

Chaste and Respectful

*“...as they [your own husbands] observe
your chaste and respectful behavior.”
1Peter 3:1-2.*

Do we really understand the true meaning of being chaste? It's really not talked about in this day and age. And being respectful of anyone, other than ourselves, has been completely eliminated from our thinking. Let's begin by searching God's Word to find how very important being “chaste” and “respectful” really is:

Chaste

What is chaste?

There are three references to *chaste* in Scripture. Let's look at the two that are specifically directed toward women:

As they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. “In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the Word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your **chaste and respectful behavior**.” In the KJV it is stated, “While they observe your **chaste** conversation coupled with fear.” 1Pet. 3:1-2.

Be discreet, chaste. “The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness...To be discreet, **chaste**....” Titus 2:5 KJV.

Strong's Concordance defines the word *chaste* as: **clean, innocent**, modest, perfect, pure. Webster's Dictionary defines *chaste* in two ways: 1. Innocent of immoral sexual intercourse (fornication); innocent of **a manner of speech** (reread lesson 4, “Kindness Is on Her Tongue.”) 2. Dress, modest, **restrained**, pure, **unadorned**.

Webster's Thesaurus defines *chaste* as: **clean**, genuine, immaculate, pure, **blameless, innocent, sincere, undefiled, virgin, virtuous**. Now we will search, and study, and look deeper into these bold words that are used to define *chaste*. First, what does Scripture say about being **innocent** meaning free from guilt or sin? Let's look at Daniel.

Daniel

Because of his innocence. Daniel is an example of an innocent man. We are very much aware of his life of continual testing, but because of his **innocence** *God delivered him*. “My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found **innocent** before Him, and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime.” Dan. 6:22. What does Scripture say about being **blameless** (which means free from fault)? Let's look at Job.

Job

Blameless, fearing God and turning away from evil. Job is an example of a blameless man who pleased God. “And the Lord said to Satan, ‘Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a *blameless* and upright man, **fearing God and turning away from evil.**’ ” Job. 1:8.

What was the secret to Job’s blameless life? He feared the Lord. We, too, must fear the Lord above all else. “But a *woman* who **fears the Lord**, she shall be *praised.*” Prov. 31:30.

Job also turned from evil. “And let him **turn away from evil** and *do good.*” 1Pet. 3:11. When you’re turning away from evil, you must replace it with something good. (See lesson 5, “Won Without a Word,” for “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge....” Hosea 4:6.) Therefore, Job was blessed by God. “*Blessed* are those whose way is **blameless.**” Ps. 119:1. We, too, will be blessed if we practice these three things: living blamelessly, fearing the Lord and turning from evil.

We are also very much aware of Job and his difficult circumstances. He had a very non-supportive spouse. Remember, she told Job to “curse God and die!” If our husbands are not supportive or tempt us to turn from our relationship with the Lord, we must not let it shake us. We must not let it deter us from our walk of faith. What about Paul’s blameless life?

Paul

Since Scripture tells us that Paul lived a blameless life, we should look at what he did and said. “And this I [Paul] pray, that your love may abound still more and more in *real knowledge* and in *all discernment*, so that you may approve the things that are **excellent**, in order to be sincere and **blameless** until the day of Christ.” Phil 1:9-10. Real knowledge is knowledge of what is good. It is not the trivia that today’s world is so preoccupied with. It is not the knowledge of evil that the newspaper so vividly gives us. And, it is not the drug and sex education that our children are exposed to. It is Scriptural knowledge; it is knowledge of what is good. Paul also says that we need “all discernment” with that knowledge. We will be studying discernment later in this lesson.

Our Daughters

Helping our daughters to remain pure, and encouraging other young women to do the same, should be an important goal of Christian women today.

Undefined is defined as “without spot.” The love the woman experienced in the Song of Solomon in the Bible was a result of her commitment to purity. Don’t you want that kind of love for your daughters and the other young women in your life? Song of Solomon 6:9 says, “My dove, my **undefined** is *but one....*” She was special and she was set apart (holy). Wasn’t she also treated in a special way?

