



MAXIMUM
marriage

Your marriage as God designed it

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	Director	Supporter	Thinker	Entertainer
Perspective	Sees task as first. People may be second or third.	People are first	The idea is first, followed by the task, then people.	People and relationships are first.
Characteristics	Independent, strong-willed, goal oriented	Very patient, warm, friendly, relaxed	Usually serious, detailed, organized, precise	Warm, caring, creative, persuasive, demonstrative, emotional
Dislikes	Wasted time, touchy, emotional behavior	Cold, pushy, aggressive, unfeeling behavior	Surprises, unpredictability	Working alone, being bored
Behavior	Controls, dictates	Agreeable, personable, friendly, caring, helpful	Attentive to details, systematic	Creative, warm, charismatic, energetic
Under Pressure	Yells, blows-up, bullies, takes potshots, arrogant	Submits, accommodates, gunny sacks, passive-aggressive	Becomes silent, flees, or withdraws, becomes autocratic	Talks louder and faster, complies
Payoff	Feels superior, other people submit.	Illusion of harmony, avoid risk-taking, relationships	Consistency, well-prepared	Communication, center of attention, influential
Strengths	Decisive, gets things done, self-confident	Likable, loyal, team-player, steadfast, patient	Accurate, fact finding, precise, organized	People oriented, persuasive, verbal skills, optimistic
Weaknesses	Intimidates and alienates people	Indecisive, wastes time, gullible, withholds negative	Stubborn, boring, aloof, unimaginative	Egotistical, lacks follow-through, "flaky"
Needs	Control, power, to be right	Security and belonging, to please others, predictability	Controlled work, security, order, status quo	Popularity, warmth/feeling social recognition
Success Tools	Support their goals, get to the point, be business-like and task oriented.	Be casual and sincere, listen, slow down, set goals.	Go step-by-step, use facts, logic and structure, tie new ideas to old ones.	Use flexibility, be enthusiastic, let them talk, use demonstrations
Examples	Paul Hillary Clinton George W. Bush	Barnabas Nancy Reagan Jimmy Carter	Luke Ted Koppel Al Gore	Peter Ronald Reagan Bill Clinton

Pick A Style – Any Style

People have one thing in common: They are all different.—Robert Zend

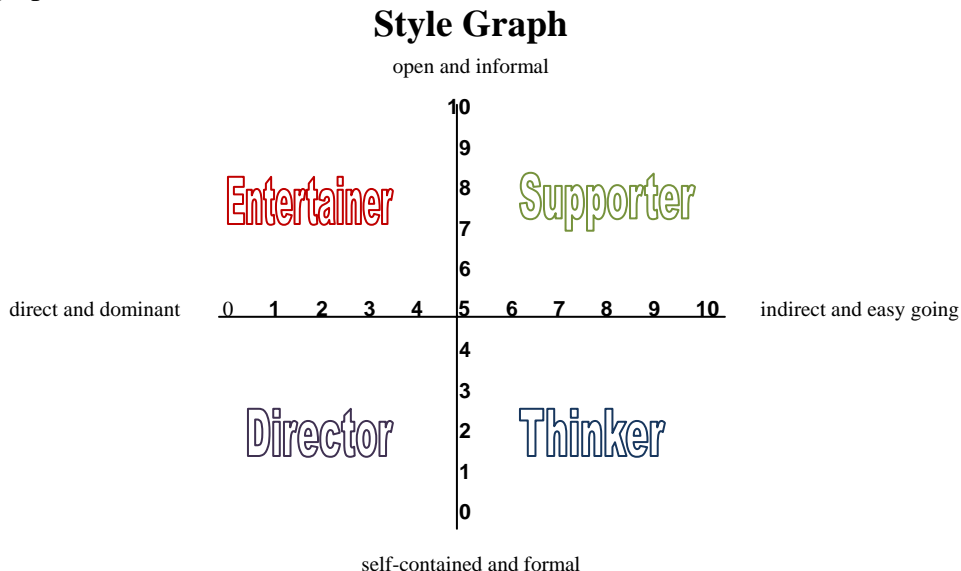
Check one word from each pair, responding to the statement, “If I were forced to choose, I would say this person is...” or “I am...” Pick the one that applies 51% of the time or more. Answer all.

