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Understanding Marriage:

Revealing The Fundamental
Secrets of A Triumphant Marriage

UNDERSTANDING MARRIAGE

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The Dynamic of Marriage

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Like, Love and Respect

Seek Wisdom

Possess Humility

Words That Edify

Today I address the importance of establishing boundaries by which our marriage is guided. Yea, parameters by which our relationship is governed.

It was a Monday morning, two weeks ago, that my wife was ready to depart for work when something happened. She said, "Sweetheart, have you seen my keys?" Then she explained that she had an appointment and she had to leave immediately. But **her car key was nowhere to be found.**

I called out to the kids, "All hands on deck, guys. Let us find these keys". **We searched everywhere without success.** Then my wife said to me, "But Sweetheart, let us retrace our steps. You were the last one that used the key". I thought for a moment, then I conceded, "You are right".

I remembered that the day before, Sunday, I had cleaned and checked her car to ensure it was ready for the week. I was at a loss for words. Then I thought, Let me check my car. I dashed to my car, and there the key was, in the cup holder. (I had gone to my car after working on her car).

I came back with the key. **What do you think my wife said or did?** She sighed, took the key from me then said, I must go now. I took her handbag and folders and walked her to her car. **Before long we were throwing kisses at each other again as she drove away.**

She could have beaten, battered, and bruised me with her words at that point. Our entire day could have been spoiled by angry, impatient expressions tailored at teaching me a lifelong lesson. Our marriage could have gone sour for days and even weeks.

But do you know what saved me?

On our wedding day, fifteen (15) years ago, we made a commitment with each other, that **for as long as we live, we would never utter a negative word to each other, not even in the form of a joke so help me God.** And we were serious about it.

Admittedly, especially in the early days, we did not achieve that goal a hundred percent of the time all the time, but we tried. After a while, however, it was like second nature. Setting that parameter, alone, in our marriage is the reason we have a beautiful relationship today, so much so that **every day for us is like a dating experience.**

We were led to establish that boundary in our relationship, because over the years, prior to our marriage, we had learned of the power of words to either destroy or enhance a relationship.

We Learned of Proverbs 16:24:

“Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.”

We also learned of a quote by Ellen G. White. She says:



In your married life seek to elevate one another.

Show the high and elevating principles of your holy faith in your everyday conversations and in the most private walks of life.

Be ever careful and tender of the feelings of one another.

Do not allow a playful, bantering, joking censuring of one another. These things are dangerous. They wound. The wound may be concealed, nevertheless the wound exists, and peace is being sacrificed and happiness endangered. - In heavenly places, 204.

I think you get the idea.

If you are serious about having a vital, triumphant marriage you must establish principles to live by, boundaries to guide you, and commitments to help you.

See other relevant quotes here:

Registered in the books of heaven

Just as you **conduct yourself in your home life**, you are registered in the books of heaven. He who would become a saint in heaven must first become a saint in his own family. If fathers and mothers are true Christians in the family, they will be useful members of the church and be able to conduct affairs in the church and in society after the same manner in which they conduct their family concerns. Parents, let not your religion be simply a profession, but let it become a reality.3 AH 317.3

A profession of faith is valueless

Where there is a **lack of home religion**, a profession of faith is valueless.... Many are deceiving themselves by thinking that the character will be transformed at the coming of Christ, but there will be no conversion of heart at His appearing. Our defects of character must here be repented of, and through the grace of Christ we must overcome them while probation shall

last. This is the place for fitting up for the family above.10 AH 319.2

Home religion affects our children

If religion is to influence society, it must first influence the home circle. **If children were trained to love and fear God at home**, when they go forth into the world, they would be prepared to train their own families for God, and thus the principles of truth would become implanted in society and would exert a telling influence in the world. Religion should not be divorced from home education.7 AH 318.4

Praise and Affirmation

Today I would like to share a simple principle that can potentially revolutionize your marriage.

One morning, while my wife was still asleep, I took the phone and quickly snapped a picture of her. When she awoke I showed it to her. What happened next? Do not think too hard. She was kind.

I said to her. "Even while you are sleeping you are beautiful". She smiled and I think that made her day. **There is something special about showering your spouse with words of affirmation, and expressions of praise.**

But some may say, "I don't find anything to affirm my spouse about, sorry". Well, think a little harder. Did he come home last evening? Then, tell him thanks for coming home.

Did she prepare food for the kids yesterday? Then, don't miss that. If she didn't assume that nurturing role, you would have to do it yourself or pay someone to do it for you, perhaps. So, look her in the eye and gently **meet**

her primal need to feel important: "Thanks for feeding the kids". That simple. Yet the benefits may be transformational for your marriage.

We must change our mindset and change our marriage. We must train our tongue to utter words of praise and transform our home into a circus of celebration. After all, we are already married. Let us make living not just bearable, but exhilarating.

A spouse who is well-intentioned may say: "But I was not trained this way. I have so much dealing with. Trauma from my past coupled with the pain of living with a spouse who is insensitive and unkind, thus adding fire to fury."

In these circumstances, I understand that it's difficult to stay positive. But may I share with you that you still possess the capability to "win" your unconscionable spouse (See 1 Peter 3:1). The biblical option is that you make the effort to **outdo evil with good.**

Let them see a living demonstration of the superior nature of your elevated and sanctified life. This will be a profound rebuke and a riveting message that they cannot ignore. It is in these circumstances that many are led to inquire about the God that you serve.

Do you know why your words of praise are so powerful?

They communicate to your spouse that they are important.

These words, reaching the central nervous system, **trigger the secretion of the "feel good" hormone, Dopamine.** They experience pleasure and a sense of well-being.

They now look upon you as the source of their joy and they desire to relive these moments of affirmation and validation. Immediately you become the attractive and irresistible spouse and they desire to be nowhere else, than the place where their emotions are massaged, and that is in your presence.

To praise your spouse is a biblical principle and a necessary requirement of the Christian marriage: The virtuous woman of

Proverbs 31, has a husband and children that praise her: "Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her" (Proverbs 31:28).

The man finds affirmation when she celebrates him as her hero, when she reveals to him that she is his most ardent fan. The bible reminds us that "Sarah calls him lord" (1 Peter 3:6). Sometimes, in my seminars, I like to ask the ladies. "When was the last time you looked upon your husband and said, My lord?"

You must start to create a culture of appreciation in your home. Cease focusing on the minor flaws and mishaps of your spouse, and instead, make a big thing of their small accomplishments.

Scan the environment to catch your spouse doing good. By identifying the good they do, and celebrating them for it, you inspire their better nature, thus bringing out the best in them.

Scriptural references:

1 Peter 3:1 (English Standard Version) Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives

Proverbs 31:28 Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her.

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

Discussing Expectation

Expectation is living in anticipation that some things will happen.

Every spouse enters marriage with expectations.

What do you do if those expectations are not fulfilled?

Unmet expectations lead to frustrations and disappointments.
People become upset, angry, and start resenting their spouse.

If people, however, learn how to communicate their expectations, they would lower their frustrations in the marriage

How did you develop your expectations for marriage?

From your upbringing; (Yes, your family of origin), your friends, the media, the books you read and other interests.

Here are a few questions to discuss with your partner to understand their mindset and to communicate expectations for marriage.

- What does the word love mean to you?
- How do you want your spouse to express their affection for you?
- What is your definition of happiness?

Spirituality and worship.

- Discuss your core beliefs and values?
- Are any of these values and beliefs negotiable?
- What happens if one of us changes our spiritual beliefs?

Fun and recreation?

