

**OFFICERS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES**  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #1

We welcome corrections and constructive comments to improve these discussion leaders guides.

Points for the leader to remember:

1. Give everyone an opportunity to host. This increases their investment/commitment to the group and provides a greater feeling of involvement and contributing to the life of the group.
2. Develop bible study discussion leaders among the group. The leaders usually grow fastest because of their serving in ministry.
3. Specialize in facilitating discovery through participation. Change is more likely to occur through self-discovery rather than didactic teaching. The strategy in these studies is to structure open-ended questions so as to encourage individual inductive reasoning and discovery learning. The 3 basic questions that the following questions are derived from are:
  - a. What does the scripture say?
  - b. What does it mean?
  - c. What does it mean man to me here and now? or How do I apply this scripture to my life?
4. Read the “Rules of Engagement of a Neighborhood Bible Study.” It is important to abide by these rules because they are contained in most of our publicity and implied in the wording of our printed invitations to a bible study. Try to keep the study to one hour. That means you may have to stop before finishing this guide during this meeting and carry the discussion over to next meeting.
5. Do not read the answers provided in this study as the “approved solution.” The answers are provided as subjective answers of the author to stimulate discussion and response after the group has had time to discuss a particular question.
6. The group coordinator should always accomplish the administrative functions such as announcements, circulating a sign-up sheet for host and discussion leader volunteers, and handle the opening and closing prayer times. The coordinator may lead the discussion because no one else will volunteer for the present but the coordinator should always accomplish leading the prayer times. The reasons for these rules will be explained later.
7. Do not press for personnel to agree to a theological position or closure to an agreed position either during or at the end of each session. Let the scripture speak for itself. We will cover the various aspects of relationships different ways with different scriptures over time. Give God an opportunity to change each person’s views as He convicts them through the Word.

## **Start the meeting:**

**Ice breaker:** “To get to know each other, let’s introduce ourselves by the familiar names we prefer and share what each of us expects to gain from this study this year.” **OPENING PRAYER:** [use step 1, opening prayer of “Developmental Prayer” such as...] We will now participate in reading portions of scripture as our opening prayer. Turn to the last three Psalms, Psalm numbers 148, 149 and 150. You will notice that these are a series of phrases of praise of God. For the next few minutes let’s read phrases of praise of God selected at random from these Psalms. Read one out loud and wait for someone else to read one before you read another. Let’s go to prayer by reading phrases of praise...

[leader: note the time and allow 4 minutes for this opening prayer. At the end of 4 minutes close with...] ” In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen!

## **DISCUSSION**

Introduction: In this study we will focus on what the scripture says that pertains to male/female marriage/family relationships.

Let’s get started at the beginning of God’s creation of man and woman by starting with the first book of the Bible, Genesis. Someone read Genesis 2:20-25.

What are the facts stated in this scripture? 1. Adam had no suitable helper, 2. Woman was made from man’s rib, 3. Man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, 4. The two will become one flesh, and 5. They were both naked without shame.

Do all of these facts relate to the marriage relationship? Yes

In the King James version of the Bible the word “helpmate” is the key word of verse 20b. What other words are used in our Bible version in place of “helpmate”?

What do these words imply about God’s possible intention for the relationship between Adam and Eve? Apparently God decided Adam needed a “suitable” helper.

How can we relate the words of Romans 8:29 which says, we are predestined to be “...conformed to the image of God’s son...” with the words of Jesus who said, “I have come to serve, not to be served?” If we are truly conformed to the image of Jesus we will be servants to others.

Let’s expand our understanding by looking at the book of Ephesians. Ephesians is near the back of the Bible. According to the index of my bible, Ephesians starts on page 1195. Yours may start on a different page depending on the translation of your bible or a different publisher.

Would someone read Ephesians 5:21.

What does “reverence for Christ” have to do with “submitting to one another.” Jesus

commanded us to “love our neighbors as ourselves.” Our first neighbor is our spouse. In the Greek language, the language used in the New Testament of our earliest Bibles, there were five words for different kinds of love. The word used here was “agape.”

Can anyone define agape? It is exercised or enacted as an act of the will. It is characterized by unselfishly accepting the other person as an act of will and striving to determine the other person’s needs and meeting/fulfilling those needs, i.e. serving the other person. It starts as a volitional act of the mind. It is often most importantly applied in response to a negative thought or feeling about or toward the other person. It is the required base of the right spiritual relationship between two Christians married to each other.

Again, what are the primary aspects of agape? Willed acceptance and serving the other person.

What would be the probable effect of a husband and wife practicing agape toward each other? They would eliminate many of the “castle walls” of defense that exist between them. These walls are created by internal responses to our spouses pressures of expectations or demands which we refuse to conform to.

What might others observe in a couple who submitted to one another and practiced agape in their marriage relationship? Real peace, unity and empathetic acceptance of each other.

What does submitting involve? Being committed... going out of one’s way to determine the other person’s needs and taking steps to meet those needs.

Now, back to Genesis 2:20b at the front of the Bible. How would you put “...submitting to one another” together with practicing agape and being a “helpmate?” It is putting into practice in the marriage relationship the principle of being conformed to the image of Jesus.

How might a husband submit to a wife ? By going out of his way to meet her needs even though it is not his “natural” way. Often, this includes spending time with her and going out of one’s way to communicate deeply and personally with her.

How might a wife submit to her husband ? By meeting his needs even though she does not understand why he has need so different from her own. Males and females are very different creatures with very different needs.

What specifics might “helping” entail?

Do you see any changes that need to take place to apply these scriptural admonitions to your own life?

Let's focus on dealing with a trait of our spouse that we have previously been frustrated with. How do you suppose one would operationally accomplish an acceptance of this trait in the spouse? By the practice of agape. The result often is that the person on the receiving end of agape has the freedom to change. The important factor is that we are willing and open to change as the Lord gives us direction in His word, the Bible and other ways.

Someone read Romans 12:2. According to my index Romans starts on page 1149...

This verse describes a process to effect change in a person's life. What is the key phrase here? "...the renewing of the mind."

How might one "renew" his/her mind in a particular way? Specialize in dealing with one aspect to enact acceptance (agape) of your spouse. In response to every first negative thought or feeling, pray and ask God to empower you... then, by an act of your will choose to accept this trait in your spouse. An additional beneficial step might be to add a request that God would bless your spouse with sensing a feeling of acceptance from you. The other person may never change or they may feel the freedom to change by the release of pressure to change. Our expectations or pressures to change often contribute to the other person's development of a strong defense system against us.

Again, would anyone like to share how you now see "submitting to one another" applying to your life today?

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Use step 1, closing prayer, as explained in "Developmental Prayer."

## **THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

### Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #2

We welcome corrections and constructive comments to improve these discussion leaders guides.

Points for the leader to remember:

1. Show new discussion leaders the instructions included lesson #1.
2. Remember: my answers are only possibilities, not approved solutions. If you read my answers to the group, do so only after complete discussion.
3. Let the Bible, the Word of God, convince them. Don't try to sell your own convictions or opinions.
4. Inform your members that Dr. George Kuykendall (the study author) had a Ph.D. degree in Counseling and was a clinical member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.
5. Leaders are encouraged to attend the morning discipline session (0600-0700 hours) in the Lounge of the Main Post Chapel. Use of this leaders guide series will encompass a portion of each morning discussion.

**OPENING PRAYER:** Use step #1, opening prayer, of the Developmental Prayer sequence.

### **DISCUSSION**

Last week we discussed Gen 2:20b-25. Specifically, we discussed the beginning relationship between a husband and wife in terms of submitting to one another (Eph. 5:21) as relates to being "help mates." God apparently meant for us to be a team...a unity/couple...one flesh.