Jesus - holy, innocent, undefined. Our example as Christians, “followers of Christ,” is Jesus Himself who was described as “innocent and undefined.” “For it is fitting that we should have such a high priest (Jesus), holy, innocent, **undefined....**” Heb. 7:26.

Virgin. A virgin is a woman who is untouched. The priests in the Old Testament were to take a virgin because of what “impurity” would do to their children. “And he [the priest] shall take a wife in her **virginity** - that he may not profane his offspring....” Lev. 21:13.

In our day virginity has almost become extinct. We Christians have followed the world and lowered our moral standards as well. A woman is to be *untouched*! This does not just mean a girl who has not gone “all the way.” It means “untouched.” This is impossible if a girl is dating.

Ladies, dating is a 20th-century invention. As a mother, rethink this idea of dating. We must hold dating up to the light of Scripture. We must take a good look at the rotten fruit resulting from this dangerous practice. Encourage the idea of “courtship” with your daughter and have her save the dating until *after* she is married.

Virtue means excellence. Virtue and excellence are words that are used interchangeably in Scripture. Ruth is an example of an excellent, and virtuous, woman in the Bible. “And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do whatever you ask, for all my people in the city know that you are a woman of **excellence [virtue]**.” Ruth 3:11.

Even in the times of Solomon, an excellent, or virtuous, wife was hard to find; now she is even harder to find. We desperately need younger virtuous women for our sons to marry and older virtuous women to teach our younger women. “An **excellent** wife, who can find?” In the KJV version it says, “Who can find a **virtuous** woman?” Prov. 31:10.

Why would a man want a virtuous woman? Because “An **excellent** (or **virtuous**) wife is the *crown* of her husband....” Prov. 12:4.

God has called us to be women of virtue and of excellence. We are to be women who are undefiled, innocent and blameless. The world, however, has been trying to convince us that men and women are alike; they are not! The world tells us that a wife should act like a harlot - before and after the marriage. This, the world says, will keep our husbands from adultery. Those who believed this lie and acted like harlots have found that just the opposite is true! It made them hunger for harlots!

The Adulterous Woman

What are the fruits of our imitating harlots and their ways? Aren’t there *more* men in adultery than ever before? Doesn’t adultery run rampant even in the church? If we buy and wear clothes that imitate a prostitute or centerfold, if we pose for pictures that make us look like we posed for a lewd magazine, will we not then be treated as the harlots are? Those women are hurting; they are used, not loved, by the men who swarm around them. James 4:4 says, “You adulteresses, do you not know that the *friendship of the world* is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world **makes himself an enemy of God.**”

Next time you are tempted to buy an article of clothing that a harlot would wear, or seduce your husband as a harlot would, ask yourself if you are not setting yourself up for his unfaithfulness. Let us rather rise above those in the world. Even the women in the church are being deceived.

If you have fallen into this trap, you will no doubt also have other characteristics of the adulterous woman. Ask yourself these questions:

Are your words sweet and healing? It says, “But in the end she (the adulteress) is **bitter** as wormwood, **sharp** as a two-edge sword.” Prov. 5:4. (See lesson 4, “Kindness Is on Her Tongue,” for “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge....” Hosea 4:6.)

Are your ways firm, founded upon the rock? “She does not ponder the path of life; her **ways are unstable**, *she does not know it.*” Prov. 5:6.

Is your motive to “give to” or to “get from” your husband? “With her many persuasions **she entices him**; with her **flattering lips, she seduces him.**” Prov. 7:21.

Are you gentle and quiet? “She is **boisterous and rebellious**; *her feet do not remain at home.*” Prov. 7:11. (See lesson 13, “The Ways of Her Household” for “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge....” Hosea 4:6.)

Are you humble; can you admit when you are wrong? “This is the way of an adulterous woman; she eats and wipes her mouth and says, ‘**I have done no wrong.**’” Prov. 30:20.

