

Surviving & Thriving in a  
Spiritually Mismatched Marriage



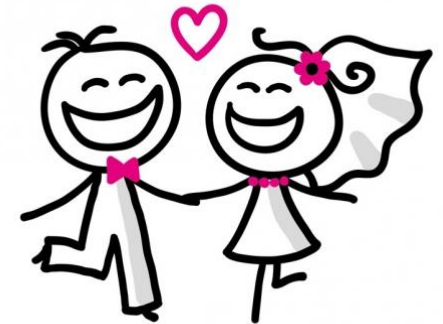
# Disclaimers

- Please seek professional help for relationships involving abuse, addictions, or adultery.
- Please hold all questions until the end of the seminar.



# Today, we will examine mismatched marriages from several angles.

- Ours
- Our Spouse
- The Church
- God's Ideal & Purpose



**We will also look at Biblical examples & scriptures, and equip you with some practical tools you can use to implement into your marriage.**

A romantic couple is silhouetted against a vibrant sunset on a beach. The man is on the left, and the woman is on the right, both with their arms raised and hands touching, suggesting a dance or a moment of joy. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow over the ocean and the wet sand. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow clouds. The entire scene is framed by a large, semi-transparent circular graphic that has a subtle spiral or ripple effect. The text is overlaid on the image in a classic, serif font.

**Can Two Walk Together**

**Except They Be Agreed**

*Amos 3:3*

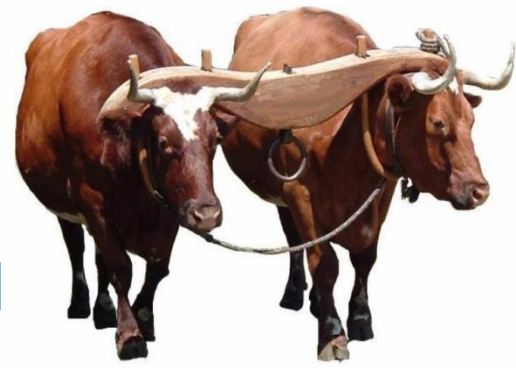




I <sup>can do</sup> ALL  
things through  
CHRIST  
who strengthens me.

- Philippians 4:13

# What does it mean to be “Spiritually Mismatched”?



- Unequally Yoked—2 Cor 6: 14
  - “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? What communion hath light with darkness?”
- What does it mean to “yoke” something together?
- What happens when one (animal/person) is stronger than the other?
- How can this result be avoided?
- Who are we supposed to be yoked to?
- How would being yoked with Jesus in our marriages affect our relationships?

“I’ve fallen and I can’t get up”





# Our side of the story...

- ❑ Loneliness
- ❑ Bitterness over situation/ disappointed expectations for our marriages
- ❑ Loss of respect & love for spouse
- ❑ Burden of being the spiritual leader in home
- ❑ Disagreements in raising children/home rules
- ❑ Feeling criticized/ostracized by husband and church
- ❑ Envy/Jealousy over other marriages/relationships
- ❑ Feeling unloved/unappreciated/misunderstood
- ❑ Distrust of husbands decisions
- ❑ Feelings of inadequacy/frustration
- ❑ Fear never being able to “convert” spouse/make him respect your beliefs
- ❑ Fear his influence on children/their choices/blame him for children’s mistakes
- ❑ Need someone to talk to—nobody understands or cares
- ❑ Fear spouse will be lost
  - ⊙ Sometimes can become manipulative
  - ⊙ Can set husband up to fail to “prove” he is wrong/you right



# God's Will, Not Ours

If you are married, remaining married is God's best will for you, and is the best possible option for God to work for the redemption of your spouse.

- 1 Cor 7:1-16 “if anyone has a spouse who is not a believer, and they are willing to live together, do not divorce. For the unbelieving spouse is sanctified by the believing spouse. For now your children are holy. But if an unbeliever leaves, let them do so. A believer is not bound in such circumstances. God has called us to live in peace. How do you know wife, whether you will save your husband?”

