

Finding Personal Freedom

Important Note: We strongly encourage you to work through the *Steps to Freedom in Christ* before beginning *The Steps for Finding Personal Freedom in your Marriage*. *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* focus on your individual relationship and identity in Christ while *The Steps to Finding Personal Freedom* focus on your marital relationship and responsibilities in Christ. *These two resources and many other materials are available from Freedom in Christ.*

We encourage you to read the book *Experiencing Christ Together*. Ideally, it would be best if you read *Victory Over the Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker* first or attended a Living Free in Christ conference (where the content of the two books is taught). These books (or conference) will help you resolve personal and spiritual conflicts and instruct you in how to live the Christian life by faith in the power of the Holy Spirit. The conference has been professionally taped and is available on video or audio cassette.

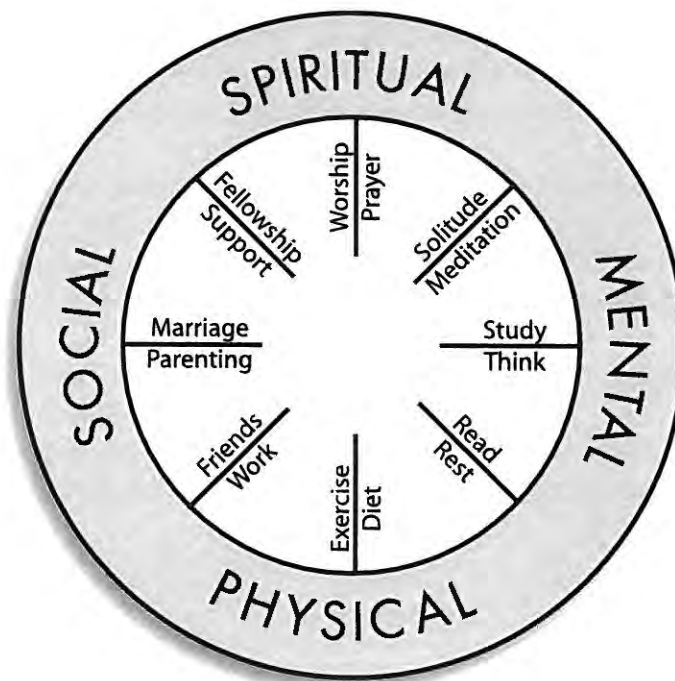
The purpose of *The Steps for Finding Personal Freedom in your Marriage* is to go beyond the personal *Steps to Freedom in Christ* by helping individuals who are married and want to resolve issues both past and current which could create conflicts in their marriage. Assuming your own personal responsibility and resolving your own issues before the Lord is the best way to achieve a great relationship in marriage!

Are you willing to allow God to show you anything He desires? Is it your desire to walk in the light and speak the truth in love? Then you are ready to work through this procedure. Set aside a day and find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. If your current marital relationship is experiencing difficulty, then we suggest that you have a responsible person whom you trust assist you in this process.

The preeminence of Christ:

“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household. Anyone who loves his father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it” (Mt. 10:34-39).

Marriage and Family Disciplines



(Fig. 0.1)

A. How marriages and families without Christ will promote a false pursuit of self-worth:

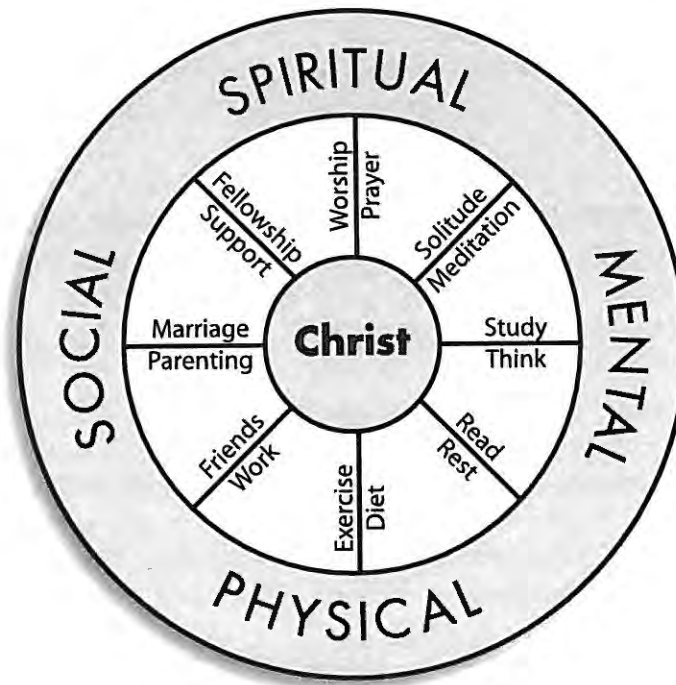
1. Appearance
2. Performance
3. Status

B. Personal needs that only Christ can meet:

1. Life
2. Identity
3. Acceptance
4. Security
5. Significance

C. God works primarily through committed relationships.

Marriage and Family Disciplines with Christ



(Fig 0.2)

BEFORE YOU BEGIN THE PROCESS:

You should have a Bible and pen handy. In order to resolve conflicts, you have to address many issues that can be quite negative. Therefore, begin by reflecting on the encouraging issues. Answer the following questions [and later share your answers with your spouse]:

What three character qualities do you most appreciate about your spouse?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What three things does your spouse do that you really appreciate?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

BEGIN TOGETHER WITH THIS PRAYER OF COMMITMENT:

Dear Heavenly Father, I love You and thank You for Your grace, truth, love, power, forgiveness and blessings in Christ. I can love my spouse because You first loved me. I can forgive my spouse because I have been forgiven, and there can be a mutual acceptance because You have accepted us. I desire nothing more than to know and do Your will. I ask for Your divine guidance and protection during this time of seeking freedom for my marriage.

I buckle on the belt of Your truth, put on the breastplate of Your righteousness, and commit myself to the gospel of peace. I hold up the shield of faith and stand against the flaming arrows of the enemy. I commit myself to take every thought captive in obedience to You. I put on the helmet of salvation which assures me of Your forgiveness, Your life, and my freedom in You. I put off the old self and put on the new self which is being renewed in Your image. I take the sword of the Spirit, the spoken Word of God, to defend myself against the father of lies.

I acknowledge my dependence on You and understand that apart from Christ I can do nothing. I pray that You will grant me genuine repentance and living faith. I desire Your plans for my marriage, for it to be a beautiful picture of Your relationship with the body of Christ. I ask You to fill me with Your Holy Spirit, lead me into all truth, and set me free in Christ. In Jesus' precious name, I pray. Amen.

Step One: Establish God's Priority for your Marriage

Objective: To understand what it means to leave father and mother and to discern any way in which you haven't, so you can take appropriate steps to do so.

Ask the Lord to reveal to you if in fact you have left your father and mother and are bonded to your spouse only.

Remember the words of Jesus:

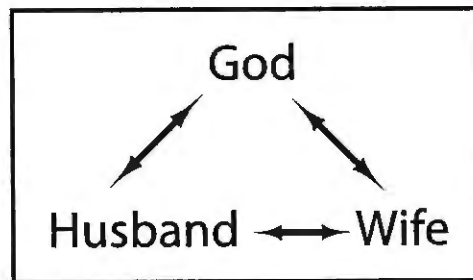
"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me" (Mt. 10:37).

