

Woman
of NOBLE
CHARACTER

*Loved well to
love well*

BARB WILSON

LEADER GUIDE – CLASS NOTES

Leader Guide - Class Notes



The content in this guide corresponds to the Class Notes and Branching Out sections of the WONC participant workbook that feature blanks to be filled in by participants.

The underlined text in this guide corresponds to the blanks in the workbook. Participants can complete these blanks during class/teaching time.

The page numbers noted indicate where to find the content in the participant workbook.

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Introductory Lesson



Introduction: Woman of Noble Character

(Pages xiv-xviii)

I. Title

A. Significance of the Cover

1. Blurry/beautiful/bountiful tree: represents/symbolizes each of us
2. Growing/planting/flourishing/cultivating theme: There should never be a time no matter how old you are, when you stop flourishing, growing, and being fruitful. - Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

B. Woman

1. English definition
 - a. An adult female human being; a person who has xx chromosomes and reproductive organs that make bearing children possible
 - b. New definition: An adult who lives and identifies as female
2. Hebrew definition - Strongs #802 ishshah: woman, wife
 - a. Genesis 2:23 - She shall be called woman
 - b. Proverbs 31:10 "wife of noble character"

C. Noble Character - Strongs #2428

1. To be courageous or valiant, term used for warriors
2. Virtuous - having strength and influence that God supplies
3. Must be a believer
4. WONC for short

D. Loved Well: by God

1. Hesed = love, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, mercy, compassion
2. N.T. =
 - a. Ephesians 3:17-19

- b. Romans 8:38-39
- 3. Your longing for acceptance and approval is an unquenched thirst for Jesus and His unconditional love for you - Rebekah Lyons

E. To Love Well:

- 1. We love because He first loved us - 1 John 4:19
- 2. Two Top Commands: Love God and love others - Matthew 22:36-40
- 3. Your purpose is to become Exhibit A in demonstrating real love at work in the real world
- 4. Life is about relationships: with God and people
- 5. From Genesis 1-2 we learn that we were created to live in a vertical and a horizontal community of love - love God and love others; it's how God designed us to live, as well as being dependent and obedient. - Paul Tripp

II. **Workbook Features**

- A. Front Matter
- B. Format of Lessons
- C. Harvest - Cultivate

III. **Immersed in God's Word and Intentional in My Walk**

- A. The primary purpose of God's Word/Truth is not just information but transformation, especially how we live during difficult times. (Brad Bigney)

- B. Change Process: Where are you stuck?
 - 1. Hear or read Truth
 - 2. Admit and agree with the Truth
 - 3. Realize and identify personal need for growth
 - 4. Confess, repent, pray for help
 - 5. Determine specific growth steps - Cultivate
 - 6. Actually do the growth steps
 - 7. Accountability
 - 8. Repeat

- C. Every day we make hundreds of choices: Will I be kind or harsh? Proud or humble? Worship self or God? Obey or disobey? Make study time a priority or not? Choices determine who we are and have consequences.

IV. **Biblical Marriage**

- A. Definition: Marriage is a binding covenant created by God between one man and one woman for our holiness, for our joy, as a picture of the gospel, and to spread the glory of God - M. Leake
- B. Every marriage involves two people who are naturally selfish and at times insensitive. They are going to hurt each other, misunderstand each other, and fail to meet each other's needs. But don't leave God out of the picture. - Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth
- C. Marriage involves a flawed person in a love relationship with another flawed person in the middle of a fallen world - but with a faithful God. There is not a day in any marriage where ministry is not required. No one plans to struggle in marriage, but we all do. God is using your circumstances to mold you into what He created you to be. - Paul Tripp
- D. Cinderella Syndrome or the Princess Problem: if only I could get married!! My Prince Charming will make me gloriously happy and meet all my needs. "The ultimate purpose of marriage is not to make us happy, but to glorify God. Those who get married for the purpose of finding happiness are setting themselves up for almost certain disappointment; they seldom find what they are looking for. True joy can only be found through Jesus Christ." - Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

V. **Reasons Relationships are Difficult** (based on material by Chip Ingram)

- A. Everyone sins every day. To some degree everyone is selfish, prideful, and flawed. If you are married, you chose to marry a sinner. And so did he. All relationships are affected by sin.

- B. Males and females are different in how they communicate, think, feel, process, and respond. They have different priorities, *hobbies*, and values.
- C. People have different personalities and temperaments. We are drawn to others who are the opposite of us. Then we try to change them into us.
- D. We bring our expectations, baggage, culture, and opinions into our relationships. Relationships are fragile; people are fragile and must be handled with care.

It is impossible for any human to meet your needs. Only God can give the love and significance you need. Everything in our lives springs from our relationship with Him.

"Put Me first and everything else will be added to you," the Word of God says. -

Lorraine Brosious

VI. Key Verses as We Begin

- A. 1 John 4:19 - We love because He first loved us
- B. Philippians 1:27 - Whatever happens, conduct yourselves worthy of the gospel of Christ
- C. Romans 13:14 - Let the Lord Jesus Christ take control of you, and don't think of ways to indulge your evil desires (NLT)
- D. John 15:5 - Without Me, you can do nothing
- E. Philippians 4:13 - I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me
- F. Jeremiah 7:23 - Walk in all the ways I command you
- G. James 1:25 - Do not become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer...and God will bless you

VII. Looking Unto Jesus: Hebrews 12:2 - Fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith

Lesson 1: Commit to Obey God



Definition of wisdom

(Page 3)

Knowing how to apply the truth of God's Word in every situation. It is the capacity to choose the God-honoring way and involves discerning right from wrong.

Definition of Foolishness: a stubborn refusal to do what is right; a rejection of God's commands and ways

A fool is not teachable. You are teachable if:

1. You humbly receive criticism, advise, and input from others
2. There is measurable, noticeable growth in your life
3. You do not defend or excuse your mistakes and weaknesses
4. You are not always committing the same sins repeatedly

Definition of hesed

(Page 4)

Hebrew word translated as God's steadfast love (ESV) or lovingkindness (NASB). We do not have an English word for it but hesed includes kindness, goodness, mercy, compassion, love, and faithfulness. This Hebrew word is used 123 times just in the Psalms.

Ways to respond to God's commands by Joe Stowell

(Page 5)

1. Disdain
2. Doubt
3. Duty

4. Devotion

5. Delight

"How blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who greatly delights in His commands.

- Psalm 112:1

Equation

(Page 11)

God's Word + my response x time = maturity, growth.

