelong Commitment
- Shared Identity
- Absolute Faithfulness
- Well-defined Roles
- Unreserved Love
- Mutual Submission
- Sexual Fulfillment
- Open Communication
- Tender Respect
- Spiritual Companionship

As we think through these 10 building blocks, remember that they are not man-made. They are given to us by God Himself. Because they are you can know with certainty that when you and your mate follow them, you will have a marriage that works!

But perhaps that's impossible for you because your martial partner is unsaved or refuses to accept the authority of the Bible. Yet, if your partner is willing to remain with you, this is your opportunity to show your mate the kind of husband or wife God can help you to be. (1 Corinthians 7:12-16). So follow this study and put it into practice by the help and power of the Holy Spirit!

BUILDING BLOCK 1: Lifelong Commitment

The first Biblical building block for a marriage that works is for the man and woman to make a lifelong commitment. When a man and woman decide to marry, they are at the same time committing themselves to remain married until one of them dies. The Lord Jesus said: "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?" So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." (Matthew 19:4-6).

Then, in response to a question about divorce, Jesus continued: "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery." (vv. 8-9). The marriage vow, therefore, is the expression of a lifelong commitment. The meaning of the vow "from this day forward" extends throughout one's lifetime. It's a vow that is not to be broken (see Eccl. 5:4).

Consider the following true story: A man and woman had been married only a year when she was diagnosed as a victim of multiple sclerosis.(an extremely serious physical disease). After thinking seriously about it, she told her husband she was "setting him free." But he did not leave her. The tender care and love he showered on her made her remaining years happy and special. Why did he do it? "Because," he said, "when I vowed before God for better or for worse, and in sickness an in health," I meant it. And God made both of us unbelievably happy as a result."

BUILDING BLOCK 2: Shared Identity

A second building block in a marriage that works is for husband and wife to see themselves as one. No longer is it a man living his life for himself and a woman living hers for herself. There is now a new union, a new family, a new unit. Adam expressed this shared identity when God brought him the woman. He said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." (Genesis 2:23). The next verse concludes with the words "they shall become one flesh" (v.24).

But it is not always easy to live out that oneness in everyday life. This is because the husband and wife have different habits, different backgrounds, different parents, different education, different personalities, and different emotional scars. Besides, Eve was not a clone of Adam. She was unique as every human being is unique. She did not come off some assembly line. She was different, both physically and emotionally. She had different needs - needs Adam alone could satisfy. And she alone could satisfy Adam's needs.

In marriage, a man and woman are brought into union. They become one, blending into one another's lives. It's once-for-all, yet it's a process. Time, love, patience, and forgiveness are needed to bring the shared identity of marriage into maturity. And it has wonderful results. The man and woman are not longer alone. They are one, even at a time when:

He is in a lodge or hotel a thousand miles away.

She is in the pains of childbirth.

He has just lost his job.

She has discovered a mysterious lump.

He has received a good promotion.

She has been offered a new job.

The two are one. Although they are distinct persons with vast differences, they have agreed to walk the path of life as one. They have a shared identity.

BUILDING BLOCK 3: Absolute Faithfulness

Not only is marriage a life-long commitment of two people who have a shared identity, it also calls for total fidelity on the part of the husband and the wife. They are to be true to one another. The Bible gives no ground on this issue. The man is to be faithful to his wife; she to him. The writer of Proverbs cautioned: “Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared? So is he who goes in to his neighbor’s wife; whoever touches her shall not be innocent.” (Prov. 6:27-29).

The Bible is uncompromising in its demand for sexual fidelity. Paul told Titus to have the older women instruct the younger women in the church “to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste.....” (Titus 2:4-5). As a woman enters a marriage relationship, she is to be committed to giving herself only to her husband. Adultery is strictly forbidden in the Bible. The sixth commandment given on Sinai was, “You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14). Jesus mentioned this commandment in His conversation with the rich young ruler (Matthew 19:18). And Paul named adultery first in his list of the sins of the flesh (Galatians 5:19).

Marital faithfulness is the fulfillment of the vow made before God and men during the wedding ceremony: “And to you I pledge my faithfulness.” One writer said: “This is how we must love one another, with a vowed love that is not dependent on happiness nor any of the eternal hallmarks of success. Where is such love to begin if it does not begin with the one closest to us, the life’s partner whom we have chosen out of all the other people in the world as the apple of our eye? Here are some implications of absolute faithfulness – the third building block of marriage:

We will concentrate our love on our mate.

We will not be disloyal in little matters.

We will not be involved in flirtations nor ever entertain the idea of starting an affair.

We will flee from temptation.

We will control our fantasies.

By today’s ungodly and worldly standards, absolute faithfulness “isn’t natural.” Of course not – not in a fallen world. But for our first parents in Paradise, it was as natural as could be. And today it will be part of every marriage that works.

BUILDING BLOCK 4: Well-Defined Roles

Today’s society has made an all-out assault on marriage. And one of its attacks is on the traditional roles within the family. The wife is being told that since she has the same rights as her husband, she does not have to submit to anybody. Pressure is being put on the husband to take care of himself and not to worry about her. As a result, husbands and wives need direction. They need answers to basic questions about their specific roles. Those answers are given in the Bible. And when they are put into practice, marriage will work.

The Husband’s Role.

The Bible says that the husband is the head of the wife, Paul wrote: “But I want you to know that the head of every woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.” (1 Corinthians 11:3). “For the husband is head of the wife.”(Ephesians 5:23).

What does this mean? It means that the husband is to provide responsible leadership without being dictatorial or blindly self-serving. Biblically, his leadership is:

To be provided in love (Ephesians 5:25; Colossians 3:19).

To follow the example of Christ’s love for the church – self-sacrificing and serving (Ephesians 5:25).

To be done with understanding (1 Peter 3:7).

To be done without bitterness (Colossians 3:19).

To equal his love for his own body (Ephesians 5:28).

Now, the fact that the husband has been appointed head of the wife does not mean that he is superior. The same verse that says the man is head of the woman also says that God is the head of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3). And we know They are equal in nature. Both are fully God. The husband's headship is functional. It helps the marriage work. It breaks the "tie votes." It also carries with it great responsibility. The husband is to provide loving, understanding, God-honoring leadership.

The Wife's Role.

The woman is instructed in the Bible to submit to the leadership of her husband. For example: "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord." (Ephesians 5:22; cp. Colossians 3:18). "Likewise you wives, be submissive to your own husbands." (1 Peter 3:1) ".....admonish the young women and to be obedient to their own husbands." (Titus 2:4- 5).

God made man and woman to come together in a fulfilling, satisfying relationship. He made Adam first (1 Timothy 2:13), and He made him to be head (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23). Adam was fulfilled in leading; Eve was to be fulfilled in accepting him as her leader (Genesis 2:18; 1 Corinthians 11:8-9).

A woman who insists on being the decision-maker in the home is placing herself in a position of disobedience. Her determination to have her own way – despite the clear command of God and pattern of Scripture – is a shame to her and a threat to the success of her marriage. The marriage works best when both husband and wife accept their roles. It's a functional necessity- a necessity exemplified within the Godhead itself. Consider these words of Christ: "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). Yet He also said, "I and My Father are one"(John 10:30). Jesus came to earth to carry out in exact detail the will and plan of the Father. Although He was equal to the Father, He submitted Himself to the Father's leading. It is similar in marriage. The husband will find fulfillment in headship, the wife will find joy in submission, and the marriage will be blessed of God. This is the way He designed it.

BUILDING BLOCK 5: Unreserved Love

The fifth building block for a marriage that works is love – genuine, heartfelt, through-thick-and-thin, till-death-us-do-part love. A husband and wife are to love one another with the kind of unreserved love that leads them to honor one another, to esteem one another, to consider one another's welfare above their own, and to stay by one another's side through the highs and lows and the ups and downs that come in every married life.

The husband is told specifically in the Bible to love his wife. Paul said it succinctly in Colossians 3:19, "Husband, love your wives....."(see also Ephesians 5:25).

The wife also is expected to love her husband. You will remember, for example, that the older women of Crete were told to instruct the younger women to "love their husbands" (Titus 2:4).

The love between a husband and wife that grows through the years of marriage does not happen automatically with the saying of the vows or the giving of a ring. It must be worked at! True, many wonderful and deep feelings are experienced by a couple who engage, and marry. As time goes on, however, they learn that love has a deeper and more practical dimension than the romantic aspect or feelings they may have experienced at first. They discover that they have to work at loving each other the way Jesus taught us by self-sacrifice and to bless and help the other.

The Biblical pattern for Christian love is spelled out in I Corinthians 13. Although the love defined and explained in these familiar verses is true of all relationships, it may be especially applied to marriage. Think about the practical ways the elements of love seen in verses 4 - 8 apply to a husband-wife relationship:

Love is patient, forgiving his absentmindedness over and over again.

Love is kind and washes the dishes without grumbling when she's had a hard day.

Love does not envy his important position at work or the praise she gets for her kindness.

Love does not boast about getting the biggest paycheck or the lowest cricket score.

Love is not proud but admits that she may be right about what's wrong with the car.

Love is not rude, for it speaks to him respectfully in private as well as in public.

Love is not self-seeking, but it gladly takes her shopping on a free morning.
 Love is not easily angered and doesn't even raise its voice when he does.
 Love keeps no record of wrongs but forgives immediately and doesn't mention it again.
 Love does not delight in evil and does not pressure the partner into wrong behavior.
 Love rejoices with the truth by facing reality and changing accordingly.
 Love always protects, keeping her secure.
 Love always trusts, giving him the benefit of the doubt and avoiding suspicion.
 Love always hopes, holding to the shared dreams when his job is phased out.
 Love always perseveres, growing even stronger in adversity and stress.
 Love never fails, though youth, health, and vigor fade away.

Believer husband or wife, this ought to describe your love for your spouse. Love should express itself in patience, kindness, trust, and hope in your everyday life. It shouldn't have to wait for a crisis to be expressed. The principles of Christian love should be experienced most deeply, most genuinely, and most often by the man or woman you have chosen as your marital partner. "But wait a minute," you say, "I'm doing my part, but my partner is not doing his. Do you expect me to keep loving him when he doesn't love me in return?" It's hard to love when all the love seems to be flowing one way. It's hard when you're the only one doing the giving, the sacrificing, the holding on. It's hard when your partner's ego or pride or selfishness keeps your love from being returned. You've tried talking about it but nothing happens. You're ready to throw in the towel. If you're thinking like that, it might help you to think about the Lord Jesus. If anyone ever had a reason to stop loving, He did. But He loved us without reservation, even to the point of dying on the cross in our behalf. That is the kind of love we are to have for one another.

BUILDING BLOCK 6: Mutual Submission

Some Bible interpreters have made much of the fact that wives are told in the Bible to submit to their husbands. In stressing the woman's responsibility, however, they fail to see that the passage in Ephesians 5 is prefaced by the following importance words: "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit....submitting to one another in the fear of God (Ephesians 5:18, 21). These verses were written to the entire Christian community. The apostle then applied the principle of mutual submission to many different relationships, the first of which was marriage. When a man and woman take their wedding vows, they enter a love relationship, a covenant that calls for a lifetime of submission to one another.

Submission and love go together. We know that God is love, but how do we know He loves us? Because with great humility and submission, Christ went to the cross (Philippians 2:5-8).

In a Christian marriage, husband and wife, because they love God, are submitted to what the will of God is for them. They are in a process of letting go of themselves and submitting to God and to each other. Having the "mind of Christ" produces mutual submission. Some aspects may be expressed as follows:

- Marriage is give and take –not just take.
- Marriage is a struggle of wills.
- Marriage is overcoming self.
- Marriage is being a servant.
- Marriage is giving up and giving in.
- Marriage is doing dishes when she's too tired.
- Marriage is laundering his favorite shirts.

But ultimately **Marriage is helping the other to reach and accomplish his or her God-given destiny! It is pouring in all the time: love, encouragement, help, support, care, etc.**

So, what does this mean? It means that a woman has no right to see the normal household duties as beneath her. She is not to view herself as the family maid just because these duties are hers. But it also means that the husband is not to view his house as his castle, and all of its inhabitants, including his wife, as his subjects. Rather, having the mind of Christ, he is to see it as the place

where he has the best opportunity of all to humble himself – to be a servant. After all, in every life situation – including the home – that’s the kind of people believers are to be! Mutual submission is an important building block that will make a marriage work!

BUILDING BLOCK 7: Sexual Fulfillment

In the garden paradise where it all began, Adam and Eve shared a wonderful intimacy; “And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.” (Genesis 2:25). Furthermore, the command to replenish the earth came before the fall. Intimacy and mutual physical fulfillment, therefore, have always been part of the husband-wife relationship. The husband and wife are to find sexual fulfillment in each other. The love and care a husband and wife share find its overflow in physical intimacy. The Bible gives the following perspectives.

It is protective. The husband and wife are to reserve this special intimacy for each other, and they are to give it freely. Paul wrote, “Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband” (1 Corinthians 7:2). We are living in a sexually promiscuous age. There are few restraints. Advertisements are lurid. Television scenes are provocative. There’s an emphasis on the body. Men and women are more aggressive than ever. A husband and wife who maintain intimacy protect each other from a sexually obsessed society. They protect their own faithfulness.

It is enjoyable. After delivering a stern warning about prostitution, the wise author of Proverbs wrote these words to young husbands: “Drink water from your own cistern, and running water from your own well. Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets? Let them be only your own, and not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth. As a loving deer and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and always be enraptured with her love.” (Proverbs 5:15-19).

The sexual aspect of marriage is not a necessary evil to be endured for the purpose of procreation, it was designed by God to bring continuing pleasure – an intimate, exhilarating, renewing part of the husband-wife relationship.

It is expected. When a man and woman come together in marriage, each has a right to expect sexual fulfillment from the other. Paul wrote: “Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.” (1 Corinthians 7: 3-4). Paul went on to say that if one marital partner decides to abstain, it is first to be agreed upon with the other. Furthermore, the time of abstinence is to be brief. “Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.” (1 Corinthians 7:5).

Sexual fulfillment is an important part of marriage. Sexuality is not evil, but within marriage it is something beautiful, something God gave as a blessing to be experienced between a husband and his wife. This was not the sin in Eden that brought the fall. It must not be made more important than it is; nor should it be minimized. It is part of the overall picture – an intimate part of the shared identity of the husband and wife.

BUILDING BLOCK 8: Open Communication

In surveys conducted it was discovered that a vast majority of husbands and wives interviewed said the main problem in their marriages was communication. The percentage would probably be the same in believers marriages. The wife is frustrated because she can’t get her husband to talk. The husband doesn’t feel it does any good because his wife has already made up her mind anyway.

Here are some of the reasons husbands and wives do not communicate effectively.

They take each other for granted.

They want to avoid a confrontation.

They are obsessed with their own interests.

They feel that they are being manipulated.

They are too hurried to take the time.

They don't want to hurt the other person.

For a marriage to work however, the barriers to communication must be broken down. And one way to accomplish that is to follow the example of Christ. You will remember that husbands were instructed to love their wives as Christ loved the church. Two aspects of the Savior's relationship to the church could be applied to marriage.

Christ the Communicator. He is the living Word of God (John 1:1-4). He came to make God known by word and by example. He revealed the will and character of God to man. Christ is also involved in a continuing process of communicating with the church. He is seated in heaven, inviting us to "come boldly to the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16) to tell God what is on our hearts and to let Him know our needs.

How can Christ's example of communication with His church apply to a marriage?

Husbands need to talk to their wives.

Wives need to talk to their husbands.

Both should feel free to respond honestly.

Every problem should be talked through.

Opportunities for talking should be valued.

Without open communication, It will be hard for a marriage to work.

Christ the Head. Colossians 1:18 says that Christ is "the head of the body, the church." A head must be in touch with all parts of the body for it to function smoothly. Through the nerves system, it sends and receives information. It tells the finger when to move; it is told when the finger feels pain. If communication is missing, the body cannot function as one.

The same is true of a marriage. The man, as head of the home, must communicate with his wife. And she in turn must be free to communicate with him. Unless there is two-way communications, as between Christ and His own, the marriage will experience difficulty.

An outstanding counselor made this observation about marital communication: "No doubt they (a husband and wife) do talk about everything, but it is all objective, all about facts and ideas, which is what a man is interested in. For a woman, real dialogue means talking about her feelings – her own feelings. But even more importantly, about her husband's feelings, which she wants to understand, but which he does not know how to explain."

What can you do if you feel your mate or spouse is not listening? Here are four suggestions:

Tell of your need to communicate.

Don't rehash old conversations.

Start on the fact level.

Move on to the feelings and conviction levels.

It's hard to converse honestly on all levels, but it's worth the pain and effort. Open communication is an essential building block of marriage!

BUILDING BLOCK 9: Tender Respect

Sometimes marital partners can behave different depending on the situation. In public they are considerate, forgiving, patient, and sweet-tempered. But once they are behind the closed doors of their own home, they turn ill-tempered, surly, and unforgiving. Their mates only wish they could be treated the way their partner treats others.

In Ephesians 4:31,32 the apostle Paul wrote: "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And you be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you." This passage certainly applies to husbands and wives in a marriage relationship.

Speaking to wives, Paul said ".....let the wife see that she respects her husband" (Ephesians 5:33). Peter told wives to be submissive to their husbands and even to pattern their behavior after Sarah, who "obeyed Abraham, calling him lord" (1 Peter 3:1,5-6), a picture of her respect for him.

Peter then spoke to husbands in verse 7 and advocated that they respect their wives as well. He gave three instructions:

“Dwell with (your wife) with understanding.” He was saying. “Know your wife well so that you can respect her feelings.” A husband should make this his goal. He should know what pleases and comforts her, and also what hurts and angers her. This special understanding can then be used in building her up rather than tearing her down.

”Giving honor....as to the weaker vessel.” If a man is going to move five containers and he knows one of them is more fragile than the others, he will handle that one more carefully. This is how a husband should treat his wife. He should give her special honor and respect. Husband, buy your wife gifts, send her flowers, remember her birthday, take her special places.

”And as being heirs together of the grace of life.” The gifts of life are not only the husband’s to enjoy. They are given by God equally to both, and they should be shared together. A man must respect his wife, and not rob the joy of life God created her to have.

BUILDING BLOCK 10: Spiritual Companionship.

Finally, and perhaps most important a Christian husband and wife should see themselves as spiritual companions. They are making a spiritual journey through life together, walking hand in hand as children of God toward the wonderful eternity with God that awaits them. What a difference it makes when a marriage has a godly husband and a dedicated wife! No one can measure how much they help each other spiritually as they travel life’s road together.

The spiritual dimension was included in the passages about marriage we’ve been discussing. Speaking to husbands about their wives, Paul said: “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies.” (Ephesians 5:25-28).

There is to be a purifying, cleansing dimension to the marriage. Just as the church is made pure because of Jesus Christ, so the wife should be made better by her relationship to her husband. And how is that accomplished? The same way Christ helped the church: He loved her and gave Himself for her. Love and sacrifice – these set a marriage apart and make possible a true spiritual companionship.

Peter also mentioned the spiritual dimension in his passage on marriage. He closed it by saying “...that prayers may not be hindered” (1 Peter 3:7). As the husband understands his wife, giving her honor and seeing her as a joint heir of the grace of life, he will be able to pray with power. If he does not, Peter says, his prayers will be “hindered.” He will lose the easy freedom of unhindered prayer.

Here are some qualities that are present in a marriage where husband and wife are spiritual companions and believers:

- They worship God together.
- They seek God’s will together.
- They serve Christ together.
- They raise their children together.
- They pray for one another.
- They strengthen one another’s faith.
- They accept the authority of God’s Word.

As a husband and wife draw closer to the Lord through prayer, Bible reading, fellowship, and submission to Christ, they will also draw closer to one another. This relationship may be diagrammed as a triangle. The more the husband and wife grow in their relationship with God, the tighter their marriage bond will become. And additional bonding force is found in doing the Lord’s will for their lives together, having a strong sense of common purpose and destiny.

Five Facts About Marriage

Pastors and marriage counselors repeatedly hear husbands and wives make statements that are not true. Here are five facts about marriage that are often disputed by marital partners under stress.

You aren't married to the wrong person.

Some times it does not take very long before the wife begins to wonder if she married the right man, or the husband begins to think he made a mistake. This often happens in that period of adjustment, while idealistic expectations for marriage are being brought into line with reality.

- You find out she hates to cook.
- You find out he can't take care of even the smallest practical house work.
- You have different views about finances.
- You each learn that the other can be stubborn, easily hurt, depressed, or angry.

So you begin to tell yourself that you married the wrong person. But that's no longer an issue. You made a lifelong commitment. Now your responsibility before God, except in cases of infidelity, is to stay with the one you have married (Matthew 19:4-9; I Corinthians 7:10-14).

His failure to lead isn't your excuse.

"Well, " the young woman said emphatically, "If he would only lead the way he's supposed to, we could work things out. But he won't, so I have to make the decisions. Then he criticizes them. I can't stand it any longer."

She's right about one thing. Her husband should assume the role of head of the house. He should be taking the lead, especially in spiritual matters.

Even so, his failure to lead is no excuse for her disobedience. Her responsibility before the Lord still calls for her to be a loving, spiritual woman of growing inner beauty (1 Peter 3:1-6). If she uses what she sees as his failure to lead as an excuse for her own poor behavior, she is failing every bit as much as he is.

Her failure to submit isn't your excuse.

Some husbands have a built-in excuse for every shortcoming or failure- they blame their wives.

She's always so pious. She corrects me every time I try to lead family devotions. It's her fault we don't have them anymore."

"She had to have this house. I went ahead with it because I knew it would please her. It's her fault we're having financial trouble."

When a man starts talking like this, he's refusing to accept his own responsibility in the family decision-making process. True, she did provide input. Perhaps she was insistent. But that's not his excuse. He has to stop blaming her and begin to do what's right before God; owing up to be responsible and wise.

Sex isn't all he thinks about.

Sometimes a hard-working, busy wife begins to think that all her husband is interested in is having his sexual needs met. This feeling may become especially pronounced if any of the following circumstances are true:

- He's a workaholic.
- She has big house to keep clean. ○
- He seldom helps with the children. ○
- Their schedule is full.

Now, it's true that he may need a sharp reminder that you have other needs than just physical ones. But it's also true that you may be giving in to self-pity and an exaggeration of the problem. You both need to do some adjusting. Try giving him the benefit of the doubt. Talk to him about your feelings. Plan a weekend away or a mini-vacation together. And don't delay. The problem needs to be confronted before it gets any larger.

Appearance isn't all she thinks about.

A fifth fact about marriage is that women do think about more than appearance. But some husbands don't believe it. They argue:

“She always wants to buy something new for the house.
 “It takes her too long to pick out a dress or clothes for herself.”
 “She insists that the kitchen cupboards need restaining. They look fine to me!”
 “It takes her forever to get ready to go anywhere. And then we’re always late!”
 “She loves to shop and spend my hard-earned money on little useless decorations.”
 It is true that women do have pride in appearance. They often are more concerned with what others think about them than men are. And Peter did speak bluntly to women about the danger of putting too much emphasis on looking good on the outside when they should be paying attention to the “hidden person of the heart.” (1 Peter 3:4).
 But let’s face it, men. We do need our wives to help us. Some of us are slobs. If we’re honest, we’ll admit we’re glad for their attention to detail.

Checklist for Husbands

Husbands, now that you have read what the Bible teaches about your role and responsibilities in marriage, take a few moments to evaluate yourself. Rate yourself by circling the appropriate number: 5-excellent; 4-very good; 3-good; 2-poor; 1-falling.

- 1 2 3 4 5 I see myself as having left father and mother and as bonded to my wife.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I see my wife as one with me in every phase of my life.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I do my best to be faithful to her in thought as well as in deed.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I provide my wife the kind of loving leadership Christ gives the church.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I often sacrifice my interests for my wife’s well-being.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I often tell her that I love her and do little things to show it.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I am concerned about her feelings, and I listen when she talks about them.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I try to say something nice to my wife every day and don’t go to sleep angry.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I do not use my wife’s shortcomings as excuses for my own failures.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I talk about spiritual matters with her, and I often pray for her and with her.

Now have your wife evaluate you. Be open to areas that need improvement.

Checklist for Wives

Wives, now that you have read what the Bible teaches about your role and responsibilities in marriage, you might want to stop and evaluate how you are doing. Rate yourself by circling the appropriate number: 5-excellent; 4-very good; 3-good; 2-poor; 1-failing.

- 1 2 3 4 5 I do not let myself think that I have married the wrong person.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I have left my father and mother and share identity with my husband.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I am committed to making our marriage last until one of us dies.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I do not use sexual fulfillment as a weapon to get my own way.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I am willing to submit to my husband’s headship as ordained by God.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I feel that inner beauty is more important than physical attractiveness.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I show respect for my husband in my attitudes and my actions.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I do little things for him that I know will please him.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I don’t use my husband’s shortcomings as an excuse for my failures.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I see myself as my husband’s spiritual companion, and I pray for him and with him.

Now ask your husband to rate you in these areas and compare notes. Be honest, and be open.

DECISIONS OF A CHRISTIAN HUSBAND AND WIFE

We decide to LOVE each other.

We shall not allow anything to quench our love. We will revive the love when seemingly quenched. We decide to call each other by an endearing name and start it boldly without feeling shy. Everyday we will do something to express our love by our words and actions. We will remember each other's Birthdays and our Wedding Anniversary and celebrate them. We will smile a lot each other (Rom. 13:8-10; 1 Thes. 3:12; 4:9; 1 Pet. 1:22).

We decide to APPRECIATE each other.

We shall not focus on the negative but rather appreciate the positive aspects of the matter. We will not for ego sake hold in a word of congratulation. We will cooperate in developing a gift or talent manifested by the other, though seemingly insignificant. We will not be jealous when one is praised by others, rather rejoice (Gal. 5:26; Phil. 2:3-4).

We decide to FORGIVE each other.

We shall bury the past. We will not make reference to past sins, mistakes or humiliating incidents, no not even a hint. We will not allow the devil to fill us with an inferiority complex because of the past but help one another to come out of it. Everyday before bedtime we will settle any misunderstandings and then pray together (Eph. 4:2, 32; Col. 3:13; Jas. 5:16).

We decide to RESPECT each other.

We shall not snub one another or joke at the cost of the other. We will not throw off the other's suggestion without pondering over it. We will not make rude comments and criticisms on the other's figure, dress, manners, habits, family, etc. But any correction will be made gently with love in private. We will not beat, raise our hands or voice, or throw things during arguments. We will discuss, not fight over disputes. We will not talk ill of the other to the children (Eph. 5:33; 1 Pet. 3:7-8; Rom. 12:10).

We decide to SATISFY each other.

We shall keep the other as the center of our attention. "I" will not be the focus. In matters pertaining to food, outing, clothes, hobby, sex, etc. we will see that the other is satisfied. We will often ask, "What do you want?" or "What do you like?" or "Which one do you prefer?" or "What is your opinion?", before taking decisions. We decide not cross the Scriptural boundary in satisfying the other. We will not drive the other crazy by over-expectation for satisfaction (1 Cor. 10:24; 1 Cor. 7:3-5, 33- 34b).

We decide to UNDERSTAND each other

We shall try our best to know and understand each other's longing, feeling, hurts, dreams, sorrows and joys. We will try to understand each other's physical, social, spiritual and emotional needs. We will not pry into the other's thought-life, nor blame one's thoughts, knowing we are not mind-readers. We will not swallow our hurts, making it difficult for the other to understand us but learn to express it without anger (1 Sam. 1:8; Rom. 14:2-3; Gal. 6:2; 1 Thes. 4:18).

We decide to TOUCH each other.

We shall not be embarrassed to touch one another. We shall put out the idea that to touch is only for sex. We will touch while talking, laughing and enjoying some fun together. We will be together in social functions. We will hold hands and pray before retiring to bed. We will hold hands before we fall asleep. We will not sleep separately (SoS. 8:3; 1:16b; Rom. 16:16).

We decide to CONVERSE with each other.

We shall make time daily to have unhurried conversation. We will share all the day's happenings. We will not be discouraged by heated conversations, believing that we improve every day. We will learn to avoid words and subjects that hurt the other and try our best to be a pleasant talking companion. We will never say, "I made a mistake in marrying you", nor talk of divorce (SoS. 2:14; 4:11; Col. 3:9).

We decide to LISTEN to each other.

We shall give undivided attention when one is talking. We will look into the eyes while the other is talking, unless impossible. We will respond appropriately. We will not cut or tell the other to shut up. We will not discourage the talker by yawning or changing the topic or walking away, but show interest. Silence will not be our answer. (Eph. 5: 21).

We decide to HELP each other.

We shall not let the other slog. When one is overburdened the other will give a helping hand. We will give due care and attention when one is sick. We will not show signs of irritation when the partner needs help. We will stand together when one faces a crisis. We will help each other spiritually by reading the Bible and praying together. We will share our spiritual knowledge and experience. We will fast a meal and pray for an hour for the family at least once a week. We will lift up the other when one falls, instead of heaping words of condemnation (Rom. 14:19; 15:14; 1 Cor. 11:33; Col. 3:16).

THE PERFECT COUPLE:

THE “PERFECT” HUSBAND

He makes lot of money and never becomes a workaholic.

He fixes everything around the house and never makes a mess of the job.

He remembers their anniversary, her birthday, children’s birthdays, in-laws’ birthdays, engagement day....and every other day.

He sends flowers, cards, notes, little gifts, and arranges surprise romantic get-away-alone weekends, and blesses her with special presents for the anniversary.

He boasts about her cooking and is always ready to take her out for dinner.

He is a creative lover – sensitive, romantic, warm but never pushy or demanding – he’s always tuned into her intimate feelings and never thinks about his own desires.

He is capable, competent, responsible, often elevated to position of leadership and honour, and never works more than 40 hours per week.

He goes to all the children’s sports games, plays, lessons, programmes, and still spends hours sharing his deepest feelings with her.

He has a great sense of humour, is fun to be around and always knows just when to switch to an in-depth conversation.

He’s strong, courageous, tough when needed and never gets angry.

He’s kind, tender, gentle, open, honest, vulnerable and never withdraws or gets his feelings hurt.

He always cherishes her, showering her with affection and love in all the special ways she dreams about, and never, never disappoints her.

THE “PERFECT” WIFE

She’s a great cook, serving delicious desserts too, and can still fit into her wedding dress.

She’s active at Church....and has unlimited time for her husband and children.

She cares for everyone who is sick in the family and never gets sick herself.

She has a great sense of humour and never has any bad moods.

She admires and praises her husband and never nags him about his faults.

She comes home from work, straightens the house, solves the children’s problems, cooks dinner, gets the homework going, cleans up after dinner, starts the laundry, gets the children back to their homework, runs to the store, irons, gets the children to bed, talks with her

husband, folds and puts away the laundry, tidies up the house and still brims with so much energy that she slips into some fine nightie to entice her husband to bed for a passionate night.

She spends an hour each day in prayer and Bible study, yet never appears more knowledgeable than her husband.

She runs an on-time taxi service for sports practice, music lessons, ball games, school plays and church programmes, and always joins her husband in his many recreational activities.

She plans great birthday parties for children, parents and the relatives, special social event, fun weekend getaways, surprises for close friends, wonderful vacations – and never exceeds the family budget.

She is always improving herself, continuing in education, growing in Bible study, learning computer skills, developing her talents, advancing in her career and always has time to put her husband and children first in everything.

She tithes, pays all the bills on time, buys food, clothes, furniture, appliances, cars, a dozen insurance policies and still puts away money in the bank, with cash left in her purse to eat out on demand.

She grooms neatly, dresses attractively, smiles genuinely, exercises regularly, eats modestly and weights in ideally.

Conclusion: The point here is that no wife or husband is perfect – absolutely none. Perfection is an impossible goal that most often leads to depression. Forget perfection, but pursue progress. The only successful method for creating an ideal spouse is to become one yourself!

KNOW YOUR WIFE!

Here are some hints to help you take a new look at your wife:

You are Number One in her life.

Next to God, she thinks you are everything to her. As against the average Asian male, the average Asian woman sacrifices her parents to take shelter under her husband's shadow. She may not express it in her day-to-day life, but when you are harsh, she feels thrown out into the cold. Her thoughts race back to the security of her childhood home. She starts worrying about her future. Don't make her homesick for heaven. She can stand any storm in life if only the husband's arms are always around her. Elizabeth was "barren" (Luke 1:7). She was "called barren" (v.36). She suffered "reproach among men" (v. 25). But till she was "well-stricken in years" she walked together with her husband before God (v.6), because Zacharias was a devoted a devoted husband and prayed for his wife (v.13).

She wants to be Number One in your life.

She cannot tolerate anyone coming between you and her. If your mother is your housewife then it is quite natural that she feels unwanted. Important family matters must first be discussed with your wife. Neither can you be wedded to your job. For a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses (Luke 12:15). Do not be a workaholic and miss the best things of life. Don't travel through life at 150 kmph! Take time to be a husband. Allow God to unchoke your life by removing unnecessary ambitions. Change your perspective on your family and your family changes forever. Enjoy your home. See the children grow up (they grow up only once) and make your wife feel she is No. 1 in your life.

She loves independence

This is not to say she does not want to be dependent on you. Rather, she depends on you for her independence. Don't hold her on a tight leash. Don't order her around the house by a volley of commands, making her wish that you hadn't come home so soon. I tell my husband that even God gave only "ten" commandments; Many wives feel like caged birds fluttering their wings against the bars. Respect her wishes. Restricting your wife is the recipe for tragedy. Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; yet she is called a freewoman! (Gal. 4:22- 23). She had, more than anything, freedom of speech. Don't tell your wife to shut up or keep quiet. Let her enjoy freedom of expression.

She hates to be compared.

Let your requests be straight forward. Don't say, "So and so made such and such a dish, so make it also. "Don't ask her to dress like somebody. She doesn't want to be like that somebody. The why-can't-you-be-like-her attitude leaves her feeling inferior, often with a tinge of jealousy. If a man without a wife could learn to be content in whatever state he was (Phil. 4:11), certainly you can learn to be content with your wife.

She likes to maintain her individuality.

Allow her to be herself. You cannot inject into her qualities which are not in her blood. Corrections are necessary. But where it is not a correction and just an alteration, give her the allowance to be herself. If she likes to bite and eat an apple without cutting don't try to civilise her. Small things in life speak loud in relationships. Often there are qualities in your wife which you don't like but are appreciated by others. You may feel she doesn't behave like an officer's wife but others may appreciate her for her simplicity. So don't be in a hurry to change

her. Many women remain snuffed out like candles. Ignite them and give wings to their originality that they too may find fulfillment in life.

She is overworked.

In most homes the woman gets backache because of overwork and the man suffers from backache for lack of exercise. She is always hectic, always tired, always weak. She has no Saturday or Sunday holidays. Two children are enough to sap her energy. So try to understand her when she is weary. A woman who works outside the home needs extra help at home. Man is not made for the kitchen. However what a relief it is when my husband prepares my coffee and makes up the bed in the morning! Thousands of years ago it was the man who wiped the dish (2 Kings 21:13). Now he has forgotten it. Sigh! At least do the man's jobs at home and save her the trouble of looking to others for help.

She is emotional

Men think with their brain. Women feel with their heart. She cries and at times becomes hysterical. She takes emotional decisions at the spur of the moment. These emotions change according to their hormonal cycle. Some days they tend to be elated and in high spirits. The next day they are dull and downcast. It is part of their physiology. For nothing at all, her feelings are shattered like fine glass. Try to relieve her of tensions wherever, and whenever possible. Kiss away your angry words. Don't sleep off when she is crying or walk off when she is arguing. A wife living with a mother-in-law needs extra understanding and care. Use her emotions for the better. Tickle her wit your jokes and bring fun back into marriage. "Live joyfully with your wife", says Solomon (Eccl. 9:9). In short, Be jolly with your wife!

Sex does not top her list.

She is not ready to jump into bed at your beck and call. The man wonders why she behaves like a wooden block. The woman wonders why she doesn't get anything out of sex. It is surprising how many husbands are ignorant that she needs time and technique to find pleasure in sex. The husband must take it as his 'duty' to see that she enjoys sex (1 Cor. 7:3). Sex is probably the last in her 'to do' list. For many, sex is like a silent movie. She remains quiet and sometimes praying that it will be over soon. Often when the husband falls into an exhausted sleep, she lies wide awake, staring at the ceiling, if that is all sex has to offer her. "Let me hear your voice" says the husband (SoS. 2:14). He encourages her to speak out and express her feelings of likes and dislikes. If you are unkind, unfaithful or unsympathetic, then sex amounts to torture for her because psychology has much say on a woman's sex life.

She needs constant reassurance.

She is riddled with doubts about her worthiness. Am I still attractive to my husband? I wonder if he likes the food I cook? Am I a good wife? Have I done anything wrong? These questions constantly flash across her mind. She needs to be repeatedly assured that she is great. Yesterday's compliment is not enough to carry her through today. Find some means of expressing your love to her everyday. She must be made to feel secure and desirable and needed. God asks only one thing from the husband in Proverbs 31, for all that the woman does – Praise her ! (v.28). That was probably the secret of success of the woman of Proverbs 31.

She wants to know.

Unless you tell her openly how will she know what you have in mind? Stop reacting like a wounded child and tell her what offended you. Then she can change herself. Tell her if you like something, so she can stick to it. Teach her what you know from the Bible. Let her not lag behind spiritually. Take her along wherever possible. Don't mind her I-already-know-that

expression. It is only a mask. Allow her to exhibit her knowledge. That gives her a facelift. Don't eclipse her. Women have enough agents to buffet them lest they boast. Share with her the news from the daily newspaper. Explain to her while watching the TV. Most women are rather poor in general knowledge. When she asks something, teach her. Do not make fun of her, especially before others.

Marriage has the two greatest gifts to offer you – someone to love, and someone who love you. Make the best of both!

WOMAN:

She is God's special gift. The noblest gift God could conceive for His creature man.
She caused man to say yes to God's plan for them both.
She completed man's humanity, opening him to possibilities of a full human existence.
She unites with him to form the mystical one flesh union.
She orients man to the order of creation and his place in it.
Her glory and honour come not one bit behind that of the man.

Man-woman relationship is not that of sameness but equality.

Her name "woman" given by Adam recalls she is of him.

She is not property.

She is full human being.

She belongs with man and for man, even as man belongs with and for her.

That man stands first in the order of being, the woman second, and that she belongs to him in a primary sense. Whereas he belongs to her only secondarily must not be misunderstood. It is not a question of value, dignity, or honour, but simply of order. Nor does it denote a higher and lower humanity. The acknowledgment of God's order brings a singular glory to the man and a singular glory to the woman.

When a man and a woman unite in marriage humanity experiences a restoration to wholeness. This is beautifully expressed in the following sentence:

"The man is restless while he misses the rib that was taken out of his side, and the woman is restless until she gets under the arm from where she was taken."

Paradoxically, this means equal glory and equal humanity for both man and woman. The glory of the man is the acknowledgement that woman was created for him; the glory of the woman is the acknowledgement that man is incomplete without her. The humility of the woman is the acknowledgement that he is incomplete without her. Both share an equal dignity, honour, and worth. Yes, and each shares a humility before the other, also. Each is necessarily the completion of the other; each is necessarily dependent upon the other.

"If God meant woman to rule over man, He would have taken her out of Adam's head. Had He designed her to be his slave, He would have taken her out of his feet. But God took woman out of man's side. For He made her to be a helpmeet and an equal to him." "Creation of woman from the rib of man; not made of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon, but out of his side to be equal to him under his arm to be protected, near to his heart to be beloved."

Comments on Gen. 2: 20-22

Adam found in the woman another human being whose origin was not the same as his own. She was neither wholly like nor unlike himself. She is of and from himself, related to him as a member is related to one's own body. She satisfies a need and fills a place that not even he himself could adequately anticipate. By taking the rib, making a woman, then giving her back to man to complete His creation and to make possible his humanity.

Man recognizes in the woman something of himself, but she also retains her autonomous nature. He identifies this human nature as unmistakably his, yet it is also unmistakably hers, for she was fashioned out of that which was taken from him and those elements still remain recognisable in her.

There is a paradox, two human beings, one man, one woman, they seem complete in themselves, yet are not; they seem so much alike, yet are not; they seem different, yet are not. They are made for one another, yet can only experience this intimacy in marriage. They are equal halves making up the whole, yet they have unequal functions. (Do not do the same things). They stand in an unequal order (he created first, she created second), yet they are equal in honour and value. Both seem complete in themselves alone, yet neither can be what he is meant to be without the other.

Man suffered something, he experienced a loss; the removal of a part of his own body for the woman to be created. He is no longer wholly himself, though he seems to be. He has had to surrender a part of himself, though he does not know why. (God covered the place where the rib was, man was asleep)

Man bears no evident wound, nor has he ceased to function exactly as he had at the beginning. But now it is determined that he is not fully completed humanity nor shall he be wholly man until he is reunited with that part taken from him and restored to him in the form of his helpmate. This deficit in his humanity cannot be filled in any other way than woman.

He cannot divest himself from that part of himself which is now returned to him. He cannot alienate or isolate himself from that which is still a part of his own being. He cannot be disinterested and separate himself from her without depriving himself of a very part of himself. She also cannot exist disinterested and separate from his for she would be denying her origin and place in God's design. There is therefore an interdependence established between the two sexes which they cannot escape; it is God's own doing.

HOW TO BE A BLESSING TO YOUR WIFE?

Someone once remarked, “The best test of a good man is to ask his family about him!”

While churches and ministries conduct numerous meetings, camps and retreats for women, there’s sad neglect to address and challenge men to fulfill their God-given role, especially in the family. Maintaining marital happiness is the mutual responsibility of the spouses, but the responsibility of the husband is greater than that of his wife because he is the head.

I have not ventured to write this study because I think I am the best husband in the world or my wife is the happiest woman on the earth. But from day one of our marriage I have kept my commitment to please my wife as a supreme priority next only to please God my Saviour. I have taken 1 Corinthians 7:33 seriously, “He who is married cares about the things of the world – how he may please his wife.” I offer here ten tips to husbands to make their wives happy. Honestly I take a conscious effort in these areas even though there are failures. Once my daughter said she would like to marry a man like me! That statement is one of the motivators for me to share the below.

1.

Build Trust

Mutual trust is fundamental to marital bliss. Nothing makes a marriage rust like distrust! In order that your wife may trust you, it is necessary that you stay truthful and faithful. Prophet Malachi warns husbands to take this matter seriously because, “the Lord is the witness between you (the husband) and the wife” (Mal. 2:14). He also cautions God’s people to keep their “spirit” free from adultery (vv. 15-16). Mental adultery is as sinful as the physical (Matt. 5:27- 28). Beware of straying eyes and wandering thoughts after the initial excitement of marriage.

Give your wife the liberty to protect you. But if she tends to be over possessive, talk to her politely to change her attitude. If your wife by nature suspects every other woman and there’s no good reasons for it, you have to patiently put up with her and pray much for her. Seek the help of a senior servant of God or a professional counsellor. A woman got terribly upset with her husband when she saw a few long hairs on his shirt as he returned from office. He had been traveling in crowded trains and buses to his workspot. Next day he checked up his shirt before he entered home. The wife again picked up a quarrel with him saying, “You must have hugged a bald woman today!” “The truth was that everyone at home used the same comb and she didn’t have the habit of cleaning up the comb after she had used it!

Some wives suspect husbands as a reaction to the husband’s suspicion. Give enough freedom to your wife and trust her (Prov. 31:11). Don’t question her every move and posture. Suspicion begets suspicion. As much as she trusts you when you go to work and lets you freely move in social circles, you too must! Some husbands never tell their wives where they go and when they would return. But they are upset if the wives visit neighbours even occasionally. This is injustice. Who said men have more self-control than women in the face of sexual temptations?

2. Give TIME

Christ gave “Himself” to the church, His bride (Eph. 5:25). Giving oneself is primarily giving one’s time, because time is essentially life measured in years and hours. The best gift we can give to a lover is time. When a young man and young woman fall in love with each other, what they long for above everything else in to spend time with each other. To maintain this “first love” in marriage, there’s no other way than to spend quality time with your wife. This is not primarily the time you sleep with her, but the time you spend with her in conversation. Men look for touch, but women enjoy talk.

One husband stopped free chats with his wife because he found that the less they talked the less the quarrel! Quarrels may be necessary for a healthy marriage. Quarrels, if handled without emotional outbursts, help to see the other person’s point of view. Someone said: “Where two people agree on

everything, one of them is unnecessary!" If talking is a gift, listening is an art. The latter must be learnt and developed to make disagreements profitable.

Unless you play with your wife you can not pray with her. Someone said, "The best way to make a marriage work is to make it play!" Discipline yourself not to watch TV unless you spend enough time in chit-chat with your wife. The television and internet has killed many marriages. Disengage the telephone receiver during family prayer and meal times. The telephone is the greatest nuisance among conveniences, and the greatest convenience among nuisances. Don't be reading the newspaper while your wife is talking to you. It is disrespect. When you return from a programme, and your wife asks, "How was the programme?", don't say it was nice and stop there. Narrate the details. Don't hide from her the problems of your work. God has given her to you as a "suitable" and "comparable" helper (Gen. 2:18). Forget not to enquire how the day was for her. Marketing with her is not a waste of time.

Never get over-committed. Differentiate between what's important and what's essential. Learn to say no to certain demands. Giving time to your wife is not just for her pleasure; it's also for your good.

3. Tolerate TEMPERAMENTS

"Made-for-each-other" does not mean that the spouses have the same temperaments. We are all made different in order to complement. Temperamental differences must be accepted and appreciated. That's how we are made. A healthy balance results this way.

Temperamentally my wife and I are poles apart, and both of us are strong personalities. We do get irritations, but we do our level best to level up things before we go to bed. The Scripture admonishes us, "Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath nor give place to the devil...Meditate within your heart on your bed and be still" - (Eph. 4:26- 27; Ps. 4:4).