If you have found out, by these questions, that you have appeared more like a harlot or an adulterous woman than an excellent or virtuous woman, then it’s time to confess. “Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” James 5:16.

It would be wise to confess to another woman who would understand your remorse. If you confess to your husband, you may become confused. He may tell you that he likes you just as you are - seductive, flattering, enticing - because he is being “held with the cords of his sin.” (Prov. 5:22)

Virtue

As a godly woman, be careful what you talk about, especially to your husband. Never tell him to look at a woman who is indecently dressed or attractive; you are encouraging him to lust. If you speak of perverted things that you’ve read about in the newspaper or have seen on the news or have heard about, you will be crushing the Holy Spirit in you and in your husband. Let your speech be chaste and respectful. “Many daughters have done **virtuously** but you excel them all.” Prov. 31:29 KJV. This daughter in Proverbs 31 did better than all her sisters. Why? Because “**Charm** is *deceitful* and **beauty** is *vain*, but a woman who **fears the Lord**, *she shall be praised.*” Prov. 31:30.

Add to your faith, virtue. “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, **virtue** and to your **virtue**, knowledge.” 2Pet. 1:5 KJV. We see that the foundation of virtue is faith, our faith in the Lord who saved us by grace. Only after you have gained faith can you add virtue. Next to virtue, you add knowledge. Knowledge will help you to know what Scriptures to stand on. A clean life is pure and innocent. God says we are to have three **clean** things:

The fear of the Lord. “The *fear of the Lord* is **clean**; enduring forever.” Ps. 19:9.

Clean hands. “Who may stand in His holy place? He who has **clean hands** and a pure heart.” Ps. 24:3-4.

A clean heart. “Create in me a **clean heart**, O God...” Ps. 51:10. When you are clean before the Lord you then can receive the blessings of God: He will be good to you. “Surely God is good to Israel, to *those* who are **clean** (pure) in *heart!*” Ps. 73:1.

Discretion

Discretion is an *action* that is based upon caution. Let’s look at other words that we may be more familiar with. Then we can get a better understanding about discretion and being discreet. Discreet in the thesaurus is defined as: attentive, careful, considerate, **discerning**, prudent, sensible, thoughtful, wise, separate, distinct, prudent, cautious, **especially in speech**.

Discerning and wise. Because of Joseph’s life of trials and tribulations, he acquired discernment as well as wisdom. “So Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘Since God has informed of you all this, there is no one so **discerning** and wise as you are.’ ” Gen. 41:39.

Answered discreetly. Jesus saw the heart of this man by his discreet answer. “And when Jesus saw that he [the scribe] answered Him **discreetly**, He said unto him, ‘Thou are not far from the kingdom of God.’ ” Mark 12:34 KJV.

Gives discretion. We are told that by learning the Proverbs, we will learn discretion. “[the Proverbs]...give prudence to the naive, to the youth knowledge and **discretion**.” Prov. 1:4. Read the Proverbs daily, one chapter for each day of the month (i.e., on the 12th of the month, read chapter 12 of Proverbs).

Discretion will guard you. By having discretion, you are protected. “**Discretion** will guard you, understanding will watch over you, to deliver you from the way of evil...” Prov. 2:11–12.

Life to your soul. Discretion is also the lifeline to your soul. “My son, do not let them depart from your sight; keep sound wisdom and **discretion**, so they will be **life to your soul** and adornment to your neck. Then you will walk in your way securely and your foot will not stumble. When you lie down you will not be afraid and your sleep will be sweet.” Prov. 3:21-22.

Give attention to wisdom and understanding. The foundation for discretion is wisdom and understanding. When you have obtained them, you will be able to use discretion. “My son, give attention to my *wisdom*, incline your *ear* to my *understanding*; then you may observe **discretion**, and your lips may reserve knowledge.” Prov. 5:1-2.

