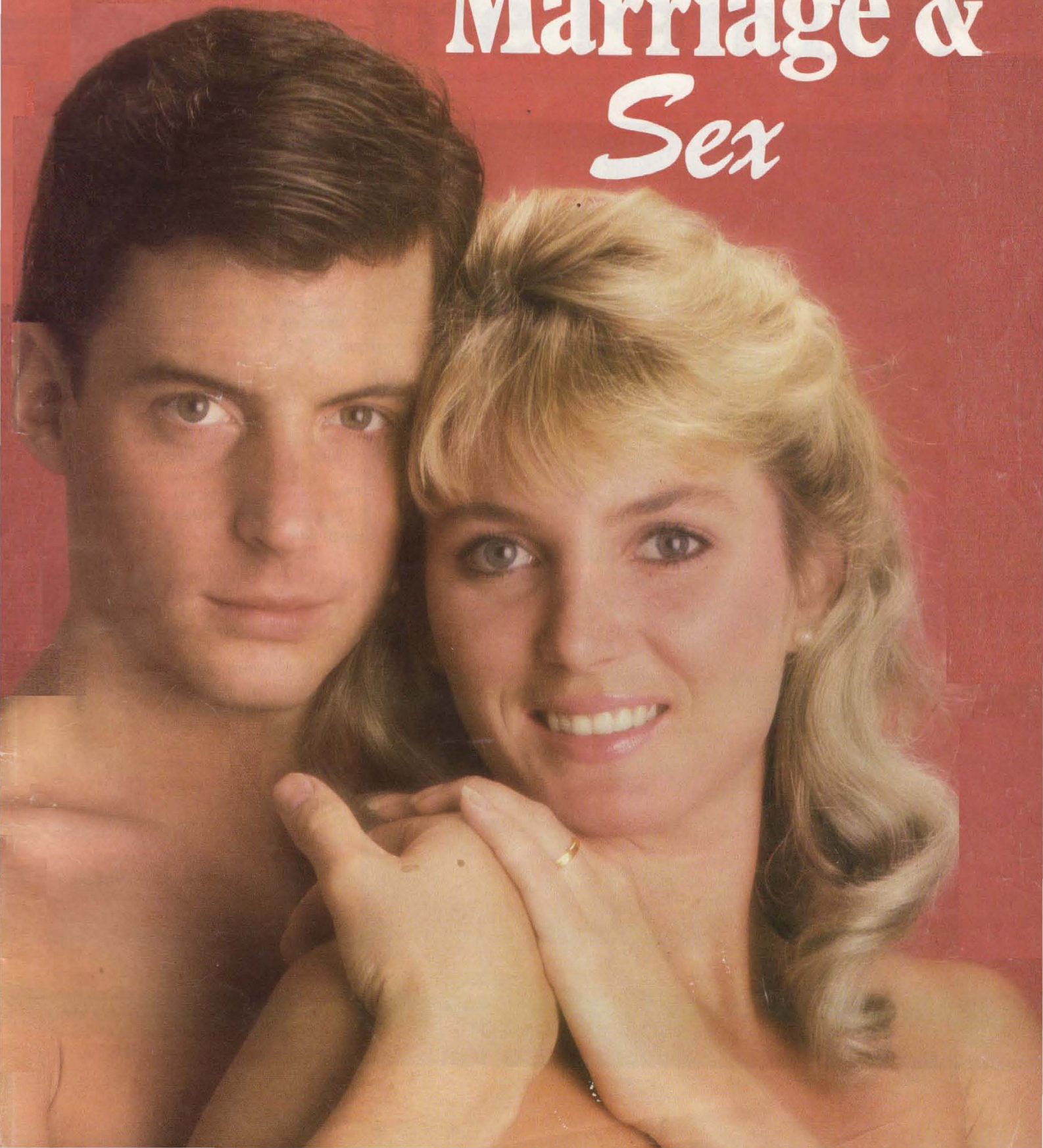


Love, Marriage & Sex



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Now stop and think for a moment. Why did God ordain the human relationship of MARRIAGE?

Animals reproduce. But animals do not marry! Animals are born with instinct. They need little or no teaching. As soon as a calf is born, it will begin to stagger to its feet, while the cow just stands waiting. She does not need to teach her calf how to walk, how to take its food, how to do anything. A little wobbly and unsteady the first minutes, the calf is soon up and walking.

But with humans all this is different. The newborn human does not get up and walk immediately to its food. The tiny baby is helpless. It has mind—but at birth there is NO KNOWLEDGE as yet in its mind. It must be taught! It needs parents to teach it! It matures so very much more slowly than other creatures! Yet its potentiality is infinitely higher! And for this higher purpose, parental guidance and FAMILY LIFE are NECESSARY!

God made cattle “according to its kind.” He made “every winged bird according to its kind.” But he made MAN after the God kind!

Why the Family

Now, incredible as it may sound to those who do not UNDERSTAND the revelation of God’s TRUTH—and only an infinitesimal minority do—GOD is a FAMILY!

Let me make this most wonderful truth of all time PLAIN!

First, go back once again to the very first words in God’s revelation of knowledge to us: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

God inspired Moses to write those words in Hebrew, not in the English words above. The Hebrew name here translated “God” is *Elohim*. It is a plural form used with a singular meaning, rather like the English words *family*, *group*, *team*. One family, but composed of more than one person. One group, but unless composed of more than one person, it would not be a group. One athletic team,

WHY the Family?



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composed of two or more players besides a number of substitutes.

Almost no one today knows that God is, actually, a divine FAMILY. One family. That family is ONE GOD.

A clever Satan has deceived people into almost every other belief imaginable about God. Most have been deceived into believing God is only THREE persons—LIMITING God to three persons and misrepresenting the Holy Spirit, which flows from God and from Christ, to be a person.

Others think of God as ONE PERSON ONLY.

But notice, again, in the New Testament, John 1:1-5, 14: "In the beginning was the Word." Sounds similar to Genesis 1:1, doesn't it? In Genesis 1:1, it is "In the beginning GOD . . .," meaning more than one person forming ONE God. In John 1, the English word *Word* is translated from the original Greek word *logos*, which means "word," "spokesman," "revelatory thought," as a being or person.

The next words in John 1 are "... and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (verses 1-3, *Revised Authorized Version*).

This "Logos" was a separate personage. He existed "from the beginning" the same as God. He ALWAYS self-existed. He existed with God. And he, also, was God. They both coexisted forever. "All things" (words elsewhere translated "the universe") were made by him—the Word—the divine Spokesman.

But now notice verse 14: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." This, of course, is speaking of Jesus Christ. In the human flesh, he was begotten of God the Father, the only one ever so begotten before human birth.

At the time of this begetting and human birth "the Word" became the Son of God.

The Father, from heaven, said of Jesus, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt.

Marriage is a physical union but a divine institution. Almighty God ordained it! It did not evolve! It is not of man's devising.

17:5). Jesus, praying, called God "Father"—Father and Son, a FAMILY relationship. The Church, at the resurrection to immortal SPIRIT life, is to MARRY the resurrected and glorified Christ (Eph. 5:25-28). So we have here a FAMILY relationship—father, son, husband and wife. And the wife is to be composed of born children of God.

In MAN, God is reproducing himself. Man has the supreme potentiality of being actually born into the divine God family!

Do you realize what that means? Of course, God is composed of immortal SPIRIT. Man, like animals, is composed in this life of material FLESH—matter! But the transcendent essential factor is that God IS PERFECT SPIRITUAL CHARACTER! It is the supreme intelligence, combined with holy and righteous CHARACTER OF MIND, that most importantly distinguishes God from every other living creature. No animal has this potential, but it is the true destiny of MAN. Of course God, too, possesses supreme, ALLMIGHTY POWER. But without right CHARACTER, this power would be destructive and dangerous!

What is this righteous spiritual character?

It is that controlled ability, in a separate independent entity, to come to a knowledge of the true and right from the false and, further, to use the self-discipline to will and to actually DO the right. And how define right? By the spiritual law of God!

This necessitates that each individual human be an independent entity, with a mind of his or her own—with freedom of choice (free moral agency). It requires MIND to absorb KNOWLEDGE, to reason, to

think, to plan, to devise, to draw conclusions, to will and to act.

Inanimate objects have no mind, make no decisions, have no character. Animals have instinct, but they do not possess human-level consciousness of self, do not absorb knowledge from which to reason abstractly. Animals do not create, question or decide whether to obey moral codes.

Humans are born with MINDS. Humans must be taught and learn. The human mind can absorb knowledge and reason from it—think creatively, formulate plans, make decisions, render judgments and exercise self-discipline.

Man has the capacity to develop righteous CHARACTER. This character is not created instantaneously. It develops through experience, and experience requires TIME. A human baby is born without knowledge, but with capacity for acquiring it and of developing righteous CHARACTER. The human has the supreme potential of receiving God's own HOLY SPIRIT that imparts the divine nature, to equip the MIND to comprehend revealed spiritual knowledge!

Human babies—born helpless—need the tender care, the loving instruction, the patient training and discipline and the warm affection and love of a mother and father. They need the warmth and protection and security of family and of home life. And they are of supreme importance—for they are the potential HEIRS of God!

Animals have never been given FAMILY relationship as humans experience it. Angels have never enjoyed FAMILY status. The family relationship is a God-PLANE relationship—not an angel-plane relationship. And God bestowed it on MAN! Because MAN is to be born INTO THE GOD FAMILY.

Why Marriage?

Of all life forms—whether plant, animal or angel—in all God's creation, MAN ALONE was created for MARRIAGE—for HOME and FAMILY LIFE!

Man is, now, composed of matter. Yet in man, and in MAN ONLY, is God's CREATION still going on! Humans, by repentance, surrender to God and acceptance of Christ,

may be in mind and attitude converted—may receive God's Holy Spirit. Thus, they are actually begotten as God's children. They may have direct contact with God and call him FATHER! They are brought into a FATHER-AND-SON relationship with God!

This is possible for no other creature—not even angels! Angels were not, never can be, begotten and BORN of God! Each angel is a separate creation. No angel can ever become a part of the DIVINE FAMILY OR KINGDOM OF GOD!

Notice! God says: "For to which of the angels did He ever say: 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You'? And again: 'I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son'?" (Heb. 1:5).

Neither animal, nor angel, nor any other being, except MAN, can be literally begotten by spiritual reproductive process, and then actually BORN into the divine GOD FAMILY!

Humans are, if converted through Jesus Christ, the heirs of the GOD FAMILY. They are to enter the divine FAMILY. They are, even now, the begotten children of God. Therefore God ordained the family relationship for human beings.

Family relationships demand MARRIAGES!

The FAMILY relationship demands the HUSBAND-AND-WIFE relationship! And that demands MARRIAGE and faithfulness to that matrimonial bond! The CHURCH of God is merely that BODY composed of the begotten children of God. And the church, as a BODY, is the affianced BRIDE OF CHRIST, to MARRY Christ at the time of the resurrection and his Second Coming!

Now UNDERSTAND! The husband-and-wife relationship, and the

family relationship, are God-plane relationships!

Since humans were put on earth for the very PURPOSE of being begotten, and then BORN into the God FAMILY—which is the KINGDOM OF GOD—the ETERNAL has endowed this GOD-PLANE relationship for HUMANS and for humans only! What a wonderful privilege to be humans—to be given the marriage relationship now, to marry Christ and become part of the God family!

The Affianced Bride

Here is another reason for the institution of marriage in the human family. It is to teach us—to constantly remind us—of our sacred relationship to Jesus Christ!

Here is the vital teaching: "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word [the Word, if obeyed, washes away error], that He might present it to Himself a glorious church [glorified—deified], not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

"So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. . . . For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' This is a great mystery,

but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:22-28, 30-32).

Notice! For this reason—because of the coming marriage (spiritually) between Christ and the church—because the church is, now, the affianced bride, engaged to marry Christ—FOR THIS REASON, God ordained the MARRIAGE institution for humans! But not for animals! Not for angels!

Notice Revelation 19:7, speaking of the Second Coming of Christ in glory: "... the marriage of the Lamb [Christ] has come, and His wife has made herself ready." Only those made ready in righteous character will be presented to him then!

Why Home and Family

So, in addition to the family relationship, there is also the divine marriage relationship.

So understand! The husband-and-wife relationship and the family relationship are God-plane relationships!

Humans are free moral agents. God never forces one to be truly converted—to become his very begotten son. Yet the purpose God is working out here below is to reproduce himself—to bring, through Christ, "many sons to glory" (Heb. 2:10) in the divine KINGDOM OF GOD!

Since humans were put on earth for the very purpose of being begotten, and then born into the God family, the Eternal has endowed this God-plane family status for humans, now—and for humans only!

What a wonderful privilege to be given the MARRIAGE and FAMILY relationships that we may be prepared for the spiritual marriage to CHRIST and the divine family status, for eternity, in THE KINGDOM OF GOD! □

Love, Marriage & Sex!

It's important to get them in the right order.

THE THREE most important ingredients to successful marriage have been terribly abused.

Some fall in love and never marry. Others marry but are not in love. Millions of people experiment with sex without even being in love.

Still others are in love and are married but fail to understand the importance of a wholesome and proper sexual relationship.

Not many seem to be putting all three—love, marriage and sex—together in the right order.

Love to Build a Relationship

Almost everyone has experienced what he or she thought was love, only to find out it really wasn't. Perhaps your case was typical. It probably first happened early in the teen years when you were first attracted to a member of the opposite sex.