# Scriptures

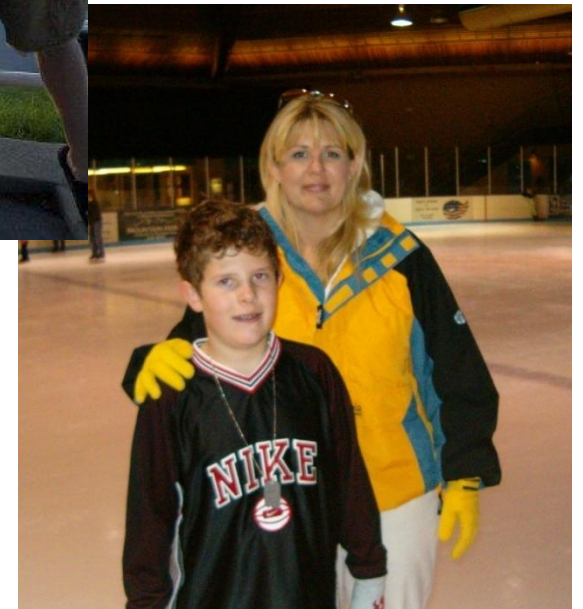
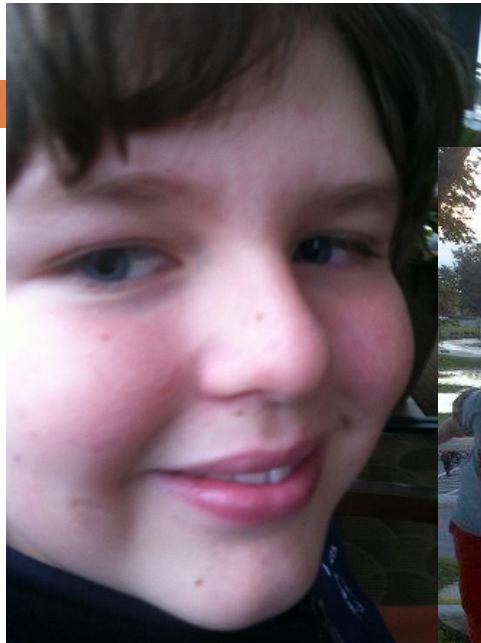
- **Phil 2:3 NET** Instead of being motivated by selfish ambition or vanity, each of you should, in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself.
- **Rom 12:10 ISV** Be devoted to each other with mutual affection. Excel at showing respect for each other.
- **Mark 10:9** Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.

# Our Story



For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.

# Fast Forward





# His side of the story...



# His side of the story

- ❑ **He is not a DIY ‘project’, or ‘jewel’ in our crown**
  - ⦿ Wants acceptance for who he is as a human being—as someone you loved enough to marry
- ❑ **We are not his savior—its not up to us to convert him**
- ❑ **Feels his conversion is for our own ease—to make our lives easier, not out of love for him**
- ❑ **He loves his family/wife no matter how often he does/doesn’t attend church**
- ❑ **Feels his responsibility for his family as head of the house—burden can be lightened or made heavier by wife/family**
  - ⦿ Hurts him as a man when his advice or decisions are disregarded, or he is not consulted
  - ⦿ will defer decisions with home & children to you if he trusts you and knows you will not hurt him—he just wants to know what is going on in his home.
- ❑ **Feels judged/criticized/disrespected**
  - ⦿ Why he has a hard time going to church; feels his faults have been discussed among the members by wife seeking support from church family. No privacy between you.
- ❑ **Hurt by sarcasm**
- ❑ **Don’t play the martyr, “sacrificing” or suffering for God instead of enjoying your marriage**
- ❑ **Don’t focus on what he is doing wrong, instead praise what he does right.**
- ❑ **Speak well of him, especially in front of others.**

# His side of the story

- **He is lonely too—all our energy is given to others/church**
- **Fears divorce/isolation—being alone**
- **Feels unappreciated, unsupported and unloved many times**
- **Feels like he's not a priority in time/attention/affections/finances**
- **Feels jealousy/envy over our relationship with Christ—another 'man'**
- **He needs you to help him find constructive ways to “cope” with his emotions**
  - Laughing, talking, walking, nature, recreational partner
- **He loves you—he just doesn't always know how to show it**
- **It would crush him and make him feel like a failure if you left him**
  - You are one flesh, supernaturally a part of him. Your absence causes him pain.
- **You bring good, happiness, joy and light to his world**
  - This world crushes men, substitutes a false manhood for the Biblical model.—glorifies sin
  - We can bring out the boy or the king/hero in our spouse—all in how you treat him
- **He depends on you and needs you more than he would like for you to know and it's hard to admit even to himself—you are his helper, he can't do life without you**

