

*Marriage
Is A
Ministry*

Session Three
*The Husband's
Companionship Needs*

Marriage Is A Ministry

The Husband’s Companionship Needs

Marriage was created by God for His will and purpose – not ours.

Hebrews 13:20-2 *Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Genesis 2:18 *And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."*

God knows you better than you do and He knows what each of you needs better than you do because He is your creator.

Philippians 4:19 *And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

Proverbs 3:5-6 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.*

Jeremiah 17:9 *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?*

Don't trust your heart. **Trust God's Word!**

God's Word reveals our companionship needs.

Ephesians 5:21 *...submitting to one another in the fear of God.*

- 1) We are equal in value to God.
- 2) A yielding and submissive spirit ready to fulfill the will of God toward our spouse motivated by our desire to please God.

When you do not surrender to fulfill God's will in your marriage, or you attempt to do so for selfish motives, you will personally experience one or more of the Three D's:

D _____

D _____

D _____

Wives to Husbands

Ephesians 5:22-24 *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.*

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Ephesians 5:33 ...and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Hurts from the past can become strongholds hindering a wife from accepting the authority structure God designed for the family.

Submit = A voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.

God's word instructs a wife to put her trust in Christ and yield to His perfect plan for fulfilling her husband's companionship needs.

Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."

God's influence in your marriage must be greater than the influence of anyone or anything else.

Hate = To love less or to love God less.

A husband's companionship need is continual affirmation to his headship or leadership over the family.

Remember that this is God's plan, not your husband's plan. God has called and anointed your husband.

Romans 8:6-8 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

See your husband through the eyes of Christ, as Christ sees him.

A wife is to be a tool of God to help her husband become what God has called him to be, not in her own way but in God's way.

Most men did not observe a godly example of how to be a godly husband and father as he grew up.

Therefore, what if he is not doing things right or is not following God's word?

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1 Peter 3:1-6 *Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward-- arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel--rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.*

...that even if some do not obey the word: this applies to non-believers and believers.

...without a word: not nagging, demeaning, mean, harsh, judging or bad mouthing.

...by your conduct: by your obedience to God in how you submit to your husband.

Your husband should be 2nd only to God in your life, not because he deserves it, but God commands it.

Proverbs 18:22 *He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD.*

Proverbs 27:15 *A continual dripping on a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike;*

A contentious wife is unwilling to trust and obey the Lord by affirming her husband's leadership role.

Husbands need to be affirmed in their leadership role by their wife - ALWAYS!

Common disaffirming practices:

- ◆ Bad mouthing about your husband to others
- ◆ Correcting him in front of the children and others
- ◆ Refusing to put older children to work ahead of your husband
- ◆ Not supporting him in the disciplining of the children
- ◆ Telling him how to _____ without him asking for your help.
- ◆ Unwilling to serve him in public
- ◆ Unwilling to cooperate with him on the financial matters of the home
- ◆ Unwilling to surrender to him physically

Our bodies are not our own they belong to our spouse – see 1Corinthians 7:4-5 and Proverbs 18:20

Colossians 3:18 *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.*

“...as is fitting in the Lord.” Means unless your husband is asking you to do something that is against His Word, not against your will, but His Word, you are to submit to him. To try, in the power of the Holy Spirit (not your power), to fulfill his companionship needs...even physically.

Hebrews 13:4 *Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled;*

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HOMEWORK SECTION

FOR

Session Three

*The Husband's
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SESSION THREE HOMEWORK DESCRIPTIONS

Each piece of the homework is important to the progress of any disciple. Remember, a true disciple of Christ is not simply trying to acquire intellectual knowledge; a true disciple invests himself/herself to learn and to live according to the principles God teaches in His Word. Your investment in learning and living according to the principles God reveals to you through this material will transform your life as God desires.

