***The Guidelines for Selecting a Husband or Wife,

No. 1

M-3A***

We now begin the first segment of a two-part series on guidelines for selecting a husband or wife. We have found that the woman was formed from the body of the man to be his helper. Therefore, she is called upon to yield her will to his in her role of responder. Marriage is a total and lifelong intimacy of a right man to his right woman in spirit, soul, and body. We have found that falling in love is not sufficient indication that the right partner has been found from God's point of view. A person may prove most unsuitable after some sober and realistic evaluation but who upon first meeting seemed a very desirable partner. Confirmation must come from the Lord through your own prayer life and through the spiritual maturity of your own soul. It is essential that you have a background of biblical understanding, a background of positive response to Bible doctrine, in order for you to understand what God is saying to you and to be able to guide and direct you in this choice.

Marriage is basically a deep friendship between a man and a woman, and the pathway from being friends to husband and wife should conform to the three parts of our being. For that reason we indicated that it is the course of Christian wisdom that dating should be restricted to cultivating spiritual intimacy. It is not a time for the physical contact level. Engagement is the time for cultivating soul intimacy. This is the time for learning how each conforms to the other in mind, in emotions, in will. Then marriage itself is the time to develop body intimacy. The husband and wife are told to cleave to each other in Genesis 2:24, and this means to coalesce. It means intimacy in all three parts of their being.

Now because of the emotional force which accompanies falling in love, it is necessary to have some specific guidelines to guide us in evaluating our prospective choices. Women especially are prone to move on emotions. So, a background of guiding principles is imperative to balance these emotions. These concepts, as a matter of fact, should be instilled in children while they are very young and very receptive for maximum effectiveness. The junior level is not too early to begin to explain these principles for these young people to use as they grow through their teen years into their young adult years, and finally to making the choice in marriage.

The main question before us is, "Can I enjoy a person as a friend, and toward this person fulfill my role either as aggressor or responder?" Using the guidelines will help decide that question. Furthermore, it will produce just as romantic a marriage as those who employ some haphazard technique where you stumble into marriage like a dumb animal. If you use these guidelines, you will be far more likely to glorify God in your marriage. There are individual differences, and some individual preferences may require some personalizing of these guidelines to your own situation. You are your own priest and we would leave it of course with you to exercise your own priesthood and to determine the Lord's mind for you relative to each of these questions. Just be sure that you have the Lord's mind and that you are not excusing yourself because some guideline seems too hard, too demanding, or someone who comes along that you are really interested in, but fails to qualify on some point, and you prefer the person to the wisdom which is embodied in that particular point. But you make your application as you feel free to make it before the Lord to your own situation.

Each Christian is free to use his own volition under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to deal with the situations that confront him and situations which may not be covered by the specific points that we're going to look at. Your background may dispose you to reject some of these though they are quite true and very pertinent. The objection sometimes is presented to me that, "Well, you just want me to marry somebody who's perfect." When someone says that to me, I'm aware of the fact that they are indicating that they are willing to settle for something less than perfect. The guideline that they reject indicates that in their own character and their own life, there is a point on this particular issue. What they're saying, in effect, is, "I'm willing to settle for somebody less because I am something less." So, you may reject a point simply because you yourself have not risen to it, but that's no grounds for rejecting it. Instead, it would be the course of wisdom for you to sit down and see whether you should not correct this feature in your own life before you go any further in considering joining your life to someone in marriage.

You may reject some of these out of fear of ending up single, so you're willing to settle for less. However, this is a pointless affair because if God has a person for you, that person will come into your life at the right time. If you had occasion to examine some lives that are messed up on the subject of marriage, you would see that the condition originated in the violation of a divine principle. Some guideline from Scripture, or that we may arrive at by Christian experience, has been violated.

These guidelines are designed in terms of those who are born again Christians. Their wisdom however will bless those who are unbelievers too. God's truth is God's truth, and it applies to everyone. Your marriage may survive if you ignore these guidelines, but you will survive at increasing loss in satisfaction, fulfillment, and happiness as the years go by. You will have occasion in all likelihood to look back at what might have been. That's the greatest kind of distress and the greatest kind of disappointment--to remember what might have been had you been faithful to some principle that we are going to lay out here.