Teach or exercise authority over a man. Also, discretion will help to train your lips to reserve the knowledge that you have found in Scripture, especially with your husband. “But I do not allow a woman to **teach or exercise authority over a man**, but to remain quiet.” 1Tim. 2:12. (For more knowledge, see lesson 4, “Kindness Is on Her Tongue,” for “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge...” Hosea 4:6.)

A woman who lacks discretion. The following is an incredibly vivid picture that you should ponder when your words and actions are lacking discretion. “As a ring of gold in a swine’s snout, so is a beautiful woman who lacks **discretion**.” Prov. 11:22.

Respectful

Now that we have learned what it means to be chaste, we also need to understand the true meaning of respect. In the world today we are told that it is something *we* should *demand* from others and that *we* should have respect for *ourselves*.

Let us again begin by looking at words that are similar to come to a deeper understanding of the word *respect*. The definition of *respect* is: special esteem or consideration in which one holds *another person*; to look at.

The word *respect* in the thesaurus is defined as: admiration, **considerate**, **esteem**, **honor**, **reverence**, admire, **appreciate**, notice, prize, **treasure**, uphold, value. The antonyms (words that mean the opposite) are **scorn**, **blame**, **censure**. We will study the words that are in bold in more depth:

Let us be considerate. What does Scripture say about being **considerate**? Being *considerate* is defined as having thoughtfulness toward others. Hebrews tells us that we need to *encourage* our husband and others. By our actions, we can stimulate them to love us and to seek to do good. “And let us be **considerate** of how to *stimulate one another to love and good deeds*.” Heb. 10:24.

The deeds of the flesh are evident. Here is a list of sins as stated in Galatians. “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities [hostility], strife [contentions], jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions [differing opinions], factions [artificial actions], envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you...that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Read again and underline those sins that are usually committed by men – the ones that we in the church call *real* sins. Next, circle the sins we tend to ignore in the church – those that are usually committed by women. Gal. 5:19-21.

Restore in a spirit of gentleness. Many women feel it is their responsibility to punish or chastise others who sin, especially their own husbands. Scripture tells us differently and shows us the consequences of these prideful actions. Let us not forget the log in our own eye. Remember that all sins are the same to God. Don’t let Satan fool you into thinking that *your husband’s* sins are worse than yours. “Brethren, even if a man is caught in *any trespass*, you who are spiritual, **restore** such a one **in a spirit of gentleness** [KJV **consideration**]; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.” Gal. 6:1-3.

Esteem others better than yourselves. Are you surprised that Scripture says that we are to esteem and have a high regard *for others*? Our world has taken God’s command “to esteem others better than ourselves” and twisted it to teach us to build up ourselves, rather than others. “Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each **esteem** others better than themselves. Do not look out for your own interests, but also for the interests of others. Have the attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.” Phil 2:3-7.

Esteem them very highly. Our husbands labor for us and have charge over us. Do you make his job as the head of his household easier or harder? “We request of you, brethren, that you **appreciate** those who

diligently labor among you and have charge over you...and that you **esteem** them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.” 1Thes. 5:13. If you also work, and therefore feel you are exempt from this command, turn to lesson 13, “The Ways of Her Household,” for “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge....” Hosea 4:6.

Worthy of all honor. What does Scripture say about **honor**? Honor is defined as to regard others highly. We are to regard our husbands as worthy of honor. “Let all who are under the yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all **honor** so that the name of God and our doctrine *may not be spoken against*.” 1Tim 6:1. When we do not honor those over us, like our husbands, our pastor, our bosses or our parents, then the name of God and the doctrine of our faith will be spoken against by others.

Servant of Jesus Christ. When we read about being our husband’s servant, the “self” in us rises up - along with the hair on the back of our necks. Ladies, we are bond-servants of the Lord. “Paul, a **bond-servant of Jesus Christ**....” Rom. 1:1. The verse says, “Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” Eph. 5:22. This means that we serve the Lord when we are subject to our husbands. We know that God Himself said we are to have no other gods before Him. He didn’t make an exception with our husbands. Be subject; do it for the Lord!

