

Solomon, Sex and Marriage

Seminar outline

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ABOUT YOUR SPEAKERS

Shane Womack married his college sweetheart, Phyllis Beyer, in June, 1979 in Lawndale, California. They have five adult children: Amanda (married Aaron Roberts), Jeniece (married Andrew Harris), Luke (married Allison Greene), Micah and Haley.

He received his BA in Christian Education from Pacific Christian College (now Hope International University) in 1978. Emmanuel Christian Seminary (formerly Emmanuel School of Religion) is where Shane earned his MA in Religion.

Shane planted Saguaro Christian Church (now Stone Creek Bible Church) in Phoenix, Arizona in 1986. He was the Evangelism Pastor at Overlake Christian Church in Redmond, Washington from 1995-98. Shane has been the Senior Pastor of Knott Avenue Christian Church (kacc.com) in Anaheim California since 1998.

Phyllis received her BA in Social Work from Pacific Christian College in 1983. She co-founded Living Alternatives, a pro-life ministry in Fullerton, CA. She loves encouraging women in their faith and served as the Women's Pastor at Knott Ave. Christian Church from 2007 to 2013.

Together, the Womacks have been teaching "Solomon, Sex and Marriage" conferences in the western United States since 1993. They have co-taught a couples conference at Cannon Beach Conference Center (cbcc.net) in Oregon since 1997. Shane and Phyllis co-hosted a live call-in marriage counseling radio show called "Marriage 911" in the Seattle area from 1996-98.

As pastoral counselors, Shane and Phyllis have worked with hundreds of married couples. As teachers of Lifemates (a five hour seminar) or Solomon, Sex and Marriage Conference (a ten hour conference), Shane and Phyllis have taught thousands of husbands and wives.

Shane and Phyllis reside in Huntington Beach, California. Shane is an avid doubles volleyball player. Phyllis enjoys long walks, new books, great sermons, old movies, and ending the day in the Jacuzzi under the stars with her honey. Together they love to travel and spend time with their grandsons, Owen, Milo and Van, and granddaughter, Reese.

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UNDERSTANDING THE SONG OF SOLOMON

*The song is a series of reflections - not always in chronological order.**

1. Courtship in the King's House

Solomon 1:1-11

2. At the Banquet Table

Solomon 1:12-2:6

3. First Date

Solomon 2:8-17

4. Dream of Separation

Solomon 3:1-5

5. Wedding Procession

Solomon 3:6-11

6. Wedding Night

Solomon 4:1-5:1

7. First Fight

Solomon 5:2-6:3

8. Solomon's Return

Solomon 6:4-9

9. Making up

Solomon 7:1-9

10. Country Vacation

Solomon 7:10-13

11. Shulammite's Childhood

Solomon 8:8-14

**Adapted from Joseph Dillow's Solomon on Sex.*

Chapter 1

Song of Solomon

¹ The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

WIFE

² "May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!
For your love is better than wine.

³ "Your oils have a pleasing fragrance,
your name is *like* purified oil;
therefore the maidens love you.

⁴ "Draw me after you *and* let us run *together*!
The king has brought me into his chambers."

Chorus

*"We will rejoice in you and be glad;
we will extol your love more than wine.
Rightly do they love you."*

WIFE

⁵ "I am black but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem,
like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon.

⁶ "Do not stare at me because I am swarthy,
for the sun has burned me.

My mother's sons were angry with me;
they made me caretaker of the vineyards,
but I have not taken care of my own vineyard.

⁷ "Tell me, O you whom my soul loves,
where do you pasture your flock,
where do you make it lie down at noon?
For why should I be like one who veils herself
beside the flocks of your companions?"

HUSBAND

⁸ "If you yourself do not know, most beautiful among
women, go forth on the trail of the flock
and pasture your young goats by the tents of the shepherds.

⁹ "To me, my darling, you are like
my mare among the chariots of Pharaoh.

¹⁰ "Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments,
your neck with strings of beads."

Chorus

¹¹ *"We will make for you ornaments of gold with beads of silver."*

WIFE

¹² "While the king was at his table,
my perfume gave forth its fragrance.
¹³ "My beloved is to me a pouch of myrrh
which lies all night between my breasts.
¹⁴ "My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms
in the vineyards of Engedi."

HUSBAND

¹⁵ "How beautiful you are, my darling,
how beautiful you are!
Your eyes are like doves."

WIFE

¹⁶ "How handsome you are, my beloved, and so pleasant!
Indeed, our couch is luxuriant!
¹⁷ "The beams of our houses are cedars,
our rafters, cypresses.

Chapter 2

WIFE

¹ "I am the rose of Sharon,
the lily of the valleys."

HUSBAND

² "Like a lily among the thorns,
so is my darling among the maidens."

WIFE

³ "Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest,
so is my beloved among the young men.
In his shade I took great delight and sat down,
and his fruit was sweet to my taste.
⁴ "He has brought me to his banquet hall,
and his banner over me is love.
⁵ Strengthen me with raisins, refresh me with apples,
for I am faint with love.
⁶ His left arm is under my head,
and his right arm embraces me.
⁷ Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you
by the gazelles and the does of the field;
do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.
⁸ Listen! My Love!
Look! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains,
bounding over the hills.

⁹ "My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag.
Behold, he is standing behind our wall, he is looking
through the windows, he is peering through the lattice.

¹⁰ "My beloved responded and said to me,
'Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come along.
¹¹ 'For behold, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone

¹² "The flowers have already appeared in the land;
the time has arrived for pruning the vines,
and the voice of the turtledove has been heard in our land.

¹³ "The fig tree has ripened its figs, and the vines in blossom
have given forth their fragrance. Arise, my darling, my
beautiful one, and come along!"

HUSBAND

¹⁴ "O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret place
of the steep pathway, let me see your form,
let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet,
and your form is lovely."

WIFE

¹⁵ "Catch the foxes for us,
the little foxes that are ruining the vineyards,
while our vineyards are in blossom."

¹⁶ "My beloved is mine, and I am his;
he pastures his flock among the lilies.

¹⁷ "Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away,
turn, my beloved, and be like a gazelle
or a young stag on the mountains of Bether."

Chapter 3

WIFE

¹ "On my bed night after night
I sought him whom my soul loves;
I sought him but did not find him.

² 'I must arise now and go about the city;
in the streets and in the squares
I must seek him whom my soul loves.'

I sought him but did not find him.

³ "The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me,
and I said, 'Have you seen him whom my soul loves?'

⁴ "Scarcely had I left them when
I found him whom my soul loves;
I held on to him and would not let him go
until I had brought him to my mother's house,
and into the room of her who conceived me."

**⁵ "I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles or by the hinds of the field,
that you will not arouse
or awaken *my* love until it pleases."**

Chorus

⁶ *"What is this coming up from the wilderness
like columns of smoke,
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
with all scented powders of the merchant?"*
⁷ *"Behold, it is the traveling couch of Solomon;
sixty mighty men around it, of the mighty men of Israel.*
⁸ *"All of them are wielders of the sword, expert in war;
each man has his sword at his side,
guarding against the terrors of the night.*
⁹ *"King Solomon has made for himself a sedan chair
from the timber of Lebanon.*
¹⁰ *"He made its posts of silver, its back of gold
and its seat of purple fabric,
with its interior lovingly fitted out
by the daughters of Jerusalem.*
¹¹ *"Go forth, O daughters of Zion,
and gaze on King Solomon with the crown
with which his mother has crowned him
on the day of his wedding, and on the day of his gladness of heart."*

Chapter 4

HUSBAND

¹ **"How beautiful you are, my darling,
how beautiful you are!
Your eyes are like doves behind your veil;
your hair is like a flock of goats
that have descended
from Mount Gilead.**
² **"Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes
which have come up from their washing,
all of which bear twins, and not one among them
has lost her young.**
³ **"Your lips are like a scarlet thread,
and your mouth is lovely.
Your temples are like a slice of a
pomegranate behind your veil.**
⁴ **"Your neck is like the tower of David,
built with rows of stones
on which are hung a thousand shields,
all the round shields of the mighty men.**

⁵ "Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle
which feed among the lilies.
⁶ "Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away,
I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh
and to the hill of frankincense.
⁷ "You are altogether beautiful, my darling,
and there is no blemish in you.
⁸ "Come with me from Lebanon, my bride,
may you come with me from Lebanon.
Journey down from the summit of Amana,
from the summit of Senir and Hermon,
from the dens of lions, from the mountains of leopards.
⁹ "You have made my heart beat faster, my sister, my bride;
you have made my heart beat faster
with a single glance of your eyes,
with a single strand of your necklace.
¹⁰ "How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride!
How much better is your love than wine,
and the fragrance of your oils than all kinds of spices!
¹¹ "Your lips, my bride, drip honey;
honey and milk are under your tongue,
and the fragrance of your garments
is like the fragrance of Lebanon.
¹² "A garden locked is my sister, my bride,
a rock garden locked, a spring sealed up.
¹³ "Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates
with choice fruits, henna with nard plants,
¹⁴ Nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon,
with all the trees of frankincense,
myrrh and aloes, along with all the finest spices.
¹⁵ "You are a garden spring, a well of fresh water, and
streams flowing from Lebanon."