There was the strange, tingling, excited feeling that would just not go away. You thought you saw shooting stars. Felt like you were walking on air. And you could have danced all night.

Later, you probably came to realize that was not love at all. Your parents tried to tell you it was "puppy love." It was just infatuation.

Maybe you even experienced these feelings of "love" three or four or more times—each time thinking

this new feeling was the really one true forever and ever love.

Unfortunately thousands of people make terrible mistakes because of not knowing how to handle adolescent emotions. It often leads to premarital sexual experience, which in turn often leads to premarital pregnancy—and millions of babies born out of wedlock every single year.

Others, misinterpreting their feelings of "love," leap into premature marriages. A large percentage of those who marry and don't divorce are not really happy. They stay married for the sake of the children, or for religious or financial reasons. They find they are not really in love at all.

How sad.

And of course where and when to fit the sexual relationship into this picture is often confusing. The signals of our liberated society tell us to practice sex whenever, however, whyever and in whatever manner we want to. "Consenting adults" is the catch phrase.

The God-given formula for happiness and success in marriage is usually totally ignored. That formula is the title of this article: Be in love, marry and have a healthy sexual relationship. You can't build a marriage without love. And sex should NEVER be practiced outside the confines of marriage.

But What Is Love?

If you had to choose just one word

to describe God, LOVE would be the best word. The apostle John simply stated it: "God is love" (I John 4:8).

From what God is and what God does we can understand the deep and significant emotion called love.

God's love was most manifest by the ultimate gift he gave mankind: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Love, you see, is not a feeling of selfish tingling emotions, like the flaming sunset in an orange colored sky. It's not that feeling of desire and passion so often mistaken as love.

Real love is the ability to put one's selfish interests and feelings aside and GIVE to the other person.

Outside of marriage, the passions that lead to sexual experimentation are nothing more than lust.

Can you imagine a teenage couple necking in the backseat of a car whispering to each other, "Oh, how I lust after you"?

No, they say, "Oh, how I love you, I love you, I'll always love you." But what they *really mean* is, "I am lusting after you." The chances are that affair will last only a short time, and they will each be whispering the same thing to other persons later on.

Love—real love—is not even possible without a degree of maturity. Mature love that prepares a couple for a lifetime of marriage and commitment begins slowly and grows. Love never stands still.

Of course love has to start somewhere. Romantic love begins with an attraction to a member of the opposite sex. There will probably be a beginning feeling of infatuation. But love that leads to marriage must grow beyond that and not be based on attraction alone.

Understanding Love from the Greek Language

In the English language there is the one word *love*. Because of that, few are aware that there are different meanings to the words in the Bible translated into English as *love*. In the Greek language, the language of the New Testament,

three different words translate into the English word *love*. By understanding them, one can better grasp what kind of love to strive for in marriage.

The first word is *eros*. It forms the root of our English word *erotic*. It is the kind of love discussed in this article up to now.

Of course *eros* is an important kind of love. Author H. Norman Wright defines *eros* in his book *Pillars of Marriage*, as love that seeks sensual expression. It is desire. It is romantic, sexual love. It is inspired by the biological structure of human nature—placed in mankind at creation.

Of itself, *eros* is not wrong. But it is a kind of love that should never act alone. Unfortunately it is the only love many people ever experience. But romantic, sensual love is only part of the God-given concept of TOTAL love.

The second kind of love comes from the Greek word *philia*. Again you may recognize the meaning—for example, the name of the city of Philadelphia means the city of “brotherly love.” *Philia* is friendship, companionship, the physical as well as emotional sharing of time and interests. It shows a desire to cooperate.

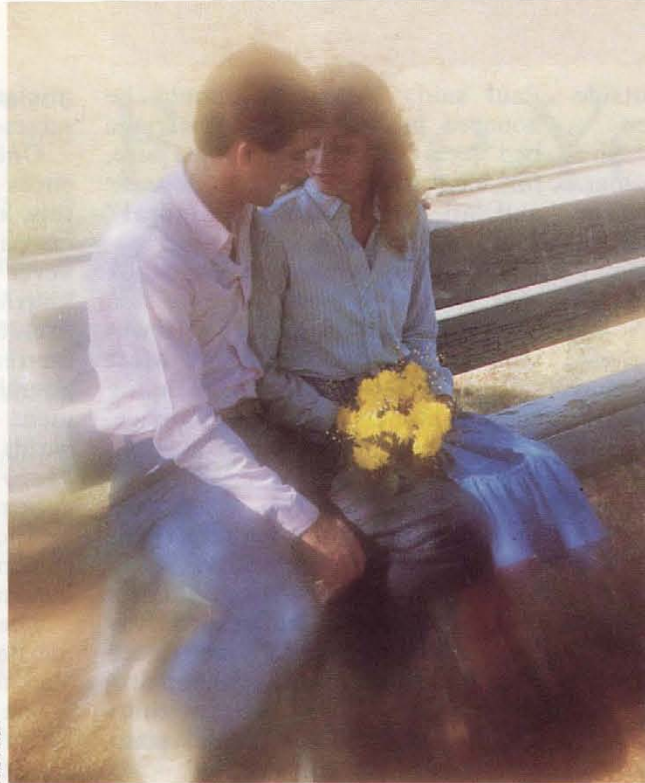
Mr. Wright suggests the difference between *eros* and *philia* is that *eros* is a face-to-face relationship while *philia* is a shoulder-to-shoulder relationship. When applied to marriage it depicts a husband and wife working together. And parents and children and brothers and sisters working together.

A friend is someone whose company you prefer. Someone you want to be with. Every good marriage has *philia* love—husbands and wives who want to be with each other.

But these two words do not tell the whole story of love.

The Greatest Love of All

There is yet another Greek word that explains the deep and spiritual



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meaning of love. The word is *agape*.

Eros produces romance—makes your mate your lover. *Philia* makes your mate your friend. But *agape* goes far beyond. *Agape* is a love of total commitment. *Agape* means “selflessness.” *Agape* is total GIVING love.

This is the love God expressed when he gave his only begotten Son. He had no self-interest. He was giving the one gift that would make possible the forgiveness of sin and would save mankind.

In the human sphere, *agape* love is thoughtfulness, concern, sensitivity to the needs of others.

But *agape* is not a natural love. We were not born with it. It is not the love of adolescence. *Eros* is essentially in mankind by creation. *Philia* comes naturally—we all want friends. But *agape* is acquired by maturity.

And the highest form of love we can attain is a gift that God can give us. The very giving and loving nature of God can be put within human beings by a supernatural miracle. Paul wrote, “. . . the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy [Spirit] which is given unto us” (Rom. 5:5). That is *agape* love.

One has not truly loved until that selfless love has been experienced. It is when every desire is for

the other person. Jesus said, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). If and when, in marriage, you come to the point you would give your life for your mate, then and only then, have you experienced the penetrating meaning of love.

Relevant to *agape* love in marriage Paul further said in Ephesians 5:28-29, NIV: “In this same way, husbands ought to love [*agape*] their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church” (verse 25).

It is natural to love the self. It is not so natural to love someone else that much. Thus God says that we ought to grow in love toward our mates equal to the love we have for ourselves. No one can expect more. But so few ever come close. Most are simply so selfish they do not achieve the real depth of love.

Too many marriages are based on only one kind of love—*eros*. That love usually will not hold up under pressure. And sadly, too many marriages don’t even have *philia* love. Some husbands and wives are not even good friends.

Love Leads to Marriage

The teen years should be spent developing a wide variety of friends from both sexes. At a proper age young people can begin to date—but not just one person.

That way, a person can experience being with a variety of members of the opposite sex. You can know much better the type of person with whom you could spend the rest of your life.

Don’t even consider marriage unless it is built on a relationship of growing love. Don’t marry for convenience, desire, security, money or any other single reason. Marry because you have grown to love the person with whom you want to share the remainder of this physical life.

And never live together outside the sacred bonds of marriage.

From the beginning the Almighty God instituted the marriage covenant as the most sacred of all ceremonies. It is the start of a new life together—the beginning of a new family unit.

On the day God created Adam and Eve, he said, “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (Gen. 2:24, NIV). God presented Eve to Adam in the first marriage ceremony.

Marriage should be the most wonderful part of life. And the wedding one of the most joyous days to remember. As a minister, when I begin a marriage ceremony I usually start by saying, “There is no more joyous ceremony than this we now enter! Marriage is a natural union, but a divine institution ordained by the Creator God.”

A beautiful bride dressed in white, a handsome groom in a tuxedo or suit, and an event shared by family and friends should be a happy occasion well worth remembering.

How sad that too many marriages are not based on true love and don't last long. Joy turns quickly to sadness. Happiness turns to tragedy.

If only everyone would put these things in the proper order. First, learn to love—really and truly love. Then *before* beginning the sexual experience, plan a wonderful wedding.

Sex—Only After Marriage

God designed the human sexual experience to begin only one time in life—AFTER the marriage ceremony.

I know that doesn't sound modern and up-to-date. But it is the truth!

And the truth about why God created sex is vitally important.

Sex is part of the *eros* love God designed. It is part of our nature, our makeup. Sex, when practiced in love and in the confines of marriage, is holy and pure. The apostle

Paul said, “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed [sex in marriage] kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral” (Heb. 13:4, NIV).

Only two generations ago sex was a taboo subject. It was often wrongly regarded as dirty. It was seldom, if ever, discussed. Most were ignorant of the true meaning of the human sexual experience. Sex life within marriage was often tragically unfulfilling.

Then following two world wars the world burst into sexual experimentation and promiscuity.

In the 1950s Dr. Alfred Charles Kinsey conducted his research on human sexuality. More and more people became educated about sexual functions. Now there are literally hundreds of books and pamphlets on the subject.

At the same time moral standards declined. Organized religion exerted less influence. Liberality became the pacesetter. The result is a modern society gone rampant with sexual experimentation.

Virginity is an almost obsolescent word. Peer pressure and false or unbridled emotions have led to a great deal of premarital sex experimentation.

The modern argument is, “Those who have experienced intimate sexual relationships before marriage will be better sex partners in marriage.”

How sadly wrong that argument is.

The Almighty God who created us male and female designed sex to be practiced ONLY in the confines of marriage. Any other practice of sex is sin! Premarital sex is called fornication. Extramarital sex is adultery. Both are capital offenses against the holy law of God!

But sex within marriage—practiced in love—is clean, holy, pure.

The most obvious reason for sex is the reproduction of mankind. God has designed the marvelous human reproductive system to function in the confines of love and marriage. Husbands and wives produce, through sexual contact,

miniature reproductions of themselves—new life.

One of life's truly great experiences is the birth of a child. But this, again, was designed by God to be part of the marriage union—never to be experienced outside of marriage.

But there is even a greater and far-reaching purpose for human sexuality. Sex can be the embodiment of all three of the Greek words for love—*eros*, *philia* and *agape*.

Sex has been designed by God to be the guiding force in preserving and perpetuating love between a husband and wife.

The modern argument that premarital sexual experimentation can lead to greater joys in marital sex is one of the greatest lies ever perpetrated by Satan the devil.

Such experimentation before marriage or in extramarital affairs can only destroy the purity of what God designed.

The honeymoon is not meant to be a time for experienced sexual professionals to practice. The honeymoon should be that joyful, timid, beautiful, shy, exciting period of time when two people who have begun to love one another begin their new life together—and should be their first joyful expression of sexual intimacy.

Sexual experience should be learned together—*after* the marriage ceremony. Why should anyone go out and learn it all in advance with a whole army of other people? Why create the possibility for sexual comparisons and vivid memories of unpleasant experiences?

The honeymoon should be the beginning of a new life together when a totally inexperienced couple *begin* to learn from experience through the human sexual relationship. In each other's arms, they will then spend the rest of their lives growing in *philia*, *eros* and most of all *agape* love.

One of life's greatest accomplishments is getting love, marriage and sex in the right order with the right person at the right time. □

“I now pronounce you husband and wife.”

Those words are like music to the ears of couples anxious to begin life together as a new family. It is their big moment — one of the most important moments of their lives. They are now joined as husband and wife.

What leads people to this point? How do they prepare? What should we know in anticipation of that future time when marriage will come to us or our loved ones?

Be Prepared

As we grow up we may move in and out of “love” abruptly.

We begin to notice the opposite sex. And the more we notice, the more care we give to our personal grooming and behavior — how we look, how we talk, the kind of impression we leave on others.

Puppy love and infatuation are common. Sometimes the person we “love” doesn’t even know he or she is “loved.” Once in a while we feel that we have finally found our “true love.” When that involvement doesn’t work we are crushed. But soon our romantic self has recuperated and is ready for another fling.

It seems that most people go through such stages in growing up. But marriage, the second most important step in one’s life (making a commitment to God is first), is not for the immature. It is only for those who are physically, mentally, emotionally, financially and spiritually prepared.

Some let physical development be the only indicator of maturity. If a person has reached a certain age, some reason, he or she should be married. Others let physical attraction be the determining factor. Certainly there must be physical attraction, but what about a person’s level of education? Is the thinking mature? There are lovebirds and kissing fish, but to be a proper partner in marriage takes mental

Before You Say ‘I Do’

Going to be married? Here’s important information you need to consider.

maturity in addition to physical maturity.

Emotional people are beautiful—they feel deeply and express themselves effectively. But have they tempered their emotions—brought their emotions under control? If so, great. If not, it will be difficult for them to cope with the changes and adjustments necessary in marriage.