# Church pressures

- ◉ **Pressure the spouse to be baptized/attend regularly/take a position/be there every time the doors are open or respond to an altar call**
  - Spouse sometimes feels church is all about him/her responding to calls and not about worshipping
  - Public pressure to commit—some spouses prefer private consultation/work
- ◉ **Members Blame/Guilt/Shame one spouse or the other—give advice**
  - “if I was in that situation, I’d...”
  - “You should...”
- ◉ **Lack of inclusiveness**
  - Exclusive classes/studies/friendships—separation from regular married members
  - Some see you as a threat to marriages/easily tempted/unfaithful in heart & mind
- ◉ **Acts like there is something “wrong” with your spouse if they are not in church**
  - Some deep secret sin
  - Asking where they are, what they are doing
  - Wish the church members would reach out to call/contact/support our spouse personally
- ◉ **Acts like there is something “wrong” if you appear happy, joyful**
  - Not sad enough—must not love or care about spouse
- ◉ **Airing of private situations in prayer services or meetings**
  - Private/Personal information is shared among members
  - Gossip in the form of “prayer requests”



# God's Ideal Plan

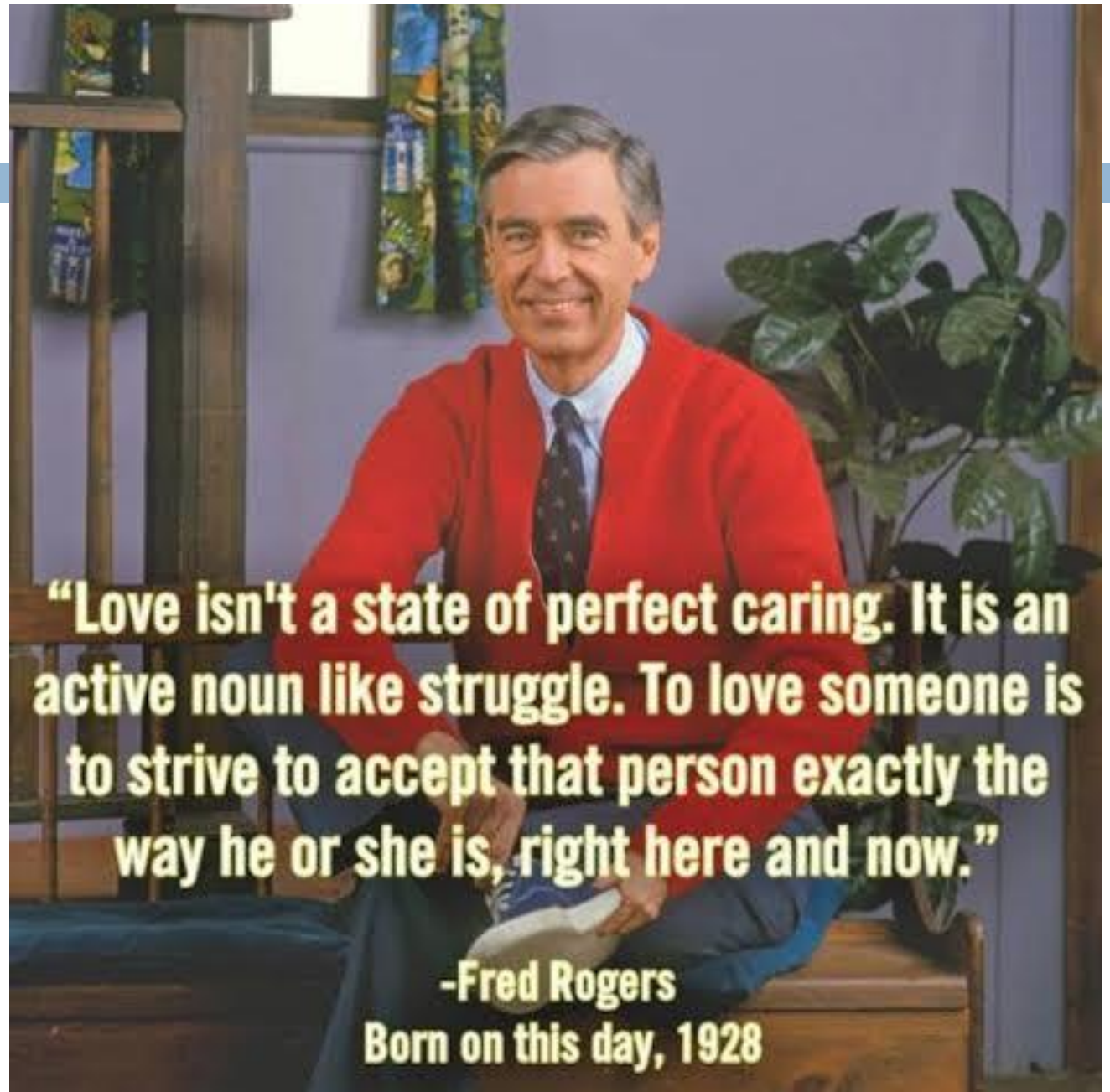
- **Marriage to be a training ground on what real love is, how to love**
  - Can't truly express love if there is nobody to love, or it's easy to love (love is sacrificial)
  - Father, Son, Spirit = unity/family/one (all sacrifice for the other)
- **An example of God relationship with us**
  - Intimate/Personal
  - Committed
  - Redemptive
- **An example of organization/authority**
  - Heaven has a system
  - Earth has a system
- **Requires death (to self)**
  - Death of the flesh, life in the Spirit
  - Choosing the will of God over our own
- **Relationship is binding—covenant**