Jude 1:20-21

(Page 12)

We are responsible and dependent for our spiritual growth. (Jude 1:20-21)

Lesson 2: Commit to Obey God - Part 2



Branching Out: Characteristics of the Transformed Life

(Page 36)

Psalm 119

1. Are you obedient to the Lord? V. 2-4
2. Is your life full of praise? V. 7
3. Can your life be characterized as pure? V. 9
4. Do you have victory over sin? V. 11
5. Do you enjoy obeying the Lord? V. 16
6. Does your counsel come from the Word? V. 24
7. Are you refreshed and strengthened by the Word? V. 28
8. Are you a woman of integrity? V. 30
9. Do you experience inner freedom? V. 32, 45
10. Are you unselfish? V. 36
11. Do you turn from worthless and destructive practices and philosophies? V. 37
12. Do you have hope? V. 43, 49
13. Where do you find your comfort? V. 50, 52
14. Are you developing good judgment? V. 66
15. Is your heart sensitive? V. 70
16. Do you have eternal values? V. 72
17. Are you growing in wisdom? V. 98-100
18. Do you find guidance from the Word? V. 105
19. Do you hate evil? V. 128

20. Are you growing in your understanding of Truth? V. 130
21. Does the sinfulness of the world cause you sorrow? V. 136
22. In the midst of trouble and pain, do you still experience joy? V. 143
23. Is your prayer life growing? V. 147
24. During persecution, do you remain true to God? V. 157
25. Do you have inner peace and stability? V. 165
26. Do you receive help from God? V. 173

“The transformed life requires daily submission of your will to the Lord by feeding on His Word.”

(The material above was taken from *Why Christians Can't Trust Psychology* by Ed Bulkeley)

“A life of discipleship is not focused on rules, regulations, and loop-holes; rather, it seeks to have the heart focused on Jesus. Discipleship involves giving over all aspects of life to God.” - *Today in the Word*

Lesson 3: Love is Commanded by God



Satan's lies:

(Page 41)

- a. God is not good.
 - b. God's Word is not true.
 - c. God's intentions are oppressive and restrictive.
 - d. God is not enough.
 - e. God's will for you involves *loss* without any purpose.
-

Lesson 4: Love is Commanded by God - Part 2



When God says

(Page 55)

When God says "Do not!" He is saying "Do not hurt yourself."

The elements for spiritual growth that you are responsible for:

(Page 57)

- a. Prayer, worship, praise, thanksgiving
 - b. Bible reading, study, and memorization
 - c. Obedience, application of Truth
 - d. Humble, teachable spirit, church fellowship, service
 - e. Confession, repentance of sin
 - f. Dependence on Christ, accountability
-

Loving Difficult People by Stacy Reaoch

(Page 61)

1. Pray for your own heart.
 2. Pray for them.
 3. Move toward them, not away from them.
 4. Find specific ways to bless and encourage them.
 5. Give them grace, just as God extends grace to you.
 6. Realize that you could be the difficult person in someone else's life.
-

Lesson 5: God Really Wants Us to Love



How to grow in love, by Jerry Bridges:

(Page 67)

- a. Repent of your lack of love.
- b. Saturate your mind with Scriptures about love.
- c. Pray for the Holy Spirit to apply truth in your life.
- d. Do loving acts, dependent upon the Spirit.
- e. Bask in God's love for you.
- f. Control your thoughts.
- g. Understand the biblical definition of love.
- h. Get rid of expectations.

Do I Really Love God?

(Page 68)

- a. Do I long for personal communion, relationship, fellowship? (Psalm 116:1-2)
- b. Do I love what God loves? (Psalm 119:97)
- c. Do I hate what God hates? (Psalm 97:10)
- d. Do I long for Christ's return and heaven? 2 Timothy 4:8
- e. Do I keep His commands? John 14:21

Common Idols, by Paul Tripp

(Page 69)

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. Comfort | I fear: <u>Pain</u> |
| b. <u>Pleasure</u> | I fear: Hard <u>work</u> |
| c. Recognition | I fear: Being <u>overlooked</u> |

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| d. Power | I fear: Being told <u>what to do</u> |
| e. <u>Control</u> | I fear: Unpredictability |
| f. Acceptance | I fear: <u>Rejection</u> |
| g. Being right | I fear: Others thinking I am <u>wrong</u> |

Progression of Desire:

(Page 70)

- a. I desire this
- b. I demand this
- c. I need this
- d. I expect this
- e. I deserve this
- f. I am disappointed that I did not get this
- g. I will punish you for not giving this to me

Branching Out: Abiding in Jesus

(Page 77)

John 15:1-8

Definition: To abide means to stay in the same place with the same person. An abider depends on God and focuses on His strength, His sufficiency, and His enabling power.

Description:

1. A conscious awareness of His presence at all times
2. A careful consultation with Him about everything that affects us
3. A continual enjoyment of Him as a person

Evidences of abiding:

1. Producing fruit, which produces more fruit
 - Bringing others to Christ (Romans 1:13)
 - Personal growth in holiness and obedience (Romans 6:22)
 - Giving to others (Romans 15:28)
 - Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)
 - Good works (Colossians 1:10)
 - Praise from our hearts and lips (Hebrews 13:15)
2. Experiencing the Father's pruning so can bear more fruit
 - God uses His Word to convict and cleanse
 - God disciplines and chastens (Hebrews 12:1-11)
 - Removes something precious: cuts away the good to have the best
 - As more fruit is produced, we need more pruning so quality keeps up with quantity
3. Prayers answered
4. Experiencing a deeper love for Christ and for people
5. Experiencing greater joy

Abiding affects everything in your life. You will find what you have been looking for all your life.

The requirement for abiding is obedience, and the outcome is joy. - John 15:10-11
My part in abiding is dependence and surrender. The more I abide, His desires take precedence over mine.

Sources: *The Politically Incorrect Wife, Daily with the King, The Wiersbe Bible Commentary*

Lesson 6: God Really Wants Us to Love - Part 2



Consequences of Sin:

(Page 84)

- a. Sin results in an ache in the soul, God's heavy hand (Psalm 32:3-5)
- b. Sin causes physical damage from guilt (Psalm 38:1-11)
- c. Sin steals our joy (Psalm 51:3, 8, 12, 17)
- d. Sin breaks our fellowship with God (Isaiah 59:1-2)
- e. Sin makes me its slave (John 8:34-36)

Five evidences that a person is a believer

(Page 85)

Love for:

- a. God
- b. God's Word
- c. God's People
- d. God's righteousness and hatred of sin
- e. God's will and ways

I am going to tell you some lies.

(Page 90)

- a. My life is only as good as my marriage and human relationships.
 - b. My joy, security, and peace are dependent upon how others treat me.
 - c. My husband or marital status hold the key to my emotional state.
 - d. Until the people in my life change, I will be miserable and trapped.
-

Relationship Truths by Paul Tripp:

(Page 92)

- a. Our relationships will never work according to our plan.
 - b. Our relationships will never live up to our expectations.
 - c. Our relationships will always grapple with some kind of difficulty.
 - d. Our relationships will always need to improve.
-

Lesson 7: What Is Love?