- What is fun for you?
- What recreational interests do you have?
- How do you expect your partner to respond with regards to these interests?
- To participate or share in your interests or to disengage?
- Will disengagement create a problem?
- How about posting on social media?
- How much of your family life or interest will you display publicly?

Household expectations

- How will you divide up the household duties?
- What role do you play in the marriage?
- What is your spouse's role in marriage?

Relational expectations

- How can I show you that I love you?
- What is something I do now, or could do in the future that would make you not trust me?
- Is a great career more important than our marriage and family?
- What kind of rules do you want to establish for our marriage?

Retirement

- What will retirement look like for you?
- Where do you want to live and what will you do?
- (Will your partner want the same thing?)

Money

- Are you comfortable putting all our money together and sharing an account?
- Are you okay with having both our names on all holdings, investments, and bank accounts?
- Are you okay with staying in debt or do you want to live debt free?
- Who will be the minister of finance in your home?

In-laws.

- What influence, if any, do you believe our families should have on our marriage?
- or how involved will your family be in our lives?
- Will you approve financial assistance for my relatives?
- Will you assist or support them when needed?

Conflict resolution.

- Let us talk about your conflict resolution skills:
- How open will you be in discussing your disagreements and disappointments?
- How will you react or respond when hurt by your partner?
- Will you become explosive or withdraw in silence? Will you stonewall or discuss the issues?
- How did your family resolve conflict when you were growing up?
- Was that a good method or not?
- What would you change about the way they resolve conflicts to apply to our marriage?

Communication

- Are you capable of honestly expressing your feelings without attacking your partner's character?
- Are you able to listen without interrupting whenever your partner is talking?
- Do you become impatient easily when asked to repeat or clarify your thoughts?
- Do you yell or swear or engage in vulgarity when communicating?
- Do you habitually engage in any of these destructive patterns of behavior?
- Criticism, stonewalling, defensiveness, and contempt.
- (See Divorce prevention).
- What does it mean to have honest conversation?

Listen.

- Do you have good listening skills?
- How important is listening to what your partner has to say?
- Will you listen to reply, with an agenda or to learn and understand?

Parenting.

- What parenting skills will you implement in our family?
- Laissez faire, authoritarian or authoritative?
- Will you be the indulgent parent, the authoritarian or one who combines firmness with gentleness?

Time with the family.

- How important is allotting quality time to spend with family.
- What plans will you put in place to balance work time and family time?
- Will your career be more important than family?

Commitment.

- The wedding vows states: “Forsaking all others, keep yourself only unto her/him, as long as you both shall live”
- What does this mean for you? How can you convince me that you will be able to embrace this principle?
- How do you define emotional and physical infidelity?
- Should we end the relationship if you fail here?

Divorce prevention.

- These are considered the 4 major predictors of divorce:
- Criticism, stonewalling, defensiveness, and contempt.
- What do you know about these?
- How often do you exhibit these practices?
- How do you rate your ability to avoid these destructive habits?

Marriage maintenance

- Will you go to marriage counseling if I ask you to?

Career

- Do you expect to be a career woman, or you intend to stay home with the kids?

For questions about sex, See the module on sex

Headship

In-Laws

Communication

If married couples are serious about creating and maintaining friendship and intimacy, they must develop proper communication skills.

After 27 years helping couples around the world, I have found no habit or practice more effective to destroy emotional connectivity and romance in a relationship than wrong communication patterns

The converse is also true. Learn to communicate effectively and you immediately discover the secret to fun, joy, and unique marital bliss.

Why we communicate

Communication is to a relationship what blood is to the body. It keeps the body alive.

We communicate:

1. To connect emotionally
2. Smooth out issues and reduce misunderstanding
3. To avoid making assumption
4. To unburden our heart.
5. To improve our understanding of our spouse.

Some say: “My spouse does not understand me, because they do not listen to me”.

6. To sort our thoughts, to clarify our deliberations

Some tips to remember regarding communication:

- Do not just engage in errand talk. Instead talk about feelings, beliefs, and values.
- Engage in Restorative conversation: Do not blame.
- Attack problem, not people.
- Do not be a “disaster”, but a “master of relationships”. Learn proper Communication skills
- Observe the acronym: **HOT**.

Honesty: Come clean. Do not drip the truth.

Openness: Have family talk. “Speak what is on your mind, what’s bothering you without being judged. This is a non-judgmental zone.

Transparency: Protect trust. Never give your partner a reason to distrust you.

- Be a good listener.
- Do not raise your voice. Improve your argument.

Assignment: Start a family talk conference in your home weekly, say at 8:00 on Thursday. The family meets weekly, without exception and discuss matters of interest and concern. The rule is. “You can share what’s on your mind, what’s bothering you without being judged or chided for it”.

No Hurtful Words

Ephesians 4:29

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers”.

Origin:

In the Greek text, the word “corrupt” is the *sapros*, a word that depicts something that is putrid or rotten

The word “communication” is the Greek word *logos*, which simply means words. But when it is used in conjunction with the word “corrupt,” the Greek phrase describes words or forms of communication that are putrid or disgusting to the recipient.

The word “edifying” is the Greek word *oikodomeo* and, as used here, means to build others up. These words never result in tearing someone down, but rather cause others to be left in an improved state after we are done talking to or about them

Today I call your attention to this biblical reference.

Many observe the precepts of the decalogue with absolute earnestness and vigilance, fearing to trample upon its sacred borders, but this text, Ephesians 4:29 is not considered significant after all.

“It is quite fine, and of no consequence if I hurl words at my spouse that wound their innermost soul, and drive them to tears, but to kill or commit adultery I will not, for those are bigger sins that invite God’s wrath”.

Isn’t this the manner of reasoning of some who are considered guardians of the Faith?

You see, friends, In God’s economy, this sin of nonchalantly hurting each other with bitter and insensitive words are not of less magnitude than those committed by the drunkard or prostitute who have not yet seen the Light.

The fact is, everything about corrupt communication has a putrefying effect on others. Proverbs 16:24 reminds us that “pleasant words are...health to the bones”. The converse is also true. Unpleasant words are unhealthy to the bones. They dry up and destroy the bones.

Think for a moment about the child in middle school who is considered a good piano player by his mom, but the peers taunt him that he always makes a mess at playing the piano. Forty years later, he confesses that he never tried at mastering the piano since the days of middle school, because of the “self-fulfilling prophecy” of his friends.

Think about the spouse whose career has been crippled, because their partner always reminded them that they can never be proficient at anything.

I have spoken to people in their sixties, homeless and disenchanting with life, who reported that they never rebound from the spell of demeaning and disparaging words hurled at them in childhood, by parents who were oblivious of the destructive power of negative utterances.

May the mental and psychological wound inflicted upon a spouse due to a blatant disregard of this divine injunction jolt us to an understanding of the enormity of this sin. It is no light matter to belittle, disparage and dehumanize another with our words.

It is an index of the condition of its source, the heart, and God would have us repent with bitter tears, resolving that by His grace, there will not be a repeat performance.

To hold grudge and harbor hate, to verbally assassinate another with our thoughtless and ill-advised speech is a sin from which we should pray earnestly to escape.

Listen to this poignant statement from the pen of inspiration:

"God does not regard all sins as of equal magnitude; there are degrees of guilt in His estimation, as well as in that of man; but however trifling this or

that wrong act may seem in the eyes of men, no sin is small in the sight of God.

Man's judgment is partial, imperfect; but God estimates all things as they really are. The drunkard is despised and is told that his sin will exclude him from heaven; while pride, selfishness, and covetousness too often go unrebuked.

