

*Marriage:*  
*A Personal Investment*

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*All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Marriage as an institution is among Satan's primary targets. Ever since Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden and commanded to be fruitful and multiply, the devil has been at work trying to undermine this most fundamental of human relationships.

Sadly, he has been very effective with his attacks. Research reveals that nearly half of all Christian marriages in the United States now end in divorce. The result has been chaos in all areas of life. Families have become fragmented and the result has been a generation that has seen increasing degrees of promiscuity and lawlessness. Why? Because homes are out of order. The husband and wife have not submitted to God.

There are no hopeless causes in Christ's eyes. He can restore and revive any union if the partners will yoke up with His meekness and allow His truth to become their rule of life.

When this is allowed to happen, as this booklet will show, any marriage can really enjoy a continual honeymoon of life, love, and productivity in the plan of God.

## *Chapter One*

# YOKING UP WITH MEEKNESS

Proverbs 16:19 says, “Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.” Also, Proverbs 22:4 says, “By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honour, and life.” Jesus said, “Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:4).

Who are the greatest in God’s eyes? Throughout the Scriptures, they are people who have humility and fear of the Lord and who live with the lowly instead of dividing the spoil with the proud.

“And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted” (Matthew 23:12). This principle of promotion is especially true in marriage, as well as in single life.

## *Success Relates to Humility*

Consider Isaiah 57:15: “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

In every single case, success with God relates to humility. When we study the word “humility” as it appears in the Bible, we find different applications. *Tapeinophrosune*, one word for humility, means to think in grace. Another meaning for humility is simply “to be lowly.” We are to express humility toward others, just as we express meekness toward God. When we can accept whatever God does, we are yoked up with His meekness (Matthew 11:28, Psalm 25:9).

Meekness allows the Spirit to teach me. If the Spirit does not teach me, I am going to have some ingredients missing from my life. For example, if you bake a cake and you leave out the baking powder, the cake will be flat. Some pastors become proud. They may be gifted, but their life is flat. There are areas in their lives that they will not deal with. Just one ingredient left out of the



cake will make it undesirable. Colossians 4:6 says, “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt.” The “salt” is Resurrection power.

### *More Grace, the Main Ingredient*

“But he giveth *more grace*. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded” (James 4:6-8).

Notice the words “more grace.” When a Christian gets to the “more grace” stage through the Word of God, he is able to edify others—especially the marriage partner—causing a dramatic change in their lives.

*Submit to God first.* Many people try to resist the devil before they submit to God. They are guaranteed to be knocked down many times. Rather, submit to God and *then* resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

*Rebound when you fail.* “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.” This is what James 4:8 is

speaking of: learning how to rebound instantly when you fail.

*Receive God's power.* In James 4:10 we read, "Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." We need to believe the truth that prayer can speak power, healing, and grace into people's lives by the power of the Holy Spirit.

"I will speak into your ears," Jesus said. "I want to give you all of my power when you go" (see Acts 1:8). To the seventy followers in Luke 10:19, He said, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." God never sends His people out without the power of the Holy Spirit.

## *Chapter Two*

# DEVELOPING THE INNER MARRIAGE

What we must understand is that the Word of God must have a marriage with power. The grace of God must have a marriage with faith. Then, the stewardship of grace must have a marriage with the stewardship of faithfulness. (1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 4:1). There must be inner marriages in my soul before I can have an effective marriage with another human being.

In Luke 4:20, Jesus went into the synagogue and all eyes were fixed on Him. At the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus appeared in His glorified body with Moses and Elijah. But after a divine pronouncement by the Father, the disciples saw only Jesus (Matthew 17:8). When the people came to the feast, Philip asked them, "Who do you want to see?" They replied, "Sir we would see Jesus" (John 12:21). When our vision is fixed upon Christ, we will begin to understand that

Christ is all and in all, and a revival will start inside of us.