Lies About Love

(Page 104)

- a. Love = passion
 - b. My spouse and others should meet all my needs.
 - c. Once love dies, you cannot get it back.
 - d. The wrong spouse or no spouse = a painful, lonely life with no hope.
 - e. It is my spouse's responsibility to make me happy.
 - f. Love means being on an emotional high forever.
 - g. Love is a feeling. You either have it or you don't.
-

Patient Definition

(Page 104)

Patient = willing to put up with waiting, pain, or anything that annoys, troubles, or hurts. Enduring calmly without complaining or losing self-control.

Having trouble being patient? (Charles Stanley)

(Page 105)

- a. Patience is a work of the Holy Spirit. Are the elements for growth in your life consistently?
 - b. Develop the attitude - It's not about me. I am crucified with Christ. - Galatians 2:20
 - c. Focus on the fact that God is in control of every situation.
 - d. Admit your need for growth and that God is providing an opportunity for that.
 - e. Pray for a servant's heart and a humble spirit.
 - f. Remember: My Heavenly Father knows all about this!
-

Overcoming Jealousy

(Page 106)

- a. Pray for the person's success, blessing, protection
- b. Encourage the other person.
- c. Defend and build up the person to others.
- d. Confess and repent of your own sin.
- e. Be content with how God is dealing with you. Do not compare.

Counterfeit Love

(Page 108)

- a. Physical Attraction
- b. Emotional Connection
- c. Spiritual Unity
- d. Cultural Unity

Branching Out: You Must Die!

(Page 113)

"To develop and sustain any of the characteristics of love described in 1 Corinthians 13 will require a kind of dying, and unless you are willing to die to self, you will never develop and sustain any of the precious characteristics of love that Paul mentions."

Wayne Mack in *Maximum Impact*

Love

1. Is long-suffering and patient: you will have to die to the desire for an untroubled life.
2. Is kind: you will have to die to harshness, vindictiveness, retaliation, and maliciousness.
3. Is not jealous: you will have to die to the desire for unshared affection or unrivaled attention.

4. Is not arrogant or proud, does not brag or boast: you will have to die to the desire to call attention to your successes or think of yourself more highly than other people.
5. Does not behave in an unbecoming fashion: you will have to die to behaviors and conversations that may offend others.
6. Doesn't seek its own: you must die to the dominance of your own desires and preferences.
7. Is not provoked: you must die to irritability and impatience and to your desire for a life with no frustrations.
8. Does not keep a record of wrongs: you must die to bitterness, unforgiveness, and a desire for revenge.
9. Doesn't rejoice in iniquity: you must die to taking pleasure in your own sin or the sin of others.
10. Rejoices in or with the truth: you must die to all lying, dishonesty, and deceitfulness.
11. Covers all things: you must die to the desire to expose the sins and faults of others.
12. Believes all things: you must die to a critical, judgmental, and suspicious attitude toward others.
13. Hopes all things: you are to die to a pessimistic, negative attitude toward people and your circumstances in life.
14. Endures or perseveres: you must die to the desire to run away from the pain of trials and difficulties that sometimes come with obedience to the Lord.

Branching Out: Waiting

(Page 114)

1. **Is inescapable:** God's plan for all of us includes periods of waiting
2. **Is refreshing:** Waiting announces that we are not in control - God is. We need to rest, cease striving, and pray as we wait.
3. **Is revealing:** God uses waiting to reveal what our hearts desire, long for, and trust in. Waiting is biblical and is meant to change us.
4. **Is productive:** God doesn't waste our waiting. It is about who we become as we wait. Waiting should always build character, especially in patience, self-control, perseverance, endurance, and trust.
5. **Is temporary:** Waiting should make us hungry for eternity. It is meant to produce a God-honoring dissatisfaction with the status quo.

The Sin of Envy

"You can gaze over the fence and covet another person's life or tell yourself that God has blessed you in ways you don't deserve and never could have earned." Paul Tripp

Envy...

1. Is **forgetful:** You focus on what you don't have and fail to keep in mind the bountiful blessings God has given. You do more comparing and complaining than praising and resting.
2. **Misunderstands blessing:** Sometimes God's blessings come in the form of trials to give you things you could get no other way. But you only want provision, release, or relief.
3. Is **selfish:** You put yourself in the center of your own world and make everything about your comfort, ease, wants, needs, and feelings, and not about the plan and glory of God.

4. Is **self-righteous**: It has an “I deserve ‘that’ more than they do” attitude and forgets you deserve immediate and eternal punishment. Any good thing you have is an undeserved gift of God’s amazing grace.
5. Is **short-sighted**: It has a right here, right now aspect to it, forgetting this is not your final destination
6. **Questions God’s wisdom**: You think you are smarter than God and would handle things a different way
7. Is **impatient**: It doesn’t like to wait, but complains quickly and wants blessings NOW!

“What is devastating about envy is that it questions God’s goodness, and when you do that, you quit running to Him for help. So cry out for rescue, that God would give you a thankful, humble, and patient heart.

Notes on this page all by Paul Tripp

Lesson 8: What Is Love - Part 2



Satan as master compared to Jesus as master.

(Page 122)

SATAN	vs.	JESUS	
a. <u>Deceives</u>	John 8:44	<u>Is Truth</u>	John 14:6
b. <u>Divides</u>	Rev. 12:4	<u>Unites</u>	John 17:20-23
c. <u>Destroys</u>	1 Peter 5:8	<u>Heals</u>	Psalm 46:1

“But I am already really trying!”

(Page 125)

- a. Never tire of doing what is right. - 2 Thessalonians 3:13
 - b. Continue to get rid of expectations.
 - c. Do everything for the Lord.
 - d. Examine your motivations.
 - e. Control your thoughts.
 - f. Totally depend upon God for help and wisdom.
 - g. Check for unconfessed sin.
 - h. Be on guard against self-pity or resentment.
 - i. Keep forgiving and extending grace.
 - j. Trust that God is in control and He never stops working.
 - k. See every situation as an opportunity for growth.
 - l. Need people less but love them more.
 - m. Pray and pray and pray.
-

Lesson 9: Are We Loving Yet?



Ways to run from suffering:

(Page 137)

- a. Mask or dull the pain with alcohol, drugs, shopping, eating, etc.
 - b. Blame others; take no personal responsibility
 - c. Become bitter; blame God for all your problems
 - d. Refuse to deal with the issue; deny the situation and pain
 - e. Keep so busy that you do not acknowledge the circumstances/emotions
 - f. Try to control or fix the situation or consequences
-

Lesson 10: Are We Loving Yet? - Part 2



How Do I Bless a Difficult Person? By John MacArthur

(Page 151)

- a. Find ways to serve him/her.
- b. Pray for his/her salvation or spiritual progress.
- c. Express thankfulness for that person to others and to that person.
- d. Speak well of him/her.
- e. Desire his/her well-being (not what they deserve).

Having Trouble Serving?