Now let's pass that scripture which relates the consequences of the fall from God's grace of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:1-15) because of their disobedience of God's one existing commandment for the time to the point where they receive God's judgment statement.

Someone please read Gen. 3:16.

What are the points of God's statement? 1. Childbearing pains will be increased, 2. Woman's desire will be for her husband, 3. The husband will rule over his wife.

Is this fair? God is sovereign, i.e., He has the ultimate and final power and authority over our lives. He created us and has the right as the creator to do whatever he wishes with us. His will is the ultimate and final truth. He is God regardless what we think. The sooner we yield to His power and authority, the sooner we begin to have the right relationship with Him. Jesus said, "Blessed are the humble..." The most significant measure of our humility is how much we are yielded to Christ as Lord. Another measure is how much we are willing to walk in the footsteps of Jesus who said, "I came to serve, not to be served."

Let's look at the meaning of each of the points of v. 16.

What are the possible reasons for increasing pain in child birth? 1. Pain may be punishment, 2. That which is gained in pain, in this case the child, is more greatly appreciated, 3. There is a sense of relational meaning in identity which Christ's pain and shed blood on the cross which makes possible our spiritual birth. Because of Christ's pain and suffering on the cross it is possible for us to be "born again" in a spiritual sense. Pain is associated with both physical-and spiritual birth.

Someone read John 1:12. According to index in my Bible the Gospel of John starts on page \_\_\_\_.

According to this verse in the King James version, if we "receive Christ" as Lord we have what power? The power to become children of God, i.e., to become members of God's family.

How do you relate "having power" versus "exercising power" to become a child of God? Many people take the first step of asking Christ into their lives to be Lord of their lives in fulfillment of the invitation of Christ in Revelation 3:20. Some of these choose to exercise the day by day obedience to God which is living out one's salvation and responsibility as a member of His family i.e., by walking "...in the Spirit" in continual relationship with Christ and yielded to the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Does the statement of God that there will be significant pain in childbearing still have consequences today? Yes... there is still considerable pain...

What do you think giving birth would have been like before the judgment when there would have been no pain in childbearing?

Do you suppose the pain has anything to do with the mother's feelings toward the child and her relationship with the child?

What do you think are the possible meanings as we bring together the statement of Gen 2:24b "... a man will be united to his wife and the two shall become one flesh" with Gen. 3:16 "...your desire will be for your husband?" There is a growing profoundly deepening

relationship which affects a woman as a consequence of the process of being united sexually (physically) that correspondingly affects her spiritual and emotional commitment to the man. This is normally not nearly so true of man's response to the sexual relationship.

How do you suppose this relates to Eph. 5:25-27? It could be that as a result of a woman's natural response man has a powerful possibility of influencing his wife to great spiritual growth. Most women agree that the opposite seldom happens.

Is it possible that this could have something to do with God's creational intention for differing male and female roles in life?

What is the nature of our differing qualities as male and female (physical, rational, emotional) that may give this discussion meaning? In all dimensions we are incredibly different creatures ...beginning with the physical: basic cell, body structure, muscle structure, even in comparative lengths of our first and third fingers... man's first finger is shorter than his third, woman's is the reverse. We are opposites in the weighing of cognitive (rational) versus emotional functioning. The focusing of the male rational mind may be compared to the key box behind a motel desk. Males tend to focus on one area (cubicle) without regard to other areas of influence of other areas. Females' minds are much like the painter's palette with colors often blending into one another. H e r emotions overshadow and color the whole and affect many things at once.

As we study the scripture, y o u will see that God's obvious intent for the marriage relationship was that it was to be the most powerful possible team relationship between two persons. What are the potential positive consequences of a marriage relationship considering the three dimensions?

1. Spiritual?
2. Physical?
3. Psychological?

How do these dimensions relate to one another?

God's understanding of the powerful consequences of a wrong physical relationship resulted in a commandment... "You shall not commit adultery."

What are the potential consequences of wrong sex in...

1. Adultery (sex with someone other than your spouse in marriage)? One becomes wrongly united... committed physically, spiritually and psychologically to someone outside the marriage. That union works against God's design for the couple relationship and cannot glorify God.

2. Fornication (sex before marriage)? We become powerfully united, lose objective judgment about the other person and may marry a person who is not God's selection for us.

The third point of v. 16 is the husband "will rule over his wife". What might have been the reason for God specifying this order of things? 1. A consequence of Eve being the leader in the sin of breaking God's only existing commandment, or 2. Woman is by nature a feeling, intuitive, emotional being... more easily loving, empathetic and responding with feeling. The negative consequence of these positive features is that she is a bit more vulnerable to emotional influence. Man tends to be more rational, objective, cognitive (i.e., his rational/thought processes normally dominate, and/or 3. God just specified an order of things for the purposes of good team work... i.e., the man was appointed the primary responsibility as team leader in the couple relationship.

What might be the practical use/application of this scripture by the individual contemporary woman?

Someone read Gen. 3:17-19.

What are the facts here in order of presentation? 1. Adam is receiving judgment because he permitted himself to be influenced by his wife against God's commandment, 2. The ground of this farmer would be cursed with thorns, thistles (noxious weeds), 3. Man would now primarily eat vegetables which were the result of his own toil rather than the fruit of the garden of Eden which were produced without the problems of weeds and disparities of nature as we know it, 4. He would gain his fruit by hard/sweaty work, and 5. He would eventually die and his body would decay and return to dust as opposed to living an eternal healthy life in God's more perfect creation.

Does point #1 add credibility to a premise that some of the consequences related to the order of sin... Eve was influenced by the serpent (Satan), Adam was influenced by Eve?

For those who have farmed or cultivated a garden., are weeds still a problem? Unquestionably... thorns and thistles grow abundantly around Fort Leavenworth.

How do you suppose this judgment applies to the world of contemporary work as compared with harvesting in the garden of Eden before the judgment? Harvesting is pleasurable. The world of professional work and contemporary living is filled with all kinds of distresses and problems (weeds).

What are some of the weeds of your daily toil which would not exist in the Eden economy?

Discuss point #3 - man now eats of his own toil rather than living off of a garden continually producing for our benefit?



How does the statement, "You shall live by the sweat of your brow relate to contemporary living?"

How do you suppose the business of death and dying changed as a result of Adam and Eve's sin? Before the judgment man would not die... essentially we had a kind of heaven on earth. After the judgment, life on earth became a much more complicated and difficult process. The route to restoration of the right relationship with God is fraught with physical, spiritual and emotional land mines. The beginning of the relationship starts with accepting Christ as Lord and continues on a day by day experience of obedience to Christ (living out one's salvation).

Someone read John 14:15. 21 and 23.

How might we apply this scripture to our lives today? What can we expect if we are obedient to Christ?

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Use step 1, closing prayer, as explained in "Developmental Prayer."

## **THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

Marriage/Family Enrichment #3

Corrections and constructive comments are welcomed to improve these discussion leaders' guides.

Points for the leader to remember:

1. Remember: the answers are only possibilities, not approved solutions. If you read the answers to the group, do so only after complete discussion.
2. Let the Bible, the Word of God, convince the group...Don't try to sell your own convictions or opinions.
3. Leaders are encouraged to attend the morning disciplining sessions (0600-0700 hours) in the Lounge of the Main Post Chapel.

**OPENING PRAYER:** If you have new people for this meeting use step #1 opening and closing prayers of the Developmental Prayer Sequence, otherwise, use step #2.