Brief Exhortation: The purpose and spirit of the homework is Ephesians 5:21 "*submitting one to another in the fear of God*". This means that in order for us to receive the help we need to live a truly fulfilled marriage life together, we must have an open mind and a willing heart motivated by a real desire to receive God's grace and instructions above all else to fulfill God's commands as a wife or husband. Only when we commit ourselves to intimacy with and obedience to Christ is our bondage to sin toward our spouse unlocked from holding us captive as a tool of the devil.

HOMEWORK for SESSION THREE

1. Worksheet - Husbands, do you feel affirmed by your wife? (page 23)

The purpose of this worksheet is to give structure and bring clarity in specific areas in which a husband was designed by God to receive affirmation from his wife. When a husband privately and prayerfully assesses his wife's level of affirmation in each of the prescribed areas, he is able to provide her with an honest evaluation in accordance with his perspective. This process will reveal areas of struggle the wife is having fulfilling God's will for her life as it relates to her marriage. This will also provide the husband with a new or renewed understanding as to why he may have been experiencing difficulty with pursuing intimacy and companionship with his wife. Oftentimes when a husband is not affirmed by his wife in some area his flesh and/or the enemy brings confusion to him resulting in the husband seeking his affirmation elsewhere. Many men today, due to this problem, are not investing themselves thoroughly in their relationship with their wife and possibly the rest of their family. This may result in their failure to provide the companionship need their wife has that we will learn about in the next session. This can become a destructive downward spiral if not met with trust and confidence in the Word and power of God.

Read the instructions and example at the bottom of page 23 to learn how to incorporate this worksheet with the worksheet found on page 23A.

2. Worksheet - Specific, practical, non-judgmental suggestions for your wife (page 23A).

- Read the instructions on the top of page 23A before completing this worksheet.

The purpose of this worksheet is for the husband to prayerfully write out specific, practical, non-judgmental suggestions his wife can do to improve her affirmation of him in specific areas in which her affirmation toward him is less than what God desires. It will be important for the husband not to overwhelm his wife with too much to start by working on every area that is not perfect. Instead the husband should give 1 or 2 suggestions for the areas in which he graded his wife less than a 4. Some men may have difficulty completing this worksheet. We exhort you men not to abandon the activity, but to pray for God to influence your suggestions. Be specific and not general. Make the suggestions practical so implementation is possible and tangible, and non-judgmental so as not to discourage your wife. Seek additional help from a church leader, an assigned marriage mentor or your pastor, if necessary. Encourage your wife to review sessions 1 and 2 this week and to be praying for you through this week.

- Continue in your daily abiding relationship with Jesus Christ and continue to build your strong foundation.

SESSION THREE HOMEWORK DESCRIPTIONS

- Continue to use the Breaking the Cycle of Unloving Communication worksheet each time there is unloving communication.

If you are in a small group discipleship class, husbands are to prayerfully complete these pages and do not discuss them with their wives until directed to do so during next week's class. It is important that the husbands complete both worksheets before the next class because these suggestions will be the focus of the next week's homework review.

If you are completing this exercise as an independent study, make sure your wife has a writing pad to write out in her own words her responses to your specific, practical, non-judgmental suggestions for her to affirm you.

- Find a private place and time where the husband can carefully present to his wife 1 to 2 suggestions from page 23A for each category from page 23 in which the husband gave a rating of 4 or lower. Remember, you are to communicate about these areas in ways that glorify Christ. Seek help from a church leader, marriage mentor or your pastor if things become difficult, but do not abandon this exercise.
- We suggest that the husband begins this discussion in prayer with his wife asking God for grace and gentleness in his communication, for God to grant his wife a receptive heart without becoming defensive, and for God to grant them protection from the attacks of the enemy and his attempts to discourage their obedience to Christ.
- We encourage the wife to resist the enemy's attacks to tempt her to become defensive. We suggest for the wife to first repeat back to her husband what she heard him say before writing out her practical response. Wives should be as specific as possible when writing in her own words her understanding of her husband's suggestions for her to affirm him.