(Page 155)

- a. Regularly ask God for strength, power, wisdom, and grace.
- b. Do everything for the Lord, not praise or approval from people.
- c. Spend time with the Lord for your personal needs to be met.
- d. Control your thoughts. Don't allow self-pity, complaining, or comparing.
- e. Pray for a humble heart and develop the attitude: "It's not about me."
- f. Check if there are things on your to-do list that God did not put there.
- g. Be aware of Satan's tactics: doubt, discouragement, deceit, depression.
- h. Live by truth; persevere and obey. Keep emotions in the back seat.
- i. Live by faith; believe what God says He will do.
- j. Confess and repent of your sin so power from Holy Spirit is not blocked.

Qualities of a Servant

(Page 157)

1. They serve God not people. Gal. 1:10

It is not that they do not care about people, but their motivation is primarily to please God.

2. Others oriented. Phil.2:3,4 Other-centeredness is a trait that few exhibit. Putting others first is a true characteristic of someone with a servant attitude.
3. Willing to serve anyone. Matt. 10:42 Often we serve to be seen. Jesus came to serve everyone, especially the "least" among us.
4. Serve with an uncomplaining spirit. Luke 17:7-10 One way you can tell if you have a true servant's attitude is how you respond when treated like a servant.
5. Work hard. Col. 3:22,23 Our service needs to be done with whole-heartedness, not reluctantly or halfway.
6. Observant and alert. Phil. 2:3,4 We need to pay attention to the needs around us. We often walk right by opportunities for service because we are focused on our own interests.
7. Faithful. Luke 16:10 Service should be done with faithfulness. If we agree to help someone or do something, we need to follow through with it.

Sharing Encounters with Christ

(Page 159)

- a. Share highlights and truths from your personal devotions
 - b. Share answers to prayer
 - c. Share truths from sermons, podcasts, books, Bible study
 - d. Share steps of obedience and areas of growth
 - e. Share songs of praise and worship that have blessed you
 - f. Share God's faithfulness and provision
 - g. Share about a person God used to bless and encourage you
 - h. Share a trial God used to grow and mature you
 - i. Share your failures, sins, weaknesses then the forgiveness and grace of God
-

Lesson 11: God's Protective Policy of Submission



Biblical definitions of submission:

(Page 167)

- a. An attitude of voluntary cooperation
- b. Yield to husband's leadership, support his initiatives
- c. Acknowledging and responding to the head
- d. Divine calling of a wife to honor and affirm husband's leadership
- e. Deferring to husband, knowing that God is the One really in control
- f. Freeing your husband to accept the weight of the decision making
- g. Humbly obey and support your husband's leadership

Submission is not:

(Page 169)

- a. Being a doormat or being forced to obey
- b. Being confined to home, walking behind your husband
- c. Keeping your mouth shut, never questioning or disagreeing
- d. Having no will, opinion, or advice of your own
- e. Physical or emotional abuse
- f. Being inferior to a husband
- g. Husband is always right
- h. Following a husband into sin
- i. Just outward compliance
- j. Letting your husband choose to sin without speaking up
- k. Replacing Christ with your husband as supreme authority in your life

Why is it so difficult to submit?

(Page 170)

- a. The curse; the desire for control
- b. Pride: everyone is right in their own eyes
- c. Fear: what if husband makes a foolish decision?
- d. We are all rebels at heart
- e. It requires great humility
- f. We do not really trust God

Build a Bridge, Not a Wall

(Page 171)

- a. Start with: Here is my idea, concern, opinion, but you are to have the final decision
- b. Close with: I will support you in whatever you decide. Then give him some time. Pray.

Husband then makes a bad decision; not what you wanted

- a. My response: How can we work together on this? How can I help?
- b. My realization: God can use this for good to grow my husband. He may learn from his mistakes
- c. God's results: God is honored, I have not sinned, husband feels freedom to lead and may listen next time, growth in marital relationship

Husband chooses his way, not yours...

- a. My response: Praise, thank and encourage him
- b. My realization: My husband can be right! My way is not the only way
- c. God's results: No sin involved, growth of marriage, husband grows in leadership

Support your husband as the leader of your home

(Page 172)

1. Pray fervently for him to have wisdom as the leader.
2. Pray for God to give you a submissive, respectful heart and attitude.
3. Give your advice, opinions, and suggestions graciously and respectfully.
4. Treat your husband with respect and do not undermine his decisions to anyone.
5. Speak positively about him to the children and to other people.
6. Support and help him once the decision is made. You are a team.
7. Never belittle, criticize, or humiliate your husband for making wrong decisions.
8. Do not respond with pouting, self-pity, complaining, anger, or "I told you so!"
9. Help bring good out of bad decisions.
10. Be a grateful encourager.

Benefits of being under God's protective policy of submission

(Page 173)

1. Husbands are the ones who answer to God for decisions and leadership.
 2. Husbands have the weight and responsibility of making the decisions.
 3. Wives are under the protection of their husbands.
 4. Wives are free from the pressure of making decisions.
 5. Women respect men when they are the leaders.
 6. Marriage gets better when God's assigned roles are obeyed.
 7. Godly examples and role models for children to emulate
 8. Peaceful, harmonious home
 9. Blessing of God for obedience
 10. Testimony to others
 11. God is glorified.
 12. Jesus is represented well.
-

Lesson 12: God's Protective Policy of Submission - Part 2



Definition of faith, by Ron Alchin:

(Page 182)

Faith is believing the Word of God and acting upon it, no matter how I feel, knowing that God promises a good result.

F Fantastic

F Forwarding

A Adventure

A All

I In

I Issues

T Trusting

T To

H Him

H Heaven

I know my wife respects me when... - by Cindy Easley

(Page 186)

- a. I am wrong and she responds kindly.
- b. She is interested and engaged in what I have to say.
- c. She trusts my opinions, judgments, decisions.
- d. She accepts me for who I am and encourages me.

Specific Ways Wives Are Not Submissive - By Martha Peace

(Page 188)

- a. She knowingly, repeatedly does things that are annoying to her husband.
- b. She does not discipline the children in the manner her husband asks her to.
- c. She is more loyal to others than to her husband.
- d. She has a bad attitude when she does not get her own way: argue, pout, withdraw, rebel.
- e. She does not stay within the limits of their budget.

- f. She corrects, interrupts, talks/answers for her husband and is too outspoken when others are around.
 - g. She manipulates her husband to get her own way: deceit, tears, begging, nagging, complaining, anger.
 - h. She makes important decisions without consulting her husband.
 - i. She directly defies his wishes.
 - j. She worries about his decisions and takes matters into her own hands.
 - k. She does not pay attention to what he says or value his opinions, preferences, or thoughts.
-

Lesson 13: True Beauty Begins Inside



Two ways to look at every situation:

(Page 199)

- a. How will it affect me?
 - b. How can I honor God in this situation?
-

Guideline Principles for Appearance by Jeff Pollard

(Page 202)

- a. The glory of God must be my primary aim.
 - b. Love for Christ must be my motive.
 - c. Remembering that I am the temple of the Holy Spirit and not my own must be my corrective.
 - d. Love for others, the preservation of purity in them, and the desire not to provoke them to lust will be my resulting aim.
-

Branching Out: Characteristics of a Gentle and Quiet Spirit Kimberly Wagner

(Pages 209-211)

Gentleness is a calm confidence, settled assurance, and rest of the soul. It is the tranquil stillness of a heart that is at rest in Christ. It is the place of peace. Gentleness springs from a heart of humility, radiating the fragrance of Christ.