Then there are those who put too much emphasis on money. They seem to think they have to marry millionaires. This is unrealistic and wouldn’t work anyway without all the other factors working.

But, then again, it does take adequate finances to run a family. How much do you earn? Do you have a regular job? Is it a career or only a temporary stop in the job market? Proverbs 24:27 tells us to prepare first, and then to build a home and family. So be sure that you are stable financially before as-

suming the responsibilities of marriage.

The most important factor in preparation for marriage is spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity on the part of both husband and wife is extremely important to the success of the marriage.

So it all begins with you! Prepare for your future with that special person by making sure you are mature physically, mentally, emotionally, financially and spiritually.

Dating

Dating is an art that is rapidly being lost in societies that have it as a practice. Many people are interested only in what they can *get* out of a date. A person should be concerned with how he or she may *give* the other person a nice time.

Dating is a discovery period. We all have ideas about what we

PHOTOS BY G.A. BELLUCHE, JR. AND WARREN WATSON

Mr. and Mrs. Albert Roy Marsh
request the honour of your presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Marilyn Marie
to
Mr. John Sherman C
Friday, the fourteenth
hundred and



want in a mate, and dating helps bring that image into clear focus. Dating widely at first helps a person to narrow the field.

Actually, the more individuals you date before settling on that special one, the better. You will observe good and not-so-good traits in those you date. You will gain a more realistic picture of your "dream girl" or "knight in shining armor."

Remember, though, that you should not view dating as merely a search for a husband or wife. Don't be in a hurry to get serious — with God's help, you will find the right mate at the right time — and keep in mind that your goal is to *give* to your date in friendship, genuine concern and good, clean recreation.

Those interested in more information on dating may request our free book *The Missing Dimension in Sex*.

Seek Counsel Early

Marriage is a divine institution (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18, 21-24), and we should make every effort to insure its success. One way is through proper mate selection. When you find yourself getting interested in a certain someone, it is good to get counsel (Prov. 11:14).

Talk to those who know you both, especially your parents and families. Your parents know you and your strengths and weaknesses. You should seek and consider carefully their advice concerning a potential mate.

Be aware that most of your friends and peers will be romantics and will see a mate in anyone you pick. This is not to say that friends who know you well are not a good source of counsel, but be sure they are being honest and constructive in their evaluations.

When seeking advice be sure to be open-minded. How often we all want to hear the answer we want from someone else! But to avoid marital problems later, it is wise now to maintain an open mind and honestly seek help. Be open about your feelings. Disclose your positive views as well as any apprehensions. Take off the proverbial rose-colored glasses and look objectively at the person with whom you want to spend the rest of your life.

Men (and marriage is for men, not boys), the major areas you should look for in women are compatibility and adaptability. Does a young lady easily follow your lead? Do you sense that she respects you? Are you able to lead her in every way (Eph. 5:22)?

Ask yourself: Do I really deeply care for her? Is she the most lovely person in the world to me? Her physical attraction and personality must make her tops in your book (verse 25). What about her intelligence and maturity? Would she make a good mother? Does she desire children?

Finally, what is her level of spirituality? Is she godly? If pleasing God is the driving force in her life, chances are that she will apply God's marital laws, which are so necessary for success.

Women, consider how sensible the man you are planning on marrying is. If he makes poor decisions or is reckless in his habits (driving, drinking, taking care of his health), will you be able to respect him and submit to him (verse 24, I Pet. 3:1)? Does he ask for input from you before making decisions?

How caring is he about you? Does he show love and concern, not attempting to spoil your future with premarital sex and necking — I Cor. 6:18? Does he find you attractive and is he expressive to you in proper affection and words? Do you find him physically attractive?

Does he have a good job? Will he be a good provider for you? Or will lack of finances be a source of arguments? Even though you may wish to work after you're first married, when children come along, it is essential that the husband be able to provide. Will he make a good father? Does he like children? What views does he have about child rearing? Are they the same as yours? How can two walk together in any matter unless they agree (Amos 3:3)?

The Engagement Period

So, after much consideration you decide that you are right for each other. What now? Some have become engaged, set the date and merely notified the minister and their families. This doesn't show

much respect for families or minister.

One way is to counsel with a minister first. Tell him about your interest in each other and that you would like to become engaged. This gives him the opportunity to help you by advising a longer waiting period or by mentioning certain difficulties he might have seen. He may want to know that these difficulties are now resolved.

Remember, engagement not only means a flashy ring on the third finger of your left hand, but carries with it a promise to marry. So before you make such an acceptance and formal announcement, be sure you are ready to marry!

After securing a minister's or counsellor's advice, next call or see the parents of the bride-to-be. (Some may want to put this first, followed by counsel with a minister.) Ask the father for the daughter's hand. Many a father has felt bypassed, overlooked or neglected when this wasn't done, and it negatively influences future relationships in the family.

When both sets of parents are consulted, it makes them feel more involved and makes them more willing to help the couple. If distance is a problem, a phone call would be next best to asking in person. It produces more confidence in and a better relationship among everyone when parents, their children and prospective mates have met before the actual engagement. If that's not possible, meetings ought to take place during the engagement period.

Suppose your parents disapprove of your prospective mate. Take their comments to heart. You will need to seriously and intelligently decide what to do in such a situation. Ask what it would take for their approval.

Barring parental bigotry, parental views should be heavily weighed. To force them into acceptance is to ask for future in-law trouble as well as probable marital trouble for you, the couple (Prov. 18:19).

Engagement periods vary according to the couple. Some have short engagements, some longer. It is not advisable to wait longer than a year; closeness (and you should be drawing closer) for too long a

time may lead to premarital sexual involvement.

It is during engagement that you should spend most of your free time together. This is the time when you begin to lose the "I" and "me" and "you" and become "we" and "us." Each must consider what's good for "us." This takes time and often compromise.

Housing, furniture, foods, entertainment, automobiles are other factors needing the input from both individuals involved. Most especially, discuss your hopes in life, family plans, finances, living quarters and general outlook for living together.

Of prime importance is the wedding day itself. When will it be? Where will it be? In setting the date, be sure to check with the minister you've asked to perform the marriage. Then check with parents and see if that date is all right with them, since, in many areas, the father of the bride traditionally bears much of the financial cost of the wedding. He is definitely to be considered for his input as to when it takes place.

The location of the wedding will depend largely on the bride. She will probably want to have it in her hometown. The proper hall will depend on the size of the wedding and whether there is to be a catered meal or only refreshments. Here again, parents and minister should be consulted regarding the plans.

Once all the physical details — when, where, by whom — are worked out, invitations may be ordered. If the other planning can be done early, beautiful invitations may be ordered at fairly reasonable costs from various companies.

Premarital Counsel

Next in your preparation for the big event is counsel with a minister. He will probably want to spend at least two sessions (probably

more) discussing marriage with you.

With his appreciation and understanding of the marriage institution, a minister will want to do all he can to facilitate your happiness since you have asked him to perform your wedding (usually the minister you counsel with will be the one performing the wedding).

Throughout his meetings with you, your minister or counsellor will be accumulating information to help you plan your future together. He will be looking for the signs that make for a good marriage as well as those that lead to problems.

According to authorities, there are certain qualities that make a person "most marriageable": adaptability and flexibility, empathy, ability to work through problems, ability to give and receive love, emotional stability, similar family backgrounds, similarities between the couple themselves, communication.

The Big Day

Finally, you are as prepared as possible for that special day. Double-check to make sure all is in readiness. Rehearse for the ceremony.

Before walking down that aisle be sure to consider the commitment you're about to make. Let us go over the words in the ceremony that God's Church uses.

The minister would ask the man:

"Do you, then [groom], faithfully promise and covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses, to take [the bride] to be your lawful wedded wife, and to cleave to her unto death — to love her, cherish her, honor her and provide for her?"

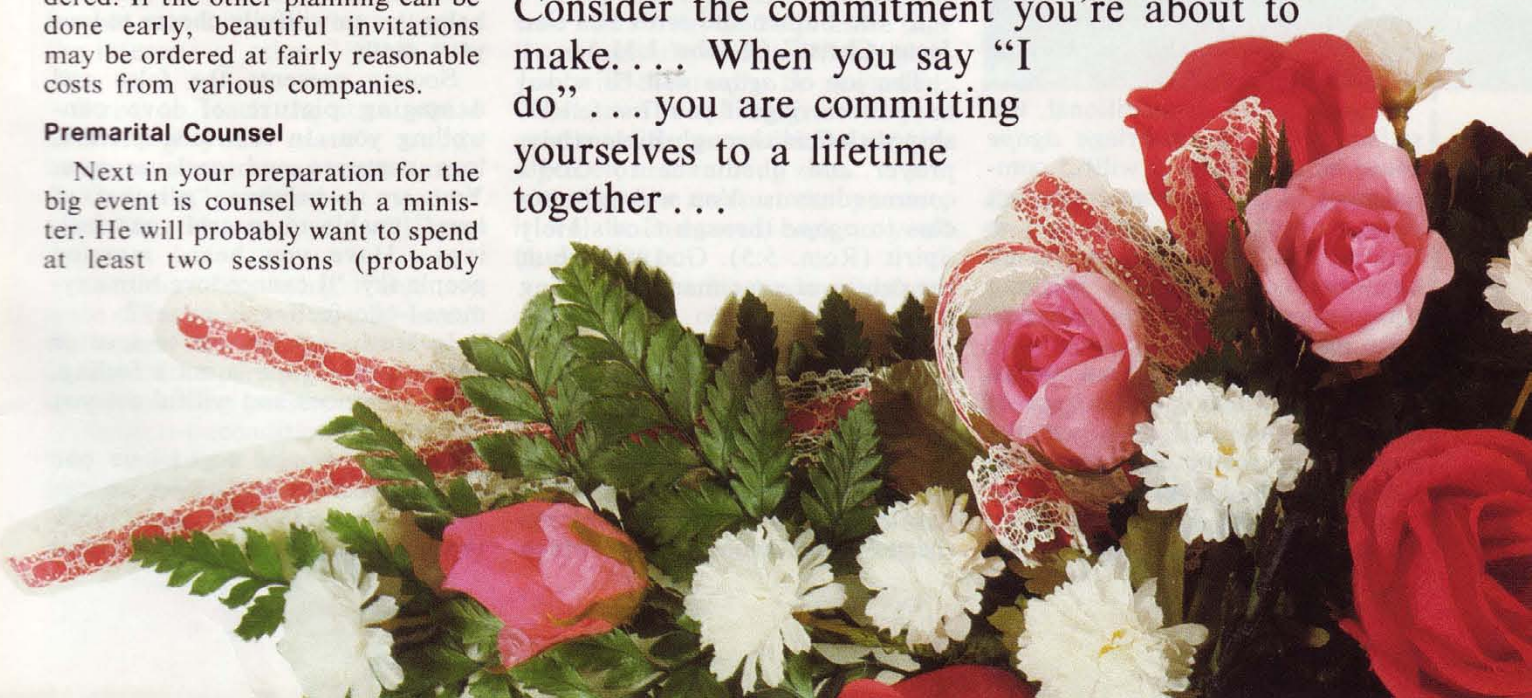
The minister would ask the woman: "And do you [bride], faithfully promise and covenant with God, in the presence of these witnesses, to take [the groom] to be your lawful wedded husband, for the remainder of your natural life, and as God has ordained, to submit yourself unto him as unto the Eternal, to be subject to him in everything and to respect him?"

When you say "I do" to these promises, you are committing yourselves to a lifetime together (Matt. 19:4-9).

Marriage was established by God at creation and pictures God's relationship with Israel (Isa. 54:5, Ezek. 16:8). It also depicts the spiritual relationship between Jesus Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:21-33, Rev. 19:7-9). So be sure you know what is involved when you say "I do" on your wedding day, and be sure you intend to live up to the responsibilities of this godly institution.

With the words, "By the authority of Jesus Christ, I now pronounce you husband and wife," may you two become one and truly live happily ever after. □

Consider the commitment you're about to make... When you say "I do" ... you are committing yourselves to a lifetime together ...



Stop and think about it: On a scale of 1 to 10, how much love are you giving in your marriage?

Are you a 3? Maybe a 6? Perhaps a rare 10?

You know you have an IQ (intelligence quotient), but did you realize that (bear with me for the sake of argument) each husband and wife has an "LQ" (love quotient)?

God commands married couples to love one another and to increase their LQ! God inspired the apostle Paul to instruct, "Husbands, love your wives" (Eph. 5:25). Paul also taught that wives should "love their husbands" (Tit. 2:4).

God created marriage to be the most joyous, love-filled relationship. Unfortunately, many husbands and wives are not actively loving one another. Their LQ is dangerously low. They endure loveless marriages of misery.

God wants husbands and wives to be lovers. Here are five ways to show true love for your mate. The first two ways deal with the aspect of commitment in marriage—they will solidify your marriage and place it on a firm foundation. The last three ways deal with the pleasure phase of marriage—God wants your marriage to be brimful and running over with real, deep joy.

Lovers Forever

The first way to love your mate is with the love expressed by the Greek word *agape*. This is the word translated in I Corinthians 13 as "love" or, in the *Authorized Version*, "charity."

Agape means unconditional, unselfish giving. In marriage *agape* could be defined as a willful commitment to give to your imperfect mate without expecting to get in return. You consciously, under all circumstances, make a lifelong commitment to never stop giving to your mate.