But these are sins that are especially offensive to God; for they are contrary to the benevolence of His character, to that unselfish love which is the very atmosphere of the unfallen universe."

Steps to Christ, 30.

Instead of spreading communication to vilify or tear down, may the divine spirit inspire us to utter words that edify, words that cause others to be left in an improved state after we are done talking to or about them.

Change your marriage by changing your communication pattern.

About 80 percent of the communication in many homes is negative. Some are living every day, under the relentless burden of hoping for the day when they will be able to enjoy meaningful communication with their spouse; to be heard and understood by them; to unburden their heart by expressing their deep hurt, disappointment, or disagreement. How they feel muzzled.

Others are being perpetually wounded by abusive words and expression, and their hope for a life of romance or emotional connectivity is only a distant dream.

Let us confront the issue squarely.

Is your communication style ruining your marriage?

Are you so impatient that the humblest of mortal can find no favor in your presence? They attempt to communicate with you, but you rile and rave when their opinion runs contrary to yours. You have not yet learned how to disagree without being disagreeable.

Or, maybe you are so short-fused that one mistake or mishap by your spouse invites from your lips the most venomous and vilifying commentary that the relationship is plunged in bitterness and dysfunctionality for days and weeks.

Some say, "I cannot talk to my spouse. They will not listen.

Do you really expect them to listen and heed your advice when your communication centers strictly on denigrating, belittling, and berating them?

You can reverse this destructive pattern of communication that is crippling the relationship and hemorrhaging the last vestige of marital bliss from your marriage.

Change your mindset, and you can change your life.

Change your communication pattern, and you can change your marriage.

Remember always that your spouse typically responds negatively or

positively based on how they are treated.

They have a sensitive heart. They are emotional beings. They can be broken or mended based on the nature of your words.

This is the law of nature and the law of life.

Whatever we sow, that we shall also reap. (See Galatians 6:7)

If we sow tomatoes, we cannot reap carrot.

If we want to create a relationship of friendship and deep emotional connectivity with our spouse, we must employ the method that will make that result possible. We do not get them to do better by highlighting their flaws and mishaps. No, we get them to do better by telling them how well they are doing.

We celebrate our spouse if we want them to manifest excellence

We praise them if we want them to radiate with beauty

We validate them if we want them to do better

We affirm them if we want them persevere in well-doing

This is God's will for your marriage.

In Psalms 128: 3, we are admonished to create in our home the kind of atmosphere where our spouse can become, not a withering, but a "fruitful vine"

The Scripture is replete with instructions and admonitions regarding the creation of a happy home through words and behaviors that edify and enhance.

"Cherish". Deut. 24:5

"Respect" Ephesians 5:33

"Praise" Proverbs 31: 28

"Honor". 1 Peter 3: 7

Understandably, we hurt each other because of the sinful nature which we

all inherit from being "born in sin and shapen in iniquity"(<https://biblehub.com/psalms/51-5.htm>). We possess a sinful nature that propels us to manifest hurtful words and demeaning behavior.

But, it is possible and urgent that we change that.

My wife and I have found victory over this compelling urge to destroy each other by bowing low before the Infinite God and pleading to Him for help, entreating Him to "remove our stony heart and replacing it with a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26).

God heard our feeble cry and responded miraculously. We now live to praise, adore, and celebrate each other. We still have our disagreements and misunderstandings, for this sinful nature exists within us and always will until that great day when our "mortal body shall put on immortality and our corruption, incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15:53)

God grants us the victory each day that we commit our lives to him afresh. We learned the importance of "dying daily" (1 Corinthians 15:31) so we can have daily victories.

I invite you to fill this prescription and swallow this self-same capsule. Bow your head in silence before the inspecting eye of the Living God. Ask Him earnestly to remove from your soul the roots and fibers of sin, and breathe therein His sweet, majestic, and transformational Holy Spirit.

If you embark on this venture genuinely, He will hear from heaven, fill you with His Joyous Spirit and Heal your soul. Then, because of this supernatural encounter, your heart will beat with a divine pulse, and your marriage will never be the same again.

You will look upon your spouse through new lenses, as an emotional being to be loved and cherished. Subsequently, you will enjoy a marital bliss and an elevated existence to which mortals dream to aspire.

Listening

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LISTENING

I was about 21 when I learned this important lesson. I will never forget it. From then I began to understand the difference between merely HEARING, and actively LISTENING.

As a small boy I was interested in sales, so I got a job at a life insurance company, Mutual Life. My manager, in one of our training sessions, taught us the psychology of listening.

He reminded us that as we prospect for new clients, we would meet people who have had a bad experience with insurance. Some might even become very expressive based on the disappointment or hurt experienced. **He taught us how to turn a "no" into a "yes".**

He explained that whenever people are venting their disappointment or frustration, the emotion is so strong that it creates a blockage that is impenetrable. At that point, nothing that you say will resonate with them. Your effort to try to de-escalate them by **talking** will only re-ignite a flaming heart.

Your only alternative to have that emotional blockage cleared or removed is to **allow them to talk**. In fact, you not only allow them to talk, but **you encourage them to talk**. By expressing themselves, they release that pent-up emotion, hence creating a vacuum in their heart.

With that vacuum created, they now possess the capacity to receive what you have to say. It is then, and only then you have the right to speak. This is always true when dealing with humans. **I like to tell the men in my audience that whenever their wife is upset and ready to talk, they must be ready to listen, and if they should interrupt her it must be with the words, "Tell me more".**

Herein lies the psychology of listening.

Proverbs 18:13

“He who answers before listening— that is his folly and his shame.”



Scriptural references:

(James 1:19- “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath” (KJV).

Failure to listen before we speak is a shame and disgrace:

Proverbs 18:13 "He that answers a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him" (KJV) Proverbs 18:13 —

To answer before listening is foolish and shameful. (New International Reader’s Version) Proverbs 18:13 —The one who gives an answer before he listens this is foolishness and disgrace for him. (The Holman Christian Standard Bible -HCSB)

How to listen

“If I’m to learn anything today, I must listen more than I speak”.

Make a commitment to listen and be responsive.

Be Present: Physically and Psychology

Give them your undivided attention.

Have a posture of involvement- Face them when talking to them

Use appropriate eye contact

Do not fake understanding

Use active listening skills

Be an active listener, not a passive listener. Be responsive.

Paraphrasing, reflecting feelings, Reflecting meaning.

Lean forward. Use encouragers; ok, yes, etc.

Observe Their bid to connect

They will not cease talking until they feel heard by you.

After they have been heard, they will cease talking. Then it will be your time to talk.

Stop multitasking.

With this divided attention, they will not feel heard by you. So, cease what you are doing, and give your partner undivided attention.

If you are not able to commit yourself to listen to what your spouse has to say, then arrange a more convenient season to listen. Say:” I want to give you 100% of my attention, but I am not able to at this moment. Can we set a time to talk about this later when I will be able to do justice?

Listen without an agenda. Stop thinking of what you are going to say.

Listen, not to reply, but to understand. Do not plot what you are going to say back.

Listen to learn, to discover something about your partner, to understand them. If you do not understand, say: I did not understand what you just said. could you please help me understand? It shows that you are really interested in what they have to say.

You can de-escalate an issue through proper listening.

There is a wonderful power in silence.

When impatient words are spoken to you, do not retaliate.

Words spoken in reply to one who is angry usually act as a whip, lashing the temper into greater fury. But anger met by silence quickly dies away.

Let the Christian bridle his tongue, firmly resolving not to speak harsh, impatient words. With the tongue bridled, he may be victorious in every trial of patience through which he is called to pass.