1. The **gentle** will be at rest in the storms of life. (Matt. 11:28-30; Ps.37:7; Heb. 4:1-11)
The fretful will be fearful in the storms of life. (Mark 4:35-41; Jer. 50:6)
2. The **gentle** will react to circumstances with peaceful trust. (Isaiah 26:3-4)

The fretful will attempt to manipulate people or circumstances. (James 4:1-3; Pr. 7:21)

3. The **gentle** will make life choices based on Scriptural principles. (Psalm 119:105)
The fretful will make choices based on emotions. (James 3:13-18; Pr. 19:16)
4. The **gentle** woman's confidence is in the security of the truths of Scripture and the faithfulness of God. (Pr. 3:26; 14:26; Ps. 119:165; Jer. 17:7-8)
The fretful woman's trust is in her own abilities and power to control others and details. (Pr. 12:15; 14:12; 16:25; Jer. 18:12)
5. The **gentle** woman finds her worth and value in knowing who she is in Christ.
The fretful woman finds her worth and value in her own accomplishments and what others think of her. (Ps. 49:11-20; Pr. 11:28, 16:18-19, 29:25)
6. The **gentle** woman finds her strength of character in Christ. (Ephesians 5:8-11)
The fretful woman finds her strength in her own personality traits. (Pr. 28:26)
7. **Gentleness** retrains the stormy tempest of our emotions and passions by commanding them "peace be still." (Proverbs 16:32)
Fretting fuels the stormy tempest by venting passions and emotions. (Ps. 37:8
Pr. 14:29-30; 29:11, 22)
8. **Gentleness** is the strength and courage to battle and overcome our own sinful anger and passions by holding fast to peace—through trusting in the providence of Almighty God. (Rom. 12:18-19; Col. 3:1-17; 1 Peter 4:19)
The fretful woman is too fearful and weak to trust God, but allows her sinful emotions and passions to rule. (Pr. 28:25)
9. **Gentleness** is constancy and steady composure in spirit and frame of mind, reflecting the consistent stability of our Lord. (Ps. 102:25-27, Eph. 4:13-15; 1 Pe 3:13-16; Heb 13:8)
The fretful woman is always on a roller-coaster ride of emotions, continually up and down. (Proverbs 21:9, 19, 25:24)

10. **Gentleness** does not allow the mind to run away with vain imaginations and to dwell on thoughts which inflame volatile emotions and passions. (2 Cor 10:3-5; Phil 4:8-9)

The rash woman is filled with suspicions, doubts, and assumptions based entirely on emotion and allows these imaginations to determine the course of action. (3 John 9-10)

11. The **gentle** woman does not avoid or run from controversy, but walks through necessary confrontations under the control of the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 6:1-2; Proverbs 27:5)

The rash woman enters controversy hastily and recklessly. (Pr:10:19, 13:3, 14:16-17, 29:20)

12. The **gentle** woman speaks truth in love, the law of kindness is on her lips. (Pr 31:26, 16:24; Eph 4:1-2)

The rash woman speaks harshly, and is not truly concerned for the listener's feelings. (Pr. 12:18, 16:27, James 3:6-12)

13. The **gentle** woman patiently waits to hear the whole matter before reacting. (Pr. 15:28)

The rash woman reacts emotionally before giving time to pause and consider. (Pr. 15:18)

14. The **gentle** woman is not unemotional, but her emotions are ruled by the Spirit of God. (Pr. 14:30, 31:25, Gal. 5:22-26; Phil. 4:4-7)

The fretful woman is ruled by circumstances, emotions, and passions. (Prov. 29:22; Ps. 37:1-8)

15. The **gentle** woman does not entertain suspicions or assume the worst concerning others, but reacts based on first-hand knowledge. (Pr. 18:13, 17)

The rash woman imagines and assumes the worst, then she reacts accordingly. (1 Tim. 4:7, 5:13)

16. The **gentle** woman is not easily offended. (Pr. 19:11, Rom. 14:19, 1 Cor. 13:4-7)

The fretful woman is easily offended. (Romans 12:3, 16)

17. The **gentle** woman forgives quickly. (Matt. 5:23-25; Eph. 4:26-27, 31-32)

The fretful woman holds onto offenses and hurts, becoming bitter. (Heb. 12:14-15)

18. **Gentleness** demonstrates gracious restraint. It responds to accusations or criticism with restraint rooted in humility, by recognizing that without God's grace, I am capable of far worse than what I am being accused. (1Peter 3:8-9)
Rashness seeks vengeance. It responds to accusations or criticism with the wrath of a haughty heart. (Rom. 12:14-19)

Lesson 14: True Beauty Begins Inside - Part 2



Choosing Gratitude by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

(Page 218)

- a. It is vital to respond to all of life with a thankful spirit, even in difficult situations.
- b. I must be ceaselessly vigilant about rejecting ingratitude and choosing gratitude or my life will feel hard, wearisome, and overwhelming.
- c. Gratitude truly is my life preserver that rescues me from myself and my runaway emotions.
- d. Choosing gratitude means choosing joy but it requires constantly renewing my mind with the truth of God's Word.
- e. To a significant degree, your quality of life and the stability of your relationship with God and others will be determined by your level of gratitude.
- f. Look for evidences of God's hand at work in the midst of turmoil and be overwhelmed with thankfulness to Him.

Sin causes people in our lives to get reduced to..., by Paul Tripp:

(Page 220)

- a. Vehicles to help us get what we want
- b. Obstacles in the way of what we want

Branching Out: Unlimiting God's Joy in Our Lives

Richard Blackaby in *Unlimiting God*

(Pages 232-233)

One way to recognize a close walk with God is the Christian's level of joy.
The story of Jesus is one of immeasurable joy.

John 15:11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you and that your joy may be full."

If you want to know if Christians are experiencing all God has provided for them in Christ, examine their joy. Joy in their lives reveals that they understand what God has done for them and what He's presently making available to them.

No one and nothing can steal your joy when Christ gives it to you. John 16:22
We can surrender our joy at any moment.

Even in the midst of the most painful experiences in our lives, we still knew that He loved us, that He was walking with us, and that in the end He would make all things right. The peace of God that surpasses all understanding stood guard over our hearts and allowed us to continue to have joy in our home.