God is the Rock from which *agape* flows. He is the source of the force that will give you the power to overcome all obstacles in your marriage. Your union must begin with God. The apostle John wrote, "And truly our fellowship is



Five Ways to Love Your Mate

What is the quotient of love in your marriage?

with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3).

The joy of *agape* will be added to your marriage if you first fellowship with God through Bible study, prayer and obedience to God's commandments. You will gain access to *agape* through God's Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). God will be at the center of your marriage, giving it strength.

God plus husband plus wife equal one *agape*-filled marriage. This is the missing formula for success in so many marriages.

As you submit to God's laws concerning marriage and other human relationships, He will unleash the power of *agape* to you, which

helps you to willfully choose to love your mate.

Society presents the false and damaging picture of love controlling you. In this false picture, love captures and enslaves you. You are a helpless "prisoner of love," unable to control your feelings. Have you heard married people say: "I cannot love him anymore—the feeling is gone"?

In truth, you choose to love or not to love. *Agape* is not a feeling, but a conscious and willful act you control.

God commands us to love one another because He knows we can control love (II John 5). Follow through on your decision to love

your mate by committing yourself to give the love that “never fails” (I Cor. 13:8, *New American Bible*).

Commitment Produces Endurance

You should have promised in a covenant with God, on your wedding day, to love your mate unto death. Pray daily to God for the power to love your mate and to keep that commitment in your mind constantly. Determine to allow nothing or no one, including yourself, to stop you from loving your mate. Go to God and recommit yourself to loving your mate.

Since *agape* is a willful commitment to give, your will and commitment must be followed by action. You cannot *get* love—you can only *give* it. Regardless of how little you receive, you will always have love in your marriage because the quantity and quality of love is dependent on how much you give.

In an emergency you would not hesitate to sacrifice your life to save your mate. Are you willing to sacrifice your life daily by pushing aside your needs and wants to satisfy your mate, by putting your mate's needs ahead of your own? When you are tired, do you get up and serve instead of waiting to be served?

Don't Give to Get

The apostle Paul admonished Christians: “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others” (Phil. 2:3-4).

Strive to reach the state where fulfilling your mate's needs becomes, next to your commitment to God, the predominant need of your life. Give and you will have *agape*.

You may be saying, “But my mate doesn't deserve special love.” But *agape* motivates one to give to an imperfect person—yes, even to an undeserving person.

Agape—unconditional, unselfish love—does not require the other person to change or be perfect. There are no conditions, no qualifications for the giving of *agape*.

Jesus Christ, the perfect husband and the only human who ever perfectly expressed *agape*, gave His life for us while we were yet sinners (Eph. 5:25, Rom. 5:8). Christ did not require us to change first—His love was unconditional.

We ought to follow Christ's perfect example of love. Demand of yourself to give to your mate even when you have been wronged. By giving in spite of your mate's shortcomings, you will feel more positive toward your spouse. Peter expressed the principle in I Peter 4:8: “Above all things have fervent love for one another, for ‘love will cover a multitude of sins.’” Your unconditional love may cause a positive response in your mate, although this should never be the motive for giving (I Pet. 3:1-2).

Do not become disappointed. It is easy to become disillusioned after giving and giving without any response, not even a thank-you. *Agape* does not require love in return. Love does not give in order to get.

The apostle Paul taught that if we give with expectations of getting in return, our love is vain: “And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing” (I Cor. 13:3).

Remove expectation and then love will fill your heart, leaving no room for disappointment. Jesus Christ taught that the joy is in the giving: “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

And yet, at the same time, you can take heart from God's promise that if you faithfully and unselfishly give, you will eventually be rewarded: “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over . . . For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you” (Luke 6:38).

Agape is the most powerful facet of the whole of love. *Agape* will carry your marriage through the most difficult trials.

Lovers Belong to Each Other

The second way to love your mate is with the love of belonging, which will bring you and your mate closer together. This love will add another

point to your LQ and enrich your marriage.

God created marriage to be the closest human relationship. Yet, many married couples live together as strangers. A cold curtain of loneliness divides them as they go their separate ways.

What about your marriage? Do you live under the same roof, but as strangers to one another? God did not intend husbands and wives to live together like total strangers. He has a solution to your problem.

What is the love of belonging? This love is characterized by a bond of unity, companionship and loyal devotion. The love of belonging shines brightest in older couples. They act alike and think alike. They have become one. The love of belonging is not just for older couples, but for all couples.

God created man with the need to belong. God looked at all He had made and saw that “it was very good” (Gen. 1:31). But when God looked at Adam He saw something that was not good: “And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be



alone; I will make him an help meet for him” (Gen. 2:18, *Authorized Version*).

Adam was lonely. God prescribed the love of belonging to cure Adam's problem. God gave Adam a woman, Eve, to love. Through giving, the first married couple could have grown to belong to one another.

This need to belong cannot be satisfied through any other person, whether mother, father, sister or



brother—only through your mate: “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (verse 24).

As with *agape*, you can only give the love of belonging to your mate.

Accept your mate the way your mate is, not the way you would like him or her to be. Your mate will not feel he or she belongs as long as he or she senses you are not satisfied with him or her.

Emphasize the positive things about your mate. Make a list of all the good things. Think back to the time when you were engaged and of all the qualities you admired. You might be surprised to find those same qualities in your spouse today. Constantly think on these good qualities. Look to find more admirable qualities. The love of belonging is making your mate feel accepted.

Learn to empathize with your mate. Push out your concerns and concentrate on the concerns of your mate. Seek total identification with your husband or wife—immerse yourself in your mate’s concerns, feel your mate’s hurts, experience his or her frustrations, sing your mate’s joys.

Cleave to Each Other

The apostle Paul encourages us to bear—take upon ourselves—one another’s burdens (Gal. 6:2). You will become an emotional refuge for your mate—a hiding place where your mate can find warmth and shelter from the storms of life. Both of you will have a home in each other’s hearts. Your mate will have a place to belong, and the love

of belonging will bring you closer together.

In Genesis 2:24, *Authorized Version*, God tells married couples to “cleave” to each other. The word *cleave* was translated from the Hebrew verb *dabaq*, which has the root meaning “to solder” or “to weld together.”

The strongest welding technique is called *brazing*, two pieces of metal welded together under intense heat. The molecules of the two metals become inseparable.

God compares the trials of life to a fire (I Pet. 1:7). By cleaving to one another as you go through life’s challenges you will become “one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). Becoming one physically, mentally and spiritually should be the goal of every married couple.

In the Song of Solomon, the Shulamite bride expressed the love of belonging she shared with her mate when she said, “I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine” (Song of Sol. 6:3).

Agape love and the love of belonging are the two legs upon which your marriage stands. They are the foundations upon which the next three loves are built. Use these two loves to increase your LQ—your love quotient—and make your marriage unshakable.

There are three additional ways to love your mate and increase your LQ. This phase of marriage could be called the pleasure phase. Let’s look at these three ways.

Lovers Cherish Each Other

The Greek word *phileo* describes the love of cherishing. This word is used in the New Testament to designate brotherly love, fondness, affection and cherishing. This is the third way to love your mate.

The apostle Paul clearly described *phileo* when he wrote, “Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another” (Rom. 12:10).

Cherish is the word we will use to describe *phileo*. *Cherish* means “to value highly, to hold in high esteem.”

Physically, your mate should be the most valuable person in your life, and spiritually, the most valuable after God. You treat things of

value with lots of attention and tender, loving care. If you do that with inanimate objects, shouldn’t your mate receive even more cherishing?

As with all the forms of true love, you cannot get *phileo*. You receive love as you give love. You can cherish your mate—here is how.

Cherishing is sharing. In Romans 12:10 Paul described the love of cherishing as brotherly love. Brothers share. In biblical times married couples affectionately referred to each other as “sister” or “brother” (Song of Sol. 4:10, 8:1).

How much sharing do you do with your mate? Do you share more with friends than with your own wife or husband? Your whole life should be shared together in a pleasurable way.

Sharing is doing things together. Invite your mate to share a hobby. Together you could collect stamps, refinish old furniture, exercise or pursue any number of enjoyable hobbies and projects. The main objective is that you have fun while sharing together.

Sharing is communicating with your mate. Wives often complain, “My husband doesn’t talk to me!” while husbands lament, “All she does is nag!” Such statements are signs that neither partner is communicating effectively.

Effective communication does not start with either listening or speaking. Surprised? Perhaps you thought it was all in listening and speaking. True communication, like true love, starts with giving—outgoing concern.

You must seek to understand (this is the *give* way) rather than to be understood (the *get* way). The



emphasis should be placed on your giving. Seek to understand what your mate wants to share rather than to “get” your mate to understand you. This approach to communication will open many new opportunities for sharing.

Cherishing is touching. How often during the day do you touch your mate? Only at bedtime? Could you and your husband or wife be called the “untouchables”?

If this is the case, your marriage is missing a great deal of joy. Couples often touch too much when they are dating, but appear to be handcuffed after they marry. Lovers love to touch. It sends the message, “I love you.” It tells your mate: “You are important to me. I cherish you.” The lack of touching conveys the exact opposite meaning.

Reach out and touch your mate. Weave touching into the daily fabric of your life. Give your mate a warm hug in the morning. Sit close together at home or in the car. Reach over and lovingly hold hands. Think about times you can touch your mate; then touch to your mate’s pleasure.

King Midas’ touch turned everything to gold, but the loving touch turns everything to love. Give your mate a touch and you will give *phileo*, the love of cherishing.

Lovers Are Romantic

Eros is the word used in Greek literature to describe romantic love. It is the love about which ballads and poems are written. *Eros* is the love that can light up your marriage and take it from boring, black-and-white silence to technicolor 3D, 50-mm excitement, in Dolby sound. Here, then, is the fourth major area in loving your mate.

You may be thinking, Romance is just a Hollywood production—surely God doesn’t want us involved with that mushy stuff. Well, here’s news for you—good news for your marriage. *Eros*—romance—is real.

God inspired a whole book of the Bible, the Song of Solomon, to describe the proper kind of romantic love in marriage.

The Bible also describes the love

Push out your concerns and concentrate on the concerns of your mate. Seek total identification with your husband or wife—feel your mate’s hurts, experience his or her frustrations, sing your mate’s joys.

Jacob had for Rachel: “So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed but a few days to him because of the love he had for her” (Gen. 29:20). Only romantic love could make seven years seem like a few days. Jacob was euphoric—on cloud nine. He was high on *eros*.

Yes, romantic love is real, and you really need to give it to your mate.

In many cases, wives have little trouble understanding *eros*. Quite often, they are starving for romance. Husbands tend to ignore romance, and do not fulfill their wives’ needs. Wives desire romance. Romance must come before sex.

God wants you to give the pleasure of romantic love to your mate. Are you a fighter or a lover? If you have not been giving romantic love, you probably have been fighting. Now is the time to become a lover, not a fighter.

There are three keys to developing romantic love: climate, imagination and surrender.

The Climate for Romantic Love

The climate in which romance is given is important. *Eros* is emotional and sensitive and requires a warm climate to flourish.

Project a warm, positive attitude toward your mate. Ask God to help you remove any negative feelings you may have had in the past (Eph. 4:31-32). You are making a new beginning in your relationship. Your giving of kindness will go a long way in producing a warm climate for romance.

Decor, a lover’s grooming, is an important part of the romantic climate. Since *eros* is sensitive to

sight and scent, your grooming or the lack of it can turn your mate on or off.

Be clean. If you want to get next to your mate, make sure you are tidy. Wives, keep your hair neat and pretty. Husbands, shave those whiskers. It is difficult to go cheek to cheek with a cactus. Exercise personal hygiene and also use a little cologne or perfume to spice things up.

Dress neatly, even around the house. Wives, dress as appealingly as possible for your husbands. Husbands, dress to please your wives. Find out what your mate likes to see you in; then aim to please.

The “look of love” produces a romantic climate. Solomon spoke of the power of romantic eye contact when he wrote, “You have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes” (Song of Sol. 4:9, *New American Standard Bible*).

Couples who are in love look at one another often. It has been said that “the eye is the mirror of the soul.” It is also true that the eye is the mirror of love. Create a romantic climate with your mate through eye contact. Look warmly into your mate’s eyes when you talk. In public situations, occasionally look for your mate, catch his or her eye and smile or wink. You will be sending the message “I love you” from your eyes to your mate’s heart.

Nothing warms the romantic climate like the giving of affection. Our generation has been stripped of its “natural affection” (II Tim. 3:3, *Authorized Version*). We have become cold and aloof, even in our marriages. Take your marriage out of the ice age by giving warm affection to your mate.

Kissing has always been a symbol of affection and warmth. You should make kissing the official form of greeting your mate.

A kiss in the morning is a pleasant way to start the day. Kisses through the day are an excellent way to sustain your mate’s affection.

Solomon’s bride desired his kisses: “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—for your love is better than wine” (Song of Sol. 1:2). As wine makes the heart

merry, so do the kisses of romantic love.

Little things mean a lot. In no other area of marriage can so little mean so much as in romance. Have you stopped doing the little things? Now is the time to start anew.

Use Imagination

Romance is all in the mind! The imaginings of your mind can be a powerful tool in becoming more romantic toward your mate. Solomon said we are what we think (Prov. 23:7). If you think romantically you will act romantically.