Your subconscious mind should be programmed to these guidelines so that they will act as aids in preventing you from making ill-considered choices in marriage, and ill-considered choices in engagement, so that you have to break off an engagement. Any time an engagement has to be terminated, or the presumption of an engagement that's coming has to be terminated, it leaves a certain emotional scar and a wound that may affect your marriage later on. You have troubles in marriage often that people don't know why they have. They can't attribute it to anything. The reason lies in a subconscious wound that is reacting unbeknownst to them because of an engagement that they had to break--a joining together, a camaraderie, a sharing and intimacy with someone that they never proceeded to the marital state with. Now it's bothering them. It creates a temptation also to bounce off to someone else who is an equally poor choice just to fill up the void that exists in your life when engagement is broken.

**The Guidelines for Marriage**

So here are the guidelines for marriage.

1. **Believers**

Do not marry an unbeliever. 2 Corinthians 6:14-16 says, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with righteousness, and what communion has light with darkness? What harmony has Christ with the devil, or what part had he that believes with an infidel. And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, as God has said, 'I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people.'" This phrase in verse 14 "unequally yoked" in the Greek is "heterozugeo." "Heterozugeo" means mismated. The word is actually used of two animals of different species who therefore need two different kinds of yoke in order to pull together. So, two mismatched animals cannot pull together in one yoke because they are mismated. Since believers and unbelievers are different breeds, they cannot be mated under one yoke which will fit both of them. So, it is a sin to marry an unbeliever, and preachers who are willing to join Christian to non-Christian in marriage are unethical, and they are way out of line in performing a ceremony such as that.

Now, this does not mean that a Christian can marry just any Christian and that all will go well. A Christian can spend a lifetime of misery with another Christian. God has designed a particular person for everyone, but he has not designed a Christian for a non-Christian. However, at the same time, you must find the particular Christian that God has for you. This guideline indicates that believers, I think, should not even date unbelievers. There is no way, if you date an unbeliever, for you to fulfill the first stage of the pathway from friendship to marriage of developing spiritual intimacy. You cannot develop spiritual intimacy with a person who is an unbeliever. You may be dating a desirable unbeliever with the hope of leading that person to salvation so as to justify your marriage, and that's a foolhardy game. Experience does not commend this motivation in dating, nor does it promise the desired results. There is no such thing in the Bible as dating evangelism. This is purely human viewpoint.

As a matter of fact, everyone that you date should be viewed as a potential marriage partner. That's the reason dating is an adult game. Teenagers are not prepared to play the dating game. They do not have the built-in controls to be able to separate the possible people they could marry and the ideal one that they should marry. It is very hazardous for you to keep dating someone who lacks spiritual compatibility with you. Here's what happens: You get acclimated to a non-Christian's condition, and you begin to rationalize away the biblical requirements. So pay little attention to any expressions from an unbeliever of spiritual interest or sympathy. Naturally, he's going to say that he admires you for your spiritual life and for your spiritual interests. Naturally, he's going to express an attraction and an admiration for you. This doesn't mean that he is willing to share that with you. Don't place any value on any promise to get active with you in spiritual things or in church activities once you're married.

If you are now married to an unbeliever, I'm not implying that you should panic or seek a divorce certainly. However, I think I can tell you that God will certainly reweave your life into a new pattern so that there will be blessing and usefulness after all. It takes Bible doctrine, understanding of the Word, for you to have the materials for him to reweave the pattern. It is best not to put yourself in this position in the first place. Just do not marry an unbeliever. Period.

1. **Spirituality**

Do not marry a spiritually immature person. Ephesians 5:21: "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." Here we have indicated that the wife's spiritual guidance comes through the line of authority which is in her husband, her head. You have to grasp the divine viewpoint that's involved here. What God is saying is that the well-being of the family depends on the husband's spiritual development. So, if you marry some spiritual clod, you may expect that as the years go by and the children come into the home, your children will be reared under the influence of a spiritual clod--someone who is not positive toward doctrine, and therefore incapable of fulfilling his role as spiritual head of the home.