Rejoicing in the Lord is a choice we make, one that goes deeper than our present feelings. As we consider all God has done for us and all He will do for us, we have every reason to be joyful.

Sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is be joyful.

God's joy is limitless. The only limit to the level of God's joy we experience lies with us. He wants us to know His joy in everything we do.

Our lives ought to be characterized by continual, irrepressible joy.

The Christian life ought to be the greatest, most exciting and fulfilling life you can live.

Following quotes by Ann Voskamp

Joy means dying to self, and only self can kill joy.

Joy doesn't negate other emotions, but transcends them. There is no joy without trust.

As long as thanks is possible, then joy is possible.

Joy dances in an open, humble palm. When the hand is clenched tight, joy is snuffed out. Anger suffocates joy.

Joy is empty of self-will.

No one who ever said to God, "Thy will be done" and meant it ever failed to find joy.

- Peter Kreeft

Lesson 15: Forgiveness



Reasons I Can't Forgive Myself

(Page 238)

All sin is actually against God. We do not sin against ourselves, but should have regret and remorse when we sin. Here are some reasons we struggle to accept God's forgiveness and cleansing:

- a. Pride - My sin is so bad that Calvary is not powerful or effective enough.
- b. Lack of trust in God - I don't really believe that God will forgive me.
- c. Guilt and shame - This comes from the enemy after we have confessed: (You're no good, too bad)

Revealing Repentance by J.I. Packer

(Page 240)

Repentance is a process and includes the following: Kerry, the words that start with R in each line should be the blanks.

- a. Recognition that you have disobeyed God
- b. Remorse at the dishonor you have done to God
- c. Requesting of God's pardon and cleansing
- d. Renunciation of the sin
- e. Right choices to keep clear of sin in the future
- f. Restitution to any who have suffered because of your sin

No repentance is true repentance which does not recognize Jesus as Lord over every area of life. – John C. Chapman

Two Truths to Aid in Forgiveness, by Jerry Bridges:

(Page 243)

- a. I, myself, am a sinner and have hurt others. - Ecclesiastes 7:21-22
- b. I must look beyond the person, who is only the instrument, to see God, who has purposed this adversity for me. - Lamentations 3:37

Forgiveness is an amazing antidote to selfishness. We do not generate one ounce of forgiveness. Love and forgiveness are given to us by God.

- Gary Smalley

Branching Out: Forgiveness

(Page 249)

Definitions of Forgiveness

- A. To give up resentment against them, or the desire to punish
- B. To stop being angry and give up my perceived right for revenge
- C. Releasing a person from the debt resulting from the sin against you
- D. Involves transferring the prisoner over to God who is able and responsible to administer justice

Forgiveness is NOT...

- A. Approving of what they did
- B. Excusing what they did
- C. Justifying what they did
- D. Denying what they did
- E. Reconciliation
- F. Ignoring what they did
- G. Forgetting what happened
- H. Refusal to take the wrong seriously
- I. Pretending we are not hurt
- J. Putting yourself in a position where harm can be done to you again

Forgiveness IS...

- A. Being aware of what they did and still forgiving them

- B. Choosing to keep no record of wrongs
- C. Refusing to punish
- D. Not telling others what happened
- E. Being merciful
- F. Grace
- G. An inner condition of the heart.
- H. The absence of bitterness

The difference between:

- A. Forgiveness
- B. Reconciliation
- C. Restoration

Every day I do something that offends God, and something that offends another person.

- Paul Tripp

Lesson 16: Forgiveness - Part 2



Common Excuses for Refusing to Forgive

(Page 253)

- a. I can't forgive because it's too big.
- b. Time will heal it. I'm going to ignore it and it will go away.
- c. I will forgive when they say they are sorry.
- d. They don't deserve to be forgiven.
- e. I can't forgive if I can't forget.
- f. If I forgive, they will just do it again.

When you forgive your neighbor, even the neighbor who lives under your roof, you place yourself squarely and safely into God's wise, just, and most careful hands. - Kim Hall

Responding When Wounded by Paul Tripp

(Pages 254-255)

Sinful Responses

- a. Regret: We wish we had acted differently in the past so this would not have happened.
- b. Fear: We begin to expect the worst in people and fear future betrayal.
- c. Defend: We withdraw into a bunker of self-protection.
- d. Withhold: We refuse to deal with the person who has hurt us.
- e. Retaliate: We are angry and devise ways to repay others for the hurt they inflicted.
- f. React: We make unwise decisions in haste.
- g. Judge: We demand an explanation from God as to why He allowed this.
- h. Doubt: We begin to doubt God's love, mercy, power, and grace.

God-Honoring Responses

- a. Run to the Lord, not away from Him.

- b. Remember that you have been chosen to live for the glory of God.
- c. Learn your lessons. The heat of relational difficult is meant to purify us.
- d. Reflect His light.

When you are sinned against, remember that you're not alone and that what's happening to you isn't an accident or an oversight. In ways that are hard to grasp, you are being loved. God wants to use you as an ambassador to express His forgiving and life-transforming love to the person who just sinned against you. - Paul Tripp

The High Cost of Unforgiveness by Rick Donald

(Page 256)

- a. Lost intimacy with God
- b. Relational damage
- c. Lost time with others
- d. Stunted spiritual growth
- e. No joy or other fruit of the Spirit
- f. Damaged emotions: bitterness, anger, malice, slander, self-pity
- g. Dishonors God

The power to forgive is available to all God's children through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives. – Michael Youssef

Righteous Anger by Robert Jones

(Page 258)

- a. Reacts against actual sin as defined biblically
 - b. Focuses on how people offend God and His name, not me and my name
 - c. Remains self-controlled and expresses itself in godly ways
-

Resolving Anger

(Page 259)

- a. Let minor offenses roll off your back. (50% of the time)

- b. Let larger offenses roll off to the Lord. (45% of the time)
 - c. For large offenses, go to the person and work it out. Use Matthew 18. (5% of the time)
 - d. When to confront the sin of others: (Ken Sande)
 - 1) Is it bringing significant dishonor to God?
 - 2) Is it damaging your relationship for more than a short time?
 - 3) Is it hurting others significantly?
 - 4) Is it hurting the offender?
-

Steps in the Forgiveness Process

(Page 260)

- a. Pour out your heart to God and tell Him everything.
 - b. Realize that God allowed this situation and will use it for your good and His glory.
 - c. Refuse to talk about the offense with those not involved.
 - d. Ask God for forgiveness on your part if you sinned in thought or deed.
 - e. Ask God for the grace to forgive others.
 - f. Try to see the situation from the offender's point of view.
 - g. Make the choice to forgive.
 - h. When possible, if you have sinned against the offender, ask for forgiveness.
 - i. Do something kind for the person you are forgiving. Overcome evil with good.
 - j. Whether the offender admits their wrongdoing or not, you must get rid of your anger and desire for revenge.
 - k. Refuse to bring up the situation to the offender, yourself, or others.
 - l. When the offense does come to mind, and it will, stop those *thoughts* and say, "I forgave () just as God forgives me."
 - m. Remember how very much you have been forgiven by God.
-

Indications We Have Not Forgiven

(Page 261)

- a. Every time I think of the person or offense I still feel angry.

