

Calvary Chapel Chester Springs



Premarital Class Pointers

By: Chris & Laurie Swansen

# Table of Contents

PREMARITAL CLASS INTRODUCTION.....	3
PHILIA – WEEK ONE .....	3
AGAPE – WEEK TWO.....	3
EROS – WEEK THREE.....	3
THELO – WEEK FOUR (TO BE ATTENDED WITH YOUR HOST COUPLE) .....	3
BEFORE WE GET STARTED...DO NOT GET MARRIED FOR THE WRONG REASONS:.....	4
FIX PROBLEMS OR HANG-UPS NOW!.....	4
SECRETS TO SUCCESS.....	5
PHILIA...FRIENDSHIP LOVE.....	7
HIDDEN KEYS TO A LOVING RELATIONSHIP. - GARY SMALLEY - MEN AND WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT..	7
FRIENDS AND FAMILY: LEAVE, CLEAVE AND WEAVE.....	8
HANDLING PROBLEMS .....	9
RECONCILIATION.....	10
FORGIVENESS .....	10
THINGS THAT CAN DESTROY PHILA .....	11
AGAPE...CHRIST LOVE .....	12
HUMILITY.....	12
FRAMING AND FILTERING.....	13
LOVE & SUBMISSION/RESPECT .....	13
DECISION-MAKING - GOD’S AUTHORITY IN THE HOME. ....	14
THINGS THAT CAN DESTROY AGAPE.....	15
EROS...INTIMATE LOVE.....	16
SEX IN MARRIAGE.....	17
BIRTH CONTROL.....	18
GUARDING/AFFAIR PROOFING YOUR MARRIAGE.....	18
THINGS THAT CAN DESTROY EROS .....	21
THELO...HYPOCRITICAL LOVE .....	22
HYPOCRISY IN CHURCH .....	22
HYPOCRISY IN HOME .....	23
HYPOCRISY IN FAMILY.....	24
HYPOCRISY IN HEART .....	25
THINGS THAT CAN DESTROY THELO, OR HOW TO WIPE OUT HYPOCRISY.....	26

## Premarital Class introduction

We will be covering the following important areas of the husband wife relationship: Friendship, Love and Intimacy. There are four Greek words that describe these different aspects of love, Phileo, Eros, Agape and Thelo.

The world has only Philia and Eros in their relationship. They do not have the Agape love that can only come from the working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of a believer. It is the Agape love that we as Christians have for each other that makes Christian marriage such a blessing.

The Agape love of the Holy Spirit in your marriage will make possible a relationship that the world will never know, but it requires your being willing to pick up your cross and follow the Lord each day in your marriage. Quite frankly, a good Christian marriage will require your dying to yourself and serving your spouse.

We will be meeting for four weeks and covering the following subjects:

### Philia – week one

- Husband/Wife Relationship – Adam and Eve Genesis 2:18-25
- Leave, Cleave and Weave -- Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4
- Handling Problems
- Reconciliation
- Forgiveness
- Things that can destroy Phila

### Agape – week two

- Humility
- Love and Submission
- Decision Making - God's authority in the home
- Things that can destroy Agape

### Eros – week three

- Sex in marriage
- Birth control
- Guarding/Affair proofing your marriage
- Things that can destroy Eros

### Thelo – week four (to be attended with your host couple)

- Hypocrisy in Church
- Hypocrisy in Home
- Hypocrisy in Family
- Hypocrisy in Heart
- Things that can destroy Hypocrisy

## Before we get started...Do not get married for the wrong reasons:

- Sexually involved – We really love each other! Ok, but is it for the right reasons? Couples who have been sexually involved we make take a 6 month waiting period before we go forward with them. Since we have enforced that rule, we have seen engagements canceled when sex was removed from the premarital relationship. So what was the relationship really built on? Sin.
- Sympathy -- I feel sorry for the person.
- Pregnancy – I guess this means we had better get married.
- Convenience --It would make our lives “easier”.
- Loneliness -- Anything is better than being alone, Right? ...Wrong!
- Settling -- I guess this is as good as it gets.
- Pressure – If I don’t get married my family will never leave me alone.
- Can’t say no -- Don’t do anybody any favors!
- Age – At my age you can’t be too choosy.

## Fix problems or hang-ups now!

If something bothers you in your relationship now is the time to address the problem. Too many people are afraid of “rocking the boat” and figure they can wait to address the problem until after they are married. Here are some issues that you really need to resolve **B E F O R E** getting married.

Anger issues (in either one of you)  
Moodiness

Controlling and or manipulative behavior  
Repeated relationship issues

Ungodly habits  
Language issues

Pornography  
Gambling  
Drug or alcohol abuse

Unfortunately we have seen this problem repeatedly! It is better to get the issues worked out now! Watch out for, dare we even suggest that you examine your fiancée for, the above issues and believe it or not even bad relationships with parents.

All of these issues can be a real problem if not handled straight on. We would rather stress this now than have you feel trapped in a bad situation after you are married.

Too often as it is in the engagement, so it will be in the marriage, possibly even worse.

When we are called in to minister to a couple in trouble, we ask them “Did you see any of these behaviors when you were engaged?” Sadly almost 95% of the time the answer is “Yes, but...” the problem was never addressed.

So if you have unresolved issues with your fiancée get them worked out before you say, “I do”. Remember God’s plan is one woman for one man for life. This is a life-long commitment.

## Secrets to success

- Treat your spouse as precious, always.

(Ephesians 4:32) And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. There is no one who deserves more of your patience, kindness, respect and affection than your spouse.

There is no one else in this world that you have asked to share your life with you than your spouse. So why would you treat anyone better than her or him? If you do treat others more kindly than your spouse you can bank on your spouse eventually resenting you for your hypocrisy towards them.