RC 293.2

Consider these bible references:

Proverbs 15:1

King James Version

15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

Proverbs 15:1 — “A soft word turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Proverbs 26:20 New King James Version. “Where *there is* no wood, the fire goes out; And where *there is* no [a]talebearer, strife ceases”.

Increase your worth through communication

Warren Buffet has this to say about listening:

Building up your active listening skills is crucial for solving problems, building trust, and winning the hearts and minds of people.

Here is a tip: Put down your smart phone, eliminate your distractions in the moment, and give the speaker your full attention.

What you are communicating nonverbally is “I am interested in what you have to say.” And whatever you do, do not interrupt. This is especially true for a person who is upset and needs your undivided attention.

Allow for ventilation to occur. Park your thoughts and your need for a rebuttal in the moment. Your time will come to reflect what you heard or state your point.

– Warren Buffet

The Man's Need to Be Heard and Understood

What do you desire most from your wife? The question was asked. **"I wish she would take the time to understand me"**, was the answer of a frustrated husband.

This is the silent plea of many a man. In fact, if his wife does not seek to understand him, by improving her ability to listen, the demise of the marriage ensues.

Why does she find it so difficult to listen?

You see, women are deeply emotional, and she improves every opportunity to give vent to the deep emotion of her soul.

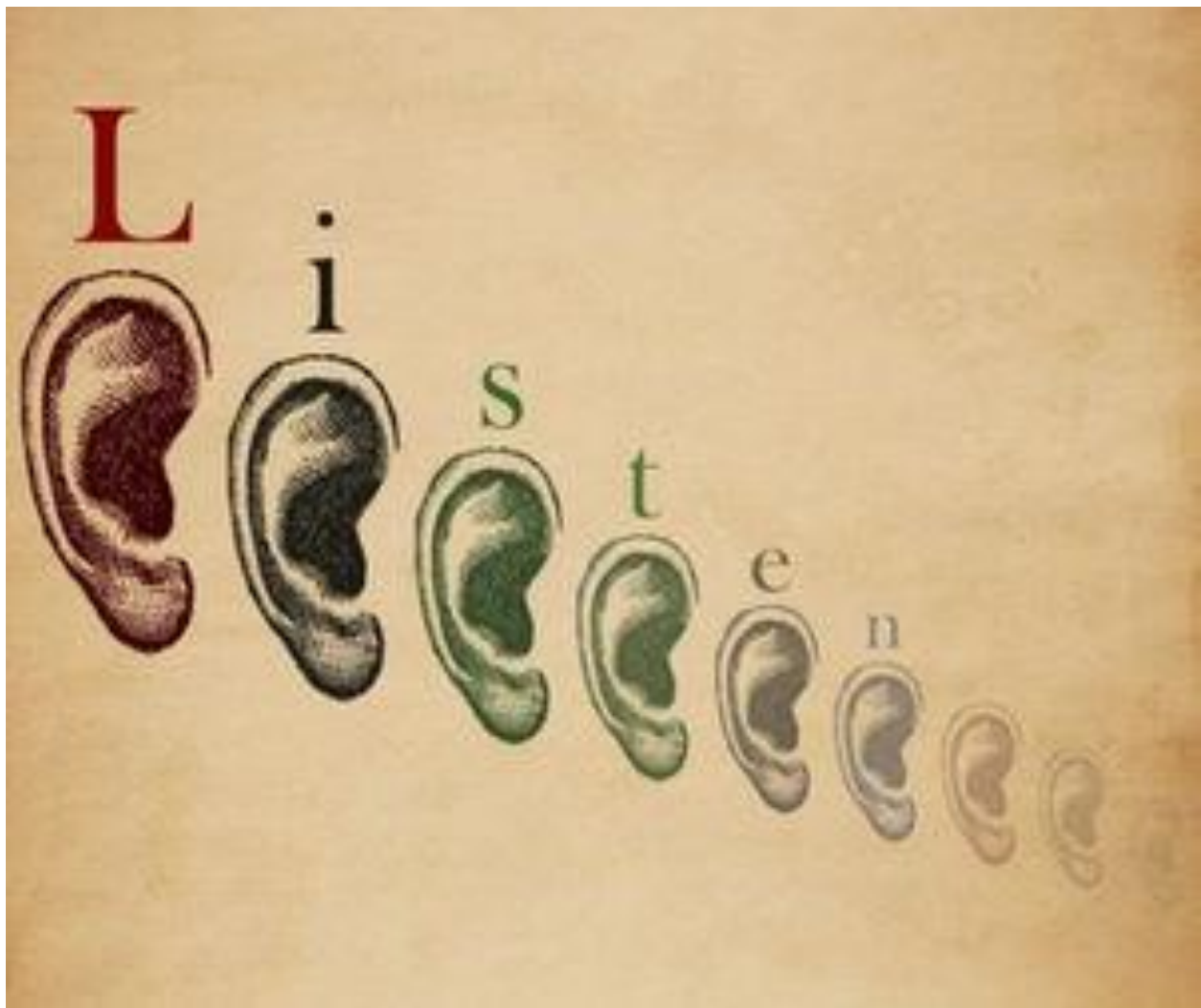
If she is not deliberate about developing this fine art, she will hijack every conversation, and strangles every effort of her husband to connect with her.

He shares a sentiment that runs contrary to her viewpoint, and she immediately exhales. He tries to share with her his business and family plans, and she silences him.

He retracts from the conversation with a resolve that he will be muzzled around her,
and seeks validation for his skills and breakthroughs from friends and associates.

It is time we understood that **failure to listen to our spouse is a great injury to our marriage.**

Our spouse is left feeling unimportant, disrespected, and suffocated.
And they wrestle to remain true to the relationship.



We can change that mode of operation by giving heed to divine counsel:
God reminds us the we should defy the natural urge to be always talking,
by training our ears to listen more than we talk.

(James 1:19- "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, **let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath**" (KJV).

As though this principle needs to be chiseled in our mind,
God ventures to use even stronger language.
He says that failure to listen before we speak is a shame and disgrace:
Proverbs 18:13 "**He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him**" (KJV

Proverbs 18:13 —To answer before listening is foolish and shameful. (New International Reader's Version)

Proverbs 18:13 —The one who gives an answer before he listens this is foolishness and disgrace for him. (The Holman Christian Standard Bible - HCSB)

Why does he need to be heard?

Because he must talk.

He talks to connect with her, for God made him a social being.

God reminds us that "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Genesis 2:18 NIV).

He talks for he seeks validation for his special skills and exceptional breakthroughs.

He talks for he is failing, and needs encouragement

He talks for he is unsure of the validity of his plans and needs to sort his thoughts.

He talks for he feels distant from her and wants to bolster the emotional connectivity.

He talks for he feels stressed and care-worn and just wants to decompress.

He talks and talks, not begging for advice, but to administer therapy to his burdened soul.

How Do You Listen? (recap)

You listen, not to reply, but to understand him.
You listen, not with an agenda, but to learn his perspective.
You listen, not to condemn or judge, but to help him.
You understand that listening is not so much about the speaker, but the receiver.
Listening is not about you, but about him.



You listen, for your Master before you left you an example, that you should do as he has done.

In His discourse with Nicodemus, Jesus could have engaged him in a theological rambling that had no purpose. But instead, Jesus looked beyond his platitudinous speech to understand his deep motive and his need.

Jesus listened patiently, then shot straight to the root of his problem and, scratched where it itched. He looked beyond what was merely being said to what was meant.

Jesus then applied the ultimate liniment, "You must be born again" (John 3:1-4).