- b. I have a subtle, secret desire to see that person pay for what he/she did.
- c. Deep in my heart I wouldn't mind if something bad happened to that person.
- d. I am still telling others how this person hurt me.
- e. I want others to know the bad qualities of the person.
- f. If this person's name comes up, I want to say something negative.
- g. I cannot thank God for how He used this person or situation in my life.
- h. I play the tape over and over of what happened.
- i. I justify my refusal to forgive.
- j. If I see that person I try to avoid them.
- k. I cannot pray for the good of that person.

Branching Out: Evidences of Bitterness by Wayne Mack

(Page 270)

Bitterness is characterized by strong feelings of hatred, resentment, and cynicism
(Webster's)

- a. Conflicts and an inability to resolve those conflicts
- b. Acts of vengeance
- c. Withdrawal or avoidance
- d. Outbursts of anger
- e. Biting sarcasm or snide remarks
- f. Condescending communication
- g. Faultfinding and a critical attitude
- h. Suspicion and mistrust
- i. Intolerance and impatience
- j. Disrespect, rebellion towards or abuse/misuse of authority
- k. Depression
- l. Lack of friends; people avoid bitter people
- m. Lack of assurance of salvation, presence of God, closeness to God
- n. Guilt and shame
- o. Lack of fruitfulness in your Christian life and ministry

How to defeat and prevent bitterness

- a. Make sure you are a Christian. Confess and repent of this sin.
- b. Pray that God would increase your ability to love. Pursue love.
- c. Remember how gracious and patient God is with you.
- d. Bitterness is always tied to what a person is thinking.
- e. Remember that God is sovereign, loving, and wise, and He could have prevented the wrong from occurring. Ask God what He wants you to learn.
- f. Ask God how He wants you to respond to the person who wronged you.

Without forgiveness, bitterness is all that is left. - Max Lucado

Lesson 17: Watching Our Words



Six Levels of Communication

(Page 275)

- a. Small Talk: level used with strangers, servers, clerks, etc.
- b. Facts: state something known, experienced, or observed
- c. Opinions: moves from stating facts to assessing them
- d. Feelings: begin to open your emotions to someone else
- e. Needs and desires: requires trust and security
- f. Beliefs: reflect the core of who you are

Consider Your Communication

(Page 277)

- a. Are you known as a complainer?
- b. Do you often interrupt?
- c. Do you force communication to fit your time schedule?
- d. Do you broadcast private conversations?
- e. Are your own needs and desires given as demands?
- f. Do you respond in anger or ridicule when others have different ideas or opinions?
- g. Do you use too many words?
- h. Do you project blame or refuse to take responsibility for your own actions or words?
- i. Are your words harsh rather than grace-filled?

Words that Build Up, Benefit, and Edify

(Page 280)

- a. Reveal the character of God
- b. Remind of promises of God

- c. Focus on the activity of God
- d. Words based on Truth
- e. Words that encourage
- f. Words that warn
- g. Words that instruct
- h. Words that give hope and confidence in God
- i. Words of grace

Five Top Needs of Men & Women

(Page 281)

Men:

1. sexual fulfillment
2. recreational companionship
3. an attractive spouse
4. domestic support
5. admiration/respect

Women:

1. affection
 2. conversation
 3. honesty and openness
 4. financial support
 5. family commitment
-

Speaking the Truth in Love

(Page 283)

- a. Is it true and accurate?
- b. Is it kind and loving?
- c. Is it necessary?
- d. Is it God-honoring?
- e. Is your motivation honorable?
- f. Is it the right time?
- g. Use the acronym:

T = true

H = helpful

I = inspired

N = necessary

K = kind

Lesson 18: Watching Our Words - Part 2



Developing Positive Speech Patterns by Joseph Stowell

(Page 293)

1. Continue to work on developing your own spiritual maturity.
2. Commit to speak only good things about other people.
3. Respond with Godly wisdom when encountering sinful speech habits in others.
 - a. Do not communicate approval or encourage additional wrong statements.
 - b. Pray for wisdom.
 - c. Be loving and humble, resisting the sin of anger or self-righteousness.
 - d. Avoid a judgmental spirit.
 - e. Encourage others to control their tongues before you hear it.
 - f. Pray about what you hear.
 - g. Publicly share your commitment to control your own tongue.

Details about Desires by David Bowden

(Page 296)

- a. Our heart's desire for something leads us into sin. (James 4:1-2)
- b. You cannot be tempted to do something that you don't desire.
- c. Our desires are our chief tempter.
- d. We fight sin by changing our desires.
- e. Desires are born when we lack something.
- f. Temptation is the offer sin makes to your desires to fill in empty places.
- g. We choose sin because we don't believe God can really fill our emptiness Himself.
- h. Chain reaction: unbelief...lack...desire...temptation...sin
- i. To fight sin, we must change what we believe about how God provides.
- j. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all you need will be added (Mt. 6:33)
- k. Trust the truth of who God is for you in Christ.

- l. Jesus fills the places within us that are lacking
- m. The Holy Spirit creates new desires within our hearts. (Romans 8:1-11)
- n. New desires lead us away from sin and toward holiness.

Four Sinful Heart Themes

(Page 300)

Despairing Heart

Angry Heart

Fearful Heart

Foolish Heart

Lesson 19: Proverbs Says Plenty



Sinful Ways to Avoid Conflict

(Page 318)

- a. Just keep quiet.
 - b. Stay away or avoid each other.
 - c. Change the subject and ignore the issues.
 - d. Hide information, sin, or bitterness.
-

Handling Anger in a God-honoring Way, by Jerry Bridges

(Page 322)

1. Admit your anger and the sinfulness of it.
 2. Ask God to reveal the root of your anger: pride, selfishness, unmet expectations, fear, idols.
 3. Repent of wrong thoughts, emotions, and actions.
 4. Change your attitude toward the person who triggered your anger
 5. Seek forgiveness if you sinned against another in your anger.
 6. Give the entire situation to God, especially when treated unjustly or unfairly.
 7. Remember that even this was allowed by God and He has a purpose for it.
-

Branching Out: Communication Differences Between Genders

(Page 329)

- a. A woman is designed to connect memories, words, and feelings, so her conversations tend to be laden with emotion and meaning.
- b. The biologic design of men causes them to be less likely to identify and communicate their emotions. They struggle to talk about or express emotions.
- c. When a woman is upset, she wants to talk and vent. A man needs to think, not talk. His compartmentalized brain is designed to do one thing at a time. Men

will avoid extended emotional conversation as much as possible. Women are soothed by talking about things, for men, it is torture.