# Characteristics of Healthy Relationships

- Love
- Respect & Honor
- Submission (Deference/Preference)
- Fruit/Action
- Honesty
- Redemptive/Forgiving
- Influential



# Love



**“Love isn't a state of perfect caring. It is an active noun like struggle. To love someone is to strive to accept that person exactly the way he or she is, right here and now.”**

**-Fred Rogers  
Born on this day, 1928**

# Love

- **1 Cor 13: 1-13** If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.
  - ⦿ How are we doing in loving our spouses according to this verse? Is our love selfish? Or sacrificial?
- **Titus 2:4** ...urge the younger women to love their husbands and children
  - ⦿ What example of love are we giving to the younger generation, to our children?
- **1 John 4:7,8** Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.



# Respect & Honor

- Definition of Respect:  
Esteem, defer to
- Ephesians 5:33
  - ⊙ ...the wife must respect her husband.
- 1 Corinthians 11:3
  - ⊙ But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God.



# Men are held responsible for their wives decisions/vows

**Numbers 30** ...If she marries after she makes a vow or utters a rash promise by which she obligates herself **7** and her husband hears about it (by whom, when?) but says nothing to her, then her vows or pledge will stand. **8** But if her husband forbids her when he hears about it (by whom, when?), he nullifies the vow and the Lord will release her. Her husband may confirm or nullify any vow she makes. **15** If, however, he nullifies them some time after he hears about them (by whom, when?), then he must bear the consequences of her wrongdoing.”

- The husband is held accountable for his own agreements and commitments AND for those of his family. All the consequences of any family decision, HE bears. He is the manager of his family and will be held accountable to God.
- Shouldn't he have the authority to make decisions for his family, all of which he will ultimately give an account?
- **Genesis 20** Abraham asks Sarah , out of love for him, to tell people she is his sister so he will not be killed if someone wants to take her. Sarah complies. Who is called to account? ABRAHAM.
- **1 Peter 3:1-6** Sarah is commended for her respect

# Adam & Eve

## □ Genesis 3—The Fall

- Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast... And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’” Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. **She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate...** And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?” So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.” And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”

# Adam & Eve

Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” And the Lord God said to the woman, “What *is* this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” So the Lord God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, You *are* cursed...

To the woman He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire *shall be* for your husband, And he shall rule over you.”

Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “Cursed *is* the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you *are*, And to dust you shall return.” Genesis 3

# Submission/Obedience

most material from: [GirlsGoneWise.com/7misconceptions](http://GirlsGoneWise.com/7misconceptions) about submission

- True meaning of submission: the action or fact of accepting or yielding to the will or authority of another person.
- **Ephesians 5:21** Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

To submit means:

- ⊙ To follow
- ⊙ To allow another to take initiative
- ⊙ To defer final decision making
- ⊙ To place oneself under the care of another
- ⊙ To give headship/authority to another
- ⊙ Not so much an action as an attitude



# Our Example

- Philippians 2:5-8 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.

# Submission/Obedience

- **1 Peter 3:1-6** Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it 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. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.
  - Submission is to OWN husband
  - Submission can win husbands affections/possibly salvation
  - Submission is counter-cultural—do not fear doing what is right
  - Submission is a choice—IF you do what is right. You have the choice.

