

Lesson 26

Teacher's Manual

BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP - PART IV

READ & MEDITATE ON: Ephesians 5:21-33 MEMORIZE: Philippians 2:2
Colossians 3:18-21

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a partnership where a man and a woman can develop character, as they earnestly strive to meet each other's needs. Through their total commitment to Jesus Christ and each other, God can work to refine them and develop their full Christian potential. Building a partnership is a lifetime project. There is an intense worldly attack on the marriage bond today, and many subtle devices are being used to destroy the family. Constant maintenance must be done to preserve the unity and strength of the marriage relationship.

GENERAL HOME MISSIONS DIVISION

CHART-25 I. NEEDS IN MARRIAGE

A. Basic Human Needs

Basically, the needs of all human beings are the same. Under varying circumstances, some may be more pressing than others. From birth, all of us experience the needs that growth requires. How these needs are met and how we are taught to rely upon the Lord to supply our needs, shapes our lives.

A psychologist named Abraham Maslow suggested that each person has certain basic needs in his or her life. He listed these needs in their order of importance:

1. Physiological Needs

First a person seeks to fulfill his physiological needs. The things that are necessary in order to sustain life: food, oxygen, shelter, clothing, rest, etc.

2. Safety Needs

Secondly, a person seeks to fulfill safety needs, which involve a safe environment and protection from harm.

3. Love And Belonging Needs

After having the first two sets of needs fulfilled, a person seeks to fulfill his or her need for love and belonging. This includes a desire for affectionate relationships with others.

4. Esteem Needs

Fourth, a person seeks to fulfill his or her need for esteem. Esteem involves receiving recognition as a worthwhile person.

5. Self-Actualization Needs

Finally, after other levels of needs are satisfied, a person seeks to fulfill the need of self-actualization. This is the need to become the person one has the potential to become. The need to develop into a full, creative person.

B. Fulfilling Needs In Marriage

A man and a woman need each other for different reasons. A man needs a woman to love; a woman needs a man to be loved. Only in this difference can a man and a woman complement each other.

1. The Husband's Needs

A man likes to be accepted and desires spasmodic actions to reassure him of his acceptance by his wife. Nevertheless, a male basically fills his own needs. God did not make him an emotionally dependent creature. God told the woman to reverence her husband. Man needs this respect but must earn it. If he is a dependable man, he will receive it. This is what a woman wants and needs.

Word, their lives will automatically blend and strengthen their marriage relationship.

The Scriptures admonish the husband to exercise headship in the family (I Corinthians 11:3); love his wife as Christ loved the Church (Ephesians 5:25); teach his children Godly wisdom (Galatians 4:2); support his wife in discipling the children (Proverbs 6:20); honor his wife as the "weaker vessel" and as an "heir together" (I Peter 3:7); provide physical affection (I Corinthians 7:5); observe times of physical "separation" (Leviticus 12:2-5); and lead the family in fasting and prayer (I Corinthians 7:5).

The wife's obligation to her husband and to God should project: her wisdom and discretion (Titus 2:4; Proverbs 31:26), her love for her husband and children (Titus 2:4), her submission and obedience to her husband (Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18; I Timothy 3:4, 11, 12; Titus 2:5; I Peter 3:1), her high morals (Titus 2:5; I Timothy 2:11), and her home management (Titus 2:5; Proverbs 31). Proverbs 31 includes her virtue (godly influence on others); her harmony with her husband; her diligence; thriftiness; and wise home management; her alertness and skill in meeting her children's needs; and her wisdom and kindness.

B. Goals In Marriage

Less than three percent of married couples have set goals for their marriage. Goals are vital, for unless you have something to achieve you won't get very far. What do you want from your marriage? What do you want your marriage to become? These are reasonable questions to ask ourselves.

The first goal of the home is immediate. This is committing the home to God, being a soul winner, and being committed to God in everything.

The second goal is intermediate and must include the spiritual welfare of family, home and family needs, economic and financial training, and meeting community needs.

The ultimate goal is to run the race with patience and to finish with victory, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (II Timothy 4:7).

CHART-27 III. FAMILY COMMUNICATION

It has been said that if we could solve the problems of communica-

3. Ask Questions

Asking appropriate questions is the most valuable conversation technique you can acquire. When you ask a question, you not only keep the conversation alive, but the other person feels you're interested in him, as well.

4. Ask The Right Kind Of Questions

You must be careful to ask the right kinds of questions that will not offend or embarrass your listener. Some questions imply criticism or invade the privacy of the other person and are, therefore, offensive. (See Proverbs 10:32, Proverbs 15:23-28; Proverbs 29:20, and Colossians 4:6.)

