

SESSION ELEVEN

In preparation for this session, read Chapter Nineteen, “Insight—Appreciate His Desire to Analyze and Counsel.” The following questions are for individual study or study by a couple. Remember to answer all unmarked questions first, then answer questions marked by the male or female icon (whichever applies to you). Finally, answer the questions with the couple icon, if you’re studying with your mate. (Suggestions for leading a small group in studying this workbook can be found in *Workbook Appendix I*, page 201.)

Questions for Chapter Nineteen

- 1 On the opening pages of Chapter Nineteen, read the story of the wife who decides to visit her husband where he works. What does she see? What does she learn? What has she been missing?



Compare the notes you made with what your mate discovered. Did you see the same things? Where did you differ? Discuss the story to see if it has any relevance to your marriage. If it does, be sensitive to each other and express your ideas with the “Is what I’m about to say or do . . .” question in mind. (See *Love & Respect Appendix A*, page 305.) Analyze together the letter from the wife at the bottom of book pages 228–29. Has either one of you thought much about the impor-

tance of a man's insight? How would you rate your typical daily exchanges? Are they conversations or monologues?

2 In "I No Longer Believe Totally in Womanly Intuition," book page 229, Emerson admits he no longer gives complete credence to two beliefs he once held: (1) that the vast majority of men are opinionated, one-sided, and inattentive; and (2) that women possess an exclusive and unique power of intuition that is always right. Why did he change his mind? Check the answer that fits or write your own thoughts:

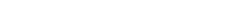
- a. He realized he was getting a very one-sided view from the wives he counseled.
- b. He read some helpful books that straightened him out.
- c. He realized that constantly pounding on men to "listen to the intuition of your wives. . . . God will teach you through your wives" was tippin' the scales too much.
- d. My thoughts:



The correct answer to the quiz above is obvious, but one or both of you may have written something you want to discuss. Why did Emerson change his mind after twenty years of thinking one certain way about men and women? Is he saying he no longer believes at all in “womanly intuition”?



3 Read book page 230, “It Was Eve, Not Adam, Who Was Deceived.” How does Genesis 3:1–6 show that wives should never feel they need to be ready with all the answers and do all the thinking? Is Emerson saying that Eve was responsible for the Fall? What part did both of them play in the Fall? Read Romans 5:12–21. Who does Paul name as primarily responsible?



Compare your notes with your mate’s. What is Emerson’s point in bringing up the account from Genesis 3? Is he trying to put down women? How does 1 Timothy 2:14 shed light on the discussion? Talk about the fact that neither of you is infallible; you both have equal weight to pull in family decisions. How would you rate yourselves in this area?

- ___ a. Both give input on decisions.

- b. Wife has much more to say and do regarding the family.
 - c. Husband makes most of the decisions.
 - d. My comments:
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4 In “A Marriage Needs Her Intuition and His Insight” (book pages 231–34), Emerson mentions an area where he believes some women are deceiving themselves today: their criticism of their husbands for lack of spiritual leadership in the family. Analyze the letters from two wives (bottom of page 231) who are distressed because their husbands are not what they would like them to be regarding spiritual matters. To women with this kind of problem, Emerson says: “Your convictions can please God, but your contempt can also grieve Him.” What does Emerson go on to say to wives whose husbands do not appear to be spiritual giants? What does he suggest that these wives do—and not do?



The problem of “lack of spiritual leadership by the husband” may or may not apply to your marriage. As a husband, if you are taking spiritual leadership, rejoice with your wife in that fact. As a wife, if you wish your husband

would take more spiritual leadership, first ask him if he would mind discussing this. If he is open, proceed to explain what you wish the two of you could work out in matters such as family devotions, praying together, and church life. (For additional discussion material on the husband's spiritual leadership, see Emerson's commentary in *Workbook Appendix VI*.)

(For more on how a wife can help her husband, see Question 5 below. And for more on the husband's spiritual leadership go to <http://www.loveandrespect.com/pearl/>)

5 At the bottom of book page 232, Emerson lists some questions for the wife to ask herself about any area of leadership where she feels her husband's leadership is lacking or questionable. Which of these questions, if any, apply to your marriage? Write them here:

Also, read the rest of page 233 and most of page 234, down to the next subhead. Do any of the following statements by Emerson from these pages apply to your marriage at all?