This does not mean you don't honor your father and mother, but it does mean that you can have only one Lord in your life. It means your spiritual heritage must take precedence over your natural heritage.

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame" (Gn. 2:24-25).

A. Leaving

In what ways could you be holding on to some unhealthy ties that are keeping you from committing yourself fully to the Lord and to your spouse? Those ties could be physical, emotional, mental, spiritual or financial.



(Fig1.1)

B. Cleaving (see Fig. 1.1)

Ask the Lord to reveal to you the ways that you have not yet left your father and mother so you can cleave (being faithful) only to your spouse.

PRAY TOGETHER ALOUD:

Dear Heavenly Father, I humbly submit myself to You and ask for Your divine guidance. I ask that You reveal to my mind the ways that I may allow my physical heritage to be more important than my spiritual heritage. Show me anything in my life that may take on a greater sense of importance to me than my relationship with You. I also ask You to show me what ways I am not willing to honorably leave my father and mother—physically, spiritually, mentally, emotionally or financially. I desire to be spiritually bonded to You in order that I may be fully bonded to my spouse. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

You should sit silently before the Lord and honestly consider your relationship to God and to your own parents. **Do not consider the relationship that your spouse has with his/her parents. Let the Lord be the Judge, and allow your spouse to assume responsibility for his/her relationship with his/her parents. Consider the following questions.**

USE THE WORKSHEETS PROVIDED TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

1. Is my relationship with God the most important relationship in my life?
2. Is my relationship with my spouse the second most important relationship in my life?
3. Does the approval of relatives mean more to me than the approval of God?
4. Am I still trying to live up to the expectations of my relatives?
5. Would I be willing to sever any relationship which would threaten my relationship with God and my spouse even if it included my physical family?

Leaving father and mother cannot mean dishonoring them. Being disrespectful to your parents cannot lead to freedom. Consider these questions:

1. Have you gone against your parents' counsel in getting married?
2. If so, have you prayerfully tried to reconcile your differences and receive their blessing?
3. In what ways have you been disrespectful of your parents or not shown them appreciation?

Note: If you feel your parents have wronged you, you will be given an opportunity to forgive them later in the *Steps*.

Write down on the worksheet any way that you are still bonded to your own parents or step-parents in an ungodly way physically, spiritually, mentally, emotionally or financially. **When you have finished your list, privately confess your issues to God.** [Later share with your spouse what you have learned. If it has effected your relationship with each other in a negative way, then ask your spouse for forgiveness. If you have been unduly critical of your in-laws, you should ask your spouse to forgive you.]

CONCLUDE THIS STEP WITH THE FOLLOWING PRAYER:

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You for revealing these important issues to me. I rededicate my life to You. My desire in my marriage is to become one flesh and one spirit in Christ. May Your Holy Spirit bond us together in love for You and each other. Show me how I can rightly relate to my earthly parents and other relatives. Thank You for Your forgiveness for any way that I have dishonored my parents, and show me how I can honor them according to Your will. In Jesus' precious name, I pray. Amen.

A note for those who have been married previously. You may want to ask the Lord if there remains any unhealthy bonding between you and any ex-spouses and their families. The process would be the same as above.

Step One Worksheets

In the space provided, answer the questions and write down any thoughts that come to your mind with regard to these issues.

Consider how you relate to your parents.

1. Is my relationship with God the most important relationship in my life?
2. Is my relationship with my spouse the second most important relationship in my life?
3. Does the approval of relatives mean more to me than the approval of God?
4. Am I still trying to live up to the expectations of my relatives?
5. Would I be willing to sever any relationship which would threaten my relationship with God and my spouse even if it included my physical family?

Consider how you honor your parents.

1. Have you gone against your parents' counsel in getting married?
2. If so, have you prayerfully tried to reconcile your differences and receive their blessing?
3. In what ways have you been disrespectful of your parents or not shown them appreciation?

Write down any way that you are still bonded to your own parents or step-parents in an ungodly way.

1. Physically:

2. Spiritually:

3. Mentally:

4. Emotionally:

5. Financially:

Step Two: Break Cycles of Abuse

Objective: To understand and discern generational and corporate sins in order to forsake and repent of them.

In this Step, first ask the Lord to reveal to your mind the family sins and iniquities that have been passed on to you from previous generations. Second, ask the Lord to reveal sins and wrong patterns of behavior that may effect your marriage. Before you begin the first part, however, realize that most Christian families are just doing the very best they can, and it would be wrong to see *only* their sins and iniquities.

[Later, take the time to encourage your spouse by sharing your answers to the following:

What habits, customs, traditions and values have you observed in your spouse's family that you really appreciate?

Because of one man (Adam), sin entered into the world and consequently all have sinned. This transmission of sin has effected every generation and every people group of the world. The fact that there are generational cycles of abuse is a well-attested social phenomena. Here is an opportunity to find freedom in Christ by breaking the progression of ancestral sins and by making a concerted effort to stop the cycles of abuse. If we do not face these issues, we will teach what we have been taught, discipline any children we may have the way we have been disciplined, and relate to our spouses the way our parents related to each other. Scripture teaches that those who are fully trained will be like their teachers. Childhood training isn't just based on what was said; it's also based on what was modeled. Family values are more caught than taught.

When we were born physically alive but spiritually dead, we had neither the presence of God in our lives nor the knowledge of His ways. We were pre-programmed by sin to live our lives independent of God. During those formative years of our lives, we learned how to cope, survive and succeed without God. When we came to Christ, nobody pushed the "clear" button in that marvelous computer we call our mind. That is why Paul says we must no longer be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Rom. 12:2).

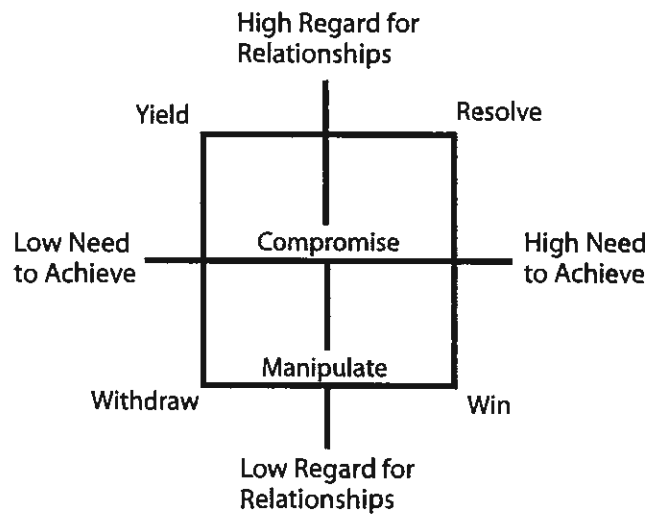
We have all developed many defense mechanisms to protect ourselves. Denial, projection, blaming and many other self-protective behaviors are no longer necessary now that we are in Christ. We are accepted for who we are and that gives us the freedom to be real and honest. Jesus is our defense. We can walk in the light and speak the truth in love. We can't fix our past, but we can be free from it by the grace of God. Just trying not to be like our parents or other role models in our lives is still letting those people determine who we are and what we are doing. Thank God for the good lessons learned, but let the Lord renew your mind and become free from what was not right in your past.