A		B	
more animated	_____	more passive	_____
more take charge	_____	more go along	_____
more assertive	_____	more hesitant	_____
more challenging	_____	more accepting	_____
more active	_____	more thoughtful	_____
more confronting	_____	more supporting	_____
more talkative	_____	more quiet	_____
more bold	_____	more retiring	_____
more intense	_____	more relaxed	_____
more forceful	_____	more subtle	_____
		Total Column B:	_____

Total the check marks in column B and put that score on the total line. Then draw a ● over this number on the horizontal line in the graph below.

C		D	
more flamboyant	_____	more proper	_____
more spontaneous	_____	more disciplined	_____
more responsive	_____	more self-controlled	_____
more impulsive	_____	more methodical	_____
more close	_____	more distant	_____
more feeling	_____	more thinking	_____
more people-oriented	_____	more task-oriented	_____
more outgoing	_____	more reserved	_____
more dramatic	_____	more matter of fact	_____
more warm	_____	more cool	_____
Total Column C:	_____		

Total the check marks in column C and put that score on the total line. Then draw a ● over this number on the vertical line in the graph below.



UNDERSTANDING HUMAN NATURE

INTRODUCTION

In order to understand marriage, we must first begin with a biblical understanding of human nature. Marriage brings together two people who have been created in the image of God and who are dealing with the effects of sin. We begin our seminar with the question, “What does it mean to be truly human?”

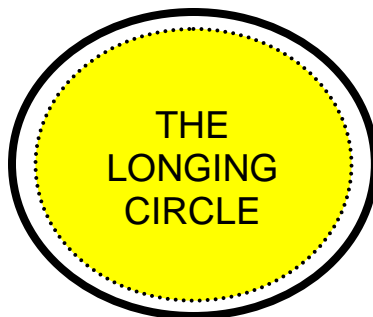
To say that humans are image bearers means that we share a fundamental likeness to God. We will think of this likeness as the qualities of personhood, which are: (1) Longing (2) Thinking (3) Choosing (4) Feeling.

I. MAN IS A LONGING BEING (THE LONGING CIRCLE)

- A. As a person, man has longings.
- B. Three biblical propositions concerning man’s longing circle
 - 1. God uses our longings as a basis of his **call** to us.
 - 2. Whatever satisfies our longings will become our **god**.
 - 3. Satisfaction found in a false God will lead to **conflict** and **breakdowns**.
- C. Three categories of human longings
 - 1. **Casual** longings
 - 2. **Critical** longings
 - 3. **Crucial** longings

- a. **Security**: An awareness of being loved without the need to earn such love
 - b. **Significance**: An awareness that my life has purpose and impact
- D. Adam's fall created within the human race an unmet craving for security and significance.
- E. The framework of the process of having our crucial needs met
- 1. I must **acknowledge** what I am longing for.
 - 2. I must face the fact that the real tendency of my heart is to seek to satisfy my longings **according to my own wisdom**.
 - 3. I must be clear as to which longings God has **promised** to satisfy.

GOD'S PLAN IS A FULL LONGING CIRCLE

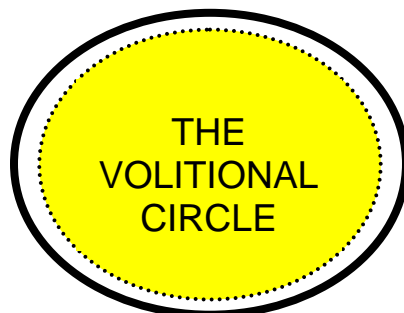


II. MAN IS A RATIONAL BEING. (THE RATIONAL CIRCLE)

- A. Man has the capacity to think.
- B. The central mechanism for change is the **mind** (Romans 12:2).
- C. How I approach life depends on my thoughts, attitudes, and convictions.
1. The Scriptures do not say that the truth in and of itself sets us free.
 2. Only our **perception** of the truth sets us free.
- D. Adam's fall created within the human race a problem called **foolishness**.
1. Foolishness is a conviction that life (the satisfaction of our longing for security and significance) can be found without God.
 2. The following scriptures indicate the foolishness of the unregenerated human heart.
 - Psalm 14:1
 - Proverbs 22:15
 - Luke 12:20
 - Romans 1:21-23
- E. Basically, our rational circle consists of two components
1. Our **convictions** about life