- ___ a. "... ask yourself if you may possibly have an attitude of self-righteousness —at least to some degree. . . . You may well believe, as many women do, that you are a better person than he is and that he needs to change."

My thoughts on this:

- ___ b. “What I see happening in some marriages is that the wife believes—or appears to believe—that she does not sin. In many other marriages the only sin that a wife will readily admit to is her negative reaction to her husband’s failure to be loving or for losing patience with the children.”

My thoughts on this:

- ___ c. “. . . it’s easy for a wife to discount or disparage a husband’s suggestion that she has some problem that needs correcting. Even if he is gentle and diplomatic in suggesting that she needs to make a correction . . . he is quickly silenced. She is offended, wounded, and angered by his assessment. He is accused of being without understanding and compassion. He has no right to speak. And he will often wind up being shown contempt.”

My thoughts on this:



Be sensitive to each other as you share your thoughts on these statements, which are quite confrontational to the wife. None of them may apply in your marriage, and if so, celebrate this fact together. If something does apply to some degree, discuss it calmly, always invoking the “Is what I am about to say . . .” rule (see *Love & Respect* Appendix A, book page 305). You may not be able to agree on every point, but try to follow Emerson’s advice: “I believe husband and wife together need to examine any situation where something is amiss and try to come to a solution or, if needed, seek godly counsel.”

6 In “Are You Trying to Be Your Husband’s Holy Spirit?” (book page 234–237), Emerson warns that in many marriages, wives see their husbands as unrighteous. He writes, “Because she is the one who constantly seems to have to be on top of things, such as correcting the children (and him), she slips into an attitude of self-righteousness without realizing it. It is often subconscious, but a subtle judgmental spirit comes over a woman. Many women have admitted to me, ‘I’ve got to stop being my husband’s Holy Spirit.’ . . . I never hear men saying, ‘I’ve got to stop being my wife’s Holy Spirit.’” How can a wife avoid slipping into a judgmental attitude (even though she may have good reason)? See especially pages 235–36 for practical ideas and list them here.



This can be another sensitive question, so walk softly to avoid stepping on each other’s air hose. On book page 235, Emerson cites the account of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38–42), which contains wisdom that is equally good for husbands and wives. Humbly focusing on Christ is a good way to avoid being or sounding judgmental. To paraphrase Jesus, “Don’t look for the speck in your spouse’s eye, be aware of the possible log in your own!” (see Matthew 7:1–5). Talk together about what this section may be saying to one or both of you. Note the wife’s letter, bottom of page 236, top of 237, for more good advice.

7 Check the tips under “Your Husband Will Feel You Appreciate His Insight and Counsel When . . .” (book page 237). Choose one or more that look applicable for you and write them here for reference later. (Note how many of these tips parallel tips under Understanding, in Chapter Eleven. A husband is a natural-born

“fixer,” so in some cases you may have to accept his insight, when all you think you need is his listening ear.)



Compare notes on what you chose. As a wife, it might be especially appropriate in this instance to ask for your husband’s insight. Which ideas did he choose? What does he want you to do first?

A JOURNAL OF MY JOURNEY TO LOVE AND RESPECT

Write any thoughts prompted by the following Scripture Meditations by Emerson, or just record your perception of how the study has gone to this point.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS

1. Proverbs 3:7 tells us, “Do not be wise in your own eyes. . . .” This warning is often applied to men, who can be very firm about their view of things. But doesn’t this verse

apply to women as well? For instance, a group of wives may gather for coffee, even Bible study, and wind up talking about their marriages and how their husbands “just don’t get it.” The implication: the wife always “gets it” regarding what God had in mind with creation of male and female. Yes, the wife certainly has her very pink point of view, but does she really “get it” regarding the very blue point of view of her husband? “Do not be wise in your own eyes” cuts both ways. Husband and wife both need to adjust their sunglasses and hearing aids and become wise together as they seek God’s counsel.