- Treat your spouse as a stranger and a friend.

You would never say some things to a stranger that sadly people sometimes say to their spouse. How could we treat the one we have asked to forsake all other for us WORSE that we would treat the all others? That ain't right!

- "Treat me like we are engaged by day and I will treat you like we are married by night."

- Men, listen to your wives.

James let's us know we should be swift to listen and slow to speak. (James 1:19-20) So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Your wife knows things you do not! And ladies your husband knows things you do not ...trust me.

- Put the needs of your spouse ahead of your own:

Philippians 2:3-4 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

This is very important! Too many in a marriage expect their spouse to lift them up, keep them satisfied, vibrant, and look for their happiness in their spouse instead of Jesus. What an unfair expectation to have of any human being on this earth. Only Jesus truly satisfies. Find your satisfaction and Joy in him and you will be able to be a blessing to your spouse.

- This is an email that was sent to me years ago. See if you find it helpful for instruction in your engagement to avoid the appearance of evil as noted in 1 Thessalonians 5:22.

There's someone that I barely know. Believer. Attends church. Was active in a ministry at that church, but no longer. Has been dating another person at that church for roughly a year. I know that previously this person was a proponent of the "true love waits" deal.

However, not long after they started dating, I saw this person's vehicle (and, yes, I know for sure it is, told me by this person directly) parked at the significant-other's house at what would appear to be overnight, every night.

Not that I'm a snoop, but the significant other lives < .25 mile from me on my direct route to "anywhere" from my house. Whether I go by at 11pm, 2am, 6am, that vehicle is always there (and all the lights off in the house, so it's not just late night movie sessions, etc.). For what it's worth, I don't know the significant other.

To me, it would \*appear\* that these 2 are living together and are not married (engaged as far as I know). They may not be living together. It \*may\* just be coincidence that I'm always catching late nights or early mornings together, but... you get my point. It just doesn't look "good" so to speak.

So, I'm struggling with whether I have any sort of right/obligation to visit this person/couple and confront them about this. I don't know if there's any specific sin going on there--there very well may not be (even if they're living together, it could be in different rooms).

However, to the "outside world" (and potentially any younger believers that may know these people) in today's culture... well, to me, it doesn't appear to make a strong statement of purity, especially if "true love waits" was touted before.

I had been thinking "if this person gets back into ministry at their church, then I'll say something." I don't know if that was an appropriate game plan or not. I'm really leaning toward doing nothing. I know it's the job of the Holy Spirit to convict us of sin.

I guess the situation here is that it may not be sinful, but it looks bad. I've heard you speak several times of why you don't drink, that it's not sin, but could look "bad" to someone seeing you do it. If someone were to see something in my life that looked "bad" I would hope they'd point it out so I could consider that. But, I'm just not sure I have any clear authority to insert myself into these people's business. I guess I'm checking in to see if you agree with that assessment.

## Philia...Friendship love

- The more time you spend with the Lord the more of a blessing you will be to your spouse. (We have seen this first hand in couples.) It is a dependent relationship.  
Jesus said, "Abide in me and you will bear much fruit". John 15:5 It also has to be stated that the less time you spend with Jesus the less of a blessing you will become. If you dry up spiritually in your walk with the Lord it often directly impacts your relationship with your spouse too.
- Never gossip about, demean, belittle, or dishonor your spouse to anyone, never!
- Moodiness is Selfishness. It's ok to have a "down" day, but it is not ok to bring everyone else around you down, learn to communicate. If you are prone to having a lot of "down days" you need to seriously examine your own heart for selfishness!
- Learn to become best friends. Spend time together volunteering, playing. God has called you to be one flesh! Not two strangers with separate lives.
- Learn to pray together! This one habit can change your marriage and take your relational intimacy to a level that cannot be reached without prayer. It builds trust and sensitivity to each other and is a great secret that too often is neglected.

<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>
R	I
I	R

- Commit to living on the husband's salary, when possible, and you will always be free to change work arrangements when children come. Financial debt really brings unwanted stress and hardship to a marriage. Avoid it as much as you can. Don't ignore this one!
- Prayerfully set your goals for finances. Help each other to be good stewards, avoid bad decisions and unwanted debt. This has to be done as a team and not as a warlord accountant lording it over his or her lowly subject. Resentment creeps in easily here if you are not in agreement.

### Hidden Keys to a Loving Relationship. - Gary Smalley - Men and women are different.

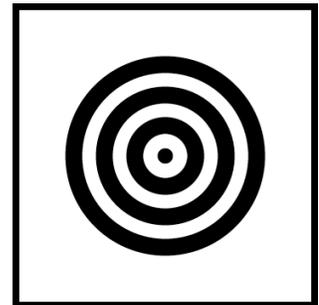
- Pebble verses a stone. "That dress makes you look wide." "The repair job you did looks like you did it." So often we can make a statement that we consider insignificant, hence, a pebble.  
Unfortunately it hit our spouse not as an insignificant comment, but as a major slam, a stone. Learn to be able to say to your spouse that comment hit me like a stone!  
What did you mean by it?  
If your spouse thought it was a pebble you have now given them the opportunity to quickly apologize and salvage the day from being one of upset or contention. This can be a big help in communication.
- Goal oriented verses wanting the whole story. Ladies most men need you to tell them where you are going with a story and then they will be ok to hang on and hear all the details. Try it and see if it helps him to be a more patient listener.
- Ladies give men a goal when there is a problem and often they will hit it. Simply telling them you are not happy exceeds their ability to hone in on a problem and wipe

it out. They need you to say, I wish you would be more kind in the way you speak to me. The way you communicate to me now really closes me up (see below).