There is nothing so grotesque like walking into a home and seeing a husband who is not capable of providing the spiritual leadership for that home situation. What you have created is an animal climate, and it is amazing how well some people can survive and some children can be reared within that kind of a situation. A woman should therefore marry a man who is at least equal to her spiritual heritage. That means more than the same religion or the same church. You should not marry beneath yourself spiritually. The person who marries someone with a low spiritual IQ is going to walk a very lonely road in the things of God. The things of God are the basic feature of a marriage. Spiritual intimacy is missing, and spiritual intimacy is the cornerstone of marriage. God has not made us as dumb animals. He has made us in His own image, and the first quality we share with Him is this spiritual capacity. So, to have a marriage without this first is to have practically nothing at all.

The husband's pattern of spiritual activity and involvement will be followed by the wife, up or down. That's the tragedy of it all. If he is a spiritual incompetent, then you will settle down to his level. If he has spiritual capacity, then you will rise and you will be blessed, and you will rise up and call him blessed for what he has brought you into. So, avoid anyone in marriage who does not ennoble your spiritual life, but who has some adverse effect on your walk with God; somebody that makes you ashamed before the Lord; someone that makes you feel uneasy in what you're doing, in what you're sharing, in what you're anticipating, and, in all that's involved in your relationships, and somehow you're ill at ease before God in the matter; or, someone who does not ennoble you in your total being. Unity in Jesus Christ is the basic ingredient of marriage, so avoid someone who does not provide this for you.

Furthermore, for this reason, do not enter mixed marriages. Conflicts here are inevitable when Protestants marry Roman Catholics, or opposing denominations try to get together. Your personal spiritual maturity is essential to recognizing God's right partner from simply that person who will merely do. Therefore, don't marry somebody who is incompetent and unprepared to fulfill his role in spiritual leadership in the home.

1. **Teenagers**

Do not marry in your teens. Ecclesiastics 3:1: "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." Then Ecclesiastes 3:5: "A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing." There is a time to get married, and a time not to get married. 50% of teenage marriages end in divorce within five years. It is a self-evident fact that the teenage years are not the time to embrace and get married. Preferences of teens mature radically, and they change in their early 20s from what they were previously. Someone who is an idol to you in your teen years will usually be an idiot when you're up in your early 20s. Mature judgment of soul is what we're speaking of, and you do not gain this except by some experience in living.

It has nothing to do with your IQ. You may be the smartest person in the world, but the issue of having soul discernment comes from the experience of living, and it takes some maturity chronologically to arrive at this. The teen is prone to be deluded about love, about marriage, and about the issues that are involved because of the borderline pornography of our culture as reflected in TV, books, magazines, stage, and the movies. Do not marry as a teenager or you will certainly have good cause to regret it even if the marriage survives. I have noticed that people who have married as teens look back and they regret the youth that they miss, the fun that they miss of being free, single, footloose young adults, and they begin to suspect that they have settled for something less, and something that they can never recapture in those wonderful years of their early 20s that they settled for being tied down to dirty diapers and dish washing and everything that goes with the realities of marriage.

1. **Parents**

Do not marry without your parents' approval. Colossians 3:20: "Children obey your parents in all things for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Parents know their children, and for this reason they have good insights as to who and what kind of a person would be a suitable mate for their son or their daughter. If your parents raise a serious objection to the person that you want to marry, this is a signal for caution. A red flag should go up in your mind and you should respect it. Personal experience in selecting a marriage partner comes too late for us to use it. It comes after we have selected someone, after we are married, and after we have gained the experience. Then we know something about how to go about selecting someone for marriage. That is particularly applicable to ourselves. Now your parents have the experience, they have these insights, and they know you. They can stand you in good stead in giving you guidance in making this choice. Their disapproval may not indicate that you have the wrong person. It may simply be the Lord's way of indicating to you that it's the wrong time. Wrong timing in marriage is just as bad, in some respects, as the wrong person. So, it's wise to keep your parents informed if you're seriously interested in someone so they can begin bringing to bear their mature estimates in your behalf and to give you some guidance.

1. **Conflict**

Do not marry a person who is in serious conflict with parents. Ephesians 6:1-3: "Children obey your parents in the Lord for this is right. Honor thy father and mother which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." A great motivation for rash teenage marriages to some ill-suited mate is conflict with his parents. A woman is tempted to play the role of an understanding mother to some rebel who gives the impression that she's just helping him so much, and he needs her so much. But I'll tell you something. The attitude of the rebel doesn't improve once he's out of his parents' home. What he does is usually transfer the conflict to his wife who becomes the parent image for him.