Strongholds have primarily been erected in our minds from the environment in which we were raised and the traumatic experiences in our past. Those strongholds will effect our temperaments and the way we relate to our spouses or children. They will remain unless we renew our minds according to the Word of God. They result in patterns of behavior that we have learned over time.

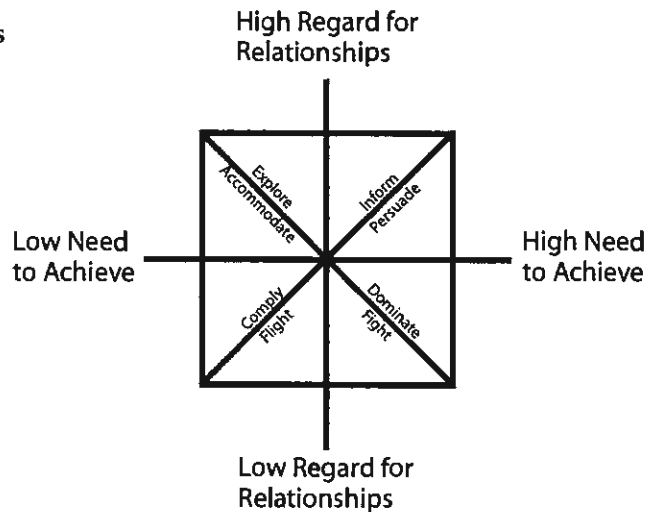
“Ah, Sovereign Lord, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for You. You show love to thousands but bring the punishment for the fathers’ sins into the laps of their children after them...” (Jer. 32:17, 18).

A. Generational sins (Ex. 20:5; Is. 65:6,7; Jer. 32:18)

1. Conflict styles



2. Communication styles



B. Generational spiritual oppression (Hos. 4:12,13)

C. Generational confession (Lv. 26:39-42; Neh. 9:2, 3; Ps. 106:6; Jer. 14:19-21)

D. Marital/corporate sins

1. Breaking spiritual bondage
2. Renewing the mind

PART ONE: PRAY THE FOLLOWING PRAYER:

Dear Heavenly Father, You are the only perfect parent I have. Thank You for my natural parents who brought me into this world. I acknowledge that they were not perfect, nor was my family and community where I grew up. I ask that You reveal to my mind the dysfunctional patterns and family sins of my ancestors that have been going on for generations. Reveal to me the strongholds in my mind that have kept me from fully honoring You and embracing the truth. Give me the grace to face the truth and not to be defensive. Only You can meet my deepest needs of acceptance, security, significance and a sense of belonging. I thank You that You have made me a new creation in Christ. I desire to be free from my past so I can be all that You want me to be. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Allow the Lord to reveal any and all family sins of your ancestors. Consider your own upbringing and family heritage. Honestly address the following issues, writing your answers down on paper.

USE THE WORKSHEETS PROVIDED TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What sins seemed to be repeated over and over again in your family, such as lying, criticizing, drinking, compulsive gambling, cheating, pride, bitterness, adultery, divorce, incest, sexual abuse, etc.?
2. How did your family deal with conflict? How do you now deal with it?
3. How did each member of your family communicate? Can you speak the truth in love?
4. How did your parents discipline their children? How do you?
5. Where did your parents get their significance? Security? Acceptance? Where do you?
6. Did your parents exhibit the spiritual fruit of self-control or were they controllers or enablers? Which are you?
7. What was their religious preference? What non-Christian beliefs (cultic or occultic) or idols did they embrace? (An idol can be anything that has greater prominence in their lives than Christ.)
8. What lies did they believe? How has this effected you?
9. What other ancestral sins has God revealed to your mind?

[Later share what you have learned from your list with your spouse. Knowing that you are willing to face these issues will give you both a lot more hope for the future. Remember, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1), and we are to accept one another as Christ has accepted us (Rom. 15:7). Mutual sharing allows both of you to understand and accept each other.]

We are not responsible for our parents' sins, but because our parents sinned, we have been taught, trained and disciplined in ways that may not be healthy. Denial and cover-up will only perpetuate the sins of our ancestors and effect us and our children. It is our responsibility to face these issues and stop the cycle of abuse so it is not passed on to the next generation. The Lord instructs us to confess our iniquity and the iniquity of our forefathers (Lv. 26:40).

Pray the following prayer for every family sin of your ancestors that you have written down.

Dear Heavenly Father, I confess (name every sin) as sinful and displeasing to You. Thank You for Your forgiveness. I now turn from those sins, reject them, and ask You to break their hold on my marriage. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

PART TWO: CURRENT PATTERNS IN YOUR MARRIAGE

We are to confess not only the family sins of our ancestors but also our own sins. Individual and personal sins are dealt with in the personal *Steps to Freedom in Christ*. However, marital relationships also have corporate sins which must be confessed and forsaken. Corporate sins are patterns of behavior in a marriage that are displeasing to God and contrary to His revealed will. They do not differ from individual sins in nature. Sin is still sin whether practiced by an individual or by a couple. A pattern of sinfulness within a marital relationship should be dealt with by both husband and wife if possible.

Examples of corporate sins in marital relationships might be:

1. Engaging together in sinful activities that displease God or damage others.
2. Taking part together in non-Christian religious rituals or any cult or occult ceremonies or practices.
3. Agreeing together on any sin: covering up for each other, lying, theft, adultery, divorce, cheating on taxes, drunkenness, child abuse, etc.
4. Withholding tithes and offerings from God.
5. Falling into patterns of gossip, slander, filthy language or other sins of the tongue in *conversations with each other*.
6. Tolerating sinful behavior in your family, especially while they live under your roof, such as swearing, foul language, sex outside of marriage, gambling, alcohol, drugs, or anything that contradicts God's Word.
7. Reading or viewing pornographic material or anything produced by psychics, mediums, occult practitioners, cults or false religions.

PRAY THE FOLLOWING PRAYER:

Dear Heavenly Father, as I seek You, bring to my mind all the corporate sins that I have committed in my marriage and family. Remind me of the sins of my ancestors and their families. Open my eyes to any tendency to repeat the same dysfunctional patterns. Give me discernment to identify and renounce corporate sins in my marriage that I have tolerated or have not dealt with adequately. Then grant me Your grace that I may confess them, renounce them and turn away from them so I may commit myself never to return to them. In Jesus' cleansing name, I pray. Amen.

Begin to identify corporate sins and write them down on the worksheet. Confess all that the Lord has revealed to you.

{At a later time, ask your spouse's forgiveness for the ways that your involvement in these sins has hurt him/her and damaged your relationship together. If your spouse is reluctant to participate with you in this sharing, then share with him/her how the Lord has convicted you in what you have been doing. With firmness and love say that you are no longer willing to be a part of these actions.]