I have counseled many wives who admit that, deep down, they consider themselves better than their husbands—at least “better” in the sense of how to love the family and run the household. It is not hard to see why a wife may feel this way, but she should be aware that this is a dangerous state of mind. Listen to Paul’s words in I Timothy 2:14: “Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner” (NIV). Paul isn’t letting Adam off the hook. He followed as his wife lead him like a lamb to the slaughter and wound up being held responsible for the Fall (see Romans 5:12–19). The point is, husbands and wives are both sinners; both face their own private temptations. In 1 Timothy 2:14 Paul reminds today’s wife that Eve was the one who was deceived (and by implication, so can she be deceived). When a woman, for whatever good reasons, begins to think she is intrinsically better than her husband, she slips into being self-righteous and judgmental (all in a “loving way,” of course). To those who might say or even think, “I am holier than you,” God replies that this kind of attitude is “smoke in My nostrils, a fire that burns all the day” (see Isaiah 65:5). First Timothy 2:14 is not here to shame the wife but to remind her she can be deceived. She must ask herself, “Am I a better person because God made me one way and my spouse another? Can either of us be saved apart from Jesus and His grace?” These questions are equally good for the husband. They enable husband and wife to come together in mutual confession and joyful connection.

3. As a wife, are you looking for ways to make it easier for your husband to lead and give insight? Peter has a lovely thought in 1 Peter 3. He says your real beauty “should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight” (1 Peter 3:4 NIV). As you get dressed for the day, it is

important to look well-groomed, fresh, and attractive on the outside, but the more important thing is what is inside. A good daily prayer might be: "Lord, as I dress this morning, please clothe me in a gentle and quiet spirit."

My current thoughts about our marriage:

SESSION TWELVE

In preparation for this session, read Chapter Twenty, “Relationship—Appreciate His Desire for Shoulder-to-Shoulder Friendship” Chapter Twenty-one, “Sexuality—Appreciate His Desire for Sexual Intimacy,” and Chapter Twenty-two, “The Energizing Cycle Will Work If You Do.” The following questions are for an individual or a husband and wife studying together. Remember to answer all unmarked questions first, then answer questions marked by the male or female icon (whichever applies to you). Finally, answer the questions with the couple icon, if you’re studying with your mate. (Suggestions for anyone planning to use this workbook with a small group can be found in *Workbook Appendix I*, page 201.)

Questions for Chapter Twenty

1 Read book pages 239–40 in *Love & Respect*. Is your marriage anything like the marriage described in the opening of Chapter Twenty? In your marriage, does he just want her to “be with him” with little or no talking? Check the answer that comes closest to describing you and your spouse.

OFTEN THE CASE _____ SELDOM HAPPENS _____ NEVER HAPPENS _____

My comments:



Discuss how much shoulder-to-shoulder activity you engage in with little or no talking. Emerson has seen this phenomenon in many couples over the years, but not necessarily everyone. Wife, if your husband does ask you to “just sit with him” from time to time, do you do it? Does it cause any problems if he wants to do little or no talking while he watches the news or his favorite program, reads a book or the paper, or works on a project or a hobby? Husband, if you have never engaged in shoulder-to-shoulder activity with your wife without talking, would you like to try it? What would she say if you did?



This session can take the two of you in three possible directions: (1) the wife will learn a new way to meet a basic need in her husband for shoulder-to-shoulder activity; (2) you both will better understand why he needs this kind of activity and why it energizes him; or (3) you both will agree he doesn’t need shoulder-to-shoulder much, if at all.

2 Read “How Can ‘Doing Nothing’ Build a Relationship?” (book pages 240–42). What are some reasons a wife might have trouble with just sitting with her husband watching TV or watching him work on a project in his workshop? How does this need in many husbands illustrate major differences between “pink” (wives) and “blue” (husbands)?



Compare your answers, then discuss them. The typical wife could have real problems with just sitting “doing nothing” when she has so many chores and other activities. But would it be worth the time if it leads to feeling closer as a couple—and, possibly later, face-to-face talking?



3 In “For a While There, Sarah Wasn’t Friendly” (book pages 242–43), Emerson recounts a time when Sarah was not too friendly, not only toward him, but the rest of the family in general. Her cleanliness standards were being violated, and she was always on everyone to pick up, wash up, and shape up. What happened to change Sarah’s mind?