We have unresolved conflicts within our being that tie us down emotionally, and we keep this emotional tie until the conflicts have been resolved. It is in the pattern of someone that you dislike heartily. Here's this person that you can't stand for anything, and you really despise this individual. And what do you find? You find that this person keeps popping back into your mind all day long. Your thoughts return to this person you despise. All night long you wake up in the middle of night. The first thing you think of is this person you despise. Everywhere you go you see this individual's face. Everywhere you go you see marks of his presence. What is happening is that, because you have a mental attitude sin of bitterness, hatred, or some other factor that is creating an emotional tension. You are unable to separate yourself from this individual, and this person absorbs your being.

Now when you are married, you not only separate yourself from your parents physically and go live on your own, but you are to separate yourself emotionally. You do not stop loving them. You do not break contact with them. You do not cease to respect their guidance, but you are on your own physically and emotionally. You cannot break from your parents if you have some conflict with them. The conflict keeps coming up, and keeps reiterating and reliving the old fights, and you're fighting battles so that you're still tied to them. Don't marry a person who is in serious conflict with his parents.

1. **Education**

Do not marry someone whose education is seriously inferior to yours. Proverbs 16:16: "How much better is it to get wisdom than gold? To get understanding is rather to be chosen than silver." Verse 23: "The heart of the wise teaches his mouth and adds learning to his lips. A man's basic education should be completed before marriage. That means training sufficient to the point of necessary income. Education may have to be cut off or slowed down because of the demands of marriage. It is neither right nor wise to have a working mother with small children in order to help out with the economics of the marriage. So, it's very hard to experience mental compatibility with a mind who is educationally or culturally far beneath your own. The lack of a high school education diploma is indicative of certain qualities in a person. It may indicate irresponsibility. It may indicate instability or limitations of IQ. And just because the individual has passed an equivalency test, and received a substitute certificate for the high school diploma that he did not earn, doesn't resolve the problems of character that are reflected by his failure to be able to follow through with a simple pattern of a high school education. Find out why he couldn't finish. A wife should not plan to educate her husband in order to bring him up to par. Nor should he try to educate her. Marry someone who is your educational equal, who is compatible to you as far as your own education is concerned.

1. **Jealousy**

Do not marry a jealous person. Proverbs 6:34: "For jealousy is the rage of a man. Therefore, he will not spare in the day of vengeance." Then Song of Solomon 8:6: "Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm, for love is strong as death. Jealousy is cruel as Sheol. Its coals are the coals of fire which has the most vehement flame." Jealousy motivates the most vindictive conduct and irrational abuse imaginable. A jealous mate will deny you your privacy, your freedom of movement, and the pursuit of your own interests. A jealous mate will constantly be demanding an accounting of you, of your activities, and of your time. He will constantly want attention from you rather than to give you genuine love. He's a neurotic. He's over possessive. That's why he wants other people around him, particularly his spouse. A jealous person is one who is obsessed with his own ego and with physical gratification. In marriage, a woman places herself under a man's authority, and a jealous man is a tyrant reflecting insecurity. Jealousy is a mental attitude. So, it indicates a lack of true love. You cannot express true love if you have the mental ill will of jealousy. If you want to bring a hellish situation into your life, you just marry a jealous man and you will have cause to regret it for a long long time.

1. **Temper**

Do not marry a person with a temper. Proverbs 15:18: "A wrathful man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger appeases strife." Proverbs 21:9: "It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop than with a brawling woman in a wide house." Proverbs 21:19: "It is better to dwell in the wilderness than with a contentious and angry woman." Proverbs 22:24: "Make no friendships with an angry man, and with a furious man you shall not go, lest you learn his ways and get a snare to your soul." A mate lives in torment of physical fear and tension when married to a person with a temper. It is a walking-on-eggshells type of life. A temper is a sign that the individual is the kind who demands his rights. Anytime we get angry, anytime we explode, it's because we think some rights that we have have been denied us. The only right we have is an eternity in hell. Until we recognize that we have no other rights, and have come to the point of spiritual maturity where we recognize that all that we have is by the grace of God, we will be prone to play the role of the temper tantrum tiger.