Step Two Worksheet

PART ONE:

1. What sins seemed to be repeated over and over again in your family, such as lying, criticizing, drinking, compulsive gambling, cheating, pride, bitterness, adultery, divorce, incest, sexual abuse, etc.?
2. How did your family deal with conflict? How do you now deal with it?
3. How did each member of your family communicate? Can you speak the truth in love?
4. How did your parents discipline their children? How do you?
5. Where did your parents get their significance? Security? Acceptance? Where do you?
6. Did your parents exhibit the spiritual fruit of self-control or were they controllers or enablers? Which are you?
7. What was their religious preference? What non-Christian beliefs (cultic or occultic) or idols did they embrace? (An idol can be anything that has greater prominence in their lives than Christ.)
8. What lies did they believe? How has this effected you?
9. What other ancestral sins has God revealed to your mind?

Now return to the instructions at the bottom of page eleven.

PART TWO: Write down corporate sins within your marriage.

1. Engaging together in sinful activities that displease God or damage others:

2. Taking part together in non-Christian religious rituals or any cult or occult ceremonies or practices:

3. Agreeing together on any sin: covering up for each other, lying, theft, adultery, divorce, cheating on taxes, drunkenness, child abuse, etc.:

4. Withholding tithes and offerings from God:

5. Falling into patterns of gossip, slander, filthy language or other sins of the tongue in *conversations with each other*:

6. Tolerating sinful behavior in your family, especially while they live under your roof, such as swearing, foul language, sex outside of marriage, gambling, alcohol, drugs, or anything that contradicts God's written Word.

7. Reading or viewing pornographic material or anything produced by psychics, mediums, occult practitioners, cults or false religions.

Now return to the instructions at the bottom of page twelve.

WHEN FINISHED, MAKE THE FOLLOWING DECLARATION ALOUD:

I confess and renounce my own corporate sins and all those sins of my ancestors. I declare by the grace of God that I am a new creation in Christ. I commit myself and my marriage to the Lord Jesus Christ. I take my place in Christ and by His authority I command Satan to flee from me and my relationship with my spouse (and our family relationships). I belong to God and am a part of His family and under His protection. I put on the armor of God and commit myself to stand firm in my relationship to my Heavenly Father.

Satan's grip from generational sins and cycles of abuse can be broken instantly. However, it will take time to renew our minds and overcome patterns of the flesh. An experienced pastor or committed Christian counselor can often help in this process. We must accept one another and build up one another. Growth in character will also take time and we must be patient with each other. Unconditional love and acceptance frees individuals so they can accept themselves and grow in the grace of the Lord.

CONCLUDE THIS STEP WITH THE FOLLOWING PRAYER:

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for Your unconditional love and acceptance. I give myself to You. Enable me by Your grace to accept my spouse as You have accepted me, and to be merciful as You have been merciful. Show me how I can build up, encourage and forgive my spouse. I acknowledge that I have not attained the full stature of Christ, but I desire to be like You in my marriage and in all I do.

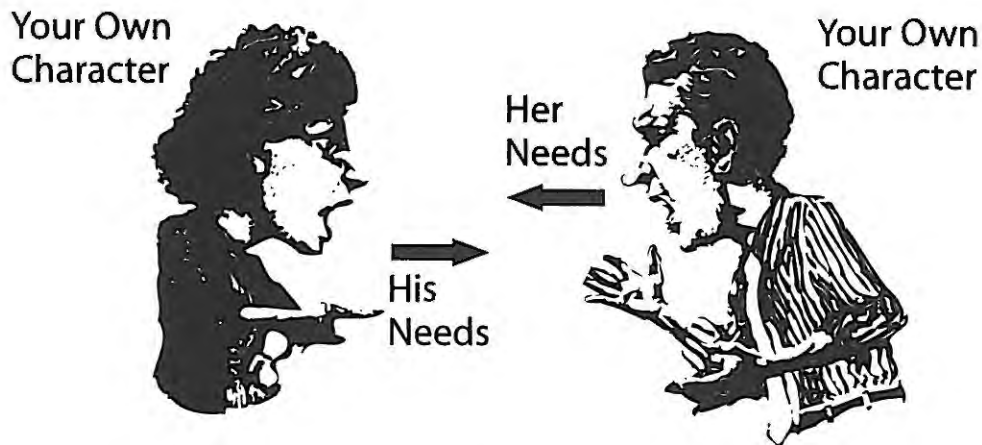
I face up to my own corporate sins, as well as the family sins of my ancestors. I honestly confess my participation in them and agree that this behavior is unacceptable to You. I disown them and repudiate them. In Jesus' name, I break all the influence of their dysfunctional patterns upon me and my marriage. I cancel out all advantages, schemes, and other works of the devil that have been passed to me from my ancestors. I break any foothold or stronghold built from the enemy's influence and I give my heart to You for the renewing of my mind.

I invite the Holy Spirit to apply the shed blood of the Lord Jesus on Calvary's cross to my corporate sins and to my ancestral sins. Through God's grace, by faith, I claim the work of Christ in His death and resurrection as my ransom from sin, release from guilt and removal of shame. In Jesus' precious name, I pray. Amen.

Step Three: Balancing Rights and Responsibilities

Objective: To resolve interpersonal conflicts by assuming your biblical responsibility so you may live in harmony with the Lord and each other after marriage.

In this Step, ask the Lord to reveal to your mind any ways that you have not related to your fiancé/fiancée in a godly way.



“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:3-5). “Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand” (Rom. 14:4).

The Languages of Love (from *The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman).

Gifts

Service

Time

Touch

Words

Step Three Worksheets

In what ways haven't you in word and deed...

1. Loved your spouse as you should have?
2. Accepted your spouse as you should have?
3. Respected your spouse as you should have?
4. Submitted to the needs of your spouse as you should have?
5. Appreciated your spouse as you should have?
6. Trusted God to bring conviction and self-control in your spouse?

Scripture teaches that we are to be submissive to one another's needs, which include loving, accepting and respecting one another. Pray the following prayer, asking the Lord to reveal any ways that self-centered living and demanding your own rights have kept you from assuming your responsibilities to love and accept your spouse.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for Your full and complete love and acceptance. Thank You that the unselfish sacrifice of Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection have met my greatest need for forgiveness and life. I ask You to reveal to my mind any ways that I have been selfish in my relationship with my spouse. Show me how I have not loved, accepted, respected or submitted to the needs of him/her in the fear of Christ. Show me how I have been angry, jealous, insecure, manipulative or controlling. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

USE THE WORKSHEETS PROVIDED TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

Sit silently before the Lord and allow Him to reveal any and all ways that you have not in word or deed.

1. Loved your spouse as you should have (Eph. 5:22; Ti. 2:4-5).
2. Accepted your spouse as you should have (Rom. 15:7).
3. Respected your spouse as you should have (Eph. 5:33).
4. Submitted to your spouse as you should have (Eph. 5:21).
5. Appreciated your spouse as you should have (1 Pt. 3:1-9).
6. Trusted God to bring conviction and self-control in your spouse (Jn. 16:8; Gal. 5:23).

When you have finished completing the above, verbally confess what the Lord has shown you.