### **DISCUSSION**

In this series of studies we are looking at the directives God has provided in scripture for men and women,- husbands and wives, and members of families.

What does sin entail? [To disobey God's directions for life or to do that which displeases God. Another word for sinning is unrighteousness or doing that which is not right in God's eyes.]

For the believer to have a growing/positive relationship with God he/she must deal aggressively with sin in his/her life.

Someone read 1 John 1:9. This is the epistle of John near the back of the Bible.

What is confession? According to this verse, what is required to deal with sin? [Confession, admission of the sin to God.]

What sins are included in the provisions of this verse? [All. Every sin.]

Someone read Psalm 66:18. (Isa. 59:2)

According to this verse, what is the consequence of sin in a person's life? [Blocked communication until the sin is resolved.]

The second step of dealing with sin is repentance. Someone read the gospel of Luke 13:1-5.

What does repentance mean? [Regret or sorrow for a sin, or for having been involved in a life process of sin.]

How do we accomplish repentance? [Repentance involves the commitment to change from the sinful act or way, resulting in a changed life.]

How does the military command "about face" relate to "repent?" [The military command "about face" means physically what "repent" means psychologically/spiritually. It involves a decision and includes the active process of turning away from one's sinful ways. It is the fulfillment of the process described in Romans 12:2 that we shall deal with later in this discussion.]

Let's look at that portion of the Ten Commandments which pertain to the marriage relationship. Someone read Exodus 20:14. Exodus is the second book of the Bible.

What is the difference between the sexual sins of adultery and fornication? [Adultery is wrong sexual sin involving someone that is married. Fornication is sex between two people before marriage.]

How can adultery be either an act or life-process sin? [One act is an act of sin. A continuing relationship of adultery is a life process of sin. The continuing sin is referred to in Scripture as the "besetting sin."]

Someone read Exodus 20:17. What does "covet" mean? [It is a thought process. It means to have a deep desire... to yearn for something or someone.]

If someone covets he/she breaks God's commandment i.e., he/she sins.

What must you do to avoid coveting? [You must reject the first covetous thought.]

What does "besetting" imply? [That sin which drags us down, which acts as an anchor on our progress in growing spiritually (closer to God). Even worse, the besetting sin increases our distance from God.]

What is the effect of sin on a person's relationship with God? [The relationship is blocked. There can be no communication with God until the sinner takes steps to clear the sin that stands between him/her and God.]

Someone read Romans 12:2.

The first phrase of Romans 12:2 says, "Be not conformed to this world..." What does "conformed" mean? [A process of changing to fit a pattern... in this case a pattern of worldly thought which leads to worldly living or living according to man/woman's nature which is opposite God's way.]

Romans 12:2 describes the process to defeat sin at the beginning by dealing with thoughts. This transforming process is called 'sanctification.' Sanctification is the life process of being daily conformed to the image of Jesus, i.e., breath by breath, step by step choosing to live according to the pattern of life that Jesus lived out as an example for us.

What does the world's pattern encompass? [It is the opposite of God's pattern. It involves values, ways of life, actions (including thought life). The way of the world is to be humanistic as opposed to being godly i.e., "right" in the eyes of God or "righteous." Remember, God is omnipresent, always present. He knows our every thought and act.]

What does being humanistic involve? [To be humanistic is to do what is normal to man/woman rather than be right (righteous) in the eyes of God.]

The last verse of the book of Judges describes what happens from God's perspective when people become totally humanistic (or do what feels good to the unregenerate person). Someone read Judges 21:25. Judges is at the beginning of the Bible after Deuteronomy and Joshua.

A portion of scripture describes the Godly perspective of being properly (spiritually) conformed. Someone read Philippians 3:10 (look at your index to determine where Philippians is).

The NIV (New International Version) of scripture uses "becoming like" " in place of the old KJ words "becoming conformable to..."

Someone now read Phil. 3:10, 11.

These two verses describe the goals of the person who desire to truly be Christian (Christ-like) and reveal some important aspects relating to spiritual growth.

What are the facts of these two verses in order of their presentation? [1. To know Christ, 2. To know the power of His resurrection, 3. To know the fellowship of His sufferings, 4. To become like Christ in death, 5. To attain the resurrection from the dead.]

What is the end result of this process of "being conformed?" [Being changed to be more like Jesus in action and thought and ultimately to attain the resurrection from the dead.]

Let's look at each fact separately...

What does it mean, "to know know Christ?" [Knowing is an intimate relationship. It is fulfilled in John 14:21... in Christ's "manifesting" n or "making Himself known" to us.]

What does "to know the power of His resurrection" mean? [It is to know the "Power" of God working in us.]

Acts 1:8 sheds some light on the source and one result of this power. Someone read Acts 1:8 for us.

What is the source and result of God's power? [The Holy Spirit is the source. As we relinquish our lives to the control of the Holy Spirit, God's power potentially operates through us in one way described here, by the salvation of lost souls...i.e., seeing others saved as they receive Christ as Savior and Lord.]

What were Christ's actual sufferings? [He was despised and rejected by the religious leaders of His day, rejected by His own people, challenged continuously by the chief priest and authorities of the church, continually misunderstood by His closest friends, given an unjust trial and crucified on a cross (a very long-term and painful punishment ending in death which was reserved for the worst of criminals).]

What does it mean to become "like Christ in death?" [Christ defeated death when God raised Him from the dead. To become like Christ is to defeat death... to be raised from the dead. Baptism signifies this defeat of eventual bodily death. Eventually, the believer who "overcomes" this world by his/her obedience to the Lord will defeat death through a bodily resurrection with a glorified state which is a perfect body state with no aging, sickness or deformity.]

What does it mean to "attain the resurrection from the dead?" [Christ promised the thief on the cross (Lk 23:43), "Tonight you will be with me in paradise." To attain the resurrection is to defeat death and ultimately to be "raised from the dead and to be with Him in paradise." That can be a condition that exists in the "now" because we become members of the Kingdom of Heaven by our relationship with Christ. In a sense "paradise" is like being restored to a life similar to the original state of the garden of Eden.]

What do you suppose the effect of adultery would be on the relationship described in Gen. 2:24? [Tragically destructive. In some cases it may not be possible to restore the relationship. This is why Jesus permitted the exception for divorce in the case of marital unfaithfulness in Matthew 5:31, 32.]

Someone read Matthew 5:27-30.

Of what importance does Jesus give to covetous/adulterous thought in verse 28? [It is equal to adultery in the eyes of God who knows our every thought... our heart.]

How strongly does Jesus feel that we should deal with our thoughts and acts according to verses 29 & 30? [Do whatever is necessary to control your thoughts and desires. If you do not have spiritual victory over your sinful thoughts and acts, the result is hell.]

Would anyone like to summarize how our discussion relates to God's commandments in Exodus 20:14, 17? [From our study of Genesis 2:24 we learned that God intends for the marriage to be a unique unity, a team of two that is bound by a mysterious oneness that involves sexual and spiritual components. In this discussion, we looked at the destructive elements of sin to our oneness with God and specifically the effect of wrong sex and thoughts on both our relationship with God and our unity with our spouse.]

Would anyone like to comment on what this study has meant to you or how you would apply the things we have learned in this lesson to grow or develop in a spiritual way?

**CLOSING PRAYER:** See the instructions at the beginning of this session.

## **THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

### Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #4

We welcome corrections and constructive comments to improve these discussion leaders guides.

**OPENING PRAYER:** Use step #2, opening prayer, of the Developmental Prayer sequence unless you have new people for this meeting in which case you should use step #1 of opening and closing prayers.