WIFE

¹⁶ "Awake, O north wind, and come, wind of the south;
make my garden breathe out fragrance, let its spices be
wafted abroad. May my beloved come into his garden
and eat its choice fruits!"

Chapter 5

HUSBAND

¹ "I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride;
I have gathered my myrrh along with my balsam.
I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey;
I have drunk my wine and my milk.

GOD

*Eat, friends; drink and imbibe deeply,
O lovers."*

WIFE

² I was asleep but my heart was awake.
A voice! My beloved was knocking:

HUSBAND

'Open to me, my sister, my darling,
my dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched with dew,
my locks with the damp of the night.'

WIFE

³ "I have taken off my dress, how can I put it on again?
I have washed my feet, how can I dirty them again?
⁴ "My beloved extended his hand through the
opening, and my feelings were aroused for him.
⁵ "I arose to open to my beloved; and my hands dripped
with myrrh, and my fingers with liquid myrrh,
on the handles of the bolt.
⁶ "I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had turned away
and had gone! My heart went out to him as he spoke.
I searched for him, but I did not find him;
I called him, but he did not answer me.
⁷ "The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me,
they struck me and wounded me; the guardsmen of the walls
took away my shawl from me.
⁸ "I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my
beloved, as to what you will tell him:
for I am lovesick."

Chorus

⁹ "What kind of beloved is your beloved,
O most beautiful among women?
What kind of beloved is your beloved,
that thus you adjure us?"

WIFE

¹⁰ "My beloved is dazzling and ruddy,
outstanding among ten thousand.
¹¹ "His head is like gold, pure gold;
his locks are like clusters of dates and black as a raven.
¹² "His eyes are like doves beside streams of water,
bathed in milk, and reposed in their setting.
¹³ "His cheeks are like a bed of balsam,
banks of sweet-scented herbs;
his lips are lilies dripping with liquid myrrh.
¹⁴ "His hands are rods of gold set with beryl;
his abdomen is carved ivory inlaid with sapphires.
¹⁵ "His legs are pillars of alabaster set on pedestals of pure
gold; his appearance is like Lebanon choice as the cedars.
¹⁶ "His mouth is full of sweetness. And he is wholly
desirable. This is my beloved and this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem."

Chapter 6

Chorus

¹ "Where has your beloved gone,
O most beautiful among women?
Where has your beloved turned,
that we may seek him with you?"

WIFE

² "My beloved has gone down to his garden,
to the beds of balsam,
to pasture his flock in the gardens and gather lilies.
³ "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine,
he who pastures his flock among the lilies."

HUSBAND

⁴ "You are as beautiful as Tirzah, my darling,
as lovely as Jerusalem,
as awesome as an army with banners.
⁵ "Turn your eyes away from me,
for they have confused me;
Your hair is like a flock of goats that have
descended from Gilead.
⁶ "Your teeth are like a flock of ewes
which have come up from their washing, all of which
bear twins, and not one among them has lost her young.
⁷ "Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate
behind your veil.
⁸ "There are sixty queens and eighty concubines,
and maidens without number;

⁹ But my dove, my perfect one, is unique: she is her mother's only daughter; she is the pure child of the one who bore her.

The maidens saw her and called her blessed,
the queens and the concubines also, and they
praised her, saying,

¹⁰ 'Who is this that grows like the dawn, as beautiful as the full moon, as pure as the sun,
as awesome as an army with banners?'

WIFE

¹¹ "I went down to the orchard of nut trees to see the blossoms of the valley, to see whether the vine had budded or the pomegranates had bloomed.

¹² "Before I was aware, my soul set me over the chariots of my noble people."

Chorus

¹³ "Come back, come back, O Shulammitte;
Come back, come back, that we may gaze at you!"
"Why should you gaze at the Shulammitte,
as at the dance of the two companies?"

Chapter 7

HUSBAND

¹ "How beautiful are your feet in sandals,
O prince's daughter!

The curves of your hips are like jewels,
the work of the hands of an artist.

² "Your navel is like a round goblet
which never lacks mixed wine;
your belly is like a heap of wheat
fenced about with lilies.

³ "Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle.

⁴ "Your neck is like a tower of ivory,
your eyes like the pools in Heshbon
by the gate of Bath-rabbim;
your nose is like the tower of Lebanon,
which faces toward Damascus.

⁵ "Your head crowns you like Carmel,
and the flowing locks of your head are like purple threads;
the king is captivated by your tresses.

⁶ "How beautiful and how delightful you are,
my love, with all your charms!

⁷ Your stature is like that of the palm, and your
breasts like clusters of fruit.

**⁸ I said, "I will climb the palm tree;
I will take hold of its fruit stalks."
May your breasts be like the clusters of the vine,
the fragrance of your breath like apples,
⁹ and your palate like the best wine.**

WIFE

**"It goes down smoothly for my beloved,
Flowing gently through the lips of those who fall asleep.
¹⁰ "I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me.
¹¹ "Come, my beloved, let us go out into the country,
let us spend the night in the villages.
¹² "Let us rise early and go to the vineyards;
let us see whether the vine has budded
and its blossoms have opened,
and whether the pomegranates have bloomed.
There I will give you my love.
¹³ "The mandrakes have given forth fragrance;
and over our doors are all choice fruits,
both new and old, which I have saved up
for you, my beloved.**

Chapter 8

WIFE

**¹ "Oh that you were like a brother to me
who nursed at my mother's breasts.
If I found you outdoors, I would kiss you;
no one would despise me, either.
² "I would lead you and bring you
into the house of my mother, who used to instruct me;
I would give you spiced wine to drink from the juice
of my pomegranates.
³ "Let his left hand be under my head
and his right hand embrace me."
⁴ "I want you to swear, O daughters of Jerusalem,
do not arouse or awaken *my* love
until it pleases."**

Chorus

**⁵ *Who is this coming up from the wilderness
leaning on her beloved?"***

WIFE

**"Beneath the apple tree I awakened you;
there your mother was in labor with you,
there she was in labor and gave you birth.**

**⁶ "Put me like a seal over your heart,
like a seal on your arm.**

**For love is as strong as death,
jealousy is as severe as Sheol;
its flashes are flashes of fire,
the very flame of the Lord.**

**⁷ "Many waters cannot quench love,
nor will rivers overflow it;
if a man were to give all the riches of his house for love,
it would be utterly despised."**

**Wife's
Brothers**

*⁸ "We have a little sister,
and she has no breasts;
what shall we do for our sister
on the day when she is spoken for?"*

*⁹ If she is a wall, we will build on her a battlement of silver;
but if she is a door,
we will barricade her with planks of cedar."*

WIFE

**¹⁰ "I was a wall, and my breasts were like towers;
then I became in his eyes as one who finds peace.**

**¹¹ "Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon;
he entrusted the vineyard to caretakers. Each one was
to bring a thousand shekels of silver for its fruit.**

**¹² "My very own vineyard is at my disposal;
the thousand shekels are for you, Solomon,
and two hundred are for those who take care of its fruit."**

**¹³ "O you who sit in the gardens,
my companions are listening for your voice –
let me hear it!"**

**¹⁴ "Hurry, my beloved,
and be like a gazelle or a young stag
on the mountains of spices."**

33 WAYS TO LOVE YOUR LOVER

(from "The Song of Solomon")

1. Kiss Frequently (Vs. 1:2)

Song of Solomon 5:16

Song of Solomon 7:9

Song of Solomon 8:1

How satisfied are you with the frequency of kissing?