- a. There is no such thing as **aimless** behavior.
 - b. Our behavior can be thought of as our **strategy**.
 - c. Any behavior that is not **rewarded** will not be repeated.
- D. The degree to which you are unaware of the goals you are pursuing is the degree to which you will be unaware that your behavior is a choice.
- E. All behavior can be thought of as moving in one of two directions (Matthew 16:25).
- 1. **Self-protection**
 - 2. **Trusting vulnerability**

GOD'S PLAN IS A FULL RATIONAL CIRCLE

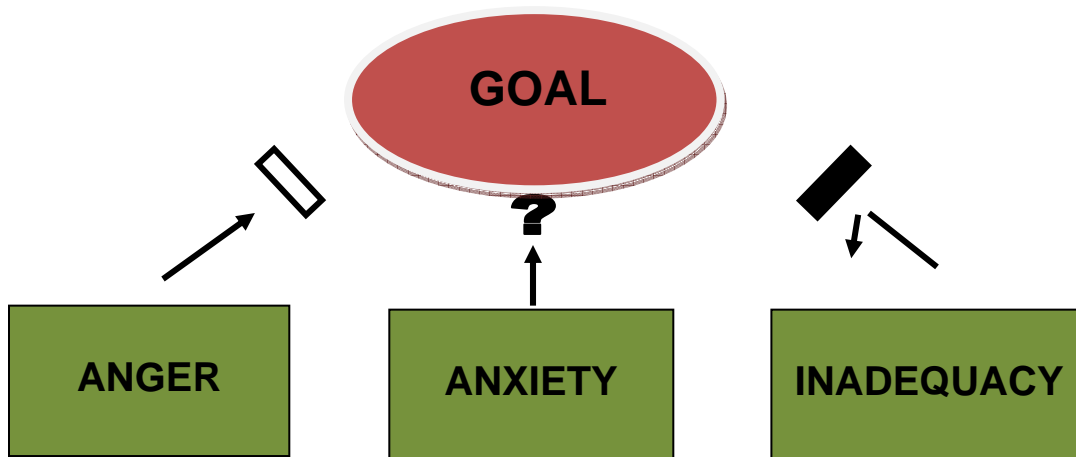


IV. MAN IS AN EMOTIONAL BEING. (THE EMOTIONAL CIRCLE)

- A. Humans have the capacity to feel.
- B. Emotions are not chosen. They **happen** as the result of our perception of events.

1. It is rare that a person has a truly emotional problem.
2. Emotions are the **result**, not the cause.
3. Painful emotions are like **warning lights** on your car.

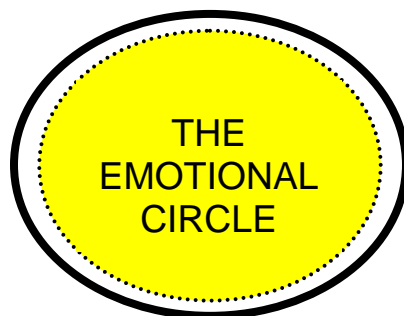
C. The source of painful emotions



D. Steps to dealing with your emotions

1. **Acknowledge** the emotions you are experiencing.
2. **Work through** that emotion to see what it is telling you.
3. **Submit** the expression of that emotion to the purposes of God.