Remember:

- God blesses obedience.
- Our faithfulness in completing all of the homework is the beginning of a truly wonderful relationship with our spouse in Christ.
- Our transformation happens only as we abide in Him. This means our daily devotions and our obedience to His Word, including confession and repentance of our mistakes, are critical to this process.
- To see Jesus work miracles, the disciples had to follow Him.

Remember, practicing loving communication and biblical forgiveness and reconciliation are the tools God uses to break up the hardened soil of our hearts and our spouse's heart so His Word and grace can have the impact He desires. He will have victory if we will come to Him, hear Him and do what He says.

A suggestion for anyone that does not yet practice daily devotions is to use a workbook that interacts with the Bible, like ***The Biblical Principles for a Strong Foundation***. This topical workbook teaches from the Bible using a structure that encourages daily reading of the Word and journaling. It challenges the disciple using scriptural references and quotes from well known Bible teachers whose lives exemplify their messages. You may obtain a copy of the workbook, ***The Biblical Principles for a Strong Foundation*** from your leader who has it on a PC disc contained in the *Marriage is a Ministry* DVD kit.

You may also email us at www.parentingministry.org with your questions.

Marriage Is A Ministry - Homework

Husband: for the list below, use a scale from 0 to 5 (*0 being not at all; 5 being very affirming*) and rate how you feel your wife is affirming you. This is not a time to be vindictive but to begin to bring clarity and healing to these areas. See *Forgiveness & Reconciliation* on page 12, if needed. Do not share this with your wife yet. Read the instructions at the bottom of this page after you have prayerfully completed this worksheet.

Husbands, do you feel affirmed by your wife in these areas?

Write in your number (0-5)

Spiritual

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|
| • Going to Church | _____ | • Praying Together | _____ |
| • Praying with Children | _____ | • Bible Study with Children | _____ |
| • Discussing Personal Devotion | _____ | • Accepting your leadership | _____ |

Communication

- Caring about the day's events at the office or job _____
- Able to share honestly how you feel about all subjects _____
- Discussing finances _____
- Always speaks with a loving, affirming tone _____
- Makes herself available each day to talk _____
- Feel safe to share deepest needs or emotions with her _____
- Feel free to laugh and/or cry with her _____
- Always speaks honorably to you _____
- Always speaks honorably about you to others _____

Physical and/or Sexual

- Tells you she loves you often _____
- Regular sexual relations _____
- Able to share openly your desires for physical fulfillment _____

Non-sexual touching

- Cuddling _____
- Holding hands _____
- Hugging _____
- Massaging _____
- Kissing _____

Parenting

- Willing to trust your decisions in discipline _____
- Supports you when disciplining children _____
- Supports rules that have been set by you _____
- Always speaks honorably about you in front of children _____

After you have completed this worksheet, **do not discuss this with your wife.** Instead, write on page 23A specific, non-judgmental, practical suggestions for ways your wife can improve in affirming you in the areas you gave your wife a mark of less than 5. For example: if you gave your wife less than a mark of 5 for regular sexual relations, your suggestion might be for your wife to have a more cooperative attitude throughout the week, that his wife would initiate a couple of times per month, and that they would engage in intimacy 2 – 3 times per week minimum.

Marriage Is A Ministry - Homework

(Complete individually, but do not discuss with your wife until directed to do so by the leader)

Specific, Practical, Non-judgmental Suggestions for Your Wife

Remember, the purpose of this exercise is for you to try to be prepared to lovingly communicate to your wife, without attacking or condemning, giving specific, practical suggestions for your wife to do to improve at meeting your unique companionship needs. Your wife's concept of your unique companionship needs may be very different from yours or God's. So it is very important that your suggestions are as complete as possible using specific explanations and positive encouragement, but also as brief as possible. Consider how your suggestions might sound if someone else was giving them to you. Don't compromise, but be gentle and considerate of your wife.

Spiritual

Communication

Physical and/or Sexual

Non-sexual touching

Parenting
