

*Marriage
Is A
Ministry*

Session Four
*The Wife's
Companionship Needs*

Marriage Is A Ministry

The Wife's Companionship Needs

Ephesians 5:25-31 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 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."*

Security through the love of Christ flowing through her husband – not based upon what she does or does not do, but based upon the example of Jesus and the Word of God.

1. Love your wife as Christ loved the Church and give yourself for her:

The opposite of security is fear.

1 John 4:18-21 *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us. If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.*

Philippians 1:6 *...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

This reminds husbands to trust in Christ and reminds wives that her husband is a work in progress.

Jesus is our example to follow. Only His example and His Word are to be our measuring tools.

2. Sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word:

- ◆ We all fail, we're human – we need to take ownership, repent, and ask for forgiveness daily.
- ◆ When God's Word is our guide for how we treat our wife we will not excuse ourselves when we are sinful or harsh toward them.
- ◆ We can't excuse ungodly behavior in our homes toward our wife or children – this makes our wife feel insecure.

This verse also includes the importance of discipling our wife, sharing biblical truth and growing together – church, mid-week study, personal devotion, prayer and example.

Marriage Is A Ministry

Wives: what if you are married to an unsaved or unwilling husband?

Matthew 11:28 “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

3. Vs. 28-30 “So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.”

Your wife needs to be treated as an extension of your own body by adapting to the uniqueness of her personality.

Leading in the training up of the children and the peace keeping of the home.

Ephesians 6:4 “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

Tending to her as you do your own body.

Learning to tend to your wife takes:

1. Time: _____
2. A Willingness - A desire to learn and adapt: _____
3. Communication – both listening and communicating in love: _____

If communication is strained, consider writing letters to one another.

Your wife’s unique companionship need is security:

1. Security that you are looking to God and His Word for direction in all areas of your marriage and family.
2. Security in knowing you have answered the call to be the priest in your family – to lead in spiritual matters...prayer...disciplining and discipling your children...church.
3. Security in knowing that it is your desire to see her and treat them as you treat yourself and willing to learn how to adapt to their uniqueness – to learn how to communicate to them and treat them with love & gentleness always.

Marriage Is A Ministry

How do I provide loving security for my wife when she struggles with God’s plan for leadership within our home?

2 Timothy 2:24-26 *“And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will. “*

1. Not quarrel = _____

2. Gentle = _____

3. Able to teach = _____

4. Patient = _____

5. In humility = _____

6. Correcting = _____

When you desire to consistently love her this way, then she will feel more secure and find it easier to trust you and embrace your authority over your family.

“It’s not hard to understand God’s Word and His instructions to us. The hard part is us denying our flesh and yielding to His Spirit and His will, and humbly taking responsibility each and every day when we fail.”

Place 2 commas in the sentence below wherever appropriate to give the sentence meaning.

Woman without her man is lost.

Without changing any words, this sentence can have two distinct meanings depending upon where you placed the commas. In marriage, both of these answers are equally true.

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HOMEWORK SECTION

FOR

Session Four

*The Wife's
Companionship Needs*

SESSION FOUR 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 FOUR

1. Worksheet – Wives, do you feel secure? (page 27)

The purpose of this worksheet is to give structure in specific areas in which a wife was designed by God to receive security from her husband. When a wife privately and prayerfully assesses her husband's level of providing loving security for her in each of the prescribed areas, she is able to provide her husband with an honest evaluation in accordance with her perspective. This process will reveal areas of struggle that her husband is experiencing in fulfilling God's will for his life as it relates to his marriage. This will also provide the wife with a new or renewed understanding as to why she may have been experiencing difficulty with pursuing intimacy and companionship with her husband. Often times when a wife is not experiencing loving security from her husband in some area her flesh and/or the enemy brings confusion causing many to seek false loving security elsewhere and not invest herself thoroughly in her relationship with her husband. This may result in her failure to provide the affirmation her husband needs by treating him as a lower priority in her life compared to the children, a career or outside activities. 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 27 to learn how to incorporate this worksheet with the worksheet found on page 27A.