[Later ask your spouse's forgiveness for not being what God called you to be. Don't overlook the times and ways that you have communicated rejection, disrespect or shown lack of appreciation. Now consider your own personal needs you feel are not being met (without attacking the other person's character or telling him/her what he/she should or shouldn't do). Then share the times and the ways that your spouse has shown love, acceptance, respect and appreciation to you.]

CONCLUDE THIS STEP WITH THE FOLLOWING PRAYER OF COMMITMENT:

Dear Heavenly Father, I have fallen short of Your glory and have not lived up to my responsibilities. I have been selfish and self-centered. Thank You for Your forgiveness. I commit myself to an increasing pattern of love, acceptance and respect for my spouse. I will submit to my spouse's needs in reverence to Christ. Restore to us our first love. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Step Four: Breaking Sexual Bondage

Objective: To establish sexual freedom and purity in your marriage relationship.

Note: Before you begin Step Four, individual freedom from sexual bondage must be achieved. You should have already dealt with your individual issues in *Step Six: Bondage vs. Freedom* in the *Steps to Freedom in Christ*. If you have not dealt with them, *Step Six: Bondage vs. Freedom* is provided on page 22. As was mentioned in the introduction, everyone is strongly encouraged to work through the *Steps to Freedom in Christ* (for individuals) for the complete process.

Sexual purity:

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God” (1 Thes. 4:3-5).

Sexual need:

“The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife’s body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband’s body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer” (1 Cor.7:3-5).

Sexual honor:

“Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral” (Heb. 13:4).

Sexual lust:

“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Mt. 5:28).

Our spouses cannot resolve a problem of lust; only Christ can break that bondage. Be sure to read the chapter in *Experiencing Christ Together* that deals with sex before you proceed. Many have found great encouragement by reading *Finding Freedom in a Sex Obsessed World* (Anderson) that teaches how Jesus Christ is the answer for those struggling with sexual bondage. Individual sexual freedom must be achieved first before you can meet one another’s sexual needs in marriage.

Areas where you may have opened the door to the enemy and brought bondage to your marriage.

1. In what way have you not been honest about your sexual relationship with your spouse?

2. What have you been doing together that you now think to be wrong?

3. How has your conscience been violated or have you violated the conscience of the other?
(1 Tm. 4:1; 2 Cor. 10:3-5):

For those needing to work through this Step individually.

Bondage vs. Freedom (Step Six)

From the individual "Steps to Freedom in Christ"

It is our responsibility not to allow sin to have control over our bodies. We must not use our bodies or another person's body as an instrument of unrighteousness (Rom. 6:12, 13). If you are struggling with sexual sins that you cannot stop (such as pornography, masturbation, sexual immorality), then pray as follows:

Lord, I ask You to bring to my mind every sexual use of my body as an instrument of unrighteousness so I can renounce these sins right now. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

As the Lord brings to your mind every wrong sexual use of your body, whether it was done to you (rape, incest, any other sexual molestation), or willingly by you, *renounce every occasion*:

Lord, I renounce (name the specific use of your body) with (name person involved), and I ask You to break that sinful bond with (name), spiritually, mentally and emotionally.

After you are finished, commit your body to the Lord by praying:

Lord, I renounce all these uses of my body as an instrument of unrighteousness and I admit to my willful participation. I choose now to present my eyes, mouth, mind, heart, hands, feet and sexual organs to You as instruments of righteousness. I present my whole body to You as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, and I choose to reserve the sexual use of my body for marriage only (Heb. 13:4).

I reject the devil's lie that my body is not clean or that it is dirty or in any way unacceptable to You as a result of my past sexual experiences. Lord, thank You that You have totally cleansed and forgiven me and that You love and accept me just the way I am. Therefore, I choose now to accept myself and my body as clean in Your eyes. Amen.

After you have confessed all known sin, pray:

Lord, I now confess these sins to You and claim through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ my forgiveness and cleansing. I cancel out all ground that evil spirits have gained through my willful involvement in sin. I pray this in the wonderful name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sit silently before the Lord and allow Him to guide you. Ask Him to cover these next few minutes with grace. Sex is a very intimate expression of love and can be a tremendous cause for guilt and insecurity when experienced outside the will of God.

USE THE WORKSHEET PROVIDED TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

1. In what way have you not been honest about your sexual relationship with your spouse?
2. What have you been doing together that you now think to be wrong?
3. How has your conscience been violated or how have you violated the conscience of the other person?

These questions need to be honestly answered and forgiveness sought.

[At a later time, be sure you cover any forgiveness issues with your spouse. The best way to find out if you have violated the other person's conscience is to ask!]

COMPLETE THIS STEP WITH THE FOLLOWING PRAYER:

Dear Heavenly Father, I stand naked before You, acknowledging that You know the thoughts and intentions of my heart. I desire to be sexually free before You with my spouse. I acknowledge that I have sinned and thank You for Your forgiveness and cleansing. I now give my body to You and my spouse. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit and bond us together in love. May our sexual relationship be holy in Your sight and an expression of our love to each other. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

THEN DECLARE ALOUD:

In the name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, I command Satan to leave my presence. I present my body to the Lord Jesus Christ and reserve its sexual use for my marriage only. I renounce the lie of Satan that sex is dirty or that my body is dirty. I stand naked and unashamed before God and my spouse.

Step Five: Release Old Hurts

Objective: To overcome the bondage of bitterness by finding freedom through forgiveness from our past hurts.

Forgiveness is what sets us free from our past. It is routinely necessary in any relationship because we don't live with perfect people. Resentment and bitterness will tear us apart. Forgiveness is the first step in reconciliation which is essential for bonding together. We also need to forgive others so Satan cannot take advantage of us (2 Cor. 2:10, 11). We are to be merciful just as our Heavenly Father is merciful (Lk. 6:36). We are to forgive as we have been forgiven (Eph. 4:31, 32).

Start this Step by making a time line, beginning with the day you first met your spouse and ending with today as shown below. On the top of the line, list all the good memories that you have had together. On the bottom, list all the painful memories.

Good Memories

When we first met  Today

Painful Memories

Thank the Lord for the good memories that have been especially meaningful in your relationship:

Lord, I thank you for (name the good memory).

After thanking the Lord aloud for the good memories, pray the following prayer. Follow this with a few moments of silent prayer, allowing the Lord to help you recall the painful experiences and traumatic events of your marriage.

Dear Heavenly Father, sometimes pain has come to me through circumstances, sometimes from other people, sometimes from my spouse. Whatever the cause, surface in my mind all the pain that You want me to deal with at this time. Let me get in touch with the emotional core of my hurt and heartache, trauma and threat that has damaged my relationship with my spouse. Show me where I have allowed a root of bitterness to spring up, causing trouble and defiling many. In Jesus' precious name, I pray. Amen.

Step Five Worksheet

Good Memories



Painful Memories

List the names of all those who have hurt you in any way, including all those for whom you have bad feelings:

Individually, make a list of the painful memories the Lord brings to your mind. Use real names, places, and dates as much as possible. It is nearly impossible to get in touch with the emotional core of pain without using people's names and recalling specific events. It is easy to pick up each other's offenses. It is also easy to turn bitter toward those who, we perceive, have wrongly influenced our spouses, even when they don't see it. Jealousy can also create bitterness.