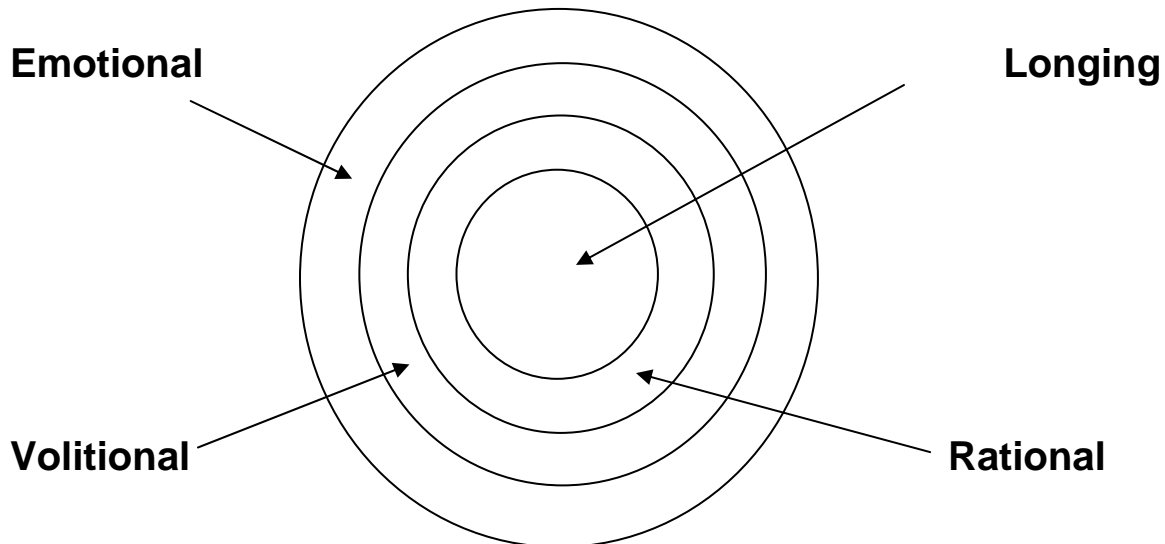
GOD'S PLAN IS A FULL RATIONAL CIRCLE



THE INTERACTION OF THE CIRCLES

INTRODUCTION

We have seen that men and women are fallen image-bearers—that we are longing, rational, volitional, and emotional beings. In this session, we will see that all four circles operate at the same time.



I. THE ENERGY (MOTIVATION) FOR OUR LIVES COMES FROM THE *LONGING CIRCLE*.

- A. Emptiness in the Longing Circle is the **core** of all our problems.
- B. The unmet longings for security and significance are crying out for fulfillment.
- C. As a result of the Fall, at the core of our being we are...
 - 1. **Fearful**
 - 2. **Demanding**
 - 3. **Empty**

II. THE DIRECTION OF OUR SEARCHING COMES FROM THE *RATIONAL CIRCLE*.

- A. Every person has developed convictions about where their deepest longings can be met.
- B. Because of our inherent foolishness, our convictions have been shaped by the lies of the world.

III. THE MOVEMENT OF OUR LIFE COMES FROM THE *VOLITIONAL CIRCLE*.

- A. Because of foolish thinking, we make foolish choices.
- B. We develop strategies based on self-protection rather than trusting vulnerability.

IV. THE RESULTS OF THIS PATH ARE FOUND IN OUR *EMOTIONAL CIRCLE*.

- A. We begin to experience painful emotions because our strategy is not working.
- B. We do one of three things
 1. Ignore our emotions
 2. Blame our emotions (they are the problem)
 3. Blame others

CONCLUSION

The point to begin moving toward the maximum marriage God intended for you to have is to first examine your own heart, repent of any foolishness the Holy Spirit reveals to you, and admit the error of all strategies you have developed to discover life outside of God's pathway. The first step toward a maximum marriage begins in your own heart.

MOVING TOWARD SPIRIT ONENESS

INTRODUCTON

Genesis 2:24, 25 says, *For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, they will become one flesh. The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame* (NIV). In these verses, we discover four fundamental laws of marriage.

- ◆ The Law of **Priority**
- ◆ The Law of **Permanence and Pursuit**
- ◆ The Law of **Partnership**
- ◆ The Law of **Passion**

In this seminar, we will focus on the third law in order to discover God's plan for oneness in marriage. We will look at oneness on three levels: spirit, soul, and body.

I. MEETING AT THE LEVEL OF OUR DEEPEST NEED

- A. Both husband and wife long for security and significance.
 - 1. Typically, in the man the **significance** need is greater.
 - 2. Typically, in the woman the **security** need is greater.
- B. In order to achieve spirit oneness, we must meet at the level of our deepest needs.

II. FOUR OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR HUSBANDS AND WIVES TO MEET THEIR DEEPEST NEEDS

- A. **Ignore** your needs.

1. This will lead to personal death, which is characterized by feelings of despair, worthlessness, fear, etc.
 2. The pain of personal death can be so strong that a person turns to addictive behaviors to anesthetize himself.
- B. Find satisfaction in **a false god**.
1. This is **temporary** satisfaction and will ultimately lead to relational and personal breakdowns.
 2. It is a polluted well.
- C. Attempt to meet needs through our **spouse**.
1. This is a very common problem, particularly among Christians.
 2. It is the "**tick-on-the dog**" syndrome.
 3. Marriage is a lifetime commitment to a person who is guaranteed to **disappoint** you.
 4. Because of the pain of unmet expectations, we retreat behind protective layers of emotional distance.
 - a. Men typically hide behind layers of manipulative retreat.
 - b. Women typically hide behind layers of manipulative control.
- D. Find satisfaction through **Jesus Christ**.