Tell your spouse how you like to be kissed.

2. Smell Good (Vs. 1:3)

Song of Solomon 1:12

Song of Solomon 4:14

Song of Solomon 5:13

Song of Solomon 7:8

Which fragrances appeal to you or your spouse?

Could your spouse improve in any specific area of personal hygiene?

**What habits of personal hygiene do you appreciate about
your spouse?**

3. Respect Your Husband (Vs. 1:3)

Song of Solomon 5:10

Ephesians 5:33

Proverbs 22:1

1 Peter 3:1,2

Ecclesiastes 7:1

Proverbs 12:4

**On a scale of 1 to 10, how respected do you feel by your wife?
What things do you highly respect in your husband?
Tell him what positive comments others make about him.**

4. Lead and Follow (Vs. 1:4)

Ephesians 5:22-29

John 5:18

Colossians 3:18

Genesis 3:16

Titus 2:5

Genesis 25:21

1 Peter 3:1,5

Job 1:5

1 Corinthians 11:3

Provider, Protector, Priest, Pastor

In what areas does the husband need to provide more spiritual leadership? How would each of you rate the wife's submission in action and attitude?

5. Recreate Together (Vs. 1:4)

Ecclesiastes 9:9

**Which games, sports or activities do you mutually enjoy?
What individual recreation do you seek your spouse's blessing?
What factors work against recreating together?
How can you overcome those factors?**

6. Self-Accept Your Physical Features (Vs. 1:5-7)

Psalms 139:14

Isaiah 45:9

Isaiah 64:8

Genesis 38:14,15

1 Timothy 2:9

**Which of your unchangeable feature(s) is hardest for you to accept?
Tell your spouse about one changeable feature that
you would like them to work on. How would you like your spouse
to dress differently? Name some outfits that are especially
attractive on your spouse.**

7. Verbalize Your Physical Attraction (Vs. 1:8-16)

Song of Solomon 4:7

Song of Solomon 7:6

Song of Solomon 6:4,10a

**What compliment from your spouse has had a deep and meaningful impact? Tell your spouse what attracts you to him/her.
How often would you like to be affirmed about how you look?**

8. Spoil Your Spouse (Vs. 1:10,11)

Song of Solomon 4:9

Ezekiel 16:11-13

Song of Solomon 3:6-10

**Tell your spouse how you like to be spoiled.
What jewelry would you like to purchase or repair?**

9. Beautify Your Home (Vs. 1:16,17)

**What changes should be made in your bedroom atmosphere?
Discuss the pros and cons of having a television or computer in your bedroom. Mutually agree upon a solution. Do any rooms in your house need a makeover or need to be de-cluttered?**

10. Create Security in Your Spouse (Vs. 2:1-5)

**Do you feel threatened or in competition with any person or thing for your spouse's attention or affection?
Are there persons who cause you to feel jealous when they are around your spouse? Who and why?**

11. Love Your Wife (Vs. 2:4,5)

Ephesians 5:28

Genesis 29:31-33

Hosea 3:1

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Describe some moments where you strongly felt most “in love” with your spouse. What words or actions cause you to feel loved by your husband?

12. Embrace Your Wife (Vs. 2:6)

Song of Solomon 3:4

Song of Solomon 8:3

Genesis 26:8

Wives, what kind of embracing or fondling is desirable and pleasurable for you? What kind of caresses would you like your spouse to try, eliminate or change?

13. Advocate Sexual Purity (Vs. 2:7)

Song of Solomon 3:5

Proverbs 28:13

Song of Solomon 8:4

James 5:16

Song of Solomon 1:7

Deuteronomy 22:13-21

Song of Solomon 8:8-10

Numbers 5:11-31

Hebrews 13:4

Timothy 1:5

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5

**In what areas of sexual sin do you need forgiveness...
Before you met? With each other before your marriage?
Since being married? What single person in your life needs to be
encouraged or confronted about sexual purity?**

14. Date Regularly (Vs. 2:8-14)

Song of Solomon 2:17

2 Corinthians 13:10

Song of Solomon 8:14

1 Samuel 25:3

Proverbs 16:21,24

1 Peter 3:7

**What were some of your favorite dates? How often would you like to
go out? Discuss dating destinations that you would like to go to. To
what degree is your husband a gazelle?**

15. Catch the Little Foxes (Vs. 2:15)

What little problems have we ignored and need to address and resolve?

16. Transfer Ownership (Vs. 2:16)

Song of Solomon 6:3

1 Peter 2:11

Song of Solomon 7:10

Psalm 101:3

Genesis 2:23,24

Matthew 5:27-30

1 Corinthians 7:3,4; 6:19

Job 31:1

Have you completely transferred ownership of your body to your spouse? Does your spouse agree with your answer? If pornography is a struggle, what game plan do you have to overcome it? Is there ever a time when masturbation is ok in marriage? Discuss.

17. Love Your Husband (Vs. 3:1-4)

Song of Solomon 1:7

Titus 2:4

**On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you feel loved by your wife?
What are the best evidences of your wife's love for you?
What older women could mentor you to become a better wife?**

18. Celebrate Marriage (Vs. 3:10,11)

Deuteronomy 22:28,29

Proverbs 18:22

Jeremiah 34:18

Malachi 2:16

Ezekiel 16:8

1 Corinthians 7:10,11

Malachi 2:14

Matthew 5:31,32

Proverbs 2:16,17

Isaiah 54:6-8

How celebratory was your wedding? Your anniversaries? How would you like to really celebrate an upcoming anniversary? Discuss the shortcomings of cohabitation that you have experienced or observed.

19. Enjoy Foreplay (Vs. 4:1-11)

Song of Solomon 8:2

Song of Solomon 2:3

Song of Solomon 7:7,8

**What experiences of foreplay do you really enjoy?
What do you want more or less of? How could your foreplay improve? What is your view on oral sex?**

20. Achieve Orgasm (Vs. 4:12-5:1)

How often would you like to have intercourse?

How often do you achieve orgasm during sex? Tell your spouse how your orgasm could be enhanced. Tell your spouse what a great orgasm feels like in your body.

21. Know God's Approval (Vs. 5:1)

Purposes of Sex in Marriage

- 1. Unity** - Genesis 2:24
- 2. Procreation** - Genesis 1:28,31 Psalm 127:3-5
- 3. Pleasure** - Proverbs 5:19b
- 4. Comfort and Consolation** - 2 Samuel 2:23,24 Genesis 24:67
- 5. Love** - Song of Solomon 7:12c

Do you ever feel guilty or ashamed in sexual interaction?

Did you have a negative or distorted view of sex growing up?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you sense God's blessing and approval of your sex life?

22. Don't Refuse Your Partner (Vs. 5:2-6)

1 Corinthians 7:3-5

Acts 13:10

Leviticus 12:1-5

Leviticus 18:19

**Out of your last 100 sexual advances, how many were
directly refused? Indirectly refused?**

**When are your favorite times of the day, week
or month for sexual intimacy?**

23. Reconcile Arguments Immediately (Vs. 5:6-8)

Ephesians 4:26-32

Hebrews 12:15

**Are there unresolved conflicts, bitterness, or unforgiveness
in this marriage relationship? Discuss.**

Are you bitter toward anybody in your life?

24. Stay Positive (Vs. 5:9-16)

Proverbs 12:4

Proverbs 21:9,19

1 Peter 3:4,7

Proverbs 27:15

Proverbs 14:1

Ecclesiastes 7:26

Proverbs 18:22

Proverbs 31:12,26

Proverbs 19:13

Affirm your spouse with five positive comments about his/her character. Evaluate your relationship as lovers and friends. To what degree do you experience your wife as your mother, your teacher or your Holy Spirit?