Remember, the true meaning is normally behind the rhetoric

Conflict Resolution

How to resolve conflict and restore relationships

Conflict resolution skills: One of the most important life skills for happiness in this life. If we are to live and interact successfully with people, learning how to resolve conflicts is crucial.

In Marriage, your ability to resolve conflicts will determine whether you will be able to maintain the relationship.

Three things happen when we fail to resolve conflicts:

We become Distant. Living emotional distant from the person you should be close to. Demanding and Defensive

Two kinds of people in a relationship. You are either a Disaster or a Master of relationships.

Unresolved conflicts damage our lives:

1. Blocks my relationship with God (1 John 4: 20). We cannot love God while hating people. We cannot be right with God and wrong with people.
2. Blocks our prayers (1 Peter 3: 7).
3. Blocks our happiness. We reap what we sow (James 3: 18). Sowing & Reaping. We normally get back more than we sow. If we sow gossip, we reap gossip. If we sow anger in our children and spouse, we get anger back and we normally get back more than we Plant. Example, corn.

A general principle to remember when resolving conflicts

Take a solution focused approach

Have Restorative conversation

Focus on healing

Ask: Can I repair it when you get upset? Repair as you go

Love is like a tender plant. Easily damaged if not treated with TLC.

Some are in the Ego Trap. They want to vilify everyone they meet. Their ego will not let them repair the relationship.

They do not repair it because of the lack of knowledge and perspective to do so differently. They need training on relationship improvement.

1. Make The First Move

Reconciliation in our relationship is more important than worship. "Leave your gift". Reconciliation is priority.

Matthew 5: 23, 24 "Leave thy gift, first be reconciled to..."

Matt.5: 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers." (Not avoiding or appeasing)

The only way to resolve a conflict is to face it, to go through it.

Conflicts are never resolved accidentally. They do not resolve themselves.

Some are fearful. Fear can keep you from resolving conflicts

Some demonstrate fear because of the possible response from their partner.

2. Take responsibility for at least a part of the problem.

Exercise humility. 95 percent of conflicts can be resolved when we possess humility.

Begin with: "What is my fault?"

Put away pride. Get out of the ego trap.

James 4:1

Proverbs 13: 10

3. Listen to their hurt and perspective

Be considerate of the doubts and fears of others.

James 1:19 "Quick to hear, slow to speak".

Know what hurt them that made them hurt you.

Start with their need, hurt and their interest.

Do you want to be a good salesman? Focus on their interest, not yours.

Listen to the emotion behind the words.

The true meaning is normally behind the rhetoric.

Proverbs 18: 13 "Get the full story".

Be ready to learn. Be teachable

Always listen before speaking. That is the key to resolving conflicts. You show you love them by listening to them.

Seek more to understand than to be understood.

4. **Speak the truth tactfully**

Do everything to preserve love. "What can separate us from the love of God? The Apostle Paul asked.

Two imperfect people cannot make a perfect marriage, so set some ground rules.

You are never persuasive when you are abrasive.

Some say, "I'm going to speak it like it is". No. You speak it in love.

You never get your point across by being cross.

Proverbs 12: 18 "Don't be reckless. Reckless words pierce like a sword".

Foolish words hurt. Wise words heal.

If you say it offensively, it will be received defensively.

Ephesians 4:29 (Not harmful words, but helpful words".

5. **Attack problem, not people.**

Never use the "You" statements. Instead, use the "I" statements.

Express how you feel. No one can deny how you feel.

Matthew 12: 37. "For by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned."

Truth without Love is resisted

Truth with Love is received

6. **Be ready to forgive and apologize**

Apology is so important in a relationship that, typically a ruptured relationship cannot be repaired except through genuine apology.

On the other hand, apology has the power to melt away resentment, bitterness and grudge and pave the way for restoration and reconciliation.

Apology is an acknowledgement that you are not perfect. The vulnerability created is a necessary step towards relinquishing the old mistakes and replacing them with a new perspective. Simply put, it is an opportunity for us to grow.

There is power in apology to turn your marriage around. You cannot change your partner, but you can influence them towards reconciliation by your sincere apology.

Family Finance

Mastering the art of money management in marriage

I hereby highlight some key topics regarding money that you should discuss with your spouse:

When mutual consent is required.

How much may I spend without your knowledge or approval?

Who should be minister of finance?

Who should be the primary custodian of the funds?

How should I regard a gift?

Should I regard a monetary gift as my money or our money?

When the wife earns more.

Should the husband feel a sense of inferiority because he is not the primary breadwinner?

Should he feel inferior to her.

Should she assume a position of superiority and lord it over him?

The proper posture that both should assume is, "Whatever we earn, we earn on behalf of the family. We are building a life together". Full stop!

You must talk about death and the inheritance (Insurance and Trust)

Should you make a will?

Should you have life insurance in the event of early death of a key family member? How would the other family members sustain life after death?

Names on bank account

Should you split the bills?

Should you have a common pool of funds from which you pay the bills?

Should you support the Step-kids and In-laws and to what extent?

Should you be concerned about leaving an economic base for the children? Should you plan for their education or skill training?

What You should teach your children about money

Should you make a budget?

Should you return a faithful tithe and offering, and should this be factored in the budget?

His Needs

A wife makes herself irresistible to her husband by learning to meet his five basic needs.

She does not chide him for what he is not, but celebrate him for what he is.

The single man is asking. Can she meet my basic needs? What are my basic needs by the way?

Find out here:

The Six Basic Needs of the man

1. His need for Respect

Ephesians 5:22, 23, 33

He needs her to be proud of him. He needs her to be his most ardent fan.

He needs her to treat him as her hero.

A man's ego is the most fragile thing in the universe

Her tongue- most effective in disrespecting him.

Respect him with the children

How you live will determine how the children live as it relates to offering respect for him

Respect his position. You disrespect him by disregarding his authority in the home

2. His need for affirmation

Admiration is the energy that propels him along.

It is sweet people that create a sweet marriage

She speaks to the king in her man.

Identify the good in him and celebrate him for it.

Appreciate him for what he is.

Do not chide him for what he is not. Instead, celebrate him for what he is. Her encouragement enables him to become more confident and achieve more

3. Domestic support

Home support.

He needs peace and quiet/ tranquility.

She creates a home that offers peace and quiet.

He needs a refuge.

Not a storm in the harbor of life, but a harbor in the storm of life.

Home for him, is rest and rejuvenation.

1 Peter 3: 1-6

The three Bs of a man: Bed, Body & Back

4. Recreational companionship

He wants a recreational companion.

He complains: Why don't you do this with me anymore?

The need to have fun with his partner is a great need of a man

Think of his recreational habits as a boy

5. Intimacy/ Sexual fulfillment

Proverbs 5:15 - 19

Proverbs 4 :9

Hebrews 13:4

This need is strong and must be satisfied, else sets the stage for an affair

Avoid sexual rejection/ loneliness.

Why do you take your car to the gas station? Do you need gas?

No. The car needs gas. You give the car what it needs.

6. An attractive spouse: PIES

The Bible reminds us: "If a man looks at a woman."

His need for her attractiveness.

She is possessed of inner and outer beauty. She dresses in a way that is attractive and tasteful to him. He is pleased with, and proud of her. He admires the soft and feminine side of her.

Ladies. You are not persuasive or attractive when you are abrasive

The acronym: PIES

P Physical attractiveness. However, don't over accentuate the external, the outer shell

I Intellectual attractiveness. Be committed to personal growth and development.

E Emotional attractiveness. Most important for the relationship EQ

S Spiritual attractiveness. Your beliefs and values.