- Often the wife is better suited to explain what problems or issues need to be resolved to improve the marriage. Many times the wife is able to list a few issues or goals that, if met, would make them feel much better about the relationship and their husband. Guys, when your wife gives you a goal or several goals that would really bless her if they changed, make sure you take care of them! You will see a new level in your marriage.
- Beware closing up your spouse. That is, doing or not doing, something they wanted/needed you to do. It could be saying or not saying, things they wanted/needed you to say. When you do figure out that you have offended him or her QUICKLY work to restore the fellowship.  
A closed up spouse is not in a place to give you all that is in their heart in love and affection. As long as you leave them closed up you are missing the real blessings of marriage. Also if your spouse has closed you up, TELL THEM! Why linger in a place of contention, anger or sorrow? Give them the chance you would also want to make things right.
- Never, Never, NEVER! harden your heart against your spouse. The minute you start telling yourself “he or she will just have to get over it” you are stepping in a bad direction in your marriage. Watch out for this one.
- What is wrong? Nothing!!! = Everything. Men (or ladies) you may find sometime you ask your wife this question and get the response noted above. Gently take her hand in yours and kindly ask her what is the problem.  
Be patient, give her time to put it together in her mind. If something is going on sometimes we need to talk it out to get to what is in our hearts. Proverbs 20:5  
Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water, But a man of understanding will draw it out. NKJV
- We prove by our actions what our priorities really are. Watching football or listening to our spouse. Going out with friends instead of going out with your spouse. We prove how PRECIOUS our spouse is by HOW we treat them! Your actions speak so much more loudly than your words.

### Friends and Family: Leave, cleave and weave.

- Time to leave the family behind, in the right way. Your marriage is first; your family is second. They do deserve your respect as your parents, but you have entered into a new relationship that takes precedence over the old. Genesis 2:24-25 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. NKJV
- Your friends are now going to have to accept a new arrangement too. Also beware old flames and nonsense on Facebook, etc!
- When you have a problem with your spouse, talk to your spouse NOT your friends or family. This can really come back to HAUNT you! If there is a problem, go to your spouse. If that is not getting anywhere go to the pastor of your church or a Bible-centered Christian counselor.  
Imagine trashing your spouse to friends and family and then by God’s grace your spouse gets things straightened out; think of how you have dishonored them and yourself to your family, friends, coworkers, whoever.



- A family member wants to tear apart your spouse. Shut it down! No matter what. Period.
- Make commitments on the calendar only after checking with your spouse when possible. Business is different, but social time involves both of you. Be considerate; share.

## Handling Problems

<p>The Sandbox (Play like you're friendly)</p>
--

- Every marriage involves conflict. H O W you determine to handle conflicts will make all the difference in the quality of your marriage, life together, and physical health!
- Let's get this established early in your marriage...before a wife is called to submit to her husband, and before a husband is called to love his wife, they are called to submit themselves one to another in the fear of God!

Ephesians 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (KJV)

This means there is a standard for your conduct as Christians that comes before you get to the requirements for how to be a godly wife or husband. We have had to tell/rebuke couples to go home and behave like Christians towards each other! Once you step outside of the fear of God and the standard of His Word, you are in the realm of the flesh. God cannot bless that and it will bring harm to your relationship.

- Establish ground rules. No name-calling, no belittling, and be willing to hear each other's point of view. You may find after all the facts that you were wrong! Imagine that!
- Do not let the sun go down on your wrath. Ephesians 4:26-27 Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. DO NOT avoid the subject. It will be back, twice as ugly. Time allows old wounds to fester! Be sure to talk it out respectfully! Hold hands while talking, after all you are on the same team!
- Watch for irritation over an insignificant event that may indicate a real issue is behind the frustration. You never put the cap on the toothpaste, when the real problem is the person felt dishonored at the family dinner that evening. (Remember "What's wrong?"..."Nothing." = everything.)
- Divorce is NOT an option, so you had better get it worked out, now.  
Matthew 5:31-32 Furthermore it has been said, Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce. But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

Matthew 19:8 He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

Malachi 2:16 "For the LORD God of Israel says that He hates divorce, for it covers one's garment with violence, Says the LORD of hosts. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."

- Yelling helps no one but your neighbors to know what is going on in your house. If children are there yelling erodes their security and can impact them in a number of ways like bedwetting. Not to mention you are giving them a HORRIBLE example of marriage and conflict resolution.

## Reconciliation

- Should always be sought where there is a problem as SOON as it pops up. The sooner you are reconciled the sooner you can get on with your relationship with the Lord and with your spouse.
- So what if your spouse is the one who was in the wrong, you go get things reconciled. Matthew 5:23-24 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.
- Reconciliation brings healing and strength to the relationship.
- It opens the door for forgiveness to be extended and received and allows the relationship to move on.

## Forgiveness

- Real forgiveness in marriage directly reflects our relationship with Jesus!
- True forgiveness can only be found in Christian marriage. You see, if you have not experienced God's forgiveness yourself, you really do not understand it. True forgiveness is the most freeing and blessed feeling to be excused from the wrong we have committed. (And to know that you are still loved!)
- Having real forgiveness strengthens the relationship because we know that even if we stumble the other will help us up. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12
- Extend real forgiveness and chose to remember it no more. Matthew 18:35 So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."  
Hebrews 10:17 "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."  
(You know, extend to your spouse the very thing you would like if you had made the mistake.)
- When you forgive your spouse of a wrong you release the right to bring it up again and stick it in their face.
- Psalm 103:10-14 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.  
As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. KJV

## Things that can destroy Phila

- Neglecting your walk with the Lord. You become fruitless! John 15:5 Unfortunately we have seen this problem TOO OFTEN. Don't become a statistic!
- Neglecting your friendship with each other.
- Slandering, gossiping demeaning, tearing apart, name calling or robbing your spouse of dignity in private, or worse, in public.  
Trust me, you will regret this mistake!!! It hurts your relationship in a number of ways and really hampers your witness to your family and others.
- Pride, Pride and Pride. No one is immune, but men (and some women too) seem to fall into this one more often. Another offshoot of pride is manipulation.
- Slothfulness: spiritually, relationally and personally.
- Keeping secrets, or hidden agendas. Don't tell my husband I spent \$300 on a hair treatment. Don't let my wife know I spent \$300 on a handgun. You will undermine your trust in each other.
- Failing to fix problems when they come up. If something is bothering you get it out and work it out...Now! Ignoring the problem or saying, "He will never listen anyway" only buries a problem that will erupt later.
- Guard your relationship from old boyfriends and girlfriends, beware social media! Focus on your marriage! Who are you going to spend the rest of you life with your friends or your spouse?