25. Get in Shape (Vs. 5:14,15)

Song of Solomon 7:1,2

John 5:6

How satisfied are you with your spouse's shape and weight? What changes need to happen with diet and exercise? Are there health issues or psychological problems that need to be addressed?

26. Cherish Your Wife (Vs. 6:8,9)

Ephesians 5:29

Song of Solomon 7:5

On a scale of 1 to 10, how cherished do you feel by your husband?

Do you feel he cherishes anybody or anything more than you?

Give three examples of how your husband makes you feel cherished.

**What dreams would you like to pursue with your husband's
help and blessing?**

27. Seduce Your Husband Occasionally (Vs. 6:11-7:9)

Wives, what holds you back from seducing your husband more often?

**Husbands, describe ways your wife could
easily seduce you into lovemaking.**

28. Take Vacations Together (Vs. 7:10-13)

What is your ratio of family vacations to hubby/ wife vacations?

When was your last overnight getaway by yourselves?

**Who will plan the next one? By what date will it happen? What
sexual positions would you like to try more? Where were your most
memorable lovemaking experiences? What private locations would
you like to take your spouse to for sexual intimacy?**

29. Honor Your Parents (Vs. 8:1,2,5)

Song of Solomon 3:11

Song of Solomon 6:9

Song of Solomon 7:1

Deuteronomy 5:15

Mark 7:9-13

1 Timothy 5:4

When you got married, did you receive a full blessing, reluctant blessing or no blessing from your parents? How could you demonstrate more honor to your parents/in-laws? What generational sins need to be broken?

30. Love Intimately (Vs. 8:6)

Aquila and Priscilla – Acts 18:3,25,26

1 Corinthians 16:19

Romans 16:3,4

2 Timothy 4:19

How close do you feel to your spouse on an everyday basis? During lovemaking? Does your spouse have any heart connections with others that you're uncomfortable with?

31. Love Intensely (Vs. 8:6)

Exodus 20:5

Proverbs 6:34

Pray for your marriage right now - that the intensity of your love will increase. How intense was your love during your courtship? Honeymoon? Newlyweds? Now?

32. Love Indestructibly (Vs. 8:7)

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Matthew 7:24-27

What or who are the biggest obstacles or opponents to your marriage? What tough times have you already endured?

33. Love Invaluably (Vs. 8:7)

Tell your spouse how valuable he/she is to you. Of all the marriages you know, which one is the best? What legacy of marriage do you want to leave behind to your kids and grandkids?

HIS NEEDS/HER NEEDS

Willard F. Harley, Jr. wrote a 1986 bestseller entitled His Needs/Her Needs which postulated that by meeting your spouse's needs, your marriage will be affair-proofed. These needs are consistent with the needs of the husband and wife in The Song of Solomon.

Her Needs	His Needs
Affection Solomon 1:2; 2:6; 3:4; 8:1,3	Sexual Fulfillment Solomon 4:5; 7:7-8
Conversation Solomon 5:16	Recreational Companionship Solomon 2:10-13
Honesty and Openness	An Attractive Wife Solomon 2:14; 4:7; 6:4; 10, 7:6
Financial Support Solomon 3:6-11; 8:11-12; 1:16-17	Domestic Support
Family Contentment Solomon 1:6; 8:2-3	Admiration and Respect Solomon 1:3; 5:10

THE IRRESISTIBLE MAN*

Any husband can make himself irresistible to his wife by learning to meet five basic marital needs:

1. He meets her need for affection with plenty of hugs and kisses at every opportunity. He also tells her how much he cares for her with a steady flow of words, cards, flowers, gifts, and common courtesies. I will say it one more time: Affection is the *environment* in which to grow a wonderful marriage.
2. He meets her need for intimate conversation by talking with her at *the feeling* level. He listens to her attitudes about the events of her day with sensitivity, interest, and concern. All his conversations with her convey a desire to *understand* her, but *not* to change her.
3. He meets her need for honesty and openness by looking her in the eye and telling her what he really thinks. He explains his plans and actions clearly and completely because he regards himself as accountable to her. He wants her to trust him and feel secure.
4. He meets her need for financial support by firmly shouldering the responsibility to house, feed, and clothe his family. If his income is insufficient to support his wife adequately, he does not feel sorry for himself, instead he looks for concrete ways to increase his earnings by upgrading his skills or he sits down with his wife to determine how to make better use of what income they have, how to lower their standard of living if necessary in order to raise their marriage to a safer and more fulfilling level.
5. He meets her need for family commitment by putting his family first. He commits his time and energy to the moral and intellectual development of the children. For example, he reads to them, he engages in sports with them, and takes them camping or on other outings. He does not play the fool's game of working long hours, trying to get ahead, while his children and spouse languish in neglect.

Whenever a wife finds a husband who exhibits all five qualities, she will find him irresistible. But a note of caution: If he exhibits only four of them, she will experience a void that will nag persistently and incessantly for fulfillment. When it comes to meeting the five basic needs, batting 800 is not good enough. Every husband must try for 1,000.

Willard Harley, Jr., His Needs. Her Needs. Published by the Fleming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan, New Jersey, 1986.

THE IRRESISTIBLE WOMAN*

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

1. She meets his need for sexual fulfillment by becoming an excellent sexual partner to him. She studies her own response to recognize and understand what brings out the best in her; then she communicates this information to her husband, and together they learn to have a sexual relationship that both find repeatedly satisfying and enjoyable.
2. She meets his need for recreational companionship by developing mutual interests with her husband. She discovers those activities her husband enjoys the most and tries to become proficient in them. If she learns to enjoy them, she joins him in them. If she does not enjoy them, she encourages him to consider others that they can enjoy together. She becomes her husband's constant recreational companion so that he repeatedly associates her with the pastimes he enjoys most.
3. She meets his need for her attractiveness. She keeps herself physically fit with diet and exercise, and she wears her hair, makeup, and clothes in a way that her husband finds attractive and tasteful. Her husband is pleased and proud of her in public and in private.
4. She meets his need for domestic support by creating a home that offers him an atmosphere of peace and quiet. She manages the home and care of the children. This gives him opportunity to spend evenings and weekends with her and their children in educational and recreational activities.
5. She meets his need for admiration and respect by understanding his value and achievements more than anyone else. She reminds him of his capabilities and helps him maintain his self-confidence. She is proud of her husband, not out of duty, but as an expression of sincere admiration for the man with whom she has chosen to share her life.

When a man finds a woman who exhibits all five qualities, he will find her irresistible. But again, the same note of caution must be sounded for the woman that sounded for the man. If a wife meets only four of her husband's five basic needs, he will experience a void that can lead to problems. Like her husband, a wife must seek to bat 1,000 in meeting basic marital needs. Being satisfied with meeting three or four of his basic needs will not make you totally irresistible.

Willard F. Harley, Jr., His Needs. Her Needs, Published by the Fleming H. Revell Company, Old Tappan, New Jersey, 1986.

13. I am more concerned with sexually satisfying my wife than I am with being satisfied myself.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

14. I am the first to ask for forgiveness when I quarrel with my wife.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

15. I encourage my wife to be actively involved in church ministry and to utilize her spiritual gifts.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

16. I lead my wife in prayer together.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

17. I read God's Word regularly to become mighty in the Scriptures.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

18. I lead my wife into spiritual conversations about recent sermons, scriptural insights for our lives, or revealing what God has been teaching me.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

19. I take initiative in taking our family to church, seminars, Christian events, which will spiritually feed us.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

20. I gently reprove my wife from the Bible so that she will totally glorify God with her character.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

21. I regularly make appointments with my wife to create and reevaluate our financial, family and spiritual goals.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

12. I spend time studying God's Word on a daily basis.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

13. When marriage conflicts arise (big or small), my prayer is, "Lord, show me where I need to change to make our marriage better."

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

14. I have a gentle and peaceful spirit.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

15. I give my husband a high level of respect.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

16. I am ok with the Scriptures, which command wives 6 times in the New Testament to submit (be arranged under) to their husbands as to the Lord.