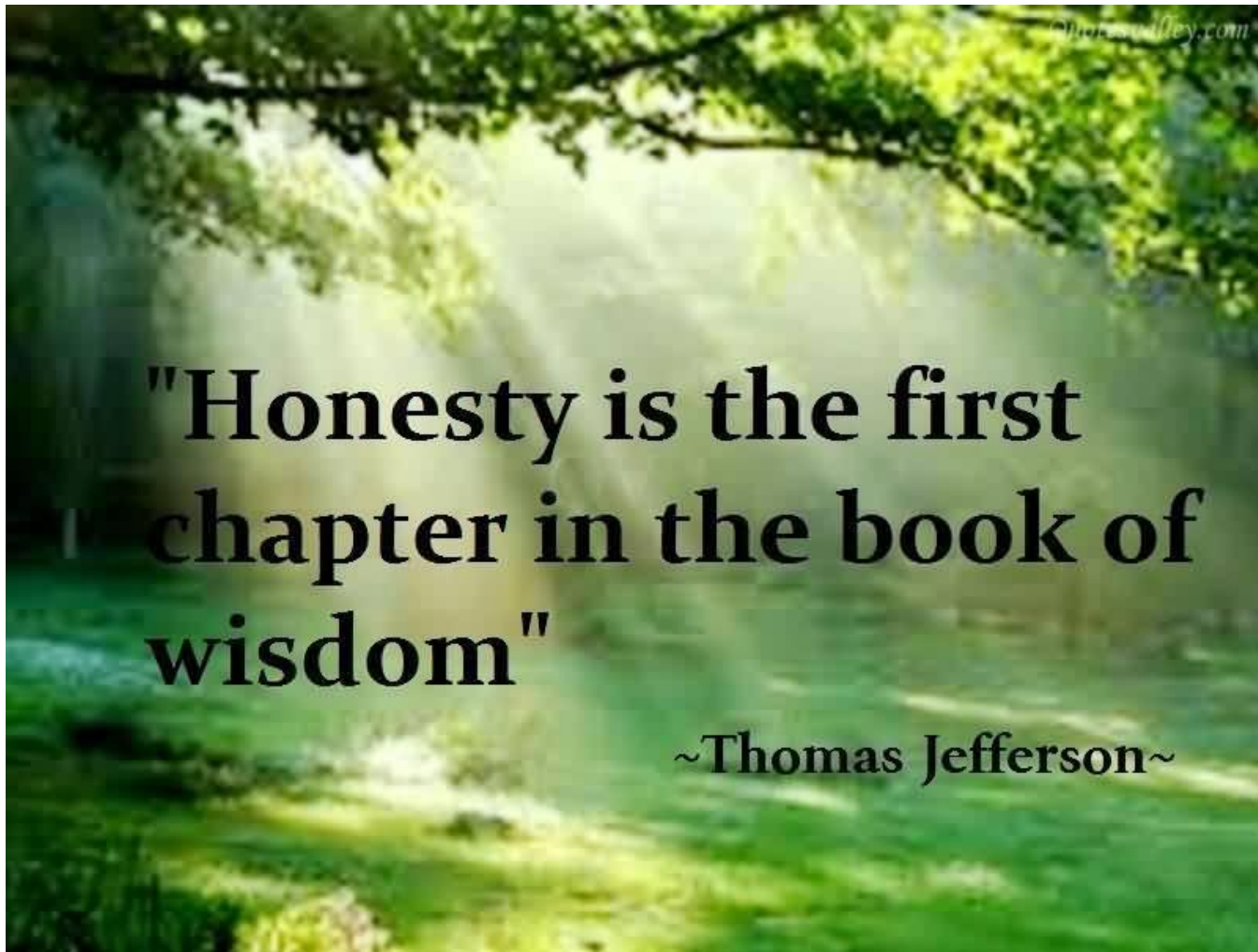
# Submission/Obedience

- Colossians 3:18 Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, **as is fitting in the Lord.**
  - **Submission is not indiscriminate. It does not mean mindless acquiescence.**
    - A woman is called to weigh her primary responsibility to God with how/if she must to submit to faulty human authority—this takes much prayer and wisdom and the answers will be different for each person. (decisions on media, home rules, finances etc...)
    - We are to challenge our husbands to ever increasing levels of holiness—bring out the best in him
  - **Submission involves having clear boundaries and enacting consequences when they are broken. These are decided upon by both husband and wife.**
    - Boundaries must be communicated, and enforced
    - Not called to endure mistreatment, sin, abuse, addictions or adultery
    - A woman can have a submissive heart, even when saying no
    - Boundaries shows our husbands we respect ourselves as the purchased possession of Christ—Commitment to Christ/Word
    - Shows our husbands we will not condone his sin, as he also has been bought and paid for by Christ and will give account of his decisions
  - **When properly understood submission is protective.**
    - Each of us is accountable to a higher authority, a guide and protector

# Fruit/Action

- Galatians 5:22, 23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
- James 2:17 NLT So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

# Honesty





# Honesty

## John 1:44-50

Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

“Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked.