1. Our longings for security and significance can only be met through our relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. The truth of who we are in Christ must be firmly grasped in your rational circle.

IN CHRIST, I AM SECURE AND SIGNIFICANT;
THEREFORE, I CAN LIVE RESPONSIBLY BEFORE
GOD NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.

I AM SECURE AND SIGNIFICANT EVEN WHEN
CIRCUMSTANCES MAY MAKE ME FEEL OTHERWISE.

I CAN REACH OUT IN MINISTRY TO MY MATE
DESPITE PAIN OR FEAR. I CAN BE A MINISTER
INSTEAD OF A MANIPULATOR.

SPIRIT ONENESS...

**Both partners turning to the Lord in complete
dependence on him for the satisfaction of
their deepest longings and turning to each
other to be used of God to achieve his
purpose in each other.**

MOVING TOWARD SOUL ONENESS

INTRODUCTION

The word “spirit” appears to be used in the Scriptures to refer primarily to our relationship with God. “Soul” is used to refer to our relationship with our earthly circumstances. In the context of marriage, *Soul Oneness* deals with the relationship husbands and wives have with each other. It is the natural result of *Spirit Oneness*.

Soul Oneness grows out of a mutual, intelligent, unreserved commitment to be an instrument of God to deeply touch your spouse’s needs in a unique, powerful, and meaningful way.

Since all behavior has a goal, in your marriage, the goal is either ministry or manipulation.

I. THE PRINCIPLE OF MINISTRY

- A. Ephesians 4:29 expresses the principle of ministry in relationships.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

- B. The biblical principle of **submission** has to do with servanthood, not domination. (Ephesians 5:21)
1. While only God can meet the deepest needs of our lives, he has chosen to allow us to partner with him in the process.
 2. Wives are to touch the deepest needs of their husbands (significance) by respecting their husbands (Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18; 1 Peter 6:7).
 3. Husbands are to touch the deepest needs of their wives (security) by loving their wives (Ephesians 5:22-29; Colossians 3:19; 1 Peter 6:7).

4. A husband's love for his wife does not in any way add to the reality of her security in Christ any more than does his failure to love his wife diminish this fact.

However, his tangible, touching presence can bring his wife a deeper awareness of what it means to be loved.

A husband cannot add to the **fact** of his wife's security, but he can to the **feeling**.

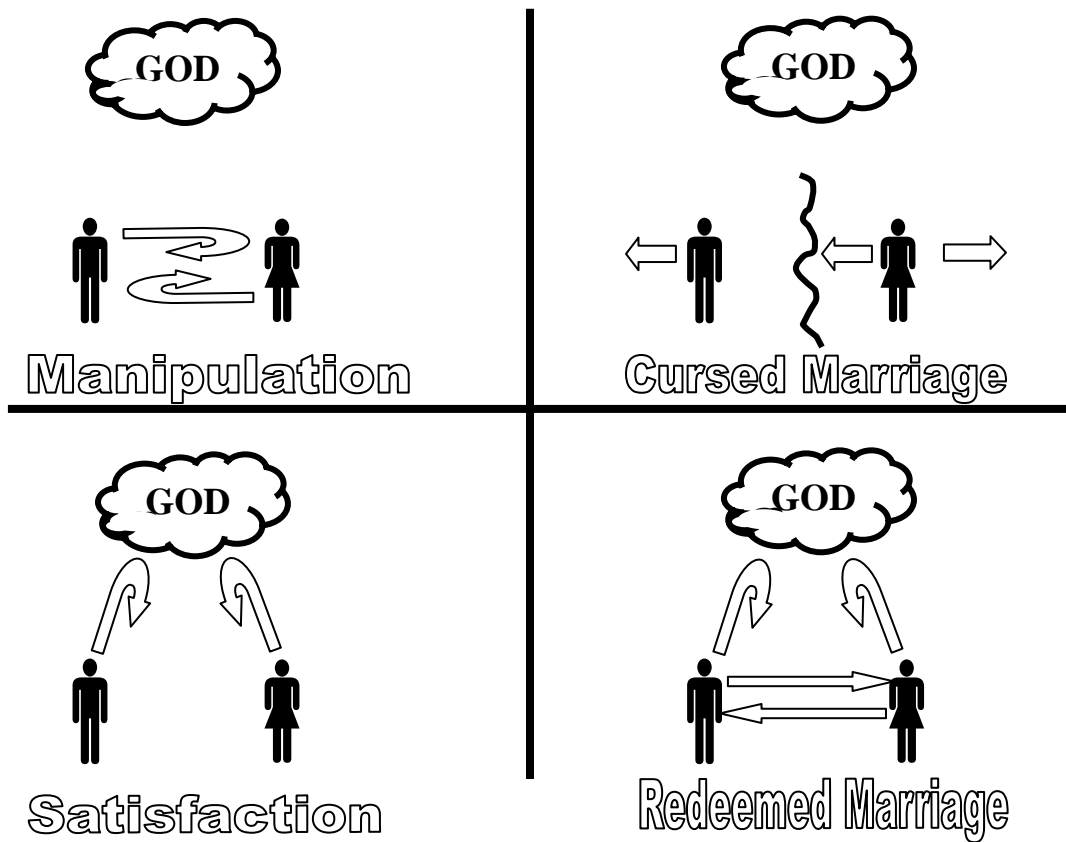
5. A wife's respectful attitude toward her husband does not increase his significance in Christ any more than does her failure to show respect to him diminish this fact.