Jesus Christ, of course, spoke of the sinful effects on the mind that lusting after a person who is not your mate will have (Matt. 5:28). But have you ever thought about the other side of this scripture? Usually for every good there is evil and for every evil there is good.

It is obviously wrong to have lustful thoughts about someone else's mate, but it is good to have thoughts of desire toward your own mate. God told Eve that her "desire" would be toward her husband, and the same applied to Adam (Gen. 3:16).

Solomon instructs us to use our minds in this way: "Drink water from your own cistern, and running water from your own well. . . . As a loving deer and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and always be enraptured with her love" (Prov. 5:15, 19). Even when your mate is out of sight, never let him or her be out of mind. Use your heart and imagination to create positive, pleasing thoughts about your mate (Phil. 4:8).

Think about your mate's attractive qualities. Hear his or her warm and reassuring voice. See that beautiful smile. Take mental stock of your mate's inner and outer beauty.

Proverbs 29:18, *Authorized Version*, says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." We can also say that where there is no vision, there is no romance.

Launch yourself into the future through your imagination. Think about how you will be romantic with your mate when you are together again. Visualize warm and thrilling romantic situations where you are actively giving love to your mate.

If you use your mind and imagination, your thoughts will reinforce your feelings and actions of romantic love.

Surrender

Surrender is another key to developing romantic love. You must surrender and give this type of love to your mate.

We have seen that *eros*—romantic love—is real, and the need for it to be revived in your marriage has been made clear. You have been equipped with the principles and applications of romantic love. Now it is up to you.

Do not grieve the spirit of *eros*. Do not withhold the romantic love your mate so desperately needs from you.

Add another point to your LQ. Surrender and let love flow!

Lovers Are Lovers

The fifth way to love your mate is with sexual love.

How is your love life? God intended it to be pleasurable. You and your mate have the capacity to reach that high level of sexual enjoyment. Even if your sex life has been unfulfilling, you can change it for the better.

The place to start improving your sex life is with the application and giving of the other four loves. Sexual love has been placed last in this series of points because its success is dependent on the other areas. If you are to improve your sex life, first improve the rest of your marriage.

The prudish, Victorian approach to sex as being one of the necessary evils of life is wrong. The modern new morality is also wrong. To properly give sexual love to your mate, you need God's positive attitude toward sex.

God created sex, and He says that it is good in marriage (Gen. 1:27-28, 31).

God inspired Paul to write, "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:4).

For "bed" Paul used the Greek word *koite*, which literally means cohabitation or coitus. The translators of the *Authorized Version* of the Bible were ashamed to use the word *coitus*, so they used *bed*, and the *Revised Authorized Version* perpetuates this translation.

But God is not ashamed of this beautiful act of love. Neither were Adam and Eve, before Satan got to them in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:25).

You have a God-given responsibility to give sexual love and satisfaction to your mate. God commands husbands and wives to satisfy one another's sexual needs: "Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband" (I Cor. 7:3, NASB).

Your body actually belongs to your mate, and your mate's body is yours (verse 4). With that authority comes the responsibility to take care of your mate's body as if it were your own (Eph. 5:28). Never abuse your mate's body. Handle it with tender, loving care. You should never refuse to give sexual love to your mate or use it as a weapon or for leverage (I Cor. 7:5).

What is your LQ? After studying these five ways to love your mate, your love quotient should be five points higher.

Increase Your Love Quotient

If you give these loves, your marriage will become more contented and pleasurable.

Finally, listen to God's admonishment: "Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun . . . for that is your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun" (Eccl. 9:9, RAV). □

The Greatest Gift You Can Give Your Children

It's not money, power or prestige. Though every parent has it—too many never give it.

THE BIRTH of a child into a family is one of the greatest thrills of life. Young couples eagerly anticipate the day of arrival. Months of waiting and planning and dreaming and hoping culminate in the excitement of newborn life.

Most parents already have a lifetime of plans for their newborns. They may plan for their children to be successful doctors or prominent lawyers. Or plan a major league sports career for them. How many parents have already purchased, before the day of birth, a football, a piano, ice skates or a baseball glove?

Above all we want them to have good health and be happy with whatever they become.

Parenting Is a Full-time Job

In addition to their long-range goals, parents hope to give their children every material benefit possible. How many times have you heard parents say, "Our child will never have to go through the hard times we did"? Most children today grow up with better homes, do

less work, have more clothing, more leisure time and more convenience items than any generation in history.

In order to provide this plethora of material goods, parents must spend countless hours on their jobs. Many fathers have taken a second job in order to provide necessities and luxuries of life. Many mothers work outside the home so the family can afford more

and better things than would otherwise be possible.

It is a noble goal—to provide well for the family and to give the children opportunities. But in pursuit of material possessions, many parents have failed to give the most important gift of all.

Think about it. Proud parents bring new life into the world—tiny miniature reproductions of themselves. Your child will have your looks, your personality, many of your abilities and your temperament. Most parents want their children to grow up to be "chips off the old block."

But too many couples today quickly lose their newfound zeal in the early months of their child's life. They just let their children grow up—too often left in day-care centers or with baby-sitters—seldom influenced by their parents.

Then when these children become teenagers, the parents wonder why they can't communicate with them—why there is a generation gap. What they fail to realize is that this generation gap has existed from birth—there never was any real communication. The problems may not be manifest, however, until teenage.

From Birth to School Age

There is no more important time in life than the early



years. Practically everything we will become is started and determined in those first few years of life.

It has been said we learn more from birth to age 1 than we will learn in any other one year of our lives. It seems hard to believe but researchers insist it is true.

And we continue to learn in those early years—at astounding rates. Little children are taking in everything—learning to walk, talk and think. They are forming personality and character traits. How do they learn during these early years?

BY EXAMPLE!

Everything you do—or not do—is being taken in. Your children will learn to speak with the same accent, voice tones and vocabulary as you do. They will take on your personality traits and good habits. They probably will develop similar tastes in food, entertainment and art.

That is, IF you are around to influence your children.

Of course, if parents are not around, their children will pick up mannerisms, personalities and tastes of others. That might not always be desirable.

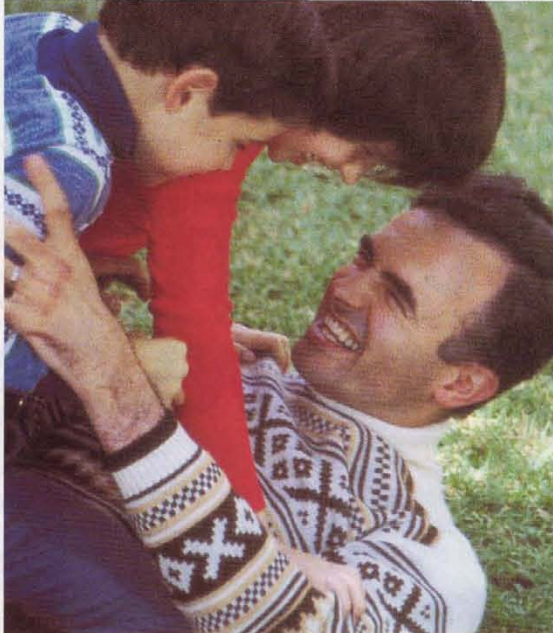
If you shuffle them off to the day-care centers or leave them with the baby-sitters or leave them alone with the television set blaring from dawn to midnight, they'll be taking in quite a different perspective than you intend.

The Best Laid Plans

Far too often, though new parents start out with the best of intentions, they quickly return to a previously established routine. Long hours of work and fighting the traffic may not make for the best parental attitude at the end of a tiring day. Dad may say, "Honey, get a baby-sitter and let's go out to dinner; I'm exhausted."

When the weekend rolls around, the old routine of golf, tennis, fishing, bowling or whatever recreation parents have participated in, beckons.

Dad may think he'll play ball with his son when he is older. But



Parents who take the time to rear children properly will receive no greater thrills, joys and rewards in this life.

family habits usually are set in concrete and later hard to change. A youngster seeing Dad go off with others the first several years is not suddenly going to want to start kicking or throwing a ball around with Dad when he's about 12.

If, on the other hand, parents have played with their children on the living room floor when they were 3 months old, then in the backyard when they were toddlers, taught them to ride bikes at age 4, played tag in the park when they were 8, then when they are teenagers, they'll still be playing games together.

Teaching by Example

There is no greater opportunity to influence the way your child will turn out than by the example you set.

You've all heard the old adage too many parents still live by: "Do what I say, not what I do." Surely we know that doesn't work. Parents who lament a child starting to smoke in junior high school have no recourse if they've continued to smoke themselves.

The father who brags about how he cheated the government out of taxes due cannot expect his son to grow up an honest, law-abiding cit-

izen. These parents have already lost the battle. Their examples speak louder than their words. In some cases, our examples counteract our words.

There have been some alarming social trends in recent years. There are increasing numbers of alcoholic parents and parents who are abusive to their children. After analyzing hundreds of problems, psychologists have found in a large percentage of those cases where parents were abusive to children, they were themselves abused.

Similar statistics apply to alcoholism. Adults who become alcoholic are often a product of a home where alcohol was abused.

If you are a parent, you have a tremendous responsibility to set the proper example in your home. But in order to set an example you

have to be there.

The objective is to have a positive effect. Homes that are filled with love and sharing will produce children who love and share. And when they grow up to become parents themselves, the same joys and happiness will usually be present in their homes.

Qualifications for Parenting

What are the qualifications of a parent? What kind of skills are required for the most important responsibility anyone can ever take—to become a mother or father? What kind of schooling is mandatory for having a baby? And what certificate is issued to demonstrate proficiency in parenting?

To become a parent all you have to do is reach the age of puberty. That's it.

I'm sure we will all admit such a person is by no means *qualified* to become a parent in his or her early teens. But it is biologically possible. The question, then, is, when is one qualified to become a PROPER parent?

Obtaining an education, gaining skills for a profession, growing in maturity to face the responsibilities that accompany parenthood ought to be required. But who can en-

force the requirements? There are no legislative or judicial bodies to make laws and enforce them.

So young people grow up in whatever environment their own parents have created for them. They learn by example what parenting is all about. And the result is the society in which you live.

The Biblical Examples

From the pages of the Bible we learn it was much the same in the society of ancient Israel. In that nation there was a priest who served well in God's service. His name was Eli.

But Eli was not effective in child rearing. Of his children, God says, "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord" (I Sam. 2:12).

It was a responsibility of the priests to offer sacrifices for the people. The sons of Eli abused the sacrificial ceremony. "Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord: for men abhorred the offering of the Lord" (verse 17).

In addition, the sons of Eli were sexually immoral. They brought great disrespect upon their father and the way of God. It was a shame these young men could not continue in the footsteps of their father as they should have.

But Eli made the tragic mistake so many parents do. He did not properly rear his children and train them. He was too busy—even in the service of God. The results were disastrous.

God then selected Samuel to follow Eli in priestly service.

Surely, you would think Samuel would have learned the lesson from Eli how to become a proper father and rear respectful children. But alas, the sad story was repeated.

Samuel married and had a family. It was normal for him to desire his sons to follow in his steps as priests and judges in Israel.

The story is told in I Samuel 8: "And it came to pass, when Sa-

muel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of the firstborn was Joel; and the name of the second, Abiah: they were judges in Beer-sheba" (verses 1-2).

But as Eli before him, Samuel did not influence and teach them by his good example. The result?

"And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre [money], and took bribes, and perverted judgment" (verse 3).

The reputation of the sons of Samuel was so bad in the community that the people demanded a change in government. What a tragedy!

Let these examples serve you well if you are parents or plan to be parents.

What Is That Gift?

What is then the nearest thing to the magic formula of child rearing?

Be prepared. The answer may surprise you. I promise it will not cost any money. And it will not be complicated.

The most important gift you will ever give your child is—YOUR TIME! If you can't take the time to be a parent, don't become one.

Parents who take the time to rear children properly will receive no greater thrills, joys and rewards in this life. But, if they don't apply the right principles and don't take the proper time, there are no greater sorrows and disappointments than improperly reared children.

If you are a parent, you are a constant living example to your children. They are learning every minute of every day how to be and how not to be. They will see your positive examples—they will also see your negative examples.

If your children see you fight, scream and have disrespect for one another, they will think that's the way husbands and wives are. After all, it's all they've ever seen.

Newborn babies don't have instinct. Animals do. A newborn calf or colt knows right where to go for

dinner. It will be up and walking within minutes because instinct has been built into its mind.

Everything human babies learn must be taught. By word. By example. They learn the meaning of love, caring, concern, warmth. They learn how to smile, giggle, laugh and cry.

They can also learn anger, hostility, disrespect.

They are constantly learning.

There is no better way for them to learn how to be the right kind of parent themselves than by the proper examples you set for them. But, you have to spend time with them to teach by example.

You Only Have One Chance

If you have small children, spend all the time you can with them, showing them positive examples of the right way to live. The years will quickly go by. Children who are toddlers today, tomorrow will be graduating from high school. The first thing you know, you will be concerned about college and marriage. And you'll wonder where the years went.

How many families have had to learn that working long hours, advancing in position or earning more money can produce one of the least desirable fruits of all—the loss of one's own children?

So what if parents become prominent surgeons, successful attorneys, respected professors or corporation presidents? If, along the way they lose their children, maybe their marriage and perhaps their health, what has been gained?

We all desire to work hard and obtain the best for our children. But if reaching the top of the corporate ladder means sacrificing children and family, it just isn't worth it.