During the first week of our marriage, my parents-in-law requested me to be patient with my wife's over-sensitive nature. Living with her for a few decades has taught me how to handle people with care. Marriage is such a realistic school.

Don't argue with your wife if what she said or did was just because of her nature. It is as useless as trying to blow out an electric bulb! Spouses must respect each other's ego. But because the woman is a "weaker vessel," the husband can be more generous. Winning the person, not the argument, should be the aim. The most powerful words before marriage: "I love you!" The most powerful words after marriage: "May be you're right!" Whenever you are wrong, admit it; whenever you are right, shut up! A question: Cannot temperaments be changed? They can be, but pray, "Change me" rather than "Change her!"

4. Respect TRADITIONS / TASTES

Even if the spouses belong to the same culture, we must not forget they come from two different families unless they are close relatives. Each family has its own way of doing things. If you do not respect her traditions, you are defying or disrespecting her family. In course of time, by mutual consent, both of you can change your customs for the better for your new family unit. Fights over food habits and table manners have led to breaking up of families. Because you are the head of the family, it does not mean your habits, manners and methods are to be imposed on the family. Analyse each item and issue objectively and adopt that which is better of the two. It is natural for you to expect your wife to dress and be like your mother. But it is wrong to expect a modern woman to follow orthodox customs unless they are better and more convenient. Don't crush her individuality.

Respect the church background of your wife. There's no perfect church. Among Bible-believing churches, no one is inferior or superior to the other in the absolute sense. Each has its pluses and minuses. Christ loves even the Laodicean Church which has shut Him out (Rev. 3:19-20).

A good friend of mine shared the following on how to maintain harmonious relationships: "Each person is unique. I am okay, you are okay. Don't say, I am okay, you are not okay; or, I am not okay, you are not okay!" In the early years of our marriage I was trying to change my wife because

her tastes were diametrically opposite to mine. She likes being alone but for me the more the merrier. I am a very social person but she in general is reserved. She likes white whereas I go for multicolours. She repeatedly reads the history books of the Old Testament, and my favorite is Paul's Epistles. The list is endless. I have now learnt to respect her tastes and so give her maximum freedom and arrive at compromises to maintain our oneness "in Christ."

5. Relieve TENSIONS

The woman's best possession is a sympathetic husband. "The true index of a man's character is the health of his wife," according to an old saying. Whatever may be her qualification or position in the society, in divine perspective she is the "weaker vessel" (1 Pet. 3:7). Don't be upset if your wife submits a list of problems when you return home from office or work. The whole day she had had her hands in the sink; now let her sink into your bosom. When the wife is a career woman, her responsibilities are multiplied. Assist her as much as possible in the care of children, marketing and household chores. Don't simply suggest to have one more servant. Get involved.

Make voluntary enquires about your wife's affairs. Don't wait until she opens up her heart to share the problems. Oh for husbands like Elkanah! He asked his wife. "Why do you weep? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved?" (1 Sam. 1:8) Give your wife a special attention where she has a problem. Elkanah gave his wife a "double" portion of the blessings seeing she was childless (v.5). He assured her of his total identification with her problem when he asked her, "Am I not better to you than ten sons?" (v.8). Feel with your wife in her aches and tears. Give her your shoulders to cry on. According to an insurance statistics, happily married people live longer. One reason is that they can talk out their inner tensions so their BP goes down!

If you are a joint family and your wife has to live with her in-laws, you must be deliberately considerate to her even if it might be misunderstood by your parents, brothers and sisters. Stand with her (Gen. 2:24). Ultimately give her a home for herself where she can be the real queen!

6. Forgive TRESPASSES

The Lord's prayer is also called a family prayer. The only conditional request in it refers to forgiveness. "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted for us" (Luke 11:4). Even a brother deserves forgiveness "seven times in day!" (Luke 17:4). How much more does your wife deserve it! When Peter checked up with Jesus whether forgiving "seven times" would be sufficient, He answered, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven!" (Matt. 18: 21-22). The disciples thought this was too much and impossible. So they asked the Lord to increase their faith. Jesus made them to understand that if they would forgive others in matters as small as a "mustard seed," they could handle issues as big as a mulberry tree! Most of the conflicts in family life are over trivial matters.

Making a marriage work is like operating a farm; you must start all over again each morning! Faults appear thin when love is thick. Love covers a "multitude" of sins (1 Pet. 4:8). This quote in Proverbs says, Love covers "all" sins (Prov. 10:12). A great leader wisely admonished, "Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, and half-shut afterwards!" Some of what your wife does may not be to your liking. If you cannot change her, accept the situation. A godly Christian with many family problems once testified, "Tolerance is a burden, but acceptance lightens it up."

This doesn't mean you must not endeavour to improve her. Building up of the wife is the husband's responsibility (Eph. 5:28-29). But not more than one correction per day – please! I am not perfect but a perfectionist. Someone has prescribed, "Next time you are tempted to pick out the faults in your wife, take time to count ten-ten of your own!"

Forgiveness is perfected by forgetting. To forgive is human, to forget is divine. Forgetting is extremely difficult. On the human side, forgetting means refusing to bring up the matter again and again. The four dimensional love of God has thrown our sins behind His back, sunk them like the depths of the sea, removed them like the clouds of the sky, and as far as east is from the west. We are called to forgive one another as God in Christ has forgiven us. If you are the offender, hesitate not to apologise to your wife. That is true manliness.

7. Develop TALENTS

It is said that behind every successful man is a woman. Similarly we can say that behind every fruitful woman is a man. Christ loved His Bridal Church so much that He gave Himself for her in order to perfect her and make her glorious. Husbands are challenged to follow Christ's example in "nourishing" their wives (Eph. 5:25-29). A self-giving love seeks primarily to build up the other person. When you sacrifice your own interests to fulfill those of your wife, you are actually doing good to yourself. This is the Biblical philosophy of marriage (Eph. 5:28-29).

We help each other in order to optimize our potential. We rejoice in the Lord when each of us sees the other person shining. One person's strength helps in the weakness of the other. Thus the body principle of the Church operates in the husband-wife team.

Don't compare your wife with women of extraordinary abilities, in your mind or word. This is detrimental to her growth. You may think that she would be challenged, but actually she will be chilled. It's a sober fact that the single-talented man of the parable in Matthew 25 represents the majority. Just like him they usually bury their talents. Your wife may have just a single talent but how significant it is you would not realize until you "stir up the gift" in her by motivation and encouragement of (2 Tim.1: 6). The husband's appreciation liberates the wife from her apprehensions. Don't ever add the word "but" after an appreciation! Practice perfects.

8. Plan TRIPS

Sabbath is God's idea. Rest does not mean idling but breaking of the routine. Vacation is an important vocation! It is not a luxury but a necessity both for husband and wife whether they go out for work or stay at home. Self-employed husbands must not sacrifice the pleasure of wives and children for the sake of promotion of their work or trade. As the head of the family you must take the initiative to plan a vacation and not wait for the wife or children to nag you. When you go on vacation, don't schedule it tightly. Reduce house visitations and avoid business talks. If you can afford, go to holiday resorts. It is ideal if the family vacation is in a place where you don't have people known to you. You can be perfectly normal and natural buying what you want, eating where you desire, dressing up as you like, and so on. This is what will really relax you. If you are a preacher, for heaven's sake don't carry your sermon notes with you or accept any speaking engagement. Your wife and children will hate it.

Apart from vacations, take your wife for an evening walk at least once or twice a week. This is one way to escape visitors who steal your family time. Buy your wife flowers. Don't say she has money and let her buy what she wants. Dine out at least one a month. Don't be always calculating and comparing the cost. Routine kills.

You have two roles to play at home – one as a husband and the other as father. You are first a husband and then a father. Don't change this order. For example, you don't need to always take the children out with you when you go for an evening walk with your wife. Only when you fulfil your commitment as a husband, you can be an effective father. The husband and wife are "one flesh" and not parents and children eventhough they are blood-related!

Give your wife enough money to buy whatever she wants. Don't preach to her on the purchase of every item! What's wrong if she buys a poor quality stuff? Have you not made mistakes in your selection? Why should she alone be denied the privilege of making wrong choices in shopping? What's important-the joy or the money? An irritated husband asked, "Why does a woman say she has been shopping when she has not bought anything?" The intelligent wife answered. "Why does a man say he has been fishing when he has not caught anything?"

9. Excite THRILLS

In the matter of sex, the husband's primary responsibility is to make his wife happy. This is the teaching of the Bible. "When a man has taken a wife, he shall not go out to war or to be charged with any business; he shall be free at home one year, and bring happiness TO HIS WIFE" (Deut. 24:5). While talking about the mutual responsibility of husband and wife, note that the husband is

mentioned first: “The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband” (1 Cor. 7:3). Even when Sarah was well advanced in age, she was talking about “having pleasure” with Abraham (Gen. 18:11-12).

According to various polls and interviews only a small percentage of the wives enjoy sex. They simply endure going through the ordeal. Christian men should take this up as a challenge and decide to be unselfish in the act. Take time and don't be in a hurry. Unless otherwise it is absolutely impossible, have the children sleep in another room. The least apprehension will steal from your wife all her sexual pleasure. You want touch; but she desires talk. Make the day as less stressful as possible for your wife if you plan for sex. Don't beat a tired horse. Someone said that sex must begin at breakfast time. Don't demand sex suddenly and expect an instant response. She is not a motorcycle to be kickstarted! If you reach orgasm every time, should she not at least every other time? Be fair. Apologise to her whenever you fail to bring her to orgasm. Following the act, don't forget to thank her. Women feel shy to tell their husbands what they really desire. They normally act just to satisfy the husbands. Consult a good book on the subject and revitalize your sex life. (“The Act of Marriage” is one of the best and is available in most countries).

Fear of pregnancy kills the joy of sex. Consult a doctor and adopt suitable preventive methods. Be considerate to your wife. Someone said that if only each husband would conceive and bring forth one child, the family planning campaigns would be 100% successful!

10. Teach TRUTHS / THEOLOGY

You are the priest of the family. Be a teacher of divine truths by example and exposition. Relatively husbands have more free time at home than the wives. You can therefore read and study more. Thank God for the explosion in Christian literature, especially the Study Bible and Commentaries. Share with your wife your meditations and what you read from books. When you return from a Bible Conference or a Revival Meeting, sit with her and explain what you've learnt. Unless your wife grows with you, you will have to drag her all the way!

The woman's world is more stressful than that of man. Out of frustration and to express her feminine emotions, she at times may speak things not very sensible. Be patient and help her understand God's ways. When Mrs. Job suggested to her husband to “curse God and die,” he replied, “Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we indeed accept adversity?” (Job 2:9-10). Finally she became the proud mother of three beauty queens! (Job 42:15). This does not mean that husbands should be always teachers and wives learners. Be willing to learn from her and open to corrections. Appreciate her ideas in decision-making. You are a son and she is a daughter of the Almighty God. Both of you as the children of the heavenly Father, grow as “heirs together of the grace of life” (1 Pet. 3:7).

Blessed is the man who makes his wife happy; for he shall be happy!

10 WAYS TO HONOUR YOUR HUSBAND

Accept him as he is – a person who is wonderful, yet flawed. Don't make him feel that you will deeply love him only if he changes, only if he conforms to your standards and preferences. Loving acceptance helps build a happy marriage and often helps the other person want to grow and to change.

Affirm and encourage him when he does something that pleases you, when he handles a situation well, or when God uses his gifts and abilities. Try to compliment him at least once a day for some strength he has or for something he does. And avoid putting him down, humiliating him, and criticizing him, whether to his face or behind his back. Avoid joking about his weaknesses or criticizing him in front of other people, especially your children.

Understand his different ways of thinking and communicating as a man – very likely more factual, less feelings-oriented, more ready to give a solution when all you want is to share your ideas and feelings and needs; don't expect him to read your mind or your non-verbal cues! Sometimes you may want to alert him before you start: "Dear, I need a listening ear for a few minutes." Also listen well to his facts and solutions rather than being defensive because he is not responding the way you'd like him to. What he says may not at the moment seem timely or appropriate, but it may in fact be helpful. Give thought to what he says even as you want him to give thought to what you say. And learn not to be quick with your answers when he shares his feelings or ideas or problems.

Fulfill your basic role, the role God especially created you for as a wife - to be loving helper to your husband. Don't let other activities, interests, or ambitions crowd out this central role, which the Lord spells out more fully in Titus 2:4-5, "to love your husband, to love your children, to be wise and pure, to be good worker at home, and to yield to your husband."

Affirm his God-given leadership in your marriage and family. You can do this by: i) showing a consistent attitude of respect and ii) submitting, always knowing better (Eph 3: 22-24). And when a decision he makes does not turn out well, don't remind him that he should have listened to you. God can overrule mistake in judgment far easier than He can overrule an unscriptural relationship. Notice that in Ephesians 5:22-23, the Lord does not say a wife should honour and submit to her husband's leadership only if he too fulfills his scriptural role. And 1 Peter 3:1-2 shows that God's standard for relating to your husband is the same even if he is not yet a believer. And such honouring of him may be the key to drawing to Christ.

Pray for him, giving thanks for his strengths, his good points, his gifts and abilities. Ask God to give him wisdom in making decisions (especially when the two of you don't see eye to eye) and to overrule any wrong decisions. Prayer can help you trust the Lord instead of feelings, it all depends on you. Focus on his bright side, not his dull and flawed side, in your praying – as well as in your thinking and speaking.

Serve him as you would Christ Himself (Eph. 6:7). Think of special ways to please him and meet his needs, as well as routine ways done with a warm, positive attitude.

Cultivate a habit of wise and kind speech. Your husband is much more likely to welcome your ideas and consider your feeling if you sow them as seeds at appropriate times, rather than hammering them in like nails with a dogmatic, arguing spirit, or by nagging (women call it reminding; men call it nagging). Water the seeds you sow with prayer and trust the Lord to help them sprout and grow – in His time, if they are what He wants. This sometimes requires much faith – or rather, a simple faith in a great God.

Be forgiving and patient with him. He (like you) is a flawed human being, struggling to live in a fallen world. Cover many of his flaws and sins with love, as God does yours (1 Pet. 4:8). When it is necessary to remove a speck (big or small) from his eye, use a small cotton swab rather than a rolling pin or a ruler. And be gentle. Also be alert to ways you need to ask him to forgive you, such as disrespect, harshness, impatience, nagging, self-centredness, self-righteousness, pride in “knowing better” or in feeling more spiritual.

Above all, and as the basis for success in all the above, keep the Lord first in your heart, and deepen your relationship with Him day by day. He provides greater security and fulfillment than the best husband – or the best career – could ever give. And according to Proverbs 31:27-31, “A woman who fears the Lord (respects and trusts and obeys Him), she shall be praised” – by her husband, by her children, by others.

One important way to affirm and encourage your husband is to be positive about lovemaking. Don’t think of sex as just physical release and pleasure for a man. It’s more. It can make him feel accepted and approved; it can be a comfort to him. Responding negatively or withholding sex can make him want sex more often than if it were freely available; it can encourage him to be unfaithful. It can also drain away your strength, for you use less energy making love willingly than coping with the problems you create if you hold back in this area. And it is direct disobedience to God (See I Cor. 7:3-6).

A yielding attitude does not mean being a doormat, or burying all your ideas, or keeping silent regardless of how your husband may misunderstand or offend you. It includes speaking up – within the guidelines for speaking that the Scriptures give for both men and women (Gal. 6:11; Eph. 4:29; Prov. 16:21; 25:15; 12:18; 15:1; Eccl. 3:7, etc.).

Living out the role God has planned for you makes you extremely valuable as a wife, both to your husband and in God’s eyes. It leads to strength and dignity and honour (Prov. 31:10, 25, 28; 1 Pet. 3:4-5).

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNICATION IN MARRIAGE

Proverbs 18:21; 25:11; Job 19:2; James 3:8-10; 1 Peter 3:10

Be a ready listener and do not answer until the other person has finished talking. Prov. 18:13; James 1:19

Be slow to speak. Think first. Don't be hasty in your words. Speak in such a way that the other person can understand and accept what you say. Prov. 15:23, 28; 21:23; 29:20; James 1:19.

Speak the truth always but do it in love. Do not exaggerate. Ephesians 4:15, 25; Colossians 3:9

Do not use silence to frustrate the other person. Explain why you are hesitant to talk at this time.

Do not become involved in quarrels. It is possible to disagree without quarreling. Prov. 17:14; 20:3; Romans 13:13; Ephesians 4:26, 31.

Do not respond in anger. Use a soft and kind response. Prov. 14:29; 15:1; Prov. 25:15; 29:11; Eph. 4:26, 31.

When you are in the wrong, admit it and ask for forgiveness. James 5:16 exhorts when someone confesses to you, tell them you forgive them. Be sure it is forgotten and not brought up to the person. Prov. 17:9; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13; 1 Peter 4:8.

Avoid nagging. Prov. 10:19; 17:9; 20:5.

Do not blame or criticize another person. Instead restore, encourage, edify. Romans 14:13; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:11. If someone verbally attacks, criticizes or blames you, do not respond in the same manner. Romans 12:17, 21; 1 Peter 2:23, 3:9.

Try to understand the other person's opinion. Make allowances for differences. Be concerned about their interests. Philippians 2:1-4; Ephesians 4:2.

FURTHER GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES:

Do not prefer your "ministry" above your spouse or children.

Wives learn, and apply, respect for your husband. Husbands learn how to be in love with your wife. Then apply it to her – and tell her of your love.

Laugh together.

Be your spouse's best friend.

Seek forgiveness, repent if necessary, restore when required.

Recognize no-one is perfect yet! Your spouse has faults as you do.

Recognize the differences between you both – the aims, ambitions and desires. Only together can these be accomplished.

Work out finances together, but husbands take the weight of responsibility in this area.

Husbands rule your house.

Wives makes the house into a home.

God has designed marriage to be a happy, joyful, lasting and rewarding relationship. If you have anything less you are being robbed.

Share each other burdens, hopes, desires, etc. no matter how “silly” they may seem.

Do show your love and affection to each other before your children. This way they will learn the real thing and not what is often portrayed on T.V. and in novels. They in turn will apply it into their marriage.

Never argue or have quarrels in front of your children.

Both agree before starting a family and before additional children are conceived.

Communicate in love often.

Don't “bury” issues – they will surface somewhere at sometime.

Be open towards each other – never hide things. (Be transparent)

Use endearments as part of ordinary speech.

The Bible does not use phrases like “the old bag”, “my old man (or woman)”, “he (or she) is useless”, - neither should you.

First look at your spouse's good points before considering the few bad ones.

Husbands do encourage your wife, do tell her that she looks good.

Husbands do recognize the effect the menstrual cycle will have on your wife. Anticipate her period and help her through it.

Wives do prepare for his coming home.

Don't communicate across a room, sit on a couch together.

When out hold hands or walk arm-in-arm together if culturally accepted.

Pray daily together!

With children at home (especially small ones) the first adult conversation your wife will probably have all day is with you as you come home from work. Give her time and space to express herself.

No one has yet won any gold medals for dusting ability or fuse mending, yet each make a home welcoming.

Most jobs eventually get boring, dull and repetitive. Marriage is the thing that gives life its zest and meaning.

In marriage you will learn a lot about God.

Let Jesus be the head of your household.

Experiment with sex regarding time, place and positions.

Don't get spiritual – or religious.

Go window shopping in another town, that way you will find your spouse's likes and dislikes.

Express appreciation.

Be courteous.

The above could be viewed as a list of do's and don'ts, yet it is not. It is what we are finding to be the ingredients of an onward moving and growing relationship. It is shared with the prayerful hope that it will help you build a good marriage. No doubt you could add to it.

Do continue to build and reach forward for all that God has in store for each of us.

In all that you do as a couple do it as unto the Lord, in everything and in every way glorify our Lord Jesus Christ

AVOIDING “WEDGES” IN RELATIONSHIPS AND MARRIAGE

Moods of sadness.

Feeling of disillusionment, boredom and emptiness, loneliness in our relationship.

Indifference to each others problems, interests, jobs.

Occasions of coolness toward one another.

Not enough affection and small courtesies between us.

Feelings of insecurity, jealousy.

A sense of being better understood by others than my spouse.

Persistent disagreements or quarrels.

Lack of planning things together.

Not enough personal conversation – most communications mechanical, routine, and on the surface.

Lack of doing things together.

A sense of being used.

More interest in position and money than me.

Taking advantage of each other.

Taking each other for granted.

No excitement in our relationship.

Not spending sufficient quality time together.

Insults, rudeness, sarcasm, criticism.

Continuous escapes, alone, such as T.V., sports, socializing, drink, etc.

Lessening of the capacity of wonderment about each other.

ROLES IN MARRIAGE

Circle what your view is to the questions below, then discuss your answers together.

1 – strongly agree; 2 – mildly agree; 3 – not sure; 4 – mildly disagree; 5 - strongly disagree.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| The husband is the head of the home. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The wife should not be employed outside the home. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The husband should help regularly with the dishes. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The wife has the greater responsibility for the children. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Money that the wife earns is her own. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The husband should have one night a week out. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The wife should always prepare meals | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Money can be best handled through a joint account. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Marriage is a 50-50 proposition. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| In an 'impasse' major decisions should be made by husbands. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Husband and wife should plan the budget together. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| It is proper for a woman to sometimes initiate love-making with her Husband. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Neither husband nor wife should purchase an item over one day's average salary without consulting each other. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The father is the one to discipline the children. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| A wife who is talented should have her own career. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| A husband should take his wife out for a meal at least twice a month. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| It is the husband's job to keep the garden and loft clean and tidy. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The mother should be the teacher of values. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Children should help plan family activities. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Women are more emotional than men. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Children develop better in a home where there is strict discipline. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| The wife should always obey what her husband asks her to do. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Neither husband nor wife should bring their parents into the home to live. 1 2 3 4 5

A couple should decide into which area of responsibility every member of the family should fit. 1 2 3 4 5

The wife is just as responsible as the husband in the disciplining of children. 1 2 3 4 5

A couple should always spend their leisure time with each other. 1 2 3 4 5

MARRIAGE COVENANT

Recall your wedding ceremony. According to what you spoke, what were the promises of your wedding covenant to one another?

To have and to hold, for better or worse

To love and to cherish, for richer or poor, in health or sickness, till death separates.

What were the terms?

Discuss with one another what the covenant relationship means to the two of you and your marriage now. Make a note of your conclusions.

With your new understanding of the meaning of covenant.

Pray together to invite God into your relationship, asking Him to teach you how to bring your marriage into the fullness of what He intended for it.

Renew your commitment to one another, expressing specific ways in which your covenant will be expressed towards each other. (For example, as you did in your original vows.)

Renew your commitment to the indissolubility of your marriage, that is that you commit to one another that divorce will never be an option to either of you.

IS SEX LESS SPIRITUAL? - A Biblical view

Sex is a beautiful gift from God. The physical intimacy between husband and wife was ordained by God even before sin entered the world. The man and woman were made to become one "flesh" as husband and wife. Their physical nakedness before each other caused no shame (Gen. 2:24-25). The Bible admonishes the husband and the wife to give their bodies to each other without any reservation. It says, "The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does." Except with "mutual" consent for a time, and that mainly for the purpose of giving themselves exclusively to fasting and prayer, the partners are not to refrain from the rights of marriage (1 Cor. 7:4-5).

I Corinthians 7:29-31 is often misinterpreted. This passage deals with five aspects: life partner, life's problems, life's pleasures, life's possessions and life's profits. The message is that all these are earthly and temporary, not eternal. For example, it is not wrong to weep when there's death or loss; but we should not forget our hope of resurrection. Similarly there is nothing wrong to buy things; but we must remember that we cannot keep them forever and carry them to heaven. In the same way, the husband and wife relationship is meant only for this "passing" earthly life. The partner won't be as husband and wife in heaven, but they will be like angels. (Mark 12:23-25).

It is a wrong idea that sex is only for procreation. Sex is created by God both for pleasure and procreation. "Rejoice with the wife of your youth. As a loving dear and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and always be enraptured with her love" (Prov. 5:18-19). Sexual enjoyment within marriage is perfectly legitimate. Only extramarital sex is sin! In the very next verse there's a question: "For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman?" (v.20). "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge." (Heb. 13:4).

Paul predicated that one of the doctrines of demons in the last days would be forbiddance of marriage (1 Tim. 4:1-3). These hypocritical teachers will not let God's people enjoy God's provisions but deceive them by their cloak of super-spirituality. Beware!

Who then are those "not defiled with women?" (Rev. 14:4). This passage must be understood in the total Biblical context. The very word "defile" suggests sexual perversions and immorality, because God has already declared that the marriage bed is "undefiled" (Heb. 13:4). The names of the twelve apostles were written on the very foundations of the wall of New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:14); and most of these apostles were married and several of them took their wives with them in their missionary journeys (1 Cor. 9:5). Moreover, the Book of Revelation is allegoric. The word "woman" in the text may also mean the ungodly world system. Therefore when the Bible so plainly teaches elsewhere in various places about the sanctity of sex within marriage, it is wrong to deduce from a single text what it does not say.

The world is filled with sex appeals everywhere. No man or woman is beyond the reach of the devil to be tempted in this area. Therefore let each man "have" his own wife, and let each woman "have" her own husband, and let each "come together again" and again and again! (1 Cor. 7:2, 5b).

Is family planning wrong?

Family planning is of recent origin. Therefore one cannot find a direct teaching in the Bible on this subject. Considering the general principles of parenthood laid down in the Scriptures, we must evolve guidelines for today's context.

God told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply to fill the earth (Gen. 1:28). This was a specific command given to the first couple when the earth was empty! But today several countries are over-crowded! Christians like other citizens have a moral responsibility to co-operate with the government to restrict population growth and thus solve the related problems.

10 DO'S AND DON'TS FOR DADS

Part of every Dad's role is to bring a healthy sense of structure and discipline to the family!

Connect before your correct

Part of every Dad's role is to bring a healthy sense of structure and discipline to the family. Communicating with your child, which includes listening to their "side" of the issue, is a key first step in successful, loving discipline.

Be there

One of the great myths is that a little "quality" time makes up for a substantial "quantity" of time. Going to school, sporting and other events is a big deal! It says – "I have your best interests at the center of my heart" to your child. Don't think only about your own affairs, but the interested in others, too, and what they are doing – Philippians 2:4.

Express love often

Children, (especially pre-teens and teens) act like they don't want their parents to "make fuss" over them. It's just an act. Children need hugs and kisses....affirm them at every opportunity.

Phony, macho men are only heroes in the movies

Real Dads aren't perfect. You can be a hero to your children if you open your heart to them and admit when you've made mistakes. They have an enormous capacity to forgive and their hearts' desire is to love and be loved. People who cover over their sins will not prosper. But if they confess and forsake them, they will receive mercy. –Proverbs 28:13

Never make your child choose between parents.

If you have problems with your wife, don't try to convince your child that you're "right" or the "victim". This causes an emotional split in your child and will ultimately drive him or her further away from you. Confine the adult issues to the adults.

Love your wife.

The greatest Dad in the world will minimize the true impact he has on his children if he does not model godly intimacy in front of his children. That's where the cornerstone of their future marriage is laid. Since God chose you to be the holy people whom He loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you....And the most important place of clothing you must wear is love. Love is what binds us all together in perfect harmony. – Colossians 3:12-14.

Be consistent.

When you are consistent in your actions, love and discipline, an environment of safety and security is created. Children need to know that there are some things they can always count on. Discipline your child while there is hope. If you don't, you will ruin their lives, Proverbs 19:18.

Be careful, you're in the spotlight.

Your children are watching every move you make. To some extent, their picture of you shapes their picture of their Heavenly Father. You have the opportunity to create a positive, loving image or a confusing and untrustworthy one. Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes. You must display a new nature because you are a new person, created in God's likeness-righteous, holy and true. – Ephesians 4:23-24.

Guard your tongue

The words you speak to your children can cut like a knife or send them soaring like a rocket. They will remember some things you say in passing for the rest of their lives. Kind words are like honey – sweet to the soul and healthy for the body. – Proverbs 16:24.

Develop Godly character

Nothing will influence your children more than watching you grow in your relationship with God. You can preach the Gospel by your actions much more effectively than you can by your words. And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to live in obedience to Him. Let your roots grow down into Him and draw up nourishment from Him, so you will grow in faith, strong and vigorous in the truth you were taught. Let your lives overflow with thanksgiving for all He has done. – Colossians 2:6-7.

TO MY DAUGHTER WITH LOVE, FROM YOUR FATHER

Dear Daughter,

few years back I saw a play where the main character, a young lady, had become too friendly with her professor, who took advantage of her and then left her in the lurch. I remember thinking to myself. How naïve! How could she have been so foolish?

I now realize, that there are many young women who go out into the world inadequately prepared to meet the viles of the devil, and the cunning of deceitful men. Many parents don't discuss these delicate matters, may be due to embarrassment. But if we don't tell you, we are denying you knowledge (Prov. 2:10) that may help you. One of the saddest words you can hear from a young lady are "I wish somebody had told me."

I sometimes feel anxious for you. It is not easy for a woman to live in a world run by men. But I take comfort in the fact that Jesus whom you know, has the power to keep you from the evil one. However, we are to learn from the Word of God. Some of the things I tell you may sound very basic, they may be stating the obvious. Remember, many tragedies happen because some simple fundamentals were ignored. In matters such as these you can never be too careful. So I write you this letter.

Tamar was a young princess and very beautiful. – but her life was a tragedy. Why don't you read her story? (II Sam. 13:1-22). Now that you have read the passage, what can we learn from her misfortune?

Understanding male sexuality

When it comes to sex, men as against women, are taken over by basic instincts. Its awesome power is like a flood sweeping aside everything in its way. Their vulnerability at this point is often not recognized by women. It is difficult for them to understand how a middle aged professor can turn, from being a model of wisdom to an animal driven by instinct. Read II Sam. 13:15.

See how thin the line is between love and hate. Sexuality in the male can be more easily disassociated from emotional love. Disassociated in this way it can get attached to varying, often opposite, emotions. So it is important for women to realize that unlike the female, a male can become quite involved sexually with no underlying commitment or love. When some handsome guy tells you he "loves you," what does it mean? Is it selfish, evil kind of love that will for the time mesmerise you with its enchanting flames, only to die, turn to smoke, which will darken your life and smother you? Or is true love that will glow clean and bright taking its character from that eternal love?

Protect Yourself

Tamar was harmless as a dove, but not wise. She was too simple (Prov. 14:15). She ignored the warning signals. Maybe, she thought Amnon would carry her away, they would get married and live happily ever after (Like in the movies).

Oh! You may say she could not do anything. Perhaps she could not disobey when David told her to visit Amnon. She could have taken a friend along like Rebeca did (Gen. 24:61). If she did not think of that, she could have smelt a rat and fled when he ordered the others out.

She need not have gone into his room, when he entreated her. But alas! None of these things entered her mind and then it was too late. TOO LATE! Until the time she entered the room, she could have dictated terms. But after that he was stronger (Verse 14). There were red signals all the way. But she ran them all one by one, till it was too late. We have many lessons to learn here.

I would refer you to Gen. 34:1 and 2, where another young lady got into trouble going to the wrong place. Don't place yourself in a slippery place. Don't allow yourself to be alone in a room with a man unless the door is wide open. The man may be 57, but it does not make much of a difference. This is another myth which is not true. The age of the man does not offer any protection.

Men are aroused easily by visual sexual stimulation. Do not tempt the man. Remember, men cannot withstand much temptation in this area. He is weak {the weaker sex!} So don't ask for trouble wearing clothes that are sexually provocative.

Guarding your heart (Prov. 4:23)

The Living Bible says 'guard your affections.' There will come a time when you contemplate a more serious relationship with a man. Before you allow yourselves to get any further, I would advise you to consider the following factors.

Women also have a chink in their armour, and that is, the need for emotional support and understanding. Women long for appreciation, conversation, romantic setting and the gentle touch. Some men know this, and use these as baits to gain their own ends. So guard your heart.

Get information.

Is it so difficult to make a few discreet enquires? You may say, this does not apply in arranged marriages. Just because your parents arrange it, does not mean you have no responsibilities. This applies especially when the parents are more bothered about family status, education and money than about character. The final decision is yours. After all, it's your life. If you cannot do the asking, request your parents or elders to do it for you. Remember Ruth – she was wise enough to take the advice and information given by Naomi.

I know of one young woman whose boyfriend told her, "Don't believe what people say about me. They are jealous and that is why they will tell you lies to spoil our relationship." Now, I would take words such as these, with utmost caution. What he is really asking for is your head, your cognitive powers. Can you trust him with your mind? In the case of this young lady she had already allowed herself to fall in love (SoS. 8:4,6-7) and in that fallen state she could not see much beyond the ground. She decided to believe him, rather than her parents and elder. Later on, she found out the truth; but by then it was too late. Too late!

You may think, "How ridiculous, Papa! Do you think I am that dumb." My dear child, I know you are not dumb. But I have lived life long enough to know that these things – even the unimaginable – does happen and will happen again. The mind thinks, but the heart does not. Don't underestimate the power of unbridled emotion. (SoS. 8: 7). It can make even the smartest girl lose her head. If you lose your head to somebody, soon he will have your body too!

Coming back to our question. Is he married? If the answer is 'yes' remember you are in danger of being a thief as well (Prov. 6:30- 32). If the answer is "I don't know", make no mistake; you are on very thin ice.

Is His Love Real!

Genuine love can be judged by the amount of respect and self-control he is able to generate, in order to safeguard the purity and clear conscience of his loved one. So, if a man becomes too interested in the physical aspect of the relationship, beware! You need to talk about it. If he is able to respect your position, then his love is likely to be real.

This step is difficult to take. You may think that your stand may drive him away, you may lose him. On the other hand, if his love is genuine, you may go up on his scale of admiration. He may not say it, but will respect you more for your stand. After all, who likes to marry a loose woman? He begins to think, "If she has given in to me today, maybe she gave in to someone else earlier, or may give in to someone else in the future." If you make your stand clear and he gets angry, you know that his intentions were not honorable and is angry that he has been discovered.

If, like Delilah (Judg. 15:16), he start saying "you don't love me, can't you trust me?" he is a crafty fellow. Once he has what he wants, he may go his way looking for fresh adventure, and YOU, precious you, will become just one more feather in his cap.

If he is less deceptive, more straight forward, he might say, "If that's the way you feel about it, let us call it off." Don't worry, you have not lost anything worth keeping. He may be a nice person, even a believer! But it is obvious that his philosophy of life is not in keeping with the teachings of the Bible. (Heb. 13:4)

The Woman's Onus

On the other hand, don't make the whole thing a cold and calculated operation. Becoming self righteous and pharisaical is not going to help anyone. God invented love and sex, and he saw that it was very good. Talking and laughing together is fun, but always do it openly, preferably with others. 'Too much too soon' is a recipe for disaster. It will leave you with guilt that is difficult to erase, even if you do get married to the same person.

Worse than that, what if the marriage falls through? Who is left with the bigger sear? Who is ostracised by society? The 'woman' (John 8:3). God has given women the greater ability to attract and also to control. In Prov. 7:26 this power is used for evil. Women will lose this advantage, if you do not have God's blessing and grace in your life. You will lose this advantage if you are careless and don't look after your values. Don't compromise your birth light for a portion of the world's brew - you will spend a long time regretting it.

If this discourse has left you feeling that any relationship is too dangerous, then I am afraid I have done the wrong thing. It's not the car that's at fault, but the driver. You've probably heard the joke "the component of the car that caused the most number of accidents is the 'nut' behind the wheel." Don't get me wrong. I am not saying, "don't drive, because it is too dangerous." I am saying, "Don't let any man get in your driver's seat. When you are ready to drive, you need a teacher. Let God teach you. Then drive carefully and follow rules, if you want to enjoy the ride and get some place other than the hospital or the morgue."

Don't be alarmed. Trying to figure out all this by yourself may seem to be too much to handle alone. Your mother and I will help you. Let us not forget to take each other into confidence. More than anything else, remember Jesus is with you always. He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Heb. 13:5).

His love is forever!

LEADING WORSHIP AND MUSICIANS (their life and ministry)

Paradigm for the Future

The church of the future must become transcultural. The evangelical church must learn to sing spiritual songs; the charismatic church must rediscover hymns; and the traditional church must begin to sing a new psalm. The young church must respect the older church and vice versa. Bridges of cooperation and counsel must be built between the black and white churches. The stagnating pools of our cultural prejudices must be flooded by the river of His divine purposes. Accepting and practicing God's standards of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs in our worship is a simple but challenging exercise designed to break us loose from our idols of ethnocentrism. Where will all of this lead us? To the most exciting celebration imaginable: the international, interdenominational, multilingual, multiethnic celebration of Christ Jesus, the Son of God!

"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb." Rev. 7: 9. Dare we look upon what John saw: representatives from every nation, tribe, people and language, declaring their praises together with a loud voice;...overwhelmed with gratitude for this majestic King who had made them into an united kingdom! If we can see that, we can see our destination. The heavenly vision is that of worshipers of many different stripes who are more conscious of the greatness of Christ Jesus than of their cultural distinctions!

If worship styles have been the source of divisions among us, let's turn the tables and allow God's design for worship to be the source of unity among us. Let's pray that heaven's worship will overtake earth's as we sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

These two components are implied in Romans 12:1 in the phrase "*logikos latreia*," which is often translated as either "spiritual act of worship" or (in the margin) "reasonable act of worship." (Revelation 5: 9- 10.)

The Difference between a 'Worship Performer' and a 'Worship

Leader" Worship Performer

Feigns a private worship life with God

Lifts up self

Manipulates people through "virtual worship"

Consumed with presenting a "glittering image" (I Samuel 16:7)

Fails to give spiritual "big picture"

Personal goal: maximum visibility

Draws attention to self by: dressing in revealing, loud, or ultra trendy styles; contrived, too big or too many gestures; talking too much; focusing on own experience; singing and/or playing too loudly; exaggerating movements when playing instrument; displaying vocal or instrumental "virtuosity" for show; monopolizing front and center stage

Clones his/her "worship leading" style from the Christian subculture

Strings together a series of pre-fabricated gestures and jargon

Tries to "work the crowd," to manipulate an experience

Tells how / pressures people to respond

Inflexible with the worship order; does everything according to plan

Searches crowd for signs of approval

Disallows or interrupts silence

Dislikes giving up the microphone to others

Visibly depressed by smaller crowds; goes through the motions

Worship Leader

Takes “worship as a lifestyle” seriously

Lifts up God

Leads people to worship by worshipping

Consumed with a passion for God and an integrity of heart (Psalm 27:4; Ephesians 4:22-24)

Keeps Christ’s redemption at the forefront; relates God’s story to people’s own stories

Personal goal: invisibility

Deflects attention from self by: dressing in style but modestly; using gestures as natural expressions of personal worship; talking only to provide context or reveal more about God; focusing most on the character and works of God; heard but not distracting; playing to express, not for an “effect”; offering skill to God as a sacrifice of praise; occasionally moving to the side to become less visible

Allows God to fashion his/her own style out of unique personality, gifts and experiences

Worships spontaneously, heartfelt

Fosters an atmosphere of worship then steps back and lets God meet people where they are

Give people options and lets them find their own way

Prepared, but sensitive to what God is doing

Stays in touch with the people in order to sense their needs

Lets go of control, allows God to speak in the quiet, to deal with people’s brokenness

Mentors others in worship leading, gives them opportunities to serve

Celebrates God authentically, no matter how many are in the pews or service

THE LIFE OF THE MUSICIAN

SANCTIFICATION, SUBMISSION, SENSITIVITY, SKILL

These are the four S’s that are needed in any spiritual ministry including the music ministry.

Without these principles growing and working in our daily lives, our ministry will be lacking.

The following study, is just an outline of lifestyle that was required of singers and musicians who ministered in worship from the time of David’s tabernacle. Where these points were law or custom of the day, they do not apply to Christian musicians literally, but the spiritual significance and application will release life within music ministries today.

GOD’S REQUIREMENTS

Musicians were chosen and set aside

Chron. 15:16-17, 19; 16:41; 25:1; II Chron. 20:21; 25:18; 29:25; Neh. 7:1.

They were chosen from the house of Levi only. (Levi had three sons – Gershon, Kohath and Merari. All who ministered in God’s house came from one of these three divisions of the tribe of Levi. Chief musicians were also selected from each of these divisions. Chenaniah and Asaph were Gershonites – Heman was a Kohathite – Jeduthun/Ethan was a Merarite. The priests were descended from Kohath – Amram – Aaron – Eleazar or Ithamar).

The music ministry is a priestly ministry – a ministry of service. This is a high and holy calling and should not be taken lightly.

There is a need for musicians and singers to be prayed for, and set aside in their ministry.

Tim 3:10; 5:22; 4:14.

Musicians were then clothed in a white linen ephod

Chron. 5:12; 15:27; II Chron. 29:15; Neh. 12:30.

-This white garment was the undergarment of the high priest, but the only garment of the priest.

-A picture of Christ’s righteousness. Is. 61:10

-This is not our righteousness, but Christ's. I Peter 1:16; Rev.7:13-14; 19:8.

-A LIFE OF MINISTRY IS INSEPARABLE FROM A LIFE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The musicians were required to enter into an oath of holiness Neh. 10:28-39.

-All the ministry people separated themselves from the people of the lands. I John 2:15

-They separated their families – including their children.

In these last days, we need families to work and be a part of kingdom life and ministry as a whole unit. If one person from a family is in ministry – then there is need for the backing, support and understanding of the whole family. Gone are the days when we can be just 'regular attenders' of church. God is calling families to extend themselves and work for the Kingdom's sake.

-v.29, 'They clave to their brethren i.e. – they were committed to one another not just in word.

-Oath – Hebrew: '*shebuah*'. From this word comes '*sheba*' meaning: 'seven', the sacred number. This is a sacred curse or oath. In taking this oath the musicians were in fact inviting the curse of God if they failed to fulfill their commitment. It is a promise to sever the old ways. and – become bound the new.

Col. 3:1-16, We need to 'put off' the old nature, and become 'bound' to Christ.

-verses 30-39. A commitment to practical matters of faith and lifestyle. A commitment to being faithful in the seemingly "small things."

-v.39, They promised not to forsake the house of the Lord. We cannot be musicians who play "when we feel like it". We are called to be faithful, to stand at our post-even when things are not going right for us!

It may be appropriate for an individual, or family to stand before God and the congregation and reaffirm their commitment to God and to all that He has called them to be. Many churches separate their singers, musicians, worship leaders and dancers to the Lord in this way, with the laying on of hands before the people and an oath of ministry and consecration.

B. PERSONAL REQUIREMENTS

They were to be taught / teachable

1 Chron. 15:22; 25:6-8; (Ps. 33:3); Eph. 4:11-16; 1 John 2:27

-Teachability is one of our greatest assets. Become open to correction, and never think that you 'know it all' musically or spiritually –even if you do – that is immediately a wrong attitude. - Music is not one of the gifts of the Spirit – it is a talent that needs to be developed. There is a desperate need in the music ministry for musicians, singers, worship leaders and dancers to open up to God for teaching.

-It at all possible, continue to seek lessons in the practical skills of your ministry and in music theory.

They were to be faithful

1 Chron. 6:32; 16:37; II Chron. 7:6; 8:14; 30:15; Neh. 12:45

-They waited on their offices; waited at every gate; that they might not depart from their services. The Hebrew word for wait is '*omad*' – to stand or stay.

These men and women were faithful to the task that was given to them – even when they were tired. The continuous song of praise was never stopped before the ark of the covenant – our praise ministry never ceases, we must learn to be diligent at all times – even when our ministry may appear to be monotonous.

-Rom. 12:7, '...let us wait on our ministering...' When the Old Testament musicians were not ministering in the tabernacle or temple, they sought the Lord and prepared for their ministry. Sometimes we think that we are too busy to pray – but we are too busy NOT to pray.

They strove for unity

2 Chron. 5:13; (Ps. 133:1-3; 1 Thess. 3:12)

-God blesses in the midst of unity.

-Often the worship leader, singers, congregation and musician are functioning as separate groups within worship, and are not flowing as one body. There needs to come a covering of one another within our ministries, and an understanding of one another's strengths and weaknesses. If a singer steps out with a song, and gets into difficulty, there must come a time, when the other singers or worship leaders are able to take over and skillfully cover the mistake, so that no one would ever know what had happened.

Too often there is a striving amongst musicians / singers for greater recognition of their skill. There is no place within the music ministry for such competition. We must learn to fast, pray and grow in God together.

C. ORGANISATION OF THE MUSIC TEAM

Chief musicians were appointed

1 Chron. 15: 16, 22, 27; 25:1-8; 2 Chron 5:12; Neh. 12:42

1 Chron. 23:5 states that there were 4,000 persons who praised God with instruments and, as under the kingship of David, they were placed into 24 courses under the 24 sons of Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun. Those 24 sons were over 288 individuals who were cunning singers and musicians.

-God's form of government is not democracy – we need leadership.

-Three Chief musicians were placed over the music ministry, and Chenaniah was the over all master of song:

Asaph, 1 Chron. 6:39; 15:17; 25:1-2; 2 Chron. 20:14; 29:30; 35:15; Ps. 50:73-83. -His name means: "he that gathers and removes reproach."

-Any chief musician must be able to understand the lives, talents and temperaments of the musicians and singers in his /her charge.

-The music ministry is one of gathering all people to be able to worship and see God.

Heman, 1 Chron. 6:33; 25:5; 2 Chron. 35:15; Ps. 88.

-His name means: "one who is faithful."

-Churches are crying out for this quality in their musicians and singers. We often try to cover our dis-organisation and incompetent lifestyle by saying that we are just temperamental musicians (½ temper, ½ mental)!!! This is not satisfactory—we need to become faithful in all we are, all we do and all we say.