_____ (Husband)

_____ (Wife)

12 LEVELS OF INTIMACY

1. Sexual intimacy
2. Emotional intimacy (being tuned to each other)
3. Intellectual intimacy (closeness in the world of ideas)
4. Aesthetic intimacy (sharing experiences of beauty)
5. Creative intimacy (sharing in acts of creating together)
6. Recreational intimacy (relating in experiences of fun and play)
7. Work intimacy (the closeness of sharing common tasks)
8. Crisis intimacy (closeness in coping with problems and pain)
9. Conflict intimacy (facing and struggling with differences)
10. Commitment intimacy (mutuality derived from common self-investment)
11. Spiritual intimacy (sharing ultimate concerns)
12. Communication intimacy (the source of all types of true intimacy)

*Taken from **The Intimate Marriage** by Howard and Charlotte Clinebell*

EMOTIONAL INTIMACY

(Song of Solomon 5:16b)

What Wives Want to Feel

1. Feel **Loved** (S.S. 2:4)
2. Feel **Close** (S.S. 1:13)
3. Feel **Beautiful** (S.S. 4:1,2,7)
4. Feel **Special** (S.S.1:9; 6:8-10)
5. Feel **Secure** (S.S. 2:1,2; 8:6a)
6. Feel **Heard** (S.S. 2:14a; 8:13)
7. Feel **Protected** (S.S. 3:7,8)

What Husbands Want to Feel

1. Feel **Respected** (S.S. 1:3; 2:3a; 3:11; 8:11)
2. Feel **Handsome** (S.S. 1:16; 5:10)
3. Feel **Manly** (S.S. 5:14,15; 2:17b)
4. Feel **Captivated** (S.S. 7:5; 4:9)
5. Feel **Peace** (S.S. 8:10)
6. Feel **Leadership** (S.S. 1:4a)
7. Feel **Desired** (S.S. 5:16a; 5:8; 7:10-13)

This is a sermon outline that accompanies the CD "The Intimate Marriage," from the message series "Extreme Makeover: Marriage Edition," by Pastor Shane Womack, available in the bookstore.

EMOTIONAL AFFAIRS

Dennis Rainey defines emotional adultery as friendship with the opposite sex that has gone too far. It's unfaithfulness of heart...an intimacy with the opposite sex that should only be reserved for your spouse. Emotional adultery is the reaction of two hearts, the chemistry of two souls.

Indicators of Emotional Affairs

- You greatly anticipate being with this person.
- You pay special attention to grooming and hygiene when you know you will be around this person.
- Your eye contact is deep and prolonged. Your eyes lock in an unusual way.
- Your relationship with this person is secretive without your mate's full knowledge.
- You discuss your marital problems with this person or vice versa.
- You find yourself being alone with this person on a frequent basis.
- This person listens to you better than your spouse.
- This person seems to know, understand, respect or appreciate you more than your spouse.
- You cannot imagine what life would be like without this friend.
- Casual touching or affection is a normal part of this relationship.
- Gift giving is a part of this relationship.

Is there somebody you need to warn your spouse about that you sense is approaching the intimacy line with your wife/husband?

Is there somebody that your spouse needs to know about that is tempting you in these areas?

- I agree to become totally accountable to my spouse in the area of emotional affairs by allowing and taking heed of my spouse's observations and warnings.
- I agree to completely extinguish chemical reactions that have begun or in the future might begin.
- I agree to disclose to my spouse any future struggles at their first appearance.

Husband

Wife

BOUNDARIES

One of the key ways to affair-proof your marriage is to put up boundaries that will help safeguard against potentially dangerous situations. Job cautioned about lurking at your neighbor's door (Job 31:9). Twice in Proverbs a clear warning is sounded about keeping far away from a seductive woman.

Proverbs 5:8 - *Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house.*

Proverbs 7:25 - *Do not let your heart turn to her ways or stray into her paths.*

Remember, Potiphar's wife made a sexual advance towards Joseph when no one was around (Genesis 39:11). Here are some suggested boundaries you and your spouse could agree upon to protect your relationship from harm:

1. Never get involved in one-on-one counseling with members of the opposite sex.
2. Never discuss sexual issues with members of the opposite sex, even on the telephone.
3. Never enter a home of a member of the opposite sex unless a spouse is present. Be cautious in allowing repairmen to come into your home if you are alone.
4. Never get into a vehicle with a member of the opposite sex (unless your spouse is present, siblings, etc.). This would include errands, favors, baby-sitters, and all non-life threatening emergencies
5. Never have a member of the opposite sex in your office unless the door is open or if there is a window view.
6. Never have lunches or coffee breaks alone with a member of the opposite sex.
7. Never work after hours with just you and a member of the opposite sex.
8. Never discuss personal or marriage problems with members of the opposite sex, or with spiritually immature members of the same sex.
9. Never travel on business alone with a member of the opposite sex.
10. Never flirt or make sexually suggestive comments.
11. Be careful about touching members of the opposite sex. Holy hugs, hand squeezing, hair stroking can all send the wrong message.
12. Use great discretion in answering cards and letters from members of the opposite sex. Allow your spouse to review the correspondence. Include your spouse's name and positive words about your spouse in return correspondence.
13. If possible, allow your spouse to be involved in the interview process for secretary or office help who will work closely with you on the job site.
14. Avoid using your secretary/office help to provide personal help, favors, or errands that your spouse could/should fulfill.
15. No social networking or texting with members of the opposite sex without the full knowledge and permission of your spouse.
16. Speak kindly of your spouse in public, and show public affection.
17. No roving/wandering eyes, sensual viewing or pornography.

Which of these boundaries are already in place? Which ones need to be put into place now?

I agree to have all of these boundaries present in our marriage that we might be above reproach and safeguard our intimacy.

Husband

Wife

MALE AND FEMALE DIFFERENCES

1. A woman is an emotional feeler.
A man is a logical thinker.
2. Language is an expression of how a woman feels.
Language is an expression of how a man thinks. He takes a second to process a thought through his brain.
3. Language heard for a woman is an emotional experience. She is incapable of carrying a great deal inside, she must talk.
Language heard for a man is receiving information.
4. A woman takes things personally.
A man takes things impersonally.
5. A woman is interested in details.
A man is interested in the general gist.
6. In material things a woman looks at the goal.
In material things a man looks at steps of how to get there.
7. In spiritual matters or intangibles a woman goes step-by-step on how to get there.
In spiritual matters a man sees the goal and knows he wants to get there somehow.
8. In problems or situations a woman is like a computer and won't let it alone until she has reached a solution.
In problems or situations a man is like a file cabinet, he logs it and drops it in the drawer and closes it till a later date.
9. A woman's home is an extension of her personality.
A man's job is an extension of his personality.
10. A woman's needs are met in security - - a home.
A man is more nomadic.
11. A woman is guilt prone (giving it and feeling it).
A man tends to be resentful (bitterness, blame put somewhere else).

12. A woman is always changing.
A man is stable and levels off.
13. A woman gets more involved quickly and easily.
A man stands back and evaluates.
14. A woman reacts openly to situations and people.
A man reacts inwardly and matter-of-factly. Turns on sports even if he has company.
15. A woman tends never to forget.
A man tends to have to be reminded.
16. Sex for a woman goes on all day long (preparation).
Sex for a man is what goes on in the bedroom.
17. A woman is sexually stimulated by what she hears.
A man is sexually stimulated by what he sees.
18. A woman responds slowly sexually.
A man responds quickly.
19. A woman needs to be cherished (nourished).
A man needs to be respected.
20. A woman needs to hear words to know she is understood or that someone understands.
A man needs a good listener, eye-to-eye contact, and not a solution to his problem unless he asks.
21. A woman tends to be traditional.
A man tends to be stubborn.
22. A woman needs only a promise.
A man tends to require proof.
23. A woman tends to be romantic and idealistic.
A man tends to be practical and objective.