Talk about this story together. Here, indeed, was a case of “pink” and “blue” needing to like each other in spite of weaknesses and faults. Go back to the top of book page 242. Talk about how husbands and wives need to be lovers, yes, but also shoulder-to-shoulder friends. In Song of Solomon 5:10–16, the wife describes her husband in the most amorous of terms, but she also adds, “This is my beloved and this is my friend” (vs. 16).



4 Read the section under “Wives, Be Patient with ‘Just Sit by Me’” (book pages 243–45). Which of the following sentences or paragraphs excerpted from this section give you insights into the male need to just be “shoulder-to-shoulder” with little or no talking?

- ___ a. “When the husband calls the wife in to ‘just sit by him,’ he is working on their relationship in a significant way. . . . This is the way a husband communicates.”

- b. "Males prefer shoulder-to-shoulder communication instead of face-to-face communication, and this can occur in the simplest of ways."
- c. "In most marriages, then, there is a real difference in basic needs. As we saw in Chapter Nine, she wants to talk, to be close. But in this chapter we see that the natural bent of the male is to be shoulder-to-shoulder with a lot less talking. Obviously, there must be some give and take at this point as there should be in so many other areas of marriage."

Regarding "shoulder-to-shoulder with little talking" I think:



Compare any notes you have made concerning choices *a*, *b*, or *c* above. As mentioned earlier, not all husbands have this need, but many do. If shoulder-to-shoulder is something he wants to do, how can his need be balanced with her need to be close and just talk?

5 Read the experiences of three different wives in "Spend Time Together, Stay Together" (book pages 246–47). What can be learned from the wife in Peoria? From the letters by wives who are benefiting from being shoulder-to-shoulder? Write down any key words or phrases you find.



Compare notes on what you found in these accounts. And be sure to discuss the last two paragraphs in this section. Does Emerson’s “twelve-week experiment” sound worth trying? Is it too much to ask a wife to do something that feels unnatural? Are the possible benefits worth it?

6 Go over the tips in “Your Husband Will Feel You Value His Shoulder-to-Shoulder Friendship When . . .” (book pages 247–48). Which of these might benefit your marriage? Write them here, with any added notes on how they can best be implemented.



Compare your choices and decide on what should be tried first. After a week or so, compare notes on how it is going. Make adjustments, if any are needed.

Questions for Chapter Twenty-One

7 Read the opening story of the doctor and his wife, plus the section called “They Kicked the Devil out of Bed” (book pages 249–51). How did the doctor’s wife turn their impasse into a win-win?

Which of the following statements from this section speak most directly to you and your marriage?

- a. “If there ever were an issue that isn’t really the issue, it is sex.”
- b. “Sex for him and affection for you is a two-way street.”
- c. “Sex is symbolic of his deeper need—respect.”

Complete this sentence: In our marriage, sex is . . .



There is a lot to compare and talk about in Question 7 that could lead to tension. Much depends on how satisfying your sex life as a couple is at the moment. Ideally, husband and wife meet each other’s major needs: his for sex, hers for intimacy through affection mixed with plenty of talking. Then both are content. But often there is an imbalance that leads to friction and fighting or a dull

and boring relationship. Be sensitive to each other as you talk through this three-part question. If he doesn't think he gets enough sex, or she doesn't think she gets enough affection and closeness with talking, do not condemn one another. Share what you can, always seeking to show each other love and respect. (For more ideas and suggestions, see *Workbook Appendix V, "Sex: Love and Respect Come First—Then, 'Just Do It!'"* (page 218).



3 Read "Two Keys to Understanding Your Husband" (book pages 251–53). Emerson describes two aspects of why a husband has sexual desire for his wife. What are they? Put each one in a sentence or two at the most.



On book page 252 is a story about a mother who gives her daughter some advice concerning sex. Do you agree or disagree (explain your choice) with her when she says, "Why would you deprive him of something that takes such a short amount of time and makes him sooooo happy"?