5. Be A Good Listener

When you are listening to another person, you are not thinking about what you are going to say when he stops talking. You are not busy formulating your response. You are concentrating on what is being said. Listening is also complete acceptance, without judgment, of what is said and what you thought he was feeling when he was speaking to you. This takes effort!

Of course, you may hear the spoken words with your ears, but "listening" involves your eyes, your mind, and your heart, as well. Jesus spoke of men who had ears but heard not. There are four qualities of a good listener:

- a. A good listener does not interrupt the speaker. (James 1:19.)
- b. A good listener does not day dream while others are talking.
- c. A good listener keeps his eyes on the speaker.
- d. A good listener responds to the feelings of the speaker and shows it in his face.

6. Comment On What's Been Said

In making a comment, you may express agreement or disagreement, or volunteer something from your own experience. When you don't comment, the speaker concludes that you're so

Level Four: Reporting the Facts about Others. In this kind of conversation we are content to tell others what someone else has said, but we offer no personal information on these facts. We report the facts like the six o'clock news. We share gossip and little narrations but we do not commit ourselves as to how we feel about it.

Level Three: My Ideas and Judgments. Real communication begins to unfold here. The person is willing to step out of his solitary confinement and risk telling some of his ideas and decisions. He is still cautious. If he senses that what he is saying is not being accepted, he will retreat.

Level Two: My Feelings or Emotions. At this level the person shares how he feels about facts, ideas, and judgments. His feelings underneath these areas are revealed. For a person to really share himself with another individual, he must move to the level of sharing his feelings.

Level One: Complete Emotional and Personal Communication. All deep relationships must be based on absolute openness and honesty. This may be difficult to achieve because it involves risk—the risk of being rejected. But it is vital if relationships are to grow. There will be times when this type of communication is not as complete as it could be.

C. Criticism

Correction is objective. It is pointing out the truth or falseness of an action, a statement, a choice or a habit and offering a solution or alternative. (See II Timothy 3:16.)

When a negative motive is ascribed to another's mistake—that's criticism. It is pointing out an inaccuracy and attributing it to a character defect or personality failing in someone else. (See Matthew 7:1-5 and James 4:11, 12.)

Criticism leads to hurt and drives us away from open and honest communication. It breaks our spirit; makes us lose appreciation of our goodness and self-worth; and tears down self-confidence. Criticism damages because it is usually accepted at face value by the listener. It becomes part of our self-evaluation and creates within us an atmosphere of personal failure. Criticism takes the spontaneity (impulsiveness) and joy out of a marriage relationship. We can not be our true selves because we are too busy trying not to make mistakes. In our carefulness we become dull and plodding.

"...for the accuser of the brethren (Satan)
is cast down, which accused them before
our God day and night."

Revelation 12:10

Criticism has failed miserably in changing others. Let's
allow them to change in an atmosphere thick with ASSURANCE
and PRAISE.



There are some definite reasons why we take the liberty to criticize our spouse. We criticize our beloved because:

1. We don't understand that what we consider weakness in our spouse may stem from their greatest virtue, simply misused.
2. We are subconsciously detecting in them the very defects we have. This is called transferism.
3. We want to GET EVEN.
4. Criticism is so prevalent (common).
5. We're constantly exposed to each other's faults.
6. We are more easily irritated by our loved ones (we expect them to know better).
7. We expect our mate to tolerate criticism we know others wouldn't put up with.
8. Of our responses to pressure and disappointment in marriage. Life is not as ideal as we invisioned.
9. We want our spouse "to do" or "not to do" something.
10. We are trying to "construct" our mate through joking criticism instead of accepting them as they are and allowing them to change.
11. We want to gain the support of other people.

D. Praise

The cure for criticism is to remove it from our lives. STOP CRITICIZING! Exert positive mental attitude and be a GOOD finder. We treat people the way we see them. If we look for bad things, we will find them and treat people badly. If we look for good things, we will find them also and responsingly treat people better.

Awareness of LOVE and PRAISE works. It produces the good result we're looking for in others. In fact, it is far more effective in producing change than is criticism of faults. We call criticism by other names such as "comments," "evaluation," "observations," and "plain statements of facts." But criticism is really an "accusing spirit."

bored that you want to end the conversation. Feeling rejected, he'll soon leave you alone.

This completes the "Conversational Wheel." To make the wheel spin, simply follow the rotation plan as follows: ASK—LISTEN—COMMENT...