### **DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this scripture study is to aid each participant in his/her spiritual growth.

[Discussion leader: Ask for a volunteer to read the following paragraph.]

The author of this study, Dr. George Kuykendall, states, "For the first thirty-five years of my life I believed I was as serious a Christian as anyone. During the latter part of those 35 years I began to realize that I was gaining more and more knowledge but I wasn't growing spiritually. I realized that greater theological knowledge did not necessarily result in spiritual growth. I had "bought in" to a common belief that more knowledge contained some "magic pill" that would result in filling the unscratchable itch or ambiguous void I perceived in my life. As I analyzed my life I found that I would frequently take sides against portions of scripture for no other reason than I did not want to relinquish control of my life to anyone or anything. As I meditated on my participation in Bible study groups I became aware that I would often oppose God covertly (in my mind) and overtly by stating my "opinion." After weeks of thought about my negative stance toward God and scripture I began to realize that my "theology" flowed out of all of my thirty five years of largely secular experiences and influences. In essence I came to realize that opinions are like noses. Everybody has a nose and hardly anybody really cares about my nose. After participating in a discussion of the following scriptures I realized that I had deceived myself and that I felt some kind of satisfaction when I was able to influence others toward my opinion. At this time, I made a life changing decision which I shall share at the end of this study."

The Apostle Paul tells us as much as anyone about how to grow as a spiritual person. Let's look at Paul's advice to Timothy about the importance of right responses to scripture.

Someone read 2 Timothy 3:10-13.

What are the facts here? Paul is reminding Timothy about: 1. The nature and content of the whole of his teaching, 2. Paul's way of life, 3. Paul's purpose, faith, patience, Love (agape), endurance, persecutions and sufferings, 4. the things which happened to Paul in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, 5. The persecutions he endured, 6. The Lord rescued Paul from all of his difficulties, 7. Everyone who wants to live a Godly life in Christ will be persecuted, and 8. Evil men and imposters will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Compare Galatians 5:22,23 with 2 Tim. 3:10. What is Paul saying in verse 10? His teachings, way of life and attributes are the proof of God's Holy Spirit ruling his life. His life bears witness that he is a spiritual man.

Why should a person be concerned if his/her life does not consistently bear spiritual fruit? It is the evidence that Christ is ruler (Lord) of a person's life (Rev. 3:20) and a testimony to the presence of the Holy Spirit in a person's life (Acts 1:8, Gal. 5:22,23).

2 Tim 3:12 states that everyone who wants to live a Godly (spiritual/God controlled) life will be persecuted.

Someone read Psalm 11:2 and 37:32. Someone else read the words of Jesus in Matthew 10:22.

Why do you suppose that the person who lives a Godly life will be persecuted by the wicked (unrighteous)? Satan cannot tolerate God's success in a person's life or witness through that life. People opposed to God will persecute Godly people.

What are the various ways a Christian might suffer persecution today? 1. Criticism by anti-Christian superiors, 2. Negative prejudice from various people in my environment, 3. Negative comments on job performance reports, etc.

2 Tim. 3:13 refers to "evil men." What makes a person evil? The person serves Satan and/or is anti-God and/or unrighteous. Another way to look at this issue is by discussing the opposite of evil which is "good" (Christ like). Jesus defines the "good" person in Matt. 19:17 and John 14:21 in terms of "obedience."

Someone read 2 Tim. 3:14-17.

According to verse 17 what is the consequence of application of scripture to a person's life? "Thoroughly equipped for every good work." The good person is the true Godly person (Matt 19:17).



According to v. 16, what are the scriptures able to do? Make a person wise for salvation through faith in Christ.

What are the elements of this "faith?" 1. Commitment to or acceptance of Christ as Lord (ruler) of my life (John 1:12, Rev 3:20), 2. Obedience as a result of my love (agape: I will, or choose, to accept and serve Christ) (John 14:21).

How do various translations state the first phrase of 2 Tim. 3:16? "inspired, " "God breathed..."

There were many authors of scripture yet this verse says all scripture is inspired by God or God breathed. How is this possible Through the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of each author of scripture. This is fulfillment of Job 32:8; Acts 1:8; 2 Pet 1:20,21 and 1 Cor. 2:13.

2 Tim. 3:16 says "All Scripture is God breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

How do you visualize application of each of these four verbs to a Christian's life...

1. "teaching?" In my learning...
2. "rebuking?"
3. "correcting?"
4. "training in righteousness?" " Training to be a first class Christian.

Of what significance do you suppose "equipping as Christians" is to God? The beginning of the primary purpose that we were created for... "to glorify God in the living of our lives."

Where should this "equipping" fit in consideration of priorities concerning professional performance and learning/development, family responsibilities, physical development, recreation?

George Kuykendall says, "The key event of opening the door of my life to God's Holy Spirit occurred when I told God, "I am through fighting You and Your Word. Hereafter, I will accept the Bible as truth for my life. I accept 2 Timothy 3:14-17 as the key to my spiritual growth."

**CLOSING PRAYER:** See the instructions at the beginning of this session.

## **THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

### Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #5

We welcome corrections and constructive comments to improve these discussion leaders guides.

**OPENING PRAYER:** Use step # 2, opening prayer, of the Developmental Prayer sequence unless you have new people for this meeting in which case you should use step #1 of opening and closing prayers.

### **DISCUSSION**

In this study we will focus on the wife.

Someone read Proverbs 18:22.

What are the two points made here? 1. He who finds a wife finds what is good, and 2. Receives favor from the Lord.

Why do you think the person who finds a good wife finds favor from the Lord? 1. God created man and woman to a unity and the marriage completes that unit, 2. In a good marriage there is the witness of each of the spouses plus the witness of the couple which illustrates the most powerful possible relationship between two people under God's power and authority.

What is the perfect model for the Christian to pattern life by? Jesus. He came and modeled for us how to live a spiritual life. So, in general, we look to the model of Jesus to determine how to live a godly life.

Let's focus on the wife of the marriage team. Proverbs 31:10-31 describes the ideal wife. Let's look at this description of the wife who is ideal and discuss each trait described.

Someone read Proverbs 31:10-31.

Now let's look at each point in turn, verse by verse.

In verse 10 the Hebrew word for "good" or "noble character" is "hayil" which relates to strength of character. Appropriate English synonyms are "virtuous" or "good."

What is the contemporary meaning of "virtuous?" It is a process both of thought and act. It includes thinking "good" thoughts as well as living life in a "good" way.

What is an opposite to virtuous or good? Evil.

In scriptural terms, how would a virtuous person act? They would be righteous in the eyes of God or do right according to God's will. A virtuous person would avoid "...even the appearance of evil."

What value does verse 10 place on a good wife? More precious than jewels..., riches..., wealth.

Why is a good wife of such value? She completes the husband. According to Genesis 20:20b, God apparently determined that Adam needed a helpmate. God provided for fulfilling this need by creating Eve. Apparently the wife provided some things that wealth could not buy.

What might these things be? One who is a good wife is a reliable, predictable and trustworthy helpmate. She becomes one physically and in Spirit with her husband. If they are a good team, their unit will result in creativity that they could not produce separately. They become reliable, predictable and trustworthy helpmates in the creation of a team spirit and unit that is invaluable in every way and worth more than riches. Each is completed by the other. They meet each other's needs. They are "on the same side" and they "bring out the best" in each other.

What is the meaning of verse 11, "... his heart trusts in her?" He has confidence in her ability to manage things. She can be trusted and will not squander their earnings. She will be such an asset that their fortune will grow. A study of the destructive factors to marriage reveals the things which destroy trust are abuse of money, adultery, etc. We must be able to trust each other.