However, her loving respect to her husband can bring him into a deeper awareness of what it means to be significant.

A wife cannot **make** her husband significant, but she can help him **become aware** his significance.

II. THE PROBLEM OF MANIPULATION

- A. Self-centered motivation leads to **manipulation** not ministry.
- B. Manipulation leads to protective layering and a destructive cycle of marriage.
- C. The only hope is to rebuild the relationship on a radically different premise.



III. CHANGING GOALS

- A. In order to move from manipulation to ministry, you must have a deep sense of satisfaction of your own inner longings through your relationship with Christ.
- B. Steps toward moving from manipulation to ministry.
 1. You must first make a **decision**.
 2. You must **pray about** your decision.
 3. You must act with **wisdom**.
 - a. Understanding the concept of E.B.A.

- b. Understanding your spouse's needs.

Proverbs 12:4, *A wise woman builds her house, but a foolish one tears hers down with her own hands.*

1 Peter 3:7, *Husbands, live with your wives according to understanding.*

Top Five Things Wives Desire From Their Husbands

- | | |
|----------|---------------------------------|
| 1. _____ | <u>Affection</u> |
| 2. _____ | <u>Conversation</u> |
| 3. _____ | <u>Honesty</u> |
| 4. _____ | <u>Financial Support</u> |
| 5. _____ | <u>Family Commitment</u> |

Top Five Things Husbands Desire From Their Wives

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 1. _____ | <u>Sexual Fulfillment</u> |
| 2. _____ | <u>Recreational Companionship</u> |
| 3. _____ | <u>Attractive Spouse</u> |
| 4. _____ | <u>Domestic Support</u> |
| 5. _____ | <u>Admiration</u> |

(From **His Needs, Her Needs** by Willard Hartley)

IV. DEALING WITH CONFLICT AND ANGER

- A. Remember that all anger is caused by a **blocked goal**.
- B. Another term for a blocked goal is an **unmet expectation**.
- C. Two types of marital expectations

IMPOSED EXPECTATIONS
Demand
<i>You ought to... You better... You must...</i>
Strong Emotions
GOAL

PREFERRED EXPECTATIONS
Preference
<i>I would like... I wish you would... It would be nice if...</i>
Mild emotions
DESIRE