Before an inner revival, however, the soul lives in spiritual adultery and self-gratification with the emotions and feelings. When you live in your feelings, you live in self-gratification. When the old sin nature is in cognition with the free volition, the soul enters into spiritual adultery. We will then derive our values from the six lust patterns outside of God's love. The soul experiences an internal conspiracy and we don't even recognize it. This begins a cycle that can manifest itself in the marriage, causing us to live in spiritual adultery.

### *The Adamic Marriage*

Imagine yourself sitting in the pew of a church. Your eyes gaze at the beautifully adorned bride and her groom about to take their wedding vows. The flowers give off a sweet fragrance and the music softens your heart for what is about to take place. The pastor states, "All right, just repeat after me,"

"I, Adam, in Adam's image, receive you Eve, expecting you to fulfill my needs. I will be a good husband—or the best I can be—but remember, I am the head! According to God's

Word, you should submit to me with all of your heart, all of your soul, and with all of your might. Never defraud me under any circumstances! I want you to know that I will love you conditionally. We will have our times with God. I will be sure to tell you when you are wrong because I am the head!

“We will go to church sometimes. We will even get religious. I’ll even be good to you as much as I can (in the flesh). How much that is will be determined by your response.”

“I say these things in honesty. Amen.”

That is going to be quite a marriage in Adam, isn’t it? It will be rooted Adam’s image (Genesis 5:2), instead of the image of Christ (Genesis 1:26)

Now the bride takes her vows:

“I, Eve, receive you Adam, after the flesh. You are to love me and fulfill all of my needs. I don’t want you to be passive, sitting in front of the TV all the time, especially when I want to go to church. When we were dating, you went to church with me, but I often wondered if you understood what was being taught. I want you to be a man of God. I want you to love me as Christ loved the Church; *otherwise, you will reap what you sow!* I will take care of you. I will do a good job and just hope that it turns out fine. We’ll

know after the first ninety days.”

Then, the pastor proclaims, “I now pronounce you the fallen Adam and the fallen Eve!”

Surely, it is difficult to imagine such a scene. But sadly, many marriages are in just such a state. The flesh rules.

### *A Marriage in Christ's Nature*

Now, imagine attending a beautiful church wedding between two Spirit-filled Christians. For the sake of illustration, we will call them Mike and Claire. It would go something like this:

“I, Mike, receive you Claire, as my lawfully wedded wife. I will love you unconditionally. I will love you when it rains or snows. I will love you no matter if the business is good or bad.

“I will give you Christ. I will pray with you. I will give you the Word of God. I make a commitment to you with *God's* love. I will live in faith through application of the Word.

“Whether you are in a wheelchair or healthy, I will be true to you. I will be true to you mentally. I will be true to you in all situations. I will be faithful until death do us part. In Jesus' name. Amen.”

Now the bride takes her vows:

“I, Claire, receive you, Mike, to be my lawfully wedded husband.”

“I will be a responder to you and appreciate your initiations. I will pray with intercession for you. I will be a helpmate and hold you up every moment of my life. Together, we will worship God in our home and our local assembly.

“We will live by categorical doctrine. We will be faithful in our worship at the local assembly—a commitment which cannot be hindered by Satan. Because we have our self-image in the image of Christ, we are going to give each other Christ. I love you and say these vows to my own hurt in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Can you see the difference? That marriage will stand because Christ is at its center.

### *Chapter Three*

## OUR MARRIAGE TO CHRIST

“Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

“For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

“So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.

“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God” (Romans 7:1-4).

The first husband we were yoked to was the old sin nature, but now we are dead to the old



nature—and to its dominion over us (Romans 6:6). Instead, we are married to Christ. Because of this, we commit adultery when we go back to the first husband—the old sin nature.

We are always producing “children” that are exposed to the eternal warfare between the elect angels and Satan’s angels. Our Christian life is always producing results.

If we produce children in the old sin nature (mentally or otherwise), the children are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, and revellings (Galatians 5:19-21).

If we recognize that we are married to Jesus Christ, who was raised from the dead, our children are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and temperance.