How would you interpret verse 12? Life is easier with a good helpmate. Life is extended, more meaningful and more fruitful.

What is the importance of verse 13? 1. She searches for good things to add creatively/productively to their life, 2. She works with a "willing" spirit. She is a positive, accepting member of the team. "Willing" has to do with an act of the mind, "to will...", to choose to be, do...

What things are important from the husbands part that facilitate this "willing" spirit? Commitment to her, to meeting her needs, to sharing with her so that she truly feels as one with him.

Let's look at the remaining verses in turn for meaning and application to life in our contemporary world.

v. 14? She does not limit herself to what is "at hand", available here. She extends herself for resources...

v. 15? 1. She rises early to provide food for her family, 2. She organizes and manages her household.

v. 16? Another form of investing the production of her life to reap a further harvest. What are some examples?

v. 17? She keeps herself physically fit.

v. 18? 1. She perceives that she is productive and, 2. She manages her home such that living does not fail for want of manageable, physical things.

v. 19? Probably applies to the tedious world of weaving which requires patience over a long term... as does the raising of children.

v. 20? She practices hospitality, ministers to the needs of others (Jesus said, "I came to serve, not to be served."), and goes out of her way to meet needs of others. She is not a selfish person with time or resources.

v. 21? The words here mean "warm clothing" of double thickness. When winter comes her family's clothes are ready. How may you generalize this to other family needs?

v. 22? She clothes herself attractively, looks good.

V. 23? She is such a good wife that her husband would be admired and respected for the qualities of his wife.

v. 24? She is productive in a physical sense.

v. 25? Unafraid of the future. Confident/secure in life because of her own inner strength and values.

V. 26? Her words testify to her wisdom and, 2. Her words teach/model kindness to others ("teaching is better than law.").

V. 27? 1. She is aware of and exercises management of her household, 2. She does not waste time, is not lazy.

v. 28? 1. Her children and husband testify to the blessing that she is to them, and 2. her husband states his appreciation by praising her... continued in v. 29...

v. 29? "... as the best of all women." What do you suppose this manner of praise affects the wife?

v. 30? The most important aspect of the life of this woman is that she is a godly person who has a real "awe" of God.

v. 31? 1. She deserves and should receive physical reward from the fruit of her labor, and 2. by her works people know her.

What kind of woman does Proverbs 31 describe? The perfect. This is a description of the model.

Of what relevance is this description to the average woman? A criterion. A standard to conform to, to grow to.

What should a woman do with the areas in which she does not measure up? Pick one attribute to work on correction or change in her life. Memorize scriptures relating to the negative aspect and to the opposite, or righteous, aspect if the problem were corrected. Whenever one senses the first negative thought or feeling related to the negative trait, quote the scripture in both categories, ask God for help and strength and, by an act of the will, reject the negative thought or feeling... and thus be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

**CLOSING PRAYER:** See the instructions at the beginning of this session.

**THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES  
of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #6

We welcome corrections and constructive comments to improve these discussion leaders guides.

**OPENING PRAYER:** Use step #2, opening prayer, of the Developmental Prayer sequence unless you have new people for this meeting in which case you should use step #1 of opening and closing prayers.,

**DISCUSSION**

Whereas, Proverbs 31 describes a kind of global criterion for the Godly woman and wife, there is not one portion of scripture that gives a complete criterion description for either of the sexes. Therefore, we must examine different portions of scripture in different ways to arrive at a complete scriptural description of the Godly man/woman and husband/wife.

During this session we will examine a portion of scripture related to the requirements of the mature and responsible spiritual man.

Someone read 2 Tim 3:1-7 for us.

Let's examine this scripture verse by verse.

1. My version (NIV) uses the title "overseer" for the highest office of spiritual ministry and leadership in the local church body. Does your version use another title for "overseer?"

Bishop, etc...

What does "sets his heart on being an overseer" imply? Desires and ambitions such that this is a primary goal of the person's life.

What is the meaning of v. 1? If someone sincerely and earnestly desires the highest ministry position of the local church, he desires a task that is noble in the sight of God.

What does " noble " mean? Self-sacrificing, highly worthy in God's sight. Fulfillment of Jesus' goal: "I have come to serve... "

v. 2: What does "above reproach" mean? Degree of integrity and honor so apparent and real that no one questions him.

The term "husband of one wife" refers to polygamy. Remember, in Old Testament days and among some people of biblical lands today a man could legally have several wives. I once asked a muslim why he did not have more than one wife and he replied, "There are too many problems with having multiple wives."

How would you define "self-controlled?" God knows our every thought. If we control our thoughts, we will control manifest acts. Self-control implies responsible control of the three dimensions: mind, body and spirit.

How would you define respectable? His good character is such that respect for him is a logical and normal response.

What does hospitable imply? A person who welcomes others and ministers to their needs.,

What are hospitable acts? Someone read Matt 25:34-40.

What is the implication of this scripture? Hospitality, meeting the needs of others, is a natural outflow of the spiritual person and is a necessary fruit for one to inherit eternal life.

Why do you suppose "ability to teach" is so important? This is an essential quality of one who is to model the Christian life as well as disciple or equip others.

v 3: What does your version use for "not given to much wine?"

Why is this important? To have normal control of one's mind and body, he must not drink an amount of alcohol which change or impair his mental system. If he permits his senses to be dulled he may be the unaware victim of Satan.

How do you interpret "not violent but gentle?" Opposites on the temper continuum. Temper can be controlled by an act of will if someone maintains awareness of his thoughts and feelings.

Define "not quarrelsome." Accepting of others. One who is not psychologically threatened by others, not offensive or defensive in manner of speech and other actions.

What is the meaning of "not a lover of money?" Money and physical possessions do not dominate his thoughts, actions or desires.

v. 4: What are the elements of "managing a family well?" 1. First, the family is a primary focus of his attention, 2. He invests in it what he must to do it well, etc...

What are the necessary actions of a father that result in his children obeying and respecting him? 1. He spends time with them, 2. Is committed to meeting their needs, 3. Is consistently concerned for and about them, 4. Consistently demonstrates his love and concern for them, for their physical and spiritual welfare.

v. 5: What are the similarities between the family and the church? The small group is his family. The larger group is God's family. The smaller family has approximately the same type of needs as the larger family.

V. 6: What are the vulnerabilities of being a recent spiritually immature convert? 1. The tendency to focus on self and take credit for what God does, 2. Unaware of Satan's ways and traps and how to fight spiritual warfare, 3. Not fully aware of how to live the spiritual life himself and therefore, not a consistent/reliable spiritual model for others, 4. More subject to his own ego needs.

v. 7: What does reputation have to do with "not falling into disgrace and into the devil's trap?" Reputation implies a result of long term Christian living... he has proved himself by consistently being righteous (a spiritual man). His actions are predictable and reliable (righteous).

Which of the traits described in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 are most important? They are all equally important but reputation is the result of them all.

What are the key elements to being the type of person described here? 1. Being committed to Christ as Lord, and 2. Being committed to being daily more conformed to the image of Christ as the model for life.

How should a new Christian begin to deal with this model? By application of Romans 12:2. By focusing on one area at a time on a priority basis until he is able to consistently be a moral/righteous person.

Should every Christian desire to be an overseer (v. 1)? No. Obviously all are not qualified to be overseers.

Note that vv. 8-13 deal with the qualifications for deacons. What are the major differences between the requirements for being an overseer versus being a deacon? Ministry qualifications: able to teach.

Whom do you think the requirements of deacon apply to? All who would serve in any capacity of leadership in the church.