24. A woman tends to play games.
A man tends to be direct.
25. A woman is a learner and responder.
A man is a leader.
26. A woman needs to be cherished, encouraged, cared for spiritually and materially, sought out and respected. To her this equals love.
A man needs to be accepted, respected, adapted to, appreciated and desired.
To him this equals love.
27. Both are to be learners.
28. Both are to be married lovers.

Taken from Christown Bible Study, Jim & Naomi Wright, Phoenix, AZ.

MALE AND FEMALE DIFFERENCES

1. **The male brain is compartmentalized with Localized thinking.**

Genesis 1:27 Genesis 5:2

The female brain is interconnected with Wholistic thinking.

1 Peter 3:7

2. **Men build testosterone by Relaxing.**

Matthew 14:23 Mark 1:35 Luke 5:16; 6:12 Mark 6:31,32

Women build oxytocin by Relating.

Titus 2:3,4 Ruth 1:6

3. **Men are prone to Anger problems.**

1 Timothy 3:3 Titus 1:7 1 Timothy 5:1

Women are prone to Anxiety problems.

Ruth 1:13b,20 Proverbs 31:17,21,25,26

4. **Men are prone to Sexual problems.**

Judges 16:1 2 Samuel 11:2,4a 2 Peter 2:14a Job 31:1

Women are prone to Slander and gossip.

1 Timothy 3:11 1 Timothy 5:13 Titus 2:3

5. **Men experience sex as an Act and an Event.**

Song of Solomon 4:9; 5:1; 7:7,8

Women experience sex as an Atmosphere and an Environment.

Song of Solomon 1:3a,13-15 Song of Solomon 2:14; 4:7; 7:10-12

6. **Men by nature are Nomads.**

Genesis 12:1

Women by nature are Nesters.

Titus 2:5

7. **Men are more Logical and sensate.**

Isaiah 1:10a, 18 1 John 1:1,3a

Women are more Emotional and intuitive.

2 Kings 4:9 Matthew 27:19 Luke 7:37,38,48,50

A sermon outline of "Male & Female Differences," in the CD series "Family Apps" by Pastor Shane Womack

THE “UNFAITHFUL/FORGIVEN” MARRIAGE

Why Affairs Happen

1. Complacency (II Samuel 10:17,18; 11:1)

Jeremiah 5:7b

I Corinthians 10:12

Ephesians 6:13

2. Lust (II Samuel 11:2)

James 1:14

Jeremiah 5:8

Deuteronomy 5:21

Proverbs 5:3,4

3. Entitlement (II Samuel 11:3,4)

Genesis 39:7-10

4. Selfishness (Hosea 2:5)

Hosea 4:13

5. Godlessness (Hosea 4:6,10)

Jeremiah 29:23

Proverbs 5:20,21

6. Stubbornness (Hosea 4:16a)

Jeremiah 5:22a,23,24a

7. Demonic influence (Hosea 4:12b; 5:4)

Ephesians 6:11,12

This is a sermon outline that accompanies the CD “The Unfaithful/Forgiven Marriage,” from the message series “Extreme Makeover: Marriage Edition,” by Pastor Shane Womack, available in the bookstore.

HOW TO HEAL FROM ADULTERY

1. Confession (2 Samuel 12:13)

Psalm 51:1-4,7,9,10

Hosea 5:14

2. Outrage (Isaiah 54:8a)

Jeremiah 3:20

Ezekiel 16:30,32,42,43a

3. Severance (Hosea 2:17)

Proverbs 28:13

Joshua 23:7

Jude 23b

4. Compassion (Hosea 3:1)

Isaiah 54:7,8

Jeremiah 3:12

Hosea 14:4

5. Forgiveness (Ezekiel 16:62,63)

Hebrews 12:15

6. Renewal (Hosea 2:14,15,19,20)

James 4:4,6-8

This is a sermon outline that accompanies the CD "The Unfaithful/Forgiven Marriage," from the message series "Extreme Makeover: Marriage Edition," by Pastor Shane Womack, available in the bookstore.

ARE YOU A CONTROL FREAK?

1. Understand how control works in your life. (Psalm 26:2; 1 Corinthians 11:28,31-32)
2. Appropriate control of self is a Biblical value, rigidity is not. (Proverbs 25:28)
3. Displays of irritability, anger and impatience towards others are usually reflections of control. (James 1:20)
4. Setting expectations and taking corrective action with people is not unhealthy control, but micromanagement is.
5. Pay special attention to the following behaviors and patterns, they are usually reflections of unhealthy control:
 - When a person doesn't do what you want them to do, you blame them and then distance yourself from them.
 - You expect others to listen to you first rather than you listening to them.
 - You are critical and rejecting of others who do not take your advice or make the same mistakes over and over again.
 - You need to be right.
 - You frequently use the phrases "God told me" or "God showed me."
 - You give gifts and favors with strings or requirements attached.
 - You are defensive in your communication with others, needing to explain yourself or show how you are not wrong.
 - You are upset and angry with another because they are not meeting your legitimate needs and therefore feel justified in your anger and demand that they change.
 - When your spouse or people reject you or your ministry, you doubt they are hearing from God.
 - You use guilt trips, threats, ultimatums and shaming to manipulate other peoples' responses.
 - You make your spouse account for every dollar spent and every minute of their day.

Adapted from Alfred H. Ells, M.C. Counselor's Corner, volume III, issue 5.

Let's begin with a definition of communication.*

Communication is:

**By Dr. Joe Sutherland of Emmanuel Christian Seminary*

WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE?

1. Incomplete Message

When an important part of the communication transaction is missing.

Response: *Ask, what is your message?*

2. Double Message

When two verbal messages contradict.

Response: *I'm a little confused. On one hand I hear you say _____ but on the other hand I hear you say _____. Can you help clear up my confusion? Ask, what is your message?*

3. Mixed Message

When the verbal message and the non-verbal message doesn't match.
Albert Mehrabian's study found that the total impact of a message breaks down as follows:

- 7% Verbal (words)
- 38% Vocal (volume, tone, pitch, rhythm)
- 55% Body Language (facial, posture)

Response: *I hear your words say _____, but your voice or nonverbal are saying _____. What is your message?*

BLOCKS TO LISTENING

1. **Comparing:** You're trying to assess who is smarter, more competent, more emotionally stable, who has suffered more. It is difficult to listen if you're busy seeing if you measure up. (II Corinthians 10:12)
2. **Mind Reading:** You're not paying attention to what another says, rather you're trying to figure out what the other person is REALLY thinking. The mind reader looks for intonations and subtle clues and relies heavily on intuitions, hunches, and vague misgivings. (Proverbs 15:28)
3. **Filtering:** You pay attention to only that which is important to you. Sometimes you may quit listening when you find out there is not a real SERIOUS problem. You may also "not hear" negative, critical or unpleasant things.
4. **Rehearsing:** You can't listen well when you are carefully preparing your next comment. You LOOK interested, but your mind is on your own agenda. (Proverbs 15:28)
5. **Judging:** This is essentially a hypercritical evaluation based on pre-judgment. Judgment or discernment should only be made after careful reflection of the communication. (Isaiah 11:3)
6. **Dreaming:** As you listen, something someone says triggers a chain of thoughts regarding issues unrelated to the present. This often happens when one is feeling bored or anxious, or when there is little commitment to the one speaking.
7. **Identifying:** You refer everything a person tells you back to your own experience. The focus is really upon yourself and your own need to be heard. (Proverbs 18:2)
8. **Advising:** You have the solution that will solve the problem. With a little information you can "fix it." You easily miss the feelings and pain communicated. (Proverbs 18:13)
9. **Sparring:** Your desire to argue and debate. You focus on that which you disagree about. One type of sparring is the put-down. (Proverbs 20:3)
10. **Being Right:** You can't listen openly because you have to protect yourself from being wrong. (Proverbs 12:15)
11. **Derailing:** You suddenly change the subject because you're bored or uncomfortable with the topic. One way to derail is to continually respond with a joke or quip.
12. **Placating:** You want people to like you so you agree with most anything that is said. (Ephesians 4:15)

Note: Self-awareness is crucial to overcome listening blocks!