GREE ____

DISAGREE ____



Compare your answers to the two aspects of a man's sexual desire for his wife. Put in its simplest terms: he sees her and he wants her. If she wants him, she can make him sooooo happy. But it isn't always that simple, as

most couples can attest. Talk about how the husband needs to woo his wife with closeness, openness, and sincerely talking with her to connect with her. When the wife feels close, she may want to become close physically, but it is an interplay that both spouses must work out in terms that are unique to their relationship. As always, this kind of interplay should be governed by love and respect.

9 In “The Golden Rule Works with Sex Too” (book page 253), Emerson describes the tension in every marital sexual relationship. She wants to feel close emotionally in order to connect sexually. He wants to feel close sexually in order to connect emotionally. Neither is wrong, just different. In the second paragraph in this section is a rule (see line in italics) that applies to every principle covered in the Energizing Cycle, and especially sexuality. This rule, which never changes, is (copy it here and commit it to memory):



Talk together about the rule that never changes. Are you at a point where you are getting better at sharing your needs with each other openly, without stepping on each other’s air hose? This could be a good time to review together *Love & Respect* Appendix C: “How to Ask Your Mate to Meet Your Needs” (see page 311–312). See especially what she can say about closeness and openness, and what he can say about sexuality. Obviously, these “scripted statements” are only suggestions. Each spouse can and should work out her or his own way of communicating needs to the other.

10 “A Dose of Respect Beats a Dose of Viagra Any Day” (book pages 254–55) includes two letters, one from a wife whose husband committed adultery, and

one from a husband who also strayed. In both cases, why was the husband vulnerable to infidelity? What does this say about the link between sex and respect?



Share your answers, which may or may not be similar. In both cases the husbands were being deprived of sex, but the thing that really drew each man into an adulterous relationship and held him there was that his adulterous partner made him feel admired and respected. As one of the straying husbands wrote, “Somebody thought I was okay.” What does this say about the constant need to let each other know, “You are okay, lovable, respectable, wanted, and needed”? Are these positives being communicated in your marriage?



11 Read “If He Loves Me, How Can He Be Tempted by Other Women?” (book pages 255–58). Which of the following statements, taken from the paragraphs near the bottom of page 257 and top of 258, are most helpful to you as a spouse? Add your comments below.

- a. “A man is responsive to what he sees. He needs his wife’s understanding of his struggles. If he wanted to be untrue to her, he would never allude to the problem at all.”
- b. “A wife longs to receive her husband’s closeness, openness, and understanding. You can achieve this in two ways: (1) do your best to give him the sexual release he needs, even if on some occasions you aren’t in the mood, or (2) let him know you are trying to comprehend that he is tempted sexually in ways you don’t understand.”
- c. “If your husband is typical, he has a need you don’t have. When you shame him, punish him, or deprive him, he feels dishonored for who he is. . . . But he needs you. . . . As you recognize his need and seek to meet it, you will find him, reaching out to meet yours.”

My comments on the quote I chose:



Compare your choice of quotes, realizing this can be a very sensitive subject. You may want to discuss one or more of the quotes above, or you may want to come back to this at another time. One solution for this problem that has worked for some couples is for the husband to meet with other men and share with them. In this way they can encourage each other to resist sexual temptation, as well as keep each other accountable.

12 Choose from the tips under “He Will Feel You Appreciate His Desire for Sexual Intimacy When . . .” (book page 258) and choose one that you believe can benefit your marriage. Write it down, with an estimated date for when it could be tried.



Compare notes and talk about how the two of you can make this happen. The husband should not put the entire burden on his wife. This is definitely a time for love on his part, respect on hers.

Questions for Chapter Twenty-Two

13 You have covered C-O-U-P-L-E and C-H-A-I-R-S, which give the husband and wife six ways each to love and respect each other. On book page 259 is the definition of the Energizing Cycle: His love _____ her _____. Her respect _____ his _____.

If you haven’t memorized this yet, do it now, and never forget it. The Energizing Cycle is the answer to keeping the Crazy Cycle from turning on.