What do you think each of us should do with this scripture?

**CLOSING PRAYER:** See the instructions at the beginning of this session.



**THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES**  
**of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #7

We welcome corrections and constructive comments to improve these discussion leaders guides.

**OPENING PRAYER** Use step #3, opening prayer, of the Developmental Prayer sequence unless you have new people for this meeting in which case you should use step #1 of opening and closing prayers.

**DISCUSSION**

Last week we focused on the spiritual man. This lesson will focus on the duties of husbands.

Some read Genesis 2:34,24.

What does God require a man do to complete his marriage? 1. "...leave his father and mother," and 2. "...be united to his wife."

What does this note about God's intent for... 1. The relationship of the couple with each other? and-2. The husband's ties to his parents and family?

What might this statement mean, "He left his father and mother physically but he stayed bound to them psychologically?"

Is the husband obeying this scripture, if he periodically checks back with his family for: 1. Direction and approval? 2. Sharing about how he is displeased with his wife?, 3. Sharing about his wife and family?

What might the consequences be if the husband and wife live with his or her family? 1. They may never really establish a home..., 2. The parent(s) dominate one or the other or both of them, 3. A parent influences one against the other, 4. Bitterness and resentment grows between the couple, the parents, etc...

What may happen if parents maintain control through money, gifts and/or promises of inheritance? Money and gifts are sometimes used by parents to maintain dependency and control over their children. This often works to inhibit development of the "united" relationship of God's intention.

What is the nature of the healthy relationship that may exist if the couple is truly united? While they should never dominate or overshadow each other, they should function as a compatible/functioning team.

How important is the basic commitment to Christ as Lord to being truly "united" as a couple? The commitment to Christ as Lord is basic to becoming a true Christian. When we accept Christ we must give up self and let Him rule. One can never be truly united to Christ or spouse until he/she takes this important step. This is an extremely important ingredient of joining with our spouse to selflessly become a part of the team in unity.

How important is it for the couple to be committed to meeting each other's needs to be truly united? This is the fulfillment of practicing love (agape) toward God and each other... i.e., to accept and serve each other.

Someone read Proverbs 5:18.

Describe things a husband must do to "... rejoice in the wife of his youth." 1. He wills to look upon his wife as a special part of his life to "rejoice in," 2. He wills to think positive thoughts about her and imputes to her good intentions toward himself, 3. He works at doing joyful things for her and with her.

What might be the positives and negatives of the custom of biblical days when a wife was chosen for the son by his parents' versus our way? I once asked an officer from India how he came to choose his wife. He said that he only met her once before they married at a dinner sponsored by his parents. They did not even have a private time together. They were married and they have had a very happy marriage. I asked if he loved his wife. He said, "Yes, I love her very much." I asked how he came to love her so much. He said, "It is expected that it will be this way. I never thought about it being any other way."

Someone read Ecclesiastes 9:9.

What are the separate points of this verse? 1. Enjoy life with your wife, 2. Whom you love, Enjoy her all the days of your life, 4. This is man's lot in life in your toilsome labor under the sun,

Let's examine the two imperative phrases which this verse begins with...

How is it possible to truly enjoy life with a wife who is often so different from her husband? Only by putting into practice the agape kind of love: 1. To choose to accept her like she is, 2. To actively seek to serve her like she is (meet her needs), 3. To choose to exercise a positive attitude toward her, and 4. To put her first in priority of life after God.

Why do you think husbands so often fall short in the area of meeting their wives needs? 1. Some are afraid of losing their identity in their wife's needs (which are perceived to be massive from their perspective, like massive sponges that will suck the very existence out of a man), 2. The husband perceives his wife from his male perspective which causes him great difficulty in understanding her, 3. Men and women are so different that we fail to comprehend the differences, 4. Men often do not understand their wives emotional needs and judge them to be incompetent and irrational... not trustworthy, 6. Men often focus on their professions as the determiners of success in life and perceive the wife who wants personal and family time as a hindrance to professional success, etc...

It is difficult for some men to accept God's stipulations and priorities for life. "Man's ways are not God's ways."

Back to Eccl. 9:9. How could the assumption, "the wife whom you love (agape)" be assumed to be true for the Christian? To agape one's neighbor is half of the requirement of the greatest commandment of Jesus (Matt 2:36-38). Our spouse is our closest neighbor in the Christian community. To fail to agape is to fail at the first step of being a Christian.

The King James version of scripture uses "...days of thy vanity" where the NIV uses "this meaningless life." What do you suppose this means? Vanity, self-centered, self-seeking . . . truly opposites of that which pleases God. Vanity implies self-focus of a life rather than God focused or other focused.

The expression, "this is your lot in life" refers to the poor quality of life compared to God's Eden of the creation and the life hereafter where the quality of Eden will be restored. The relationship with his wife is one of the husband's main opportunities to maximize his obedience to God and his quality of life on earth.

"Your toilsome labor under the sun" " refers to the judgment of man in Gen. 3:19... "By the sweat of your brow..." The consequences of that judgment will only be removed at the second coming of Jesus Christ.

How do you feel about the scriptural elements that we have covered in this session?

What do you feel is the most difficult portion of this sessions material?

HOW do you think one should deal with a scriptural imperative that he feels he is failing?

**CLOSING PRAYER:** See the instructions at the beginning of this session.

## **THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #8

**OPENING PRAYER:** Use step 3, opening prayer, of the Developmental Prayer sequence, unless you have new people for this meeting, in which case you should use step 1 of the opening and closing prayers.

### **DISCUSSION**

Last week we focused on the spiritual man: this week we will focus on "submission" as an important aspect of marriage and Christian life.

Let's first look at an example Jesus gave us.

Someone read John 13:4-17.

Washing the dust off a guest's feet as the guest entered the house was a common servant's task of New Testament days. What was the message of Jesus to the apostles in this story? 1. He acted out an example for them. 2. He showed them that being committed to being a servant involved willingly serving at this level.

How does this story relate to the words of Jesus to His apostles in Mt 20:25-28? Not to be served, but to serve.

Someone read Ephesians 5:21.

What does having "reverence for Christ" have to do with submitting to one's spouse? According to Mt 22:36-39, a part of the greatest commandment is to love (agape) your neighbor as yourself. To agape is to accept and to serve. To serve is "to submit to." Therefore, if one has "reverence for Christ," he or she will obey Christ and agape his or her spouse.

How does "submission" relate to being a Christian? To "be a servant" is to obey and emulate Christ.

Compare Paul's plea in Romans 12:1 with his statement about himself in RO 1:1. Of what importance was "being a servant" to Paul's knowing Christ as Lord of his life?

What might the implications be if Christ is our Lord and we are truly the servant of Christ?--

1. In relation to our attitude about self? We would be selfless. We would be more concerned about His will than our will.

2 . In relation to others? Committed to serving, meeting the needs of others.

In light of the above and what we have studied about marriage thus far, how important is submission to the marriage relationship? Christ has clearly defined our purpose as Christians is to be servants to others. In a marriage, if both parties' needs are to be met, we must be committed to meeting each other's needs, i.e., to be the servant to each other. How can we ever fulfill this in the community if we cannot do it with the person we have chosen as our spouse.

How do we determine what our spouse's needs are? Ask.

How do we apply this? What do you think are the problems related to being the servant in the marriage relationship? 1. For the wife? 2. For the husband?

Where do you think we should begin to act out the business of being a servant in the relationship first--1. From the wife's perspective? 2. From the husband's perspective?