PREDICTORS OF MARRIAGE TROUBLES

Howard Markman, Susan L. Blumberg, and Scott Stanley studied 135 couples and tracked their marriage success over the years. They found four predictors of troubled marriages. If couples never learned how to deal with conflict, then they were prone to separate and divorce. This information was aired on “Focus on the Family” Radio Show, tape #CS971. To order, call (800) 232.6459. These studies are found in Fighting for Your Marriage by Howard Markman, Susan L. Blumberg, Scott Stanley, and in A Lasting Promise by Scott Stanley.

1. W

(Physically running away from conflict; Leaving the room, house, without resolution; Withdrawing your spirit from your spouse; Cold shoulder, silent treatment).

Solomon	Song of Solomon 5:2-6
Nabal	I Samuel 25:2,3,36,37
Jonah	Jonah 1:2,3; 3:1,2

2. I (Ridicule, insult, devalue, trivialize, refute, dismiss, deny)

Elkanah	I Samuel 1:2,6-8
Job’s Wife	Job 2:7-10
Saul	I Samuel 20:30
Jesus Validates	John 1:47; Luke 7:9; Luke 22:28

3. N **Interpretation**

(Seeing your spouse in the worst possible light; Assuming negative scenarios about your spouse; Overall pessimism – viewing spouse with “dark glasses on.” Slow to acknowledge your spouse’s good points and spiritual growth; Locking your spouse into the prison of past failures).

Joseph	Matthew 1:18-20	
Michal	II Samuel 6:14,16,20-22	
A. Polluted Mind	Titus 1:15	Proverbs 17:20
B. Inventing Negatives	Nehemiah 6:8	
C. Spiritual Highhorse	Job 4:8	
D. Satanic Thought	Revelation 12:10b	
Jesus Positively Interprets	John 1:42, Luke 22:31,32	

4. E

(Fueling or starting arguments; Inciting or provoking emotional reactions; Pouring “gas on the fire;” Yelling, screaming, using inflammatory speech; Making mountains out of molehills).

Zipporah	Exodus 4:24-26	
Samson’s Wife	Judges 14:16,17; 16:16	
	Proverbs 15:1,18	Ecclesiastes 7:8b, 9,21
	Proverbs 26:21	John 10:10
	Proverbs 29:11,22	Matthew 7:24-27
	Proverbs 19:11	John 8:23,24
	Proverbs 17:14	Luke 13:5

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS

GROUND RULES

1. No Yelling / Outbursts of Anger

Proverbs 15:1,18 Ephesians 4:31 Galatians 5:19,20

2. No Swear Words / Cutting Words / Name-Calling / Verbal Abuse

Proverbs 8:13; 15:4 Proverbs 12:18 Ephesians 4:29; 5:4

3. No Interrupting

Proverbs 18:13 James 1:19

4. No Trashdigging

1 Corinthians 13:4-6a Proverbs 17:9

5. No Table Turning

John 4:17-20

6. No Negative Comparisons

2 Corinthians 10:12

7. No Withdrawing / Shutting Down / Stonewalling

Proverbs 18:1 Jonah 1:1-3a; 3:1 Acts 20:20a

8. No Blameshifting

Genesis 3:11-13

9. No Ranting / Flooding

Proverbs 27:4a Ephesians 4:15

10. No Using the Words “You Never” or “You Always”

Proverbs 26:21 Matthew 18:15

11. No Taking Up Other People’s Offences

Psalm 15:3 Proverbs 3:30 Proverbs 26:17 Proverbs 18:17

12. No Slandering / Spreading Strife to Others

Proverbs 6:12a, 14b Proverbs 6:16,19b Proverbs 16:28

RULES OF CONFESSION

1. Examine Your Own Heart for Your Sin

Psalm 26:2 Ps. 139:23,24 1 Corinthians 11:28a,31 Matthew 5:23,24

2. Humbly Apologize for Wounding Others

James 5:16 Matthew 23:12 Jeremiah 6:14,15a

3. Don't Rationalize/ Justify Your Misbehavior

1 Samuel 15:20,21

4. Ask for Forgiveness / Grace / Mercy

Genesis 50:17

5. Vow to Never Do that Sin Again

Proverbs 28:13 Matthew 3:8

RULES OF FORGIVENESS

1. Extend Grace / Forgiveness When Asked

John 17:3,4

2. Forgive From Your Heart

Matthew 18:35 Matthew 6:12,14,15 Ephesians 4:32
2 Corinthians 6:11-13; 7:2 Mark 3:5

3. Confront if Your Offense is Not Addressed

Galatians 6:1

Covenant

I agree to abide by these rules. If I violate these rules, I give my spouse permission to bring the violation to my attention, and I will retract, apologize, ask forgiveness, and continue with the discussion.

Husband

Wife

Date

Date

WHAT'S YOUR LOVE LANGUAGE?

In 1992, Gary Chapman wrote The Five Love Languages. In this book, it is suggested that everyone has a preference as to how his or her spouse can best emotionally express love to him/her. Your own love language may not be your spouse's love language. A common mistake is that a husband or wife will attempt to communicate emotional love in their own language, but not their spouse's.

The Five Love Languages Are:

1. Words of affirmation
2. Quality time
3. Receiving gifts
4. Acts of service
5. Physical touch

Some key questions in determining your own love language are:

- A. What makes you feel most loved by your spouse?
- B. What do you desire above all else?
- C. What have you most often requested of your spouse?
- D. What does your spouse do or fail to do that hurts you most deeply?
(The opposite of what hurts you most is probably your love language.)

Ask your spouse what they think their own love language is.

DOES DIVORCE MAKE PEOPLE HAPPY?

That's the question the Institute of American Values asked in a 2002 study. The answer was no – the average couple is not happier five years later if they chose to divorce. The report found:

- Divorce did not reduce symptoms of depression.
- More than 2/3 of unhappily married people who remained married reported that their marriages were happy five years later.
- Among couples who had rated their marriage as very unhappy, 80% said they were happily married five years later.
- If a couple is unhappy, their chances of being happily married five years later are 64% if they remain together, but only 19% if they divorce and remarry.

This was one of the first empirical studies that actually examined if a divorce makes people happier. To the contrary it showed that couples who endure and get counseling can emerge happier than if they had separated and divorced. Furthermore, two states studied divorced people which revealed major regrets about their decision.

- 46% of divorcees in New Jersey wished they had tried harder to salvage their marriage.
- 66% of divorcees in Minnesota said the same.

MARRIAGE IS BETTER FOR YOUR HEALTH

You'll live longer and healthier if you're married than if you divorce.

- Robert Coombs documents that life expectancy is significantly lower for divorced men and women.
- A Yale study revealed that you're more likely to survive cancer if you're married.

CONSEQUENCES OF DIVORCE ON CHILDREN

There has been a plethora of studies that all show the same thing: divorce has negative consequences on children.

- “*The Longevity Project*” by Howard S. Friedman and Leslie R. Martin, verifies that children of divorced parents die almost five years earlier than children with intact families.
- Judith Wallerstein and Joan B. Kelly report in Surviving the Breakup that children of divorce experience more depression, learning difficulties, premarital sex at an earlier age and out of wedlock pregnancies. Children of divorce are three times more likely to be referred to psychological help and three times more likely to divorce or never marry. One third of children of divorce have serious problems.
- Amoto, Keith and Emery in a 2003 study enumerate six factors that lead to increased unhappiness in children of divorce:
 - Parental loss
 - Economic loss
 - More life stress
 - Poor parental adjustment
 - Lack of parental competence
 - Exposure to conflict between parents

All of the above suggests that you’re better off married, and your kids will be better off if you stay married. If you tough it out, learn how to be better spouses, then you’ll echo these words in Song of Solomon:

Many waters cannot quench love, nor will rivers overflow it (8:7a).

God calls us to an indestructible type of love. Let’s choose to love our spouse no matter what happens.