All the things to understand about a man

He needs a good listener

You must be obvious because men do not like hints

He wants a woman with a positive attitude

Physical attractiveness.

He wants transparency.

He wants a willingness to listen

Respect him. If not, he finds it difficult to love you.

Loyalty and support

Your feminine energy

Identify the best in him, even when he cannot see it.

Speak to the king in your man

Bible references

Proverbs 9:13 Clamorous or simple woman

Proverbs 19:13 Contentions of a wife

Proverbs 21:9,19; 25:24 Corner of the house top wilderness

Song of Solomon 4:9 to 5:1

Song of Solomon 1:8-10

1 Peter 3:1-5

Ephesians 5:22,23,33

Song of Solomon 8:1,2,6.

1 Corinthians 7:1-5

Hebrews 13:4

Proverbs 9:13; 19:13; 21:9

Proverbs 25:24

Happiness is the core in relationships

Even if things are tough, if happiness exists, both parties can survive anything in a relationship.

Meeting needs

Proverbs 31:28 **Praises her**

1 Peter 3:1-6 Calls him Lord

Ephesians 5:33 **Respect him**

Philippines 4:8 Whatsoever things are lovely

Mark 10:45 **Jesus came to serve/ to meet Needs**

Ladies. Your femininity is your super-power.

"The unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves"
(1 Peter 3:4, 5 NIV).

1. A masculine man desires a feminine woman.

Possessing this kind of woman makes a man feels respected and validated. He feels he can assert his manly role to serve and cherish the woman of his dream.

2. Allow him to lead.

"I don't need a man. I can do it myself!" This is a sure way to prevent a man from serving and connecting with you.

3. Be nurturing and caring.

What about a man's mother that makes her so endearing to him?

Her nurturing and caring spirit.

The wise woman would do well to adapt this feminine trait.

4. Self-care.

Care for yourself physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually.

5. Don't dictate. Persuade

"It is my way or the highway!". This attitude repels a man

6. A good listener.

Listen, not to reply or judge him, but to understand his perspective.



7. A gentle spirit, as opposed to being coarse and boisterous.

8. Positivity. You do not strangle his progress or retard his growth with negative words. Instead, you see possibility amid hopelessness. You believe in him even when he does not believe in himself. You speak to the king in your man. (See Proverbs 16:24)

Her Needs

Sex



Asking Your partner these questions will help you to better understand their expectation regarding sex.

Mastering the science of Human Sexuality

- **How would you respond if I told you that sex is very uncomfortable, even painful for me?**
- **Please share your understanding of the real purpose of sex.**

- **Considering that men and women are wired differently, what do you know about my perspective of sex?**
- **Or. Why do women view sex differently than men?**
- **Is sex more about your enjoyment or the other person's satisfaction. Explain why?**
- **It is said that the man is a gas stove and the woman a hot plate. What does that mean?**
- **Is sex only physical for you? Is it also psychological? Explain**
- **What would you do to initiate a resolution of sexual rejection in the bedroom?**
- **If your partner is too tired or stressed to perform sexually, how would you respond?**
- **Is sex important to you? How would you attempt to enhance your sex life?**
- **Do you think we should openly and candidly discuss our sex life?**
- **If your partner told you they are not ready or in the mood, how would you respond?**
- **If I were ever to lose interest in sex, would you dissolve the relationship? Would you divorce me?**
- **Which is more important to you? Sex or non-sexual affection?**
- **How many children do you want to have?**
- **Sex is not profane. It is sacred. What does this mean to you?**
- **What is your view of sexual betrayal (Infidelity)?**

- **Why do you think you are capable of being loyal to one partner for life?**

- **What are your moral boundaries with regards to sex?**
- **Will you respect my moral boundaries?**

- (Other questions about sex)
- What are the minimum and maximum number of times you want to have sex in a week?
- What gets you in the mood to make love?
- What turns you off?
- Where do you crave to be touched before, during and after sex?

Helpful Tips about Sex

Women: You know the real secret to
a man's heart?

It is not his tummy, but 6 inches
away from it.

Remember: A great marriage is the Union of
Two Servants in Love.

YOU MUST SERVE EACH OTHER

**Repeated exposure to pornography will
result in a diminished man-
unable to perform**

What is the number one secret to great sex?

Exclusivity.

"My lover is mine and I am his"-

Not porn, masturbation, or some other fantasy.

These things will only wreck your appetite for
the real thing.

**It is a turn-off for a woman that the man is
thinking about another while trying to
engage with her.**

The Triumphant Marriage

Fixing Marital Issues

[Avoid Doing Marriage by Default](#)

Do you know what a pitfall is? "A pit flimsily covered or camouflaged and used to capture and hold animals or men. A hidden or not easily recognized danger or difficulty" (Merriam-Webster).

I almost got tricked into the "pit" of doing marriage by default. When you have not learnt something new, a new method of operation, you revert to what's already stored in your mind. So, you operate by default.

When I was a young boy, I observed the way some men did marriage. In the evenings, for example, the men would shower after a hard day's work, get dressed, apply cologne, then march to the town square to play domino until midnight. They leave their wife and kids at home languishing for their presence. **Married, yet acting single.**

In my young, untutored mind, I imagined this to be the standard by which real manhood is judged, and the norm by which marriage is practiced.

An occasional evening with the boys is in order but depriving your family of quantity and quality time every day and night is devastating to a marriage.

Doing marriage by default: *The married man who roams the street at night, getting home at 4:00 AM the next day. *The girl that yells at her husband because that's how Mommy did it. *The man who cheats because that is how the friends celebrate their youthful prowess. And they clap themselves when the guys meet up. *The wife who is domineering because she was trained by the media. The list continues.

I breathe a sigh of relief. I bow my head in gratitude.

God did not institute marriage, then leave us to flounder in the quicksand of ignorance.

He saves us from the pitfall of doing marriage by default, when we inherited a flawed perspective of marriage from the media, friends and in most cases, our upbringing.

He gave us the ultimate marriage manual. Let us unearth the secret to marital success that transcends any cultivated tendency or man-made proposition:

How to treat your wife. *Lead her into the presence of God, as Abraham did. *Cheer her up: "shall cheer up his wife" (Deuteronomy 24:5). *Cherish her, as your own body *Honor her, as the weaker vessel *Sacrifice for her good as Christ, the church.

How to treat your husband. *Respect him (Reverence his position) *Affirm him, as Sarah did (Praise, encourage and validate him) *Help him. God made you his helper *Love him with your gentle and tender spirit, as a daughter of Abraham's seed.

How to treat the kids *Provide for them, else you are worse than an infidel. *Bring them up in the fear of God for they cannot bring up themselves. *Teach them about life and they will not depart from it. *Converse and play with them (It's called bonding). *Give them a godly example, as Moses commanded the people.

Traits you must possess. *Humility. God can replace the stony heart with one of flesh *Be ready to apologize. God leads to repentance *Be ready to forgive. Be reconciled to your spouse. *The spirit of a servant: Serve your spouse/ Outdo each other in showing honor

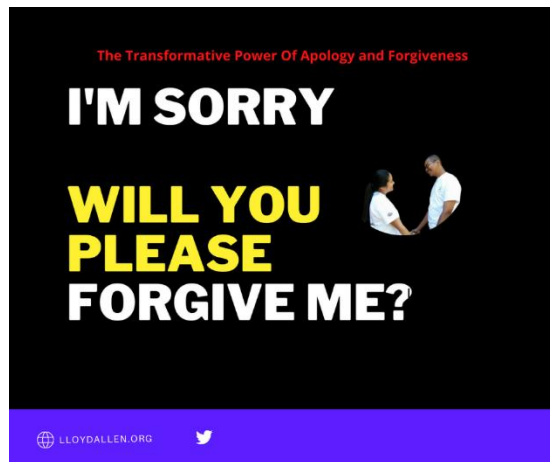
Cultivated Tendencies

[Win My Spouse Back](#)

Re-igniting the Passion

[Get My Spouse to Change](#)

Apology and Forgiveness



The Transformative Power of Apology and Forgiveness.