The temper person is a troublemaker. He is unyielded to God's care in faith rest, so he fights for what he thinks he's got coming. Don't rationalize a person who has a temper before you marry him with the idea that he feels deeply about things, and that's why he is so forcefully expressive. There's something else, as you've noticed here in Proverbs, and that is that temper is contagious. "Lest you learn his ways and get a snare to your soul." You will find that his temper or her temper will be destructive to your own soul, and you will be joining in time in the violence. Pretty soon you're slamming things around and you're yelling around the place. If you like to live in a climate of violence, just marry a person with a temper. If you argue and are contentious with one another before marriage, that's a big warning sign because it will likely not change afterward. Instead, it increases as the years go by. Someone on the team has got a deep temper streak. Do not marry a person with a temper.

1. **Cheating**

Do not marry a person who cheats. Proverbs 29:24: "Whoever is partner with a thief hates his own soul. He hears cursing and reveals it not." Romans 12:17: "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men." 2 Corinthians 8:21: "Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." A deceiver, a cheat, creates distrust between mates. It has an all-around corrosive effect. You will note dishonesty in little things, and these indicate a flaw in personal integrity and honor, and this flaw will surface anywhere. The word of such a mate will in time come under some doubt. You will suspect that he's covering something up, or that she has ulterior motives in her actions. Consequently, you are never fully at ease with such a partner, because there's always a question as to whether they are being fully openly honest and trustworthy with you. If you see the little indications of a cheater, do not marry him. These signal something greater that blossoms out later in marriage.

1. **Smoking**

Do not marry a person who smokes. 1 Corinthians 6:19: "What? Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have of God, and you are not your own? For you are bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's." I think that today, a sign of immaturity is the lack of basic good judgment and of self-control on the part of the person who smokes in view of current medical findings. It is something else to smoke today in view of what we know of the effects of tobacco upon our bodies, these temples of God the Holy Spirit. What you are going to do if you marry a person who smokes is that you are living with a person who is enslaved to an addiction.

It controls all the patterns of his life, and it will control all the patterns of your life. When you marry this person, you must be prepared to take the tobacco, the ashtray, the scattered ashes, the tobacco breath, the stained fingers, the yellow teeth, the expense, the health breakdown, and the whole bit. It's a package deal that you're taking into marriage with you. The person who smokes in our day, in view of our medical knowledge, I think reflects often something of the spirit of a rebel. There is something in his being that is a problem. There is something that causes him to find an expression of rebellion. His persistence in smoking is particularly bothersome. After he has found out better through our medical findings, and through spiritual guidance as to our bodies being the temple of the Holy Spirit, he still persists. That indicates a certain rebel streak which he may in all likelihood later exercise within marriage on anyone else who's crossing his will.

The inability to conquer this destructive practice, I have noticed, has a strange way of depressing genuine spiritual development. It will be no hindrance to religious development and activity, but when it comes to Christian development it has a great hindrance. It is a great drain on the family for tobacco and for health damage expenses. Certainly it is a major problem with children that you have in the home. How are you going to dissuade your children from following the same pattern? How are you going to dissuade them from smoking? The only way you can do it is by discrediting the parent who smokes and to shatter, to that extent, the child's confidence in a mother or father. How are you going to take this precious little life and say, "Now look. Here is a bad thing. Smoking. It will be destructive to you physically and will be destructive to you spiritually. Your father does it. Your mother does it. But we don't want you to do it. Not to mention the hazard to unborn infants which medical science also recognizes. Life in the climate of tobacco odor and ashes is not too pleasant for people with unpolluted tastes. Christianity has a quality of ennobling our lives. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is indeed a new creation." With the problems of sin removed, the way of life that is open to us is considerably ennobled and elevated. There is nothing elevating about tobacco, whether you smoke it, snuff it, chew it, or spit it.