7. Follow Scriptural Principles For Conversation

Some helpful scriptural principles are found in: Psalm 19:14, Psalm 39:1, and Ephesians 4:29.

CHART-28

B. Five Levels Of Communication

In our communication we send messages. Every message has three components: the actual content, the tone of voice, and the non-verbal communication. With changes in the tone of voice or in the nonverbal component, it is possible to express many different messages using the same word, statement, or question. Non-verbal communications include facial expression, body posture, gestures, and touch.

Communication is the process of sharing yourself, both verbally and nonverbally, in such a way that the other person can both accept and understand what you are sharing.

The three components must be complementary. One researcher has suggested the following percentages to indicate how much of a message is being sent through each component: content/7%, tone/38%, and nonverbal/55%. Confusing messages are often sent because these three components are contradicting each other.

In his book, "Why Am I Afraid To Tell You Who I Am?" John Powell states that we communicate on five different levels from shallow cliches to deep personal comments. Inhibitions such as fear or poor self-image keep us at a shallow level of conversation. If we can learn to be free from our restrictions, we can engage in deeper, more meaningful levels of conversation.

The five levels of communication are:

Level Five: Cliche Conversation. This type of talk is very safe. We use phrases such as "How are you?" "How's the dog?" "Where have you been?" "I like your dress." In this type of conversation there is no personal sharing. Each person remains safely behind his defenses.

tion, we could solve the problems of the world. However, it becomes quite difficult to communicate when there are seventeen hundred languages and dialects in the world. Language translation is difficult and communication becomes a problem. There are about three million words in the English language, including all derivatives. It is humanly impossible to learn them all. The good college graduate should have one-half million at his command. Even this does not assure full communication.

Proximity (physical nearness) of two people is necessary for total communication. Marriage partners should utilize this closeness to its fullest, to become better acquainted with each other. Place two people, who are strangers, anywhere for three months, and at the end of that time, they will still be strangers unless they communicate. You can't know anyone unless you communicate with them. You can't love anyone you don't know. Therefore, the depth of love existing between a husband and a wife, depends on the amount and depth of their communication.

A. Conversation Skills

God cares whether or not you become a good conversationalist. First, He knows that the ability to converse freely will make you a happier person. Secondly, He wants you to be His mouthpiece, as you share the gospel with others. Because God is actually depending on you to speak in His behalf, you must learn to become a good conversationalist. (See Exodus 4:10-12.) The following rules will help you get started.

1. Look For "Common Ground"

You always have something in common with every person you meet. Three of these common ground areas are: common location, common weather, and common time zone. Be sure and look for additional common ground clues to keep the conversation alive.

2. Don't Do All The Talking

Conversation is a two-way game. It's like tossing a ball back and forth—don't hang on to the ball, toss it back. Voltaire rightly said, "The secret of being tiresome is telling everything." God gave us two ears and one mouth to be used in that proportion. (See Proverbs 17:27.)

A wife is a man's greatest asset; his greatest possession. She belongs to him and is above his wealth, his money, his job, his status, his position, and all else other than God. She is the ultimate of creation because she possesses the power of human reproduction. (See Proverbs 18:22.)

2. The Wife's Needs

It is the little things that count with a woman. It isn't some great outlay or expensive garment during the holiday season. She would get the same satisfaction if you brought a dozen roses without any reason at all, just because you love her. It is the unexpected "I love you" during a telephone call or even during breakfast. These little gestures, genuinely bestowed, give the woman the security which she needs.

The amount of fulfillment a wife receives depends greatly on the atmosphere of love with which her husband surrounds her. If he envelopes her with love, tenderness, consideration, kindness, benevolence, cordiality, acceptance, care, support, and protection, she will go anywhere with him, and share any undertaking with him.

If a wife is not loved by her husband and cannot depend upon him for her emotional security, it will cause anxiety. Being rejected, she will become hysterical. Her purpose for creation—to be a suitable help to her husband—has been thwarted, and her need to be loved has been denied.

CHART-26 II. COMMON VALUES AND GOALS

A. Values In Marriage

Personal values provide the basic motives for our doing what we do. Values determine the purpose and direction of our life. The only way to really discover our values is to look at the decisions we make and the way we live our daily lives. There are different values for every age level, but persons at each level are sincere about what they feel is important to them.

Physical attraction is actually not enough to hold a couple together, but common values are the qualities that are admired in each other. Feelings vary, but values are more stable.

If each spouse will accept the set of values prescribed in God's