Time and again I have had to say to my wife, "I'm sorry". It is a way of saying, I got that wrong, I want to do better next time. Will you please help me?

What I have observed about apology is **its power to transform a relationship**. The receiver gets the message that you care about them, and

that you care about the relationship.

It communicates that you feel the pain you caused them, and how much you have hurt the relationship. They feel a restoration of their dignity and that they matter in your eyes.

One of the great blessings of being a Christian is that God endows us with a spirit of repentance, for indeed "He leads to repentance" (Romans 2: 3,4). He takes away the stony heart and gives us a heart of flesh (See Ezekiel 36:26).

He equips us with **the capacity for remorse and empathy**, to become sensitive of the feelings of others. All these are necessary characteristics, if we are to genuinely apologize.

Apology is so important in a relationship that, **typically a ruptured relationship cannot be repaired except through genuine apology**. On the other hand, apology has the power to melt away resentment, bitterness and grudge and pave the way for restoration and reconciliation.

Apology is an acknowledgement that you are not perfect. The vulnerability created is a necessary step towards relinquishing the old mistakes and replacing them with a new perspective. Simply put, it is a opportunity for us to grow.

Somebody said it well, that **a great marriage is the union of two great forgivers**. Why? Because a great marriage is the union of two imperfect persons.

In marriage, the masters of relationship are always seeking an opportunity to repair the relationship. The lapse in judgement, the impatience manifested, and the thoughtless sentiments expressed reveal that apology must be a language fluently spoken in our homes.

The mom and dad model **apology and forgiveness as a twin principle of a long-lasting and healthy relationship**. The children replicate the practice, not just among themselves, but in the new families that they form.

Today, if you desire restoration in your relationship, then fall at the feet of your spouse and **like the prodigal son**, confess: "**I have sinned** against heaven and before thee. Reckon me as a spouse who wants to do better".

Like the wealthy tax collector, reveal the sincerity of your apology by **offering to make restitution**, and to do "whatever you require to make things right" (See Luke 19:8)

Like David, be **specific** about "that thing" for which you apologize, for you want to be taken seriously. And above all, promise that there will not be a repeat performance of the wrong, for you desire to be **restored to the joy and bliss of the marital relationship**.

Apology & Forgiveness



There are two types of people in a relationship. You are either a master or a disaster of relationship.

The disaster of relationship does not make the health and happiness of the relationship a priority. The relationship may be strained, even toxic and failing, but they never take the necessary steps towards reparation and healing.

The master of relationship, on the other hand, is always seeking an opportunity to repair the relationship.

Today I would like to share a surefire method to commence the process of repairing a ruptured relationship. It is **Apology and forgiveness**.

Did you know that no one will be able to have a long lasting, healthy relationship except they are always ready to apologize?

Some will not apologize because they did not learn how to do so in childhood. Others will not apologize because they consider it a sign of weakness and threat to their manhood/ womanhood. Hence, they are filled with anxiety and discomfort when they are called upon to demonstrate the vulnerability and sincerity required by an apology.

But apology must be a part of our mode of operation in a relationship. The more comfortable we are at acknowledging our failure, and the extent to which we have hurt the relationship with our habits or behaviors, the greater our hope of having a triumphant relationship.

- Apology is saying, I have failed and want to make amends.
- Apology is acknowledging our mishap and requesting an opportunity to reconcile.
- Apology is saying, I want to rebuild trust and convince you that there will not be a repeat performance.
- Apology is saying, I value the relationship and if you help me, I will become a better person.

There are five (5) components of an apology:

1. Expressing regret. Say what you are apologizing for and be specific about it. David declared before God, 'I am guilty of blood-guiltiness' (Psalm 51). This demonstrates sincerity, remorse and empathy, without which our apology is only an empty platitude.

2. Taking responsibility. You understand how your behavior has inflicted pain and has hurt the relationship, and you take full responsibility for your action. You don't attempt to defend your behavior by deflecting blame or finding excuses. Example, If you didn't do that I would not have

done this". You face the issues squarely and you are ready to deal with the consequences.

3. Making restitution. Here, you ask the question, "Is there something I can do to make it right?" The rich young ruler, in conversation with Jesus, was ready to make it right.

4. Changing our behavior. If you are genuinely repentant you will possess an ardent desire to change your behavior. You make a promise that there will not be a repeat performance. "Godly sorrow worked repentance" (Text). If your behavior does not convince the other person that you have made a right about turn, then you have not really apologized.

5. Requesting forgiveness. There are some who never feel like you have apologized except you ask for forgiveness. If this is how your spouse views apology, then you must literally request their forgiveness.

There is power in apology to turn your marriage around. You cannot change your partner, but you can influence them towards reconciliation by your sincere apology. If somehow you believe that your marriage is at an impasse and there is no hope, remember that God, who specializes in the impossible, can use your sincere apology to restore your relationship.

Understand Infidelity

Infidelity From the Woman's Perspective

When her husband engages in an affair, the impact on the woman is normally far more devastating than the man can possibly conceptualize.

The man may sometimes argue that it is only a small matter. **He believes that his attempt to roam is not consequential for the relationship and should not impact his wife so severely.** A lot of men sometimes nonchalantly express their perspective with these words:

“I am only giving expression to the natural biological urges with which God has endowed me. I have no intention of leaving her for another. She is my wife and always will be. Why does she make such a big thing of it? I just cannot understand why she is consumed in such agony and pain. I just do not understand women.”

The woman, on the other hand, experiences such emotional trauma and excruciating pain that she looks upon his insensitivity in shock and amazement. She is writhing in anguish and pain while he looks dazed and unaffected.

It is important therefore that a man gets a glimpse of infidelity through the eyes of his wife.

Statistics have confirmed that, **for some women who have been victims of an affair, infidelity is worse than rape.** For others, it is like death in the family.

Infidelity transmits the painful message that she is not enough. That somebody else is more worthy of her husband's time and attention. She feels unimportant and unwanted. Her self-esteem is eroded, and her dignity is ripped from her. She feels rejected, dejected, and deserted. She may even start to question if life is worth living.

Some women even confess that the pain of an extramarital affair is so numbing, that they feel incapacitated by pain for many years.

Did you know that sixty percent of these women have had suicidal ideation?

Seventy percent experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Talk about the anxiety they experience, resulting in sleepless nights and the shame that keeps them from friends, relatives, and church members.

Is God concerned?

This violation of the marriage vows. This betrayal of filial love. This disregard for the sensitivity of the human soul is so potentially devastating to the emotional and physical wellbeing of the woman, and the sacredness of the marriage bed, that God categorically declares his disapproval of it.



God Places the prohibition against infidelity among the catalog of sins to avoid in the Ten Commandment decalogue, “**Thou shall not commit adultery**” (Exodus 20:14).

He further declares that no one who continues to commit adultery will have a part with him in His kingdom but will be among those who will ultimately be destroyed.

(See Revelation 21:8)

A violation of the marriage vows

Infidelity, according to scripture, is an abrogation of the covenant of marriage. **It represents a breach of trust and a violation of the marriage vows.**



Infidelity, oftentimes, is the cause of broken homes and the production of delinquent children who wreak havoc upon society.