Their deeds deny Him. Remember that by showing honor to our husbands, we bring glory to God. The consequence of not showing this type of respect is dishonoring God and His Word. “They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and **disobedient**, and worthless for any good deed.” Titus 1:16. “...to be...kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the Word of God may not be **dishonored**.” Titus 2:5. And, “Wives be subject to your own husbands, **as to the Lord**.” Eph. 5:22.

Honor

Grant her honor. We, as women, long to have our husbands treat us as in the following verse: “You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her **honor** as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.” 1Pet. 3:7. By striving to be quiet and gentle and giving honor to our husbands in a chaste and respectful manner, we can receive the blessing of having husbands who honor and understand us. Here are some guidelines on how to receive the honor that we long to obtain:

By being gracious. “A *gracious woman* receives **honor**.” Prov. 11:16.

Honoring and submitting from the heart. “This people **honors** me with their lips, but their *heart is far away from Me*.” Matt. 15:8.

By being humble. “And before **honor** comes humility.” Prov. 15:33.

By being humble. “But humility goes before **honor**.” Prov. 18:12.

Again, by being humble. “A man’s pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit obtains **honor**.” Prov. 29:23.

The wife must reverence her husband. What does Scripture say about *reverence*? Reverence is having a feeling of *great respect*, love, awe, and esteem; to fear. Many of us do not respect or show reverence to

our husbands. How can we as Christian women ignore the Scriptures? “And the wife see that she **reverence** her husband.” Eph. 5:33 KJV. In the NAS version it is stated, “And let the wife see to it that she **respects** her husband.”

Where is your treasure? What does Scripture say about *appreciation*? Appreciation is defined as having favorable recognition; to cherish, enjoy, value, understand; to treasure (especially in the marriage vow); to take loving care of; to keep alive (in emotion). We spoke about doing things from the heart. If your husband is not one of your treasures, your heart is not with him. “For where your **treasure** is there will be your *heart* also.” Matt. 6:21.

Sometimes when we lose something or temporarily misplace it, we realize how important it was to us. Do you need to lose your husband, as I did, for you to treasure him? Or, for those of you who are praying for the Lord to restore your marriage, did it take losing your husband for you to realize what you had? *It did with me!*

A soothing tongue. How can you take care of your husband spiritually and keep him alive emotionally? Speak sweetly and gently to your husband. “A **soothing tongue** is a tree of life, but perversion in it crushes the spirit.” Prov. 15:4. This blessing can be yours. “All the days of the afflicted are bad, but a **cheerful heart** has a *continual feast*.” Prov. 15:15.

Here is a caution. Watch what you say about your husband and how you correct him in the company of others (or in private). **Shame** is an emotional cancer. “An excellent wife is a crown to her husband, but she who *shames* him is as **rotteness in his bones**.” Prov. 12:4. Rottteness is defined as decay by caries (cavities); decay as by *worm eating*. That’s interesting since it says about the adulteress: “In the end she is *bitter* as **wormwood**, sharp as a two-edged sword.” Prov. 5:4.

Anxiety in the heart. When your husband has financial worries or job-related worries, a good word will encourage him. (Heaven forbid that his anxiety is from you.) Remember, your husband is not **your** helper; you are his. Take your troubles or worries to the Lord. “**Anxiety in the heart** of a man weighs it down, but a *good word* makes it glad.” Prov. 12:25.

The tongue of the wise. Your tongue can have two opposing effects. Which will you choose? “There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, but the *tongue of the wise* brings **healing**.” Prov. 12:18. Healing also comes from a joyful heart. “A **joyful heart** is *good medicine*, but a *broken spirit* dries up the bones.” Prov. 17:22.

A joyful heart. Let your face show the joy that is in your heart. “A **joyful heart** makes a *cheerful face*, but when the heart is sad, the *spirit is broken*.” Prov. 15:13. The word joyful is used in the New American Standard and the word merry is used in the King James Version.

