

GROWING IN FAMILY TOGETHER (GIFT)

Letter for Husband and Wife



EIGHTH LETTER TO THE FAMILY- HIS WORD

by Pastor Thomas and Ma'am Pamela Teh

Dear Family,

In our previous letters, we looked at several areas to help us foster a deeper understanding of the institution of marriage. We examined its purpose and its challenges; discussed the need for forgiveness and communication; and the importance of being able to discern between lies and truths as well as love in marriage. In each area, Jesus remains our cornerstone, and His Word is the pillar of a strong and fulfilling marriage. Now what is a cornerstone? It is the principle stone, used as the foundation and standard upon which a building is constructed.

It is usually placed at the corner of a building, with the rest of the building conforming to the angle and size of the cornerstone. The cornerstone is also the key to keeping the walls of the structure straight.

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The root of marital problems is our inability or unwillingness to anchor our marriage on Jesus and apply the truths and principles He has taught us in His Word. The result: marriages fail or lose their significance and are depleted of the strength and fulfillment as promised in His Word. When a cornerstone is removed from a building, the entire structure collapses. In the same way, when a marriage doesn't have its cornerstone, it falls apart.

God instituted marriage (Genesis 2:20-25), making it a covenant, a solemn oath of faithfulness and commitment to one another, before God and man, until parted by death. In marriage, the couple is no longer two but is of one flesh. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and the two shall become one flesh" (Matthew 19:4-6, Ephesians 5:31). Apostle Paul revealed the great mystery attached to marriage. "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:32). It is a mystery not in the sense that it is mysterious and frightening, but because it is a spiritual picture.

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Marriage is a testimony of the relationship between Christ and His church.

Interestingly when we look at the responsibilities of the husband to his wife, we see that they resemble the responsibilities that Christ has to His church. The same applies to the responsibilities the wife and the church have to the husband and Christ respectively.

Responsibilities:

Husband-lead, love, sacrifice, protect, provide, purify

Christ-lead, love, sacrifice, protect, provide, purify

Wife-submit

Church-submit

This quiz can help us see what else God says about marriage and how we can build it for His glory. Do this simple quiz with another 3-5 couples. Make reference to Bible verses in your discussion. Choose your answer.

1. With today's pressures, husband and wife should share equal authority in the family.
 - a. Yes
 - b.No
2. As the head of the house, the husband only needs to seek God in making decisions.
 - a. Yes
 - b.No
3. Does looking at sensual and pornographic materials damage the marriage relationship?
 - a. Yes
 - b.No
4. Does asking for forgiveness restore the marriage relationship?
 - a. Yes
 - b.No
5. A person who despises or dislikes his or her spouse will have a problem loving God.
 - a. Yes
 - b.No
6. My spouse does not know I am bitter against him or her because I can hide my bitterness well.
 - a. Yes
 - b.No
7. Does forgiving a person also free that person from the consequences of his or her actions?
 - a. Yes
 - b.No



8. The main cause of marital failure is incompatibility between husband and wife.

- a. Yes b.No

9. We should help and encourage anyone who has a broken marriage to rebuild it.

- a. Yes b.No

10. Unless both husband and wife work to put a marriage back together, it is not possible to restore it.

- a. Yes b.No

11. The basic needs of a husband and a wife are really the same since God gave us the same human nature.

- a. Yes b.No

12. Has God placed "challenges" into our marriage?

- a. Yes b.No

You will find the answers in my next letter.



Leadership comes with responsibilities.

Men, we are called to:

1. **Love** our wives in the same manner that Christ loved His church. Christ sacrificed for His church (Ephesians 5:25).

2. **Sanctify** and cleanse our wives with the Word (Ephesians 5:26). A carpenter knows that good wood and good tools are necessary for making quality furniture. An athlete recognizes the importance of disciplined training as well as having a talented coach in order to excel. The Word is our best teacher and it provides the directional signs to achieve a Christ-centered marriage.

3. **Protect** our wives. God made the woman weaker so that the man can guard and watch over her (1 Peter 3:7). Once we understand this as God-fearing men, we will position ourselves to protect her from harm because the spiritual battle is intense and ongoing. The way we treat and welcome our spouse into our life will give her the security and reassurance that she needs. Protection is more encompassing than just the physical aspect. It should also include emotional and spiritual protection. Use the Word well as only through it can we find the spiritual weapons to guard and shield as well as sanctify and purify our family (Psalms 119:9).

I know how you may feel. It might seem that we are picking on the men and giving excuses to the women. However, this is actually a privilege that God has given to husbands and it comes with a blessing—"He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor of the Lord" (Proverbs 18:22). Men, now you know we get favor from the Almighty. What a special blessing indeed. So do not shy from this God-given responsibility.

Women, do not wrestle to take over the special responsibilities that God has given only to the men. Once you do that, you will find yourself feeling frustrated, stressed, discouraged, anxious and dissatisfied. These are the warning signs telling you that you have taken something that does not belong to you. Give it back to the head of the house. Your key role is to "SUBMIT" as a helpmeet. Support your husband and give him the strength to succeed and be the man that God wants him to be. Nurture your children under his leadership and together grow your family in love and faith, under the divine Headship of Christ.

By His Grace,

Pastor Thomas & Ma'am Pamela Teh