### *Connected to a Spirit*

At any moment, we are operating either in the power of the Holy Spirit or in an unholy spirit. It could be the spirit of fear (2 Timothy 1:7), the spirit of lust, the spirit of pride (Isaiah 14:12), or the spirit of anger, just to mention a

few. Everything we do is connected to a spirit, either through the grace of God in our obedience or through the old sin nature in disobedience. A soul that isn't living in the compatibility of the grace and love of God is a soul that is not prepared for marriage.

Our souls must be filled with the love of God because the love of Christ constrains us. This truth is for a husband. This is for a couple in their relationship with their pastor-teacher. This is how a pastor-teacher relates toward them. This truth must be applied to every decision we make because we are only alive for a very short time.

The love of Christ must motivate us. It is the Holy Spirit who sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead" (2 Corinthians 5:14).

### *Receive What God Has Said about You*

A believer can get alone before God and just dwell on God's promises. He may say to himself: "I'm saved."

"I'm filled with the Spirit."

"Yes, God does truly love me."

"If I die today, I am sure that I'm going to

heaven.”

When a believer does this, he connects with heaven, and heaven hears, and heaven will answer. Gratitude will spill out as we thank God for all that He has done—for all of the acts of mercy and grace bestowed upon us.

In Song of Solomon 2:16, the Shulamite maiden said, “My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.” In 6:3, she said, “I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine.” But in 7:10 she said, “I am my beloved’s, and his desire is toward me.” You see, she just kept growing. She no longer wanted to possess him—she was just content to be his.

My wife waited for me through seven years of courtship. As we were driving away from the church after our wedding, she took my hand and said, “You’re mine! *You’re mine!*” All the way to our honeymoon she kept repeating it, “You’re mine.” But now she says, “I’m yours!”

In the same way, we can say to Jesus, “You are *mine!* You’re mine. And I am *Yours.*”

Remember 2 Corinthians 5:14, because this is where humility comes in, so we can also receive what God has to say about us.

*Chapter Four*  
THE IMPORTANCE OF  
INVESTMENT

We cannot live unto ourselves. God says that a pastor should invest in his people. Any godly pastor could go into the worst area on earth and plant a thriving ministry in a very short time. How is this done? By investment. Where does investment start? Monday morning, he knocks on doors. Monday night, he knocks on doors. Tuesday afternoon, he knocks on doors. Tuesday night, he knocks on doors, and on he goes. *Investment!* This is the way to build a church, and it's the way to build a home.

In a poll taken among married women from the general population, 50 percent of the women indicated that they have a poor self-image.

More than half of them felt unwanted.

They also complained of feeling unloved. Most did not feel as though their husbands found them attractive.

These women also made these statements: “When we have sex, I feel that he exploits my body. I feel that he has sex just to fulfill himself. It isn’t mutual love that is flowing.”

Half of the women surveyed felt exploited, unwanted, and undesirable to their husbands. They said that they often felt frustrated and bored with their lives.

The men surveyed in the same poll said they felt unappreciated. They did not feel that their wives were good responders. Many felt that their wives were hard workers and took good care of the family, but they did not feel oneness with them.

The problem in both cases is that the souls are not right. The problem is not in the marriage; the problem is in the soul. When you get the soul right, the marriage gets right.

The Lord said in Genesis 2:24, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall *cleave* unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” In Mark 10:8, Jesus said the same thing. We can either hear, believe, receive, and cleave, or we can have an impersonal faith in the Word of God and leave our spouse—or, at least, leave mentally. The word “cleave” means to become so one that you are always there to support and

to love under all conditions. It speaks of being there in every situation. In Acts 2:1, the disciples were of one accord. In Acts 4:32, they had one heart and one soul. Why should it be any less in a marriage?

I believe that every single marriage can be the happiest marriage in the world! Every marriage can be one in which the fruit of the Spirit become the children. When there is abundant life in a marriage, there is not a single problem between the couple. The husband isn't proud and arrogant. He doesn't take advantage of his wife. She, in turn, feels wanted and loved dearly by him. She has self-esteem. He is kind to her. He communicates with her, and they walk together without keeping secrets from one another.