1. **Drinking**

Do not marry a person who drinks. Proverbs 20:1: "Wine is a mocker. Strong drink is raging. Whoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Proverbs 23:20: "Be not among heavy drinkers of wine, among gluttonous eaters of flesh, for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe the man with rags." Romans 13:13: "Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in immorality and sensuality, not in strife and envying. Isaiah 5:22: "Woe unto them who are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mix strong drink." I would suggest that you reject all justification which someone who drinks may offer to you that they drink in moderation. All alcoholics start out by drinking in moderation. Alcoholism is an ever present threat to any drinker. No one plans to become an alcoholic. It is even more tragic when it happens to women. Yet it is a major destroyer of marriages today. You should discount any promise that someone who drinks gives you that he'll give up booze if you agree to marry. The drinker, I realize, may be a Christian. But again, that Christian seldom makes significant consistent progress in spiritual development. There is something about alcohol and the overall associations of alcohol within our society that has a depressive effect, not only on the physical being, but upon the spiritual being.

Now again this is no problem to religion. You can go to your church. You can go through your rinky tink motions. You can go through your ritual. You can go through your formalities, and alcohol will not disturb you one bit. You can include it right in the social life of the church, and it will all fit in perfectly well. I'm talking about consistent spiritual development--the level of life in Christ Jesus to which we have been called through Bible doctrine that God has for us in elevating us to the point where we function as he has designed us to function. Alcohol is one of the things that is destructive of our coming to the reality of our own being. The drinker may be a Christian, but he seldom makes very deep progress in the Christian life. He does good at religion, but bad in the spiritual development.

And again, you've got the problem of children who are going to be reared in this climate of a father or mother who drinks. This child is prone naturally to emulate his parents. How are you going to discourage him from following your pattern? How are you going to teach him the hazards involved in drinking, and to discourage him as he moves into his teenage years from following your practice? Well, the only way you can discourage him is by discrediting one of the parents. You just picture your first precious little baby that God has given you and which the Bible calls a heritage from the Lord. Now you picture the world that alcohol can open to him, all that this connotes. You imagine yourself in the position where you are living at home a life that introduces him to that world. Are you ready to do that? Are you ready to run that hazard? Well, a lot of parents have. A lot of parents discounted that this could be any real problem, and they shed tears now because of it. Today's youth is finding in its drinking parents a justification for experimentation with drugs, and it's pretty hard to answer that argument. Now this does not even consider the expense and the drain on family income in booze and health damage.

1. **Foul Language**

Do not marry a person who uses foul language. Ephesians 4:29: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that he may minister Grace unto the hearers." James 3:9-10 speaks of our tongues, "Therewith we bless God, even the Father, and therewith we curse men who are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." Cursing creates a degrading climate for the family, and it is certainly especially vile in a woman. It is unfeminine, and it is degrading to her femininity to use foul language. Don't excuse "damn" and "hell" as innocent colorful expletives, expressions that color your prospective mate's language. They are in all likelihood prelude to fouler words that he or she will be bolder to use in your presence once you are married. And foul language includes dirty stories. The dirty story teller reveals a crudity of soul, and it indicates the quality of fellowship that you may expect with that person once you're married. Here again we have the influence of children in the home and this is crucial. Think of the heritage that you will pass on to them in this kind of a climate before you marry some foul-mouthed character.

Here are 12 specific points based upon the Word of God and upon Christian experience for guiding in the selecting of a husband and wife. In our next session we'll add more. But here's an even dozen, a determined dozen to guide you toward a marriage which is exhilarating, exciting, satisfying, and which from year to year moves to a higher and a finer level.

Maybe you are married. Maybe you can look over just these 12 and say, "Well I don't meet this one. I don't meet this one. I don't meet this one." As we have gone over this series of guidelines in various groups, I can hear groans from the audience at different points as we touch one, and you know that you've touched a raw nerve end as someone suddenly recognizes themselves as a failure in rising to some specific guideline. Well, if that's your case you can always correct it. It was unfortunate that you began this way, but for you, who are married, these guidelines are equally applicable. For you they have the value of taking them one at a time, and rising to their challenge; taking them one at a time, and removing the violation and the conflict from your life, particularly for men. If we can get the husband straightened out on these points, and if we can get the husband to where he is playing his spiritual role, it is going to resolve a great many problems within the marriage for the wife, and it is going to electrify the home and the children toward ideals, convictions, and dedication to a godly life as they have never experienced before.

These guidelines are backed by the Word of God. They are backed by good Christian judgment. They will bring blessing into your life. Don't be too quick to discount them.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1970

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