## Homework for next session:

How would you define love? Have you and your fiancée write a definition. Work independently and only when both of you are finished then compare answers. Please bring your answers to turn in at the next session.

Remember have a Chaperone couple for week 4!

## Agape...Christ Love

- If you want to enjoy the best that marriage has there cannot be the possibility of a divorce, only reconciliation! Get the word out of your marital vocabulary. Why joke about what God hates?
- Something the world does not have, true Agape. 1 John 4:10-11 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
- Requires the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love. Remember love is patient and is kind, 1 Corinthians 13:4
- Is the glue that joins the friendship of Philia, and the physical relationship of Eros.
- Agape in marriage is a powerful witness to the power of God in you life.
- Requires that each person give 100% in the relationship, not 50%/50%. 100%/100%!
- The covenant lives here! You are making a commitment to love for a lifetime.
- Your marriage should never be based on a particular “feeling” but a rock solid commitment to stick it out with your spouse no matter what may come. God so loved the world that He made a commitment to us and gave His Son, John 3:16!
- Note in the first marriage in Genesis 2:18-25 a covenant was made before God for marriage. Love is not mentioned in that marriage covenant. It was the making of a life-long covenant that allows love to grow.
- Too many couples lose the “feelings” at one time or another and decide it is time to break the commitment. What is needed at those times is a commitment to the commitment, which will foster and return the “feelings” as we are faithful to our promises.
- Love goes through seasons, but the commitment never changes!
- How would you define love? (Read the homework.)

## Humility

- Marriage is humbling! You want to stay married? Humble yourself.
- When you remember that the King of the Universe was willing to humble Himself and wash His disciple’s feet (John 13:3), suddenly serving you spouse becomes less difficult. See also Psalm 113:6!
- Marriage will prove to you your selfish heart at times. Jeremiah 17:9-11 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; Who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings. Kids will also expose how selfish we really are at times too!
- I was asked by a bride-to-be years ago to name to the number one problem I saw in marriages. It took a minute to think about it, but the answer that kept coming up to my mind was selfishness. It shows up in many forms, but it is at the root of almost all marital troubles.

- No one knows you better than your spouse. Be transparent with your spouse. “You know that bothers me because”...or “It hurts me when you say this...” Why hide from them what is on your heart?
- I can receive any statement from my wife no matter how I am blowing it, if she delivers it in love. Because if it is delivered in love, then her goal is to help me to become a better husband, father, or pastor to the people around me. not to tear me down.

## Framing and Filtering

- What is Framing? Seeing an attitude or trait in your spouse that colors all other actions they take in your eyes.
- What are the Frames? They can be found in Galatians 5:19-21
- It is the Agape Love of Christ that enables us to not "frame" our spouse, but rather reach out to them in love. It is the ability to give them a fresh start even when they are unlovely, or have made a mistake.
- What is Filtering? It is the restraining of your flesh by the Word of God so you can be in the Agape love of Christ towards your spouse.
- The filter is 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.
- The Word of God empowered by the Holy Spirit in our hearts enables us to restrain our flesh and tongues, and enables us to speak words of encouragement and love, rather than criticism and scorn.



## Love & Submission/Respect

- Wives are called to submit to their husbands. Ephesians 5:22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. Peter exhorts wives to do the same thing in I Peter 3:6. But what about Ephesians 5:21 submitting to one another in the fear of God? Remember to stay in the sandbox when playing.
- Submission is an attitude of heart to honor and love your husband that will permeate your behavior over time. In Titus 2:4, Paul tells wives to love their husbands too.
- Ladies, if you are having problems N O W submitting to your fiancée's leadership or ideas, um, wakeup! Voice your concerns now and see what you really have in a partner, or what you may be facing for a lifetime.
- Husbands are called to love their wives as Christ loved the church. Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,  
So guys, how did Jesus love the church? He DIED to serve her. You want to be Jesus in your home, die to yourself and serve your wife to bless her.  
Do this and just watch how sweet your marriage will be. Many women wish their husbands would be a covering to them, looking out for them and taking care of them. Don't forget this nugget.
- Husbands are warned in I Peter 3:7 to dwell with their wives with understanding so that their prayer is not hindered! Beware closing them up.

- Wives are called to have godly conduct, honoring their husbands, and to be careful they have proper attire in I Peter 3:1.
- Husbands are to present their wives as holy and without blemish Ephesians 5:27-28. Guys this goes for the engagement too! The engagement time is for you to prove you are a man worthy of following! So show her you can lead the family in the future, but keeping the two of you pure in the engagement!
- Men, I encourage you to read the book of Ruth and note how Boaz behaved himself towards Ruth at all times.
- So many husbands will say, "I will start loving her as Christ loved the church WHEN she submits to me". So many wives will say, "I will start submitting to him WHEN he loves me like Christ loved the church."  
Note that Ephesians 5 does not say wives submit to your husbands WHEN they love you...nor does it say that husbands are to love their wives when they submit to you. You are called to do your part regardless of the performance or lack thereof of your spouse.
- You do the basics even if you do not "feel" like it. Be committed to doing what is right and the feelings will return in force. The pattern is a husband who loves his wife will find her submitting to him. And the wife who is submitting to her husband will find him loving her. It is a cycle that builds upon each other.