**CLOSING PRAYER:** See the instructions at the beginning of this session.

**THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES**  
**of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #9

**OPENING PRAYER:** Use step #3, opening prayer, of the Developmental Prayer sequence unless you have new people for this in meeting, in which case you should use step #1 of opening and closing prayers.

**DISCUSSION**

Last week we discussed the servant role of the real Christian. Now let's look at how that role fits in a marriage relationship concerning the wife. While this passage of scripture is often resented by wives, next week's discussion will reveal how God's requirements for the husband are just as difficult or perhaps more difficult.

Someone please read Ephesians 5:21-24.

What is the admonition of Eph 5:21? To be subject to one another. This is a part of the greatest commandment stated by Jesus, "You must love [agape: accept and serve] your neighbors as yourself."

What is the imperative of verse 22? "Wives be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord."

How does this fit with the last phrase of Gen 3:16? God assigns roles throughout the Bible. Here, at the beginning of creation, He stated an order of authority between the husband and wife.

Some say, "Paul was a bachelor and didn't understand. This doesn't apply to the contemporary." It is interesting that Eph 5:22 is an extension of Gen 3:16, and Eph 5:31 is a quotation of Gen 2:24. What would this indicate about the admonitions of Eph 5? Eph 5 is a restatement of God's intent from the beginning of creation.

What is the implication for the husband? He has been assigned authority and responsibility as the leader of the home. He has a responsibility to his wife and God to be what God demands that he be.

Can you think of any differences in the created natures of the average man and woman that would support the logic of this assignment of leadership? The marriage relationship is obviously the primary relationship of God's concern beyond our relationship with Him. He has created the man with a nature that is rational, objective, and cognitive

(functions out of his head/reasoning). Woman tends to be emotional, intuitive, and empathetic (functions out her emotions/feelings). Woman tends to focus on one issue to the exclusion of all others. Woman tends to shade issues with her feelings concerning other issues. Man's role can be compared to that of a lion hunter who must be single minded, always rational, considering and calculating the objective possibilities of the object of his focus. Similarly, woman's role can be compared with the wild horse tamer who functions best out of intuition and feeling, considering the needs and feelings of the object of her focus.

Someone read Eph 5:30-31.

How does this fit in with the Gen 2 passage? Apparently God intends the marriage to be a witness to the world of the maximum possible relationship. He intends unity in the marriage.

What are the spiritual consequences of a wife refusing to honor the admonition of God to submit to her husband in Gen 3:16 and Eph 5:22? It is essentially denial of the sovereignty of God. To refuse God's will is to sin, to be unrighteous, and to be willfully separated from God. Ps 66:18 says that if you have sin on your heart, God will not hear your prayer. The result is likely to be disharmony and disunity because of the lack of God's lordship and blessing.

Why is it so difficult for us to accept Christ as Lord? We must submit to His rulership (Lordship) by 1. Giving up self (ego and pride), and 2. Yielding to His will even in the smallest of details. It is hard to relinquish control over our own lives to someone else, even God. Yet we will never have peace with God until we willfully obey Him.

Do you suppose that this same ego and pride is what led Eve to be subject to Satan's temptation?

What is the first fact of Eph 5:23? "The husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church."

What if the husband chooses to relinquish this responsibility to his wife? God does not provide for delegation of His assigned authority. To fail to respond to this assignment of authority and responsibility is to disobey an order of the highest command.

What is the common failing of man in this area? To shirk his husband responsibilities in favor of his professional responsibilities.

What are the consequences? He is in sin, unrighteous in the eyes of God, and does not have God's blessing on his life (Jn 14:21).

What are the implications of the second part of verse 23 as applies to marriage? Just as Christ is the spiritual savior of the Church (Body of Christ), so is the husband the leader of his marriage. If he does not accept this leadership, the marriage will not be blessed by Christ and the wife suffers spiritual consequences.

Is it possible that Adam failed in this leadership, and the result was Eve's yielding to Satan's temptation? If the husband does not meet the leadership needs of his wife, she is vulnerable to outside influences that will meet fill the void. The result will show in both the wife and children.

What is the extent of the admonition of Eph 5:24? Wives are commanded to submit to their husbands in everything.

Is this consistent with Gen 3:16? Yes.

Is this fair? God is sovereign. His will is fair by definition. He is the creator--God.

What does "everything" encompass? Everything! Social, spiritual, economic--everything.

How can a wife respond to this admonition so as to please God? 1 . By making Christ's words in Jn 14:21 a commitment for her life (with a promise from Christ-- "The one who loves me will obey me . . .") and 2. Thought by thought, feeling by feeling, breath by breath, and act by act choosing to submit to her husband as an obedience to God (the process of Ro 12:2).

What if the husband is not worthy to be submitted to? That is God's problem.

How should one deal with these difficult admonitions of God in scripture if he or she disagrees? According to 2 Tim 3:16-17, "All scripture is inspired by God [God breathed] and profitable for teaching, correction, reproof, and training in righteousness." To respond is an exercise of faith in God. To fail to bring one's life into subjection of God is to reject Him as Lord, to be unrighteous, to displease God. It is essentially failure of the first part of the greatest commandment of Jesus, "To love [agape] the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength."

This has largely been the wife's week in the barrel. Next week we will discover how the husband's role is even more demanding and difficult.



**THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES**  
**of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #10

Last week we discussed the Ephesians 5:23-24 passage concerning the admonition to wives to be "subject to their husbands in everything." Now we turn to the husband's role. Some say this scripture is just too demanding for husbands and wives. A different interpretation is that this scripture just illustrates the high level of importance that God places on the marriage relationship over everything but our relationship to Him.

You will note in this portion of scripture that there is a comparison between the husband's role with his wife and Christ's role with the church. As we read this description, it is like comparing one 35mm color slide projected side by side with another. Then, as we read on, the two views seem to merge, and then become separate again. Obviously, our Lord considers the marriage relationship to be very important.

Someone read Ephesians 5:22-27.

What are the facts in verse 23? 1. The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is also the head of the Church. 2. Christ is the Savior of the body.

How do you suppose Christ feels that the believer should relate to the church (the body)? It is the Christian's identity--citizenship. It is how the "real " Christian relates to the world. If we are married, we first relate to our marriage, family, and home. The church (body) is our identity in the world. Everything we do outside our marriage is to support our marriage and then to be a part of the body by membership, stewardship, and the practice of spiritual gifts and talents.

In what respect is Christ the head of the Church? 1. He is its Savior. 2. He is Lord, the supreme/ultimate ruler and authority over the Church. If Christ is not Lord, that church/or body of believers is not a part of the body of Christ.

Now let's look at verse 24. In what respects are members of the body subject to Christ? In all respects: morally, spiritually, professionally, and socially.

In what ways does Christ exercise His authority over the Church? 1. By direction of His Word, the Bible. 2. By the moment by moment continuing presence and leading of the Holy Spirit (See Jn 16:13 and Ro 8:14).

-Regarding the analogy beginning with verse 23, in what sense should the husband be

head of his wife? He has this primary responsibility. As Christ reliably fulfills His role as Savior, so the husband is responsible to fulfill his role as the head of the marriage/his wife.

What roles of the husband compare with those of Christ? 1. He is continually responsible to be the provider and protector. 2. His role is three-fold: past, present, and future--meeting physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs. 3. He provides reliable security in the sense of commitment of his love (agape), the provision of a home, plans for future security (savings, insurance, personal reliability, assurance that he will always love and be there for his wife). 4. Before the Lord, he is the primary priest of his home, the religious leader/guide/teacher providing for his wife's spiritual relationship with the Lord, spiritual growth, and development such that she is presented spotless (righteous) before the Lord. Also that their marriage is holy (set apart/protected for God), a witness to the world and especially a model for their children of what a Christian marriage should be.