-If we can become faithful in the 'little things', we may look to God to entrust us with His word. 1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Tim. 1:12; 3 John 5; Luke 16:10-12.

Ethan / Jeduthun, 1 Chron. 6:44; 15:17,19; 16:38, 41- 42; 25:1-3, 6; II Chron. 5:12; 29:14; 35:15; Neh. 11:17; Ps. 39; 62; 77.

-His name means: "a consistent choir of praise." One of consistent and permanent praise.

Ancient and established in praise.

-Ethan and Jeduthun are the same person.

-As a leader of the worship ministries in a church, one needs to be a worshipper himself first!!

Chenaniah, 1 Chron. 15:22, 27.

-His name means: "established by Jehovah." As perpetuated of Jah. Made permanent by the Lord.

-Whenever God calls us, He equips and establishes us – this is our inheritance in the Lord, as we are joint heirs with Christ.

During these times, Hebrew parents named their children with care. The names generally expressed some personal characteristic, some incident connected with the birth, some hope or wish or prayer of the parents, and the child embodied these things and their name became a personal vow. Often the child made it his life's ambition to realize the full meaning of his/her name.

-All of the chief musicians were prophets and seers. 1 Chron. 25:1-3; II Chron. 29:30; 35:15.

There is need for excellence in prophetic release through musicians and singers in these days.

Musicians assisted in the practical duties in the house of God.

1 Chron. 9:26-33; 25:8-31; 26:29; Neh.11:22; (1 Chron. 23:24; Matt. 20:26-28; 23:10-12; Mark 10:43-45; 1 Cor. 9:19)

-The singers and musicians worked with the whole Levitical family, and got their hands dirty with practical duties – they were not an elite group!

-They prepared the wine and the oil – this speaks of the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the joy of the Lord being poured through music ministry.

-They helped with gatekeeping- this speaks of musicians and singers assisting in keeping the 'sheep'. We need to be available to people.

-They assisted in the preparation of frankincense and other spices for the altar of incense – this speaks of the preparation of the character of a Christian in prayer and worship, and allowing God to mould us, and crush us so that the fragrance of His glory might be released. II Cor. 2:15.

-The musicians were busy people – there is no time for laziness in the kingdom of God in these days.

-They also handled the finances – we need to be trustworthy.

-They assisted in the preparation of Shewbread – this speaks of healing and the Word of God, and flour, which also speaks of the Word.

THEY WERE SERVANTS

There is a lot of talk about being servants these days, but those in music ministry should not see their music as being their only avenue of service. We also need to be workers in all other areas mentioned above.

There was a continuous song of praise to the Lord

1 Chron. 9:33; 16:6; 16:11, 37, 40; (1 Chron. 6:32; Ps. 34:1; Ps. 113:3; 115:18; 145:1-3)

-There was continuous rotal on of singers before the ark – this is a picture of the life of praise. Heb. 13-15; Acts 2:46-47.

-We need to give our all to the Lord and play with all our might. 1 Chron. 13:8.

The Levitical singers and musicians began ministry at age

25 Num. 8:24 (see also the whole of Ch.8); 1 Sam. 10:5

-The singers and musicians were 'under the hand of their father' (1 Chron. 25:6) – They were trained for many years before they ever entered the sacred service.

-We need to know more than just a few chords or notes on our instruments before we place ourselves in a church orchestra or music cum praise and worship band or team– we need to prepare musically, so that we are able to play with skill (Ps. 33: 3b), and we need to be spiritually prepared so that we are able to minister life.

-After the age of 50, they were no longer allowed to serve in ministry. There is no age limit in serving Christ – serve Him for as many years as the call of God rests upon you.

There were male and female singers and musicians

2 Sam. 19:35; Ezra 2:65; Neh. 12:43

-God is causing right order to be established within the body – there is a correct place for both men and women in ministry.

D. HOW THEY LIVED

They had their own quarters and cities.

Num. 18:20; Deut. 10:9; 1 Chron. 9:27, 35; Ezra 2:70; Neh. 12:29; Ezek. 40:44; Num. 35: 1-10

-When the promised land was divided among the children of Israel, the Levites were not given any land, as their portion was the Lord Himself. They were given cities for their families, sleeping quarters adjacent to the temple for those on duty, cattle, food and finances from the tithes.

-The church needs to minister to the needs of those in ministry – including the singers and musicians.

They were given new wine and oil
Neh. 13:5

-The wine speaks of the blood of Christ (Matt. 26:27-29) and the fullness of the Holy Spirit, Eph. 5:18.

-The oil speaks of Joy (Is. 61:3), Anointing (Deut. 8:8; Ezek. 16:13), Holy Spirit. -We need to be daily applying the wine and oil to our lives.

They were supported by the other tribes
1 Chron. 9:33; Ezra 7:24; Neh. 11:23; 11:10; Lev. 27:30-33

-There must be definite call upon one's life before God expects the body to be responsible for your financial needs. However, 'For the Scripture says, you shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his reward.' The Christian church is noted for its irresponsibility towards those who minister, and have not honoured God in this area. Musicians who are called to full-time ministry must be honoured financially.

-Musicians and singers gave a tenth of their income to the Lord – this is the least we should give. 2 Chron. 9:6-7.

They didn't pay any taxes, tolls of customs duty
Ezra 7:24

-Try to pull this one today!

-This is sign of their high calling, and the respect that was granted to those in ministry.

They were a treasure in the courts of the king
Gen. 31:27; 2 Sam. 35; Ps. 137:3-4; Eccl. 2:8-9; Luke 15:25

-The Lord will also consider His singers and musicians a treasure in His courts if we function in priestly service.

-We will also be an asset in the body of Christ, and will be valued and loved by our brethren as we become servants.

The musical instruments were made of special wood
1 Kings 10:12; 2 Chron. 9:11

-This wood was from a tree in Labanon – Almug/Algum. It was very precious wood that was also used to make pillars in the house of the king.

-A musician or singer operating his/her ministry, and functioning as a servant and priest is going to be pillar in the house of God – the King of Kings.

-We need to give God our best – the best we can afford. If you could improve by obtaining a better instrument, then try to do so.

You may well have heard these things over and over many times, but our questions is – “are you living the life that is required of a priest and servant in the courts of the King? We despair, when time and time again we come across those in music who have never died to self or offered their ministry on the altar for God. Our attitude in ministry is supremely important.

Don't seek to learn 'creative things in praise and worship just so that they can be added to your repertoire of interesting things to do in church. Worship is not 'just another function' in our church's 'bag of tricks'. Worship must be our life, it is the center of everything, and whatever we are in life is an outflow of our relationship with God – our worship.

No other teaching of deeper things or 'creative things' will apply to us until the principles mentioned in this study are in daily practice in our lives. If we are going to be apart of what God is doing in these days, and if we want to take our churches in God's plan for this time, then we need to move on in excellence in these principles of being priestly servants, and then on into excellence in our music. The above truths hold the 'key' for touching 'deeper things' in God.

CHURCH MUSICIANS

1. The purpose of instruments:

| | |
|---|--|
| -To minister to God in His presence | 1 Chron. 16:4,6, 37 |
| -To praise God | 1 Chron. 23:5; Ps. 33:2; 71:22; 92:1-3; 98:5-6; 149: 3; 150: 3-5 |
| -To accompany singers in joy and praise | 1 Chron. 15-16; Ps. 81:1; (also N.T. refers to the Psalms) |
| -To call to and lead in worship | Num. 10:1-10; Ps. 81:3; 92:1-3. |
| -To prepare the people for prophecy | 2 Kings 3:15; 1 Sam. 10:5 |
| -To prophecy | 1 Chron. 25:1-3; Ps. 49:4 |
| -To lead and play in warfare | Num. 10:2-10; Ps. 67:25; 144:1 |
| -To usher in and declare God's Presence | Ps. 47:5 |
| -To teach the nations to praise | Ps. 57:7-9 |

Establish a chief musician.

It is best if the persons appointed to oversee the music ministry are musicians themselves, but this may not be the case in every situation. The music director / chief musician should be in charge of the following areas of church life: Singers and choir, Musicians, Worship leaders, Outreach music.

In order to oversee all of these areas, the following qualities must apply to your life:

- good grounding in the Word
- definite leadership qualities (strength of character; faithfulness; authority; compassion, etc.)
- organizational ability
- a growing understanding of music and music theory
- a prayerful understanding of your musicians
- a love for and ability to gather the people

Any musician or singer must know what is required of them. Type out a list of requirements, and if you make a rule – stick to it.

Asaph, Heman and Jeduthun were skilful, hard working leaders of music ministry – we also need to maintain a high standard in church music ministry.

Choosing and appointing musicians.

- Pray for the musicians / singers that you need.
- Ask the congregation to pray about dusty instruments or hidden talents.
- There may be instruments that others could use, or a talent that could be developed.
- Encourage younger musicians to continue lessons. (Don't use unskilled musicians of any age, just to boost the numbers of the orchestra)
- Encourage a high standard of spiritual growth in the musicians and also a high standard of music.
- Pray for each musician – establish and confirm them in their ministry.
- Set the instruments aside, II Chron. 29:19. Practice together regularly.
- Pray together – you will grow as one unit.
- Develop honesty and commitment in the group.
- Study the Word together.
- Set goals for every practice: learning a new song, playing in difficult keys, preparation for special meetings, studying music theory, developing worship forms, practice putting dynamics and character into chorus and worship playing, etc.
- Stress regular attendances and punctuality at practices.

- Practice at home.
- Establish priorities within you life – the order should look something like this:
Relationship with God, Family, Health, Employment, Ministry, Other interests, (sports, etc.)

Develop an organized lifestyle

- Become faithful in all that you do or say
- Keep a folder of all your notes and music
- Practice being tidy at home, and at work
- Be prepared for every service -Practice being early – plan ahead
- You may need to change your lifestyle

The instruments themselves

- Be careful of musical instruments and devices of these last days. The character of the instrument must be capable of representing the testimony of redeemed man, and his inheritance of the nature of God.
- Aim for a balance in timbre within the orchestra. Try to get a good balance between percussion, wind (brass and woodwind) and string.
- Some musicians may be able to learn an instrument that relates to their main instrument – to add variety. (Read players may be able to adapt from clarinet to sax, oboe, horn, etc.)
- Ensure that you have the complete equipment (capos, spare strings, reeds, mutes, etc.)
- Care for your instruments.

The service

- Arrive early – before pre-service prayer, and tune up
- Tune up quickly – don't 'jam' while others tune
- Help others tune if they need it
- Join prayer meeting (Those who don't pray shouldn't play!!)
- Position instruments so that there is good visual contact within the orchestra, and with the worship leader
- Don't have every instrument playing all the time – we seem to know this, but are rarely sensitive enough to do it of our own accord

RESPECT EACH INSTRUMENT SO THAT YOU SAVE IT FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT

- Vary the use of your instrument so that you are expressing what the Lord is saying – use the full of dynamics of your instrument.
- Ensure that your playing is an extension of your praising. As you concentrate on your playing, and on the leading of the worship leader, you are not always able to enter into worship in the same way as the congregation – that is why you need to be a worshipper, and not just one who goes to worship services.
- Sometimes a silence can be softened by gentle playing – be gentle though – don't be afraid of silence. Chord progressions can also be used here – with the help of lead instruments – or chorus can be played.
- Keep harmonies simple so that singers can harmonise – make sure that correct and interesting chords are used though.
- Make careful use of modulation.
- Don't all fill in all the breaks! – This is where the congregation maintains it's pitch and timing and sensitivity is needed.
- Start and conclude tidily – some worship leaders may need a strong introduction and starting note.
- Know where your authority to take initiative starts and finishes. The leader must be followed at all times.
- There is no need to reproduce secular styles – develop your own style.
- Use your resources well. Allow for an increase in the climaxes of songs – not just the volume, but in the intensity of notes played.

-Musically interpret the words that are sung.

-If you cannot hear the other instruments or a singer, then you may be playing too loudly. Weaker instruments may need microphones.

-Greater dynamics may be achieved by adding new and simple instruments, e.g. glockenspiel, chime bars, un-tuned percussion.

-Participate in the service – don't hide behind your instrument. You may need to respond to an altar call, etc.

-Don't mistake dryness for bondage. Ps. 137:4; Ps. 107:22; Heb. 13:15; Rom. 12:6; Eph. 4:1-7; sometimes we have to minister by faith even when life is tough. The only time the children of Israel hung up their harps, was when they were in captivity, or spiritual decay.

GOD IS PERFECTING THE CHURCH THROUGH IMPERFECT MINISTRY.

THE HURT OF NOT BEING ASKED TO BE A PART OF THIS MINISTRY IS NOWHERE NEAR AS BAD AS THE HURT OF BEING ASKED TO STAND DOWN.

LEADING IN WORSHIP

Worship leading is a ministry with separate skills to that of a musician, pastor, elder, singer, etc. Often the worship leaders has the hardest job of all – to lead the whole congregation (even those who are sick, tired, hurting, stubborn, lazy, unteachable, etc.) into a place where there is communication with God on an individual level and a congregational level. Ultimately to the place where the praise and worship touches the heart of God and ushers in His manifest and tangible Presence!

If this is to happen, worship leading cannot be an area that all different leaders in the church can ‘have a go at’ in order to develop their leadership skills.

Those who lead worship need to become skilful in the spiritual principles of worship as well as the practical aspects of music and form.

There are three functions of a worship leader.

To lead the whole congregation into the presence of God so that they might praise and worship Him, and hear from Him within every service – GOD HAS A PLAN FOR EVERY SERVICE - He wants to spend time with us, and He has something specific to impart to the body every time we meet in His name.

REQUIREMENTS:

- You need to be a worshipper. The best way to lead others into worship is to worship God yourself daily and even throughout the day! (Ps. 119: 164) -An ongoing and growing relationship with God.
- A knowledge and knowing of God, His ways and His Presence.
- An understanding of the moving of the Spirit
- A servant and right attitude within the body.
- A love and empathy for the congregation.
- Punctuality, and organized lifestyle.
- Grounded in the Word – having a fresh flow of revelation and insight. Col. 3:16 (Your ministry will only be as deep as your understanding and practical application of the Word). Become a reservoir for the thirsty.
- A personal revelation and understanding of Scriptural worship.
- Well established in the basics of truth.
- Become a vital part of the life and ministry of your church and not just one who is seen on Sundays.
- Know what God is saying in your church, city, nation and consider how you may assist the Pastor in leading the people on in these things.

To co-ordinate and cover the singers and musicians – in their ministry to God and within the congregation.

REQUIREMENTS:

- A love for the singers and musicians, and an understanding of their ministry.
- Skill in the use of various music forms in worship
- Understanding of the basics of music i.e.
 - able to stay in tune.
 - able to pitch the start of a song from the instrumental introduction.
 - able to know when a song is too high or too low, and know what to do about it.
 - developing skill in music theory – don’t be intimidated by this – the basics are not hard to learn, and can help you!

To prepare the congregation for the ministry of the Word

REQUIREMENTS:

- To be at one with the leadership of the church.

-To understand the direction God is taking your church – each church has its own distinct place in God’s plan, and ‘flavour’ within the body – It is important to be aware of this and to tap into this move of God. Also God takes a congregation through different ‘seasons’ of emphasis and application of the Word and Christian life, know where you people are at with the Lord. -Be in submission to your Pastor!

THE PREPARATION OF THE SERVICE

Sanctify yourself.

1 Chron. 15:14; II Chron. 29:14- 15; Neh. 12:30; Gal. 5:25; 1 Cor. 6:11.

These are not just old-fashioned words with no meaning for today. We need to repent daily and live clean before the Lord. Don’t wait for God to clean you up – Purify yourself!

Wait on God.

1 Chron. 6:32; II Chron. 7:6; 35:15-16, Rom. 12:7.

Because God has a plan for every service, we need to seek Him – He does not keep it a secret from us, and then ‘spring it on us’ at the last minute. Just as a preacher can know what he is to say – so, too, a worship leader can come, knowing the direction the Lord will take. (This does not mean that we always have it completely worked out and leave no room for spontaneity).

Keep a list of Choruses.

You need an up-to-date of choruses – listed in themes (thanksgiving, praise, joy and rejoicing, healing, warfare, altar–call, high praise, worship, etc.) and listed in key signatures so that you are able to flow choruses on one after another. Also keep a master list of choruses in alphabetical order. Progress in praise towards worship.

Go to the musician practices.

Often the worship leaders in a congregation are leaders in other areas of the church, and are too busy to go to musician practices. Therefore mistakes are never corrected, there is a lack of ‘flow’ between musicians and leadership, and the worship ‘style’, form and creativity never progress into great excellence. If your church is serious about becoming more excellent in worship expression, and more creative, then you must practice. Many of the problems within the churches seeking to develop in worship are caused by a lack of communication both spiritually and musically.

PRACTICAL POINTS IN WORSHIP LEADING:

Be on good terms with the musicians.

- Don’t correct the musicians or argue publicly.
- Practice with the musicians.
- Keep hand signals easy to follow.
- Have songs chosen (with keys) and a list for the musicians before the service.
- Know what the musicians are capable of and how you can get the best out of each one.

Don’t spend too much time talking.

- Encourage the people as they worship (Don’t take it for granted that everyone knows what is going on.) This has to be skillfully done – without talking too much time.
- you can break the ‘flow’ of worship with too much talking.
- Emphasise relevant truth.
- Teach and admonish gently – never bring condemnation! Neither correct where the shepherd should take this responsibility.
- Base introductions on the Lord – not yourself.

Choose songs carefully.

-Develop and accomplish something in the worship. See the worship time as a whole. Like a plane gearing up its engines before moving onto the runway and then taking off for its flight, in a similar way work progression in your selection of songs. **Starting with joyful songs,**

progress to thanksgiving and praise, and then ‘take off’ with deep and intimate worship songs which can naturally flow into singing in the Spirit (I Cor. 14: 15).

- Make careful use of theme and tempo changes – don’t switch back and forth from fast to slow choruses, or from joy, to warfare to adoration themes. Try to stick to your theme and its progression as you move towards deep and intimate worship. In this way the Holy Spirit will bring even new insights and ‘revelation’ of the character of God as people worship Him!
- Choose more songs than you need – be over prepared.
- One of two songs may be keys for a particular service – don’t be afraid to sing these for an extended time – each time through may heighten the expectation and sense of worship.
- Allow the Lord to move – you may not be able to sing all the songs that you have chosen.

Know your songs.

- Don’t use songs you are uncomfortable with.
- Never practice on your congregation.

If you teach new songs – try to teach them correctly. You can stop the congregation if they make a mistake.

- Keep introducing new songs which contain ‘present truth’, i.e. there are truths that God is restoring in these Last days, and truths that He is emphasizing.

Give strong leadership.

- You must lead – not the congregation or musicians.
- The best way to lead is with your voice – don’t be afraid of the first note – it is supremely important.
- The congregation will have no confidence in and will not be able to follow a weak leader – lead with your whole face and body.
- Mainly you should be singing the melody rather than trying parts. -
- Be at ease – smile; be genuine – have a ‘comely’ countenance.
- Lead the people to the Lord and not to yourself!

Be sensitive to the flow and timing of the Spirit.

- Take time to build up the faith, expectation and confidence of the people.
- Establish thanksgiving and praise attributes before moving on into other realms of deeper worship.
- If you have felt to use a particular song – sing it as many times as needed for the people to enter into the message of the song.
- Know when the meeting should be opened to the prophetic flow – know the Biblical principles of the gifts of the Spirit.
- Don’t be afraid of silence – there may be waves of worship.
- Obey every prophetic utterance – there may be a need for special ministry – healing, commitment, etc.
- Keep an ‘eye’ on the pastor – he will know if gifts are in ‘order.’
- Know when to stop – don’t take more time than you have been asked to unless you receive further instructions from the pastor.
- Don’t wear the people out with a several ‘high points.’
- Be sensitive to the ‘climax’ of worship and how long to go on for – sensitivity is needed here. After spending some time on their faces before the Lord, God may desire that the people enter into a time of joy and celebration. Be open to what God wants and don’t put Him in a ‘box’ thinking that you ‘have Him all worked out’ and that He can only move in certain ways.

General considerations.

- Watch the use of clapping and lifting hands and other forms – they can be done out of habit. -Encourage people to stand as priests as a sign of respect - unless elderly, sick, etc.
- There is no need to constantly beat time unless it is a large congregation and /or orchestra.
- Seating, P.A. system, ushering, heating, lighting, ventilation and nursery all need to be functioning correctly.

THE FLOW OF THE SPIRIT

This is one of the most difficult areas of spiritual worship to define, and therefore, to become skillful in. The Holy Spirit is first the HOLY Spirit, and we need to walk in righteousness and holiness (not just those in ministry, but all the congregation) so that He may not be grieved – Eph. 4: 22-23.

It is true that the Holy Spirit is constantly residing within every true believer in Christ, and when we gather together, we are already ‘in the Spirit’ because we walk daily in the Spirit. But it also applies that God never changes from His position of holiness, and in order to approach His throne with boldness (Heb. 4:16) and to hear His secrets, we must be those He can trust and who can understand and respect His courts.

Each time we gather together He wants to hear us (Song of Sol. 2:14).

Because it pleases Him and

Because we needed His response to this pleasure.

Also, whenever we gather, God literally wants us to meet with Him, and gain revelation of His nature, character and person. This revelation is an automatic result of meeting with God, and when it happens, we take on His likeness (Ps. 17:15; 2 Cor. 3:18). This relationship and response is a lifestyle not an hour – long event once a week.

Therefore the worship service needs to be free enough to ‘flow’ into the specific revelation that God desires for each time we approach Him. This is not necessarily a ‘deep’ and ‘heavy’ thing, but an enlightening of the Word of God to our spirit. (For years this truth may have been an intellectual understanding only!) It is normal and natural that each Christian should live in a constant stream of revelation knowledge of God as a natural outflow of our worship relationship with Him. Because God is infinite, we will continue for eternity and still not have begun to realize the extent of any one aspect of His character or person!

God has a plan and purpose for every service, so as the musicians, singers, dancers and worship leaders seek God throughout the week, then they can come, and flow in with the same Holy Spirit. As we move into praise and worship God will develop His service, and there will be a clear unfolding of revelation in the midst of the people. There are so many directions that the Spirit may take within worship, and we can prepare our service and our hearts without leaving the congregation with the feeling that we have pre-arranged the whole service. Often one theme, or continuous stream of revelation may flow through an individual or congregation for weeks or even months.

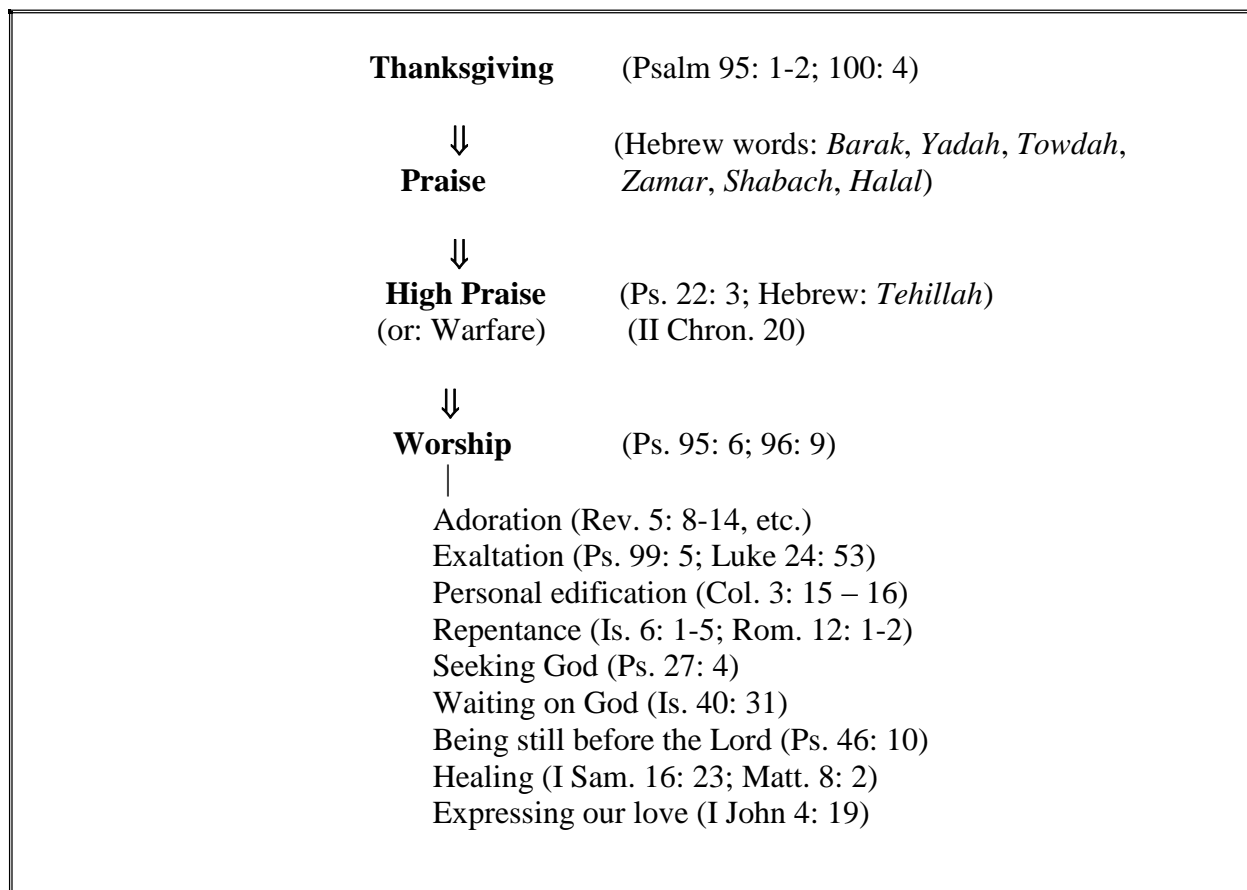
The following diagram is based on Scriptural unfolding of worship and where the Holy Spirit leads in the midst of worship. It is not intended that we examine or analyse our worship services according to this diagram – it is only an illustration of what our relationship with God and revelation of Him may produce.

The diagram below is merely to assist those who would say ‘where do we go now?’ or ‘where is worship going?’ – how come we always seem to stop when we have only just started?’

The next step is – God. Sometimes we begin to enter into worship, and we stop in praise – or even high praise, and never go on into the depths of truth that God would reveal. We must seek God! We must cry out with Moses ‘...I beseech thee, shew me Your glory.’ There must come in the midst of the church, a demonstration of God Himself.

If the Spirit seems to be directing you to rejoice and celebrate in your redemption, then don’t just sing, ‘Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice’, a couple of times, and think that is the end of rejoicing – so you hand back to the Pastor to take the offering! We need to be able to explore the depths of what God is saying in the midst of the church – we need to be able to explore the depths of who God is – we need to be able to explore the depths of the Kingdom of God in the midst of the church. It will take eternity before we have even begun to understand one small aspect of God, and His character. If you sing ‘Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel. God with us revealed in us, His name is called Emmanuel’ (for example); don’t allow yourself to

sing the words without expecting the truth and the depths of meaning of those words to be demonstrated in your life, and understood, in part, deep in your spirit. You may have to sing a song over and over many times because each time you sing it the Spirit of God takes you beyond the words and adds layer upon layer upon of powerful truth and revelation within your spirit.



It is time for men to seek the Lord – it is time for us to meet our God, and grow up from knocking on the door of His kingdom, talking about the kingdom, and then running away like children, because we are too embarrassed to face Him. We have not known what to say to Him. We have not dealt with sin in our lives, and our humanity has caused us to hide from His presence like Adam and Eve in the garden (Gen. 3:10), and like the children of Israel who worshipped, every man in his tent door. Moses dared to go and speak with God as friend, and he dared to ask that he might see the very face of God. What we have called ‘worship’ has often been not more than a few comfortable songs, in our comfortable ‘tents’ where we are comfortable with the ‘decency’ and ‘order’ of our offerings, because our friends and neighbours might come in and we must make them ‘comfortable.’

The spirit of humanism has invaded our worship and we have reduced our expressions to those which are acceptable to our culture. The facts is – GOD IS NOT NATIONAL, NOR DENOMINATIONAL. We need to worship in the manner that God considers ‘decent and in order’. We have all taken some expressions of worship and fitted them neatly into our organization, rather than entering into all that the Bible declares concerning our relationship with God.

Let us then, briefly examine some of the depths we can enter into through praise and worship:

THANKSGIVING

-Ps. 100:4, ‘enter into His gates with thanksgiving....’ Our entrance into the presence of God involves this act of faith – it should not be thing we do once a week, but we should be thankful in all things – this is in act of faith. You are thanking Him for things that He has done – is doing now – is going to do. Some of these things cannot be seen, and we must have faith to thank God, and to believe He exists when we may not see Him, or feel Him.

-When you come to God (tired, hurting, lonely, burdened, needing forgiveness, full of joy, peaceful, etc.) begin to confess thanks – speak to yourself of your God, that your eyes may be set towards Him, and His nature. Let your soul hear, and be renewed, and filled with hope in God. Faith will produce hope, and hope will produce a desire to go on. 1 Peter 1:21
 -Some of the Hebrew words for thanksgiving are the same as those for praise, and include ‘towdah’ – a company or choir of them that give thanks and praise – also to offer sacrifices of thanks and praise; also ‘*Huyvedoth*’ meaning: a choir of singing. It is good to sing your thank offering – so your soul may hear.

PRAISE

There are seven Hebrew words for ‘praise’ that beautifully describe the different aspects of praise – some of which we have never fully entered into in expression:

- BARAK** Meaning: to kneel, bless, salute, praise. Judges 5:2; Ps. 72:12-15.
 This speaks of the reverence and quietness before God – expecting, by faith, a response. Of all the words for ‘praise’ this is the only one which infers some kind of silence – there is no statement in this word about vocal expression.
- YADAH** Thankful expression of praise, from a root word meaning: ‘to throw out the hand’ – lifted hands. 2 Chron. 20:21; Ps. 28:7; 43:4; 111:1; 138:1.
 This word implies action, not passivity – this is heart praise with the outward sign of the lifted hands describing the lifting of the heart. It is obviously powerful when used in battle. 2 Chron. 20:21.
- TOWDAH** Thanks and praise for what God is going to do. The sacrifice of praise – the lifted hand is also implied here. Ps. 50:23; 69:30; 107:22; Is. 51:3.
 This is faith praise in action – and it honours God – Ps. 50:23. “Whose offers praise (*towdah*) glorifies Me...’- He sees us accepting His Word without question.
 Bringing a sacrifice of praise also means that we are bringing a praise sacrifice which has been examined for impurity. Just as the Old Testament priests examined the sacrifices to ensure they were whole – we need to examine our heart and offer to God praise which flows from a pure heart!
- ZAMAR** This is instrument and sung praise – lit.: “to touch the strings”. Ps. 47:7; 57:7; 68:4; 98:4; 144:9; 147:7; 149:3.
 Ps. 149:3 – “Let them praise His name in the dance, let them sing praises unto Him within the timbrel and harp.”
- SHABACH** Meaning: to commend, triumph, glory, shout, address in a loud tone. Ps. 35:27; 63:3; 117:1; 145:4; Dan. 2:23; 4:34, 37.
 Ps. 63:3, ‘Because Thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise (shout to) thee.’
 Ps.117:1, “O praise (shout – speak loudly) all you nations; praise (triumph and address loudly) Him all you people’ – This does not mean that those who are quiet and shy don’t have to – we are all exhorted to praise like this, and still remain ‘decent and in order’ – God sanctions this volume of praise (not because He is deaf!) but because His majesty and glory is worthy of great and indignant commendation (The New Testament also refers to such loud praise – Luke 2:13; 19:37; Acts 2:46-47; 3:8; Rev. 5:12; 6:10; 7:10).
- HALAL** Meaning: to shine, boast, celebrate, commend, sing, be clear, rave, be clamorously foolish. II Chron. 31:2; 1 Chron. 23:5; 23:30; 2 Chron. 20:19; Ezra 3:11; Neh. 5:13; Ps. 22:23, 26; 35:18; 63:5; 69:30, 34; 74:21; 107:32; 109:30; 119:30,164,175; 145:2; 149:3; 150:3-5; Joel 2:26.

As you can see, this is the most common word for 'praise' in Scripture, and it comes from the imperative – Hallelujah, i.e. "praise ye the Lord", by boasting, and celebrating, and raving about Him until it seems foolish!!!

TEHILLAH Meaning: high praise – to sing and laud.

Ex. 15:11; 2 Chron. 20:22; Ps. 23:3; 33:1; 34:1; 35:28; 40:3; 65:1; 71:14; 100:4; 106:2; 147:1; Is. 42:10; 61:3.

This praise differs from the rest of the praise expression, in that while the other realms of praise involve faith, this word implies that God has responded to that faith, and literally inhabits, and is enthroned in the midst of 'tehillah' praise. Then:

Ex. 15:11, we see Him not just as Father and Friend, but glorious in holiness, and fearful in praises' – we see that our God is a consuming fire and requires reverence and godly fear (Heb. 12:29). There is coming to the church, an understanding not only of the goodness and love of God, but also the severity of God – Rom. 11:22. When He inhabits this praise (He always honours faith with some response – as we enter in with faith, we now know His presence – this is a certainty), there is no way that we will be able to stand smugly in our own greatness and righteousness, and 'chatter' thoughtlessly before Him.

Ps. 33:1 - '...praise is comely for the upright.' As God inhabits our praise, we will be changed into His likeness (Ps. 17:15) and will show a comeliness of countenance. 2 Chron. 20:22. Battles will be won in the midst of 'tehillah' praise.

Ps. 40:3. Great evangelism will result from 'tehillah' praise.

Ps. 65:1 – Praise waits for You, O God, in Zion...' Sometimes we cannot go 'leaping' into other expressions of worship until we have 'waited' in this realm of praise and knowledge of God. Too often we never enter this far, and then when we know the inhabiting presence of God in our praise, we are too quick to either 'press on further' or –take an offering, read the announcements, etc. Before you go on from here, learn to wait in praise, learn to take time and know His voice!

WORSHIP

SHACHAH Meaning: to bow down, to prostrate, to fall on knees with forehead touching the ground, to fall flat, to reverence.

(Greek – *'proskuneo'* – to be prostrate, to reverence, to kiss towards, to kiss, as a dog would kiss the hand of its master).

Once we have entered into God's presence by faith, and therefore have obtained access to the habitation of God – then worship can be our only response. Praise required faith, but we need no faith once God inhabits, and is enthroned in our midst – we simply fall at His feet in wonder – for we see Him, knowing His manifest Presence.

There is no alternative once God has presented Himself in our midst, but to worship, and usually the moment God reveals Himself in some way, we will bow – That is the most normal and 'in order' response from all of creation.

Phil. 2:9-11, 'Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in earth, and things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Praise and thanksgiving means: to dwell upon things that God has done, is doing, and is going to do, but worship is: to dwell upon who He is and not the greatness of His acts.

Worship is our response to Him, once He has presented Himself in our midst. God reveals Himself to us in different ways, as each time we are in His presence He wants to show us something else about His character and nature, and also, He desires that we enter further into additional realms of His glory. Whenever we worship, it is a life-changing experience. We enter His presence, behold His face (glory), are changed as we take on His glory and nature, and are sent out into the world glorious even as He is glorious!

I Cor. 3:18, 'But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.'

Worship leaders need to know what God is saying in the midst of His people – where is He taking them. What is He revealing to them. - How best, can the people respond. What does God cause to happen in worship.

Exodus 19:6 "And you shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and on holy nation...."

God's original intention for His people was that they be a kingdom of priests, and that they would all know God as Moses knew Him. However, on the third day, God visited the people, and He spoke louder than they thought He should speak, and He felt more intense than they thought He should feel, and the whole earth shook when He spoke, and He required more of them than they thought He should have (He wanted them to be holy, and sanctified, He wanted their whole lives as a sacrifice before Him), and so the people said, "Moses you speak the things of God to us, but don't you let God speak to us, for all flesh has to die in His presence, and that is all we are. Let us be removed from God, so that we never have to have a personal encounter with Him – you go ahead and know Him, and tell us about Him so that we can still be called His people, and inherit all the blessings, but don't task us to get so close to Him again that we have to die to ourselves.' Ex. 20:18-21.

How long are we, in the church going to 'stand afar off' from our God, He longs to come in the midst of His people day after day, as He came before Moses (in Exodus 34) and process in the midst of us proclaiming and revealing Himself that we might be changed from glory to glory. Worship is an encounter with God – it is life-changing! For when we encounter Him we can only see a God of extremes – He is far beyond our limited concepts. He is a God of extreme love, mercy, grace, power, greatness, majesty.– faithfulness, justice, peace, holiness, beauty. It is my desire that I go as far as is possible (in God's boundries of balance and order – not man's pre-conceived ideas of balance) to go in worshipping Him with adoration, exaltation, celebration, evangelism, warfare, repentance, consecration, etc. Whatever God is saying in the midst of His people – I want all of it!!!

Come let us worship and bow down:

The following expressions are only some of the areas we can move into in the midst of worship. These flow in the midst of the church as a result of individuals and whole congregations meeting God. We still have not even begun to touch and know all there is to touch and know of God. We have not even begun to worship.

ADORATION – Rev. 5:8-14

The Bible is full of expressions of adoration in the midst of worship. This is not a word that is found in Scripture, but it perfectly describes the time in our worship, when there is an overwhelming desire in love, honour and revere the Father. This is an extremely personal time of deep 'pouring out' to the Lord although it is valid as a congregational expression also. There are many times in the midst of adoration that it would be inappropriate to speak, as words cannot begin to describe the splendor and majesty of our God.

As a church we have not begun to explore realms of adoration although, we would probably consider that this is one aspect of worship that we know well. In times of singing and spontaneous expression, the words we sing/speak can easily become formality and reduced to clichés unless we really allow our faith, mind and desire, to be the basis of our entrance into worship. Are we really adoring the Lord? - or are we just saying/singing the right words?

The elders in heaven are continuously adoring the Lord. They along with the other creatures, 'rest not day and night (Rev. 4:8) in their worship. They see the Lord, and then fall down and worship, and ponder what they have seen, and then they look up, and see His glory again or hear of His magnificence, and it is quickened or revealed to them that they are seeing something they had never considered before, and immediately they fall again at His feet in adoration. (Rev. 4:10; 5:8; 5:14; 7:11; 19:4; also John fell down – Rev. 1:17; 19:10; 22:8).

Where is there a man, or a created being, who can stand in his own righteousness in the presence of God? Don't stop with where you are in adoring the Lord – We will never stop seeing and hearing of the glory, and the majesty, and the power, and the mercy, and the grace, and the splendour, and the holiness, and the compassion, and the strength, and the wisdom, and the justice, and the wonder, and the might, and the authority of our God and King – and those are only a few of the attributes belonging to His person. As we worship throughout eternity, we will not even begin to come into the fullness of the knowledge of our God.

This is only one aspect of worship – most often we touch upon adoration – There will be times when the other aspects of worship are prominent – (see headings below).

Musicians, singers, dancers, congregation – how can you best express adoration? What sound can be made? What do we sing/say? What is going to be the demonstration of your heart?

EXALTATION – Ps. 99:5; Luke 24:53

Where adoration is a deep cry – almost at times, without words, and a dowing down before the Almighty, exaltation is more exuberant worship. There is an abounding, and prolific cry of worship, and a speaking out of our heart-felt praise. Exaltation speaks of a lifting up of the heart, hands, voice, banners, etc. Some of the Hebrew and Greek words for exaltation are:

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Rum / Room</i> (Heb.) | To exalt, extol, lift up high, mount up. To be set up, lofty, loud, tall. |
| <i>Gabah / Govah</i> | To be exalted. |
| <i>Nasa</i> | To be lifted up |
| <i>Alah</i> | To be gone up, ascend (up into), increase, shoot forth vapour. |
| <i>Huperairo</i> (Greek) | To lift up above – to exalt above. |
| <i>Kauchaomai</i> (Greek) | To boast, joy, rejoice, glory in glorifying. |

These words speak of this abounding praise shooting forth to the Lord – In a sense it is like loud and joyous adoration.

PERSONAL EDIFICATION – Col. 3:15-16

We are encouraged to reach and admonish (exhort, give advice, inform, remind, train) one another in the wisdom of the Word through psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. This is God revealed through His Word, and through a song in the midst of the congregation (see also 1 Cor. 14:26-when we meet together, some will sing, another will teach, or unfold doctrine, etc. All are to flow in the Spirit and edify, or build up the body.) We are quite used to this aspect of the Spirit's moving in our midst, however, there have been times when we have sought to be blessed rather than to bless and be a blessing – let us go on to excel in the gifts of the Spirit so that others may be edified. God speaks and blesses out of an atmosphere of worship, and we return to our homes enlightened and built up.

HEALING – 1 Sam. 16:23; Matt. 8:2

David found that he could minister healing to Saul, as he praised God with song and instrument. This principle follows the previous point – where we find that there is the opportunity to minister oil to the body as we worship. It is important to note, that this is not just a spiritual and emotional healing, but also physical healing can be imparted in a special way as we worship. Matt. 8:2 – A leper came to Christ, and the Word says that he 'worshipped' and then asked for healing. The healing came as a result of the worship (also Matt. 9:18 – the worst sickness. It is possible to have – death overcome through worship, Matt. 15:25). Sometimes in the midst of worship, God will reveal Himself as our healer – Ex. 15:26, "...for I am the Lord that healeth thee." During this time there will be great blessing, and no man should seek the glory – musicians can minister soothing and life upon their instruments, as the breath of God moves as He wills. A song, or dance can illustrate this also, and gather the people into the move of God. Many singers are testifying of cases where people are being healed as they sing.

One word in Greek for ‘worship’ is *‘THERAPEUO’* - meaning: to cure and to heal. As we take on the likeness of God in the midst of our worship, then healing is bound to result when God reveals Himself to us as the Healer, as we take on His life, His health, His joy and ‘state of mind.’

Prov. 17:22 and James 5:13 – those who are merry should sing, and the merriness of the heart will do us good like a medicine. Even in the natural world, there is increasing evidence, that music has an ability to heal and soothe. The science of music has revealed that music has the ability to reach the subconscious part of man, and effect for good or bad. If this is happening in secular music – how much more powerful will be the anointed music of worship.

REPENTANCE – Is 6:1-5; Rom. 12:1-2

When Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, and the seraphim crying one to another in worship, he did not adore the Lord, or move into warfare, or exalt Him, or dance with joy – He cried: ‘.....woe is me! For I am undone because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.’” When he saw the Lord – he saw himself, and bowed himself in an attitude of repentance. He was undone in the sight of God. This attitude is needed in all our lives – as we worship, let us also be ready for God to reveal the true state of our heart (or maybe we could never be quite ready for what will see!) so that we might sorrow with a godly sorrow that brings a repentance from the things of the world. 2 Cor. 7:9-11.

Romans 12:1 states that the decisive dedication and sacrifice of self is worship, and that we need to free ourselves from conformity to worldly things. When we see God – ungodly desires will fade – our desire will be towards Him. This is the beginning of knowing God.

Once again, we need to find the sound with the instruments which will best express the cry of the heart. Often though there will be need for music – may be a song of Lamentation or mourning needs to be heard. Jer. 9:17. There is a call to repentance arising in the church today. Without a new and deep work of repentance, we will not see revival.

SEEKING GOD – Ps. 27:4

Once we have turned from self – we have one desire i.e. ‘to dwell in the house (presence) of the Lord all the days of my life. To behold His beauty, and to inquire in His temple. The more we see Him, the more we will seek Him, He is irresistible. The Song of Solomon is a beautiful picture of the Bride – a worshiper seeking her Lord. This is a day when we must seek the Lord as never before.

CELEBRATION - Ps. 150; Is. 51:11

There are times when God reveals Himself as a God of dance, and mirth, and joy. We need to know that ‘...joy unspeakable and full of glory.’ Just because we know, and believe in Christ (1 Peter 1:8). Where is there a church that knows ‘the fullness of joy’ because they have been in the presence of God (Ps. 16:11)? We have not even begun to enter into that ‘fullness of joy’. We have yet to see the extent of joy that that will be released upon the church in these last days. God is preparing a people who know how to celebrate and effuse light and joy into all the earth! The instruments and songs and dances will radiate the joy of the Lord in the midst of the Church – sorrow and mourning will flee in our path. We often hear that people see slow songs as being songs of worship and fast songs as being songs of praise. However, if we meet the God of joy who sings and rejoice over His people, there is nothing else to do but worship with this kind of exuberance. Sometimes it is appropriate for us to throw back the chairs, and laugh and dance together, because the God of joy is in our midst. Make the sound of joy and a call to dance upon the instruments. Use rhythmic sounds and songs of gaiety and mirth.

EVANGELISM – Ps. 40:3; Acts 16:15-34; John 12:32

Some of the greatest days of harvest, and evangelism are ahead of the church. Rather than worship being an expression we should restrict (because the unsaved will be ‘put off’), many will run to the altar for salvation, as we extol and worship Him. ‘And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.’ When Paul and Silas sang praise – such was the demonstration of the presence

of God, that the jailer asked for salvation. Our lives, and our affection for God should provoke men and women to be saved. They should so see God in our lives, that they fear and trust in Him. If we make noise – just for noise sake – or enter into worship forms whatever they may be – just out of habit all that the unsaved will see and hear will be the ‘forms and the noise.’ However, if we meet God in the midst of the worship – the unsaved will see beyond the forms and the noise, and encounter God.

WARFARE – 2 Chron. 20

On this occasion, a great victory was won as a result of praise and worship. Many examples are seen for the church who is engaged in spiritual warfare: ‘For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in high (heavenly) places.’ Eph. 6:12. The word ‘wrestle’ in Greek, is ‘*pale*’, which is taken from the wrestling matches of that time, and which were a fight to the death. The only weapons used, were the hands and feet, and the opponent was killed by placing the heel in his neck. There was no draw!