#### Decision-Making - God's authority in the home.

- Make your decisions together. You will both be affected, so you ought to have a vote.
- Seek the Lord together about your decisions and trust that He will speak to both of you on the important issues. When He does it give such a great confirmation on an issue and an exciting sense of God's leading in your marriage.
- A wise husband listens to his wife! A wise husband considers what his wife's opinion is on an issue.
- A wise wife listens to her husband too!
- So whose decision is it when there is a disagreement? Who has the final authority? The husband's (GIRLS IF THIS DOES NOT PROMPT YOU TO CHOOSE A HUSBAND WISELY NOTHING WILL.) Remember though, a wise husband listens to his wife.
- Husbands you are God's servant leader in your house. Are you serving your wives and are you leading them in to a deeper knowledge of Jesus? Too many wives wish their husbands would pray with them, and the husbands are totally against the idea. This is wrong and a lack of humility, pure and simple.
- Husbands are the protectors of the home. This goes way beyond providing for your family; it includes being the gatekeeper of the home to keep out ungodliness and worldliness from your spouse and children. Husbands are the ones who will be called into account for their stewardship of their spouse, children and home. What have you allowed to creep into your house that brings no glory to God?

- I blame husbands MORE for the problems that have developed in marriage than the wives! Yes I do recognize that the wife can have a big influence on trouble too. But Guys, how could you let this happen on your watch of the gate?
- So what about the wives who won't serve their husbands, but rather try to manipulate them? Trust God to handle them for their rebellion to His will for them as a wife and do your part to honor God as a husband. (By the way guys, if you are engaged to a woman who will NOT listen to your decisions or respect your authority, take a good long look at what you can expect a lifetime of. Address the issue now while you have time to make changes.)
- The husband is to lead as Christ leads His church. How? By dying to yourself that you may present your bride to the Father spotless and fully mature in Christ. Remember that wives are to love and respect their husbands too.
- Homes where the wife is wearing the pants usually happen because the trousers were empty!

### Things that can destroy Agape

- Pride
- Hardness of heart
- Walking in the flesh and not the Spirit
- Selfishness
- Anger
- Bitterness
- Unresolved conflict
- You can close up your spouse in a moment. Agape makes true restoration possible.
- Not abiding in Jesus.
- Unrepentant sin
- Framing your spouse
- Not filtering your heart, mouth or attitudes

### Homework for next session:

Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 in whatever translation you like. Be ready to write it down next session.

## Eros...Intimate Love

- Eros is the icing on top of the layer cake of Philia and Agape! It is the physical, intimate relationship God has designed for Christian marriage. The world can have passionate sex and techniques without being married, but it is not blessed of God. It is not pure and lovely as God designed it to be for marriage. Genesis 2:25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. NKJV
- The stronger the friendship and loving forgiveness is in a marriage, the more satisfying is the intimacy because each is there to please the other; and in so doing will find their own needs abundantly satisfied.
- Intimacy is God's gift to marriage is the two shall become one flesh. (Genesis 2:24) (Do not open until the wedding night! Don't peek either.) Sexual intimacy in Christian marriage reflects the intimacy we are called to have with the Lord as his church! (Ephesians 5:32)
- The most powerful sex organ we have is our mind. We need to guard our minds from ungodly worldly influences that only disrupt our marital intimacy, like TV, the Internet, pornography, memories of old flames, trash novels or simply wrong thoughts!
- The way to have a strong marital desire and fulfillment is to forsake all others in all the forms whether real or virtual and commit your heart to your spouse and him or her only.

Proverbs 5:15-23 Drink water from your own cistern, and running water from your own well. Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets? Let them be only your own, and not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth. As a loving deer and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and always be enraptured with her love. For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman, and be embraced in the arms of a seductress? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He ponders all his paths. His own iniquities entrap the wicked man and he is caught in the cords of his sin. He shall die for lack of instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

Proverbs 6:24 To keep you from the evil woman, from the flattering tongue of a seductress. Do not lust after her beauty in your heart, nor let her allure you with her eyelids. For by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one walk on hot coals, and his feet not be seared? So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; Whoever touches her shall not be innocent.

People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving. Yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold; he may have to give up all the substance of his house. Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he who does so destroys his own soul. Wounds and dishonor he will get, and his reproach will not be wiped away. For jealousy is a husband's fury; therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will accept no recompense nor will he be appeased though you give many gifts.

- Job 31:1 "I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman? NKJV
- See also Proverbs 7:4-27; 9:13-18 and Matthew 5:27-28.

## Sex in marriage

- It is our opinion that your sex life in Christian marriage is a barometer of the marital relationship. When the barometer is falling, odds are the relationship is as well. A falling barometer means a storm is coming! When the barometer is rising, odds are the relationship is too! A rising barometer means good weather ahead!
- Sex is the reward of marriage. Good marital intimacy is the result of a trusting, honoring relationship that is other-centered and not self-centered. Dishonoring each other WILL hurt your intimacy!
- It is very difficult for a woman to open up to her husband if she is feeling cheap and used by him. It is also difficult for a man to be loving and tender toward his wife if he feels disrespected by her.
- Remember that prayer will promote a deeper relational and spiritual intimacy between you which will result in a deeper physical intimacy in your marriage. Who doesn't want that????
- Men, create an environment in your home that assures your wife she is loved, honored and accepted for who she IS, not who you think she should be and the intimacy will take care of itself.  
Failure to provide an atmosphere where your wife feels secure, loved and honored will result in her being closed up to you. Many women are self-conscious about their appearance and their bodies thanks to the influence of Hollywood, Madison Avenue and pornography. Loving her for who she is and not comparing her to anyone else will give her the freedom to open up to you!