There are no magic formulas. And successful child rearing will require old-fashioned hard work. But if you want to know the greatest gift you can ever give your child, it is your time. Begin now to give that precious gift to your children. □

Confessions of a Busy Father

Who are the most important people in your life? “Why, my family, of course,” you’d probably answer. “I would die for them!”

That was my answer, too, but then I discovered that I was not dying for them, but killing them slowly through neglect.



NATHAN FAULKNER

reminded me that today was my daughter’s big track meet, the final one of the season. “Oh, no!” I said. “I’ve been so busy, I forgot all about it. I have business today—I can’t go.”

I reluctantly walked downstairs to break the news to my daughter. By the look in my eye she knew what I was going to say. Her eyes began to water. I apologized for forgetting, and encouraged her to do her best. I told her I would pray for her.

The trouble was, I was the one who needed prayer. I was the one who needed encouragement to do the right thing—to really love my family.

She said she understood, but her disappointment and hurt were obvious. She packed her books and headed for school. I also headed for “school”—God’s school of spiritual lessons.

First, self-justifying thoughts began racing through my mind: Surely she knows I love her! I’ve been there at other times. She knows I am a minister and must serve God’s people. She will do just fine without me.

But then my own voice from past sermons echoed: “Put your family first! If the family is to survive, fathers must make the family their No. 1 priority! Dad is the most important person in a teenage girl’s life.”

I was overwhelmed. In tears, I fell down on my knees and repented to God. I also thanked Him for refocusing my priorities toward my family. I got up and rearranged my appointments and, with great joy, looked forward to being with my daughter.

The Ecstasy

When I arrived at the track meet,

I spotted my daughter standing across the field. She seemed a little down—she probably wondered why other people were more important to me.

My mind flashed back to the times when I comforted her as a baby—how I would rock her in my arms. I thought about the times I comforted her as a toddler when she fell and bumped her head. I thought about now, when I would comfort her as a blossoming young woman by being by her side.

I called her name. Surprised, she looked up, her eyes met mine and our agony was turned to ecstasy.

Now she knew I truly loved her. Now she was sure the family was indeed my No. 1 priority.

She did not win any gold medals that day, but she won first place in the heart of her dad, and that’s better than gold.

By the way, God’s work was done that day. How, you ask? The great God commissions fathers to turn their hearts to their children (Malachi 4:6). Fathers, do God’s work! Give your heart, your time and your life to your children.

More than one other girl on my daughter’s track team said: “Wow! Your dad must really love you. My dad was too busy to take time off to see me run.”

In spite of my initial blindness, God used that day to convey to students and teachers a foretaste of the deep bond of love all parents and children will share in tomorrow’s world.

Who are the most important people in your life? If it’s your family, don’t be too busy to love them. Give them your life—give them your time. □

Through an event I’ll never forget, God helped me learn that a father should never be too busy for his family.

The Agony

It was the usual Tuesday morning with phone calls to make and appointments to keep. Then my wife

SELDOM do families get together anymore. We live in such a hectic society.

We have little time for dinner with the grandparents or for a family reunion. And because we haven't taken the time, the glue that holds families together doesn't hold firm.

It's time to revive some old-fashioned values and build more permanent family ties. It might just save your family.

Dinner at Grandma's

Let's take for example an old American custom to gather the whole family every Sunday afternoon for fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, fresh cooked garden peas and, best of all, three different kinds of homemade pie. If you ever had such wonderful dinners in your family, you can almost taste the delicious meals still. And who could ever forget the fun of games afterward with all the children in the neighborhood joining in?

And remember those lazy Sunday afternoons in the summer when you sat in the shade of the old oak tree watching cloud formations float by? Or do you remember playing outside with your cousins while your parents sat and talked for hours?

If that had been part of your life you cannot forget it. But why is it gone today? Doesn't anyone care anymore? And why can't you start or reinstate such family get-together customs now?

Well, you can.

Of course, if the grandparents live hundreds or thousands of miles away, you can't have Sunday dinner together frequently. But if they are nearby, you can certainly make it a fairly regular practice. Even if they are a great distance away, all is not lost.

Those Wonderful Family Reunions

Another great old-fashioned tradition used to be getting the family

Strong Family Ties

Important principles often ignored can help you establish and maintain strong family ties.



together once a year or every other year—the whole family: brothers and sisters and all the cousins. There is nothing like it.

We, in the Western democracies, live in very mobile societies. In the United States a family now moves on the average of once every five years. Often these moves are hundreds or sometimes thousands of miles. When such moves happen the children may grow up without any real sense of stability.

The result of this separating has created a whole generation who don't know "who they are." When you grow up under the influence of your parents and your grandpar-

ents, there is little doubt of who you are. If you have a quick temper as your grandfather did, you'll know it if you saw him yell at the cow when she kicked over the pail. If you have a fine voice for singing, you well may have inherited it from your grandmother. If you heard her singing lullabies, you will know for sure where you got your voice.

Many have become more aware of their heritage as a result of the Alex Haley book and television series, *Roots*. It has made many want to search out their backgrounds and ancestry. Mr. Haley created a need to find out who we are and where we came from.

This knowledge of one's family heritage seems to be missing in so many families today. Grandpa may have been forced into early retirement while he still had years of productivity left in him. Perhaps he died prematurely from the lack of purpose and inactivity. Like as not grandma was put into a rest

home to rock away her final years of life in boredom. What a tragedy! And all the time they could have helped so much.

Don't let the opportunity for your children to know and love their grandparents go by. Plan a family reunion as soon as it is practical. If the grandparents are not living, make it a practice to visit the cemetery where they are buried. Tell the children stories about their grandparents and the "good old days." You'll be surprised

at the greater sense of identity it gives them.

Nontraditions

Instead of positive traditions, do you know what many families in today's society have? Nontraditions. What are nontraditions? Let me give you an example—the typical Western breakfast in the U.S.

Years ago when societies were mainly agrarian, breakfast was quite an affair. The entire family sat around the table. Mom prepared a hearty meal of cooked cereal, toast from homemade bread, fresh fruit, scrambled eggs and a hamburger patty. Dad outlined the

day's chores. That was a tradition.

A nontradition is quite the opposite. Today, dad probably grouches his way through the morning preparing to fight the traffic jams. He may or may not bolt down a cup of coffee and a piece of toast.

Where's mom? She may have a job of her own and hurries through the blow dryer and hair curlers to be ready for her ride to work.

And the children? Left to themselves, they take the easy way out and gobble down a bowl of presweetened cold cereal.

That's breakfast. That's what we mean by a *nontradition*. Nothing of lasting value comes out of this life-style. There is nothing here to pass on to the next generation. No positive family relationships are built.

The chances of the dinner hour having any greater family value are between slim and none. The major difference in the evening, compared to breakfast time, is the blaring of the television—that greatest of all conversation destroyers. Staring at production-line situation comedies or old movies while eating a pop-in-the-oven prepared meal, the average family spends little time getting acquainted with each other, much less the grandparents and the cousins.

That's hardly the kind of bonds that build strong family ties.

Ethnic Traditions

Some of the strongest bonds in many families are passed on from generation to generation as a result of cultural heritages from the land of their ancestry. Those customs often retain cultural tastes in food, dress, dance and even in professions.

One custom is particularly striking to anyone spending time in the biblical city of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is a city of apartments. On Friday afternoon businesses start closing shortly after noon as most Jews in the city make Sabbath preparations.

A beautiful custom starts the Sabbath each week. About 20 minutes before sundown, candles are lighted in nearly every home. It's quite a sight. All over Jerusalem through the windows you see the flickering lights of candles on dining room tables. The family gathers around for dinner and often engage in another Jewish family tradition—singing Sabbath hymns.

These traditions have been perpetuated through many centuries and serve not only to bind families together, but bind an entire people to an ancient heritage and to their God.

Learning a Trade

Another passing on of custom can be that of a trade or profession. Throughout most of history, children learned the trade of their fathers that had in turn been learned from their fathers.

Because many modern societies have given up such practices altogether, crafts that have endured for centuries are being lost.

Even if a youngster does not wish to follow in his father's footsteps, if a trade, craft or profession has been learned, he will have something to fall back on.

It's amazing today how few boys do—or know how to do—any household jobs, paint or mend things, change the oil or tune up the car. Only a small number of girls know how to sew, quilt or even cook for that matter.

You see, in order to learn many of these skills, you have to spend time with your father or mother or with grandparents.

Since most of us are not living on a farm, we may not know how to plant, cultivate, harvest, can (bottle) or freeze vegetables and fruits. Even if many families wanted to have a vegetable garden, they wouldn't know how to. Yet many middle-aged parents have known how to plant a garden—and almost every grandparent had one; probably grew up on a farm or in the country. Why haven't we

passed on these fun and useful skills?

If you have not learned any skills that should have been perpetuated in your family, why not take a little time to backtrack and learn from your father or mother in order to pass them on to your son or daughter?

It's Up to You

Whether you have realized it or not, there are really only two courses of action to take. Either build meaningful and lasting traditions in your family, or drift into "nontraditions" that will cause your family to split further and further apart one from another.

Why not sit down this evening and talk over what kind of relationships will best benefit your family? Get out the old picture album. Recall granddad and grandma—even your great grandparents. Maybe you'll bring up some long lost part of your family past that your children have never even heard before.

Then talk about what kind of new customs you would like to incorporate into your family.

Obviously not every family will find skiing the most practical way to spend their annual vacation. But some of the most meaningful family experiences can be worked around a vacation. Perhaps visiting national parks, or taking up camping, fishing or other outdoor activities, will be something your family can enjoy.

One of the best ways to spend vacation time is to hold regular family reunions such as have been mentioned in this article.

So whether you decide on special vacation trips, outdoor camp-outs, Friday night or Sunday afternoon dinners, or nothing more than a quiet afternoon in your own backyard, make up your mind to build strong family bonds. You'll always be glad you did. Someday your grandchildren will thank you for establishing family bonds that will be passed on to their children and to generations yet to come. □



PHAL FINCH

Domestic Violence

The Secret Sin

The problem of battered women and children must be understood, dealt with and solved.

THERE are some subjects so gruesome that humans don't want to hear about them.

Yet in our world of increasing violence, these problems must be faced.

The rising tide of domestic violence, which includes wife beating, child beating and even beating of aging parents, has forced the public to become aware of what, in the past, has been a behind-closed-doors, secret sin. Tragically, too, a climate of *hysteria* has been created in which people innocent of these crimes are being falsely accused by evil neighbors or by officials seeking publicity for themselves.

No Longer Secret

This once-hidden sin is still ex-

tremely difficult to discuss publicly. But discuss it we must.

From Europe, Australia, South America, Africa—it matters not where—attention has been awakened to the problem of battered women and other tragic family abuses.

One of the leading figures in the campaign against women's abuse is Englishwoman Erin Pizzey. After living outside England most of her life, she finally settled back in Britain in 1960.

In 1971 she founded a group called Women's Aid and has since set up a number of shelters for battered women. One of her books shockingly entitled *Scream Quietly or the Neighbors Will Hear* recounts the horror stories of scores of British women and children who have sought shelter

from both physical and mental abuse.

Since the fledgling beginning of her first "safe house" or shelter, every one that has been opened was almost immediately filled. There is a constant search for property and funding to establish more. Such is the problem in Britain.

And the United States has equally staggering statistics.

During the period when nearly 39,000 American soldiers died in a futile, dirty conflict in Vietnam (between 1967 and 1973), 17,570 women and children died on the home front from family violence.

According to FBI statistics, a wife is beaten every 30 seconds in the United States. That's more than one million a year at the time this is being written.

But before we draw the inaccurate conclusion that violence is limited to men against women, we need to realize that another facet of the secret sin that often goes unreported is, strange as it may sound, husband beating.

Sociologist Suzanne Steinmetz of the University of Delaware has written a book on the subject of violence, entitled *The Cycle of Violence*. She estimates from her studies that each year more than one-quarter million American husbands are beaten and injured each year in domestic violence.

And then there is the problem of neighbor *falsely* accusing neighbor out of jealousy or hate or spite.

To Solve a Problem

Public awareness of this problem is very recent. Few books were published on battered women before 1970. Some of the best-known books are the aforementioned *Scream Quietly* published in 1974; *Battered Women* by Marian Roy in 1977; *The Battered Woman* by Lenore Walker in 1979; and *The Family Secret* by Stacy and Shupe in 1983.

All of these books tell the sorrowful stories of broken-up marriages, women and children driven from their homes, broken bones and bruised bodies left in a wake of unparalleled family violence. They all point out how little has been done until recent years to alleviate the suffering.

Now communities, civic groups

law enforcement agencies, concerned neighbors, local, state and national governments are striving to help. Funds are donated and taxes are allocated to help in a variety of ways. Hot line or emergency telephone groups are set up to help those in trouble. Counseling centers have been established. Safe houses or shelters have been set up where abused women and children can seek refuge.

Yet the surface barely has been scratched in solving the problem. Only a small percentage of the abused know how to seek help or have the courage to make the first step by calling a minister, social worker, doctor or the police.

Unless checked, family abuse threatens the very fiber of society. It is only one of many scourges in a satanically influenced world that seems to be speeding ever more swiftly to its own self-inflicted destruction.

But Why?

Why is there so much family abuse? Why do husbands beat their wives? Why do parents beat their children?