We will cover the use of the hands and feet during spiritual warfare under the chapter on ‘dance’. It is important for us to remember that spiritual warfare is powerful, when flowing out of worship (as in 2 Chron. 20), as the enemy cannot stand in the midst of a people who are inhabited by the presence of God. The church is still learning about our position and function in the midst of warfare, but musicians, singers and dancers are being taught all over the world of their responsibility to lead out in songs, sounds and dances of war.

God may reveal Himself at times as a man of war – Ex. 15:3. ‘The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is His name’ – and we need to function in our scriptural role as leaders of spiritual warfare, and in assisting the congregation in seeing God as a man of war.

All sound travels through the air, and if Satan is the prince power of the air (Eph. 2:2), then we must fill the air with praise and worship. If our praise is inhabited by God, it becomes like a two edged sword (Ps. 149:6). Don’t be afraid to shout – (shout in Hebrew means: to mar-especially by breaking to split the ears with sound, destroy, smart triumph, a battle cry, clangor of trumpets as an alarm, to be free, to rejoice, to blow an alarm.) Josh. 6:5; II Chron. 13:15; Ps. 5:11.

Anyone can shout, and make a loud and empty noise – Satan is not afraid noise, but if God is in the shout – then all that is not of God will be destroyed. We need to release the hand of the enemy from our friends and neighbours, so that they can be released into the kingdom of God. Musicians, singers and congregation – consider the song and the sound of praise that you make in the midst of war. Trumpets and drums are excellent in warfare when played skillfully. We need to learn to make the sound of the enemy being defeated and trodden underfoot.

Thanks produces Praise. Praise produces High Praise. High praise produces Worship. Worship can be expressed in a variety of ways, and is not necessarily just adoration. Kingdom life flows out of our relationship with God – our worship. Then the Glory of the Lord is revealed in us, as we take on His likeness. The gifts of the Spirit flow as a daily part of living. People are not brought into the kingdom of God by seeing miracles – they saw Jesus perform great things, and then crucified Him – signs and wonders come as a result of knowing God and living in His ways.

DANCING IN PRAISE

Concerning the spiritual dance we feel it necessary to encourage those who dance before the Lord; to explore the Scriptures concerning their ministry, and see the great things that God is restoring today concerning the involvement of dance in worship. We are not just talking about the usual hopping up and down, which is known to churches all over the world. (this is one aspect and form of dance, and is a valid Scriptural way to express joy and release us in the presence of the Lord). Our desire is that we would be able to express total abandonment in worship, and that the body of Christ would be able to maturely, and at the right time, worship in the spirit and truth – using whatever form is appropriate to express what God is saying. Dancing is a Scriptural truth, and

therefore we need to be able to function in this truth with a godly sense of responsibility and order. We fear that many have moved into this expression without due thought, prayer and teaching. Some have settled for the form of dance, and creativity, without realizing the deep significance that this form has in the plan of God for the church in these last days. More than ever we need to learn to die to external things – even our desire. Without death, there will be no life. God desires life to flow from the dance ministry, and not just a group of people being ‘free’ and practicing to be creative just for creativity’s sake. Some of the last things that God reveals and restores to the church, may be those things concerning the feet.

We only have time to include a brief study of some things which are involved in the dance ministry. Study the scriptures for yourself – this is intended as a beginning point, only.

SCRIPTURAL WORD STUDY – WORDS FOR DANCE AND REJOICE: (Hebrew)

Gul; Gill – to spin around (under the influence of any violent emotion); rejoice; (cringing) fear; be glad; joy; be joyful; rejoice; to go in a circle.

Psalms 2:11; 9:14; 13:4-5; 14:7; 16:9; 21:1; 31:7; 32:11; 35:9; 43:4; 48:11; 51:8; 53:6; 89:16; 96:11; 97:1-8; 118:24; 149:2; Is 9:3; 16:10; 25:9; 29:19; 35:1-2; 41:16; 49:13; 61:10; 65:18-19; 66:10; 1 Chron. 16:31; Job 3:22; Prov. 2:14; 23:24-25; 24:17; Song of Sol. 1:4; Jer. 48:33; Joel 1:16; 2:21-23; Hosea 9:1; 10:5; Hab. 1:15; 3:18; Zeph. 3:17; Zech. 9:9; 10:7.

Chul; Chil – to twist or whirl (in a circular or spiral manner); to dance; to turn around; to dance in a circle; to writhe in pain (especially of childbirth); to travail.

Deut. 2:25; Jud. 21:21-23; Job. 15:50; Ps. 29:9; 55:4; Is. 13:8; 23:4; 26:17-18; 54:1; 66:7-9; Jer. 4:19; Ezek. 30:16; Joel 2:6; Mic. 4:10.

Machol (from Chul – above) – a (round) dance; dancing chorus. Ps. 30:11; 149:3; 150:4; Jer. 31:4, 13; Lam. 5:15.

Macholah (femine of Machol) – A dance company or chorus.

Ex. 15:20; 32:19; Judg. 11:34; 21:21; 1 Sam. 18:6; 21:11; 29:5; I Kings 19:8; Song of Sol. 6:13.

Karar: to dance (whirl); to move in a circle.

Sam 6:14.

Rekad: To stamp, to spring about (widely or for joy, dance, jump, leap, skip).

Chron. 15:29; Job 21:11; Ps. 29:6; 114:4, 6; Eccl. 3:4; Is 13:21; Joel 2:5; Nahum 3:2

Dalag: To spring or leap.

Sam 22:30; Ps. 18:29; Is. 35:6; Song of Sol. 2:8; Zeph. 1:9.

Pazaz: To leap, to bound, be light; (associated with root word ‘to separate and purify metals from dross by means of fire – solidify by refining – to be made strong.)

Chagag: To move in a circle, specifically to march in a sacred procession, to observe a festival, celebrate (from the idea of leaping and dancing in sacred dances), keep a solemn feast, by implication to be giddy or drunken.

I Sam. 30: 16; Ex. 5: 1; Lev. 23: 41; Ps. 42: 4; Ex. 12: 14,17; 23: 14; Deut. 16: 15.

SCRIPTURAL WORD STUDY – WORDS FOR DANCE AND REJOICE: (Greek)

Agalliao: from agan (much) and hallomai (jump, leap, spring up); properly: to jump for joy, exult, be exceeding glad, rejoice greatly.

Noun: Agalliasis: exultation, extreme joy, gladness.

Luke 1:14, 44, 47:1 10-21; Matt. 5:12; John 5:35; 8:56; Acts 2:26, 46; 16:34; 1 Peter 1:6,8; 4:13; Heb. 1:9; Jude 24, Rev. 19:7.

Hallomai: To jump, leap, spring up.

Acts 3:8; 14:10-3.

Exallomai: To spring forth, to leap up. Acts 3:8

Skirtao: To jump, sympathetically move, leap for joy. Luke 6:23; Luke 1:41, 44.

Choros: A ring or round dance chorus, dancing, a band of dancers and singers, a circular dance. Luke 15:25.

Orcheomai: from “*Orchos*” (a row or ring), to dance (from the ranklike or regular motion) Matt. 11:17; 14:6; Mark 6: 22; Luke 7:32. (This Greek word is used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew word for King David’s rejoicing in 1 Chron. 15:29 and 2 Sam. 6:21)

DANCING IN WORSHIP

The lifting of our hands, and bowing down before the Lord are demonstrations of heart surrender by physical involvement with the body. (Deut. 6:5, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your might.”) Jesus accepts the worship of Mary, who enacts total homage, and proclaims Jesus as King and Lord by washing His feet with her tears and with, and then drying them with her hair. (John 12:3; Luke 7: 38) – This is a visual enactment of her worship.

2 Sam. 6:14-16; 1 Chron. 15:29 – David danced before the Lord in worship with all his might.

Ps. 149:3 – “Let them praise His name in the dance.’

Rev. 19:7 – ‘Be glad and rejoice for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and the wife has made herself already.

Judges 21: 21 – The daughters of Shiloh made a pilgrimage every year to Shiloh to worship the Lord on the set places in the vineyards.

Jer. 31:13 (read from v.12), ‘Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old men together...’

The dance of rejoicing and worship is released after the establishing of wheat, wine and oil (the word, joy, anointing) – these are the three things that will cause a balance in the dance ministry).

Ps. 30: 31, ‘You have turned for me my mourning into dancing.’

WELCOMING A VISITATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

A BIBLICAL BASIS FOR PRESENT-DAY PHENOMENA

“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.” (1 Pet. 3:15).

We are living in exciting times as these are the last days, and the Lord is pouring out His Holy Spirit on His people in a new way all across the world in churches, congregations and fellowships. (Joel 2: 28 –29; Acts 2: 17 – 19a). These Holy Spirit outpourings bring a great sense of spiritual refreshing (Acts 3: 19b), followed by a new zeal for the Lord, compassion for the lost, and a desire to live holy lives! Yet this new wave and outpouring of the Holy Spirit appears to be accompanied by various phenomena and manifestations which have caused some good believers to ask legitimate questions about these things. The main question heard is usually the following: “Where do we find it in the Bible?” This study will try to help answer this question, clear our doubts and prepare us to welcome this new visitation of the Holy Spirit around the world!

Can I prove all these unusual experiences that I ‘m seeing or hearing about in various churches and congregations with exact Bible verses? The answer to this is: “not always.”

Or, asked another way, the question becomes...

Do these experiences agree with clear Biblical principles? The answer to this is: “usually, yes!”

The Bible contains primary (very important) Scriptures that tell us what we are to believe and what we are to do. They are specific Bible verses that prove certain experiences and beliefs. They set a standard for what we can consider the “norms” in Christian experience. For instance, Jesus forgave the woman taken in adultery (John 8: 4-11). Here He was setting a standard for our own attitude and behavior. We are to follow His example and be kind, merciful and attempt to restore the repentant in such cases.

However, the Bible also contains secondary Scriptures. These describe experiences and events that are necessarily setting a standard of what is considered normal. We do not teach these texts as principles you must observe and do to be a good Christian. But these secondary examples are important because these may validate similar activities and manifestations and render them acceptable. Such similar experiences in our day may not exactly duplicate what is in the Bible, but they are near enough to recognize whether they are of God or not. An example of this is Jesus applying His spittle for healing in order to restore speech and sight (Mark 7:32-35; John 9:6-7). These examples open the door for other very unusual ways of praying for healing today, without actually using spittle. We do not have to use spittle. But it is alright to use some unusual means to bring healing if directed by the Spirit to do so. In such cases it would also be expected that this claim of divine direction be confirmed by the sick being healed. Doing weird things without results should be rejected!

Proof-Texts or Biblical Principles

Another instance is Ezekiel. He was picked up by what looked like a hand, and in visions was taken to Jerusalem (Ezekiel 8:3). Numerous times he would fall face down like a dead man, only to be physically raised up or even taken away by the Spirit (Ezekiel 1:28; 2:2; 3:14, 24 and others). Ezekiel was even gripped by an involuntary sticking of his tongue to the roof of his mouth that made him unable to speak (Ezekiel 3:26).

Since these unusual experiences were Biblical, they may therefore be repeatable. However, they definitely do not form an example which requires they be followed by believers. Nor are they to be preached as the “main and plain” commandments of Scripture. Yet, as descriptive passages, they may make other similar happenings acceptable. These similar incidents may not look exactly like Ezekiel’s experience but would still be considered Biblical.

“Pet” Hermeneutics

Everyone interprets Scripture through their own experience. How people read and understand the Bible is due largely to their denominational or church background or previous training. For instance, consider Paul’s comment concerning head coverings: “And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head...it is just as though her head were shaved” (1 Corinthians 11:5). The meaning and application of this verse is interpreted very differently depending upon which group teaches it. In some groups this verse virtually became a very distinct doctrine of that denomination. They interpreted the text literally to mean: “every woman’s head must be covered.” However, when they came to the part on prophecy, they said that this did not apply. Prophecy had ceased. It was obsolete. They believed that things such as prophecy had died with the original twelve apostles.

On the other hand, another group of my friends said “no” to head coverings. This was because, in our current culture, a covering no longer makes any sense as a sign of authority or submission. However, because prophecy was special in their doctrine, they gave a hearty “Amen!” to the fact that women should prophesy. It was the same Scripture used by both groups, but exactly the opposite in application.

Then I met still another denominational church group and I found they didn’t believe in head covering or prophesying. What’s worse, at the end of the day, all three groups believed they were right. Error is produced by faulty hermeneutical practices that support pet doctrines. We all believe and do things that agree with Scripture but are not commanded in the New Testament. Yes we can know by principle if something is Biblical.

Sunday Schools are not commanded in the Bible, but we know it is a right and Biblical principle to teach God’s words to our children and to others. (Deut. 4:10; 6:7; Matt. 28:20, etc.)

Some people believe that we should not worship God with musical instruments. This is because they cannot find a Bible reference where instruments were used in New Testament worship. In the sixteenth century, some reformers actually destroyed church organs because they were not found in the New Testament!

True, it is possible that no instrumental music was used in the Church from the first century until the arrival of the organ. But to apply Scripture in this way is faulty. The Bible tells us, “...sing praise upon the harp unto our God” (Ps. 147:7). “...let them sing praises unto Him with the timbrel and harp” (Ps. 149:3). “Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet; praise Him with the psaltery and harp” (Ps. 150:3). The Book of Psalms is full of examples of musical instruments used in worship.

The worship songs and use of instruments commanded by king David were the result of the Spirit of God instructing him. David said, “The spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was in my tongue” (2 Sam. 23:2). See also 1 Chronicles 15:16; 2 Chronicles 5:13; 7:6.

Where did the form of worship come from in the early church if not from the Old Testament? The divinely given worship orders given centuries earlier were never taken away. Therefore, if musical instruments honored God and were used to praise Him in the Old Testament, they can honor Him and be used in our praises to Him now.

The Bible Does Not Require Us To Proof-Text Everything

An outstanding church leader said, “God is bigger than His book.” That was news to me, because I was told that He was contained in His book. I was told that all that could be known of God is in the Bible. The Jews of Jesus’ day had the same problem. Jesus said, “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me to have life” (John 5:39- 40). The Scriptures are about Jesus, but they are not Him. It is possible to be so fixed on what we think the Word is saying and meaning that we limit who God is and what He can do.

The Bible does not require us to proof – text everything. The Book says about itself: “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written” (John 21:25).

The whole world could not contain the experiences, reports and expansions of His teaching. Does that mean these unwritten things would be different or contradictory? No! They would just be an expansion of that which already exists. If Jesus did things that are not recorded, then there is truth that is not contained in the Bible. So to answer the question, “Are some of the unusual present-day manifestations Biblical?” The answer is yes. Are there specific proof-texts for them? The answer is: may be yes and may be no, depending on how one interprets the text. The following discussion will present Biblical principles to show the reality of spiritual, physical and emotional manifestations caused by the Holy Spirit.

Tongues

There was not a specific and clear prophetic pronouncement in the Old Testament that when the New Testament dispensation was ushered in it would be accompanied by rushing wind, tongues of fire, people appearing as though drunk and the miracle of speaking in actual languages (tongues the speakers didn't know (see Acts 2:1-21). There were many unusual happenings and manifestations when the Holy Spirit fell at Pentecost. One could never have anticipated all those things. Not one of them was recorded in the Joel 2:28-32 passage which Peter used to validate these happenings. When pressed for an explanation of the phenomena, Peter appealed to Scripture. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he said, “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel” (Acts 2:16). Yet, when we check Joel 2, we find none of “this.” Peter never defended any of the phenomena. He just stated, “This is it!” Finding a direct proof Scripture was not needed to show that it was Biblical. And yes, a Pharisee who based everything on God's Word could say, “What do you mean this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel? I don't read anything about a rushing wind, a manifestation of fire and this tongues thing, Where do you read that in the Bible? Even Jesus never spoke of this!” Technically the Pharisee would have been right, but spiritually he would have been dead wrong – again.

Joel spoke of a future empowerment. However, the Holy Spirit of Scripture did not find it necessary to describe and include all that would happen.

What Is Not Disallowed, Is Allowed

The great theologian St. Augustine once said, “Love God and do whatever you want.” What he meant was: if you really love God, you will want what He wants, and you will “obey the law without the law” (Rom. 2:14). If we apply that principle to Bible interpretation, we could say: What is not disallowed, is allowed. That is, if something is not disallowed or contradictory to Scripture, it probably is allowed. The disciple John once protested to Jesus that “we saw a man driving out demons in your name... and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us” (Mark 9:38). In a sense, John was saying, “The man wasn't one of us; he didn't do it like us; it just shouldn't be allowed!” But Jesus replied, “Do not stop him. No one who does a miracle in My name can in the next moment say anything bad about Me, for whoever is not against us is for us” (Mark 9:39- 40).

Staying With The Main And Plain

We do not believe in elevating personal experiences to the same binding authority as Scripture. We subscribe to the Westminster Confession which contains these words: “Nothing in addition to Scripture can be binding.” Any in Church history who have elevated personal experiences to the same binding authority as Scripture have finally come into conflict with Scripture. It is not right to build “new” teachings based on personal revelation or experience. We agree with the following quotation: “No doctrine should be based on a prophetic interpretation of a particular manifestation.” While we firmly follow this, we still believe in the Biblical gift of prophecy. In its most common form Paul defines prophecy in these words: “But he that prophesies speaks unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” (1 Corinthians 14:3).

Prophecy should always: build up, stir up, and cheer up! Anything beyond this exceeds the Scriptural limits of the simple gift of prophecy and must be judged and weighed carefully by church leaders.

We also believe in the existence of experiences and manifestations that are not precisely described in the Bible. During Bible times, it is obvious that many things happened which weren't recorded in the Scriptures. The Apostle John stated as much when he finished his Gospel. "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book;" (John 20:30).

In the early Corinthian church meetings, prophecy was common. These were unpremeditated utterances that may or may not have included quotations from the written Word of God. They were not considered in any way as equal to the Bible in authority or value. Paul taught that words that come through prophecy should never be elevated to the authority of the inscriptured (written) Word of God. Prophecy must be judged and weighed for validity (see I Corinthians 14:29). Jesus and many other Biblical personalities did things and had "God-experiences" which are not written down. We cannot assume that an unusual manifestation that happens to someone in our day is invalid simply because we do not find an exact Biblical account of the experience. Recording every spiritual experience was not the purpose of the Biblical writers. In fact it was impossible to do so. John said, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen." (John 21:25).

Biblical Evidence

The Biblical evidence supports various manifestations which are seen today in the present renewal / revival around the world. We will choose the four most common and controversial manifestations to describe. These are: shaking, falling, laughing and ecstatic prophecy. Although there is much historical evidence of these in the Church, we will deal only with the Biblical record.

A - Shaking

There are several places in the Bible where shaking and other physical and spiritual phenomena accompanied a visitation of the immediate presence of God. In one of the greatest visitations recorded in Bible history, God came down to deliver the Ten Commandments to Moses and "the whole mountain trembled violently." The exact account is extremely graphic. "On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, the whole mountain trembled violently, and the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. Then Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him." (Exodus 19:16-19). The New Testament account of this visitation says, "At that time his voice shook the earth." (Hebrews 12:26).

Isaiah experienced a similar effect in his visitation from God. "At the sound of (the seraphim's) voices the doorpost and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke" (Is. 6:4). When God was coming to deal with the downcast prophet Elijah, who was sitting in a cave, the Lord said – "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by. Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper." (1 Kings 19:11-12). The powerful wind, the quaking of the earth and the fire were not the Lord, but preceded the actual presence of God. The wind and fire are both examples or types of the Holy Spirit's work. His work is described as promising that, "Once more (He) will shake not only the earth but also the heavens" (Hebrews 12:26).

At the scene of the most dramatic occasion of all of New Testament history, God's presence produced violent shaking in the earth. When Jesus Christ, God's only Son, was suffering in agony on the cross, the Holy Spirit was hovering all around. The Bible says, "And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, He gave up His spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn

in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split” (Matthew 27:50-51). Again, this shaking was a response to the presence of God.

Finally, there was shaking with the coming of the promised Holy Spirit at Pentecost. “Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” (Acts 2:2-4). Notice again the wind and fire, which reminds us of God’s visitation to Elijah on the mount. The Bible records, “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit.”

The very next time the assembly was together they were filled with the Holy Spirit again. This time it was at a prayer meeting held by Jesus’ disciple in response to their first persecution. “After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God boldly” (Acts 4:31).

We may wonder about a possible reason for shaking as a reaction to being in God’s presence. An eminent scientist and a believer himself was concerned with God’s creation of the earth. He made the following study: “Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering {“moved upon,”} over the waters.” (Genesis 1:2). This activity of the Holy Spirit is called that of “moving.” The word ‘moved’ (Hebrew: *‘rachaph’*) occurs only three times in the Old Testament, the other two being translated “shake” (Jeremiah 23:9) and ‘fluttereth’ (Deuteronomy 32), respectively. Some commentators relate the word *‘rachaph’* to the hovering of a mother hen over her chicks. In any case, the idea seems to be mainly that of a rapid back-and-forth motion. In modern scientific terminology, the best translation would probably be “vibrated.” If the universe is to be energized, there must be an Energizer. If it is to be set in motion, there must be a Prime mover. It is significant that the sending of energy into the air is in the form of waves – light waves, heat waves, sound waves and so forth. These sorts of waves are usually rapid back-and-forth movements. They are normally produced by the vibrating motion of a wave generator of some kind or another. Energy cannot create itself. It is most appropriate that the first giving of energy to the universe is described as the “vibrating” movement of the Spirit of Creator God Himself.

Moved By the Spirit

There is another moving of the Spirit of God mentioned in the Bible. “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21). The Holy Spirit energized the original universe to bring form and life to God’s creation. In a similar way, He later empowered God’s prophets to bring beauty and spiritual life to His new creation. They were to do this through the energizing Word which they put into Scripture. Whether the word “moved” (Hebrew *‘rachaph’*) can actually be interpreted as “vibrated” is not the point. Rather, it is the understanding of how energy is released and sent that is interesting. Shaking may simply be a response to power. The Biblical data would support the position that things can be physically shaken in response to the presence of God.

It is Biblical to say the Spirit moved (Greek: *‘phero’*) upon lifeless objects and also moved upon holy men of God. Shaking is Biblical because it is in the Bible and God initiated it. Some people think that shaking is ‘of the devil.’ In some cases, it is true. We have witnessed shaking that was obviously in response to unholy or demonic spirits. Human beings can be moved by spirits who are unholy. In Mark 9:22 a demon cast a boy into the fire and water. Demons can cause people to shake, cry out and exhibit other manifestations.

However, an experienced person can easily discern the demonic. It usually can be dealt with quickly. The fact that demons cause physical responses in those that are demonized does not negate the fact that Christians or believers are moved upon and shaken by the power of God (as already shown above). We have concluded that this shaking is the physical response to the mighty filling power of the Holy Spirit.

B - Ecstatic Prophecy

One of the most graphic examples of God moving on human beings is the description of Saul and his soldiers. The first encounter is seen in 1 Samuel 10:1-12 where Samuel, directed by God, anoints Saul as the first king of Israel. Samuel pours the anointing oil upon Saul's head. The heavenly anointing is then prophesied to come upon Saul soon after: "As you approach the town, you will meet a procession of prophets coming down from the high place with lyres, tambourines, flutes and harps being played before them, and they will be prophesying. The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you in power; and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person. Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you." (1 Samuel 10:5-7).

Many Bible scholars have not known what to think about this roving, worshipping band of prophets. They seem to have come out of nowhere. However, the people of their day knew they were a distinct company. They also knew that the Spirit of God was in their midst. Onlookers asked the question, "Who is their father?" This implies that some special thing had been passed down from father to son (1 Samuel 10:11 and Amos 7:14). Therefore, it seems a spiritual structure had existed for generations. Even much later, in the days of Elijah and Elisha and beyond, large bands of prophets were still functioning together (1 Kings 20:35; 2 Kings 2:1-15; 4:1, 38; 5:22; 6:1; 9:1).

The description of the Lord coming upon Saul in power leaves no doubt that there was more going on than mere words (1 Samuel 19:23-24). "When all those who had formerly known him saw him prophesying with the prophets, they asked each other, "What is this that has happened to the son of Kish?" (1 Samuel 10:11).

One Bible scholar commented the following on this passage: "The passage seems to focus on the awesome power of the Spirit. This causes Saul to do something he has never done before. This probably astonishes Saul as much as people who observed him. His acquaintances are watching. Their surprise is clearly caused as much by what they saw as by what they heard. It seems likely that the Spirit's power produced changes in the prophets which could be seen or heard. These were changes the people observing Saul were familiar with. The effects of the Spirit's power evidently lasted for some time."

God Empowers Saul And Saul's Men To Prophecy

Years later, an event occurred that leaves no doubt as to the ecstatic nature of being seized by the Spirit of God. Saul sends a battalion of tough soldiers to capture David. They were certainly not willing vessels on their way to a renewal meeting. "When they saw a group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's men and they also prophesied. Saul was told about it, and he sent more men, and they prophesied too. Saul sent men a third time, and they also prophesied" (1 Sam 19:20- 21).

Our imagination can just picture the Spirit of God leaping from the midst of these prophets, landing on the heads of these tough soldiers and causing them to prophesy in wonderment. It is obvious that this experience happened against their will. They didn't have a choice. After Saul was told about it, he sent more men and they prophesied, too. Saul sent men a third time. Again the same result: they also prophesied. This is an example of an epicenter, or a special central place, of Scriptural power and anointing. People walked into it and received supernatural, spiritual experiences.

"Finally, {Saul!} himself left for Ramah....And he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" So Saul went to Naioth at Ramah. But the Spirit of God came even upon him, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth. He stripped off his robes and also prophesied in Samuel's presence. He lay that way all that day and night." (1 Sam 19:22-24). The King James Version says, "He lay down naked all that day and all that night." This account is in the same brief story as to that of the three groups of soldiers. Therefore, it is likely that Saul's action is of the same type as the involuntary prophesying of the soldiers. Like the soldiers, Saul also was not a willing vessel. This was not a penitent Saul. No, this was an unrepentant man who was seized against his will. He was taken over in body, soul and spirit.

It is uncertain if Saul's condition included shaking, ecstatic utterances such as have been seen and heard in historical revival settings, as well as in present-day meetings. But the possibility cannot be ruled out. Saul had entered the spiritual epicenter of the company of prophets and thus became like them. God still has the right to create what seem to us to be the most outlandish spiritual experiences. We would do well to remember God is God, and we're not!

C - Falling

Today by far the most common manifestation is that of falling or being overwhelmed (overcome) by the Spirit. For years Pentecostals and Charismatics have called the experience "being slain in the Spirit." Far from being an exclusively Pentecostal or Charismatic experience, Christians and believers from every tradition and church background have written extensively for centuries about this manifestation. The fact that this manifestation is Biblical is well supported by God's Word. These Scriptures describe everything from deep sleeps, an inability to stand in the glory of God and falling at His feet like a dead man (Genesis 15:12; 2 Chronicles 5:14; 7:2; Revelation 1:17).

All the accounts are similar in that the believer is caused to be powerless in some way. The accounts differ in detail with some people not being able to stand (John 18:6; Acts 9:4); others going into trances (Numbers 24:4); some into a deep sleep (Daniel 10:9); while others are actually transported to wherever the Spirit willed (Ezekiel 3:14; 8:3; 11:24).

Daniel in Babylon is not only a classic example of falling. He also is an example of whatever else may be happening while the worshiper is overwhelmed. "I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. Then I heard Him speaking, and as I listened to Him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground. A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said, "Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you." And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling. Then he continued, "Do not be afraid.... Now I have come to explain to you what will

happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come." While he was saying this to me, I bowed with my face toward the ground and was speechless. Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I opened my mouth and began to speak. I said to the one standing before me, "I am overcome with anguish because of the vision, my lord, and I am helpless. How can I, your servant, talk with you, my lord? My strength is gone and I can hardly breathe. Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. "Do not be afraid, O man highly esteemed," he said "peace! Be strong now; be strong." When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength." (Dan. 10:7-19).

Daniel's experience is incredible. He doesn't even record that he fell; only that he had no strength and was overcome by fear and helplessness. Daniel could hear and was conscious of his state. He was aware that he was "in a deep sleep" with his "face to the ground." He was physically helped to his hands and knees by the visible form of the Lord. Next, Daniel stood in obedience to the Lord's command, and bowed to the ground in a speechless state. He complained that he was overcome with anguish because of the weight of the glory of God. It so weakened his strength that Daniel could hardly breathe. We could say that falling was the least of his concerns. Daniel's strength and speech finally returned after a physical touch from "the one who looked like a man."

In the Bible, whole crowds could be affected like this. An example of this is the great temple dedication of Solomon. The celebration was glorious. Elders, chiefs of tribes, priests, musicians – they were all there. "The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the Lord. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, they raised their voices in praise to the Lord and sang: 'He is good; His love endures forever.' Then the temple of the Lord was filled with a cloud, and the priests should not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God." (2 Chronicles 5:13-14).

These men had prepared for months for this occasion. They had a service to perform which would have been the highlight of their lives. Then, all at once, none of them could perform his services. They were made completely powerless.

Moments later, when Solomon finished dedicating the temple with prayer, “fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. The priests could not enter the temple of the Lord because the glory of the Lord filled it.” (2 Chronicles 7:1-2). For the second time in one day, no one could function in what he had expected, because the unexpected had taken its place.

D - Laughing In The Spirit

The spectacular manifestation of hundreds of people laughing in church has caused dismay among some Christians. Why would people laugh in church? It doesn't appear reverent. Shouldn't there be tears instead of laughing?

We must say no, not always. Joy due to the filling of the Holy Spirit should be a natural response in church. “For the kingdom of God is...righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 14:17). Indeed the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace and so on (see Galatians 5:22- 23). What do you think joy should look like? Why does it seem so odd to see joy expressed with laughter? After all, the two go together.

Psalm 126:1-3 describes the time when the Lord brought back the Jewish captives to Zion. “We were like men who dreamed. Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them. ‘The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy.’” Contrary to what some might say, laughter belongs with joy. Joy is not merely a deep state of contentment. The Jewish captives jumped and skipped; their mouths were filled with laughter and joy. Laughter and joy should go together in church, too.

In summary, there is still so much more that could be cited – a talking animal (Numbers 22:28); walking on water (Matthew 14:29); riding with angels (2 Kings 2:11); bones that raised the dead (2 King 13:21); wrestling with visible appearances of God (Genesis 32:24-28); and even visiting the third heaven to receive visions of paradise (2 Corinthians 12:2- 3).

The words of King Solomon said it right: “Is there anything of which one can say, ‘Look! This is something new? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time’” (Eccl.1:10). The spiritual experiences of men and women in the Bible are so fantastic that they amaze one's mind. And they are not new. They have happened throughout time and history. Unusual manifestations that we are seeing should not be challenged out of doubt and fear. But, like the Bereans (Acts 17:11), we have the liberty and duty to search the Scriptures whether these things be true. Once we see that God does work in unusual (to our natural mind) ways we should pray that even more powerful evidences of His manifest presence come so we can be even more like the people in the Bible.

So far we have only experienced water up to our ankles. We need to pray for water deep enough to swim in – a river that no one can cross (Ezekiel 47:3-5).

Conclusion

We do not want to force Scriptures to say what they were not meant to say. However, Biblical information is varied and encompassing. There is therefore not much in the way of spiritual, physical, emotional or mental experiences that cannot come from God. Are spiritual, physical and emotional manifestations Biblical? We can say “yes!” on all counts.

In and of themselves, manifestations are not against Biblical principles. They could be called natural – the response of finite human beings to the presence of an infinitely powerful God. We are not compelled to proof-text each and every unusual manifestation we see, since they are not considered to be part of the “main and plain” of Scripture. They may have happened in Bible times to approved Old or New Testament saints without being recorded. The examples and teaching found in the Scriptures would allow them far more than disallow them.

There is no reason to assume manifestations are contrary to the Bible just because we cannot find an exact precedent in the Scripture. Rather, what we have seen are every bit in line with the amazing similar encounters with God experienced throughout history!

Final Note:

The real issue in spiritual, physical and emotional manifestations is not the fact that they happen. What we should be concerned with is the spirit{ual}, source, power or casual – factors behind what we observe.

The spiritual gift (*charism*) of “discerning of spirits” (1 Cor. 12:10) is an enablement given by the Holy Spirit to help us know whether what we are observing is of the Holy Spirit, the human spirit, or a demonic (or evil) spirit.

If it’s the Holy Spirit, pastors should encourage it. If it’s the human spirit, pastors should train and discipline it. If it’s a demonic (evil) spirit, pastors should restrain it!

I have noticed that some Christians develop “spiritual habits” of shaking or shouting when they prophecy or speak in other languages by the Holy Spirit. I do not label this as wrong. God is sovereign, and may at times give some a good shaking or strong emotion.

However, with encouragement and teaching, most believers can be helped to exercise self-control (temperance) which I one of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:23). Then their prophecies are much more intelligible, easily understood and better received by believers and unbelievers alike “...except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken?” (1 Cor. 14:9).

BREAKING BAD HABITS

INTRODUCTION

Life is filled with habits –some good, some not so good. We are creatures of habit. We’ve all managed to acquire a host of habits in the course of our development. Many habits are innocent, unnoticeable, and of little consequence. However, some habits are deadly, obvious, and of major consequence to our lives. When we embraced Christ, we renounced a life of sinful habits and practices. But many Christians and believers find it difficult to break old habits and forsake well-established patterns. In this study, we will examine the subject of breaking bad habits, and offer some liberating steps for accomplishing this.

WHAT IS A HABIT?

...habit is: “an established practice, tendency, or manner of behavior.” It is a behavioral pattern which is acquired through frequent repetition. A habit implies something which we have learned to do unconsciously and often compulsively. It is a pattern which has been reinforced through repeated use. A habit can be harmless or life– threatening. It can range from a facial mannerism to something as deeply ingrained as a character weakness. It can involve something as simple as putting the right shoe on first – or something as serious as drug addiction.

HOW IMPORTANT ARE HABITS?

Habits can be extremely important. They often have a tremendous impact upon the course of our lives. They can even affect our eternal destiny. The following saying captures this truth well:

Sow a thought, reap a deed;
Sow a deed, reap a habit;
Sow a habit, reap a personality;
Sow a personality, reap a destiny!

Since our habits can have such a significant impact upon our lives, we must not ignore them or take them lightly. Those habits which are beneficial need to be appreciated and reinforced. Those habits which are detrimental need to be carefully examined and eliminated.

THE CHALLENGE OF CONQUERING HABITS

The challenge of overcoming destructive habits can be a formidable obstacle. Some habits are so firmly established in our lives that they seem like insurmountable barriers. Habits sometimes appear to be areas which are impossible to change. The prophet Jeremiah presented a question which approximately characterizes the dilemma which we sometimes encounter when we confronting the challenge of breaking bad habits. “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil.” (Jer. 13:23).

A SOURCE OF FRUSTRATION

The struggle of wrestling with habits can often produce a deep sense of frustration. The difficulty of achieving a permanent victory over alcoholism, drug dependence and smoking can become a grueling experience. Our previous inability to defeat sinful habits can create overwhelming sense of hopelessness and despair. Those who have sought to overcome such habits have soon discovered that they are not always easy to defeat. It is not a problem which can be solved with simplistic answers or quick-fix remedies. However, it is problem which can be successfully answered through Christ.

IS THERE GENUINE HOPE?

Yes! Before we can successfully deal with sinful habits, we must understand that there are no hopeless situations in Christ. Our habits are no exception. In 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Paul lists the sinful practices which the Corinthians had been habitually involved in. He included such things as drunkenness, homosexuality and thievery. In verse eleven, he followed with this important

statement: “And such WERE SOME OF YOU.” This verse is a strong encouragement for all those seeking a lasting release from life-dominating habits. The wording is in the past tense – ‘WERE’ Paul reveals that God has made it possible to overcome what seem to be impossible – our old way. Jesus didn’t just provide a temporary, half-way solution. He gives a permanent victory over every conceivable practice. If He could do it for them, He can do the same for us!

IS THERE A SOLUTION?

Absolutely! This is the guarantee of Scriptures: “I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST who strengthens me.” (Phil. 4:13). However, some Christians have convinced themselves that this is not possible. They have made so many unsuccessful attempts to overcome their habits that they have resigned themselves to failure. They have defeated themselves even before they begin.

We may have lost a few battles, but we have not lost the war. In spite of our previous failures, we must not settle for total defeat. We must re-commit ourselves to follow God’s divine instructions for victory. In this study we will examine the Scriptural steps for achieving a complete and permanent victory over our sinful habits.

WE MUST SINCERELY REPENT

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Sincere repentance is the first step.

Before any Christian can defeat sinful habits, he must recognize them as a sinful practice. If we fail to grasp this fundamental fact, we will not succeed in overcoming them. We must not endeavor to conquer our sinful habits just to alleviate guilt or soothe a troubled conscience. Our motive must not be based upon the compulsion or coaxing of others only. It must be based upon a sincere, godly conviction to please God and appropriate His cleansing power and forgiveness.

WE MUST APPROPRIATE GOD’S POWER

Before we can bring God’s power to bear upon the problem, we must recognize that we have a problem. If we ignore it, minimize it or overlook it, our sinful habit will only reinforce itself. We must identify the habit and give careful consideration to its nature, frequency and occurrences. When we have given proper attention to the problem area, we can begin to wage successful warfare against it.

After isolating the problem, we should begin to attack it through persistent prayer. If we will begin to draw upon the power of Christ through prayer, He will impart the necessary strength. We must not rely upon our own might, but upon the divine resources of the Holy Spirit to combat our sinful habits.

WE MUST STRIVE FOR CHANGE

The Scriptures teach us that change is a vital part of our development in Christ (II Cor. 3:18). The process of change is a fundamental requirement for overcoming sinful habits. Without change, our habits will continue to persist. However, change must be more than just attempting to stop practicing a sinful habit. Many attempt this form of change without lasting success.

Change must involve more than saying “NO!” Change isn’t just a matter of will-power, human resolve or sheer determination. It isn’t turning over a new leaf or making bold promises to quit. Quitting is not change. This is only a half-way response which only provides half-way results. If this is all we do to change, our change will only be temporary. Scriptural change involves a two-fold process. Real change isn’t just stopping sinful habits, .. but replacing them with godly actions. Only when we begin to change our practices and re-learn positive habits can we really achieve lasting victory!

Paul points out this two-fold process in Colossians 3:8. He exhorts us to “put off” our old practices. He then encourages us to “put on the new man” (Col. 3:10). This putting “off” is the negative side of change. It is important – but, in itself, insufficient. We must also

apply the positive side of change which involves the putting “on” of Biblical alternatives. This is the key to successful change.

IV. BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; BUT BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT” (Eph. 5:18). This verse illustrates both the negative and positive side of change. Instead of allowing ourselves to be dominated by old habits, we should strive for the Holy Spirit to be the prevailing influence in our lives on a daily basis. When we are filled with His presence, we receive the necessary strength, support and will-power to successfully overcome the “lust of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16- 17). We must replace our old habits with constructive alternatives. Paul reveals some of the practical steps for accomplishing this in verses 19 and 20 of Ephesians, Chapter 5.

~~This doesn't mean you must not endeavour to improve her. Building up of the wife is the husband's responsibility~~

APPLY THE CLEANSING POWER OF THE WORD

“How can a young man cleanse his way? **BY TAKING HEED ACCORDING TO YOUR WORD**” (Psalms 119:8). The Word provides an effective source of cleansing for our old ways. In referring to God’s desire for His Church, Paul stated: “That He might sanctify and **CLEANSE HER WITH THE WASHING OF WATER BY THE WORD.**” (Eph. 5:26).

The Word is a cleansing agent for our thoughts, desires and inclinations. We should carefully consider those Scriptural passages which have a specific bearing upon the need for godly change and His provision for help. If we will meditate upon God’s Word and take heed to His counsel, it will gradually begin the process of cleansing our ways and purifying our habits.

VI. WE MUST BRING OUR HABITS UNDER SUBJECTION

“But I **DISCIPLINE MY BODY AND BRING IT INTO SUBJECTION**, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified” (1 Cor. 9:27). We must exercise a firm hand in disciplining our sinful habits. The tendency to participate with our old ways must be confronted and suppressed. If we allow our minds to fantasize, flirt with, or entertain the possible justification of our sinful habits, we will suffer defeat.

Victory depends upon decisive action. When we are tempted to continue a sinful habit, we must challenge the desire with the Word of God. The temptation should also serve as a warning signal to drive us to the Lord in prayer. Our determination to promptly confront our habits when they arise is an effective safeguard against failure.

VII. WE MUST FORM RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS

The Scriptures reveal the destructive power of wrong relationships: “**DO NOT BE MISLED BAD COMPANY CORRUPTS GOOD CHARACTER.**” (I Cor. 15:33). Harmful relationships only reinforce sinful habits (Prov. 22:24- 25). Old friendships and associates can be a destructive influence. Our old hangouts can also create compromising situations for those endeavoring to overcome sinful habits.

This fact demands a godly alternative. We must terminate those associations which hinder us, and surround ourselves with healthy relationships which reinforce godliness. We must strengthen the ties of Christian fellowship and center our activities around the church and fellowship of believers. (Heb. 10:24- 25).

VIII. WE MUST NOT GIVE UP!

“**A JUST MAN FALLS SEVEN TIMES, AND RISES UP AGAIN**” (Prov. 24:16). In the process of striving for victory, we may occasionally fall short; however, we must rise up and continue to press on. We must persevere in order to achieve victory. We must not allow our failures to discourage, frustrate or disillusion us. They must not cause us to give up. It takes time to re-establish godly alternatives. There is no such thing as instant success. It takes about 30 days to relearn a godly habit. Therefore, persistence and determination are essential.

OVERCOMING PROBLEMS IN THE BELIEVER’S LIFE (Breaking strongholds)

The Nature, Origin and Solution of Problems (Strongholds)

Problems Are A Part Of Life

Every believer faces problems. They are a part of life, and we should not be surprised when they occur. The reason life is filled with problems is because of man’s sin nature. Man was born with strong desire to have his own will and way. Sadly, this is apart from God’s desire and purpose. His will produces a life of love, joy and peace. Our way produces a life filled with problems – for us and for others.

Ongoing problems which gain a firm grip or hold upon our lives are called “strongholds.” They are the result of deeper needs within our hearts. It is these hidden roots of our problems that God wants to reach with the healing and redeeming power of His love.

Yes, God desires to take our trials and problems and use them to make us more like Jesus. In one sense, then, we can actually welcome them more as friends than as enemies. In the end, they will do us good rather than harm. That is the promise of God. “Therefore, let us rejoice in our trials and troubles. We know that such pressure produces patience and the ability to endure. From this comes Christian character, and hope for the future. And this hope will never disappoint us. In fact God love has already been poured into our hearts through the gift of His Holy Spirit” (Rom. 5:3-5).

Relationships Often Reveal The Problem Areas Of Our Lives

Many hidden strongholds in our lives are forced to the surface through our relationships with others. Working and living with other people has a way of bringing out the best – and the worst – within us. We are forced to face ourselves as we really are. God often uses relationships to reveal changes which are needed within the believer’s life. I recall a young lady telling me how she wanted to prepare herself for marriage. I asked her where she was living. “Oh, I live alone in a little room of my own. I have a greater freedom that way.” I told her she was going to have to learn how to live with another person. This was the quickest and best way to get ready for marriage. She agreed and soon got another young lady as a roommate. Day by day they bumped into each other’s attitudes, words and actions. In time the sharp, rough edges of their lives were worn smooth. They learned how to be kind, forgiving and thoughtful of each other’s needs and desires. In the process, they became more like Jesus. And this is the very best preparation for marriage that one could ever want.

Yes, God will use relationships to bring problems and strongholds out in the open. Then He can heal and release us from hurts and bondages from the past.

Wrong Heart Attitudes Are The Root Of Most Problems

As stated, the heart is the center of our being. It is the attitude of our hearts which gives us our view point in life. The attitude of the heart influences the direction of the mind! For this reason, when God wants to reach the roots of our problems, He looks upon our heart. This is the source of our strongholds.

We cannot change our hearts by trying to change our outer behavior. If you have a bad temper, you will not solve your inner problem by trying to hold your anger in. You may stop your yelling and fighting for a time, but the fire still burns within. When the pressure builds up, it can still break out in full force. Or it may result in high blood pressure or some other kind of physical problem.

God wants to treat the source, not just the symptom. You can’t cure a cancer by taking a drug that only relieves pain. You have to remove the cause of the pain – the cancer itself. Otherwise, the disease will spread until the whole body is affected. God reveals our strongholds so that He might cleanse us from all “unrighteousness” – everything that is not right in our attitudes and actions. He wants us to walk in righteousness so that we might have a life that is ruled by his loved, joy and peace. He has given us Spiritual laws for our good – that we may have His full blessing. Obedience is the way to true spiritual freedom. To break His laws brings us into bondage. We become bound by the power of our own strongholds. For this reason, it will be important for us to study the nature and cause of strongholds in more detail.

The Source and Nature Of Strongholds

Strongholds Defined

As stated above, strongholds are wrong inner attitudes of heart. They come from two main sources:

Wrong attitudes towards the “major influences” which shape our lives. These are the people, places and events which have influenced us throughout our lives.

Wrong attitudes towards God. These wrong attitudes can be defined or explained as listed below:

- Misbelief – wrong ideas about His character.
- Unbelief – doubt and distrust of His love, power and wisdom.
- Judgment – blaming Him for our problems.
- Resentment – hurt and anger towards Him because of our problems.
- Rebellion – resisting and disobeying His will.
- Bitterness – a stronghold of resentment.

These wrong attitudes towards God sometimes develop in the order above. We begin with a false idea of what God is like. We expect Him to relate to us in line with our understanding of Him. If we think of God as being unkind and unfair, we will blame Him for all the unkind, unfair things that happen to us. If we think of Him as Someone Who should give us our every desire, we will blame Him if we don't get what we want. In either case, our judgment of God will turn into the hurt and anger of resentment. As a result, we will resist and rebel against His will for our lives.