Realize that this is a time to bring healing to damaged emotions so we can be free from our pasts. Simply record what happened and how you felt about it. Understand that forgiveness is not forgetting. Forgiveness may lead to forgetting, but trying to forget only complicates forgiveness. Before you start the forgiveness process, please recall these ten steps to forgiveness.

1. Allow yourself to feel the pain, hurt, resentment, bitterness and hate (Mt. 5:4).
2. Submit to God, recalling how Christ forgave you (Mt. 18:21-35; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13; Jas. 4:7-8).
3. Ask for Christ's grace and power to forgive (Lk. 11:9-10).
4. Agree to live with the unavoidable consequences of the other person's sin against you (Col 3-13-Eph.5:21).
5. Release the offense. Tear up the moral, personal, or relational debt owed you (Mt. 6:12).
6. Never bring up a past offense again as a weapon against your spouse (Rom. 12:17).
7. Keep forgiving when your emotions recycle the pain or when the other person keeps offending you (Mt. 18:21-22).
8. Reject the sinful act and tolerate it no longer (Rom. 12:21).
9. Turn the vengeance over to God and over to God's human authorities (Rom. 12:19-20).
10. Replace the old resentful feelings with the forgiving love of Christ (Eph. 4:31-32).

Do not make forgiveness more difficult than it already is. Some things we don't have to do:

1. We don't have to feel good about the person who hurt us—either before or after we forgive.
2. We don't have to tell the offender or other people about our resentful feelings unless the Holy Spirit guides us to do so. Matthew 5:23-26 does tell us to seek forgiveness and be reconciled to those we have offended as the Holy Spirit would guide.
3. We don't have to wait until we feel like forgiving. We can choose to obey God's Word right now.

Lift your painful memories before the Lord, asking for courage to face the pain honestly and for the grace to forgive fully. Releasing the offense results in relieving the pain.

ITEM BY ITEM FORGIVE EACH PERSON YOU RECALL AND RELEASE THE OFFENSE AS FOLLOWS:

Lord, I forgive (name) for (specifically identify all offenses and painful memories).

Prayerfully focus on each person until every remembered pain has surfaced. Be sure to include your spouse and every painful memory in your marriage. You should also accept God's forgiveness of yourself as needed. Bitterness hardens the heart, but forgiveness softens it.

AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE ABOVE, PRAY THE FOLLOWING PRAYER ALOUD:

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You for Your unconditional love and forgiveness. It is Your kindness and patience that have led me to forgiveness. In the name of Jesus and with His kindness and tenderness, I forgive every person who has ever hurt me or my family. I forgive my spouse for the pain that has come through weakness, poor judgment and outright sin. I accept Your forgiveness for the pain and damage caused in our marriage.

By your grace bring healing, help and hope to those who have hurt me and to those who have been hurt by me. I bless them all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who taught us, "... *Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you*" (Lk. 6:27-28). According to your Word, I pray for those who have hurt me in the precious name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

MAKE THE FOLLOWING DECLARATION ALOUD:

By the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is seated at the Heavenly Father's right hand, I assume my responsibility to resist the devil. I declare that I am crucified, buried, made alive, raised up and seated with Christ at the right hand of God. In union with Christ and with His authority, I command Satan to release any and all footholds in my life or any influence on my marriage. Satan, in the all-powerful Name of the crucified, risen and reigning Lord Jesus Christ, leave my presence and my marriage. Do not come back. Take away with you all of your lingering effects upon my memories, my relationships, my present thoughts and my future with my spouse.

Step Six: Unmask Satan's Deception

Objective: To discern how Satan is attacking your marriage so you can stand firm in your faith and resist the evil one.

“Finally be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 6:10-12).

A. Winning the battle for the mind (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

B. Identifying continuing patterns of defeat (1 Jn. 5:18-21)

C. Praying at all times in the Spirit (Eph. 6:18)

D. Committing to the Lord all with which you've been entrusted as a good steward (1 Cor. 4:1-3)

The goal of Satan is to discredit the work of Christ and tear apart your marriage and family. His primary weapons are deception, temptation and accusation. He also uses harassment, discouragement and disillusionment. When we buy his little lies, we turn against God and each other. Our homes can become a battle ground instead of a proving ground. In our relationships, our desires should be that we're a vital part of the building crew, rather than the wrecking crew. The tongue, however, is the instrument Satan uses the most. We either become tongue tied and refuse to speak the truth in love or we allow the tongue to become a destructive weapon.

If only one member of a family pays attention to the Holy Spirit, it will have strengthening effects upon every other member. On the other hand, if only one member of a family pays attention to a deceiving spirit, it will have weakening effects upon every other member as well. The purpose of this Step is to unmask the evil one's deceptions and stand against his attacks in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Satan uses real people to mount his attacks. They may come from deceived or evil people inside or outside our families. For example, a friend or co-worker may lead your spouse into an adulterous affair. The attacks may come through relatives or neighbors who use their tongues as destructive weapons. They may come from people who give us bad counsel to leave our marriage or abandon our children. They may even possibly come through Satanists who use occultic rituals or blood sacrifices in an evil attempt to destroy our families and, therefore, our testimonies.

Ask the Lord to show you the nature of these attacks so you can stand against them, united as one under the Lordship of Christ.

PRAY THE FOLLOWING PRAYER:

Dear Heavenly Father, I stand under Your authority. I give thanks that You are my hiding place, my protection and my refuge. In the name of Jesus, I clothe myself and my marriage with the Lord Jesus Christ and with the full armor of God. I choose to be strong in You, Lord, and in the power of Your might. I stand firm in my faith, I submit to You and I resist the devil. Open my eyes that I may see the attacks of the evil one against me, my family, and my marriage. Give me spiritual discernment to become aware of Satan's schemes, not ignorant of them. Open my eyes to the reality of the spiritual world in which I live. I ask You for the ability to discern spiritually so I can judge rightly between good and evil. As I wait silently before You, reveal to me the attacks of Satan against me, my family, my marriage and my ministry in order that I may stand against them and expose the father of lies. In Jesus' discerning name, I pray. Amen.

Make a list of whatever God brings to your mind. Look for patterns that seem to repeat themselves, such as conflicts that always break out before church, prayer or discussions on spiritual things. Think of any unresolved conflicts which keep recurring that may be due to one of the three following areas (or see the topics mentioned on page 27). Use the worksheet provided or a blank piece of paper.

1. Repeating mental thoughts that cause you to close your spirit toward God and your spouse (1 Tm. 4:1; 2 Cor. 10:3-5).
2. Recurring times and situations that cause distractions, confusion and disorientation in your marriage and home (usually during discussions, devotions, and times surrounding church or ministry opportunities (1 Thes.2:18).
3. Improper stewardship (1 Cor. 4:1-2)
 - a. Sins that were tolerated in your home.
 - b. Anti-Christian material brought into your home.