“Come and see,” said Philip.

When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, “Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit.”

“How do you know me?” Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, “I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.

Then Nathanael declared, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel.”

# Redemptive/Forgiving

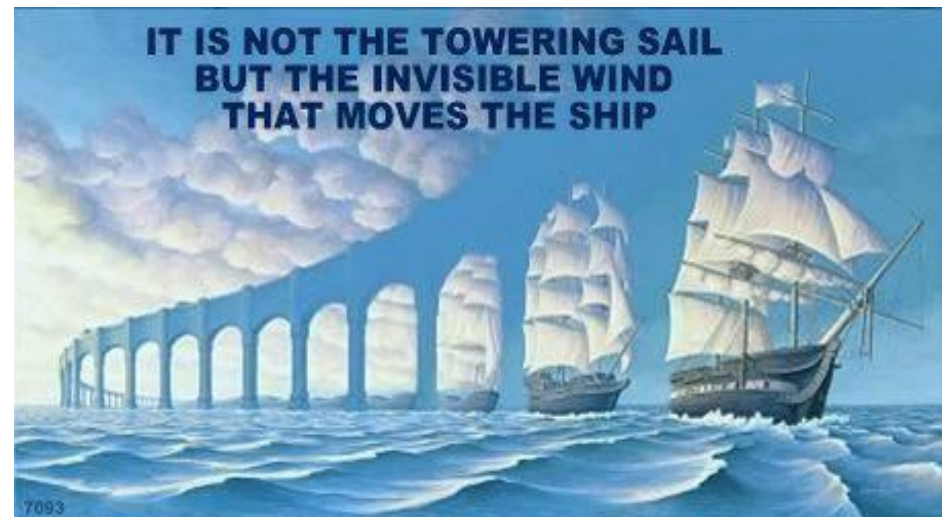
- **Ephesians 4:31, 32** Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.



The weak can  
never forgive.  
Forgiveness is  
the attribute of  
the strong.  
- Mahatma Gandhi

# Influential

- Holy Spirit is like wind, it comes and goes, moves things
- Wives can have powerful influence over their husbands
- Sailboat example
  - Husband = captain
  - Wind = wives influence
  - Sails = listening
  - Storms = arguing, wresting the wheel from husband
  - Shipwreck = mistake, storm
  - Repair = getting back on track
- Biblical Wives—what influence?
  - Eve
  - Jezebel
  - Pilates Wife
  - Herodias
  - Sarah



# Practical Help—Begin Again

- Commit to improving your marriage no matter how hard it seems
- Pray for your marriage—ask God to help you love your spouse with a Christ-like love
- Spend quality time with God—study His counsel
- Read, research, take advantage of marriage resources—educate yourself
- Cooperate with God—do what He says
- Be content—and patient
- Tell your husband that you want to work on improving your marriage—be open

# Practical Help

- Seek your husbands counsel, talk to him
- Show & speak love
  - Assure him you love him, and no matter what happens, the two of you can get through it
  - Apologize for your mistakes...not caring enough, whatever your situation
  - Tell him you appreciate his good qualities...a good provider, hard worker, good father, funny, happy, smile, etc...
  - When you make cookies for church, make him some too—do things
- Tell the truth, always—have integrity
- Forgive
- Strive to become more and more influential to him—give him the wheel of your family
- Set boundaries, personal & spiritual
- Love unconditionally, Like Christ



# Scriptures

- "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." [Proverbs 3:5-6](#)
- "Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." [Joshua 1:9](#)
- "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." [Romans 8:28](#)
- "For I know the plans I have for you," declares The Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." [Jeremiah 29:11](#)

# Scriptures

- "Be completely humble and gentle; Be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace." [Ephesians 4:2-3](#)
- "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." [Ephesians 4:32](#)
- "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins." [1 Peter 4:8](#)