Now go to page 260. In “How Does a Husband Spell Love to His Wife?” is a brief review of C-O-U-P-L-E, six tools the husband can use to maintain his side of the Energizing Cycle for his marriage. If you are a husband, make some notes below on which of these six tools you have understood in a new way or even learned about for the first time. Which ones are easiest for you to use? Which ones are harder? Which ones have made a definite difference in your relationship? If you are a wife, make notes below on the six tools in C-O-U-P-L-E. Which ones has your husband been using? Which ones would you like to see him use more? Why?



Compare what you wrote. What does the husband think he has been doing well? Where does he see he could be doing better? What does the wife think he has been doing well? If the wife has suggestions on what the husband could be doing better or more often, she should be encouraging, not negative and complaining. The point is, even small steps of progress on the Energizing Cycle are symbolic of a big step of progress for your marriage.

14 “How Does a Wife Spell Respect for Her Husband?” (book pages 260–61) is a brief review of C-H-A-I-R-S, six tools a wife can use to maintain her side of the Energizing Cycle for her marriage. If you are a wife, make some notes below on which of these six tools you have understood in a new way, or even learned about for the first time. Which ones are easiest for you to use? Which ones are harder? Has using any of these tools made a real difference in your relationship to your husband? In what way? If you are a husband, make notes below on the six tools in C-H-A-I-R-S. Which ones has your wife been using? Which ones would you like to see her use more? Why?



Compare your answers. What does the wife think she has been doing well? What does she think she could be doing better? What does the husband think she has been doing well? If the husband has some suggestions on what his wife could do better, he should be encouraging, not complaining (or even teasing).



15 Is it easy or hard to “cut your spouse some slack” as he or she tries to practice the principles in C-O-U-P-L-E or C-H-A-I-R-S? Read the wife’s letter that begins on book page 261. What has she learned that all spouses should try to practice?



Compare your answers to see if you both included what the wife said about what her “first response” should be. To put it briefly: always try to find positives about your spouse, not negatives. This is not easy. The negative comes naturally. The positive is often much harder, because, look, your spouse has stepped on your air hose again!

On page 262 Emerson writes, “You can’t grasp the Holy Grail of perfection, which is always beyond your reach. But you can embrace Love and Respect, which will always provide more than enough to energize your marriage.” Is he right? Do you believe enough to act on the principles embodied in C-O-U-P-L-E and C-H-A-I-R-S? If you

do, your marriage will not only be less negative and more positive, it will be the kind of marriage that honors Christ in every way. (To look ahead to the Rewarded Cycle, Part III, see “From the Energizing Cycle to the Rewarded Cycle” (pages 262–63.)

A JOURNAL OF MY JOURNEY TO LOVE AND RESPECT

Emerson’s Scripture Meditations, below, are one possible source of journal entries you may want to make. Or just write your thoughts on where you are in your marriage. What do you see happening? What do you need to do or stop doing?

SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS

1. A woman should consider how to be a companion to her husband. After all, God did say, “I will make a helper who is just right for him” (Genesis 2:18 NIRV). Have you, as a wife, considered that a most helpful activity for you that is just right for your husband is a shoulder-to-shoulder activity? Many husbands are energized by a wife’s mere presence. As your husband’s helper, have you been overlooking a very fruitful way to help your husband and energize your marriage?
2. In marriage, timing is everything. There is, indeed, “A time to be silent, and a time to speak” (Ecclesiastes 3:7). Have you seriously considered that there are times when talking is not a good thing? For example, if a husband has been unloving or disobedient to Christ in some other way, the shoulder-to-shoulder wife can find new meaning in “won without a word” (1 Peter 3:1). Although “without a word” may make little sense to you as a woman, God’s Word is worth trusting. In the past, how persuaded have you been that the only way to convict your husband was by voicing your complaint to him? During this “season” of your marriage, is it a time to be silent? Could it be that when you are respectfully silent a husband can better listen to God and his own conscience?
3. “Your two breasts are like two fawns . . . that browse among the lilies” (Song of Solomon 4:5 NIV). This passage is describing the attraction a wife’s breasts have for her visually oriented husband. When you courted, were you aware of his visual orientation?