Sinful activities need to be renounced. Attacks that come from the enemy because of our obedience to Christ need to be understood so we can recognize them and stand against them in the future. You need to understand how you "... wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the powers of darkness. ..." (Eph. 6:12). Don't be like a blindfolded warrior who strikes out at himself or others. When you tear down a satanic stronghold, you may have some resistance. In order to walk free from past influences and present attacks, verbally make the following declaration and then pray the following prayer.

DECLARATION (ALLOUD):

As a child of God who has been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, I submit to God and resist the devil. I cancel out all demonic working that has been passed on to me from my ancestors. I have been crucified and raised with my Lord Jesus Christ, and now sit enthroned with Him in heavenly places. I renounce all satanic assignments that are directed toward me, my marriage, my family, or my ministry. I cancel every curse that Satan and his deceived, misguided evil workers have put on me and on God's plan for my marriage. I announce to Satan and all his forces that Christ became a curse for me when He died on the cross. I reject any and every way in which Satan may claim ownership of me. I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who purchased me with His own blood. I reject all other occultic rituals and blood sacrifices whereby Satan may claim ownership of me and God's plan for my marriage and children. I declare myself to be eternally and completely signed over and committed to the Lord Jesus Christ. By the authority I have in Jesus Christ, I now command every enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ to leave my presence, my memory and my present thoughts. I commit myself to our Heavenly Father to do His will from this day forward.

Step Six Worksheets

1. Repeating mental thoughts that cause you to close your spirit toward God and your spouse (1 Tm. 4:1; 2 Cor. 10:3-5):

2. Recurring times or situations that cause distraction, confusion, and disorientation in your marriage and home (usually during discussions, devotions, and times surrounding church or ministry opportunities) (1 Thes. 2:18):

3. Improper stewardship (1 Cor. 4:1-2):

a. Sins that were tolerated in your home

b. Anti-Christian objects brought into your home

PRAY:

Dear Heavenly Father, I come to You as Your child, purchased by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. You are the Lord of the universe and the Lord of my life. I yield my rights to You as the Lord of my marriage. I submit my body to You as an instrument of righteousness, a living sacrifice, that I may glorify You in my body and in my marriage. I reserve the sexual use of my body for my spouse only. I now ask You to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I commit myself to the renewing of my mind in order to prove that Your will is good, perfect and acceptable for me. I commit myself to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. All this I do in the name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Next, you need to commit your home to the Lord. Have you brought or allowed any foreign objects to be brought into your home that could serve as an idol or objects that were ever used for a non-Christian religious purpose? These could provide grounds for Satan to have access to your home. Are there any pornographic videos, magazines or books, occult or false religion materials? Is there anything else that needs to be cleansed from your home? Ask the Lord to reveal any such sins or articles in your home. Covenant before the Lord to remove all these items from your home and burn or destroy them. Then commit your home in prayer to the Lord as follows:

Dear Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that You are the Lord of all. All things You have created are good. You have charged me to be a good steward of all that You have entrusted to me. Thank You for what You have provided for me and my family. I claim no ownership of what You have entrusted to me. I dedicate our home to You, our living quarters, my work space, and all the property, possessions and finances You have entrusted to us. I promise to remove from my home anything and everything that displeases You.

I renounce any attacks, devices or ceremonies of the enemy or his people designed to claim any ownership of that with which I have been entrusted. I have been bought and purchased by the blood sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. I claim my home as a place of spiritual safety and protection from the evil one. I renounce anything and everything not pleasing to our Heavenly Father which has taken place in my home by myself or by those who have lived there before me. I ask for Your divine protection around my home and family. I desire to honor You in all my ways. Thank You for Your protection.

Lord, You are the King of my life and my marriage and I exalt You. May all that I do bring honor and glory to You. In Jesus' holy name, I pray. Amen.

THEN DECLARE ALOUD:

As a child of God, seated with Christ in the heavenly places, I command every evil spirit to leave my presence and my home. I renounce all attacks against my house, property, possessions and my very life. I announce to Satan and all his workers that God's plan for my marriage, family, and all that my Heavenly Father has entrusted to me belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. I submit completely to the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Step Seven: Christian Marriage

Objective: To consider what marriage vows mean in Christ.

All who marry, whether Christian or not, become part of God's creation order of marriage (Gn. 1:26-28; 2:18-25). A *creation order* is a God-given longing built into the fabric of human life. As a result of this God-given longing, every culture and all people groups on earth practice marriage in some form. No exceptions! Violating marriage breaks the order of creation and always brings terrible consequences.

When one partner (or both) knows Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, their marriage becomes "sanctified" or set apart as holy, part of God's new Christian order (1 Cor. 7:14). They commit themselves to Christ's new creation in marriage and enter a marriage covenant before God and one another. Christian marriage far exceeds a mere social contract. Marriage as a social contract is only a legal agreement between two parties. Christian marriage is a lifelong covenant with binding vows, spoken before God and human witnesses. If the vows are broken, they bring God's judgment. If they are kept, they bring God's rewards.

Satan's lie is that people who marry are really married singles, bound only by a human relationship and a social contract. That means marriage can be broken whenever either party feels the partners have "irreconcilable differences." In Christ, there are no irreconcilable differences. We have been reconciled to Him and we have been given the ministry of reconciliation.

God's truth is that marriage vows bind us into the organic union of Christian marriage, a new creation that lasts until the death of one of the spouses. A contract can be canceled, but a Christian covenant lasts a lifetime. Contracts can be broken or renegotiated, but a new creation in Christ either grows toward fulfillment or is violated.

Living in obedience to God's Word in Christian marriage (or any other part of life) brings the Lord's shelter of protection (Ps. 91). It results in God's blessings, including children who are set apart for God's purposes (1 Cor. 7:14). By God's grace His blessings extend not only to those who are faithful to Him, but also to their descendants for many generations to come (Ex. 20:6; Dt. 7:9; Lk. 1:50). Violating marriage vows brings God's curse, not only upon ourselves, but also upon our descendants for three or four generations (Ex. 34:7; Nm. 14:18; Jer. 32:18).

MAKE THE FOLLOWING DECLARATION AND THEN PRAY THE PRAYER THAT FOLLOWS.

DECLARATION (ALLOUD):

I submit myself to God's plan for my marriage. Satan, I renounce you in all your works and all your ways. In the all-powerful name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I command you to leave me. Take all your deceitful spirits, evil demons and fallen angels with you, and go to the place where the Lord Jesus Christ sends you. Leave my spouse and me and don't come back. Take with you all of the thoughts that have been raised up against the knowledge of God and toward us. Take with you all of your deceptions that contradict God's written Word. The Lord Jesus Christ has torn down your demonic authority, and I stand against your influence and activity toward my life and my

marriage. You are a defeated foe, disarmed of your weapons and made a public spectacle by the cross and resurrection of Christ (Col. 2:15). He (God) that is in me is greater than you who are in the world (1 Jn. 4:4). You, as prince of this world, now stand condemned (Jn. 16:11). Christ has the supremacy over every evil throne, power, rule or authority (Col. 1:16). Jesus shared our humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil (Heb. 2:1). I resist you by the authority of Christ and because I am alive in Him; therefore, you must flee from me (Jas. 4:7).