To a man who has never had even a slight passing thought about hitting his wife, it is unfathomable to think of striking her. In the marriage ceremony he promised to "love her, provide for her and protect her." How can any man abuse his wife in any way?

In reviewing one of the above mentioned books on family violence, one book critic observed: "The book is compelling, though almost too much to bear in some places. One stays with it to get answers to the questions that go unanswered: How can they do it? And *why* do they do it? The authors admit little is known about batterers, just 'armchair speculation' and the unclear pictures of them from the victims."

That review demonstrates the frustration nearly everyone feels. Even experts in the field of sociology really don't yet have enough information to draw clear-cut conclusions.

What research has brought to light, however, is dispelling the many myths that the public in gen-

eral presupposes about battered women and those who do the battering.

Some of those myths are pointed out by Lenore Walker in her book *The Battered Woman*, pages 18 to 30:

Myth 1: Battered women are only a small percentage of the population. (The truth is millions of women and children are abused all over the world.)

Myth 2: Battered women are from minority ethnic groups and from a lower socioeconomic status. (The truth is battered women come from homes in every social strata and ethnic group.)

Myth 3: Battered women deserve to be beaten and even get a masochistic pleasure from it, otherwise they would leave. (Again the truth is a self-respecting woman would not want to be beaten. Pain doesn't feel good. And most women who are abused don't leave for several reasons: not having financial support, fear of being hunted down and even more severely beaten, and the fear of what would happen to the children.)

There are many other myths Dr. Walker dispels. These listed are only some of the more common misconceptions.

Can We Know the Real Cause?

Family violence has been going on for about as long as mankind has been on the earth. The first recorded family violence was Cain rising up to kill his brother Abel.

The society that followed was "corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence" (Gen. 6:11, *New International Version* throughout). God observed "how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time" (verse 5).

But why such violence then and now?

The answer goes back to the first humans in the garden of Eden.

When the first humans were placed in the garden of Eden, God instructed them. Included was a warning not to eat from one tree in the garden—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. You know the story well. Deceived by Satan

the devil, Eve took of the tree. Adam followed suit.

What did the tree symbolize? Not merely knowledge of good and evil. They chose the way of *deciding for themselves* what was right and what was wrong. In other words, they chose the way of human experimentation. Trial and error. They rejected revealed knowledge from God.

That's what mankind has been doing ever since. God has permitted it, of course. But God has not left mankind without knowledge. His written word, the Bible, contains the revelation of his will—of how we ought to live. But most people have rejected this revelation of essential knowledge.

Don't Discount the Devil

We realize many skeptics, doubters and agnostics will ridicule the existence of a very real spirit being called Satan or the devil. Nevertheless, his influence is a powerful force behind family violence.

When Jesus described the devil he said: "He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

The Bible further describes the devil as "the god of this age [who] has blinded the minds of unbelievers" (II Cor. 4:4). And in the book of Revelation, "The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray" (Rev. 12:9).

Satan has tried to pervert or destroy family life as much as any part of God's great creation. The reason should be apparent.

Through marriage and the resultant human capacity to reproduce, human beings are given physical life. Each human has the potential to be born into the family of God, to serve in God's government for all eternity and even to be part of the government that will ultimately judge Satan and the rebellious fallen spirits who followed him (I Cor. 6:3).

Small wonder Satan has attempted to destroy family life, to

pervert child rearing, to demolish love between a husband and wife.

Maybe this will explain, if you have not understood it before, why so much of human history has been filled with inexplicable violence and evil. It has simply been a world cut off from God for the most part, experimenting to discover for itself good and evil in a world under the influence of Satan.

Modern family violence is no exception.

Then What Is the Answer?

While there are no easy answers to complex questions, there are answers. We can tell you, from the pages of the Bible, how a husband should treat his wife and his children. This problem spans all ethnic, national and socioeconomic boundaries. So the solution must span all these as well.

It boils down to whether or not an individual who is abusing his wife or children is willing to apply the way of life that leads to happiness.

Safe houses, shelters for battered women, homes for abused children are only a small part of the answer. They are noble causes that help as many as they can.

But unfortunately such shelters cannot solve the *cause* of the problem. Such methods are the best human means so far devised to treat the *result*. In the end, only those who are committing the sin can stop it, and perhaps put together again a family imbued with love for wife and children.

Dr. James Dobson put it well. While he was not specifically dealing with the problem of family abuse in his book *Straight Talk to Men and Their Wives*, he said, "If America [or any other nation] is going to survive the incredible stresses and dangers it now faces, it will be because husbands and fathers again place their families at the highest level on their system of priorities!"

Nothing could be more applicable to the subject of battered women and children.

The first and most important

step in treating the cause of family abuse is for men who have become husbands and fathers to realize the awesome importance of their responsibilities. Loving, providing for and protecting a wife is infinitely more important than rising to fame and fortune in the business world. Spending time with, teaching and loving children makes any other accomplishments in this life pale into insignificance.

The apostle Paul must have looked into our time today when he described the society of the last days: "People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, ABUSIVE, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (II Tim. 3:2-4).

If that doesn't describe this last half of the 20th century A.D., then what does?

That same apostle gave vivid, explicit and loving instructions on building the proper marital relationships.

Here's what he wrote in Ephesians 5:25-29: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy . . . and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church."

What a world it would be if just those verses were applied in marriage!

If just one husband who has abused a wife reads this article and sets his will to change, it will well be worth the time and effort.

There is simply no excuse at any time and for any reason for a man to hit, kick, bruise and batter his wife—or any woman or child.

Peter admonished husbands: "In the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker [physically] partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers" (I Pet. 3:7).

When God created mankind in his own image he made Adam, the man, first. But Adam was not complete—he was only half there. God permitted him to experience, for a few hours, what it was like to be alone. In all the animal kingdom there was not a suitable companion for Adam.

So God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him and made the first woman, Eve, from his own bone and flesh. Together they could love, share, reproduce. Apart from each other they were unable to accomplish any of these.

Woman was not made a subspecies. A lesser creature. A property to be dragged about by a hank of hair.

In all human history there has not been a society, ancient or modern, that has fully understood the plain truth. Satan has deceived them all.

With God's help though, you can understand.

Husbands and wives should never abuse one another, their children or their parents. Their intentions and desire should be one of constant love—growing love—and the establishment and maintenance of a strong family headed by a loving husband and father who guides his responsive family.

Then and only then will there be no secret sins of battered wives and children cowering for fear behind closed doors.

And neighbors and officials will cease falsely accusing innocent parties. Too often television, radio and newspaper coverage is given of the accusation and little or no coverage of the fact that a family or parents were *falsely* accused.

When God's ways are practiced, family dignity and love abound. It's the only way that will ever work. □

THOSE of you who are women face far more today than was expected of your mothers and grandmothers.

Not only must you be an up-to-date homemaker, wife and mother, you must also cope with the mounting pressures of financial responsibility and keep up with knowledge of a rapidly changing world.

Yet when you reach those middle years of life, the same physical, hormonal, mental and emotional changes will go on just as women have experienced for thousands of years. For many, it's a devastating combination.

Some have hoped, even thought, today's active, fulfilled women aren't supposed to experience irrational anxieties. It seems so out of style.

Instead of looking at this stage of life as a time of reassessment—a time to grow and develop some of those interests put aside in earlier years—some look into their mirrors one day and see a vaguely familiar face and a figure they don't like very well.

There is a noticeable tint of gray in the hair. There are wrinkles in the corners of the eyes. A few pounds of extra weight. A listless

The Changing Years . . . *PREPARE NOW!*

It's time we all understand our natural life cycles.

feeling, frequent depressions, occasional hot flashes and night sweats and their nerves are frayed.

It all adds up to the "change of life"—menopause as it is more technically called. There is in the life of every God-designed woman that time when the body will no longer bear children. A physical and emotional change is under way.

For too many it becomes a crisis.

Battling Fluctuating Hormones

Women entering the middle years, whether they admit it or not, have the battle of fluctuating hormones to fight. Many find it hardly a skirmish. But for some, it's an all-out war. It's up to you whether you will enter the battle prepared and armed or whether you will face this challenge unprepared both physically and mentally.

It is an important time in life. The happiness of the remaining one third of your life is at stake. How to pass through menopause and plan for the future is often one of the most overlooked and least considered times of life.

Everyone has to realize

the middle years are very real. Perhaps you have heard the story of the male who believed this sort of change was all mental and psychological.

One night he and his wife were guests for dinner. As they all sat by the fireplace after the meal, the subject of menopause came up. There followed quite a discussion on whether the change of life was hormonal and physical or just in one's head.

After some time, the guest's wife finally presented the best case to convince him he was wrong. She said to him, "Honey, please don't make it so I have to go through terrible turmoil during menopause just to prove you are wrong."

The man had also thought morning sickness during the early stages of pregnancy was just in the head.

Education, the First Step

Knowledge is one of the most important ingredients to any phase of life—but perhaps more important at menopause than any other.

Menopause has been described as adolescence in reverse. A young woman enters into puberty at about age 12 or 13. That is an exciting time of life—and it's important parents educate their children about this new phase.

A girl matures into a young woman and her body begins its



PHOTOS BY HAL FINCH

preparations to make motherhood possible. During the next four decades the fallopian tubes will release more than 400 ova.

In those years marriage will usually take place in the early 20s. Many families will have children. Conception can occur on a monthly basis. During a month when conception does not occur, the unfertilized egg does not become attached to the uterus and the menstrual period results.

But usually in the mid to late 40s, this all begins to change. The childbearing years over, God designed the body to cease the possibilities of conception. But not suddenly. This marvelous change usually takes a few years.

Ancient and superstitious societies believed something was wrong. Some thought a woman's hair turns white during menopause. Many times women were suspected of losing their mental faculties. What a tragedy. Generations of women have lived with untruths and unneeded fears because of improper knowledge.

Menopause is a natural and normal part of the life's processes. About 85 percent of women will pass through the change in life with relatively minor symptoms of discomfort. The remaining 15 percent may experience greater difficulty, but can seek proper medical help and guidance to proceed through the few years menopause may take.

Menopause is not something to fear. It is a passing stage of life that may offer some discomfort and concern. But it will pass.

Women can find the remaining years some of the most personally rewarding, gratifying and joyful years of their lives.

An Understanding Husband

For married women going through the menopause, an understanding husband can be one of the best helps of all. Many men simply are not educated concerning the importance of this time in a woman's life, and do not offer proper support.

Many men have not taken the time to understand their wives in this sometimes crucial phase of life.

Perhaps more than at any other time in the marriage, a woman during menopause requires love, attention, appreciation and UNDERSTANDING.

Without a doubt there is a hormonal change taking place. To a lesser or greater degree there will be changing emotional reactions, depression, hot flashes and lack of energy.

Husbands must never let this time in life lead to casting a wandering eye toward another woman or lead to neglect. It is a time for husbands and wives to spend even more time together. It is a time for a husband to reassure his wife she is even more beautiful than ever.

Remember you are both growing older together. And if the wife has a few gray hairs, some wrinkles in the brow and has gained a pound or two, so probably has the husband.

So in addition to education, the love and support of a husband, children and friends are vital ingredients to help a woman through this changing time of life.

What to Expect

Most women can expect menopause to begin in the late 40s. The average age is 47. Research has shown heredity is a strong factor—a daughter can anticipate beginning menopause at about the same age her mother did.

At the onset of menopause the menstrual cycle may change slightly. Monthly periods will perhaps not be as regular as before. The number of days of menstrual flow may change, over a period of years decreasing in days till finally the process stops entirely.

As menstruation slows down, the woman's body will usually produce fewer hormones.

This, along with other adjustments, stresses and strains of the middle years, may produce increased nervousness and feelings of



depression (often for no apparent reason). There may also be weight gain without additional food intake and at times an inability to sleep as well as usual.

Sometimes there will be a tingling feeling in the hands and feet. And there may be occasional itching and a feeling of heat in certain portions of the body—most people call these “hot flashes.”

These conditions should be no cause for alarm. They are brought about by irregular contraction and expansion of many blood vessels in the body. These irregularities, too, will pass in time.

Most women will experience a noticeable decrease in energy. The energy level may drop by as much as one third at this time of life. Some women who have maintained a hectic schedule, whirred through the housework and were always ready to go at a moment's notice, simply may not be able to maintain that pace.

This does not mean the home should be filled with statements like: “Vacuum the house, Suzie, Mommy's very tired. She's in that time of life, you know.” Yes, Mother may well appreciate a little extra help around the house, but

she doesn't need those sideswiping comments.

If there are still children at home, they should certainly do their fair share of keeping the house clean and other normal household duties. (Fact is, they ought to have been doing that all along.)

And it wouldn't be the worst idea in the world if the husband picked up some of the duties of the home and together they would do the dishes once in a while. He can vacuum the upstairs or prepare an occasional meal.

And if the family had not been able to afford it before, but can now, hire domestic help to clean the home once or twice a month.

Most of all, you can be sure menopause is a passing phase of life. It will end, but it may last a few years. There may be some discomfort. A few women will have more severe than normal symptoms. But it will come to an end.

The best years of one's life can be just around the corner.

What to Do

Once again, education or knowledge is most important. Read books and articles on the subject of menopause. Understand the variety of possible symptoms. Your family doctor can often be helpful in giving advice and, when necessary, recommendations on what to do.

Then face that wonderful changing time of life positively. Dr. Marion Hilliard in her book *A Woman Doctor Looks at Love and Life* describes her reaction to women patients who come to her office with the whispered statement, "Doctor, I think I'm in the change."