<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>
R	I
I	R

- Women, sexual intimacy is important to your husband! It is an opportunity for you to affirm him as your husband whom you love, and as the man of the house. You are the only one who can minister to him in this way. Failure to meet your husband's need for intimacy can result in his frustration and worse if not careful, to resentment towards you. Laurie says intimacy for a husband is the bandaid that fixes anything.
- We are called to not deprive one another except with consent for a time (to seek the Lord), and that for a limited time, lest Satan get the opportunity to tempt us! 1 Corinthians 7:5
- Sex in the world is taking. Sex in Christian marriage is giving.
- Sex is NOT a bargaining chip in a power play. Sex is not a weapon of manipulation and withholding it is wrong and asking for trouble in your relationship.
- Depriving your spouse of sex for any other reason or motivation than sickness or agreed prayer and fasting is asking for real trouble.
- Laurie has told me "Treat me like we are engaged by day and I will treat you like we are married by night." Get it?

## Birth Control

- Does the Bible address the issue? What does the story of Genesis 38:9 mean? What do Psalms 127:3 and 128:36 say?
- You need to be in one accord as to what will work for you. Be convinced in your own heart about what the Lord has for you. Others will have lots of opinions.
- Laurie has always wondered “Why is it people are willing to trust God in other areas of their lives, but when it comes to family planning they run the show?”
- Abortion for the Christian is not an option! It is murder! If ladies you have had an abortion, it is under God’s grace. But now as a Christian who knows the truth that it is a child and not a “lump of cells” it is not an option.

## Guarding/Affair proofing your marriage

- What is the single most effective way to guard your marriage? Show public affection for your spouse. It sends a clear signal to all who are watching (work, neighborhood, family) that the marriage is strong and will reassure your spouse of your love for him or her. It also assures the kids that mom and dad are doing well, which gives them security.
- Keep the marriage relationship the preeminent one in your home. Jesus is first, the marriage is second and kids are third then come family and friends.
- Too many couples put their marriage relationship behind some other priority. While all are good things, the following can destroy the relationship if they get out of proportion:
  - Ministry
  - Career
  - Material possessions
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Kids
- There is no other individual who should be treated more kindly than your spouse. Why can you be so patient and kind to everyone else but your spouse? You witness for God starts first in your home. The light that shines the farthest aboard shines the brightest at home.
- Beware of trying to please or impress someone of the opposite sex who is not your spouse. That is a big red flag that you have allowed your emotions to be committed outside of your marriage. Where the head goes the tail will soon follow.

<u>AM</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>AW</u>
R	R	I	I
I	I	R	R
- Avoid situations that can lead to trouble! This is not rocket science, yet people who fall into adultery are shocked that some other person made a move on them, and get caught flirting and playing where they should not. If your neighbor or coworker is overly friendly, WATCH OUT! Stay away from them unless you are with your spouse!

- If your needs are not being met by your spouse, whatever they may be, **TELL YOUR SPOUSE WHAT YOU NEED!** Do not be so foolish as to look for the completion of your marriage in another person outside of your marriage. That is sin!  
Never play with someone's infatuation because you feel neglected by your spouse. You are setting yourself and your marriage up for destruction, we have seen this first hand in the church.
- **NEVER STOP DATING AND COMMUNICATING!** Really! I talked to a couple that was married for 17 years and they claimed that the last 10 years had not been so hot. Their intimacy was virtually non-existent. Why? They had among other things stopped dating about 10 years ago!
- Ladies here are three simple ways **ONLY YOU** can bless your husband.
  1. Initiate intimacy with him. Be lovingly persistent. He will gladly get used to the idea, and you the wife will reap a number of blessings from him.
  2. Dress to impress your husband. Get an outfit for your bedroom. You are called to be appropriately attired when out in the world, yes, but at home and for your husband's eyes only you can let him know about your desire for him. You may not understand the full implication behind these suggestions now, but over time you will.
  3. Communicate to him what pleases you. Let him know what is a turnoff. Don't just "endure it", help him to know what helps you to be engaged in your time together. Let him know if change is needed, or initiate change yourself. A little communication can go a long way to blessing your intimate time together.
- Guys – Make sure she feels loved and desired relationally!
  1. Do ask her for a date. Plan a night out and give her time to consider it. **DATE!**
  2. Do things around the house to lighten her burden and free her up mentally for bed time. Many women cannot rush all day and then just hop into bed and be ready for time with their husband. They need to unwind. Stay at home mom's don't get a commute home to decompress.
  3. Do sweet things at unexpected times. That can include flowers, a note, a date or what you know will bless her. For most women the biggest blessing is that you were thinking of her during your day.

Contents of a letter to Pastor Chris:

This is a thank you note. I came to you broken, afraid and at the end of my rope. I then heard you on the radio one day and was bold enough to call you to seek your council on my failing marriage. You gave me wisdom, many Bible verses and much hope.

I am so happy to let you know our marriage is definitely on the mend. We pray together and actually have fun together. Through the grace of God I have finally laid to rest and forgiven my husband for what I thought he had wronged me for these past 30 years. Yet I realized he has been a most loving husband to me.

We have realized we both have faults but with the Lord we will continue this journey together. Dec 29<sup>th</sup> we will be celebrating our 31<sup>st</sup> wedding anniversary with much joy. We are now in a couples Bible study at our church. Merry Christmas.

## Things that can destroy Eros

- Poor relationship with the Lord.
- Poor relationship/friendship with your spouse.
- Poor hygiene!
  