SEXBUSTERS

Put a 0, 1, or 2 on the line before each statement to indicate your opinion:

0 = zero factor in our marriage
1 = minor factor in our marriage
2 = major factor in our marriage

- _____ 1. Your parents are too involved in your marriage.
(Genesis 2:24)
- _____ 2. You had sex before marriage with your spouse.
(Song of Solomon 2:7, 3:5, 8:4)
- _____ 3. You harbor resentment, anger or bitterness.
(Ephesians 4:31-32)
- _____ 4. You view or watch pornographic material.
(Psalm 101:3, Romans 16:19)
- _____ 5. You have a negative or nasty view of sex.
(Genesis 1:28, Song of Solomon 4:7, 5:1,16)
- _____ 6. You were sexually molested and never got help or counseling. (Proverbs 15:22)
- _____ 7. You go to bed too late and get up too early.
(Psalm 127:2)
- _____ 8. You have poor technique on the marriage bed.
(Song of Solomon 4)
- _____ 9. You are not emotionally connected; evidenced by nagging, harshness or withdrawal. (I Peter 3:1-7, Proverbs 21:9,19)
- _____ 10. You feel like you don't love your spouse.
(Ephesians 5:26, Titus 2:3-5)

- _____ 11. You will be nice to your spouse when your spouse is nice to you (Matthew 7:12).
- _____ 12. You have unsubmitive, rebellious attitudes. (Ephesians 5:25)
- _____ 13. You use sex as a weapon, payback or bribe. (Matthew 10:8)
- _____ 14. You don't make time for sex. (Song of Solomon 8:2)
- _____ 15. You don't think it's worth the effort. (Proverbs 5:19)
- _____ 16. You are focusing on getting, not giving. (Romans 15:2-3)
- _____ 17. You don't trust your spouse. (I Peter 5:5)
- _____ 18. Your spouse is not attractive to you. (Song of Solomon 4:1-7)
- _____ 19. You think of sex as a job or duty, but not as fun. (Song of Solomon 5:1)

SEXUAL REFUSAL COMMITMENT

1. Because God's Word forbids sexual refusal except for mutually agreed upon seasons of prayer... (I Corinthians 7:5a)
2. Because Satan will tempt us because of our lack of self-control... (I Corinthians 7:5b)
3. Because I no longer have authority over my own body, but my spouse does... (I Corinthians 7:4)
4. Because I am commanded to fulfill my duty (what I owe) to my spouse... (I Corinthians 7:2)
5. Because we are now one flesh... (Genesis 2:24)
6. Because we are to regard one another's needs as more important than our own... (Philippians 2:3-4)
7. Because we are to please one another for their good and edification... (Romans 15:2)

We therefore pledge to make ourselves 100% willing and available for Biblical lovemaking and to not directly or indirectly refuse my spouse's sexual needs and desires.

Husband

Wife

BITTERNESS

Guilt is what happens to us when we sin. Bitterness is what can happen to us when somebody sins against us.

The Greek word for bitterness in the New Testament is “PIKROS,” with the root word “PIK.” It means to cut, prick and thus to be pointed, sharp. We get the word pickaxe or ice pick from this Greek word. A bitter person has a sharp edge in his spirit.

Bitterness is unresolved anger, bearing a grudge, or a deep hurt that has never been healed. The Bible says to get rid of all bitterness (Ephesians 4:31). A key verse on bitterness is Hebrews 12:15.

Cure for Bitterness:

See to it that no one falls short (or misses) the grace of God...

Reality of Bitterness:

And that no root of bitterness springs up

Results of Bitterness:

And causes trouble, and by it many be defiled.

Bitterness can cause untold damage in marriage. The obvious cure for bitterness is forgiveness from the heart (Matthew 18:35). Forgive means to release, literally “to send from.”

Jesus (Luke 23:33-34), Paul (II Timothy 4:16-17) and Stephen (Acts 7:60) all prayed that God would not count their offenders’ sins to be held against them.

Joseph, abandoned by his brothers, had “50/20 vision” in Genesis 50:20, stating, “You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good...” Indeed, God can cause all things to work together for good for those who love God (Romans 8:28).

Unresolved anger and an unforgiving heart gives a foothold for Satan in your life and marriage (Ephesians 4:26-27; II Corinthians 2:10-11).

We have a choice to become bitter or better. The consequences of not forgiving are severe (Matthew 6:12-15). The blessing of receiving God’s grace and interceding in prayer for our offenders is our own restoration (Job 42:10).

COMMON CAUSES OF BITTERNESS

Check every situation that applies to your life.

- _____ Death of a loved one
- _____ Broken engagement
- _____ Divorce
- _____ Adultery
- _____ Sexual refusal
- _____ Physical abuse
- _____ Rape
- _____ Emotional abuse
- _____ Rejected by family
- _____ Parents' divorce
- _____ Rebellious children
- _____ Wrongful termination (employment)
- _____ Passed over for a promotion
- _____ Falsely accused, blamed
- _____ Imprisonment
- _____ Victim of fire, flood, etc.
- _____ Crime victim
- _____ Financially cheated
- _____ Accident
- _____ Injury
- _____ Illness
- _____ Disease
- _____ Infertility
- _____ Birth defect
- _____ Medical misdiagnosis
- _____ Church division
- _____ Abandonment
- _____ Lawsuit
- _____ Bankruptcy
- _____ Flunked a grade
- _____ Abortion
- _____ Learning disability
- _____ Family alcoholism
- _____ Betrayed by a friend
- _____ Forced employment

INDICATIONS OF BITTERNESS

1. Unable or unwilling to pray for your offender.
2. Plotting or hoping to take revenge.
3. Lose sleep thinking about the offense.
4. Cringe when you see or think about the offender.
5. Angry outbursts connected to offense and offenders.
6. Remember exact details of cruel events from years ago.
7. Retell your offenses frequently to others.
8. Physical problems related to bitterness (ulcers, colitis, etc.)
9. Frown lines, vertical cleavage in the forehead, piercing stares.
10. The truth that God loves your offender causes you to question God.

Question: Do any of these apply to you?

THE LETTER THAT CAME TOO LATE*

"I did not leave easily. I did not just wake up one day and say to myself, 'I want out'. When we first married, I loved you because of yourself. Later I tried to love you in spite of yourself. Then I reached the point where I could not love you - because of yourself.

We grew in total different directions over the years. We were never really friends. You had too many suggestions about what was wrong with me to have really liked me.

You always said that I never communicated with you. I told you things in so many ways, but you rarely listened - with your ears or with your consciousness. I tried to tell you things without coming right out and hurting you. You say I should have said it anyway. Now, you would accept the criticism, but for the better part of our life together, you never wanted to listen to anyone's opinion but your own. I never felt that you supported anything that I chose to do of my own accord. I was denied music at home because you didn't like it. The constant lack of stroking and genuine concern took its toll over the years.

I truly feel that you felt that the universe revolved around you and that everyone must tow the mark, which you arbitrarily set. No one could ever do it. You demanded things of people that you are not willing to give yourself. You demand and demand and demand some more.

Many times I dreaded coming home because your moods were so unpredictable. The only place I felt worthwhile was in my job, which you did not see as worthwhile because it was a music job.

You always say that I never took a leadership role in the marriage. You would not have followed lovingly, but bitterly.

As far as salaries were concerned, yours only bothered me in as much as you used it as a well-placed dagger when the opportunity arose. My self-worth comes from a job well done and putting out a good effort not from whether I make as much on my paycheck as the guy down the road.

When I first said I didn't love you, right away everyone assumed that there must be another woman. That solution is easy to deal with. The only woman I left because of - was you!

You always like to say that I must not love the children to just walk out on them. That's not true and never will be. They understand more than you realize. I'm sorry if you still feel that you love me. I really don't think you know how to genuinely care about someone else. Please try to accept what I have said as honesty rather than cruelty.

As far as sex was concerned, I felt that it was at your convenience and that your attitude was that it was a necessary duty rather than an enjoyable, sharing experience.

I didn't leave because of sex or because of your coffee indulgences or your telephone fetishes or because of a dirty house. There was not just one reason. No matter how much our friends want us together, it cannot be. Please let go."

**An actual letter written by a husband to his wife prior to their divorce.
Christown Women's Bible Study, Phoenix, AZ.*

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