Dr. Hilliard whoops with delight, "The change! Well, you're in for an interesting time. I can promise you that the best years of your life are ahead of you."

I'm sure most of her patients are momentarily shocked beyond belief. Somehow, many think menopause is an illness to be treated by drugs and even hospitalization. While that might be recommended

in the few cases of extreme difficulty, it is not what a majority of women need.

Another important consideration in successfully enjoying the changing years is nutrition and diet. (Not that this should not be an important consideration throughout one's life.) Because of all the chemical and emotional changes being made, a woman *must* eat a balanced diet and maintain proper nutrition.

Wisdom and balance in this area are essential. Most doctors know that chancy and excessive hormonal drugs are not the answer.

Yet many women automatically assume estrogen replacement is the thing to do. More often, it is *not* the thing to do. Why chance chemical side effects that could shorten your life to escape a few years of discomfort?

There really is no aid, natural or chemical, to combat growing older. We all will go through the aging process marking the various stages of life as they come.

When we were younger we could disregard (but shouldn't have) the laws of good health and not suffer immediate repercussions. But during these middle and later years of life our bad habits take noticeable toll.

As we grow older and often less active, our metabolic rates begin to change. We can gain weight on the same diet that formerly left us trimmer. Muscles begin to lose their tone and body alignment is affected. Many suffer resultant back pain.

A common complaint of many women in the menopausal years is the loss of calcium and a condition of bone loss called osteoporosis. At this stage in life regular exercise is vital. Coupled with proper calcium intake, the only known way to stimulate bone growth is exercise.

Here's where husbands can again be of help. Begin an exercise plan by taking long walks together three or four times a week. Start with a half mile and work up to four or five miles. Almost everyone can exercise in this manner, and the talks

you share while walking can strengthen your marriage as well.

In addition to physical symptoms and the ability to take care of those physical aspects of menopause, it is most urgent we understand the emotional changes that will also occur.

Fluctuating feelings of depression and irritability are not symptoms of encroaching mental illness. They simply, to one degree or another, are emotions one must cope with at this time of life.

There will be good days and there will be bad days. There will be times a woman will forget even her best friend's name. She will notice extreme fluctuations in her feelings of anger and love.

While hormonal imbalance plays a significant role in the emotional makeup, outside factors can also play a part. A woman overly subjected to stress is much more likely to have fluctuating emotions than a woman who lives and works in an environment of love and understanding.

This brings us to the conclusion of the matter. Every woman must accept that she will enter into *and pass through* menopause. It is not a sickness or disease, but a normal, to-be-anticipated time of life.

It is a time when a husband must offer more love, understanding and time to his wife than ever before. Children, relatives and friends must also pitch in to create a stable and loving environment.

Then, it is a time to look forward to about one third of a life span of accomplishment and joy.

If you have entered or are about to enter menopause, relax. You are going to go through some changes, yes. You will on some days be hard to live with. You will have some bad days. But they will get fewer and further between. One day they will stop.

Stay active and busy. Maintain a good exercise program. Eat a wholesome and balanced diet.

Then you may find, as one woman wrote, "The change begins at age 45 but, believe me, life begins at 50!" □

HOW quickly the years roll by. It seems only yesterday, you were young and carefree, living at home under the care of parents.

Then came the college years or you decided to work full time.

Next was marriage. Then children. Before you realize it they are grown, off to college, settled into jobs. They are married and you are in-laws.

Then one day you receive the momentous notice you are about to become grandparents.

Such are life's cycles.

Being grandparents, though, can be one of the most inspiring times of life. Unfortunately, in many segments of Western societies, the art of grandparenting has been lost.

In today's highly mobile society so many young families move away to pursue careers far away from home. At this time grandparents can fulfill a very needed role of stability and provide a connection to hereditary roots. It is important to take advantage of their experience, love and concern.

The Bible teaches respect for age and its accompanying wisdom. God instructed through Moses, "Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God" (Lev. 19:32, *New International Version* throughout).

What a shame when society rejects this important spiritual principle.

Take for example riding a crowded subway of Tokyo, Japan. When an elderly man or woman boards, often a younger person offers the older his place rather than see the elderly remain standing. In most societies that kind of respect is rare today. Young people crowd onto public transportation and seldom assist the elderly when a bus or train is crowded.

With this declining respect for age comes an attendant lack of regard for experience and wisdom. It is a wise young person who takes



The Art of Grandparenting

Some of the most important people in the family are grandparents. Here is a personal reminiscence.

advantage of his grandparents' knowledge.

Don't Forget the Past

Our 12-year-old daughter spent last summer with her grandparents in Texas. They are all in their 70s now and have lived through and experienced the many changes of the 20th century. My job has required several moves and we are now living some 1,500 miles from our parents. But we know the importance of grandparents and their influence.

On my wife's side of the family there are 20 grandchildren. As patriarch and matriarch of the clan, her parents have set a fine example

and standard, not only for their seven children, but for their grandchildren as well.

My mother has a special love for our five children. Since I am an only child they are the only grandchildren she has.

Our children have been able to stay with one set of grandparents or the other at least one summer.

So this last summer was our youngest daughter's turn to spend the summer with her grandparents. We found a book in the bookstore prepared especially for grandchildren to interview and record interests and experiences of their grandparents.

She took her book and has written stories from her grandmother's younger years. She heard things her parents had not heard. Maybe we just never took the time to sit down with our parents to hear them. So many of these marvelous experiences would have been passed over and forgotten had our daughter not recorded them.

The remaining years will pass quickly. So we are now making plans for a future visit to tape record a few hours of the interesting times and experiences of some of the generation that have lived through the most rapidly changing time in all human history. Maybe many of you might be inspired to do the same.

A Grandfather's Advice

Several years ago our oldest daughter went to spend the spring school vacation at her grandparents. It was her senior year of high school and she was experiencing the agonies of making decisions about her future. Should she stay at home and attend a university nearby? Should she live near her grandparents and go to a junior college? Should she attend Ambassador College in California, where her grandfather and both her father and mother had graduated?

It was weighing heavily on her mind. She wasn't sure she wanted to move away to California (we lived in another state at the time). My wife and I were trying not to interfere—we wanted the decision to be hers.

One night during the visit, her grandfather took her out to dinner to discuss her future. He calmly and lovingly directed her to think about the pros and cons of each possibility. But having a deep love for Ambassador College he said, "Whatever the faults and flaws you may feel about Ambassador College, it is a better place for you than any other institution."

Those words of wisdom hit home. Even though she had applied to and been accepted at one or more other colleges, she came home from that visit to her grandparents determined to attend Ambassador College. It was a decision she has never regretted. She completed four years of college, gradu-

ated, met her future husband at college and is now very happily married.

When the wedding took place last summer the grandparents were all in attendance. My daughter and future son-in-law had asked me to perform their wedding ceremony just as her sister who had been married a year earlier had done.

It is a special privilege not only to walk down the aisle to present a lovely young bride to the bridegroom, but to step around and officiate the ceremony. As you can well imagine it is a time of great emotion.

There was some concern from my wife that I would not fully maintain composure—that my voice might crack or a tear might come to my eye. She was certain she would be sitting in the front row holding back the tears (of joy, of course).

The eventful day came and I remained remarkably composed, I thought. The wedding march started and I escorted my daughter down the aisle. Stepping around in front I began, "There is no more joyous ceremony than this we now enter."

That was all it took. On the front row Grandpa simply could not hold back the tears. In order not to do the same, all I could do was bury my head in the ceremony and read it through. I know the joy of a father presenting his daughters as brides, but Grandpa assures me I have a special emotion waiting when my grandchildren take that step.

Somehow it seemed a proper conclusion to the advice he gave her nearly five years before.

Never underestimate the influence of grandparents.

A Call for Grandmother

There is one special time when you absolutely must have a grandmother. That is at the birth of your children. Somehow grandmothers know everything there is to know. And the fledgling new parents seem to know so little even though they may have read more than a dozen books on having and caring for babies.

Probably thousands of new fa-

thers would have nearly starved had Grandma not come to take care of the household after the new baby arrived.

When we had our first child, Grandma came to spend the first week. It was so pleasant to have her that she had to come and spend at least a week at our home for the birth of our next four children.

One time Grandma and Grandpa were part of the whole process. When our third child, and only son, was born, we were living only a few miles from the grandparents. About 4 o'clock in the morning my wife jarred me awake saying, "Honey, wake up, wake up, the baby is on the way." This was happening a few days before "due-day."

I jolted out of bed and called the doctor. "Oh no!" his wife exclaimed. "My husband has gone fishing. There would be no way to find him on the lake."

I called the nurse. But she lived about 45 minutes away. "How far apart are the pains?" she asked. I rushed back to the bedroom to find out. "You'd better hurry," my wife urged, "the pains are two minutes apart." "Two minutes," I reported to the nurse. "I'd better get right over," she hastened.

Most expecting parents have read books on what to do in such emergencies. But you never feel you'll have to use the knowledge. This time I had to. Of all the times for a fast delivery, my wife had to choose this one. Our first child had been about a seven-hour labor and the second was eight or nine hours. I naturally assumed I had plenty of time, that the nurse would arrive and even the doctor would return from his morning fishing and be in attendance.

I called Grandma and Grandpa and told them the baby was on the way. They said they would be right over—it would take maybe half an hour. Forty-five minutes from the first pain, the baby was on the way into the bright world. There I was alone trying to keep calm and keep my wife calm. It really went smoothly and out came the bouncing baby boy.

About the time I had taken him up, Grandma and Grandpa burst into the room. "What do I do

now?" I asked in a borderline desperate voice. "I think you'd better give him a gentle swat on the bottom," Grandpa quickly replied. I did. He squalled. Grandma took over caring for Mom and the newborn infant.

By the time the nurse arrived everything was in order. (By the way, the doctor didn't make it back till late that evening.) And the rest is history. Our son is now almost 20 years old, about 6 feet 3 inches tall and attending Ambassador College.

And I assure you his grandparents have been a great influence in his life—in his case from his very first breath.

Record Your Experiences for Posterity

I would encourage you who are entering the autumn years of life to record your memories and experiences for your children and grandchildren.

One of my favorite books is one of a caring and considerate father and grandfather wrote to his offspring. But millions of others have enjoyed and profited from it. It is *The Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong*, the founder of Ambassador College and late editor in chief of the *Plain Truth* magazine.

Born in the last decade of the 1800s, Mr. Armstrong had seen the changes from horse and buggy to space flight. He observed the marvelous technological advances, but noted the paradox of a society that cannot solve its human problems. He certainly learned a great deal from a varied, busy and active life.

You can have a free illustrated copy of the first chapters of Mr. Armstrong's autobiography, titled *The Early Years*, if you write our nearest office.

But you don't have to be a professional writer to record your own experiences. So many of you who are grandparents have much to pass on to the next two or more generations. I hope while there is yet time you will write or tell as much as you can of the many les-

sons you have learned. That's part of the lost art of grandparenting you might want to recapture.

Building an Inheritance

The importance of grandparenting is perhaps best captured in Proverbs 17:6, "Children's children are a crown to the aged, and parents are the pride of their children." In those latter years of life, perhaps the greatest joy of all is seeing the grandchildren grow to maturity and take their place in the world.

If you have spent time with them, shown them their heredity, and influenced their decisions, you can complete those years knowing you have made a significant contribution to the lives of your children and grandchildren.

It is not always possible in our complex modern world, but one great blessing grandparents can provide is the building of an inheritance to pass along, not only to their children, but their grandchildren as well.

Solomon also wrote, "A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children" (Prov. 13:22). There is much to be said for laying up an inheritance. The years of hard work and accumulation of whatever worldly goods can be passed on from generation to generation.

Too much of our modern society has become the throw-away type. We buy it, use it, discard it when it is worn out—which usually doesn't take too long.

But many families have beautiful heirlooms, antique furniture or family jewelry that can be divided among the children and grandchildren. Perhaps property has been in the family for several generations. I have a good friend who lives in a lovely remodeled farm home originally built by his great-grandfather after the American Civil War. The homestead exudes history and charm. How nice it is when such things can be retained in a family for generations.

But perhaps the most valuable asset of all that grandparents can pass along is their experience. Life is filled with many lessons. A wise

person it is who will learn from the experiences of others rather than make all the mistakes himself.

And these experiences need not all be great lessons of accumulating wealth or making multimillion dollar business decisions. They can be some of life's simple yet often overlooked everyday lessons.

The apostle Paul wrote to older women, "They can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God" (Titus 2:4-5).

At first glance that might not seem earth shattering in importance. But if you take time to observe our hectic modern society, you will find those are some of the very qualities most lacking.

Young men often don't know how to be loving, understanding husbands, exercising proper leadership. Young women often don't know how to be properly motivated wives and mothers, how to be submissive.

Is it because they have not been taught by or have not listened to the older generation?

Perhaps that is at least part of the answer.

Yes, there is a true art in being a grandparent. Many of you who are reading this already are grandparents—even great-grandparents. Many others who are parents are going to become grandparents in the not-too-distant future. Even our young readers who are not yet married will find the years passing swiftly and the time rapidly coming upon them when they likewise will enter those exciting and productive years.

At all ages and levels there are few people more important to the family structure and even the fiber of a nation than the generation who are grandparents.

It would do us all well to turn our attention and respect to that marvelous class of individuals who have so much to contribute—
GRANDPARENTS. □