Husbands, there is nothing wrong with edifying your wife. Not only is a man to love his wife as Christ loved the Church, laying down his life in sacrificial love, (Ephesians 5:25), but a man ought to love his wife as his own flesh (Ephesians 5:28).

To love her as his own flesh means that just as a man would never, on purpose, pound his finger with a hammer nor hurt himself emotionally (unless he was deceived by Satan's vibra-

tions, projections, and pressures), he should never consider hurting his wife in any way. He should only consider how to nourish and nurture her with all of the love and creativity the Holy Spirit gives him.

A husband must come to the understanding that his wife is insatiable and that she craves leadership. She wants to be edified and she wants him to communicate Christ to her. She will respond and give her husband Christ in return, because what is invested in her is what will come out of her.

In God's order, the marriage comes before the assembly. Everyone ought to be faithful to attend services, but if a couple is having problems, they should take some time away for spiritual healing. A week together can turn a marriage around. They should go somewhere alone and find a place where they can have an intimate time with each other and with the Lord—just to pray and give themselves to each other under God's umbrella.

### *Beware of Sentimental Attachments*

When a woman wants to spend excess time in a relationship with another woman, she may be entering into a soul-power relationship. This

kind of relationship is one based on sentimentality instead of truth.

A woman does not want to “marry” into sublimation: the husband plus the drinking, the husband plus his anger or his passive temperament toward her. She didn’t ask for that when she got married. She was told that he would love her, and both parties are to keep their vows to their own hurt. But she didn’t marry sublimation; she married a leader.

“...The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (1 Corinthians 11:3).

Jesus said, “I submit to My Father in every thought, in every word, in every moment. I submit to the Father, though I am God in My humanity. I will always submit to the Father.” (See John 5:19, 30.) He also says to husbands, “I want you to submit to Me in your thoughts, in your words, in your deeds. Take spiritual leadership, spiritual initiation, and submit to Me.”

When a husband applies these truths to his life, the wife’s submission will be a normal response because what comes out of him goes into her. The wife responds because she was designed to respond. She appreciates because God designed her to appreciate.



## *Learn How to Invest*

The Bible says, “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with [your wives] according to *knowledge...*” (1 Peter 3:7). Every endeavor requires knowledge. To be a scientist, or a teacher, or a doctor, or a nurse requires certain kinds of knowledge. To drive a car requires certain knowledge. To be a pastor requires certain knowledge. To be a good husband, you need to have knowledge about your wife, about marriage, and about God. You need to know what your wife needs. You require certain knowledge in order to be her spiritual head and to give her the abundant life.

The Scriptures do not say that *she* has to have the knowledge. It says that the husband needs to have the knowledge about sensitivity in sex, having mutual initiations without lusting and putting the woman on trial. When a man has sex with his wife in love, he should derive his pleasure from pleasing his wife. He must not lust after her in self-gratification; instead, he should enjoy coming together with his wife as one soul, one heart, one spirit, and one flesh without lusting.

“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with [your

wives] according to knowledge, *giving honour* unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel..." (1 Peter 3:7). This means to esteem her highly. The wife is the husband's darling. She is precious to him. She is his queen, and he is to give her leadership. The verse closes by saying, "...and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

When the husband dwells with his wife in knowledge and gives her honor as the weaker vessel, they grow as heirs together of the grace of God. They experience the grace of life together, being equal, with the exception of God's provision for leadership in the home, which is for the wife's protection. When this is understood, hallelujah, their prayers are not hindered! They can say to the mountain, "Be cast into the sea." Their marriage is just one victory after another!

## CONCLUSION

When two people enter into marriage, they become one soul, one heart, one mind, and one flesh. She came out of him; therefore, she is the glory of his body (1 Corinthians 11:7), which means she reflects what he gives her. She reflects the nature of God that he imparts to her, even as he is the glory of God.

What glory can be in a marriage when it is experienced in Christ's nature! There is no passivity. No sublimation. There is not an odd kind of incompatibility because of missing ingredients. Instead, a marriage that thrives in Christ's nature reflects all that God is to all of those who come in contact with it. It gives birth to the most beautiful "children": love, joy, peace, and contentment.