PRAY ALOUD:

Dear Heavenly Father, I gladly acknowledge that You created marriage and family life for Your glory. Thank You for designing marriage as a *creation order*, woven into the fabric of human society. I commit myself anew to honor the covenant of Christian marriage with all its blessings.

I renounce the lie of the devil that I am nothing more than a married single, bound only by a human relationship and a social contract. I choose to believe that marriage is binding as long as we both shall live. I acknowledge that we can never violate our marriage vows without bringing lasting damage upon ourselves and our future descendants for three or four generations to come.

I confess that I have fallen short of Your perfect will by my own selfishness and sin. I gladly accept Your forgiveness of my sins through the blood of Christ on the cross (1 Jn. 2:1-2). By grace through faith I receive Christ's abundant life into my heart and His holiness into my life and marriage (Jn. 10:10; 1 Cor. 7:14).

I crucify my own fleshly lusts and sinful desires which tempt me to ignore or violate my marriage vows (1 Pt. 2:11; Gal. 5:24). I clothe myself and Your plans for my marriage with the Lord Jesus Christ and His armor of light (Rom. 13:12-14; Gal. 3:26-27). I give myself to live by the power of the Holy Spirit in daily obedience to Christ (Gal. 5:16; 1 Pt. 1:2).

I announce that in Christ I have all the spiritual blessings I need to live out my new creation and the Christian covenant of marriage. I affirm that I can become one in Christ Jesus—one marriage, one flesh, one family (Eph. 1:3; 3:14-15; Gn. 2:24; Mk 10:6-9). I submit myself and my marriage to the ownership of my Heavenly Father, to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and to the power of the Holy Spirit. From this day forward, I ask You to use Your plans for my marriage to display Your splendor before our children and families. I invite You to work through us to show Your glory in the midst of a corrupt and wicked generation. In Jesus' glorious name. Amen.

When you were first married, you spoke vows that said, "I take thee as my lawful, wedded wife or husband." Consider becoming a giver instead of a taker. Think of your vows as "I give myself to you to become your husband or wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until death do us part, according to God's holy Word: and hereto, I pledge you my faithfulness.

Living Free in Christ

Know that both marriage intimacy and freedom must be maintained. In gaining your freedom, you have won a very important battle in an ongoing war. And freedom is yours as long as you keep choosing truth and standing firm in the strength of the Lord. If more painful memories should surface or if you become aware of lies that you have been living, renounce them and choose the truth. If you haven't already done so, please read *Victory over the Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker*. In order to maintain your freedom, we suggest the following:

1. Become active in a Christ-centered church, a small Christian group and a ministry for Christ. Build healthy allies for your marriage. Step outside of yourself for Christ.
2. Study your Bible daily, pray and be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit. If possible, we also suggest reading one chapter together every day of *The Daily Disciplex* or the devotional *Daily in Christ*, by Neil and Joanne Anderson.
3. Review and apply your personal freedom in Christ. Remind yourself of your identity in Christ, winning the battle for the mind, and processing the *Steps to Freedom in Christ* (personal freedom) as an ongoing personal inventory. Realize that the Lord uses marriage to reveal more layers of the onion of our selfishness which He wants to peel off.
4. Take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Assume responsibility for private thoughts, reject the lie, choose the truth and stand firm in your identity in Christ.
5. Don't drift away! It is very easy to get lazy in your thoughts and revert back to old habit patterns of thinking. Share struggles openly with your mate. See the suggested daily prayer on the next page.
6. Don't expect your spouse to fight your battles. While you can help each other, no one else can think, pray or read the Bible for you.
6. Don't expect your spouse to fight your battles. While you can help each other, no one else can think, pray or read the Bible for you.
7. If serious problems surface in your relationship, seek out a competent Christian pastor or counselor who is committed to the biblical institution of marriage, and not just to the individual apart from marriage.

PRAY DAILY WITH CONFIDENCE AS FOLLOWS:

Dear Heavenly Father, I honor You as My sovereign Lord. I acknowledge that You are always present with me. You are the only all-powerful and only all-wise God. You are kind and loving in all Your ways. I love You. I thank You that I am united with Christ and am spiritually alive in Him. I choose not to love the world and I crucify the flesh and all its sinful desires.

I thank You that I am a child of God, a new creation in Christ Jesus, dead to sin but alive to God. I ask You to fill me with Your Holy Spirit that I may live my life free from sin. I declare my dependence upon You and take my stand against Satan and all his lying ways. I choose to believe the truth. You are the God of all hope and I am confident that You will meet my needs as I seek to live according to Your Word. I express with confidence that I can live a responsible life and be faithful in my marriage through Christ who strengthens me. I ask these things in the precious name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

DECLARATION (ALLOUD):

I now take my stand in Christ and put on the whole armor of God. In union with Christ, I command Satan and all his evil spirits to depart from me. I submit my body to God as a living sacrifice and I renew my mind by the living Word of God in order that I may prove that the will of God is good, acceptable and perfect.

Use the list on the following page, taken from Dr. Neil Andersen's
Who I am in Christ, to celebrate who you are in Christ.

WE ARE ONE IN CHRIST

WE ARE ACCEPTED IN CHRIST:

Jn. 1:12	We are God's children.
Jn. 15:15	We are Christ's friends.
Rom- 5:1	We have been justified.
1 Cor. 6:17	We are united with the Lord and are one with Him in spirit.
1 Cor 6:20	We have been bought with a price. We belong to God.
1 Cor. 12:27	We are members of Christ's body.
Eph. 1:1	We are saints.
Eph. 1:5	We have been adopted as God's children.
Eph. 2:18	We have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit.
Col. 1:14	We have been redeemed and forgiven of all our sins.
Col. 2:10	We are complete in Christ.

WE ARE SECURE IN CHRIST:

Rom. 8:1,2	We are free from condemnation.
Rom. 8:28	We are assured that all things work together for good.
Rom. 8:3	We are free from any condemning charges against us.
Rom. 8:35	We cannot be separated from the love of God.
2 Cor. 1:21	We have been established, anointed and sealed by God.
Col 3:3	We are hidden with Christ in God.
Phil 1:6	We are confident that the good work God has begun in us will be perfected.
Phil. 3:20	We are citizens of heaven.
2 Tm. 1:7	We have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind.
Heb. 4:16	We can find grace and mercy in time of need.
1 Jn. 5:18	We are born of God and the evil one cannot touch us.

WE ARE SIGNIFICANT IN CHRIST:

Mt. 5:13,14	We are the salt and light of the earth.
Jn. 15:15	We are a branch of the true vine, a channel of His life.
Jn. 15:16	We have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.
Acts 1:8	We are a personal witness of Christ's.
1 Cor. 3:16	We are God's temple.
2 Cor. 5:17f	We are ministers of reconciliation.
2 Cor. 6:1	We are God's co-workers (1 Cor. 3:9).
Eph. 2:6	We are seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.
Eph. 2:10	We are God's workmanship.
Eph. 3:12	We may approach God with freedom and confidence.
Phil. 4:13	We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

Notes

Notes