EIGHT REASONS WHY SOME EXPECTATIONS ARE UNREALISTIC

1. *I HAVE MADE SIMILAR ERRORS.* It is unrealistic to demand that my partner meet my standards of acceptable behavior when I cannot (Romans 2:1).
2. *At TIMES, I PUT MY DESIRES BEFORE MY PARTNER'S.* It is unrealistic to demand that my partner act differently than I do (Matthew 7:1-5).
3. *PEOPLE ARE LIMITED IN TIME, ENERGY, AND ABILITY.* It is unrealistic to demand that my partner transcend these limitations (Ecclesiastes 1:4; Isaiah 40:30; Romans 7:15).
4. *PEOPLE ARE LIMITED IN KNOWLEDGE.* It is unrealistic to demand that my partner foresee and avoid all poor decisions (James 4:14).
5. *I MAY BE PREVENTING MY EXPECTATIONS FROM BEING MET.* It is unrealistic to demand that my expectations be met if I am doing something to prevent or discourage my partner from meeting them (Galatians 6:7).
6. *MY PARTNER MAY BE UNAWARE OF MY EXPECTATIONS.* It is unrealistic to demand that my partner meet my expectations if I do not make them known (Matthew 18:15).
7. *MY PARTNER IS A DIFFERENT PERSON THAN I AM.* It is unrealistic to demand that my partner think and act just like me (Psalm 139:13; Romans 12:4).
8. *HAVING MY NEEDS MET MAY NOT BE GOD'S WILL.* It is unrealistic to assume that having my expectations met is God's will just because I want them met (James 1:2-4).

FIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES

I win...You lose

I lose...You win

I lose...You lose

I win and lose a little...You win and lose a little

WE WIN!

- C. Some positive steps in resolving conflict.
1. **Identify** your unmet expectation.
 2. **Evaluate** your unmet expectation.
 3. **Communicate** your unmet expectation.
 - a. The C-A-R-E method:
 - **C**onsideration
 - **A**ction
 - **R**eaction
 - **E**xpectation
 4. Responding to when you've been care-fronted
 - a. You can give a **defensive** response (not a good idea)

Defensive Response

Defensive Statement

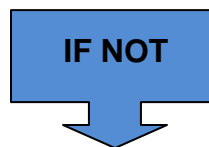
1) Blaming	<u>2</u>	"I never do that!"
2) Denying	<u>8</u>	"You shouldn't feel that way."
3) Making excuses	<u>7</u>	"My way is obviously best."
4) Criticizing	<u>10</u>	"You're impossible!"
5) Changing the subject	<u>9</u>	"What you should do is..."
6) Withdrawing	<u>4</u>	"That was a dumb thing to do."
7) Proving yourself right	<u>6</u>	"I don't want to talk about it!"
8) Rejecting feelings	<u>1</u>	"It's your fault, not mine!"
9) Giving advice	<u>3</u>	"Well, I only did it because..."
10) Exploding in anger	<u>5</u>	"Sure, but what about..."

b. You can give a **listening** response (a good idea).

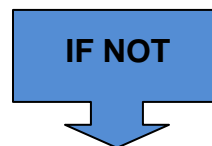
- Put into your own words the **message** you think your partner has communicated.
- Put into your own words the **feelings** you think your partner has communicated.

5. Bring it to a conclusion

a. The person being care-fronted determines if he/she is willing and able to meet the expectation...



b. Both partners explore other alternatives of meeting the expectation...



c. The person being asked to change agrees to seriously contemplate the expectation throughout the coming week while the other person focuses on

trying to change the expectation. Prayerfully he/she considers the consequences of meeting or not meeting the expectation in order to determine what God's will may be. If he/she chooses not to meet the expectation, he/she will share the specific reasons for this decision while the other partner continues to focus on altering their expectations, keeping it in the "preference" column rather than the "demand" column (if at all possible).

SOUL ONENESS...

A mutual, unreserved commitment to be an instrument of God to deeply touch my mate's personal needs in a unique, powerful and meaningful way.

MOVING TOWARD BODY ONENESS

INTRODUCTION

God's plan for marriage also includes the joy and pleasure of Body Oneness. This is more than just the physical act of sexual intercourse. It is pleasure for the body and meaning for the person.

BODY ONENESS...

Sexual pleasure between a husband and wife who depend on the Lord to meet their deepest longings and are committed to being used of God in meeting each other's needs...

Sexual pleasure that grows out of a commitment to minister to one's mate by giving maximum sexual pleasure...

Sexual pleasure that provides for a husband and a wife a shared experience of sensual excitement and sexual satisfaction...

Sexual pleasure that heightens each partner's awareness of their unbreakable bond.