Now that you are married, do you still acknowledge that orientation, or do you act as though it should not be there? What about your emotional orientation? Should he act as though it should not be there? If a husband denies his wife's emotional orientation, what could happen? If a wife denies her husband sexually, what could happen? For rather explicit details on how not to deny each other's needs, read Song of Solomon 4:1–15, which is Solomon's song of praise to his wife's charms. Also note verse 16, where the wife gives her husband a passionate invitation to be sexually intimate.

4. "With her flattering lips she seduced him" (Proverbs 7:21 NKJV). It is possible that a husband might be seduced by a sexy, sensual woman, but he is far more likely to be seduced by an admiring woman. We could assume the woman spoken of in Proverbs 7:21 flattered her victim with false respect and phony admiration. Actually, what she said to him could have been true enough, but her motives were false and manipulative. Why was he so easily manipulated? A good guess is that he could have been living with a wife who never said anything respectful to him, much less admiring.ⁱ When the adulteress laid her trap (see Proverbs 7:6–20), he fell for it completely, just as a wife who gets no emotional intimacy can be seduced by a man who is "kind and understanding." How can you affair-proof your marriage? With love, respect, and trust in God.

My current thoughts about our marriage:

ⁱ In Proverbs 7, the instruction is given to a "son" to avoid sexual temptation. Is this "son" married or unmarried? The answer is found earlier in Proverbs 5, where "sons" are exhorted to steer clear of sexual temptation (see v. 7 ff.). Some of these "sons" are married, according to Proverbs 5:18–19: "Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love."

PART THREE: THE REWARDED CYCLE

Sessions 13 and 14 cover Chapters Twenty-three and Twenty-four, and the Conclusion of *Love & Respect*

A PERSONAL WORD FROM EMERSON:

In Part One you learned how to slow and stop the Crazy Cycle. In Part Two you learned how to build a better marriage with the Energizing Cycle. In Part Three the message is different and has multiple applications: the Rewarded Cycle is for couples who are trying the Love and Respect Connection but it isn't working well. They have slowed the Crazy Cycle but aren't quite on the Energizing Cycle. The Rewarded Cycle is also for spouses hanging on by a thread in a marriage where his unconditional love for her, or her unconditional respect for him, is getting little or no results. And finally, the Rewarded Cycle is for all couples who want to know the real reason for love and respect.

Ultimately, all husbands and wives should be practicing Love and Respect principles first and foremost out of obedience to Christ. If they do not, it is so easy to start being arrogantly proud about "our great marriage." So many marriages seem to be getting along just great, and then *wham!*—the wheels come off. If we take our eyes off Christ (or never put our eyes on Christ in the first place), we are building on sand, and when the storms come, we can be swept away (see Matthew 7:24–27).

What follows contains comfort, encouragement, and plenty of straight talk for any spouse who wants to learn the deepest meaning of respecting or loving unconditionally. The Rewarded Cycle explains that you love and respect, not because you want to save your marriage, or even strengthen your marriage (worthwhile as those goals are). You love and respect because you want to love and reverence Christ. In the ultimate sense, your marriage has nothing to do with your spouse. It has everything to do with your relationship to your Savior and Lord, and how much you want to serve and glorify Him.

SESSION THIRTEEN

In preparation for this session, read Chapter Twenty-three, “The Real Reason to Love and Respect.” The following questions are for an individual or a husband and wife studying together. The suggestions for spouses studying together are of two kinds: (1) for couples who have managed to slow the Crazy Cycle, but are struggling to get on the Energizing Cycle; (2) for couples who are on the Energizing Cycle, but who can still profit from what the Rewarded Cycle has to tell them about how central Jesus Christ should be in a marriage. Remember to answer all unmarked questions first, then answer questions marked by the male or female icon (whichever applies to you). Finally, answer the questions with the couple icon, if you’re studying with your mate. (Suggestions for anyone planning to use this *workbook* with a small group can be found in *Workbook* Appendix I, page 201.)

1 Read “Don’t Give Up—Trust God to Work” (book pages 268–70). If you are a spouse who is struggling, which of the following quotes from this section speak to you the loudest right now?

- a. “Don’t give up just because it doesn’t seem to be working.”
- b. “Don’t doubt the light from God’s Word in your dark times.”
- c. “Most often, Love or Respect is working on your spouse more than you realize.”
- d. “Have confidence that God will work.”