One act of sexual betrayal can adversely impact the family, and the wider society for years to come.

How should we relate to the victims of infidelity?

Parents should assure their daughters and sons that they will always be there, providing emotional support for them. Let them know that the doors of your home are always open to receive them, that they are always your precious gem.

The church should embrace these care-worn pilgrims, reminding them that the church represents a hospital. The members should throw their arms around them, listen and “mourn with those who mourn” (Text). Remind them that God is a sympathizing friend, who “sticks closer than a brother”.

The guilty party should be encouraged to seek help, and to do so speedily. Educate them of the enormous pain created for the family (wife and children). Assist them in securing professional help. It’s important to remember that there are some cases of infidelity that may never be resolved without professional help.

How to protect yourself against infidelity

Statistically one third of men, and 10-15 percent of women are usually the perpetrators of infidelity. Men are a special target of the enemy of souls.

1. Build hedges around your marriage. Do not flirt with other members of the opposite sex. Avoid those occasions where you are found with her alone. The frequent lunch dates and private trips are potentially dangerous. Be reminded that emotional attachment is formed through frequent connection and interaction.

2. a. **Make your marriage beautiful.** See your marriage as your second job. Fix the crack in the relationship. There is a saying that all that is necessary for a thorn to grow is a crack in the sidewalk. If there are serious problems in the relationship, do not suffer in silence. Seek help. The fact is, if your spouse does not feel liked, loved, and respected they are always thinking of being elsewhere. Love, affirmation, and affection are primal needs of the human soul. Create in your marriage a culture of love and appreciation, a little heaven on earth.

b. **Flirt with your wife.** If you don't flirt with her, you may want to flirt with another. The greatest need of your wife is the need for affection. It is the small acts that communicate "I've been thinking of you" that excite her.

c. **Nurture your own garden.**

If you neglect the care and nurture of your own garden, then the neighbors flourishing garden will always appear more beautiful and attractive. The way to make your wife "a fruitful vine" (Psalm 138: 3), is to understand her and meet her needs.

d. **"Flee fornication"**, is the divine warning. You don't bargain or fight back, you get out and get running. The only posture the man of wisdom can assume in these circumstances is that of cowardice. Learn a lesson from Joseph (See Genesis 39: 11,12) and take flight.

How do you recover from an affair?

 LLOYDALLEN.ORG 

How to recover from an affair

Reach out for God's help.

Ask: "Can God really help to restore my marriage?" Bow low at his feet and ask Him to climb down in the deep recesses of your heart and grant you the endurance and capability to deal with the pain that threatens to overwhelm you.

Wrestle with Him as Jacob did ([Genesis 32:22-32](#)), until He grants you the assurance of peace within.

- Before you decide to throw in the towel and call it quits. Before you beckon the attorney to furnish you with the bill of divorcement, just ask. If God were to ask me what I did with my marriage, would you be able to say, "I tried?" So, give it a try.
- The guilty party must be brought to the place where they confront the issue, while taking full responsibility for their action. They disclose the details of the affair that are material to the restorative process.
- You now have an opportunity to reveal the pain and trauma that they inflicted upon you and the family.
- Until they express remorse and empathy, there is no true reparation of the relationship. If they are truly repentant, this is the time for them to express it.
- They will seek to make restitution by vowing that there will not be a repeat performance. They are prepared to deal with the consequences and resolve to rebuild trust by asking, "What can I do to make it right?"
- You do not heal by moving from grief but moving forward with grief. They will help you to heal by allowing you to rehearse the pain and trauma as often as you need to. They will listen patiently without being reactive or defensive. This is one way of helping you to heal.

- This is your moment of forgiveness. You forgive, not only to help them, but to heal your heart. The healing process will be facilitated by your understanding that you will not use their past sins against them.
- [Seek professional help.](#)

Scriptural reference:

Revelation 21:8 English Standard Version 2016 (ESV)

[But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”](#)

**Want to improve
your marriage?
Continue doing what you did
to win him/her**

Want to improve your marriage? Listen to and validate them. Suspend your own thoughts and ego. Make it all about them.

KISS YOUR SPOUSE WHEN
YOU DEPART & ARRIVE
HOME: IT IS A GOOD
HEALTHY HABIT TO PICK UP

**Speak well of each other,
especially in public. And never
share their secrets with others-
not your friends, relatives, or
well-wishers**

If you have something to say to your spouse, find a gentle, respectful, and inoffensive way to say it.

Do not expect them to be a mind-reader, and you cannot afford to harbor resentment. You must communicate

Exercise patience when interacting with your spouse. You will never have a triumphant marriage without patience

Be a GREAT listener.
Do not be a reactive listener.
Do not listen to reply.
Instead, listen to learn,
to understand.

Respect your spouse's
feelings. Be sensitive.
Do unto them as you would
have them do unto you.

Never, oh never point a finger of blame towards your spouse. Find positive ways to resolve issues. Never attack their character.

Have a teachable spirit.

You do not have to be always right.

Allow yourself to be influenced by your spouse too.

Distinguish yourself as a
Master of relationship.
The “Master” is always
seeking for an opportunity to
REPAIR the relationship

**Be ready to forgive.
Remember. You are not perfect,
neither is your spouse.
Marriage is the union of two
great forgivers.**

**Be ready to apologize when
confronted for your mishap. You
will never have a great Marriage
except you possess humility.**

**Cherish your spouse.
Show that they are treasured.
Identify their good qualities and
celebrate them for it. Let them
know you are fortunate to have
them in your life**

**Accept your spouse for who they are.
Do not try to change them.
Do not remind them of their flaws, and
how much they do not measure up.
Appreciate them for the good they do**

Celebrate your spouse.
Identify the good they do and
tell them. Make a big thing of
their small accomplishments

It is not so much the heroic
declarations of love,
but the little acts of kindness
and thoughtfulness.
Pay attention to your spouse.

Care for your spouse.

Care also means: Avoid damage or risk. Make it a rule of life that you will not hurt your spouse, not with words or deeds.

Allow them space to exercise their own individuality.

Don't be a control freak.

Don't track them.

Show that you trust them.

Premarital Preparation

**Do it right, it is the closest
thing to heaven on earth.**

**Do it wrong, it is the closest
thing to hell on earth**

Set Boundaries

When courting,
keep both eyes open.
When married,
shut one.

[Why Shacking-Up is a Bad Idea](#)

Your relationship will probably end. An article on [examiner.com](#) states that 80% of shacking up relationships end before marriage or in divorce after marriage. So, it is 80/20 against you getting married, or staying married, to that person.

A relationship without commitment will not last. Marriage is the biggest commitment you can make in life. A legitimate marriage consists of a union between a man and woman who have made a covenant and commitment.

The dynamic of the relationship changes.

Most men argue: If you are living with a woman and getting some of the “benefits” of marriage – sex, having someone to help around the house, sharing the bills – you can get lazy about taking the next step in your relationship.

Your children will be negatively affected.

To the parents who have children: a. Your kids are three times as likely to be expelled from school or get pregnant, b. they are five times more likely to live in poverty, and c. 22 times more likely to be incarcerated. All because you choose to live with someone you’re not married to. (Source: [examiner.com](#))

The Bible considers shacking up the opposite of a legitimate marriage.

Hebrews 13:4 reminds us that marriage is to be honored by all.

Shacking up is a violation of God's will for humanity and hence, will carry with it the painful consequences of sin.

Marriage, on the other hand, is designed to bring honor and blessings, not only to the couple, but to the church, community, and the world.

Warning: Identify a Narcissist

Warning: Unequally Yoked