2. Worksheet - Specific, practical, non-judgmental suggestions for your husband (page 27A)

- Read the instructions on the top of page 27A before completing this worksheet.

The purpose of this worksheet is for the wife to prayerfully write out specific, practical, non-judgmental suggestions her husband can do to improve his providing loving security to her in specific areas in which his provision is less than what God desires. The wife should give 1 or 2 suggestions for the specific areas in which she graded her husband less than a 4. Some women may have difficulty completing this worksheet. We exhort you women 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 husband. Seek additional help from a church leader, an assigned marriage mentor or your pastor, if necessary.

- Continue in your daily abiding relationship with Jesus Christ and continue to build your strong foundation.
- Continue to use the Breaking the Cycle of Unloving Communication worksheet each time there is unloving communication.
- Husbands should review sessions 1 and 2 this week and to be praying for your wife through this week.

SESSION FOUR HOMEWORK DESCRIPTIONS

- Wives should continue to work on the suggestions your husband previously gave to you from session #3.

If you are in a small group discipleship class, wives are to prayerfully complete these pages and do not discuss them with their husbands until directed to do so during next week's class. It is important that the wives 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, get a writing pad and write in your own words your responses to her specific, practical, non-judgmental suggestions for you to provide her with loving security.

- Find a private place and time where the wife can carefully present to her husband 1 to 2 suggestions from page 27A for each category from page 27 in which the wife gave a rating of 4 or lower. Remember, you are trying to practice communicating about these areas in ways that glorify Christ so you can learn to communicate this way for the rest of your lives. 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 couple begins this discussion in prayer with his wife asking God for grace and gentleness in her communication, for God to grant her husband 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 husband to resist the enemy's attacks to tempt her to become defensive. We suggest for the husband to first repeat back to his wife what he heard her say before writing out his practical response. Husbands should be as specific as possible when writing in his own words his understanding of his wife's suggestions for him to provide godly security for her.

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. Your own copy of The Biblical Principles of Forgiveness and Reconciliation is included on the PC disc contained in your Marriage Is A Ministry DVD or CD kit.

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

Marriage Is A Ministry - Homework

Wife: for the list below, use a scale from 0 to 5 (*0 being not at all; 5 being very secure*) and rate how your husband helps you feel secure in these areas. 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 husband, yet. Read the instructions at the bottom of this page after you have prayerfully completed this worksheet.

Wives, do you feel secure in these areas?

Write in your number (0-5)

Spiritual

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|-------|
| • Going to Church | _____ | • Praying Together | _____ |
| • Praying with Children | _____ | • Bible Study with Children | _____ |
| • Discussing Spiritual Things | _____ | • Providing godly leadership | _____ |

Communication

- Caring about the day's events. _____
- Able to share honestly how you feel about all subjects. _____
- Discussing finances _____
- Always speaks with love and gentleness. _____
- Makes himself available each day to talk. _____
- Feel safe to share deepest needs or emotions with him. _____
- Feel free to laugh and/or cry with him. _____
- Always speaks honorably to you. _____
- Always speaks honorably about you to others _____

Physical and/or Sexual

- Tells you he 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 lead in the discipline of the children. _____
- Supports you when disciplining children. _____
- Cares about and participates in the children's interests. _____
- Always speaks honorably about you in front of children. _____
- Willing to show proper affection to children. _____

After you have completed this worksheet, **do not discuss this with your husband.** Instead, write on page 27A specific, non-judgmental, practical suggestions for ways your husband can improve in providing security to you in the areas you gave your husband a mark less than a 5. For example: if you gave your husband one of the lower marks for discussing finances your suggestion might be for your husband to be willing to calmly discuss an income and expense budget together and that he will commit to a joint monthly review.

Marriage Is A Ministry - Homework

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

Specific, Practical, Non-judgmental Suggestions for Your Husband

Remember, the purpose of this exercise is for you to try to be prepared to lovingly communicate to your husband, without attacking or condemning, giving specific, practical suggestions for your husband to do to improve at meeting your unique companionship needs. Your husband'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 husband.

Spiritual

Communication

Physical and/or Sexual

Non-sexual touching

Parenting