The sad results of our self-willed lives will further harden our hearts towards God. Before long, our whole life will be filled with the powerful poison of bitterness. This final outcome is a deep-rooted stronghold which only the Holy Spirit can break.

The Three-fold Nature Of Strongholds

Strongholds can be defined in three ways:

- Strongholds are “self-holds”

As we submit to our strongholds, we actually feed them in a way that builds the kingdom of self. Everything is centered on how we think, feel and act. At the same time the Kingdom of God is weakened in our lives. We seek to serve ourselves rather than seeking to put His Kingdom first.

- Strongholds are “sin-holds”

Self-holds lead to “sin-holds” because selfish desires lead to sinful attitudes and actions. Once this pattern of sin is set in our lives, it is hard to break. We confess and fall into the same sin over and over again. We want to stop, but can't seem to firmly say no the next time around. As a result, we go back and forth between the pleasure and guilt of sin. The roots of our problem are still there – fixed into the ground of our old sin nature.

- Strongholds are “foot-holds”

Sin-holds of the flesh become “foot-holds” for demonic influences. Repeated, willful sin becomes the ground upon which demon powers can stand. They then obtain a stronghold upon some area of our life. As they feed upon our sin, their grip becomes even stronger. We cannot by ourselves easily break away. It is only as we submit to the power of God's Word and His Spirit that they are overcome – and we are set free.

Before strongholds can be broken we need to know more about them, and how they are expressed in our lives. We will want to review this in some depth below.

How Strongholds Are Expressed

Strongholds can be seen and known on the surface of our lives in a number of different ways. We shall discuss some of the more common ones.

Being super-sensitive and over-reacting

Some people are very sensitive, and get their feelings hurt very easily. Usually they will over-react and quickly pull away in fear, self-pity or anger. They are like someone with a bad sunburn. We may not know they have a problem if they cover up the burn with light clothing. However, if we greet them with a pat on the back, they will quickly react. They will seek to defend and protect themselves by crying out or pulling away.

People with inner hurts and wounded spirits react in the same way. If topics are raised which relate to painful problems in their lives, they will quickly act to defend themselves. They will either withdraw in silence or react with strong words or even tears.

These signs point to strongholds which clearly need the gentle grace of God's forgiving and healing power.

Anger or frustration

We often feel we have certain rights that should be honored. We may believe we have needs and desires that should be met for our well-being. If these expectations are not fulfilled, we may overreact with deep feelings of anger, failure and disappointment. We are put out with ourselves and others.

Fear, worry, anxiety and insecurity

Some people live under a dark cloud of fear and worry. They feel their well-being and that of their loved ones is always in danger. The smallest threat produces strong reactions of fear and anxiety. They never feel fully safe and secure. Even when there is nothing to worry about, they are uneasy because they feel there should be. The roots to such strongholds run deep.

Self-pity

Self-pity is feeling sad and sorry for ourselves. It occurs when we believe we have been treated unfair or unkind by others. Our feelings have been hurt, and we react by crawling into a pit of our own making.

It is not only a pit of pity, but one of torment and inner pain. The more we think about our hurt, the deeper the pit becomes – and the harder it is to climb out. In time, we will need help from others to break such a stronghold and find our release.

Guilt and shame

Sin can produce feelings of guilt and shame. But Jesus came to forgive, redeem and release us from our sin – and the guilt and shame it brings. In Christ there is “no condemnation” for those who walk after the Spirit. (Rom. 8:1).

Still, many people live with heavy hearts. They feel they can never be good or holy enough to please God. They may even believe they have failed so badly they are beyond God's grace.

Sadly, some preachers even use the fear of God as the main force to keep people in line with their religious rules.

Loss of emotional feeling

Some people have been hurt so deeply they have hardened their hearts to any kind of feeling. They have built walls around their emotions to avoid any more pain. As a result, their feelings are numb or almost dead.

Such folk can't respond to good or bad events with either joy or sadness – laughter or tears. In fact, they are not able to enter into a warm, personal relationship with anyone. They have turned into themselves, and will not share their hearts with others. These are signs of a serious stronghold that requires much love and wisdom to destroy.

Rebellion

To rebel or disobey is a part of the old sin-nature. However, for some, any authority causes a rapid and strong feeling of rebellion to rise up within their hearts. They resent any form of rule or control.

Their rebellious spirit affects every area of their life and produces problems not only for others, but themselves. They will choose to rebel even when obedience would bring far better rewards. Sadly, rebellion has become the controlling force and stronghold of their life.

The bondage or addiction to sin

An addiction or bondage to sin is a desire which we cannot control. Moreover, it becomes the very center of our life. Every other area of our life turns about it –and is related to it. Yes, we build our life-style around it, and it affects all of our thoughts, decisions and actions. Certain sexual sins or substance addictions like alcohol or tobacco are good examples of such strongholds.

The need to control, possess and dominate

Some people have to be in control. They must be in a position where they can direct people, things, events and programs. It is based on a fear of what would happen to them if others were to direct their lives. Therefore, they must be on top no matter what the cost – to themselves or others.

Stubbornness

Stubbornness is a strong set of mind that will not change even when it is should. Stubborn people will never give in or give way to anything or anybody. They feel they are always right and will never admit it when they are wrong.

Plainly, such people have strong wills and a problem with pride. Strange, as it seems, they can also be driven by fear. They are afraid that change will reveal a weakness in their lives which they cannot face.

A critical, judgmental spirit

Some people have strong feelings of inferiority. They believe others are better than they are. Therefore, they are always seeking to build themselves up in the eyes of others.

Sadly, they may try to do this by putting other people down in a critical, judgmental way. The greater their feelings of inferiority, the more critical they may become. In time it becomes the central attitude of their life.

Selfishness

A self-centered person is always thinking of himself – his desires, needs and goals. Everything and everyone is judged by how much he will gain from it or them. It easily leads to greed and envy.

Selfishness is often based on a fear that somehow they are going to lose out in life. It can also be the result of parents who “spoiled” their children by giving them everything they wanted. Therefore, they only think of themselves rather than others.

Rejection and withdrawal

Many people suffer from the pain of rejection – both real and imagined. They feel unloved, unwanted, unneeded and unworthy. As a result they withdraw, and will not risk starting new relationships. They cannot face being left out, put away or turned down. The strength of their defense depends on how much they have been wounded in the past. This stronghold is fed by a spirit of fear, which only the power of God’s love can cast out.

D. Strongholds: Their Season And Strengths

The strength of strongholds differs from person to person. We inherit certain personality traits and weaknesses. Other bad traits are learned and picked up from our parents, families and friends. The events and influences which shape our lives are all different. Therefore, we must be careful not to judge another because we have victory in one area where he does not. We may be strong where he is weak, but he may be strong where we are weak. Plainly, personal strongholds are not the same for different people. For example, some people have grown up in families that hold grudges. If they have been treated unfairly, they hold on to those hurts. They refuse to forgive and let go. They may even vow to pay others back for the pain they have caused. Other families by nature

won't let themselves become upset by the action of others. Life is too short to waste it by holding on to bad feelings. They can far more easily "forgive and forget." Plainly, children raised in such families will relate to the problem of grudges in different ways. The strength of that stronghold most likely will be much greater in one than the other.

Some strongholds appear at different seasons of life. The fear of growing old, for example, is not seen until later in life. Other strongholds also gain strength as one grows older. Some only reach their peak in later years. For example, we may not have the time to develop the stronghold of self-pity when we are younger. Our time and attention is taken by our duties to our family and job. If the seeds are there, however, they will take root and in our old age will rapidly grow. Later in life there is more time to feed and strengthen our negative or bad feelings. If we do, they will take over our lives – and those around us. Yes, we shall reap the bad attitudes we have sown in younger years – unless these strongholds are dealt with now.

So we see – there are different people, different seasons of life and different stronghold strengths.

E. Other Times when Strongholds Are Revealed.

During times of suffering, trials and troubles

"Blessed is the man who stays steady and passes the tests of life. He shall receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (James 1:12). Everybody has trials, but in one sense only Christians have "fiery trials." It is during times of suffering and trouble that the fire of God's Spirit can purify our lives. The binding cords of strongholds can be burned away and we are set free. As the grip of the enemy is weakened, we become stronger and develop more of Christ's character. Heat and pressure not only purify metal, but they also make it stronger and more useful. The same is true of our life in Christ Jesus.

It was my pleasure to visit with some one who had been terribly persecuted for his faith in Christ. He said something I will never forget: "I went through 17 years of being tortured – painfully treated – for being a Christian or believer. That was the best thing for me. I could have become bitter or better. I chose to become better!"

Truly, God allows times of trial and testing to come our way. He does so that He might expose and tear down the strongholds the enemy has set up in our lives. God means it for good, not evil. He wants to remove the roots of bitterness, and replace them with the sweetness of His spirit.

We may not always understand why certain things happen. But one thing we do know: in the midst of all, God wants to give us His peace. We can hang on to our resentment, and hold it against others – and even God. Or we can give it up to the Lord and let Him heal our hearts and restore our souls. We can become bitter or better. The choice is ours.

During crisis time of fear and doubt

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (II Tim 1:7). God may allow us to come into times of fear and doubt so that our faith may be both proven and perfected. It is not His desire that we give in, give up or give way. Rather, He has promised to give us:

(a) A sound mind; (b) Power to overcome; and (c) The support of His love.

Yes, crisis times are testing times. They are times when hidden fears and doubts can be forced to the surface of our lives. God's purpose – and promise – is to show us the overcoming power of His love and peace within our hearts. The apostle Paul found God's Word to be true in a very personal and practical way. Listen to the words of a man whose faith had been proven and perfected in his life of service to God: "I have learned to be content with what I have. I know how to live whether I have little or I have much. I have learned the secret of being happy all the time and everywhere – no matter what happens...Yes, I can do all things through Christ Who gives me strength." (Phil. 4:11-13).

This record from Paul's pen is most amazing. He had actually come to place in his walk with God where nothing without could ever disturb his peace within. He could be "content" with little or much, in easy times or hard. He was not controlled by outer events or situations. Now

that's real freedom! It didn't matter whether he was in prison or not; his spirit was free. No, he was not bound by the "prison-holds" of either doubt or fear. He was safe, sound and secure in God's love. And a "sound mind" produces a peaceful spirit. What more could we want?

During times of personal loss

Personal loss is built into the system of things. It is an expected part of life. All of us will experience the loss of someone who is dear to us. That is true. No matter how we may deny it, or avoid thinking about it, it is still true. Yes, we will all go through times of personal loss—either persons, places or things. But again, God can use such times to reveal and heal hidden strongholds in our lives. If our loss leaves us with a grief or fear which does not lessen – or even increases – with time, we may have found the roots of a stronghold. There is always a real feeling of grief over the loss of something or someone who was very special to us. But if the sorrow does not slowly decrease with time, it could be a sign of a deep-rooted need in our life.

If we feel as if God is gone following such a loss, it may be that what was lost had taken the place of God in our life. Perhaps we had placed more faith and trust in a loved one than we had in the Lord. They had become the real source of our security and sense of well-being.

Therefore, with our loss it is difficult to get over our feelings of loneliness and insecurity. We are left with an empty ache in our hearts which gets worse rather than better. It is very sad situation indeed.

But there is hope. It is at this point that God desires to reveal Himself to us our Blessed Comforter. He wants to make it up to us for our loss. He wishes to do so by revealing Himself to us as the true source of our every need. He wants our security to be in Him, because He will never fail us no matter what life may bring our way.

God wants us to know that He cares for us – and will always take care of us. He is our God, and in Him we can trust. He is our peace, and in Him we can rest. Nothing else truly matters when we are in His presence. We can again face the future with faith and hope in our hearts. Truly, there are hidden blessings in our losses if we allow the Lord to reveal Himself to us in a greater way. He wants to do so, and He waits for us to look to Him. This is His promise – and our hope and expectation. He will not fail us; we will never be disappointed.

Yes, with His healing and release in our lives, we can face the future without fear. We have won a victory which will last for life. Then with Paul we can truly say, "I have learned that I can be content whether I am poor or rich – have little or much." No longer are we controlled by our losses or our gains. Christ is now the Lord of our lives, and in Him we have peace – now and forever. And that is true freedom!

Personality conflict

"Where do your fights and quarrels come from? They come from your selfish desires that are ever at war within you...But God will give us more grace. Indeed, the Scriptures says, 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble...Yes, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another. Do this so God can heal you.'" (James 4:1-6; 5:16).

We talked about personality problems earlier in this study. It is good, however, to remind ourselves that at such times certain strongholds can be revealed—and healed. As we learn to humbly walk together in the Lord, we can actually help and heal each other. Instead of pouring salt on each to other's wounded hearts, we can pour in the healing power of God's love and understanding. This is Christian counseling at its best!

During holy times in the presence of God

"God is light...If we live in the light, we share fellowship with one another. And the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin...If we confess our sins, He will forgive us our sins, for He is true and faithful. He will make us clean from all of our wrongdoing." (1 John 1:5, 7, 9). People often avoid God's holy presence because they are fearful of seeing their sin. Yet that revelation can be a great blessing for us. In fact, God really wants to us see our sins. This is

not because He wants to leave us in shame, guilt and despair. It is because He wishes to forgive, redeem and restore us in His love.

The Lord does not want us to spend all of our lives gazing at our sins and feeling guilty. He wants us to look upon Him as our Savior, Healer and mighty Deliverer.

The light and love of the Lord always go together, or we wouldn't dare approach the holy throne of God. As it is, He wants us to come to Him just as we are – in honesty and humility. He gladly receives us in Christ Jesus. He willingly picks us up and cleans us off – and makes us as pure and holy as His Son.

God's judgment is not aimed at hurting, degrading and destroying us. It's purpose is to cleanse, heal, release and restore. God's judgment for the believer is good. It is something we should welcome for our well-being. Yes, it is the key to a life filled with love, joy, peace, freshness and freedom.

HOW TO TEAR DOWN STRONGHOLDS

Conviction: Claiming And Confessing Your Sins

“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves...and make a liar out of God....If we confess our sins, He will faithfully forgive us....and cleanse us from all that is wrong within our lives” (1 John 1:8-10).

i) Name, claim and confess your sins

We must recognize and be responsible for our judgments, vows and strongholds. We must see our sins, and claim and confess them as our own. We cannot put the blame for our faults upon

others. If we find we have a problem with the stronghold of anger, we must admit that it is our problem. It is basically not the fault of other people or situations which make us angry. The sin is ours and we must own up to it. Moreover, if it is rooted back into judgments we have made against others – who treated us unfairly and unkindly – we must admit that. Perhaps they didn't or couldn't – meet our needs and expectations for love and attention. We became hurt, and then angry. Therefore, we judged them for their failure. But their wrong behavior doesn't justify our judgment. It was and is wrong. Our attitude of judging is sin.

We may then have vowed – knowingly or unknowingly – never to take that kind of treatment again without making somebody pay for our pain. Our “revenge” might be in the form of angry words or hurtful actions. As that pattern was repeated, the attitude of anger became fixed and set in our lives as a stronghold. It is necessary to confess these vows, attitudes and actions as sin! We have sinned against God's love and against other people. Our sin has brought grief to God's heart and pain to those around us. We must see it, claim it and confess it to our heavenly Father. He is right and we are wrong.

ii) Be convinced and convicted of your sin

Confession and conviction of sin go together. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts and convinces us of sin. That is, He points it out and tells us how sinful it is. We not only see the sin, but how very wrong it is. It is sad and hurtful to God, others and ourselves. In our “confession” of sin, we are agreeing with God that it is as bad as it really is.

The role of the Christian counselor is to help a person to see, claim and confess his sin. As a counselor you must remember, however, that you cannot convict the “sinner.” Only the Holy Spirit can do that. The counselor is not a judge, but a helper. You cannot “convict” or “fix” anyone. The counselor raises issues, asks questions, and reviews insights – trusting the Holy Spirit to guide in the process.

As a counselor, you must not insist that the person “see things your way.” If you do, the conviction and confession of the person will not be his own – but yours. That will only make the person depend or lean on you all the more. And if his problem remains, you are going to be the one he blames!

Repentance: Willingness To Turn From Your Sin

Repentance is being willing to change the sinful attitudes of one's heart and mind. Only then can the power of strongholds be broken. God will work when we “will” Him to “work.” There is no other way. We must understand, however, that there is a difference between the will to change and the power to change. In one sense, of course, the entire process is a work of God's grace. From man's position, however, there is his part and God's part. Man's part is to choose to change – that is an act of his will. God's part is to give him the power to change – that is His special work.

This is important to see, for no one can break the grip of a long-standing stronghold by the power of his own will. That is a work of our flesh –even though the desire may be godly. But it won't work. The apostle Paul put it this way. “You began your life in Christ by the Spirit. Are you now going to try to finish it by your own power? That is foolish!” (Gal. 3:3).

Only the power of God's Spirit can remove our guilt, heal our hurts, and break our bondages. We cannot change ourselves by ourselves. Only the Lord Jesus can do that. “Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of His grace. There we will find mercy and help in our time of need.” (Heb. 4:16). Yes, our part is to readily and honestly come to the Lord in true repentance. We must be willing to turn from our old sinful attitudes and actions. As we do, God will provide the power to break away from the past. We can then walk forward in victory in the gracious light of His love and truth.

Power: A product Of Our Prayer, Praise and Worship

“Don't worry about anything. Pray for what you need with a thankful heart of praise...Pry for one another that you may be healed. The prayer of righteous person has a powerful effect.”

(Phil. 4:6; James 5:16). As we walk with the Lord, it will involve a close relationship with the Lord Jesus who is our source of power. Only the power of His presence can truly change our lives in a lasting way. For this reason, it is His desire that we face Him with our fears, problems, trials and troubles. He not only has an answer, He *is the Answer!*

That's why it is said, "God does everything through prayer and nothing without it." Prayer is a powerful form of "face-to-face fellowship."

Various Forms Of Effective Prayer

As we have seen, there are various kinds of prayer. All of them are effective in breaking the power of strongholds. It would be wise to briefly review them with this thoughts in mind.

Confession: We name, claim and agree with God that we have sinned against Him, others and ourselves.

Forgiveness: We ask for and receive His forgiveness. We also forgive others and receive forgiveness from them.

Renunciation: We "renounce" or put down, out and away anything which is wrong in the eyes of God. It is a sure, strong and final word. We will have nothing more to do with it – ever. It is a firm word which we declare to God, Satan, others and ourselves. ...

Deliverance: We confess and submit to the Lordship of Christ. Then in the authority of His name we resist and rebuke the devil. Through the power of the Cross we break his hold on our lives – and set ourselves and others free.

Cleansing: We declare the cleansing power of Christ's blood, and accept our freedom from guilt, shame and condemnation.

Revelation: We ask the Holy Spirit to search our souls and reveal to us the real roots of our problems. We do so without fear, for with the light of His truth comes the power of His love.

Healing: We confess and claim the Lord Jesus as our Great Physician. We accept from His hands the healing of all of our inner hurts and wounds of the heart.

Prayer and Fasting

Fasting with prayer is a powerful means of releasing God's grace in difficult problems. Jesus told His disciples that strong, stubborn "spirits" may not leave without prayer and fasting (Matt. 17:21). Fasting from food and other things of this world helps us to hear God more clearly. As we put away the desires of the flesh, the Spirit can work through us in amore powerful and effective way. Fasting doesn't make God more gracious or merciful to us. We cannot add to God's grace by our works. However, it does make it easier for us to receive His grace, when the power of our flesh is weakened.

I have seen the benefit of fasting when counseling people with very difficult problems. The strong roots of these problems are well-hidden in the ground of their flesh. These roots are hard to find because they have become so much a part of their lives. They don't know what or where they are. Fasting weakens the flesh and allows the root-reasons for their problem to be reached. The Holy Spirit reveals and then removes the basic causes for their personal pain and difficulty. In other words, fasting puts us in a place to better receive God's goodness and grace. This is true for both the counselor and the person who is being counseled.

The Power Of Praise And Worship

Praise is blessing God for all that His has done for us. It begins with the Cross – His death and resurrection: What He did for us there is the basis for all of the other gifts which we receive from His hand. In praise, we express our thanks and gratitude for the goodness to us in so many ways in the past. We praise Him for answered prayers in every area of our lives.

In worship, we love and adore God for Who He is. We think upon the beauty of His body and loving nature. We bow before Him and enjoy the holy wonder of His presence. As we look upon His face our hearts are warmed by His goodness and grace.

In both praise and worship, our hearts and minds are upon God. As our attention is fixed upon Him, the power and pain of our problems are weakened. Our faith can rise to claim God's answer

for our needs. We can begin to believe that He is both able and willing to heal the hidden hurts of our lives. God knows us better than we know ourselves, and loves and accepts us just as we are. He does so because He also knows the difference that His Son, His Spirit and His Word can make in our lives. As we come into His presence, we can talk to Him about our deepest problems without fear – but in faith. More important than that, He will also talk to us. We can expect Him to give us enough light and faith to take the next step. And it will be the beginning of a new walk into His way of divine health and happiness.

Word: Instruction in Righteousness

“All Scriptures is inspired by God. It is useful for:
teaching the truth,
rebuking error,
correcting faults, and
instruction in right living.

As a result, God’s servants will always be ready – and full prepared – for every kind of good deed” (II Tim. 3:16). God’s Word is our guide to righteous living – right thinking, speaking and doing. Without that direction, we can easily loose our way. Many of us have, and that is the reason we suffer from the problems that we do. It is good to know, however, that God’s Word is also our guidebook to a better, happier, more useful life. God’s promises are like handles which we can hold onto as we pull ourselves out of our deepest problems. No longer are we pushed and pulled in every direction by the pressures of the past or present. The Word of God is a sure ground on which we can firmly stand. It is the authority by which we can continue to walk in God’s will in a sure, steady way.

The Written Word becomes the Living Word

“It is the Spirit who gives life. The words and works of man are of no value at all. The words I speak to you are of the Spirit, and bring life.” (John 6:63). We need to know God’s Word –what it says and what it means to us personally. “Logos” is the Greek term for the written Word of God in general principle. “Rhema” refers to the living Word of God as it applies in personal practice. As we think, pray and meditate upon God’s written Word, the Holy Spirit brings it to life in our hearts. It becomes a part of us, and affects our attitudes and actions in practice and specific ways. A rhema word provides both wisdom and power for our personal lives. It is God’s Word divinely directed just for you!

The Power of God’s Word To Renew Our Minds

“Do not shape your lives to fit the ways of this world. Instead, change your lives by renewing your mind. Bring it in the line with the good and perfect will of God. Prove it out in practice” (Rom. 12:2). The Power of God’s Word will cleanse and heal if we will allow ourselves to be exposed to it. “Put down all thoughts and ideas that oppose and lift themselves above the true knowledge of God. Yes, capture and control every thought, that your mind will be obedient only to Christ. Submit your thinking to His will in all things.” (II Cor. 10:5).

As observed, our “self-talk” has a very important effect upon our lives. We talk to ourselves in our minds all throughout the day. Some believe we speak as many as 2,500,000 words to ourselves each day. Plainly, what we “say” in our hearts and minds will affect our attitudes and actions. (Prov. 23: 7a –K.J.V.) What are we telling ourselves? In one sense we are speaking to our “souls.” Is it the truth of God’s Word, or the lies of the world, the flesh and the devil? What we think sets the shape of our lives! Maybe this is the reason some of us are in such sad shape and bad form. It is through the power of God’s Word that we can renew our minds and control our thoughts. We need to read, learn and meditate on the written Word of God – until it becomes the living Word of God for us. (Josh. 1: 8; Phil. 4: 8). As we speak “truth” to our souls, it brings “life” to our spirits. The psalmist seems to have discovered this powerful principle. Over and over again in his psalms, David encourages his soul with “Spirit-breathed” words of faith and hope.

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all of His benefits.

He forgives all of your sins.

He heals all of your diseases.

He redeems your life from destruction.

He crowns you with love, kindness and mercy.

He provides you with good things.

The Lord renews your strength like that of an eagle.” (Psalm 103:1-5).

Truly, God’s Word is spiritual food and strong medicine for our souls.

Roots: Revelation of Hidden Things

“The Word of God is spiritually alive and active. It is sharper than a sword with two edges. It cuts all the way through to where the spirit and soul meet – to the depths of our inner being. It reveals and judges the attitudes, thoughts and desires of man’s heart. Nothing is hidden from the eyes of God.” (Heb. 4:12- 13). Both God’s Word and God’s Spirit are needed to reach and release us from the hidden strongholds of our lives. Many of our personal problems fade away as we turn to God Word and pray. For hidden hurts and strongholds of long standing, however, it may be necessary to “dig” a little deeper. This is most true when we want to be free to serve and obey God – but seem to be bound by strong habits and bad attitudes. This requires reaching the real roots of our problem. It means going back to its “point of beginning” and destroying the power.

We are not “digging” just for the sake of digging. We are not interested in reviewing all of the sad and bad sins of our past. We are asking the Holy Spirit to search our hearts. We want to know if there are any painful roots from the past from which we need to be released. “Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any hurtful or wicked way in me. And lead me into the path which will last forever” (Ps. 139:23-24) The Holy Spirit is our true Counselor. Our desire is for Him to reveal the point where our problem began. Then we can deal with it directly and destroy its power. I have seen God do this many times. The release and healing which follows is real and lasting.

Perhaps we were hurt or deeply disappointed as a child. As a result, we judged those involved and made some negative vows never to be hurt like that again. The bad attitudes and actions that followed these decisions fixed strongholds that needs to be broken. God wants us to confess any sins of unforgiveness, resentment and anger – judgments, vows and attitudes. He desires to heal our hurting hearts and wounded spirits. He will also release us from any demonic influence which may be involved. And He will be as direct and specific as are the causes of our problem.

There is a sense in which the power of the past to control our lives has already been broken. It was destroyed at the Cross by Christ’s victory over evil. The devil, however, is a deceiver and wants us to believe, feel and act as if nothing is different. There is a point where we must confess the victory, forgiveness and healing which we have in Christ. The past has no power to keep a hold on our lives. However, if we fail to claim our new freedom in the Lord, we will keep our hold on the past. We must be willing to “let go” – that is our part to play. And God has given us the power to do it!

In other words, we must allow the Holy Spirit to reveal the point at which some problem began. This is the place where it first entered our lives. It is there that we claim the releasing power of the cross. In Christ, the stronghold has already been broken. Therefore, we are free to let it go. It no longer grips us, and we should no longer hold on to it. In this way, the two-way stronghold is destroyed.

This is very true, for example, with men who have a problem with lust and pornography – looking at evil sex pictures. In such cases, it may be necessary to find the point when the sinful “seed” was first planted. This might include the time, place, people and actions involved. If we then invite the Lord to forgive, cleanse and deliver, He will do so at once. The habit’s hold on our life is then broken. We can “let it go,” and are free to grow in the strength of our new found

victory. This doesn't mean there will be no more temptations in this area of our life. It does mean we have the power to say: "No" and to grow in the purity of a cleansed heart and a renewed mind.

Healing: Release from The Wounds Of Life

"The spirit of a man can support him during a time of physical sickness; But who can bear a wounded spirit?" (Prov. 18:14). Only Jesus can heal a broken heart. You cannot fix it yourself. You can learn about psychology, and even Christian counseling. But in the end it is Jesus – and He alone – Who can reach the roots, and heal the hurts. We are all "wounded healers." That is, as God heals us from the past, we can minister His healing to others. We know and understand how they think and feel. We have been there ourselves – it is a familiar road. But we met Jesus there, and they can too. Yes, we are now able to minister to them with compassion, power and wisdom. As we grow in the Lord it will be a continuous process of repentance and healing – in our lives and through our lives. What an honest and glorious hope this is for us all.

"We all clearly behold – and reflect like a mirror – the glory of the Lord. We are ever being changed into His image—from glory to glory. And this is by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor 3:18).

Deliverance: Release From The Power And Works Of Satan

"Our Father has delivered us from the power of darkness. He has brought us into the kingdom of the Son of His love." (Col. 1:13). "All authority has been given unto Me in heaven and in earth...And behold, I give you authority to stamp on serpents and scorpions – and all the power of the enemy. Nothing in any way will be able to hurt you." (Matt. 28:18; Luke 10:19). Our enemy Satan is very real, but he is not all-powerful. His kingdom of darkness has been overcome by the Kingdom of God. And Christ our King gained that victory on the Cross.

Moreover, as we submit to His Lordship, He has given us the authority to force the devil "to flee". (James 4: 7). The enemy has no right to a place a hold on our lives – unless we give it to him through ignorance, doubt, disobedience or fear. It is important, therefore, that we know who we are in the Kingdom of God.

We are royal sons and daughters in the Family of God. We have been given the power and authority, to set the captive free. Yes, we can break the strongholds of the enemy in the mighty name of Jesus – in our own lives, and in the lives of others.

The Cross: Total Surrender Of Self

"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it. Whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."

(Matt.16: 24- 25). See also Rom. 12:1. We can never find ourselves by ourselves. We cannot fulfill our lives through self-effort. We can know ourselves – and be ourselves- only through self-surrender. We must daily submit ourselves to the Creator and Lord of our lives. Only then can we become all that He has created and called us to be.

As we exchange or replace our lives with His, we have the power to change into His likeness. At the same time, we find what we thought we had lost – life as it was meant to be lived. Now we can love, forgive, help and heal others – with His love, forgiveness and healing power. Yes, it is His life which makes our life worth living!

Jesus is our victory

In I Corinthians 15:57, Paul expresses the prayer of our hearts when he says: "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus is your victory over the giants Satan has sent against you. He has already defeated them on the cross and you have nothing more to fear from these giants. Victory over Satan is not something you must work to accomplish; victory is an accomplished fact, and all you must do is to claim it in the name of Jesus. In James 4:7 you are admonished to, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." You resist Satan in the name of Jesus and remind him that Jesus defeated him on the cross, and there is no further need for you to struggle with him since

he is already a defeated foe. You claim your rightful inheritance and through the power of the Holy Spirit you have your inheritance.

In the Old Testament when the children of Israel crossed over the River Jordan on dry land and went on to defeat the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, they went with the assurance that God would give them victory. As long as they remained true to this assurance each victory was theirs. They marched around the walls of Jericho seven times, as God commanded, and the walls fell down. They went against each of the cities and God gave them the victory. The important thing was not the manner they used to gain each victory but the fact they were following God's command in each victory. The children of Israel succeeded as long as they followed God's commands. But when Achan kept some gold, silver, and garments, then God allowed the next city to defeat them because they had failed to follow His commands. God deals with His children the same way today. In 1 Samuel 15:22, Samuel says to Saul, "...to obey is better than sacrifice...." Today you receive God's blessings at the point of your obedience. You claim your inheritance through obedience to the truth that God has revealed to you through His Word and through the Holy Spirit.

To claim the inheritance you have in Jesus, you must take authority over the giants Satan has sent against you. Renounce each of these giants in the name of Jesus, and command each spiritual giant in the name of Jesus, to leave you and have no influence in your life again. As Christians we have set a hierarchy of sins with some sins worse than others. God views all sin as singular and as rebellion against Him. There is no spiritual force Satan can send against you that you cannot have authority over in the name of Jesus.

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the things that Satan has sent against you and then as He reveals them, renounce each one and command that force or spirit to leave you in the name of Jesus. For example, if they Holy Spirit reveals that you have been tormented by a spirit of rejection, you simply say: "Spirit of rejection, out in the name of Jesus." If possible, pray with someone who can lift you up in prayer as you renounce the involvement with Satan and take authority over the giants Satan has sent against you.

Some of the giants Satan sends against people are:

| | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Pride | inferiority | doubt |
| Unbelief | jealousy | condemnation |
| Rebellion | indifference | rejection |
| Loneliness | defeat | anger |
| Hatred | worry | resentment |
| Bitterness | tension | suicide |
| Anxiety | timidity | un-forgiveness |
| Paranoia | fantasy | intellectualism |
| Lying | depression | indecision |
| Procrastination | hopelessness | self-pity |
| Temper | fear | self-will |
| Criticism | fear of disapproval | insecurity |
| Nervousness | schizophrenia | guilt |
| Suspicion | confusion | infirmity |
| Frustration | self-deception | competition |
| Fear of failure | deceit | grief |
| Covetousness | greed | death |
| Intolerance | sorrow | gluttony |
| Adultery | lust | fatigue |
| Occult | cults | false religions |
| Alcohol | nicotine | drugs |
| Spiritism | | |

Go back through the list above and in each instance ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you if that is a negative force or a giant or a spirit that Satan has used to help defeat you. For each of the negative forces the Holy Spirit reveals to you as one that is coming against you, repeat this authority statement over that negative spirit: “spirit of _____ out in the name of Jesus.”

God has provided you the power to rebuke Satan and take authority over him. As you exercise that power, the Lord gives you new power and authority and provides all that is necessary for you to have complete victory.

Now through the power of the Holy Spirit ask Jesus to put into your heart and mind the rightful inheritance God has promised you. Ask Jesus to give you the spirit of joy, the spirit of peace, the comfort that comes from the right relationship with God. Ask Jesus to fill you with His love. Not love as defined by this world’s standards, but love like Jesus knew, the very love of God, “Agape”-love. A love that is supernatural and that extends to all relationships in your life. Ask Jesus to fill every void in your life with all the fruit of the Spirit, with all the positive forces – ask Jesus to fill you completely with the Holy Spirit.

Remember, just binding Satan and renouncing all the negative forces is not enough. You must constantly keep your spiritual house clean and filled where these negative forces cannot return. (See Luke 11:24-26; Matt. 12:43-45). Ask Jesus to constantly fill you with the Holy Spirit and all the fruit of the Spirit.

A word of caution, don’t look for an evil spirit in every person as an explanation for every wrong thing they do. Some people enjoy blaming Satan for their misbehavior when the person actually needs to practice will power and self control. Also, remember Christians cannot be possessed, but they can be oppressed by Satan. Don’t let Satan frighten you, and don’t give him more credit than he deserves.

The next step in inner healing is prayer for the healing of memories – If you had a spirit of fear, the Lord not only wants to set you free from that oppression, but He also wants to heal the memory of the incident when the fear entered.

A more comprehensive strongholds list is presented below.

Stronghold – list for identification and deliverance

Please go prayerfully through the below presented list of possible strongholds in your life. Tick off where appropriate, so that after the session you can repent of your sins, renounce the strongholds in your life, and be set free in the mighty name of Jesus Christ!

I have a poor relationship with my mother/father. This could be the reason why I find it difficult to believe that God loves me.

It’s hard for me to forgive myself for what I’ve done in the past.

I was hurt in the past and I suffered. I find it hard to be free from the anger that I feel inside when I remember these things.
 I find it hard to build relationships. I don't trust people.
 I am prone to depression and sometimes the feeling of self-pity dominates me.
 I have a sin or bad habit that controls me. I try to stop but I haven't succeeded.
 I have problems in my sexual life. I haven't been able to break habits in this area.
 I have a behavioral disorder, e.g.: eating too much, gambling, exaggerating, over sleeping, smoking, drinking, drugs, etc...
 Sometimes I feel like the desire for money or material possessions controls me.
 Sometimes I can't control my anger. It seems to boil up inside of me and explodes before I can stop it.
 I have a problem with anxiety. Sometimes I even do not know why I am anxious.
 I have many fears in my life, e.g.: fear of dark, of being alone, of illness, death and phobias.
 I have thought of committing suicide.
 It's very difficult to concentrate when praying or reading the Bible I get tired.
 In the past I have been involved in certain practices of the occult.
 In the past I have been dedicated to idols.
 I still have objects of idolatry and of the occult in my home.
 My parents dedicated me to false gods.
 My parents and/or grandparents are (or have been) involved in the occult or freemasonry.
 There has been involvement with idolatry by my parents and/or my grandparents
 My parents are divorced.
 There is history of adultery in the life of my mother/my father/one of my grandparents.
 One of my parents, grandparents or great-grandparents has committed a crime.
 There have been racist attitudes in my life or in my family.
 I have had incisions and tribal markings done to my body.
 I have been named after a local god or idol.
 I normally dream of swimming.
 I often eat in my sleep.
 I often have sex with someone other than my spouse in my dreams.

Traumatic Experiences:

At which phase of your life? Please describe in the five categories below.

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| | Birth |
| | Infancy |
| | Adolescence |
| | Youth |
| | Adulthood |
| | |
| | <u>In which category?</u> |
| | Death of a loved one. |

| | |
|--|--|
| | Sexual abuse. |
| | Divorce. |
| | Severe physical shock. |
| | Traumatic accident. |
| | Excessive punishment. |
| | Injustice. |
| | Parents rejected pregnancy. |
| | My parent tried to abort me. |
| | Traumatic birth. |
| | Cesarean or any other birth complication. |
| | My parent wanted the opposite sex. |
| | |
| | <u>Attitudes and Feelings that often appear and dominate your life:</u> |
| | Abandonment |
| | Accusation |
| | Affliction. |
| | Aggressiveness |
| | Bitterness. |
| | Anxiety |
| | Self-pity |
| | Denial |
| | Self-rejection |
| | Jealousy |
| | Envy |
| | Competition |
| | Confusion |
| | Control |
| | Guilt |
| | Depression |
| | Defeat |
| | Bewilderment |

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| | Desire to Kill |
| | Desire to Die |
| | Disobedience |
| | Destruction |
| | Lack of Confidence |
| | Selfishness |
| | Infirmity |
| | Mental infirmity |
| | Phobias |
| | Obstinacy |
| | Fatigue |
| | Irresponsibility |
| | Frustration |
| | Ambition |
| | Greed |
| | Hyperactivity |
| | Mental idolatry |
| | Religious superstitions |
| | Negative or demonic thoughts |
| | Impatience |
| | Human thinking |
| | Indecisiveness |
| | Indifference |
| | Inferiority |
| | Insecurity |
| | Insomnia |
| | Intellectualism |
| | Irritation |
| | Mental health problems |
| | Cursing |
| | Fear |

| | |
|--|--|
| | Fear of death |
| | Nervousness |
| | Hatred |
| | Oppression |
| | Pride |
| | Passiveness |
| | Persecution |
| | Worry |
| | Rejection |
| | Religiousness |
| | Hypersensitivity |
| | Loneliness |
| | Superstitions |
| | Sleepiness |
| | Sadness |
| | Vengeance |
| | Violence |
| | Own will |
| | Others |
| | |
| | <u>Destructive Habits that control your life:</u> |
| | Alcohol abuse |
| | Drugs |
| | Smoking. |
| | Gambling |
| | Bad Temper |
| | Swearing |
| | Stealing |
| | Eating disorders |
| | Drunkenness |
| | Gluttony |
| | Lottery |
| | Lies |
| | Not Tithing |

| | |
|--|---|
| | Tendency to criticize |
| | Self-mutilation |
| | Worldly Music (Rock, Heavy Metal, Disco, Rap, Film Music) |
| | |
| | Sexual Areas where you've faced problems: |
| | Bestiality |
| | Abortion |
| | Perversion |
| | Adultery |
| | Bi-sexuality |
| | Fantasies |
| | Fornication |
| | Homosexuality |
| | Incest |
| | Masturbation |
| | Pornography |
| | Others |
| | |
| | False Religious Beliefs that you adhered to: |
| | Catholicism |
| | Liberalism |
| | Religious Formalism |
| | Lodge or Freemasonry |
| | Materialism |
| | Humanism |
| | New Age |
| | Non Christian Philosophy |
| | Non Christian Psychology |
| | Voodoo |
| | Other |
| | |
| | Religious Cults you were a part of before: |
| | Buddhism |
| | Christian Science |
| | Hare Krishna |
| | Hinduism |
| | Islam |
| | Atheism |
| | New Age |
| | Jehovah Witness |

| | |
|--|---|
| | Any type of pact or dedication |
| | Other cults |
| | |
| | The Occult entrances in your life: |
| | Some type of pact or consecration |
| | Astrology (foretelling of events by stars) |
| | Tarot Cards (cards used in fortune telling) |
| | Consulting Mediums (person who communicates with spirits) |
| | Palm Reading |
| | Divination (foretelling, predicting or foreseeing by inspiration or magic) |
| | Enchantments (seances) |
| | Spirits associated with horror films (e.g. The Omen, Exorcist, etc.) |
| | Witchcraft (practice of magic or sorcery) |
| | Magic (art of invoking supernatural powers to influence events) |
| | Mystical experiences |
| | Graphology (hand-writing study and analysis) |
| | Hypnotism (induced state like deep sleep in which subjects acts on external suggestion) |
| | Faith Healing |
| | Acupuncture (Chinese medical treatment involving insertion of needles) |
| | Reading books about the occult |
| | Other forms of alternative healing involving energy or forces (e.g. Reiki, etc.) |
| | Crystals (crystal ball gazing) |
| | Channeling |
| | Horoscopes (observing disposition of planets to predict one's future, etc.) |
| | Video or any other games involving occult characters |
| | Telepathy (action of one mind at on other at a distance) |
| | |
| | Spiritual marriages to deities and family idols |
| | Transcendental Meditation (surpassing normal or supernatural meditation) |
| | Pendulum (suspended weight swinging to and fro for making decisions) |
| | Mind control |
| | De ja vu (experience of perceiving a new situation as if it had occurred before) |
| | Satanism |
| | Spiritualism Sessions |
| | Use or possession of an amulet (something worn or carried as a charm) |
| | E.S.P. (extra sensory perception, meaning perceiving beyond your five senses) |
| | Martial arts: e.g. karate |
| | Yoga (Hindu system for well-being by means of physical and mental exercises) |
| | Describe any other |
| | |
| | Participated in any Seasonal or Religious Festivals like: |
| | Hindu Festivals |
| | Attending and participating in water festivals |
| | Buddhist Festivals |
| | Halloween (honour as holy the evening of 31 st Oct., the All saints day) |

| | |
|--|---|
| | Pagan Festivals |
| | Satanic Rites |
| | Requiem Mass (mass for the death) |
| | Necromancy (magic, esp. with communication with the death) or wizard |
| | Carnival |
| | Others |
| | |
| | Supernatural Capacities Developed in your life like: |
| | Vision of spirits or clairvoyance (power of seeing things not present to senses) |
| | Magic (art of invoking supernatural powers to influence events) |
| | Out of body experiences (astral (that is: of the spirit world) - travelling) |
| | Divination (foretelling, predicting or foreseeing by inspiration or magic) |
| | Hypnotism (induced state like deep sleep in which subjects acts on external suggestion) |
| | Ability to stop or move objects |
| | Levitation (the power of raising a solid body into the air supernaturally) |
| | Other |
| | |
| | |
| | |

- Are there any ghosts, demons or familiar spirits attached to you or your family?
- Have you been named after a false god, demon, or ancestral spirits?
- Have you ever had any demonic manifestations?
- Have you participated in any blood pact or bloodletting ceremony?
- Have you been involved in Non-Christian dream explanations?
- Are there any curses operating through your family bloodline?
- Are there any traditions relating to Non Christian beliefs or practices in your family?
- Do you have any demonic symbols in your family tradition? (e.g. crests, mottoes etc.)
- Have you ever received or given a false prophecy?
- Have you ever been involved in false doctrine or heresy? (e.g. Unitarianism, Jesus Only, Sacramentalism, Baptismal Regeneration)

Please write below any other difficulties that have not been mentioned in the previous pages above.

Prayer of Release:

Part 1: Repentance.

Dear Lord God, I come to you in the Name of Jesus my Lord and my Saviour, who shed His precious blood at Calvary’s cross for my forgiveness and salvation. Today dear Lord, I realise afresh how much my sins has offended your holiness, and specifically repent of my following sins: *(mention specifically the sins you have ticked off, and repent of them one by one)*. Lord, I thank you for the promise in your Word, that as I confess my sins, You are faithful and just to forgive me of all my sins, and the blood of Jesus cleanses me from all sin. Lord, I receive your forgiveness now.

Thank you for cleansing me with the precious blood of Jesus. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Part 2: Renunciation.

Thank you Lord Jesus, that You are my Lord and Savior, and that I belong to You! By the power of the blood of Jesus, and the authority of the Name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, I renounce every hold that the devil and the world had upon my life. In His authority I renounce every foothold or entry the enemy may have had through the following: (*mention specifically the sins you have ticked off, and renounce them one by one*). In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Part 3: Fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Lord Jesus I thank you that you are my Lord, Saviour, and Deliverer! I pray, Lord, fill me afresh with Your Holy Spirit and empower me to live for You! Holy Spirit come! I open my heart to You, fill me, lead me, mould me and make me more and more like Jesus I pray. Amen.

A STEP BY STEP STRATEGY FOR COUNSELLING

In a proper counseling approach one can distinguish three phases:

Explore: interaction with the counsellee about the nature of his problem

Diagnose: aimed at uncovering the root of the problem

Resolve: Biblical truth and principles shared to help the counsellee overcome his problem.

After **Exploring** the problem or issues faced by a counsellee, the counselor may proceed to the phase of Diagnose.

In the **Diagnose** phase, the following steps should be taken:

Identify the problem – related to feelings

Examine the problem – based on behaviour

Uncover the problem – based on thinking

Expose unmet needs and longing

At the end of this phase the counselor should be able to draw up a clear diagnose of the depth and magnitude along with the roots of the problem.

The next step to be taken is the Resolve. Herein the counsellee is helped along to ultimate change and overcome his problem once he makes a determined resolve and puts the counsel into action.

The Resolve phase consists of the following steps:

- Encourage a new dependency on Christ
- Correct the problem with principles from God's Word – renewed thinking
- Plan and encourage to carry out the counsel presented – shapes a new behaviour
- Teach how to handle the same – subject feelings to the Spirit

A clear and determined resolve will pave a pathway to overcome, breakthrough, freedom, and success.