- Television, hours taken and images left behind in your head.
- Pornography - MAJOR DAMMAGE!
- Wrong comparisons in your mind of other partners whether real or from Hollywood. This will breed discontent and shred your relationship.
  
- Poor self-image, improper expectations or wrong comparisons with a super model/stud will bring dissatisfaction of your spouse's appearance and surprisingly with your own appearance.  
Funny how the world can give us a ridiculous hang up with a part of our bodies God gave for our spouse to enjoy. Don't let Satan rip you off.
  
- Harsh words
- Trash words, guys usually turn a woman OFF!
- Lack of kindness one towards another really kills intimacy.
- Talking about things that should wait for later.
- A lack of sensitivity to your spouse's needs.
- Failure to give 100% even in intimacy, being self-absorbed.
  
- Failure to provide the romance the other partner needs to enjoy marital intimacy.
- In busy seasons of life, failure to make time for intimacy.
- Guys, foreplay does not consist solely of locking the bedroom door. It takes a little more than that!
  
- Foreplay for a woman starts in how you treated her in the kitchen when you got home, not in the bedroom when you are in the mood. My wife tells me doing the dishes for her is foreplay.
  
- De-emphasizing the importance of the act. Be careful guys we are usually guiltier of this one than the ladies.
- Failure of to take care of yourself. I'm married now so I can let things go right? Wrong!
- Failure to communicate with each other can turn a delight in to drudgery.
- Pastor Leary Hood said "A great lover is not a man who can please many women in a lifetime. A great lover is a man who can please one woman through all the changes of a lifetime!"

Suggestion: Couples listen to the teaching on the Song of Solomon by Pastor Chris.

## Thelo...Hypocritical Love

- Thelo... In Mark 12:38, KJV, thelo, "to wish," is translated "love" (RV, "desire"). (from Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c)1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)
- NT:2309 thelo i.e. choose or prefer (literally or figuratively); by implication, to wish, i.e. be inclined to (sometimes adverbially, gladly); impersonally for the future tense, to be about to; by Hebraism, to delight in: KJV - desire, be disposed (forward), intend, list, love, mean, please, have rather, (Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright (c) 1994, Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc.)
- NT:2309 theloo 1. to be resolved or determined, to purpose: Rom 9:16 2. equivalent to to desire, to wish: Matt 20:21 3. equivalent to to love; followed by an infinitive, to like to do a thing, be fond of doing: Mark 12:38; Luke 20:46 in imitation of the Hebrew chaapeets, to take delight, have pleasure (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by Biblesoft)
- Mark 12:38-41 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love (Thelo) to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation. KJV
- Thelo is a love of appearance, which may or may not be an accurate reflection of the reality of the situation.
- In Mark 12:38 Jesus is warning His disciples that they are to be wary of those who delight in the appearance of being spiritual, while having no real genuine spiritual conduct.
- The scribes loved the appearance, (the long robes), and the greeting associated with being spiritual, (salutations in the marketplace rabbi, rabbi), all while they are in the process of devouring widow's houses (the defenseless and destitute) and making long prayers.
- For eight years we used only the first three Greek words for our premarital classes. However, it has become painfully obvious to us that a HUGE problem in marriage is the love of appearance and the absolute void of reality in the home.
- In the world and in the church the divorce rate is over 50%. That means one of every two couples in this class have the potential to end in divorce! Think about that! Why is the number so high?
- Another marital statistic is that 75% of all marriages are not satisfied with the relationship. So 50% of all marriages end in divorce in the church, another 25% are miserable in their relationship, leaving a meager 25% who actually enjoy the marriage. Why is the number so low of those who enjoy their marriages?

### Hypocrisy in church

- We have encountered a genuine problem in the church of couples that appear to be doing "fine", only to find out that what they appear to be at church is nothing at all close to how they behave at home.

- This “dual life” many couples live can be justified for a number of seemingly spiritual reasons. I don’t want to expose my spouse as the \_\_\_\_\_ that they are to the body of Christ.
- If people found out we behave this way at home we would not be allowed to serve in the \_\_\_\_\_ ministry.
- Everyone has troubles, ours are bigger than most, but that is our business.

## Hypocrisy in home

- Many times these false behaviors are unfortunately a learned pattern from our parents. Destructive methods of arguing (silent treatment verses a yelling fest), manipulation, power struggles all are works of the flesh.

- Ephesians 5:21!

<p>The Sandbox</p> <p>(Play like you’re friendly)</p>
---

- Clearly we are reaping from the anti-authority generation that has turned its back on God. It started with the removing of prayer from school in the 1960’s to the present seeking to censer all things to do with the God of the Bible and His Son, The Lord Jesus Christ.

No greater evidence of this foolishness can be seen than in the reaping in the homes of our nation the ungodly behavior, attitudes and full on hypocrisy in the church.

- Our behavior has a judge who is always available to settle any dispute in the home. Galatians chapter 5 covers these methods and strategies that couples employ in their arguments.
- The works of the (walking in the) flesh are:
  - Adultery, fornication, (sexual immorality)
  - uncleanness, (impure thoughts)
  - lasciviousness,(eagerness for lustful pleasure)
  - Idolatry, (or self-idolatry as John Cook called it)
  - witchcraft, (participation in demonic activities)
  - hatred, (hostility)
  - variance, (quarreling)
  - emulations, (jealousy)
  - wrath, (outbursts of anger)
  - strife, (selfish ambition)
  - seditions, (divisions)
  - heresies, (the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group)
  - Envy, (envy)
  - murders,
  - drunkenness,

- revelling, (wild parties)
  - and such like, (and other kinds of sin)
- If the behaviors listed above are commonplace in your relationship with your fiancée, we would **STRONGLY** encourage you to **WAIT** on getting married **UNTIL** these behaviors are changed.
  - We have had the displeasure of conducting weddings for couples who seemed “fine” in the premarital class and at church...only to find out shortly after the wedding day, that there are real problems in the relationship.