Why do you think these responsibilities are not left to the natural selection of the fittest between husband and wife? This is what normally happens and why so many marriages fail to fulfill their spiritual potential. If the wife wears the priestly pants, the husband usually abandons or diminishes his responsibility for spiritual things, and we model a wrong image for our children. Boys grow up to be spiritually weak and our daughters seek men in the image of their fathers.

What is the husband's role in light of verse 24? As the wife is subject to him in everything, responsibility is fixed according to God's standard-- he is responsible to see that her needs are met and responsible to God for their spiritual growth and unity.

What is the connotation of verse 25? The husband's practice of agape is complete to the willingness to give his life for her.

What is the meaning of "to sanctify" in verse 26? Sanctification is a spiritual, continuing process of growth and development over life in response to the Word and moment by moment leading of the Holy Spirit.

What is the implication of the husband's role in verses 26-27? As priest of his home, he is responsible for the ministry of the word in a day by day process such that they both are guided by the Word and the Holy Spirit as to be holy (set apart) for God and blameless (righteous) in His eyes,

Someone read verses 28-31.

What is the overall issue here? The unity of man and his wife is so important that the man practices considering his wife an equal part of himself. Meeting her needs is equally as important as meeting his own needs. It is more than agape; she is just as important as he himself. A husband may fail in considering his wife's needs to be as important as his own when spending for gratification. Failure to consider one's wife as equally important is often the reason for bitterness and castle walls that exist between husband and wife.

What are the various areas where unity is important? Husbands don't completely dominate their wives, but need to assure equal consideration in recreation (leisure time), social needs, and physical needs. Husbands often lose themselves in their professional commitment and fail in this primary area of responsibility before the Lord.

How does a husband determine what his wife's needs are? Through extensive communication. He needs to try putting his own defenses and ego aside and concentrating on understanding his wife's concerns, where she is coming from, and how her thoughts and ideas are formed. To learn about the historical experiences that have shaped the filters in her mind. Then, he should reverse the process and share with her just as deeply where he is coming from. Woman was created from man's rib, and she innately desires to be back there as close to his heart as his own rib.. He should share extensively with her about his daily life and actively listen to her share about hers.

How often should a husband and wife communicate deeply to develop the oneness implied in verse 31 and Genesis 2:24?

Someone read verse 33.

What is the command for the husband here? To love (agape) his wife as himself.

What is the command for the wife? To respect her husband.

What does respect mean? Some synonyms are relate to, acknowledge, observe, be considerate, revere. If a man is shown respect, he will often rise up to the degree of respect shown.

What are the various ways we can begin to enact these scriptural imperatives in our marriages? 1. Talk about them. 2. Make commitments to the Lord and each other. 3. Obey the word. 4. Study the word. 5. Pray separately and together about these things. 6. Seek third party spiritual help where needed.

O f what importance are these things if we desire God's blessing on our own lives

and our marriage/home? Basic to life and our job description before the Lord. This relates not only to God's evaluation and blessing of our lives now, but it also relates to the future lives of those around us and our ultimate judgement by God as righteous or unrighteous. Scriptural imperatives are not options before the Lord.

**THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES**  
**of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #11

Last week we discussed the Ephesians 5 passage concerning the husband's role. We continue to look at scriptural passages relating to the husband's role in marriage.

Someone read ECC 9:9.

Let's first discuss "joy," the root word of "enjoy." What words can you think of other than "enjoy" that contain "joy?" Enjoyment, joyful, joyous, overjoyed, rejoice, etc.

Someone read Gal 5:22-23.

What does the word "fruit" mean as it applies to the believer? Fruit is the observable evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. In one sense it is a measure of the presence of the Holy Spirit controlling the life of the believer.

What if there is no fruit evident in the life of a person? The Holy Spirit may not be there.

The second fruit listed in Gal 5:22 is "joy." What does joy mean? It is a spiritual quality deeper and more than happiness. It consists of a quality of assurance and confidence which is rooted in an assured faith in Jesus as Lord.

How important is "joy " to our day by day witness?

How and when might joy manifest itself in the life of a believer?

When is joy the most evident?

Can joy be put on or shifted into gear as a matter of will?

What does "enjoy" mean?

Of what nature is the statement of Ecc 9:9? It is a command, an imperative.

Husbands, in what ways might you change your life to better practice being responsive to the command to "enjoy" life with your wife?

Wives, what ways might you suggest your husband enact to begin "enjoying" life with you?

What is the message from God concerning His expectations about our marriage?

**THE NEIGHBORHOOD BIBLE STUDIES**  
**of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

Marriage/Family Enrichment Study #12

In the last session, we discussed the admonition to the husband to enjoy his wife. Now we turn to specific directions for how a husband should treat his wife.

Someone read 1 Peter 3:7.

What are the admonitions in this scripture? 1. Be considerate. 2. Treat your wife with respect as the weaker partner and as heir of the gracious gift of life.

What is the meaning of the word "considerate" here? To be considerate is to take account of the wife as a person who has her own needs and desires. To treat her as a partner of value and worth.

What are some examples of being considerate?

- a. In physical ways?
- b. In psychological ways?
- c. In spiritual ways?

How would wives most like for their husbands to be considerate?

What do you wives desire your husbands to do in fulfilling this admonition to be considerate to you?

What do husbands usually do when they feel they are being considerate?

What are the differences between how husbands view being considerate and how wives view their being considerate? Why?

Husbands and wives differ greatly in how they view the world. If one is to really meet the other's needs, we must work at looking out of their eyes, feeling their feelings, and thinking their thoughts. We are extremely different creatures as male and female.

What is the implication of the words "as you live with your wives?" [Considering the past weeks of study in this area, it is clear that God intends for a couple to live their lives focused from the couple as a base of existence. To "live" with one's spouse is to maximize life as God intended it. "Living" in this manner involves being creative and growing in this relationship with God and each other throughout our lives. It includes all dimensions of existence: physical, psychological, and spiritual.]

What are the possible meanings of "weaker?" 1. Muscle power. 2. Size. 3. Consequences of metabolism (PMS, etc.). 4. A woman is usually more subject to her emotions, which often has some negative psychological as well as physical consequences.

What are some things a husband might do to provide for the wife's security?

a. In a physical sense? 1. Providing for her physical protection when he is away. 2. Protecting her from danger, etc.

b. In a psychological sense? 1. Meeting her need for time together when she feels weak, depressed, or vulnerable. 2. Communicating to affirm her and to help her feel as if she is a full partner in his life, etc.

c. In a spiritual sense? 1. Studying the Bible with her. 2. Praying with and for her. 3. Arranging for significant spiritual learning experiences for them as a couple, etc.

Define the "gracious gift of life." The spiritual life. The life which is made possible because of God's great provision--Jesus. God's provision that we might be his children, members of His family. To realize God's purpose for us: to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

According to 1 Peter 3:7, what is the consequence of not treating a wife considerately and with respect? Our prayers would be hindered (Ps 66:18). To fail to obey God's Word is to sin--to be unrighteous in His eyes..

Someone read Co1 3:19.

We have discussed the admonition to the husband to love (agape) his wife. What is the meaning of "harsh?" To be unduly critical, unfair. One may be harsh in many ways.

What ways can you think of that someone may be--

a. Psychologically harsh?

b. Physically harsh?

c. Spiritually harsh?

Describe actions that are the opposite of being harsh.

How would you summarize the important elements of this session?