How to counsel persons suffering from different problems and bondages in their lives is covered in more detail in the following Chapters.

THE HOME: ISSUES BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEENAGERS

THE HOME - Conflicts Between Parents and Teenagers

Background

In our fast-moving electronic age, children grow up quicker and want to be free earlier in life than their parents did. Parents often find it difficult to keep pace with the lightning changes in their children, and as a result, conflicts come. It seems that one day, a child is in his parent's arms and the next day he is beginning school, bringing home friends, helping around the house, being a pretty good child! Then, suddenly, the roof caves in! He begins to talk back, questions the rules and breaks them, sometimes is sullen and non-communicative. The teens years have arrived, catching the parents completely off-guard.

There can be many areas of conflict, their friends (many of whom we may not approve), make-up, chores around the home, an allowance, having a bike, school and homework, and discipline, to name a few. A communication barrier develops. Parents find it difficult to talk things over with their children. They delay explanation of crucial physical and mental changes, especially in the

areas of sex and reproduction. Controls are tightened by the parents and the teenager rights even harder for independence. The gap widens, they become antagonists – and the battle goes on.

Rebellion, waywardness, lack of discipline, confusion, and conflict prevent happy relationships within the home. (But) God is interested in your family, your marriage, your children. He shows us the ideals and the goals for the family. He's willing to help us... Have you sought God's will? Have you gotten on your knees and committed your children to the Lord? Do you gather them for family devotions and are you trying to make these times interesting? The answer is in surrendering your heart and life to Jesus Christ so that every member of the home knows Jesus Christ and loves the Word of God.

Counseling Strategy

In counseling parents in conflict with their children, urge them to put their house in order, spiritually.

Advise them that in order to have the peace of God in the home, they must have the peace of God in their hearts. This comes through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

- 2, Encourage parents to take a firm stand for Christ in the spirit of Joshua, who said, "Choose you this day whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). They must determine to have a home that exalts Christ.

Counsel them to learn to rely on God's resources, available through prayer. They should covenant with God for the wisdom He offers (James 1:5) and claim His help for the proper spiritual development for their children. (See Philippians 4:6). They must learn to pray with their children as well as for them.

Urge parents to build the life of the family around the Word of God, helping each member to understand the issues of life from its viewpoint. Encourage them to:

Seek each one's salvation through Christ.

Center the family activities largely around a Bible-teaching church or fellowship.

Be willing to deal patiently with the children's spiritual doubts.

Parents must establish rules governing the home which are equitable, reasonable, and "keepable." (not beyond reach) Respect is earned as a response to authority. Be as flexible as you can where their identity, independence and self-esteem are concerned. Teenagers need a lot of support and encouragement. Conflicts are never resolved by argument or fighting.

Parental example and stability influence children greatly. A good, happy marriage will do more to prepare young people for life than rules and surveillance. A consistent demonstration of Christian virtues such as love, patience, understanding, encouragement, and trust will provide the anchor the teenager needs in stressful and changing times. The beliefs of the parents should never be divorced from experience and practice, especially in the home; requiring a "practice what you preach" lifestyle!

Close communication with the teenager will do much to avoid conflict. This means not only meaningful conversation, but spending quality time with him/her. This personal attention will help create a positive self-image and fortify family solidarity. Don't be afraid to show physical affection. A fatherly hug or a motherly kiss will aid in making the child feel accepted and loved.

Scriptures to be used:

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

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

“Be careful to obey all these regulations I am giving you, so that it may always go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is good and right in the eyes of the Lord your God.” Deuteronomy 12:28.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother – which is the first commandment with a promise – that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:1-4.

The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed are his children after him.” Proverbs 20:7.

THE HOME - Raising and Disciplining Children

Background

A recurrent theme in the Bible is the training of children through teaching and example. The book of Deuteronomy is explicit in stating that children be taught the ways of God. “And these words, which I command you this day, shall be in your heart; and you shall teach them diligently unto your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lay down, and when thou rise up.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

The book of Proverbs is a compendium of the wisdom of God’s people. The family and the nurturing of children in the faith is one of its strong emphases. “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6). Timothy had been taught the Scriptures from infancy, according to God’s command and Jewish custom. “And that from a child you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 3:15). Paul speaks of the necessity for continuity in training and disciplining our children. Both continuity and consistency are essential. “When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that is in you also.” (2 Timothy 1:5). The Bible teaches that parents have the responsibility of training and disciplining their children so that they might be brought up knowing the Scriptures and honoring the Lord.

The basic reason for unhappiness in the home is that we have disregarded God and the principles He has given us. We have refused to acknowledge His plan for the family. The members of the home have refused to accept their particular responsibilities as given in the Bible. It is well known that obedience doesn’t come naturally. It must be taught and learned. Children must be taught obedience just as much as they need to be taught to read and write

Counseling Strategy to be used:

Encourage parents to provide the kind of home that is conducive to solid spiritual and mental development. This contains the following elements:

A stable, peaceful and loving home.

A family-centered home where there is sense of solidarity, mutual respect, and encouragement. A home where the family does things together, especially when children are younger.

A God-centered home where each member has the right to respond to God’s love in Christ, and to be taught how to live from a spiritual perspective. Where there is balance but also a holy awe and fear of the Lord! See Proverbs 22:6 (This would be an appropriate time to ask the parent if he has ever received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.)

A church or fellowship-oriented home. It is much easier to raise children when their lives and those of their families and friends are centered in the church or the activities of the fellowship.

Parents should introduce their children to the world of the mind by example and practice. If parents are readers, children are likely to read also. Good books and magazines on the child's level should be introduced into the home. Music lessons, hobbies, and sports should be introduced while children are at their first years in school. This will be a safeguard against conflicts as the teen years come.

Encourage parents to recognize that their child has certain rights, but that these rights integrate with those affecting all members of the family. Yet maintain the balance between rights and responsibilities.

The child has the right to be loved and accepted.

The child has the right to receive the kind of reinforcement which leads to self – respect and a sense of security and significance.

The child has the right to see parents demonstrate genuine affection and respect for each other. Examples of mature, Christian behavior are needed in order that children may see how the parents handle problems, stress, and other problems.

The child has the right to be disciplined and punished with fairness and consistency.

Do not expect more from a child than he can deliver.

Be fair and just in administering punishment. Excessive demands and harsh, physical punishment lead quickly to resentment and rebellion. Parents should be flexible and not demand the “letter of the law.”

Never punish in anger or on the spur of the moment.

Always give an explanation to the child so that he knows why he is being punished. Afterwards affirm the child by acceptance and love!

Encourage the parent to keep the lines of communication open at all costs.

The parent must take time to be an attentive listener and take the initiative in encouraging dialogue. There must be frank discussion in regard to sex, drugs, alcohol, developing good friendships, career development, etc.

The parent should share experiences from his childhood and teen years, including the mistakes and failures.

The parent must be honest, permitting a child to question his standards and beliefs. This gives the opportunity to explain and defend them. Through this, your child will formulate his own standards of beliefs and values (convictions). You can challenge them and help them in setting goals for the moment and for life.

Scriptures to be consulted:

“The just man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him.” Proverbs 20:7.

“Father, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.” Colossians 3: 21.

“My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent His rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those He loves, as a father the son he delights in.” Proverbs 3:11- 12.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother – which is the first commandment with a promise – that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:1-4.

Others: - Proverbs 31:10, 26 - 28.

Proverbs 30:11.

Deuteronomy 12:28.

THE HOME - Winning Parents to Christ

Background

Paul, in writing to Timothy, counseled him as follows: “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and purity..... Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.” (1 Timothy 4:12, 16). Though this advice was given nearly two thousand years ago, it is still timely for the young person who has received Christ and is deeply concerned for his parents’ spiritual welfare.

Recently a pastor said that when a teenager has been saved and wants to know how to witness, he tells him to go home, straighten up his room, make his bed, mind his parents, smile, listen to other people, and wait until his parents ask him what has happened before telling them that Christ has changed his life!

First of all, I suggest patience with your parents. They will want to be sure that your experience with Christ is not just a passing fancy. Second, let Christ so possess you that they see a difference in you. Third, pray for them. They may seem to be turning a deaf ear to you, but they are hearing more than you think. This won’t happen in a week, in a month, or perhaps even in a year, but God’s Spirit is always at work. Remember, the Bible says, “Be not weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not” (Galatians 6:9). And fourthly, earn a right to speak yet do so in humility; never try to force your beliefs on your parents who are senior to you!

Counseling Strategy

Congratulate the young person seeking advice about witnessing. It is an indication of a more-than-average spiritual concern.

Emphasize the following:

In the Scripture of 1 Timothy 4:12,16 the key word is: example. In the home, this would be best demonstrated by respect, obedience, and acts of love and kindness.

Remember the old saying, “What you do speaks so loudly, I cannot hear what you are saying.”

Make sure your consistency in Christian living, not being up one day and down the next.

Urge him to give much attention to the development of his own spiritual life by reading and studying God’s Word, by prayer (he can put his parents’ names at the top of his prayer list), by being a good student at school, and by becoming involved in Christian activities with other young people in the church or fellowship.

Counsel him to pray patiently for opportunities to witness. This may be done personally or by inviting his family to a special Christian function or to an evangelistic church service.

Pray with the young person that Paul’s advice to Timothy might be a reality in his life. The above may not sound too exciting to him, but experience has indicated that it is the best, if not the only, way to go.

Scriptures to be shared:

“Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. Be diligent in these matters: give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.” 1 Timothy 4:12-16.

“Don not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6- 7.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you: and you will be my witness in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8.

“Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.” Ephesians 6:13.

COUNSELING WITH TEENAGERS

Counseling teenagers is much like counseling anyone. The basic concepts and techniques of counseling apply to all ages. Yet, working with Teenagers is just as specialized as working with the Aged or with pre-schoolers.

UNDERSTANDING THE TEENAGER

“Understanding the Teenager helps the youth counsellor establish rapport and a sympathetic kinship. It enables the counsellor to accept teenage behaviour without undue alarm, or resentment. The teenager too, senses when an adult understands him, and naturally he responds to acceptance with frankness and respect.

A Teenager is:

- A person in transition.
- One whose life patterns are crystallizing.
- A bundle of possibilities.
- Looking through the eyes of an idealist.
- Capable but lacks experience.
- One who has a rapid maturing body and intellect.
- Someone who responds to a challenge.
- One who wants to know.
- One who craves activity.
- A person with needs and is happiest when he exercises self-control.
- One who needs God.

INTERESTS OF TEENAGERS

A counsellor should never overlook natural, God-given interests. When he is interested, he is ready to learn. Therefore, shape your approach to counseling around his interest.

Teenagers:

- Are interested in fun.
- Are concerned about friendships.
- Are interested in parents.
- Are interested in education.
- Are interested in personality development.
- Are interested in looks.
- Are interested in manners.
- Are interested in the art of communication.
- Dating.
- Marriage.
- Spiritual issues.

CONTEMPORARY CONDITIONS AFFECT TEENAGERS

Many swift and turbulent changes in contemporary living have brought youths face to face with new problems and decisions.

It is harder to be an individual and easier to conform to a leader or to the mass.

The spread of technology and political changes result in anxiety towards post-school education.

With the high turnover of people, families in our cities, young people struggle to establish a sense of identity.

The changing role of women has raised crucial issues in the lives of both girls and guys.

Today's teenagers are often faced with vocational choices about which their parents have had little or limited experience.

The spirit of materialism is infiltrating every area of life, leaving an ungodly imprint on all. They are growing up in an environment that has forgotten God.

BASIC GUIDELINES FOR COUNSELING TEENAGERS

Teenagers are living in a time of change – it is now or never.

Gain their confidence – earn the right to speak.

Identify the problem from the teenager's point of view – not from your adult eyes.

There is a problem to be solved, not a sermon to be preached.

Avoid giving too much advice until you have drawn a Teenager out sufficiently to understand the problem and its setting.

Respect maturity and treat as adults, not children.

Challenge young people.

Help teenagers accept themselves.

Always keep in mind his family upbringing and religious background.

Don't overlook group/peer pressure. The "gang" is a powerful force in a teenager's life.

Make allowance for young people's lack of information and understanding.

Encourage Teenagers to participate in Christian activities.

View Teenage interests in physical development and sex education as related to their adolescent growth.

Help them to develop self-control.

Do not assume a serious problem behind a seeming trivial circumstance. (Don't overlook the possibility though).

You are a source of balance, stability and security.

Do not underestimate a teenager's potential.

Patience is a must.

Help a Teenager to build a close relationship with parents.

Teenager years are crucial years-ideal for turning to Christ!

Learning to relate to Teenagers

The question most often asked by those interested in becoming involved in youth work is, "How do you relate to teenagers?" Below are some tips for learning to relate to this difficult age group.

BUILD YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

It takes timebe patient!

It takes effortbe persistent!

It takes communication...be open!

It takes giving.....be loving!

BUILD YOUR UNDERSTANDING

Get into the Word....learn God's perspective solutions.

Observe human behavior....learn to recognize repeating problems.

MAINTAIN YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Wait on God in prayer.

Meditate on the Word of God.

Keep in touch with family situations of your teens.

- iv. Remember your responsibility.
(Worry is defined as “Assuming responsibilities God never intended me to have.”)

MAINTIAN MERCY AND TRUTH

(One secret of successful youth work is learning how and when to apply these two principles of “mercy and truth”)

USE YOUR SUPERNATURAL ABILITIES

- Ask God for wisdom and understanding.
- Ask God for discretion and discernment.
- Seek spiritual insight into problems, i.e. a word of wisdom, word of knowledge, etc.

What are the GREATEST NEEDS OF YOUTH? Below is a list of the needs we feel are the most significant in order of their importance.

- NEED for commitment to Jesus and the Church.
- NEED for covering of parents and authorities.
- NEED for confidence in themselves in Christ.
- NEED for companionship of others in Christ.
- NEED for chastity of body and mind.
- NEED for challenge of Christian adventure.
- NEED for channeling of God-given energy.
- NEED for counsel of godly instruction.
- NEED for compassion for others.
- NEED for contentment and gratefulness for what they have.

COUNSELLING THOSE WITH MARITAL OR FAMILY PROBLEMS

INTRODUCTION

Definition of a good marriage

A marriage (or family) in which all those involved have maximum opportunity, through mutual love (agape) to grow towards the fulfillment of their God-intended potentials as persons and reach their destiny in Christ. Satan’s primary area of attack on the Church today is aimed at marriage. He knows that if he can break up marriages, he can destroy families and because the family is foundational to the Church, broken families means damage to the Church. A good marriage needs a strong foundation.

WHAT IS GOD’S PURPOSE FOR MARRIAGE?

First of all we must understand that man was created in the context of spiritual conflict between God and Satan and that before the fall man was in complete harmony and unity with God. God established marriage for a number of purposes:

To mirror God's image (Gen. 1:26-27).

To multiply and fill the earth (Gen.1:28) and produce a line of godly descendants who would defeat Satan.

To manage God's creation (Gen. 1:28) under God's delegated authority and have dominion.

For man and woman to mutually complete one another (Gen. 2:18; I Cor. 11:11).

To picture Christ's relationship with the Church, His Bride (Eph. 5:31-32).

UNITY

For these purposes to succeed, it is essential that unity exists in marriage, in other words, that the couple is in full agreement with God's will and purposes. This unity is expressed on two levels – vertically in relationship with God and horizontally in relationship with one another.

Unity between husband and wife reflects the unity of the Trinity and thus mirror's God's image to the world.

Unity is necessary to produce godly descendants – children are prepared for future successful marriage as they observe their parents' unity and godliness. Also the home is the child's best training ground for learning and understanding agape love.

Without unity a couple cannot manage God's realm.

Unity is necessary to complete one another and build companionship – self-centered individuality destroys unity.

Unity is necessary to model Christ's relationship with His church – Jesus leads, loves and serves the Church, while the Church is reverently subject to Him.

From the above we can see that-

Marriage is far more important than you may have realized.

Recognize that your marriage is taking place on a spiritual battlefield, not on a romantic balcony.

To be in opposition to your marriage partner is to be in opposition to the very purposes of God.

WHAT ARE THREATS TO UNITY IN MARRIAGE?

Our culture today does not support successful marriage – in fact marriages in our day world-wide are under more pressures than ever before.

Many marry for the wrong reasons and motivations, e.g. feelings (infatuation), sexual attraction, cultural pressures, escape.

Christians couples have in many cases not been equipped with God's plan for marriage – having only the world's plan, they are headed for rough waters. The world's plan is 50/50 relationship, i.e. acceptance based on performance, giving based on merit, motivation for action based on feelings, in short, you do your part and I'll do mine.

Self-centeredness threatens unity. During engagement, this self-centeredness lies dormant and is not anticipated by the couple – neither party makes allowance for the flesh in each other. Appreciation and approval quickly change to disappointment and rejection.

Many couples fail to anticipate and work through the inevitable difficulties and problems that come into every marriage – this threatens unity. The way a couple responds to their difficulties will either drive them apart or bond them together – these periods of difficulty must be worked through in God's strength as they don't necessarily mean that something is wrong with the marriage. Each others needs must be satisfied.

Many couples fail to recognize and stand against enemy attack on their marriage (Eph. 6:12-13) and allow strife to destroy their unity (James 3:16).

Incorrect priorities destroy unity. The only workable priority is Mathew 6:33. When careers, material acquisition or other activities are given priority, the marriage is headed for destruction.

Many marriages fail because of the following reasons:

Lack of communication.

Needs of the two partners not being met. This causes the weaker partner to pull down the stronger which leads to much frustration in marriage. This is mainly due to a lack of love which is composed of four factors:

Knowledge of the other person.

Caring for the other person.

Respect for the other person.

Responsibility for the other person.

Many marriages run into conflict because of early life deprivation which leads to neurotic tendencies in exaggerating contradictory, conflicting, opposing, fluctuating and wishy-washy behaviour. When these and like problems are encountered the person(s) normally need inner healing and/or deliverance.

THE BIG TEN:

MONEY

The root of all evil is not money, but the love of it or disagreement over it: how it is to be divided, given, spent, saved, invested. About money, there should be:

No secrets – with income or ‘out go.

The root of all evil is not money, but the love of it or disagreement over it: how it is to be divided, spent, saved, invested. About money, there should be: No secrets – which income or outgoings

No ownership – for it belongs to a partnership, not the individual earner.

No dishonesty – agree on principles and scrupulously follow them.

No inequity – each one as free to spend as the other.

Money is: - Not a weapon – to keep wife under.

Not a possession to be doled out as to a child.

Not a substitute for expressing love personally. – Matthew 7:12.

2. SEX

Sex is beautiful, delightful, necessary, because God made it so. It is: An expression of oneness. A total commitment. A complete self-giving. A sacred obligation.

Sex is: Not a right – to claim selfishly.

Not a favour – to withhold selfishly.

Not a weapon – to dominate another.

Not a reward – for good behaviour.

Each one finds fulfillment in satisfying the other. The body doesn't belong to its owner – but to the partner – to be enjoyed fully, cherished attentively, love unselfishly. – I Cor. 7:5.

3. CHILDREN

Both parents bear total responsibility for each child. The mother and father are a team, a partnership, a company. One is not the disciplinarian – the other the lover. One is not the judge – the other the comforter. Parents stand together publicly, solve disagreements privately. So the team judgesdisciplines, and the child knows it.

Discipline a child with love – or the world will do it without love.

Discipline for disobedience –not for a mistake or an accident.

Discipline according to the offense immediately, without anger – and it is a proof of love. Ephesians 6:4

4. LOVE

Courtship must continue. Love began in pleasing, remembering, appreciating your partner. It grows the same way.

Love needs:

Vocal expression – “I love you”, “I need you”, “I appreciate you”.

Physical expression – touches, embraces, kisses, oneness, love, happiness.

Social expression – special-day remembrances, little kindness, dining out, a week-end alone, an unscheduled trip.

Our principle business is to invite the love of each other – to make it easy to love and be loved. I John 3:18.

5. EXPECTATIONS

Marriage never fails – people fail. They fail when they expect more than they give, talk more than they work, dream more than they do.

Marriage isn't held together by one person – two made it – two maintain it.

Marriage doesn't solve problems – people do.

Marriage doesn't do something for people – they do something for marriage.

Marriage is not an extended honeymoon – marriage is a task, a test, a happy struggle.

Marriage is an opportunity to give yourself away.

Marriage is like an empty box – neither partner can take out what he hasn't put in. Luke 6:38.

6. PRIORITIES

Partnership must precede parenthood. A man is a husband first, father second, businessman third. A woman is a wife first, a mother second, a career woman third. A strong marriage precedes a strong family.

Marriage is permanent – parenthood is temporary.

Marriage is central – parenthood is secondary.

Marriage is the hub – children are the spokes.

The child – centered home is: Poor training for the child, Poor marriage insurance, Poor preparation for the empty nest.

Your partner is first – before children, job, career. Eph. 5:33

7. SHARING

Acting alone, selfishly, is basic to every marriage. The essence of sin. The worm in every apple. It is –

Wanting my own way – with sex, money, time, decisions.

Thinking of my own comfort, pleasure, rights, insisting on my own independent planning, ambitions.

Ignoring my partner's feelings and desires (spoken and unspoken)

Living in my own small circle, private world refusing to get the second mile to serve, give please adapt, submit.

Concerning myself more with a personal victory than a stronger relationship.

Always ask this key question, “Am I being selfish and independent in this matter right now?” I Cor. 13:5 .

8. FORGIVING

Real forgiveness is early, complete, and irrevocable, like a canceled note never to be remembered against your partner.

Dragging out the skeletons reveals they were never completely buried.

Holding the past over someone reveals subtle self-righteousness.

The more you know your own weaknesses, failures and sins, the more forgiving you are. Genuine humility is being willing to take the first step, admit the blame, apologize, learn from each other's failures, and start again with a clean slate. Matthew 6:15.

9. COMMUNICATING

Positive sympathetic communication is the key to understanding, harmony, and love. It costs, for it means: openness, honesty, sharing, self-disclosure, self-discovery, possible rejection. Yet it pays in growth, maturity, happiness.

Communicating is based on complete acceptance of your partner, and wanting to honestly understand and respond – listening – without trying to find a flaw in the person, discover a weakness in the argument, gain time for a rebuttal.

When a person withdraws – refuses to listen or speak the truth in love – he is saying to his partner, “You are inferior, unimportant, unappreciated”. Ephesians 4:2.

10. MATURING

The person who embarrasses his partner:

- Points up differences or difficulties.

- Parades weaknesses publicly.

- Jokes at other’s expense.

- He suffers from: low self-esteem, insecurity self-righteousness, blindness to own failures.

Love accepts a partner as he/she is, habits and all, without nagging whether he/she changes or not, assures a partner by thoughtful consideration and kindness.

Assumes a partner is important enough to remember without extra courtesies.

Voices his love constantly. – I Cor. 13:7.

There are no unhappy marriages – only marriage partner who are immature..... not growing, learning, facing, admitting, confessing and changing.

THE ROLES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

To effectively counsel those with marital difficulties, you need a clear understanding not only of God’s plan and purpose for marriage, but also a solid grasp of each partner’s role as detailed in God’s Word – most of your counseling will be in this area.

Points to remember:

- God has designed an order of responsibility in the family (I Cor. 11:3).

- God has designed husband and wife to be interdependent (I Cor. 11:11).

- God has designed husband and wife with equal worth (I Cor. 11:12).

The role of the husband:

- Leading his home (Eph. 5:23). Leadership involves:

 - Responsibility.

 - Serving.

 - Managing.

- Loving his wife (Eph. 5:25).

- Caring for his wife (Eph. 5:28-30), by:

 - Understanding her needs (I Pet. 3:7)

 - Giving her first priority after God.

 - Sharing his life with her.

The husband can only do this if he is fully submitted to Jesus as Lord and led by the Spirit.

The role of the wife:

The first responsibility of the wife is that of submission (Eph. 5:22-24; I Pet. 3:1). Many women (and men) have the wrong concept of submission and pick up problems in this area. The Greek word for submission is “*huppo tasso*” meaning: to “complete” or “to come together and fill the gap” and “to arrange in order to fill out a pattern, to complete the whole.”

Submission consists of the wife

- Entrusting herself to the Lord.

- Perpetuating the harmony in the home (1 Pet. 3:1-3)

Adapting herself to her husband's love.
Reflecting back her husband's love.

The second responsibility of the wife is that of respect (Eph. 5:33). To respect him is:

To know him
To encourage and build him.
To build him.

The wife can only do this as she is submitted to Jesus as Lord – He is the basis of her submission to and respect for her husband.

CHILDREN IN THE HOME

Children are a gift from God (Ps. 127:3-5).

It is the parents' responsibility to:

Bring up their children in the ways of the Lord (Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4).
Discipline their children in love (Prov. 13:24; 22:15; 23:13-14).
Know and guide their children (Prov. 27:23).

The responsibility of children is to honor and obey their parents (Eph. 6:1-3).

COUNSELING THOSE WHO WISH TO RECEIVE THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The subject of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is one of the most interesting controversial, important and misunderstood subjects of the Bible. The whole Christian world is divided on the subject and for that reason every thinking Christian should search the Scripture and have an open mind to every statement in the Bible which throws any light upon the subject. Those being counseled to receive the Holy Spirit must be shown the Scriptural basis of this experience, this coupled to your own testimony of your own baptism and work of the Holy Spirit in your own life is most important during counseling.

WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT:

John 14: 16-17.

Jesus Promised that He would ask the Father who would give us another helper, the Spirit of truth and that He abides with you and will be in you.

John 16:17.

Jesus stated it was to our advantage that He went away so that the Holy Spirit would come.

John 16:13.

The Holy Spirit will disclose what is to come. The Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of Truth” will reveal Himself and the importance of receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

John 1: 32-34.

John the Baptist recognized Jesus as the Baptiser in the Holy Spirit.

GENERAL FACTS ABOUT THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT:

That there is a baptism of the Holy Spirit. Matt. 3:11; 20:22-23; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:31-34; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1 – 39.

Jesus was the first to be baptised in the Holy Spirit.

Mark 3:16-17; 20:22-23; Luke 3:21-22; Acts 10:38; John 1:31-34.

The baptism was in fulfillment of prophecy.

Isaiah 11:2; Isaiah 42:1-7; Matt. 11:2-6; Luke 4:16-21.

The disciples were “filled” with the Spirit before Pentecost.

Matt.10:1-8; 16:20; 16:17; Mark 6:17-13; Luke 10:1-24; John 17:14; 20:22.

WHAT IS THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an immersion of the believer in the Spirit – at which time he receives the Spirit in his life in all “fullness” and “without measure” and is “endued with power from on high.” This in order to do the work of Christ.

It is the same full anointing of the Spirit that Christ received.

Isaiah 11:1-2; 42:1-7; Matt. 11:4-6; 12:8; Luke 4:16-21.

It is the Spirit’s coming in, upon, filling and overwhelming infusing, anointing and enduing with full power and not a measure as in the Old Testament days.

It is the Spirit taking full possession of the believer’s live, speech and work through him in the same degree that was manifested through Christ and the Apostles.

It is the fullness of what men had in Pentecost.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience subsequent to salvation:

Some have been taught that when a person is saved he has the Holy Spirit (which is true in a sense since we are born-again of the Word and the Spirit!). But we need to have all of the Holy Spirit that there is to have. We need to receive by faith the fullness God wants to give us, and which we also need in order to live victorious Christian lives!

However we shall see from Scriptures that there is this experience subsequent to salvation.

Philips ministry in Samaria – Acts 9:12-19.

Paul – Acts 9:13-14.

Ephesians – Acts 18:1-7.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a decisive and a definite experience.

You know that it has occurred.

It's vitality can be lost if it is not immediately followed by a walk in the Spirit.

THE PURPOSE OF THE BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT:

The purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not to save the soul, sanctify one or make him a child of God, or to qualify to go up in the rapture.

The soul purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is to endue men and women with power from on high to do the same works that Christ did.

To continue the things "that Jesus began both to do and teach." Acts 1:1-2; Matt. 28:20.

To make men "successful witnesses" Acts 1:8.

To prove men to be true believers and divinely sent to represent God. Mark 16:15; John 14:12; Acts 1:8.

Paul used his power to do miracles as proof that he was sent by God. 2 Cor. 6:4-7; 10:3-11; 12:12; 13:10; Gal. 3:3-5.

-To defeat and punish others who opposed the gospel and who did not live right. Acts 13:6-11; 1 Cor. 4:18-21.

-To make men obedient. Rom. 15:18-19; 1 Cor. 4:18-21.

-To establish the faith of men in God. Rom. 1:11; 1 Cor. 2:15.

If the chief purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is to endue men with power to accomplish what is stated above; thus it is the all important experience of the believers today if they want to be successful in gospel work.

Jesus made it clear to the disciples that it was imperative to be baptized in the Holy Spirit before going out to evangelize the world. Luke 24:40; John 14:12, 17; John 16:7-15; Acts 1:4-8.

120 of many hundreds of followers of Jesus felt it necessary to obey. 1 Cor. 15: 6; Acts 1:4-5, 12 -15.

SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCES OF THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

The pattern of the Book of Acts:

1. Pentecost Acts 2:4.
2. Samaria Acts 8:15-19.
3. Paul Acts 9:17.
Cornelius' household, Acts 10:45-46.
5. Ephesus Acts 19:2.

.B. Why is it necessary that we speak in tongues? And, How will it help us?

There are many advantages in speaking in tongues.

It will give you the assurance that you are filled with the Holy Spirit. Acts 10: 44-46.

It will edify you – build you up. 1 Cor. 14:4.

It will edify the church. 1 Cor. 14:5.

It will help you to get through to God in you prayer life. 1 Cor. 14:2; Rom. 8:26.

It will help you to praise (bless) God. 1 Cor. 14:15; Acts 10:46.

HOW TO RECEIVE THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

To help the person in this step of faith, offer the following suggested steps:

The gift has already been given.

He does not have to tarry.

He does not have to beg.

It is up to the individual to receive, which must be done by faith. (Gal. 3: 2).

Salvation is the only prerequisites. Acts 2:37-38.

Yet there should be a desire, a hunger and thirst for more of God. (Luke 11: 9 – 13).

Laying on of hands of other Spirit-filled believers would be helpful.

Thank Jesus for the gift of his Spirit in faith. 1 John 5:14.

Receive the Holy Spirit by faith and speak in the language He gives you, but remember you need to do the speaking! (John 7: 37 –39; Acts 2: 4).

Keep on speaking in tongue while the Spirit helps you. (Rom. 8: 26).

COUNSELLING THOSE NEEDING PHYSICAL HEALING

INTRODUCTION:

The doctrine of divine healing is one of the most outstanding subjects of the Bible. Divine healing is not to be confused with “Faith healing”. Faith is the channel by which healing is received. The source of healing is that which determines whether or not it is divine.

WHAT DIVINE HEALING AND HEALTH IS NOT:

It is not healing and health by natural remedies, imagination, will-power, personal magnetism, metaphysics, demonology, spiritualism, immunity of death, presumption in subordination to God’s will, mind over matter, denial of the plain facts of sin, sickness and disease, or natural healing by inherent laws and creative powers in man’s body.

WHAT DIVINE HEALING AND HEALTH IS:

It is a definite act of God through faith in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and the precious blood of Christ, whereby the whole human body is cured, healed, repaired, and

delivered from sickness and its power and made as whole, sound and healthy as it was before the attack.

ARE SICKNESS AND DISEASES, AS TAUGHT IN THE SCRIPTURE – A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

They are called a curse. Deut. 28:1-61.

Sin and sickness came upon the human race because of Adams disobedience. Rom. 5:12.

Christ redeemed us from the curse at Calvary. Gal. 3:13.

WHAT ARE SOME DIFFERENT SOURCES OF HEALING?

Natural healing. Prov. 17:22.

Medical Healing . Matt. 9:12.

Divine haling. Ps. 103:1-4. This aspect of healing is when God overrules both nature and man to bring forth healing.

WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF DIVINE HEALING?

The atonement. Is. 53. Matt. 8:16-17.

By healing in the atonement we mean that Jesus Christ not only took on sin and sins, but also our sicknesses in his body on the cross. 1 Peter 2:24.

CAUSES OF SICKNESS AND DISEASE:

GOD THE LAW MAKER

God is not the direct cause of either sin or sickness. He never wills any man to have sin or sickness in his life. He made abundant provision through the gospel to cleanse from all sin and to heal diseases. He did make it law from the beginning that what ever man sows, that shall he also reap, but never causes free moral agents to break the law. He cannot be just and keep them from reaping whatever they sow if they are determined to disobey Him. (Gal. 6: 7 – 8).

SATAN THE LAW – EXECUTOR:

Satan is the direct power in executing the Law of sin, sickness and death. Sickness is the result of sin and one of the effects of the fall. Matt.12:22-28; Luke 13:14; John 10:10; Acts 10:38.

MAN THE LAW BREAKER:

Man is the great law-breaker and he must reap what he sows. Man is responsible in the first place for yielding to sin and Satan and submitting to demon powers who take advantage of his sinful state and cause all kinds of sufferings and failures in his life.

HOW MAY HEALING BE RECEIVED?

Faith in Christ. Heb. 11:6; Matt. 6:5.

Prayer of faith and anointing with oil. James 5:14.

Laying on of believing hands. Mark 16:17.

Prayer cloths. Acts 19:12.

Sending the word. Ps. 107:20; Matt. 8:8.

Gifts of the Spirit. 1 Cor. 12: 9-10.

The Lord's Table. 1 Cor. 11:23-32.

WHAT ARE SOME HINDERENCES TO HEALING?

Sin. Is 59:2; Matt. 13:5.

Unbelief. Mark 6:5; Matt. 13:58.

An unforgiving spirit. Matt. 6:14-15; Matt. 5:23-24.

Abusing our bodies. 1 Cor. 3:16-17; Phil. 2:25-30.

Not discerning the Lord's body. 1 Cor. 11:29-33.

Satanic resistance. Dan. 10:12-13.

Strained husband and wife relationship. 1 Peter 3:1-7.

DEFINITE PROOF THAT IT IS GOD' S WILL TO HEAL:

God would not have healed people in both Testaments if it had not been His will to heal all who come in faith to Him. God is no respecter of persons. Rom. 12:3.

Jesus Christ proved it to be God's will to heal all the sick when He actually healed all those oppressed of the devil. Acts 10:38.

Matt. 8: 16-17; John 10: 10; John 12:14-15.

"I will", Jesus said in Matt. 8; John 5:6.

COUNSELING THOSE NEEDING INNER HEALING

We must realize that we are the express image of God and so have value. In the modern world we have absorbed technology into our lives to such an extent that we are being dehumanized and it is controlling us. We need to get back to our roots: If you don't know where you come from, your Biblical God-like roots, you cannot know who you are or what you are supposed to be or where you are going to.

God created us with an ability to receive love and give love. John 10:10, "I have come that you might have life, and have it to the full."

INNER HEALING DEFINED

It is the healing of the inner man, consisting of the mind, the emotions, the painful memories, and sometimes dreams. Through prayer we are set free from resentment, rejection, self-pity, depression, fear, sorrow, hatred, inferiority, condemnation or worthlessness and many others.

We are made up of a Body, Soul and Spirit. (I Thes. 5: 23). Our spirit is the faculty that God has given us to have communication with Him. We are controlled by our emotions to a large extent. God wants to free us from our emotions so that we can live victorious lives.

There are hurts and bruises that are so painful that we do not even remember them with our minds, but our spirit knows. "Who knows the mind of man save the spirit of man." Often times these will manifest themselves in anger, hatred, retaliation, etc.

Man is created in the image of God. His basic needs are met through love communication. ; When rejection enters, the person is denied love, security, acceptance, identity and recognition. He is no longer capable of loving or receiving love. The result is crippling and destructive to one's total person. Note: There are degrees of rejection whose effect is proportionate. We are a product of our total life experience. Our reactions to present situations are determined by past experience. Our perception of the present time can be distorted by past hurts. To the extent that we are act violently to a simple problem. We must conclude that we are bound to the past and cannot respond normally to present situation.

Jesus was bruised:

- "...He was bruised for our iniquities" (Is. 53:5).

- "...Pleased the Lord to bruise him" (Is. 53:10).

And suffered rejection:

Betrayed by a close friend.

Rejected (Is. 53:2-3), despised, forsaken.

Falsely accused (Matt. 12:24).

Hated.

Forsaken.

CONCLUSION: "...The chastisement of our peace (and well being) was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.." (and made whole). (Is. 53:5).

'Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon Him. Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. (Is. 53:1-3).

REJECTION

Rejection is a deep bruise that destroys one's total persons.

The source of rejection

Parents/Child relationship.

Parent / child rejection:

Before Birth, Luke 1:39-45; Luke 1:46-55. Unwanted child; failed abortion.

Fear and rejection can come in as a child - transmitted by mother through, e.g. a state of shock in case of an accident or sudden death; also dependent on the role of authority figures in the child's life: father, teacher, elder brother, uncle, etc.

CONCLUSION: A rejected child will grow up unable to love and receive love. A child that has been abused will withdraw in fear or else be destructive through rebellion.

Adopted Children.

Parents who cannot communicate love:

Parents who suffer from rejection.

Alcoholic parent.

Substitute giving of things for love.

Pre-occupied.

Domination.

6. Critical (Requiring perfection).

CONCLUSION: An unloved child by a father will have difficulty building a stable relationship to God as Father. (His or her perceptions of Who God is as a Father have been twisted by earthly child-father relationship).

-A child who grows up under rejection will accept rejection rather than love from God.

-The parent image is the model upon, which the child builds his relationship to God. This determines how he or she sees God. ("tainted father image").

Peer Relationships:

-Critical of others (Matt. 7:3).

Loss of self-identity

Rejection destroy a person's self identity.

Teenage seeks identity with peer group.

Adult seeks identity in a profession, church, club, etc.

CONCLUSION: Man was made in the image of God and only in Him can he find his identity. God can give a new image: Rom. 8:29; II Cor. 3:18. To be like Christ; transformed into His image. Our N.T. identity is found who we are: "In Christ / In Him."

Unstable relationship to God.

One cannot enter into true fellowship with God as long as there is rejection.

Tends to relate to God upon basis of works.

A substitute for love is "busyness" (activity).

Rejection undercuts faith. (feels unworthy to receive anything).

CONCLUSION: An unable relationship to God could well indicate a problem of rejection.

7. A sure sign of rejection is being unable to love or receive love.

Bruises can cause bondage

Bruises bind us to the one who hurt us.

Bruises bind us to bitterness we experience from the hurt.

Bruises bind us from loving and receiving love.

Conclusion: sin is not always the only occasion by which satan occupies a place in one's life!

(Christian growth and ministry are bound by the weights and bondage of hurts, as well as by our sin of course!)

Bruises can cause bitterness

The deepest hurts come from those closest to us.

Hurts from child-parent relationship.

Hurts from husband – wife relationship.

Bitterness pollutes one's whole system.

Comes out of one's speech.

Seen in one's actions.

Revealed in one's attitudes.

Damages physical health.

Bitterness builds walls of isolation.

Fear of further hurt.

Fear and distrust of people.

Fear of inner hurts and weakness being exposed.

Loneliness.

Cut people out of life.

No basic trust.

Very critical attitude towards others.

THE DAMAGE OF BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS:

Broken relationships cause blind spots. (1 John 2:9 –11) One walks in darkness because: No direction; caused to stumble; can't see himself; can't see others.

Blind spots stop us from acting wisely.

Blind spots stop us from seeing ourselves.

Blind spots stop us from seeing others as they really are.

- Broken relationships cause insensitivity.
 - Life becomes self-centered.
 - No proper regards for the needs of others.
- Broken relationships cause immaturity.
 - The emotional growth stops at the time of injury.}
- 2. Personality does not mature with the body. }(hidden infant inside)

THE DESTRUCTION OF UNFORGIVENESS:

- Resentment becomes bitterness.
- Blame becomes hatred.
- Deception becomes perversion.

Bitterness is the “seed-bed” for demonic work. It will destroy any Christian. The safeguard against it is to remain in the spirit of forgiveness continually. When Satan comes to bruise, do not receive the hurt (Eph. 4:27). Immediately release it by forgiveness!

JESUS CAME:

- “...To set at liberty them that are bruised”, Luke 4:18.
- “....The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by His stripes we are healed.”, Is. 53: 5.

STEPS OUT OF REJECTION:

- Forgive those who have rejected you.
- Release all rejection to Christ (Is. 53:13)
 - Jesus bore rejection by men.
 - Jesus bore rejection by God.
 - Promise: Jeremiah 30:17
- Accept the fact you are accepted in the Beloved (Eph. 1:6).
- Find your identity in Christ –
 - His image (II Cor. 3:18)
 - His workmanship (Eph. 2:10)
 - New Creation (II Cor. 5:17)
- Accept yourself –
 - By forgiving yourself of the past.
 - By receiving the Father’s love (Rom. 8:15, 38-39).
- Claim your deliverance and receive inner healing.

The ministry of deliverance will cut the roots of rejection. The bondage and oppression must be broken as well as the lies of deception. Demonic powers definitely work in this area. Remember, with God there is no rejection.

- Jesus was rejected....
- “.....He was bruised for our iniquities” (Is. 53:5)
- “.....Pleased the Lord to bruise Him” (Is. 53:10)
- Was betrayed by a close friend.
- Rejected (Is. 53:2-3)
- Accused (Matt. 12:24)
- Hated by Pharisees
- Forsaken by His own disciples at a time of need (Hebrews 5:7 – 10)

THE GOAL OF INNER HEALING IS: PEACE

Romans 16:20

- Peace with others.
- Peace with yourself.
- Peace with God.

THE STEPS OF INNER HEALING:

Listen

Localize the problems.

Distinguish between surface and root problems.

I. Surface problem involves one incident filled with guilt and fear, etc.

Root problems have many disturbing memories built upon one root.

Release the past –

Through forgiveness.

Through walking with Jesus through the past.

Break the bondage of satan.

CAUTION:

Inner healing is not digging up all the garbage of the past.

Do not get involved in introspection.

The ministry of healing is the Lord's ministry, one must stay sensitive to what He is doing.

Do not systematize the work of the Spirit.

The person's faith must be strong to face the reality of a painful memory, do not push.

RELEASING HURTS THROUGH FORGIVENESS

INTRODUCTION: Many Christians are being tormented by the enemy because of un-forgiveness. Un-forgiveness gives the enemy a legal claim and he moves in to oppress and torment. Bitterness, the result of un-forgiveness, is the seed-bed of every evil work. Satan respects no Christian or believer if he walks in un-forgiveness!

TEXT: release \ forgive and you shall be released (Luke 6:37).

THESIS: forgiveness is the key to release bitterness.

A DEFINITION OF FORGIVENESS:

Matt. 28:23-35, "the debtor servant"

"...Released him and forgave him the debt" (Matt. 18:27)

v.35, "...forgive ... from your heart."

Greek word: "Apoluo"

To set free, to liberate one from a thing.

-Example: "...Woman, thou art loosed from your infirmity" (Luke 13:12).

To let go, to release as it were a captive.

-Example: "Then the lord of that servant...loosed him and forgave him the debt" (Matt. 18:27).

Greek word: "Aphiami"

To let go, send away.

-Example: "Then he left the multitudes" (Matt. 13:36).

To cancel, remit, pardon.

-Example: "...The lord of that slave...forgave him the debt" (Matt. 18:27).

FORGIVENESS RELEASES THE HURT OF THE PAST

The one who carries the hurt is bound to the past \ controlled by it.

Unable to live in the present.

Bitterness of past flows into present relationships.

The one who carries hurt is bound to people of the past.

You can retain another in his sin through un-forgiveness (John 20:22-23).

By retaining another's sin you become like them.

PRINCIPLE: Forgive and become like God; retain and become like the one who hurt you.

Un-forgiveness is not changed by time.

The one who carries hurt is tormented.

-Example: A servant who refused to forgive (Matt. 18:21-35).

Called a wicked servant (Matt. 18:32).

In light of God's mercy, what should be our attitude toward others?

Prayer of deliverance comes after forgiveness.

-Model prayer: "...Deliver us from evil..." (Matt. 6:9-13).

FORGIVENESS RELEASES GOD.

Forgiveness releases God's forgiveness for you. (Matt. 6:14-15; Mark 11: 23-28).

Un-forgiven sin gives Satan a place.

Redemption is co-extensive with forgiveness (Eph. 1:7).

Forgiveness release God's forgiveness for others.

"Whatever you loose on earth ..." (Matt. 18:18).

"If two of you agree..." (Matt. 18:19-20).

Forgiveness releases God's healing in you.

Some may need to forgive themselves.

Others may need to release God.

CONCLUSION:

Forgiveness is an act of the will: you choose to forgive. The feeling will come later. As you release the person, God releases the hurt in your heart and healing takes place.

Be like God, FORGIVE!

List relationships of past that were bad.

Analyze to find reasons.

Deal with each relationship and release the person by forgiveness.

You need to ask forgiveness from the person for your unforgiving attitude and the part you are to blame for!

HOMOSEXUALITY

INTRODUCTION: The ultimate of losing all self-identity is to come to a confusion of the sex role. In this state, the flesh becomes god and the passions are twisted to a promiscuous life in which there is no love, but is governed by lust. Rebellion and insecurity drive the person until he is totally absorbed in his sin.

SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF HOMOSEXUALITY

God did not create anyone a homosexual.

In the beginning God made man, male and female (Gen. 1:27).

Men and woman were to be one flesh (Gen. 1:28; 2:24).

Homosexuality is the result of rebellion against God. (Rom. 1:24-27).

Man exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for the corruptible.

And lost his own glory.

Instead of living in truth, man chose to live a lie and God gave him up to degrading passions.

The following Scriptures express God's viewpoint on homosexuality:

-Lev. 18:22 -Deut. 23:17-18

-Lev. 20:13 -Rom. 1:24-27

-Deut. 22:5 -I Cor. 6: 9-10

Homosexuality is definitely a spirit of perversion.