Joyful and Merry

Let’s learn more about being joyful and merry. Merry is defined as glad, **joyful, rejoicing**. Joyful is defined as (being) a good woman, pleasant, precious, sweet, **grateful, agreeable**.

Rejoice always. But sometimes in our circumstances we feel sad. How can we possibly be merry or joyful? “**Rejoice in the Lord always**, again I say **rejoice**.” Phil 4:4. And when are we to rejoice? “**Rejoice**

always.” 1Thes. 5:16. But what are we to be thankful for? “In **everything give thanks**; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” 1Thes. 5:18. Do you thank God *every* time that you think of your husband? Paul said, “I **thank my God** in **all my remembrance** of you.” Phil. 1:3.

Agree quickly. The following Scripture is not saying that your husband is your adversary; it is saying that you should agree with everyone quickly, even your adversary. “**Agree** with thine adversary **quickly** while thou art in the way with him.” Matt. 5:25. Remember, “**blessed** are the peacemakers!” (Matt. 5:9)

Without murmuring. Do you complain? Do you whine and murmur under your breath? If you do, you are not grateful! “Do **all things** without **murmuring and complaining**.” Phil. 2:14.

Learn the secret. We may think that in our circumstances, we have reason to whine. Let us learn about being content. “...for I have *learned* to be **content** in **whatever circumstances** I am. I know how to get along with humble means...and in any and **every circumstance** I have **learned the secret** of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.” Phil. 4:11-12. **AMEN AND AMEN!**

Scorn, Blame, Censure

Antonyms of *respectful* are to scorn, blame or censure. Do you scorn your husband? Do you blame him for past failures? Or do you censure where he goes or what he says? Then you must RENEW your mind to understand who is the leader of the family. (See lesson 9 “Helper Suitable” for “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge....” Hosea 4:6.)

Love and Respect

A Practical Application

Many women, many times without knowing it, actually create the “lack of the man” they despise. Scripture tells us that “the wise woman builds her house, but the foolish tears it down with her own hands.”(Prov. 14:1) I have heard women speak about their husbands to other women. They have no idea that when they verbally “tear down” their own husbands, they are tearing down their own homes. Somehow they think that if they “challenge” their husband, it may somehow cause him to try harder.

How ridiculous and foolish we women are! It says that God’s people perish for a lack of knowledge. We women certainly perish for our lack of knowledge. We feel that if we are firm, that’s motivation. On the contrary! Scripture tells us that sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness. (Prov. 16:21) Also “love covers a multitude of sins.” (1Pet. 4:8). And we have the promise that “Love never fails...!” 1Cor. 13:8. So let us begin with love!

Love is a verb; it’s an action. It is popular to hear the phrases “I love you but...I can’t live with you...I don’t want to be married,” etc., etc. Also, “I am not *‘in love’* with you,” as though it is some sort of “magical spell” you’re under. Let us look at the Author of love and His definition in 1Cor. 13:4-8: “Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the Truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails....” Ask yourself these questions:

Are you *patient* with your husband?

Are you *kind* in action and speech?

Are you *jealous* of his life, of what he has or his position as head of the family?

Do you have to *brag* to your husband or act *arrogant* about what God has blessed you with? Pride comes before the fall. Reread lesson 6, “A Contentious Woman.”

Do you *act unbecomingly* in front of your husband? In other words, in a way you wouldn't act in front of your friends?

Do you fight for your *own way*?

Do you remember times in the past when your husband has *caused you wrong* and you brought it up to win an argument? What do the Scriptures say about forgiving?

Do you rejoice in the *wrong things* or in the right things?

Do you *bear the burden* of things without grumbling?

Do you *believe* your husband when he tells you things, or are you suspicious?

Do you *hope* for the best in him?

Do you *endure* all the trials God brings into your life, even those brought in through your husband?

Is divorce something you have thought or spoken about?

If you answered “yes” to any of the above, then we must ask God to put into our hearts the love that can only come from Him – agape love, *unconditional* love. If we do not exhibit this kind of love, then sadly the Truth says, “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.” 1Cor. 13:1-3.