I. THE PERVERSION OF SEXUALITY

A. Sexual **asceticism**

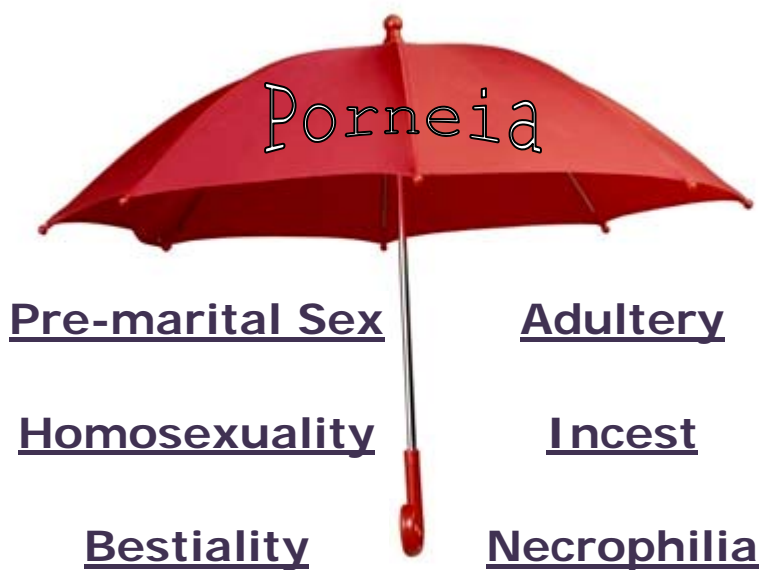
B. **Situationalism**

C. **Double standard**

D. Deification of sex

E. Hedonism

F. Sexual anarchy



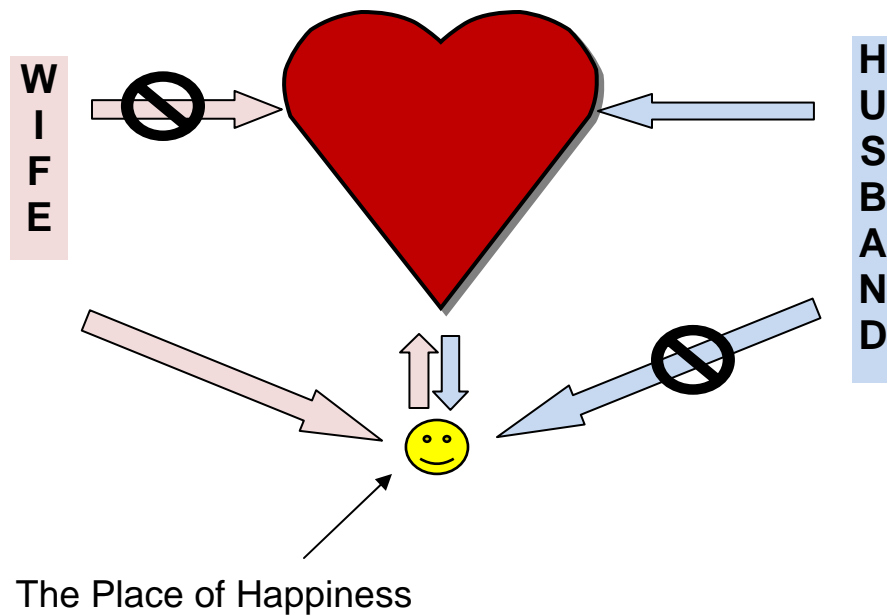
II. GOD'S PURPOSE FOR SEXUALITY IN MARRIAGE

A. Procreation (Genesis 1:22, 28; Psalm 127:3)

B. Recreation (Song of Solomon; Deuteronomy 24:5)

C. Communication (Hebrews 13:4)

D. Sublimation (1 Corinthians 7:3-5; Proverbs 5:15-19)



III. OBSTACLES TO BODY ONENESS

- A. Problems in the person
- B. Problems between partners
- C. Problems with technique

CONCLUSION

God's plan for your marriage is that you experience the maximum happiness that he intended for this union to bring. Although we are fallen creatures in a fallen world, through Christ and obedience to his Word, a maximum marriage can be yours!

Resources on Sexuality from a Christian Perspective

Intimate Issue by Linda Dillow and Lorraine Pintus

The Gift of Sex by Clifford and Joyce Penner

A Celebration of Sex by Douglas Rosenau

What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew about Sex by Ryan Howes, Richard Rupp, and Stephen Simpson

Sheet Music by Kevin Leman

For Women Only: What You Need to Know About the Inner Lives of Men by Shaunti Feldhahn

For Men Only: What You Need to Know About the Inner Lives of Women by Shaunti Feldhan