-Examples: Men of Sodom (Gen.19).

Men of Benjamin (Judges 19).

Homosexuality has its own god.

Flesh and self-gratification.

Phallus cults of other generations with male prostitutes.

II.HOMOSEXUALITY IS A CHOICE

A choice influenced by parents, relatives, circumstances, etc. such as the following examples:

Mr. A.:

-Hatred and rejection towards his father.

-Loss of personal identity.

-Mother ran the family.

-Life dominated by rejection.

Mr. B.:

-Knew his father loved him, but was afraid of his father. -

Brothers would not accept him; continually put down. -

Found acceptance in sexual experience with an older boy.

-Sexually raped at age 14.

-Very lonely all of life.

Ms. C.:

-Life of rejection, adopted.

-Father rarely around; could never please

him. -Bitter against parents.

-Insecurity.

-Always disliked herself.

Ms. D.:

-Rejected by parents.

-Suffered cruelty as a child.

-Self – hatred and total self-rejection.

-Hatred toward women; took male image.

CONCLUSION:

All had poor relationships with their father.

All had problems of sexual identity at an early age.

Rebellion is the element that turned them toward homosexuality.

Rejection becomes a driving force to find acceptance in same sex.

III.THE HOMOSEXUAL OPPOSES HIMSELF

His fears are destructive.

Fears normal relationships.

Fears rejection.

Fears failure.

Forms of self-rejection:

Hatred for own sex.

Hatred toward self.

No self-identity.

Forms of rejection of others:

Bitterness seeks its victims.

Fear of rejection becomes a way of life.

NOTE: Homosexuality is both aggressive and reticent.

Excuses:

“I cannot help the way I’m made.”

“I have a right to fulfill my sex needs the same as others.”

“I will change my sex by an operation and then society will accept me.”

“I can serve God and be homosexual – God accepts me as I am.”

IV. MINISTRY TO THE HOMOSEXUAL

.1 Find roots of rebellion.

Restore broken relationships in the home.

Seek total acceptance of self in the normal sex role – renewed image.

Deal with rejection and fear of rejection.

Renew the mind – deal with sin.

Change life style.

NOTE: Some people are brought into homosexuality by circumstances later in life, such as prison, military service, bisexual experiences, etc. These will not have the deep roots of an early childhood problem.

CONCLUSION: There is help and deliverance for the homosexual. (I Cor. 6:11). Received them with the love of Christ, lead them to the truth. Take your stand firmly without rejecting them. Deal with the roots. Minister deliverance.

DEALING WITH EVIL SPIRITS AND THE OCCULT

For the sake of moving ahead, I am assuming that those following this study are aware of the Biblical teaching concerning:

The existence of demons or evil spirits.

The fact that the Lord Jesus has totally conquered Satan and his hosts, and disarmed them at the Cross.

That the Lord Jesus has given us authority over all their power in His Name, and commanded us to do as He did and cast them out.

We shall therefore consider some practical issue involved.

Demons cannot possess a Christian, but they may ‘lodge’ in one, harass, oppress, bind, confuse, deceive and generally distress a Christian.

Demons have the right at present to walk through the earth, but they do not have the right to invade any person without being given invitation or other suitable opportunity. A man has control of his own will. However they do gain control or influence in some of the following ways:

Evil spirits may gain control by:

By the deliberate choice of the person to honour or worship them. This applies to idolatry, yoga, all forms of witchcraft, tantra-mantra, etc. i.e. all forms of the occult. Idolatry is spiritual adultery and Paul says he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one flesh with her, in the same way a deliberate idolatry or such activity seems to be more binding on a person than ‘ordinary’

sin because they yield allegiance in their spirit. So general repentance at the time of coming to Christ may not be enough.

By the choice of another on our behalf-usually as a baby charms and so on are put, or 'dedicating' of the baby to a certain deity or cause. Curses may also be the cause of harassing a person.

Trauma. Sometimes in a situation of a great shock a person's natural reserves are shattered, and the devil will take advantage. This may apply usually to spirits of fear, or, depending on the shock, may be of lust, violence, etc.

By people indulging their own self-will, habits and attitudes. Lustful thoughts fed and encouraged, become a lustful attitude, and soon a spirit of lust moves in to take hold. The same is very often true with a lying spirit, and many others.

This is BY FAR the most USUAL way evil spirits gain a hold of those whom we counsel as Christians and believers, unless they have a past of worshipping other gods, etc.

How to Recognise the presence of Evil Spirits:

By the gift of the Holy Spirit – discerning of spirits or word of knowledge.

By the presence of certain usual symptoms:

A 'driving' factor, a compulsion to do things, especially 'odd' things.

An inability to change, even after prolonged and genuine effort.

A great 'intensity' of feeling or activity – in emotions, speech, mind, or addictions.

The person themselves knows.

You yourself 'pick it up' by change in the eyes, a 'slipperiness' or however you personally recognise them.

How to Deal with them:

In case of severe possession of course the person themselves is not in control, but in most of the cases we deal with in the church the person is conscious and has come for counseling. Therefore it is essential to expect that person's integrity and work with them. Their co-operation ensures success! We must cast the demon out, but the 'counselee' is ever to be considered passive in this.

Steps to take:

Identify the spirits. This will have become clear during the counseling.

Remove the ground on which it sits. This also will have become clear. I.e. How did it gain control? It will therefore be necessary to repent of sin, renounce the involvement, forgive any who have hurt the counselee, etc.

Address it by name! We don't ask God to do it, or Jesus to send it out. He has told us to cast out demons. Mark 16: 17.

Bind it. Mt. 12:29; 18:18; 16:19. This is in order that it shall not harm the counselee or anyone else.

Command it to leave in Jesus Name. It is good for the counselee either to pray their own prayer also renouncing, any further connection with it, or to repeat a prayer after you, which accurately expresses their intention.

Pray for an infilling of the Holy Spirit - especially those gifts and graces most needed to fill up the injury caused by the evil, e.g. after spirit of lying has been renounced and cast out pray for the Holy Spirit of truth, and also for the armour of God. Give the counselee some suitable Scriptures for their meditation and follow them up to encourage them.

FINALLY

It is good to hand back to the Lord all that has been discussed during counseling.

Agree with Him to forget the sins confessed.

See to it that the counsellee has a written note of Scriptures, etc. given during counseling.

Support one another in Jesus' Name into His love and care.

It is a simple but profoundly effective exercise and especially in a church keeps us free from over-dependence on others, and becoming over involved in each other's lives.

COUNSELING THE DEMON POSSESSED AND DEMON OPPRESSED

ARE DEMONS FOR REAL?

What are they and what do they desire to do? What is their origin and are they part of Satan's army against whom the saint is to fight the fight of faith (spiritual warfare) to overcome?

Mark 9:17; Luke 4:33; Mark 1:23-24; Mark 5:2; Matthew 4:24;

SATAN'S THREE PRONGED ATTACK

Satan trespasses in three areas with the carnal person, but in the case of a Christian he trespasses in only two areas – they Body and the Soul (or mind). He desires however to also control the spirit of the believer.

Our fight is against spiritual wickedness and rulers of darkness (Eph. 6:10-12; II Cor. 10:3-4). Wrestling is close quarter fighting and you are grappling with the powers of darkness at close quarters – this also suggests pressure tactics. His kingdom is highly organized with a satanic hierarchy – hence the word “principality” – or “kingdoms” – the territory and kingdom of a demon prince. The word “power” should be “authority”, showing that the demon has been given authority over that territory. Yet greater authority has been given to the church! (Mark 16:17-19; Luke 10:19; Luke 9:1). Hallelujah!

N.B: Demon spirits may trespass, but they have no legal rights against Christians (Luke 11:20-22). These evil spirits and fallen angels have only one objective and purpose – wickedness (John 10:10).

Demon powers are set in array and given authority by Satan to control the entire world and plague it with pernicious evil. We, the Church must take up the challenge to resist him and see him flee! (James 4:7). Satan wants to destroy you and conquer your family, church, community and nation. Are you going to launch an attack to overthrow the enemy? Remember, warfare is not prayer (II Cor 4:3-4; 1 Tim 4:1).

THE VALUE OF DELIVERANCE

To have no spot or wrinkle as a believer. (Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:7; Jas. 1:23-25; II Cor. 3:18).

HOW DO DEMONS ENTER OR WHAT ALLOWS THEM TO ENTER?

Demons are evil personalities – they are spirit beings and they are enemies of God and man. Their main objective is to tempt, deceive, accuse and condemn. You cannot pick up a demon by walking down a street among carnal people, it has to enter by means of a “door.”

The following “doors” must be noted:

1. SINS OF THE FLESH: Over indulgence and wrong indulgence (Self indulgence)
Galatians Chapter 5 lists 17 works of the flesh.

LIFE’S CIRCUMTANCES: (underlying need for inner healing)

Rejection as a child.

Parents divorced.

Parents alcoholics.

HEREDITARY OR FAMILY DEMONS (need for curse on family to be broken)

TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES (e.g. death of a close friend, motor car accident)

DABBING IN THE OCCULT – Lev 20:6; Gal. 5:9-21

ANY FORM OF DISOBEDIENCE TO THE WORD OF GOD

FALSE DOCTRINE - Not girding yours loins with the truth.

Like: false religions, Christian cults, occult and spiritism, false doctrine.

DIFFERENT WAYS TO DETERMINE THE NEED FOR DELIVERANCE:

The gift of Discerning of Spirits (1 Cor. 12:10)

The Word of Knowledge (1 Cor 12:8)

Detection – simply observing people and by their actions know the presence and nature of demons. People in Jesus’ time were well acquainted with demons.

Some of the most common symptoms for detecting demons are the following: 3:1 Emotional problems and instability, which persist or recur.

3:2 Mental problems.

3:3 Speech problems – foul language, lying and cursing, blasphemy.

3:4 Sex problems.

3:5 Addictions.

3:6 Physical infirmities (Luke 13:11).

3:7 Religious error – a major contributor (John 8:32).

STEPS TO DELIVERANCE:

Honesty – Ps. 32: 5; Ps. 139:23-24

Humility – James 4:6-7

Repentance – Ezek. 20:43

Renunciation – Matt. 6:14-15; Joel 2:32.

Prayer

Warfare – Mark 16:17; Luke 10:19; Psalm 18:2

G. STEPS TO KEEP DELIVERANCE:

Put on the whole armour of God. (Eph. 6:10-18).

Have a positive confession – this is faith expressed (Mark 11:23).

Stay in the Scriptures (Psalm 1:1-3).

Crucify the flesh and submit to discipline (Gal. 5:19-24).

Develop a life of praise and prayer. (1 Thess. 5:17).

Maintain a life of fellowship and spiritual ministry.

Total commitment to Christ and the church.

Cultivate right relationships and right attitudes.

Before we continue, please note the following eleven points: (I - XI)

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR REPENTANCE

Man is responsible for his choices and responses.

The Christian life is maintained by an attitude of repentance (living out of forgiveness)

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR SELF-DISCIPLINE

Deliverance will not give a person discipline.

Discipline must be learned / put into practice!

Discipline brings order to one's life.

The devil does most of his work through disorder.

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR CRUCIFIXION OF THE FLESH

One cannot crucify demons.

One cannot cast out the flesh.

IV. THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR FORGIVENESS AND CONFESSION OF FAULTS

Ground for deliverance must be prepared through forgiveness and confession of faults and sins.

Bitterness can only be released by forgiveness.

SATAN ENTERS A PERSON WHEN A PLACE IS GIVEN HIM.

“Neither give place to the devil” (Eph. 4:27).

There are things that give place to the devil, like: calling on spirits, persistent sin.

The devil does not respect a Christian who opens the door to him.

VI. THE DEMON MAY BE CAST OUT, BUT THE GROUND THAT GAVE PLACE TO IT CANNOT BE CAST OUT.

Unless the ground is dealt with, no permanent relief can be obtained. Matt.12:43-45.

Pull down the stronghold by the weapons of our warfare and the enemy must flee.

(Prov. 21:22; II Cor. 10:14).

VII. THERE ARE DEGREES OF DELIVERANCE.

To the degree truth has been received, God's Spirit will bring deliverance. (John 8: 31-32).

To the degree of understanding concerning the enemy and the ground given, can one effectively resist him.

VIII. THE SCRIPTURAL GROUND FOR OBTAINING DELIVERANCE IS TRUTH.

Receive the truth of Christ's full redemption. (I John 3: 8)

Receive the truth of concerning the works of Satan. (John 10: 10)

Receive the truth concerning one's self. (Rom. 16: 19 –20).

IX. ACCEPTING ONE'S OWN RESPONSIBILITY IN THE MATTER IS RECEIVING TRUTH

Phil. 2:12-13; Rom. 12:2.

Man is responsible for what he is.

Only as he accepts this responsibility is there deliverance.

WHAT IS OURS IN DOCTRINE IS NOT OURS AUTOMATICALLY IN EXPERIENCE.

Areas can remain untouched until one appropriates by faith Christ's redemption in that area.

The blood covenant breaks the power of Satan, faith must be joined to the covenant for its benefits to be received.

XI. FORCE MUST BE USED AGAINST FORCE.

The devil only respects one more powerful than he. (I John 4: 4)

One must be the aggressor against the enemy.

The strong man must be bound. (Matt. 12:29).

CONCLUSION: The Spirit of God coming into a life will not allow the works of the enemy to remain hidden. As the Spirit reveals his works, the believer must arise and gird himself with faith and come against his enemy in every area until he is free to be all God wants him to be.

H. FILL THE EMPTY HOUSE (Matt. 12:43-45)

With the power of the Spirit operating in all nine gifts. The supernatural gifts of God's Spirit counter the work of demons and they hate them. Baptism of the Holy Spirit is necessary.

With the Spirit's fruit. (Gal. 5:22-23) – Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance or self-control. Demons are exactly opposite in character to the fruits and Jesus.

The house must be filled and kept.

DEMON MANIFESTATIONS

Demons sometimes demonstrate their particular natures in certain ways.

Serpentine manifestations – tongue, body, etc.

Nose – blowing air, making a hissing sound.

Feigns death or fainting – body goes cold and heartbeat may not even be felt in case of the spirit of death.

Breath smelling.

May cry out with loud voices.

A very proud almost arrogant look.

Rhythmic dancing spirits manifest themselves through the motion of the body.

Mocking laughter.

Pain.

Crying.

Laughing.

They speak back defiantly.

Manifestations when Demons leave

Demons spirits normally leave through the mouth or the nose and the following could be witnessed:

Coughing and bringing up of phlegm. Vomiting – phlegm.

Drooling –

phlegm. Spitting –

phlegm. Foaming –

phlegm. Screaming

Sighing Belching

Convulsions with shaking.

Gagging and choking in the throat area. Groaning

YOU AS A DELIVERANCE MINISTER:

Overcoming fear.

Personal demands:

- Time
- Energy
- Patience
- Dedication
- Loving and wise
- Free from blame
- Bearing others burdens
- Prayer and fasting

Blessing and benefits.

L. HOW TO CAST OUR EVIL SPIRITS?

The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit, Eph. 6:17.

The Name of Jesus, Luke 16:17.

THE MINISTER OF DELIVERANCE

INTRODUCTION

The ministry of deliverance is given to the Body of Christ to be incorporated with the five principle ministries of the Church. I believe there is an anointing given to different individuals in which the gift of discernment operates and we find them ministering to the oppressed of the devil. This ministry demands much of the person as he enters into battle against spiritual forces to bring deliverance. He certainly needs the support of the whole Body.

HIS PERSONAL LIFE

A life of discipline in:

Prayer

Fasting (the cure of unbelief - Matt. 17:20-21)

Word

A life of balance in:

Rest and recreation

Family

Ministry

Purity in personal life. ‘The one who is free to move unmolested into enemy territory is the one who has a passion for righteousness and a hatred of evil.’

Clean of all defilement of flesh and spirit. (II Cor. 7:1; 1 Cor. 9:27).

Perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (II Cor. 7:1).

HIS MINISTRY

Be in control as to:

Time to be given to ministry.

Do not allow the devil to push you into ministry. You call the terms – you be in control.

Limit the hours and days to be given to this ministry.

People who receive ministry.

Is the person ready or just wanting temporary relief?

Is the person only wanting ministry and not permanent deliverance?

Does the person have enough truth to maintain deliverance?

Pray for discernment:

Discernment a gift. (I Cor. 12).

Gift developed by experienced and alertness.

Minister with authority and power:

Degree of authority according to:

Degree of power of the Holy Spirit in response to faith.

One's own submission to the authority of Christ over him.

PRINCIPLE: Submission to authority gives authority!

The degree of victory in the person's individual life.

The fullness of the Spirit gives power.

Must have knowledge of the Word:

Satan is the father of lies and deception.

Must meet the lies of Satan with the Word. - Matt. 4, Like Jesus: It is written!

The Word gives power and authority.

The Word becomes the two-edged sword.

Minister with the compassion of the Lord.

Unconditional love and acceptance.

Speaking the truth in love.

Keep the ministry strictly confidential.

Minister with a mature person present.

HIS ANOINTING

The anointing of David (Ps. 18:50).

God becomes our strength (Ps. 18:1-3).

Extended to the oppressed (Ps. 18:16-19).

Given to the one with clean hand (Ps. 18:20-24).

Supernatural strength (Ps. 18:26-36).

Victory over enemies (Ps. 18: 37-45).

Protection (Ps. 18:46-49).

CONCLUSION: "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you. Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand. Behold, all those who are angered at you will be shamed and dishonored; those who contend with you will be as nothing, and will perish. You will seek those who quarrel with you, but will not find them, those who war with you will be as nothing, and non-existent. For I am the Lord your God, who upholds your right hand, Who says to you, 'Do not fear, I will help you.'" (Is. 41:10-13). (See also: Ps. 149: 6-9)

HOW TO MAINTAIN DELIVERANCE

INTRODUCTION

The enemy has come into the land through deception and force. The key is breaking the work of deception and resisting every work of the enemy. Maintaining of deliverance means walking in the truth and resisting the enemy.

TEXT: "It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery." (Gal. 5:1).

STAND DAILY ON THE WORD

Take your place in Christ as a dead to sin (Rom. 6:11).

Hide within the Word (Ps. 91). And hide it in your heart. (Ps. 119:11)

Stand upon the promises. (Eph. 6:17).

In case of the following problems, counteract with the word of truth!

Fear

in circumstances (Is. 43:1-2).

of man or enemy (Is. 51:12-16).

of failure (II Tim. 1:7; II Cor. 2:14).

Healing of hurts:

Jer. 30:17

Is. 43:18-19

Is. 61:3

Rejection:

Is. 53:3

Is. 54:4

Jer. 30:17

Eph. 1:6

Accusation and condemnation:

Rom. 8:1, 33- 34

Rev. 12:10-11

Passivity:

Luke 4:18

I Pet. 1:13

Mark 11:23

Allow truth to drive out all deception:

Knowing the truth shall set you free! (John 8: 31-32).

Deception about yourself.

Deception about God.

Deception about others.

RESIST THE ENEMY

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (Jas. 4:7).

Resist him on the ground of the blood of Jesus (Rev. 12:11).

-Confess your victory and deliverance through Jesus’ blood.

Claim your authority over Satan by virtue of your position in Christ.

-Eph. 1:20-21; 2-6; Col. 2:13-15; Luke 10:17; Matt. 28:18. -

Command Satan to depart in Jesus’ Name.

Use the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit in hour of temptation. - Eph. 6:16; I Pet. 5:9; Matt. 4:4, 7,10.

- Speak the Word with your mouth.

Put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-18).

- Girdle of God’s truth enables us to move in battle.

- Breastplate of God’s righteousness covers from accusations of enemy. - Shoes of God’s peace releases all conflict within.

- Helmet of God’s salvation renews our mind.

Bring every thought into subjection to Christ (II Cor. 10:5).

WALK IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LORD

Submit yourself to God.

-The other side of James 4:7.

The fellowship of obedience.

The fellowship of waiting. (I Pet. 5:6).

Walk in the Spirit.

The desires of the flesh will not be carried out (Gal. 5:16).

By the Spirit, the desires, of the flesh are put to death. (Rom. 8:13).

Keep your mind on things above. (Col. 3:1-3).

Walk in His light (I John 1:7).

There is fellowship in the Light.

There is cleansing in the Light.

CONCLUSION: The full redemption of the Cross is ours. Active faith appropriates this in every part of our living. You are directly a part of God’s work in you. Respond with faith and resist the enemy.

MINISTERING DELIVERANCE TO CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

As a person looks at his life, he will notice certain cycles being repeated –cycles of depression, fears and defeats. Satan has a way to cause a person's life to constantly fall into these cycles and keep him from being free to achieve certain goals in life.

PREMISE: Satan bruises a child and through the bruise can control or disable him to the point he is not free to live a normal life.

CHILDREN SUFFER FROM THE BRUISES OF REJECTION

Satan can bruise a child before birth.

A mother can communicate rejection to an unborn child.

Most adopted children suffer from rejection.

Children need to be cut loose from the spirit of the mother.

A mother can communicate her own rejections.

A mother suffering from rejection will unconsciously smother a child.

These barriers of rejection must be melted and the heart of the child joined to his parents.

A girl who never had her father's acceptance will not be able to accept herself as a woman.

A boy without his father's acceptance finds it difficult to fill the role of a man.

CONCLUSION: Ministry to both parent and child is necessary to break the cycle of rejection.

CHILDREN SUFFER FROM OCCULT OPPRESSION

Learning problems can develop.
Nervousness and agitation can be symptoms.
Fears and bad dreams are symptoms.

CONCLUSION: One should have the parent to confess his involvement in the occult and after renouncing the works of darkness, pray the prayer of deliverance for the child. The cycle of occult oppression can be broken.

CHILDREN SUFFER FROM FEAR AND INSECURITY

The atmosphere of the home can affect the child.
Fears of parents are communicated.
The atmosphere in the home is absorbed into the child.
A traumatic experience can have a memory of fear.

CONCLUSION: Ask the Lord to heal the memory of all fears that came at that time. Rebuke the powers of darkness that would torment through this memory.

IV. CHILDREN SUFFER FROM LOSS OF A PARENT IN DEATH

Death can be a shattering experience for a child.
The life of the child is built around the parents.
Scars of insecurity, sorrow, fear, etc. can come at death.
A child taught the Christian concept of death can escape the scars of death.

CONCLUSION: Minister to the child the truth of life after death. Pray that the Lord will fill the emptiness left in his life.

CHILDREN SUFFER FROM DIVORCE

Divorce is worse than death.
Death leaves emptiness but divorce leaves rejection.
Death leaves sorrow but divorce leaves hurt and bitterness.

The dissolving of a relationship tears the child apart.
The hurt of a broken relationship is carried by the child.
Symptoms of withdrawing, living in an imaginary world, or hostility and rebellion often result from a broken parent relationship.

CONCLUSION: Forgiveness is the key. Generally a child will carry the hurts of one parent. Acceptance of both parents and their love is very important.

VI. CHILDREN SUFFER FROM ABUSE

There are two results of being molested sexually (applies mainly to girls).
Promiscuity as a way of life or
Fear and guilt which brings rejection of sex role.

Demonic influence can come in at time of abuse.

CONCLUSION: Hatred for men must be released through forgiveness. Ask the Lord to go back to the experience and heal the memory and remove the pain of all the hurts. Ask God to give her a vision of man as he was first created.

ROOT OF REBELLION

INTRODUCTION

God created man in His image. A divine relationship was intended for man. Through transgression, rebellion became the nature of man and the divine fellowship was broken. Man without this divine relationship becomes a fractured, lost individual who lives in solitude and selfishness. The purpose and intent of life is lost, he is lost. Salvation begins at the point of man's rebellion by yielding to God and accepting the lordship of His Son.

TEXT: "For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has also rejected you from being king." (I Sam. 15:23).

SOURCE OF REBELLION

Pride – deception.

-Example: Lucifer was lifted up in pride and consequently rebelled against God (Is. 14:13-14; Ez. 28:14-17).

Bitterness.

Steps to rebellion

Hurt to resentment.

Resentment to bitterness.

Bitterness to hatred.
Hatred to rebellion.

REBELLION REFUSES AUTHORITY

Rebellion refuses the authority of God.

Godlessness is living as if God did not exist.

Man through rebellion becomes his own authority. Question: Will you submit to God's Word?

Rebellion refuses the authority of parents and government.

Child discipline is necessary for maturity and security.

Governmental authority is necessary for social justice and order (Eph. 6:1-3; Rom. 13:1-7).

CONCLUSION: These areas must be treated to get to the roots of rebellion. Humanism is the refusal of man to submit to the authority of God.

REBELLION AGAINST AUTHORITY RESULTS IN THE BODY RULING OVER THE PERSON

One who rebels is against authority and will become a slave to his own body.

-In certain sex problems, the root of rebellion generally goes back to parental authority.

Being turned over to the flesh is the judgment of God upon rebellion

. -The flesh is always hostile toward God (Rom. 8:6-7).

-The works of the flesh are the fruits of rebellion (Gal. 5:19-21).

IV. REBELLION LEADS TO WITCHCRAFT

-Example: Saul's reasoning became superior to God's Word (I Sam. 15:23).

Witchcraft is assuming the role of God.

Desire to manipulate and control people.

Desire to revenge one's self by doing evil.

Desire to obtain power.

Witchcraft is insubordination.

One becomes his own authority.

One's ambition becomes his governing power.

REBELLION AND REJECTION ARE TWO ROOTS THAT PRODUCE SCHIZOPHRENIA IN THE PERSONALITY ("Schizein": to leave, split. "Phren": mind)

Rejection turns a person inward:

-Loneliness, timidity, shyness -

Self-pity

-Fantasy -

Lust -

Insecurity

-Negative self-image, self-rejection, self-

hatred -Fear of rejection

-Jealousy, envy

-Depression and suicide

Rebellion turns a person outward. -

Hatred, violence, murder -

Bitterness and un-forgiveness -

Control, possessiveness, witchcraft

- Self-willed, unteachable, proud
- Self-delusion, self-deception
- Perversion

CONCLUSION:

Schizophrenia (double personality) revolves from one extreme to the other, withdrawn and then hostile, the above symptoms follow each root:

The Schizophrenic loses identity and hides behind one or the other root.

Deliverance involves treating the two roots plus bringing the person into identity with Christ who becomes their covering (I Cor. 6: 17 - one spirit with the Lord).

Finding identity is the key in maintaining deliverance.

ROOT OF PRIDE

INTRODUCTION

Pride speaks of the very attitude of a man's heart that determines the direction of his life. At the heart of wickedness and deception is pride. In the steps of the fall of Lucifer, the Scripture says: "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor..." (Ezek. 28:1).

TEXT: "But you said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High" (Is. 14:13-14) Note the five "I wills" of pride.

PRINCIPLE: The root of the tree determines its growth.

PRIDE HAS ITS ROOT AND STRENGTH IN A SPIRITUAL POWER

The God of this world fell through pride (Is. 14:13-14).

The world operates on a principle of pride (I John 2:15-16) - Lust of the flesh
Lust of the eyes
Pride of life

The root of every sin and evil is pride and rebellion!

CONCLUSION: Whereas pride has its roots within the spirit of this age, humility is the essence of Jesus Christ. Pride must be changed into humility.

A FRUIT OF PRIDE IS PERFECTIONISM

Definition: A person who sets up standards for himself beyond the normal requirements. Through achieving these, places himself above others and becomes critical of those who do not accept the same standards.

Description: Lack of love, indifference to needs of others, insensitive, hasty in judgment, sharp in words, critical.

The result of perfectionism is:

Harsh attitude toward others and self which results in severity of character.

A very critical spirit.

Unforgiveness.

Self-righteousness and religious pride.

Poor relationship with God.

Transmits rejection to children

-Child never feels accepted except on basis of achievement.

The perfectionist will look at God as a perfectionist.

Will relate to God on the basis of his achievements. Sets high standard for himself.

God's acceptance is received on the basis of works.

Life filled with works, but he actually has no relationship with God.

CONCLUSION: Pride makes him think he can please God. Our relationship to God is never established on the basis of our works, but always on the basis of His grace. He accepts us as we are. This is the beginning point.

A FRUIT OF PRIDE IS COMPETITION

Definition: Constant striving to excel above another – to be first or better – to be recognized.

Description: Selfish, self-willed, self-exaltation, ambitious, envious.

The results of competition is:

Enmity between men (Gal. 5: 26; 6:3).

Constantly comparing one's self to another (II Cor. 10:12).

Discontentment with life and any past achievement.

Jealousy and envy.

CONCLUSION: Pride is a root that can never be satisfied. Constant striving with God man brings a spirit of competition that will absorb a life and keep him from functioning in his calling and role in life.

IV. A FRUIT OF PRIDE IS UNFORGIVENESS

Description: Unforgiving, bitter, estranged, touchy, angry.

The result of unforgiveness is

Guilt and condemnation.

-He cannot release others. He does not have God's release (forgiveness).

-He cannot forgive himself for the past. He cannot receive God's forgiveness.

Note: - Pride will keep him from forgiving himself because he has broken the image of self that pride has built.

Blindness and deception.

-He fails to see himself as he really is.

-He fails to see others as they really are.

Bitterness and hatred.

CONCLUSION: Pride would hold forth a false sense of justice when self must be vindicated. Pride calls for retribution rather than forgiveness.

A FRUIT OF PRIDE IS UNBELIEF

Definition: The nature of pride is to be independent and self-sufficient. To believe, one must acknowledge a need, a deficiency, a limitation. So unbelief seeks to establish its independence and sufficiency so that no one else is needed. Pride is the root of unbelief.

One cannot believe in God and seek the glory of men. (John 5: 44).

Pride desires the glory of men.

Faith desires the glory of God.

Pride seeks to possess itself of God's blessings characterized by:

Striving with God.

Working faith principles for personal goals rather than seeking God's will for life.

Refusing to seek God's will and pleasure instead in one's life.

Faith and humility are the same root.

Humility prepares the soul for trust.

Examples of faith and humility:

-Centurion, 'I am not worthy!' - Luke 7:2-10.

-Gentile woman, "The dogs eat the crumbs." - Mark 7:25-30.

CONCLUSION: Faith does not grow from the root of pride.

VI. HOW TO CUT THE ROOT OF PRIDE

Ask God to show you the deception of pride.

Repent.

Release the deceptions of pride.

Change the motivation of live from pride to love.

Humble yourself before God.

CONCLUSION: The root of every sin and evil is pride. The root of all virtue is humility. Pride will push us up. Rejection will push us down. We must be free from both and let God exalt us.

ROOT OF THE OCCULT

INTRODUCTION

There are things in which people become involved that not only affect them, but later generations also. The occult is a root that can extend to the third and fourth generations and its consequences are severe. In dealing with the problems of people one must ever be on the alert for its symptoms – even innocent suffer from it.

TEXT: "When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For who does these things is detestable to the Lord: and because of these detestable things the Lord your God will drive them out before you" (Deut. 18:9-12).

THESIS: Occult involvement gives Satan legal claims over an individual. Spiritual gifts of the occult are passed on from generation to generation, likewise the curse. (John 10:10a)

IDOLATRY AND THE OCCULT ARE FROM THE SAME ROOT

Idolatry is the worship of demons.

- "...They served their idols...they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils." (Ps. 106:36).

- "...The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God....." (I Cor. 10:20).

The occult is the manipulation of demon powers for selfish goals. By establishing common ground, demons enter into agreement with people. The benefits offered through the supernatural always become a curse to the benefactor. The supernatural gifts as well as the curse are passed from one generation to another.

The curse for bowing before other gods goes to the third and fourth generations. "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate me." (Exod. 20:5).

THERE ARE CERTAIN DIRECT RESULTS THAT COME FROM AN OCCULT ROOT

Spiritual blockage

Supernatural control that keeps one from confessing faith in Jesus.

An attitude of rebellion against all authority.

Spiritual blockage that keeps one from entering the spiritual benefits of the Holy Spirit.

Inability to read the Bible, concentrate, pray or worship without being attacked.

Physical symptoms

Symptoms of paralysis, epilepsy, nervous disorders, etc.

Children born as freaks, deformities, deaf-mutes, etc. Also nervous disorders, learning problems, agitation, inability to function in social structure, fears, bad dreams, etc.

Emotional instability

Violent tempers

Hatred and cursing

Nervous disturbances

Un-social behavior

Depression

Fear

Insecurity

Tormented constantly

Bad dreams

Mental bondage

Confusion in thought pattern

Learning problems

Mental illness

TWO QUESTIONS THAT MOST OFTEN TROUBLE PEOPLE ABOUT THE OCCULT ROOT ARE:

How is it possible for a Christian to continue suffering oppression or subjection because of this earlier, pre-conversion experience?

Answer: The door opened to the powers of darkness will remain open until it is closed by an act of the person's will. An open door is an invitation to oppression.

Can a Christian who has never participated in any form of occultism be subjected or oppressed?

Answer: - Occult oppression can be passed on by parents to children.

Children can be infected by certain occult blessings sought by parents.

There is a curse for entering into an unholy alliance with another god.

IV. THE ROOT OF THE OCCULT CAN BE CUT BY:

Confession of faith in Jesus Christ and acceptance of His authority over you.

Confession of all occult sins.
Renunciation of Satan and the command for him to depart.
Prayer of deliverance.

CONCLUSION: An alliance made with another god is easily broken. Active faith in Christ and direct renunciation of occult powers are necessary for complete severance. Many need to be cut loose from ancestors who made unholy alliances. The blood covenant of Jesus breaks the curse of the occult. By faith the believer confesses with his mouth and breaks every alliance of the past.

THE COUNTERFEIT OF THE OCCULT

INTRODUCTION

There is a vacuum in the religious world. For generations the church has denied the supernatural and the workings of the Holy Spirit for the present time. The emphasis upon the intellect with its powers of reasoning has been the source of doctrine and practice which has ruled out the supernatural. In this vacuum, the kingdom of darkness is generating a revival of the occult and the supernatural. The traditional church has become structured and is losing its life. People are turning from it and seeking reality elsewhere. Because man is basically religious, the occultic counterfeit fulfills this need.

TEXT: “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.” (II Cor. 11:13-15).

THESIS: There is reality in the supernatural of the occult!

THROUGH THE OCCULT, MAN HAS DISCOVERED THE REALITY OF ANOTHER DIMENSION

The world of the occult is real.

Many people go on the premise: “If it is real, then it is right!”

Many have ignored the reality of a spiritual enemy.

The world of the occult is a supernatural dimension.

Many people go on the premise: "If it is supernatural, then it is God!"
Man has a supernatural enemy who is a counterfeiter.

The kingdom of another dimension is opened by the occult.
The occult holds keys that open doors into this dimension.
These doors are: spiritism, psychic phenomena, extrasensory perception,
divination, magic, and Satanism.

II. THROUGH THE OCCULT HAS COME THE COUNTERFEIT OF THE TRUE

There is a true outpouring of the Holy Spirit which is supernatural (Joel 2:28; Acts 1:5-8).

In the true baptism one receives the Holy Spirit.
In the counterfeit one receives an unclean spirit.
The Holy Spirit energizes the total person.
The unclean spirit brings passivity to the total person and tries to take control.
Jesus Christ is the baptiser.
The counterfeit works through medium, séances, etc.

There are true supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:1-11).

There are true gifts of revelation, (I Cor. 12: 8, 10).
The word of wisdom through the Spirit.
The word of knowledge through the Spirit.
The discerning of spirits by the Spirit.
The counterfeit has come in the form of:
clairvoyance and clair-audience (ESP of objects and events)
precognition (knowledge of events not yet taken place)
telepathy (direct experience of someone's thoughts)

There are true gifts of power, I Cor. 12: 9- 10.

The gift of faith by the Spirit.
The gift of healing by the Spirit
The gift of effecting miracles by the Spirit.

The counterfeit has come in the same forms of:
faith through concentration of thought and will.
healing through mediums with supernatural power.
supernatural manifestations (Rev. 13:13-15).

There are true gifts of inspiration, I Cor. 12: 10.

The gift of prophecy by the inspiration of the Spirit
The gift of tongues by the inspiration of the Spirit.
The gift of interpretation of tongues by the Spirit.

The counterfeit has come in the forms of: -
divination
-tongues used by demonic powers

CONCLUSION: The occultic powers focus on the mind whereas the true spiritual gifts come through the spirit and are ministries of the Holy Spirit. The ministry of the true does not require passivity or trances, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Cor. 3: 17). The Spirit of God does not consume the individual nor oppress him. The works of the Spirit are for edification and correspond with the fruits of the Spirit. The counterfeit corresponds to the works of darkness and the works of the flesh.

THE DISCERNING OF SPIRITS UNCOVERS THE DECEPTION OF THE OCCULT

"Angels of light" are uncovered by discerning of spirits (II Cor. 11:13-15; Acts 13:9-10).

The witness of deceiving spirits is uncovered by discerning of spirits. “possessed with a spirit of divination” (“*python*”) (Acts 16:16).

The doctrine of demons is uncovered by discerning of spirits (I Tim. 4:1).

The demon miracle workers are uncovered by discerning of spirits. “Signs and lying wonders” (II Thess. 2:9); “Spirits of devils working miracles”. (Rev.)

CONCLUSION: “Discerning of spirits gives supernatural insight into the secret realm of spirits. It reveals the kind of spirit that is activating a person who is manifesting supernatural knowledge or power.”

THE ORIGIN OF THE OCCULT

INTRODUCTION

The ancient religions were rooted in the occult. These religions were called Mystery Religions because of secret rites experienced by the initiated. Babylon is thought to be beginning place for such religions and their traditions. The Bible describes the existence of a religion system in the end-time as “Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth” (Rev. 17:5). The occult practices very easily fit into this description. The name occult means: “that which is hidden.” Man has discovered hidden secrets by which the doors to the occult world are opened. These secrets are the mysteries of Babylon. God brought complete destruction to ancient Babylon (Jer. 50), and Babylon’s spiritual counterpart in the end-time awaits the same (Rev. 19:2).

TEXT: “And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, ‘Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality.’ And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABMONATIONS OF THE EARTH.” (Rev.17:1-5)

THE OCCULT HAS ITS BEGINNINGS IN IDOLATRY

The occult is the worship of other god.

(demons) 1685

These gods work in idolatry and religious systems.
These gods bring the supernatural to idolatry.

Idolatry opens the door to the hidden powers of darkness.

These powers are demons (Ps. 106:35-38; I Cor. 10:20).

The first commandment speaks of other gods (Ex. 20:1).

.3. The occult seeks to manipulate these spiritual forces.

These demonic forces allow themselves to be used.

The price for such a service means the complete enslavement of the individual.

CONCLUSION: Entering into an occult involvement is bowing down before other gods. The unholy alliance opens the door to the supernatural. Even though a person involved is able to manipulate these powers for a while, in the end he is completely enslaved.

REBELLION AGAINST GOD IS THE ROOT OF THE OCCULT

Man in the garden sought hidden knowledge.

“Your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God...” (Gen. 3:5).

Man rebelled against the command of God.

Forbidden knowledge brought him under the authority of darkness.

After the flood, man attempted to set up his kingdom and religious system. “Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach heaven...” (Gen. 11:4).

Man sought to establish himself as god.

The heavens were made the object of his worship.

The kingdom of Babylon becomes a center of idolatry.

Man discovered the occult.

Occult powers were made available.

IV. KNOWLEDGE AND POWER BECOME THE CHIEF ELEMENTS OF THE OCCULT

The occult is a search for destiny and knowledge.

There is need for meaning and purpose in living.

People are caught up in the fascination of the unknown.

All occult forms attempt to predict the future.

Conclusion: “The secret things belong to God” (Deut. 29:29).

The occult is grasping for power to dominate and control. “you will be like God” (Gen. 3:5).

Man’s potential of subduing the earth is perverted.

Man seeks to dominate and control others.

Man seeks to have power over the gods.

Conclusion: Instead of subjecting himself to God, man has sought other gods he can manipulate and make himself powerful.

SPIRITISM – THE QUEST FOR LIFE AFTER DEATH

INTRODUCTION

Spiritism is the effort to go beyond death and enter into contact with departed loved ones. Evidences of survival after death are gathered and the wonderful reports from the other side are supposed to take away any idea of death as being real or separation from friends and relatives as being final. They would say to the Christians, “You have the faith of life after death, but we have the evidence.”

Spiritism has become a recognized religion that claims it has the third revelation – one beyond Christ. This revelation comes from the departed spirits of the dead. Supernatural gifts are manifested, such as prophecy, speaking in tongues and interpretation, gifts of healings, word of knowledge, etc. It has adopted Christian names, rituals, and covering. It fits easily into a religion where idolatry is evident.

TEXT: “Or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who called up the dead.” (Deut. 18:11).

God is eternal, unchanging, and infinite in His perfection. He created the universe and all that exists.

Man is an imperfect spirit created by God. God places these imperfect spirits into flesh to perfect them. Once the spirit is perfect, it returns to God.

Spirits inhabit the space around us working good and evil in the physical world. Superior spirits are attracted to meetings where love and desire for good is found. The inferior spirits work among the curious and foolish.

There is no Satan or demons. The devil is in each of us.

Sin is mere limitations that will disappear. All sin is expiated by suffering in this life. There is no hell except in this life.

Jesus only serves as the example of how we must suffer to pass from the material to the immaterial. He is considered a superior spirit, more perfect the category of Mohammed and Buddha. He is not God.

Death is not once for man. If he dies in a moral state, he passes to dwell in other planets. No place is given for the resurrection of the dead.

There is no eternal judgment or hell.

II.TWO BASIC SUPPOSITIONS OF SPIRITISM

Communication between the dead and living is possible.

Spiritists use the following Scriptures references: They say Deuteronomy 18:11 affirms the reality of communication with the dead; the transfiguration. This confirms communication between the living and the dead (Matt. 17:1-13); and Saul's conversation with Samuel after Samuel's death (I Sam. 28)

Conclusion: The spiritist cannot prove the identity of the one with whom he is communicating. Deceiving spirits can well imitate the deceased and produce knowledge known by he person. Jesus always communicated with the Father, not the dead. The appearance of Moses and Elijah confirm the reality of life after death; they spoke only with Jesus who was transfigured at the time. I will not speculate on the reason for this event that happened only once. Jesus taught His disciples to pray to the Father, never to the dead!

Reincarnation

The Scriptures used in spiritism regarding reincarnation are:

Matthew 11:14 – John the Baptist came in the spirit of Elijah.

NOTE: John's testimony in John 1:19-23. The "spirit of Elijah" indicates the role and character of the prophet who would be the forerunner for the Messiah.

John 9:2 – The blind man. Interpretation of spiritism: Being born blind indicates he had sinned in the previous life. Conclusion: The condition of blindness did not indicate his sin nor his parents' sin. (vs. 3).

John 3:3 – Nicodemus. Spiritism: To be born again indicates reincarnation
Christianity: To be born again indicates regeneration.

Note: Regeneration indicates a change in the soul and life of the person, not a change of body.

Conclusion: The doctrine of reincarnation denies the heart of the Gospel, Christ's redemption through the Cross. Man becomes his own saviour and the physical world becomes his cross. Jesus Christ loses His deity and and the world waits for a word from the realm of the dead. This is the state of spiritism.

SPIRITISM IS PROJECTED IN VARIOUS WAYS

Spiritism is projected through mediums.

Communication with "the dead" is received through inanimate objects (table levitation, ouija board, etc.)

Automatic writing becomes a direct communication thought to be valid.

CONCLUSION: Satan and demons desire to communicate with man. They will communicate through any person who will yield his faculties in exchange for occult manifestations. The unlearned will receive these communications as revelations from the spirit world by which one knows the unknown. Whether through mediums or objects, the demons seek to communicate with man.

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA

INTRODUCTION

The phenomena of the psychic opens the door into the spirit world. The thrill and curiosity of the supernatural leads many people through this door. The manifestations are many and designed to trap the innocent soul. These phenomena are seen in the following ways:

DOORS INTO THE SPIRIT WORLD THROUGH PSYCHIC PHENOMENA:

Poltergeist

Definition: “noisy ghost.”

Poltergeists present themselves as spirits of a deceased person.

Poltergeists are attracted to houses where occult practices have occurred.

Conclusion: The revival of modern day spiritism started in a house which manifested strange phenomena. As communication was established, the Fox sisters developed medium abilities and were used to propagate spiritism throughout various states and nations. This began in the Fox home in 1848.

Levitation

Definition: "The capacity of a solid object to defy the laws of gravity, to levitate itself with no means of support."

The phenomena of levitation is occultic and realized through occultic powers.

Conclusion: The power of the occult to resist and overcome the natural laws of nature have fascinated the curious and unbelieving, making them victims of its deception. The founder of Transcendental Meditation, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, has presented a course to teach people to levitate and fly at will.

Ouija board

Definition: A medium of communication by which a spirit will respond to the questions of the curious.

A "harmless game" puts one in contact with the spirit world.

Conclusion: Through games, the credibility of the spirit world is established.

Apportation – telekinesis

Definition: The moving of a solid object from one room to another or even long distances by no visible means. Articles are also carried through walls and locked doors.

Sufficient energy is released through occultic powers to move solid matter objects.

Conclusion: Spiritual energy can move material objects.

Astral Projection

Definition: An individual in a state of consciousness is capable of leaving his physical body, traveling long distances, observing other people, recording what they say and do, returns to his body and confirms what he saw.

Drugs also induce this kind of state.

Conclusion: Occultic forces work in this area and could well be demonic deception. Satan showed all the kingdom of the world in a moment of time to our Lord.

Automatic writing

Definition: One writes under compulsion of a spiritual influence not knowing what is written until later.

This is one form of communication with "the dead."

Conclusion: Compulsory action describes this experience when one yields himself to an outside force. Various messages and doctrines are communicated which is well described by the term "doctrine of demons."

7, Stigmata

Definition: Marks and even wounds are supernaturally imposed upon the body of an individual in imitation of the wounds in the body of Christ.