We women love to hear the words “I love you!” I'm sure your husband loves to hear them, too. But what means more to your husband is the way you respect him; this *shows* your love. It's a lot like when your children *say* they love you, but disobey you. Wouldn't you rather have a child who obeyed you? One who *showed* that he loved you?

Respect

Ask yourself these questions to see if you respect your husband:

Do you ask him what time he will be home? Have you set up a curfew?

Do you give him privacy in his thoughts and when and where he goes? Or do you ask him: “What are you thinking?” or “Where are you going?”

Do you demand meal attendance? “You had better be home on time for dinner this time.”

Do you watch the checkbook and his spending? “What did you buy? What for?”

Are you his Holy Spirit or his mother? “Honey, you really should....”

Do you give him “unasked-for advice” or criticism? “I think...blah, blah, blah...!”

Do you feel that these questions uncovered a lot of ways in which you do not show respect for your husband? Do they reveal the *man* that you desire him to be? Use these questions as a guide to your attitude and actions with your husband. Ladies, if you say “but he is no man to be respected,” let me let you in on a little secret. If you treat him the way you would like to see him, you will allow him to be that very man! Here are some more ways you can show respect:

By listening to him.

By stopping what you are doing and looking at him.

By not interrupting him.

By nodding your head and keeping eye contact.

By using nice expressions, not rolling your eyes or letting out a deep sigh.

By teaching the children not to interrupt.

By answering him with “Yes, *let's*” instead of “Yes, *but*”

By the way you talk to him.

By not talking about what you know doesn't interest him.

By keeping it short.

By not lecturing or teaching him.

By not grumbling or complaining.

By accepting him rather than changing him.

If he says he's going out, don't quiz him, mope, or get mad. Instead, tell him “I'll wait up” and kiss him good-bye.

Go where he wants to go: sporting events, trips, etc. If you won't go, someone else will!

Respect his decisions.

Don't debate or question his authority, pout or try to prove him wrong. Remember, it was Eve who was greatly deceived!

Develop interest in what he likes.

Be appreciative of what he does; thank him! This is the opposite of expectations.

How you look when he's around shows respect. Do you wear your make-up? Fix your hair? Does he hate what you wear?

Give away the clothes he doesn't like; then you won't be tempted to wear them - especially those frumpy nightclothes!

Laugh at his jokes; if you don't someone else will!

Make a list.

Make a list of his good character traits and start telling him how much you admire him. Is he honest, affectionate, faithful, kind, funny, a good listener, a good provider, a hard worker, thrifty or a good protector? If you really can't find any good qualities, ask God to point them out to you.

Also, go back to when you first fell in love and remember what qualities he had then. Maybe you can rekindle some of those first feelings. Tell him what you remember. "Seek and you shall find!" (Luke 11:9) If you look for the good in people (your husband), that's what you'll find.

Marabell Morgan wrote a book several years ago called *Total Woman*. In it she said that to make your man feel loved, do the four "A's"— Accept, Admire, Adapt, and Appreciate him. I think that covers a lot of what we lack, don't you? (I don't advise that you read this book since it tells how to do things in the *flesh* rather than in the Spirit.)

My final statement is this...if you do it to get results from your husband, it will never work. Instead you must do it "as unto the Lord." You must do it because it honors God. He put your husband over you. If you don't respect your husband, you really don't respect God's Word. Anything that you don't like in your husband's actions or appearance must be given to the Lord. When it's His battle there is always victory! Honor God by honoring your husband. Don't try to please your husband; let your motivation be to please the Lord by giving the respect and reverence God commands. "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart." Ps. 37:4.

"And he will have no lack of gain." Proverbs 31:11.

Personal commitment: To show chaste and respectful behavior toward my husband. "Based on what I have just learned from God's Word, I strive to be chaste in my life. I also commit to demonstrate a respectful attitude toward my husband because of the example it sets for others and the honor it gives to God and His Word."

Date: _____ Signed: _____