Most often those problems revolve around the list of the works of the flesh by one, or both of them. The primary suspect is usually **SELFISHNESS!**

- Most of those problems existed **BEFORE** the wedding date, but the couple failed to have the maturity to face them and address them in a Biblical, godly, mature way. Had these incorrect behaviors been addressed from the beginning the adjustment of the two becoming one would have been much more enjoyable and fruitful.
- This problem is **NOT** isolated to first time marriages nor is it exclusive to a younger age group. It has emerged at all age levels and in a wide variety of marital circumstances, blended families, etc.
- What God has called us to as believers is to walk in (the works of) the Holy Spirit. Those behaviors are the following:
  - love,
  - joy,
  - peace,
  - longsuffering, (patience)
  - gentleness, (kindness)
  - goodness,
  - faith, (faithfulness)
  - Meekness, (gentleness)
  - temperance, (self-control)
  - against such there is no law, (Here there is no conflict with the law)

### Hypocrisy in family

- Within the body of Christ we have seen an alarming comfort level on the part of those who consider behaving one way at home toward their spouse and kids and another way toward the world around them as “normal”.
- A wife who has a husband who is sweet and caring in public but rude and unloving at home will begin to despise him. This will show up in a number of ways, mocking, arguing, dishonoring, first at home, but eventually in public. What you reap at home your will eventually show up in public.
- A husband who has a wife who seems loving and supportive of her husband in public but disrespectful, badgering and manipulative at home will begin to harden his heart to her and close up his heart to her. This will show up in a number of ways insensitivity, non-commutative and even openly hostile. This too will eventually show up in public.

- One of the worst examples you can set for your children is to model hypocrisy. Kids are more perceptive than you give them credit for. They know when there are two lives being lived, one for public consumption and one for personal convenience at home. You are teaching them to live in a way that Jesus hates see Matthew 23 for more on this. It will frustrate, anger and depress them! That often shows up as rebellion to your authority out of their disgust for your hypocrisy!

## Hypocrisy in heart

- The root of all problems on this issue. It all starts here.
- John Cook, our former elder, now home with the Lord, used to instruct young husbands who were struggling to be what God has called to be in the home. He always told those husbands to examine what has them so upset, most times the problem was not their wife, but their own “self-idolatry”.
- Self-idolatry quite simply is the worship and service of your will and desires ABOVE the will of God for your life in some issue and above the needs and desires of your spouse. You act one way towards your wife or husband simply to get what you want. It really is all about you.
- This problem is often clearly seen in relationships in the secular world. Men give love to get sex, women give sex to get love. Both are playing the hypocrite and neither will really get what they truly want.

Gal 5:19-26 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, 20 idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin.

Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law.

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. 25 If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. 26 Let us not become conceited, or irritate one another, or be jealous of one another.

## Things that can destroy Thelo, or how to wipe out hypocrisy.

### In the church

- Become accountable to other believers God has placed in your life. This is why we have required you to get a chaperone couple.
- Seek out other married couples that you know to have a solid relationship with the Lord and with each other. Ask them to help you with the issues you are struggling with as a couple. Keep yourselves accountable to them. Seek them out when you have an impasse and need another objective opinion about a problem/issue in the marriage.
- When couples would head out of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, Pastor Chuck's wife, Kay, would tell the wives of the pastor's going out to plant, to call her if there was trouble in the marriage. What did that do for those couples who were going to plant churches in other states? It held them accountable.

### In the Home

- Become accountable to your spouse with your attitudes. How?
- Become accountable to your spouse in prayer together. It will drive out the hypocrisy!
- Allow Galatians 5 to be the rule for determining when one or the other is walking in the flesh. When the husband or the wife is walking in the flesh, have the genuine humility to submit to God's Word on the issue and correct yourself! Remember Ephesians 5:21!

The Sandbox

(Play like you're friendly)

### In the Family

- Become accountable to your Children! How?
- Study Galatians 5 with them. Teach them to recognize when they or you are not walking in the Spirit. Allow them the privilege to speak the truth when they perceive a relationship in the home is in the flesh and not in the spirit.
- This will require a real humility on the part of the parents, but you will be shocked on how quickly ungodly behavior will be removed when it is exposed in the light.
- Obviously age is a factor in this, but your older children can really be a help to you as a couple struggling against the flesh and want to stew or continue in something that is wrong!

### In the Heart

1. Pray. You have sin at the door. If you be open and honest with God things will change.
- The ultimate hypocrisy is to approach God as though your relationships are in order when they are not. Jesus told us to leave our sacrifice at the altar and go and be reconciled to our brother/sister and then come and make our offering.



Matthew 5:23-25 "So if you are standing before the altar in the Temple, offering a sacrifice to God, and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you,

leave your sacrifice there beside the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God. NLT

- Walking in continuous hypocrisy HINDERS our walk with God!
2. Get into God's word. Make the list of the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit. Make it a point to memorize these behaviors. Then Filter!
- To filter means, before you speak to your spouse run the comment or attitude through the filter of Galatians 5. Is this comment/attitude a work of the flesh? If it is, then the problem is not with your spouse, it is with your one heart...self-idolatry (see above). If the comment/attitude is not a work of the flesh, then it is profitable to speak it to your spouse.
  - Take the time to meditate on I Corinthians 13:4 the section on Love. Memorize it as well. Filter your comment/attitude through it as well. Does it pass the test?
  - This issue of heart is the KEY to a marriage. Failure to take these things seriously will result in great harm to your marriage.