Write your thoughts here and on the next page regarding what you checked above. How can one or more of these ideas help you right now?



If you have slowed the Crazy Cycle but can't seem to get the Energizing Cycle started in your marriage, look at the quotes above. If you haven't already checked one or more of them, do so now. Then, if both of you are willing, talk about where you are now and how you must trust God and His Word to work in your lives. (If yours is a marriage that is on the Energizing Cycle, rejoice together and give God the glory for what He has done, and what He will continue to do as you trust in Him.)

2 In “When It Simply Doesn’t Work—What Then?” (book pages 270–71), Emerson explains what the Rewarded Cycle is all about. Following are some key quotes to consider if you have been ready to say, “This Love and Respect thing just doesn’t work.” Choose one of Emerson’s statements and write some reasons why it encourages or enlightens you regarding your situation.

- a. “When you love or respect unconditionally, you are following God and His will for you. Ultimately, your spouse and your marriage have nothing to do with it.”
- b. “Unconditional love and unconditional respect will be rewarded. I call this the Rewarded Cycle.”
- c. “I believe Paul also had your marriage in mind when he penned Ephesians 6:7–8: ‘Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does . . . (NIV).’”
- d. “In marriage, everything you do counts, even if your spouse ignores you!”

This is what the Rewarded Cycle is all about:

HIS LOVE BLESSES REGARDLESS OF HER RESPECT;

HER RESPECT BLESSES REGARDLESS OF HIS LOVE."

Write your thoughts here regarding the statement you chose. Does the Rewarded Cycle sound too hard? Or is it strangely encouraging, even inspiring?



As a couple you may have had trouble putting the Energizing Cycle in gear. Go over the four statements above that describe how the Rewarded Cycle works. Does the Rewarded Cycle sound helpful or too hard? If you can talk with your spouse about these things, share your deepest thoughts and feelings. (Couples on the Energizing Cycle: read together the third paragraph on book page 272, beginning with "All couples must take heed . . ." Then talk about how you can keep your marriage on a foundation of rock, never letting it shift to sand.)

3 Read "Heaven's Reward—The Eternal 'Ahhh!'" (book pages 272–74). Have you ever thought of heaven in the terms that Emerson describes in this section? Suppose you could put all the happy, joyful experiences you have ever had into one big package that you could enjoy all the time. When you share your Master's happiness, the intensity of being with Christ forever will be "a trillion times greater" than that! Emerson concludes this section by saying, "When you make a decision to love or respect your spouse, the dividends are without end. Jesus is offering you a bargain. Do a few things on earth in this life and get many things forever in heaven." As you think about hanging in there with a marriage that just doesn't seem to be working, what is

your reaction to Emerson's words? Do you agree that the endless, boundless, indescribable pleasures of heaven will be worth the "momentary affliction" you are feeling now? Write your thoughts here. Be very honest—tell God how it really is. (You can read Emerson's additional comments in *Workbook Appendix VI*.)



If you are able to talk to each other about your marriage, this is a good question to chew on together. Is heaven worth the rough trip you are having here on earth right now? Can you begin to catch a vision of God using your "momentary light affliction" to bring you eternal joy? The first thing the two of you have to do is commit to your marriage because you are doing this as unto Christ, and you look forward to the matchless rewards He has waiting. If you can do that, it will open the way for things to happen here on earth as you struggle between the Crazy Cycle and the Energizing Cycle.

(Couples on the Energizing Cycle: never cease to remind yourselves that you are loving and respecting each other "as unto Christ." When you someday meet Christ face-to-face, He will ask you: "Did you do what you did in your marriage for Me?" How sad if a person must reply, "Lord, I had a good marriage, but I must confess I never thought about You." I know of one wife who had a very good marriage, but she had been overlooking where Christ really fit in. Then she heard the Love and Respect challenge and wrote to say: "The image of myself looking through my husband and seeing Christ was exactly what I needed to hear. Knowing that when I hold my tongue [and] have self-control over my responses, it is not only out of respect for my husband but in obedience to God. What a breakthrough!"