This phenomena comes to sincere people who ignorantly have made alliances with occult powers.

Conclusion: Supernatural benefits such as healings and miracles coming from such phenomena brings the receiver into oppression and deception. The powers know well how to imitate and use the supernatural to deceive people. There need not be any more shedding of blood.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT PSYCHIC PHENOMENA

Psychic phenomena are a substitute for faith (Deut. 13:1).

Persons who seek psychic phenomena always worship other gods.

Psychic phenomena are a substitute of the supernatural of God.

Automatic writing is a counterfeit to the inspiration of the Scriptures.

Conclusion: The Scriptures describe the deceiver, who works in psychic phenomena, as "...one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish..." (II Thes. 2:9-10).

EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION – E. S. P.

INTRODUCTION

The phenomena of extra-sensory perception goes beyond what men can explain scientifically or logically. This phenomena passes beyond the ability of man to know through his senses and brings to him a knowledge that he could not know except through supernatural means. The deception comes in making man believe he has this hidden power in the subconscious mind and he must only release it to pass beyond the realm of the natural. In this way, the door is opened to the occult world. It is likely that ESP ability appears in many different forms involving the occult and that it runs through most of the magical practices.

DEFINITION: "The reception of information by anyone by means other than the senses." (Note: The source of this information comes from the occult).

VISIONARY DREAMS

Biblical examples and warnings:

-Daniel 1:17, 19-20; 2:27-28; Deut. 13:1-5.

TELEPATHY

Definition: "The acquisition of knowledge...without the use of the senses."

Telepathy is used with objects in receiving information about the owner.

Telepathy is a possible answer to the phenomena of a person announcing his death by appearing to a relative.

Telepathy also demonstrates the phenomena of knowing what is in someone else's mind.

Conclusion: Telepathic communication subjects one to emotional and volitional bondages. It can reach the point of being demonic.

CLAIRVOYANCE

Definition: "By clairvoyance we mean the extrasensory perception of objective facts, of which no one has knowledge, without the use of any of the known senses."

Some call it the faculty of "second sight."

Some classify this as the latent power of the soul; man's soul power becomes satan's working instrument.

Examples of clairvoyance;

Jeanne Dixon.

Edgar Cayce.

Conclusion: Demons are able to establish communication with men and communicate through men knowledge that he could not know through his senses.

IV. CLAIRSENTIENCE

Definition: An irrational diagnosis of illness.

Methods:

Concentration.

Crystal ball gazing.

Touching with the hand.

Pendulum rod.

Conclusion: Receiving healing benefits from occultic powers brings about worse conditions through nervous oppression and fear. Many who receive healings also become psychic.

DIVINATION

INTRODUCTION

Divination is the practice of foretelling the future by occultic means. Man's curiosity and insecurity drives him to look into the future. The powers of darkness offer a variety of ways one can discern and they are as old as Babylon. "For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination; he shakes the arrows, he consults the household idols, he looks at the liver. Into his right hand came the divination...." (Ezek. 21:21- 22).

TEXT: "Stand fast now in your spells and in your many sorceries with which you have labored from your youth; perhaps you will be able to profit, perhaps you may cause trembling. You are wearied with your many counsels. Let now the astrologers, those who prophesy by the stars, those who predict by the new moons, stand up and save you from what will come upon you. Behold, they have become like stubble, fire burns them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame; there will be no coal to warm by, nor a fire to sit before!" (Is. 47:1).

ASTRALOGY

Definition: Astrology is a study of the stars and their relative positions which foretell the future and influence people. The zodiac becomes the center of attention.

Background: In Babylon, astrology was the science of the priests. Horoscopes were cast only for kings. This practice spread to the Egyptians and Chaldeans. The practice is also found in the ancient cultures of the Incas and Aztec. It dates back to four thousand years ago.

The intent of astrology

Astrology attempts to penetrate the future.

Astrology attempts to bring order out of chaos in a world that has lost purpose.

Astrology is interested in analysis of character.

Astrology appeals to man's need for purpose and power.

Reasons Christians should reject astrology:

It comes from a heathen background.

-The stars were equivalent to gods, as the religious aspect receded, the same rules were followed.

The position of the zodiac is different from what early astrologers thought. Yet the same rules are followed.

Astrology will not hold up under scientific data and observation.

It is fatalistic.

-One's destiny is fixed by the stars.

-Old rule: Rays from the stars falling on a child at birth decides his destiny.

Satan is the master computer.

The effects of astrology is deception, suggestion, and occultism.

The Bible speaks clearly:

- Deut. 17:2-5.

- Is. 47:13-15.

- Jer. 10:2.

CARTOMANCY (tarot cards)

Has a history of many centuries.

-The Romans possessed a system of small tablets with inscribed symbols. -Cards appeared in the eighth century.

Cartomancy is a technique of fortune telling.

-Seventy-eight cards are used to foretell the future. Card "Ten of Hearts" means a wish fulfilled; "Seven of Hearts" is the card of love; "Ten of Spade" is a lucky card, etc.

Dangers: People become victims of the power of suggestion and the prediction actually becomes a curse.

PALMISTRY

History: In ancient Rome, astrological ideas were mixed with palmistry.

The palm was divided into seven planetary mounds along with the four main lines.

Definition:

Chiromancy is the telling of fortunes from the lines in the hand.

Chiromancy is the scientific interpretation of the shape and lines of the hand

Graphology is the interpretation of handwriting.

Technique: Four main lines.

IV. DIVINING WITH A ROD OF PENDULUM

Techniques: Rod is moved over parts of the body. Forked stick is used to find unrevealed sources of water, mineral deposits, etc.

MIRROR MANTIC OR CRYSTAL BALL

Technique: Gazing into a mirror or crystal ball sets in motion forces that are subconscious which give entrance to powers outside the person.

Purpose: To discover things unknown, diagnose diseases.

VI. PSYCHOMETRY

Definition: The supposed faculty of divining knowledge about an object, or about a person connected with it, through contact with the object.

CONCLUSION: The techniques of fortune telling often change, but the spirit and the force behind it remains the same. The Bible definitely forbids the practice of divination. Read the following Scriptures: Deut. 18:9; Ps. 106:28, 35-38; Ezek. 21:21; Amos 5:26.

MAGIC

INTRODUCTION

Satan appeared to the woman in the garden and tempted her with the words "...you will be like God..." (Gen. 3:5). That enticement led to the fall of man. Since that time, man has not ceased his quest for power to manipulate and control. The kingdom of darkness has offered man this potential through the powers of darkness. From this unholy alliance has come formulas and conjunctions that have made man his own god. Magic establishes the will of the person as supreme.

TEXT: "When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For whoever does those things is detestable to the Lord; and because of these detestable things the Lord your God will drive them out before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God." (Deut. 18:9-13).

DEFINITION:

“Magic is the much disputed art of, or at least attempt at, knowing and ruling the spirit – human, animal and plant worlds, together with the world of dead matter – through extra-sensory means with the aid of the mystical and accompanying ceremonies.”

Whereas divination seeks knowledge of past, present, and future, magic seeks to manipulate the spirit world for its own personal ends. One assumes the role of God.

Black Magic

Endeavors to subjugate and dominate the enemy with magic. Example: Young lady in some country married against family wishes and died under a curse.

Techniques: offerings of chicken, liquor, tobacco, etc.

White Magic

Participants claim power is of God because:

Christian symbols are used.

Names of the Trinity may be used.

Lord’s prayer repeated three times, three crosses, three Bible verses, three candles, etc.

Liturgy: counterpart of true worship.

Invoking – counterpart of prayer.

Charming – counterpart of reading Scripture.

Symbolic action – mimics laying on of hands, baptism, etc.

Fetish – counterpart of Lord’s Supper, etc.

Levy denies any difference between white and black magic.

Observations:

In true prayer of faith one submits to God, while in white magic one compels God to act.

The will of the person becomes supreme rather than the will of God.

Neutral Magic:

-Use of neutral forces of nature for healing purposes.

THE MANIPULATION OF SCRIPTURAL FORCES SATISFIES MAN’S SEARCH FOR POWER – “You will be like God” (Gen. 3:5).

Powers granted though magic:

The ability to conjure spirits.

The love and compliance of men or women.

Discovery of all treasures and ensuring their possession.

Recovery of stolen goods.

The power to become invisible.

The winning of all games.

Knowledge.

Power to cause harm or death to animals or men.

REBELLION AGAINST GOD’S WILL AND ORDINANCES IS THE ROOT OF MAGIC

The door is opened by rebellion against authority.

Parental authority.

Governmental authority.

Divine authority.

In praying for deliverance, one must deal with root of rebellion (I Sam.15: 23).

The ordinances of God are set aside in the sixth and seventh Book of Moses. (These are demonic inspired books!)

-The first part of the book reveals how a man may enter into a relationship with the devil.

-The second part gives instructions as to how a person can achieve dominion over all the forces of nature as well as powers of heaven and hell through the use of magic.

IV. BIBLICAL REFERENCES TO MAGIC (Witchcraft)

Magicians of Egypt – (Ex. 7:11, 22).

Forbidden – (Deut. 18:10; Lev. 19:31).

Power of witchcraft cannot save – (Is. 47:9, 12).

CONCLUSION: (1) The child of God is protected by the blood of Jesus. (2) Prayer hinders the use of magic; (3) Full deliverance is possible through Christ.

THE OCCULT AND MYSTICISM

INTRODUCTION

Mysticism asserts the possibility of attaining knowledge of spiritual truths through intuition acquired by fixed meditation. The medium of human reasoning to attain knowledge is set aside. This doctrine and practices comes from such disciplines as yoga, magic, alchemy, astrology, kabbalah, taosim, tantra and zen. In our day this practice is carried on in various forms of which transcendental meditation and martial arts are prominent. The doctrine basically denies the personal God of Christianity, asserts the inherent divinity of man, and rejects any absolute statement of moral values.

FOUR BASIC THOUGHTS OF MYSTICISM

“All is One.”

All distinctions are dissolved into a single undifferentiated unity.

Conclude: There is only one Reality in existence.

All apparent separations and oppositions are unreal.

All “objects” and “individuals” are mere glimpses of the all-inclusive One.

The state of unlimited and unconditional awareness brings one to a consciousness of ultimate Reality.

Man is a divine being.

Meditation brings one to experience the inner self

Self awareness brings one to experience oneness with the divine within.

The self of man is god.

The purpose of fulfillment in life is to become aware of our divine nature.

A flash of metaphysical insight brings man's "enlightenment", "illumination," "at-one-ment", "union" or "self-realization."

The personal, subjective and experiential are the source of meaning and truth.

Self-realization leads to the mastery of spiritual technology and the attainment of psycho-spiritual power.

The man-god becomes master and creator of his own reality.

Through his knowledge and utilization of spiritual laws, he becomes capable of creating and manipulating the conditions of his own further development or that of others.

As reality is composed of consciousness, man learns to control reality by controlling consciousness.

He learns to alter the structure of creation by controlling consciousness – at this point mysticism becomes magic.

CONCLUSION: Through mysticism man submerges himself in creation to find God and merges with it to the dissolution of identity and individuality. Man is resurrected as divine and through consciousness is able to control the world of reality. By worshipping creation, man is enthroned as god.

FOUR BASIC DISCIPLINES OF MYSTICISM THAT EXPOSE ONE TO THE OCCULT

Transcendental Meditation

The author, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, was a disciple of Guru Dev the recognized leader of Vedantic Hinduism.

Offers to heal the spiritual sickness of man in every area.

Promises to bring one to a state of "god – consciousness," in which "action ceases to decay life...mental and physical planes come to the level of the spiritual plane which has eternal life."

Asserts that TM is not a religion, but the initiatory puja is a chant of worship to Shri Guru Dev.

The chanting of mantras brings one into the spirit world where contact with demons is possible.

Yoga

Yoga is a collection of methods designed to release the human soul from all that is earthly with the aid of asceticism, physical exercises, breathing techniques and meditations.

The main emphasis is placed on the cycle of rebirth, also called the transmigration of the soul.

When the soul is purified by reincarnation, it is ultimately identical with the universal spirit (Brahma).

Hatha yoga emphasizes physical techniques for purification.

Mantra yoga emphasizes meditation techniques to identify one's self with the universal spirit.

Yoga is bound up with occult powers through the mantras and meditation.

Eckankar

According to Eckankar's self-definition, it is the way to god-realization via "the ancient science of soul travel."

Teaches man must forget his mind and return to the void, the realm of God.

Man, who is spirit, can move out of his body at will and be liberated from the world of matter, energy, space and time.

Present leader, Sri Darwin Gross, maintains psychic union with 20,000 followers around the world.

Karate

A system of fighting without weapons that evolved out of ancient jui-jitzu. This was combined with Zen Buddhism to develop Sumurur warriors.

Today karate is often taught in conjunction with various forms of transcendental meditation.

The individual is taught to use his body as a weapon and react like a snake without thinking.

Based upon philosophy of violence linked with the supernatural in mediation, karate becomes a spiritual trap.

CONCLUSION: Occultism in all its forms consists of secret techniques of consciousness-alteration, coupled with secret doctrines which explain the inner meaning of the experiences thereby attained. So we conclude that mysticisms and occultism are joined at its root and invariably lead their followers the same path.

DELIVERANCE FROM OCCULT OPPRESSION

FOUR WAYS FROM WHICH OCCULT POWER AND OPPRESSION CAN ORIGINATE

Heredity – two possibilities: genes or succession.

Subscription of one's self to the devil.

Occult experiments.

Occult transference.

QUESTIONS:

How is possible for a Christian to continue suffering oppression or subjection because of this earlier pre-conversion participation?

Answer: The door opened to the powers of darkness will remain open until he closes it by an act of his will.

Can a Christian who has never actively participated in any form of occultism be subjected or oppressed?

Answer: Yes, in several ways: (1) can be passed on by the parents; (2) Children can be infected by certain occult blessings sought by parents; and (3) by watching certain occult films or TV shows.

METHOD OF DELIVERANCE:

Confession of faith in Christ.

Confession of occult sins.

-“Admission is to unmask the presence of the enemy and reveal the point at which he holds his victim in bondage.” Freeman.

Renunciation of Satan and command to depart.

Prayer of deliverance.

IV. THINGS THAT ACCOMPANY OCCULTISM:

Rebellion against authority.

Drugs.

Pornography – sexual lusts.

T. M.

Music (acid rock).

COUNSELLING THOSE IN GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT

Background

Grief is an intense, emotional suffering caused by personal loss. There is acute sorrow, deep sadness, suffering, pain, and anguish. Bereavement is a sad and lonely state due to loss such as the death of loved one. It is a difficult time. The bereft will often feel that his experience is unique, that no one has ever endured such a loss or suffered as he is suffering. There are cycles of healing to the pattern of grief, which permit the sorrowing to recover in due time. Some individuals, however, continue grieving for long periods. In some ways, no one is ever completely delivered from the sense of loss.

The cycle of healing, mentioned above, usually proceeds as follows:

The initial shock of death: that intense emotional impact which sometimes leaves a person with a seeming paralysis.

Emotional release: a period of weeping.

Loneliness and depression: The sense of loss is often related to the degree of dependence on the deceased. There are many symptoms of depression.

Guilt: “I could have done more,” or “I should have done something differently,” etc.

Anger, hostility: “Why did God do this to me?”

A stage of inertia: Listlessness, “I can’t get on with it”; “I couldn’t care less.”

A gradual return to hope: “Life will go on,” “I will be able to cope.” “God will help me get over this.”

The return to reality and normalcy: admitting the loss and adjusting to it.

We must remember, however, that grief is not predictable nor can it be catalogued. Sometimes the stages of grief will seem to merge and overlap. The bereft may feel release from a certain “phase” of suffering, only to have it return.

Counseling grieving people calls for genuineness, special sensitivity and tenderness, sympathy, and empathy. We must depend upon the Holy Spirit for guidance. Convenient, glib, or pat answers have the ring of brass. Our words must be sincere and meaningful, “tailor made for the situation” because real comfort for the bereaving person depends upon where he actually is in the grieving process.

Don’t pretend to have an answer for everything. Admit that you do not understand why or how God does what He does.

Don’t be the “cheerleader” type, attempting to pump up the bereaved with cheer and good will.

Don’t offer clichés or trite phrases about death and suffering.

Don’t suggest that if the grieving one were more spiritual or closer to God, the pain might be less.

Remember that one short session will not meet all the needs of the inquirer. We do what we can, however, to share Jesus Christ, and the message of Scripture. We will trust God to do His work.

Counseling Strategy that can be followed:

Tell the inquirer you care and want to help. Encounter him to tell you about his loss and how he feels about it. Be a patient listener. It helps to ventilate feelings when one is grieving.

Tell him that it is healthy to mourn and grieve. This is a universal human experience through which we all must pass. Someone has said that grief is a “gift from God.” It may be His way of helping us react to the tremendous shock of death and its emotional aftermath. Jesus said:

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4). Jesus Himself wept at the grave of Lazarus (John 11:35).

Tell him that it is good to express feelings of guilt, anger, confusion, or despair. These feelings should not be repressed by the sorrower or rejected by the counselor. Encourage him to talk about the way he feels.

Tell him that the things he is feeling are often normal to the grieving process and that acceptance and healing will come, though perhaps slowly. God wants to bear our heartaches and loss and bring to us His comfort, hope and encouragement. Life may seem valueless at his point, but remember – Christ is permanent, the Solid Rock, the foundation on which to rebuild a life.

Ask him if he has ever received Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior.

“Our confidence in the future is based firmly on the fact of what God has done for us in Christ. Because Christ is alive we need never despair, no matter what our situation may be. Now if we...died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him ...For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:8-23).

Tell him that, for the Christian, death is not the end of life. Through His death and resurrection, Christ has defeated sin and death, so that to believe in Him now means: We “shall never die” (John 11:25-26); we have eternal life (John 3:16); we have a place assured in heaven (John 14:1-6); we shall take part in the bodily resurrection (I Corinthians 15:51-52). Also, “if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 4:14). Thus, there will be a glorious reunion some day between us and all those in the Lord whom we hold dear!

Encourage the inquirer to begin to read and study the Bible. It is great source of comfort and strength.

Tell him that God sees our earthly life as preparation for the greater joys of heaven (Mark 8:36). Thus, He permits trials, sufferings and the death of loved ones to come into our lives so that we might see our need to trust Him. “Yet we believe now that we had this experience of coming to the end of our tether that we might learn to trust, not in ourselves, but in God who can raise the dead.” (2 Corinthians 1:9).

If he express guilt over some aspect of the death of his loved one (this is common in the case of suicides), counsel him not to “second guess” himself at this point. He should not carry guilt for something he should have done or not have done. This is past, and he needs to leave all his regrets with the Lord. If he has something to confess to God, do so, but accept the reality of His forgiveness in the light of 1 John 1:9.

If he seems overwhelmed with a sense of loss, of loneliness, of what to do in the future, etc, counsel him to confide in family and friends, and to trust them for emotional support and encouragement. The church can do a great deal to fill the areas left void. He should become involved in a local church. The pastor may be able to offer a great deal of emotional support. If he is not already a member, he should seek a Bible-teaching church or fellowship and identify with it. Learning to accept God’s will for what has happened, having a thankful heart for the years of love shared during the life of the a loved one and for the promise of things to come, and reaching out in Christian love to help others who are hurting, will all be great therapy and will serve as factors in learning to live fully again.

Pray with the inquirer for understanding, comfort, and blessing in his life.

The Death of Children:

The death of a child is especially difficult for surviving parents and families to handle. Death after such a short life-span often produces guilt, melancholy, and a lot of questions. In addition to the Counseling Strategy mentioned above, we offer these additional points.

Though we cannot know why the child died, we do know that children are especially precious to God. Jesus said, “Of such is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:14). This implies that children who die are taken immediately into His presence.

When King David’s child was taken from him in death, he said, “Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.” (2 Samuel 12:23). Thus, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, trusting in Him as our Lord and Savior, we have the blessed hope of seeing our loved one again.

Scriptures:

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.” Revelation 21:4.

“For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. For I am hard pressed between the two having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.” Philippians 1:21, 23.

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall be live; and whosoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this? John 11:25- 26.

“Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14: 1-3.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Peter 1: 3-5.

“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” 2 Corinthians 5:1. Read also: Psalm 23: 6.

CAN CHRISTIANS EAT WHAT HAS BEEN OFFERED TO IDOLS?

The Indian population statistics indicate that around 80% worships idols. Christians constitute hardly 3% in this country. Thus, they are constantly challenged to befriend the non-Christians, especially the Hindus who are the largest segment of their society, in order to share the message of the love of God with them. When invited they gladly join for birthday parties and Christmas dinners of the Christians. They have no problem in eating the food we serve after offering thanksgiving prayer. But when they invite us to their festival dinners or send us sweets, believers hesitate and they are offended. Relationships get strained. Some believers eat anything freely, whereas others are apprehensive. What does the Bible say about this?

Conditions similar to these existed when the New Testament epistles were written. Eating food offered to idols was one of the hot issues the apostle Paul addressed while writing to the young churches. In his first Corinthian Epistle he discussed this issue at length in two chapters, 8 and 10. Read them carefully. Here is what we learn:

Strictly speaking, idols are “nothing” (I Cor. 8:4; Is. 37:19; Jer. 16:20; Gal. 4:8). As such any food offered to them cannot be contaminated. However, for the idol worshipper it symbolizes something supernatural. Commenting on their point of view Paul calls idols as “demons” (I Cor. 10: 20). This figure is in their mind. According to the idol-worshipper the food becomes sacred when offered to idols. No Christian can accept food from an idol-worshipper if it is given in this sense or with this

understanding (I Cor. 10:20; 21, 27). We can politely refuse it with a smile. If they still insist, we can receive it, but later quietly give it away to a foodless platform-dweller or a beggar.

The apostle mentions three places where food offered to idols will be served: (a) temple; (b) houses; and (c) market places. A Christian under no circumstance can join a dinner inside “an idol’s temple” (I Cor. 8:10). This public act will dishonour Christ and discourage new Christians who have denounced idols to serve the living God. But when invited to a family dinner of an idol-worshipper we can go and eat ‘asking no question’ (I Cor. 10:27). No true friend will try to trap us like Balaam or Jezebel (Rev. 2:14, 20). Next comes what is sold in shops. Muslims chant a prayer before butchering animals. Hindus place sweets and savories in front of pictures of gods and goddesses immediately after making them in restaurants or stalls. We need not bother about these things, but can freely buy and “eat whatever is sold... asking no questions” because the earth and all its fullness belong to our Lord! (I Cor. 10:25- 26). All animals and birds and plants and trees belong originally to the Lord and they are for us to enjoy because we belong to Him! Everything is sanctified by the Word of God and the prayer of thanksgiving (1 Tim. 4:4- 5).

The underlying principle that Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10 as well as in Romans 14 is that no knowledge of the truth or liberty in Christ should be used to “wound the weak conscience” of our brothers and sisters or to “become a stumbling block” to them (1 Cor. 8: 9, 12). While there is nothing wrong, in the absolute sense, in eating whatever is served to us, it is sin if our eating makes brother “stumble” or “perish” (1 Cor. 8:13, 11). Nothing we do must offend others (1 Cor. 10:24, 32, 33; Rom. 14:14- 15, 21).

To summarize: Don’t compromise on the truth; don’t antagonize idol-worshipper friends; don’t despise weak believers. 1 Corinthians 10:32 can be paraphrased as, “Give no offense, either to the nominal Christians or to the non-Christians or to the born-again Christians!”

GLOSSARY OF NON-CHRISTIAN WORDS AND CONCEPTS

Ahimsa. The doctrine of nonviolence toward all life. Since the Hindu believes that insects and animals, through good karma, evolve upward to become humans-and that humans, through bad karma, may become animals or insects again- it would be tantamount to murder and cannibalism to kill and eat any living thing except plants. The Hindu must therefore be a vegetarian.

Ahimsa, however, is not consistent either with the Hindu scriptures or practice. Many Hindus still make animal sacrifices, and throughout history Hindus have not demonstrated any less propensity to kill an enemy in wars and revolutions than men not professing the doctrine of Ahimsa. Hindus have, however, consistently refrained from killing cows.

Arti. A religious ritual performed rotating the sacred flame or incense-held on a platter In the right hand-in a clockwise circle around the replica of a god or saint This can be done by any Hindu in his own prayer room.

Ashram From the Hindi word ‘asrama’, signifying the four “stages” in life of the twice born (high caste) Hindu: 1 } adolescence as celibate religious student; 2) married householder who begets children; 3) a time of retreat into forest for meditation and devotion to religious duties and rituals; and

old age, when one is expected to renounce all possessions except loincloth, begging bowl, and water pot, live by begging, and be free from all obligations and observances. The term has come to be applied more to the third “stage” in life, as well as to the hermitage of a sage. Today it is popularly used for a religious community or retreat in India, usually where one goes to study under a guru. Even some other faiths organizations in India now call their retreat "ashrams."

Avatar. In its broadest sense, the incarnation of any god into any living form, every species presumably has its own avatars. In the narrower sense, however, an avatar is a reincarnation of Vishnu. Some Hindus hold that Vishnu has been reincarnated innumerable times, while others teach that he has come as an avatar only nine times: as a fish, a tortoise, a man-lion, a boar, and a child-dwarf, and as Rama, Krishna, Buddha, and Christ.

The exact role that the avatar plays in bringing salvation to man is not clear, but the avatar is generally considered to function as a guru in each reincarnation. Many orthodox Hindus believe that Kalki, the next avatar after Christ, is due to appear on earth in about 425,000 years. However, there are hundreds of gurus today, who are considered by their followers to be avatars.

Barahi. From the Hindi word 'barah' meaning: "twelve," a religious ceremony held on the twelfth day after the birth of a male Brahmin, at which time the pundits and astrologers make predictions concerning the child's future.

Bhagavad-Gita. The most popular of the Hindu scriptures, part of the "*Mahabharata*", and the most widely read of any Hindu holy book in the East or West. Known as "The Song of the Lord" and often called "the gospel of Hinduism," the "*Gita*" is a dialogue between the warrior Arjuna, who shrinks from killing his relatives in the war he faces, and the avatar-god Krishna, who acts as his charioteer and encourages him to do his duty in battle as a good and brave warrior.

Bhagwan. A Hindi word for God or Lord.

Bhai. Literal meaning of this Hindi word is: "brother," a term of honor given to one's equal. Rarely would an older religious Hindu use this term in addressing an adolescent and never to a child. Therefore when Gosine began to address Rabi in this way it was as indication that he had transferred to him the honor and esteem with which he had regarded his father.

bhajans. Songs of devotional love used in worship of the gods.

Bliss. The state of being achieved when the illusion of existence apart from Brahman, who is pure existence-knowledge-bliss, has been dispelled through meditation and enlightenment, and all desires have ceased. Since this state is laid to be beyond pain or pleasure, Buddha, who was raised a Hindu, thought of it as "nothingness," which he also called "nirvana."

Brahma. Not to be confused with Brahman, who is all gods in One. Brahma, the Creator, is the first god in the Hindu tri-"murti" (meaning: "gods"). The others are Vishnu, the Preserver, and Shiva, the Destroyer. Supposedly every 4.32 billion years Shiva destroys everything, Brahma created all again, and Vishnu is reincarnated once more to reveal the path to Brahman. Often depicted as issuing from Vishnu's navel (which seems to contradict his role as Creator), Brahma is usually shown with four heads and four hands holding sacrificial instrument, prayer beads, and a manuscript

Brahmacharya. Literally "religious living," the name given to the first of four stages in the high-caste Hindu's life. Since this was a time during which sexual abstinence was obligatory, the word also came to be applied to older religious Hindus still living under this vow of celibacy.

Brahman. The ultimate reality: formless, inexpressible, unknowable, and unknowing; neither personal nor impersonal; both Creator and all that is created. Brahman is all and all is Brahman. The ultimate truth and salvation for the Hindu is to "realize" that he is himself Brahman, that he and all the universe are one and the same Being. However, Brahman is not just another name for the God of the Bible, but a concept foreign and opposed to the Judeo-Christian God. Brahman is everything and yet nothing; it comprises both good and evil, life and death, health and disease, and even the unreality of "maya".

Brahmin. The highest Hindu caste and closest human form to Brahman through thousands of reincarnations and therefore the intermediary between Brahman and the other castes. One must be a Brahmin to be a priest. This gives the Brahmins great power over the other castes; however, Brahmins are required to live a much more religious life than non-Brahmins, and any misdeed carries a heavier penalty for them than for lower castes.

In Sanskrit the word for caste is “*varna*”, which means: color. The Brahmins are probably descendants of the light-skinned Aryans who conquered India, and even today the Brahmin's skin is generally several shades lighter than that of other castes.

caste. A doctrine supported by Krishna in the *Gita* and probably devised by the Aryan invaders of India in order to keep the dark skinned Dravidians they conquered in quiet subjection. It was taught that the four castes-Brahmin: Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra originally came from four parts of the body of Brahma, the Brahmins from the head and the others from progressively lower parts. The doctrines of karma and reincarnation followed naturally, teaching that those of lower castes by accepting their lot in life uncomplainingly could improve their karma and thus hope for a higher reincarnation the next time around.

The Untouchables were below caste and thus outside the religious system of Hinduism. When the Muslims invaded India, the Untouchables were the easiest to convert, since Islam offered them immediate status. Most of the Christians in India are also descended from Untouchables, many being Christians in name only to raise themselves from Untouchability.

chanan. A soft, aromatic sandalwood paste used to make caste marks and ritualistic marks for religious purposes on both gods and worshipers, generally on the forehead and / or the neck.

Dakshina. One of the many names of Shiva, meaning literally: “on the right” and therefore applied to money given to Brahmins as an offering, which must be extended by the right hand.

devatas. The deities or gods.

deya. A small clay cup with a flared lip usually containing ghee or some other oil and a wick, to be lit during religious ceremonies and special celebrations.

dharma. The right way of living for a Hindu. Not an absolute, it varies not only for each caste but also for each person and must be discovered by each individual for himself. Not a moral principle; it involves certain disciplines which supposedly lead the person to a mystical union with Brahman, but which do not necessarily relate consistently to the moral recognition of right and wrong inherent in the human conscience. One's dharma, in fact, could be above right and wrong.

dhoti. A long length of cloth which a man wraps around himself like a shirt. Ordinarily it hangs nearly to the ground, but in hot weather or while performing rigorous tasks he may tuck the hem into the waist, cutting the length in half. Some pull the last few feet of the cloth up between their legs, turning the skirt into baggy pants.

Although in the cities many Indians now wear Western clothes, the dhoti is still common in the villages. Even in the cities, holy men and priests generally wear a dhoti, often topped off with a suit jacket.

ghat. A special area designated for ceremonial cremation of human bodies. There are many such places throughout India, but the most popular and sacred are near certain “holy” cities, such as Benares, along the banks of the Ganges, making it more convenient to sprinkle the ashes in the sacred river.

ghee. Oil made from butterfat, used in food and for ceremonial purposes and considered to be very holy because it comes from the cow, the holiest of all creatures.

guru. Literally a teacher, but in the sense of being a manifestation of Brahman. Technically the Hindu scriptures cannot be learned just by reading them, but must be taught by a guru who himself has learned at the feet of a guru. Every Hindu must follow a guru in order to reach Self-realization. It is through the gurus that the ancient wisdom of the sages passes down to succeeding generations. (Many students of the Bible find a striking connection between this concept of spiritual enlightenment through knowledge and the Tree of Knowledge that brought about the fall of man in the Garden of Eden.)

The guru is worshiped even after his death and is thought by many Hindus to communicate with them more strongly than ever when he has passed from this life to supposedly higher planes of

existence. The burial place of a guru is therefore thought by many to be an ideal place for meditation.

higher consciousness. There are various "levels" of consciousness opened up in Yoga and meditation, called "higher" states because they differ from one's normal consciousness and are supposedly experienced on the road to nirvana. Different schools of Eastern mysticism define them in different ways. Typical states would be "unity-consciousness," where one experiences a mystical union with the universe, and "God-consciousness", where one experiences that he himself is actually God.

Similar "states of consciousness" are experienced through hypnosis, mediumistic trance, certain drugs, witchcraft ceremonies, voodoo, etc., and all seem to be slight variations of the same occult phenomenon.

Hinduism. The major religion of India, which encompasses so many diverse and contradictory beliefs that it is impossible to define. One could be a pantheist, polytheist, monotheist, agnostic, or even an atheist; a moralist or amoral; a dualist, pluralist, or monist; regular in attendance at temples and in devotion to various gods, or not attend to religious duties at all-and still be called a Hindu.

Hinduism claims to embrace and accept all religious beliefs, but any religion so included becomes part of Hinduism. The syncretistic attempts to place Christianity in this "embrace that smothers," but it is clear that the God of the Bible is not Brahman, that heaven is not nirvana, that Jesus Christ is not just another reincarnation of Vishnu, and that salvation through God's grace and faith in Christ's death for our sins and resurrection contradicts the whole teaching of Hinduism.

janma. One name given to a prior life by those who believe in reincarnation. It is used in the sense of a stepping-stone along the path of existence that has prepared one to take the next step. One janma determines what the next janma will be.

jivan-mukti. Highly praised in the *Bhagavad-Gita* as the highest ideal of man, it is the attainment, through Yoga, while still in the body, of mystical union with Brahman.

karma For the Hindu the law of cause and effect which determines destiny or fate. The doctrine teaches that for every moral or spiritual thought, word, or deed, karma produces an inevitable effect. Presumably this could not be carried out in one life; thus karma necessitates reincarnation. The circumstances and condition of each successive birth and the events of each successive life are supposedly determined absolutely by one's conduct at the same age in past lives. There is no forgiveness in karma. Each person must suffer for his own deeds.

Krishna. The most popular and beloved Hindu god and the subject of countless legends, many of them erotic. Krishna is the best-known of the Hindu gods in the West because of the missionary zeal of the singing, dancing, saffron-robed "Hare Krishna" disciples seen in most major cities. They hope to achieve happiness and salvation through chanting over and over the mantra: "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Hare Rama, Hare Rama. Hare Hare Hare." Like Rama, Krishna is presumed to be one of the reincarnations of Vishnu.

kundalini. Literally "coiled," the name of a goddess symbolized by a serpent with 3 and a half coils, sleeping with its tail in its mouth. This goddess, or "serpent of life, fire and wisdom," supposedly resides in the body of man near the base of the spine. When aroused without proper control, it rages like a vicious serpent inside a person with a force that is impossible to resist.

It is said that without proper control, the *kundalini* will produce supernatural psychic powers having their source in demonic beings and will lead ultimately to moral, spiritual and physical destruction. Nevertheless, it is this *kundalini* power that meditation and Yoga are designed to arouse and control. Advanced students of T.M. and other forms of meditation now practiced in the West have had kundalini experiences.

lingam. A term used for the phallic (male organ) emblem of the god Shiva. There is evidence of lingam worship in the Indus valley predating the Aryan invasion. At first ridiculed by the Aryan conquerors, the worship of this erotic symbol was later adopted by them. Although it is associated with fertility cult, Tantrism, and religious rituals involving sexual perversions, the Shiva lingam is a

prominent object of worship in almost every Hindu temple, not only those devoted specifically to Shiva.

lota. A small brass cup from which "holy" water is poured or sprinkled or drunk in various religious ceremonies.

Mahabharata. One of the two great epic poems of Hindu scriptures, the other one being the *Ramayana*. Consisting of 110,000 couplets, it is three times as long as the Christian Bible and thus the longest poem in the world. It was the work of numerous poets and editors, who constantly made additions, deletions, and adjustments to suit themselves. Its doctrines are incoherent and often flagrantly contradictory; nevertheless, it is still revered as scripture by Hindus.

mandir. Another word for a Hindu temple.

mantra. A sound symbol of one or more syllables often used to induce a mystical state. It must be passed on by the living voice of a guru and cannot be learned in another way. One need not understand the meaning of the mantra; the virtue is in repetition of the sound. It is said to embody a spirit or deity, and the repetition of the mantra calls this being to the one repeating it. Thus the mantra both invites a particular being to enter the one using it and also creates the passive state in the meditator facilitate this fusion of beings.

maya. The Hindu explanation for the apparent existence of the entire universe of both mind and body as man experiences it. Since Brahman is the only reality, all else is illusion, proceeding from Brahma the Creator as heat from a fire. Man's ignorance fails to see the one Reality and thus accepts the illusion or unreal universe of forms and pain and sorrow. Salvation comes through enlightenment dispelling this illusion.

Since the universe appears the same to all observers and follows definite laws, some Hindu sects teach that maya is really a dream of the gods and that men only add their personal sense of suffering.

meditation. To the Westerner this signifies rational contemplation, but to the Eastern mystic it is just the opposite, causing considerable confusion on this subject in the West. Eastern meditation (being taught as T.M., Zen, etc.) is a technique for detaching oneself from the world of things and ideas (from maya) through freeing one's mind from all voluntary or rational thought, which projects one into "higher" states of consciousness.

Though popularized in the West under many names, the aim of all Eastern meditation is to "realize" one's essential union with the Universe. It is the doorway to the "nothingness" called nirvana. Generally sold as a "relaxation" technique, meditation really aims at and ultimately leads to the surrender of oneself to mystical cosmic forces.

moksha. Liberation from the cycle of reincarnation through entrance into the ultimate state of being achieved by those who have escaped the universe of maya to arrive at union with Brahman. Hindus look forward to moksha as the end of the pain and suffering that reincarnation has imposed upon them through life after life. However, according to orthodox Hinduism, there is no ultimate escape, and one must eventually return to the cycle of deaths and rebirths again. Since at one time there was only Brahman, according to the Hindu scriptures, it will do no good to return to it; moksha is merely a temporary rest, another stage on the wheel of existence that goes round and round endlessly, repeating itself every 4.32 billion years.

namahste. A common Hindu greeting that to some means simply "hello," it accompanies clasped hands and a polite bow in recognition of the Universal Self within all men.

nirvana. Literally a "blowing-out," as to extinguish a candle. Nirvana is "heaven" to both Hindu and Buddhist, although the many sects have different ideas of what it is and how to reach it, supposedly it is neither a place nor a state and is within us all, waiting to be "realized," It is nothingness, the bliss that comes from no longer being able to feel either pain or pleasure, through the extinction of personal existence by absorption into pure Being.

nyasa. The ceremonial act of calling a deity into the worshiper's body by placing one's hands upon

forehead, arms, and chest, etc., while repeating a mantra. The repetition of the mantra is itself designed to transform the worshiper into the likeness of the deity embodied in the vibration or sound of the mantra. Nyasa is intended to strengthen this process.

obeah man. A type of a witch doctor, brought to the West Indies from Africa, often insulted by Hindus, generally understood to have at his command the powers of demons and other lower entities, which he uses, for a fee to accomplish the wishes of those coming to him for help.

puja. Literally "adoration". Both the word and the form of worship it represents are of Dravidian origin. It was adopted as the term for all ritualistic and ceremonial worship as the Aryan custom of animal sacrifice, including smearing the altar with blood, gradually gave way in later years under the Buddhist challenge of nonviolence to the Dravidian practice of offering flowers and marking the worshipers with sandalwood paste.

Along with flowers, modern forms of the Hindu *puja*, performed both in temples and in private homes, generally include offerings of fruit, cloth, water, and money.

pundit. A Brahmin who is especially learned in Hinduism and who is able to apply this knowledge for the benefit of others, such as through advice about the future or intercession with the gods, and performance of religious rituals and ceremonies. Not all Brahmins are priests or pundits. Although every Brahmin is automatically qualified by birth, not all devote themselves enough to their religion to become pundits, and most Brahmins in India today follow secular professions.

Rama. The reincarnation of Vishnu, whose life is the subject of the epic *Ramayana*. To the Hindu, Rama always acts with the utmost nobility and is the ideal man; his wife, Sita, is the ideal woman. Each Hindu sect highly reveres Rama, and his name is the one most commonly given to Indian children. All Hindus would like to die with Rama's name on their lips. When he fell, mortally wounded by his Hindu assassin, Mahatma Gandhi murmured, "O Rama! O Rama!"

Ramayana. Literally "the goings of Rama," one of the two great Hindu epic poems, consisting of seven books relating the human life of the god Rama, a reincarnation of Vishnu. Probably strongly influenced by Buddhist edition, it was originally in several versions, today, three official versions, each varying from the other in some details, are popularly recognized in India.

Rigveda. The most important and revered of the four Vedas (but not the oldest), a collection of miscellaneous old legends, chants (mantras), and hymns, divided into ten books. Its hymns, generally stereotyped and dry, sound the praises of many primitive nature gods. Its priestly prayers are of a selfish and sensual nature, seldom expressing the desire for spiritual wisdom but rather for wine, women, wealth, and power.

sandhya. The god of twilight, a name also given to the morning, noon, and evening prayers of the twice-born Hindu (of castes above Sudra), during which the Gayatri mantra must be repeated as many times as possible, to keep the sun in the sky and to bring salvation to the one chanting it.

sanyasi. A religious Hindu in the fourth stage of life who, having renounced everything, is now above all rules and ritual and holds himself aloof from society and ceremony. If he does not belong to any special order but is independent, he may be called a sadhu-or he could be called a Yogi- if he is a master of Yoga.

self-realization. The ultimate goal of Eastern meditation and Yoga by whatever name it is called: deliverance from the "illusion" that the individual self is different from the Universal Self, or Brahman.

Through ignorance man has supposedly forgotten who he really is and thus thinks of himself as distinct from his neighbor and Brahman. Through Self-realization he is liberated from this ignorance of individual existence and returns to union with Brahman again.

Shakti pat. A term used for the touch of a guru, usually of his hand to the worshiper's forehead that produces supernatural effects. Shakti literally means power; and in administering the Shakti pat the guru becomes a channel of primal power, the cosmic power underlying the universe, embodied in the goddess Shakti, the consort of Shiva. The supernatural effect of Shakti through the guru's

touch may knock the worshiper to the floor or he may see a bright light and receive an experience of enlightenment or inner illumination, or have some other mystical or psychic experience.

swami. A sanyasi or Yogi who belongs to a particular religious order. In practice the term is often applied as a title to the guru or head of the order.

tassas. Large ceremonial drums.

Upanishad. Literally "near-sitting," the name given to a part of the Hindu scriptures that embodies certain mystical teachings that were supposedly originally delivered by ancient gurus to chosen pupils allowed to sit near them for instruction. Dating from about 400 B.C. and originally not considered to be a part of the Vedic canon, the Upanishads have been accepted as such in more recent times.

The Upanishadic philosophy is esoteric and understood by few people. Covering a variety of knotty subjects from the nature of God and man to the purpose of existence and ultimate salvation, the Upanishads try to solve everything with one thesis which runs pretty much through them all: the identity of the individual soul (atman) with the Universal Soul (Brahman), and the essential oneness of everything. One of the most famous expressions of this doctrine is found in the teaching of Uddalaka to his son Svetaketu in the Chandogya Upanishad: "The subtle essence is universally diffused in all things wherever found. It is the true Self; and, Svetaketu, that thou art!"

Vedanta. Literally "the ultimate or last or best of the Vedas." In its broadest sense it applies to the Upanishads; in a narrower meaning, it refers to one of six orthodox systems of Hindu philosophy based upon the Upanishads and first formulated by the philosopher Bodarayana, who lived about 2000 years ago. Vedanta is uncompromising in its monistic and pantheistic views; Brahman is All and the only Reality; all else is illusion.

The Vedanta Society, founded by Vivekananda, the successor of Ramakrishna, with centers around the world, professes to teach tolerance for all religions. However, the "unity of all religions" it espouses is really not liberal or broad-minded, but is based upon this uncompromising monism which says that everything is One.

Vedas The primary scriptures of Hinduism, said to be greater than the gods because they will endure even when the gods perish. It is believed that they are a revelation from Brahman itself, the Absolute, and existed in their eternal and perfect form from the beginning. The Vedas are Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda. As a whole they have been divided into (our classifications: the Mantras (metrical psalms of praise); the Brahmanas (manuals of ritual and prayer for priestly guidance); the Aranyakas (special treatises for hermits and saints); and the Upanishads (philosophical Treatises).

Vedic. The language in which the Vedas were originally composed, an archaic form of Sanskrit also called Old Indo-Aryan. As an adjective it means "as taught or exemplified in the Vedas."

Yoga. Literally "yoking" it refers to union with Brahman. There are several kinds and schools of Yoga, and various techniques, but all have this same ultimate goal of union with the Absolute.

The positions and breath control are intended as aids to Eastern meditation, and a means of controlling the body in disciplining oneself to renounce all desires, which the body might otherwise impose upon the mind.

Yoga is designed specifically to induce a state of trance, which supposedly allows the mind to be drawn upward into a yoking with Brahman. It is a means of withdrawal from the world of illusion to seek the only true Reality. If one desires to achieve physical fitness only, exercises designed for that specific purpose ought rather to be chosen. No part of Yoga can be separated from the philosophy behind it.

Yogi. In the loose sense, anyone who has attained some proficiency in the practice of Yoga, but in the true sense, one who is a master of Yoga - that is, one who has attained, through the practice of Yoga, union with Brahman, which is its aim. The true meditating Yogi has cut himself off from all sense perceptions, including family, friends, and all human relationships. He is supposed to be beyond space, time, caste, country, religion, and even good and evil.

As Krishna said in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, nothing matters anymore to the Yogi except Yoga itself.

THIS IS BOOK NO:

| |
|-----------|
| 11 |
|-----------|

OF A SET OF 16 BOOKS IN TOTAL, to be studied together in the Ministry and Leadership Training Course, which is a “One-Time-Only” – Project of M.L.T.C.- Ministries.

(FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY!! - NOT FOR SALE!! - Part of a “One-Time-Only” Project)

Printed by: Nana Art Printers, Mumbai-8; Published by: M.L.T.C.– Ministries / N.L.F., P. O. Box 19106, Worli, Mumbai-25.