- d. A man's brain and hormones compel him to respond to emotions and stress by doing or fixing something. Men may take up to seven hours longer than women to process emotional data.
- e. Women have four times as many neurons connecting the right and left sides of their brains so they tend to be more perceptive, attuned to feelings, better at communication, and more creative.
- f. The female body produces oxytocin which promotes bonding, maternal instinct, and a "tend and befriend" strategy.
- g. The male body produces large quantities of testosterone which causes the "fight or flight" response and the desire to take risks, guard, conquer, and deal with the threat.
- h. A man's brain requires that he gets rest from emotional involvements (work on car, skip through channels, etc.)
- i. When a woman doesn't understand the male brain, she risks the male response of stonewalling, when a man shuts down emotionally and verbally.
- j. Most men are not equipped to satisfy a wife's need for prolonged conversation.

Branching Out: Communication Guidelines

(Page 330)

1. You must want to please God more than anything else. 2 Corinthians 5:9
2. You must be humble. Ephesians 4:1-3
3. Be aware that you are accountable to God for everything you say. Matt. 12:36
4. Be a good listener. James 1:19-20
 - a. Concentrate on and carefully consider what the other person is saying.
 - b. No interrupting unless the other person is out of control.
 - c. No formulating what you are going to say while the other person is talking.
 - d. Don't talk too much. Allow for breaks in conversation.
 - e. Ask for clarification: What do you mean by that? Is this what you mean?

5. Remember that communication involves more than just words: tone and body language also matter.
 6. Do not use silence to frustrate the other person.
 7. Treat the other person with respect and patience.
 8. Do not become involved in quarrels. Disagree without quarreling.
 9. Do not respond in uncontrollable anger. Use kind words and tone of voice.
 10. When you are wrong, admit, confess, and ask how you should change.
 11. Avoid nagging.
 12. Do not blame or criticize but forgive, restore, encourage, edify.
 13. Do not respond in a sinful manner when you are sinned against.
 14. Be willing to put forth effort and time for good communication.
 15. Try to understand the other person's opinion and interests.
 16. Build bridges, not walls.
 17. Speak the truth in love.
 18. Pray for God to give His wisdom and grace.
-

Lesson 20: Pride Brings You Down



Self-Esteem vs. Self-Acceptance

(Pages 336-337)

Self-Esteem = an individual's overall sense of personal worth, value, and confidence in themselves and their abilities. It is based on external or societal standards.

Self-Acceptance = understanding and accepting oneself based on the truth that God personally designed, created, and loves you, even with your flaws. True self-acceptance comes from being created in the image of God and your identity in Jesus. It involves acknowledging both your weaknesses and your strengths.

- a. Weaknesses/flaws: ask God for help, work on growth, confess any sin
- b. Strengths/gifts/talents: thank God, give Him all the glory and credit, do all for Him

Biblical Self-acceptance sets you free from anxiety about what others think and allows God to work through you. It is rooted in God's unconditional love and acceptance while allowing Him to conform you to the image of Jesus Christ.

The Bible never tells us to love ourselves but to love others in the same way that we already do love ourselves, esteem others as better, and to put their interests above our own.

Pitfalls of Pride for Christians

(Page 341)

- a. I am more intelligent and wiser than others because I accepted Christ.
- b. I obey God quicker than others.
- c. I know a whole lot about the Bible.
- d. I do a lot for God. I am busy all the time serving.
- e. I have grown a lot spiritually, much faster than others.
- f. I have longer devotional times and am in more Bible studies than others.

g. Many people look up to me and seek my advice and counsel.

Spiritual pride is the main spring or at least the main support of all other errors. The spiritually proud man thinks he is full of light already and feels that he does not need instruction. Nothing sets a Christian so much out of the devil's reach than humility.

- Jonathan Edwards

Branching Out: Evidences of Pride by Stuart Scott

(Pages 348-349)

Definition: The mindset of self (a master's mindset rather than that of a servant): a focus on self and the service of self, a pursuit of self-recognition and self-exaltation, and a desire to control and use all things for self.

1. Complaining against or passing judgment on God
2. A lack of gratitude in general
3. Anger or moodiness
4. Seeing yourself as better than others
5. Having an inflated view of your importance gifts, and abilities
6. Being focused on the lack of your gifts and abilities
7. Perfectionism
8. Talking too much
9. Talking too much about yourself
10. Seeking independence or control
11. Being consumed with what others think
12. Being devastated or angered by criticism
13. Being unteachable
14. Being sarcastic, hurtful, or degrading
15. A lack of service
16. A lack of compassion
17. Being defensive or blame-shifting
18. A lack of admitting when you are wrong
19. A lack of asking forgiveness
20. A lack of biblical prayer
21. Resisting authority or being disrespectful
22. Voicing preferences or opinions when not asked

23. Minimizing your own sin and shortcomings
24. Maximizing others' sins and shortcomings
25. Being impatient or irritable with others
26. Being jealous or envious
27. Using others
28. Being deceitful by covering up sins, faults, and mistakes
29. Using attention - getting tactics
30. Not having close relationships

Biblical view of self

1. I am so very far beneath God and totally unworthy before Him.
2. I am desperately wicked and totally incapable of anything worthwhile in God's sight on my own.
3. There is nothing I have accomplished or possess that I should take credit for myself.
4. I have no worth in and of myself but God has given me a place I do not deserve and has set His love on me anyway.
5. God has given me abilities that are to be used for His glory and purposes.

Branching Out: Brokenness

(Pages 350-351)

Biblical Descriptions:

An ongoing attitude of humility before and desperation for God; when you come to the place that you see that "awful thing that happened to you" as an instrument in God's loving hand, molding, shaping, and making you into God's woman.

I am afraid of only one thing...that I should become a grain of wheat not willing to die. (John 12:24)

Those people God uses most to bring glory to Himself are those who are completely broken, for the sacrifice He accepts is a broken and contrite heart. (Psalm 51:17)

1. A shattering of my self-will; humble, obedient, contrite (ground to pieces)
2. A stripping of self-reliance or independence from God; desperation for Him
3. A softening of the soil of my heart; receptive and responsive to the Word, easily molded. - Nancy Demoss Wolgemuth

God created the world out of nothing and as long as we are nothing, He can make something out of us. - Martin Luther

If the truth were known, the saints of God in every age were only effective after they had been wounded. - A.W. Tozer

It is a wonder what God can do with a broken heart if He gets all the pieces. - Samuel Chadwick

Process God Uses to Produce Brokenness by Charles Stanley

- a. He targets the area in which we are not submissive to Him.
- b. He arranges the circumstances and selects the tools with which to break self-sufficiency.
- c. He controls the pressure and timing of those circumstances to bring us back into His will.

A person who is broken before God will also be humble and broken before others.

Broken men and women don't care who finds out about their sin; they have nothing to protect and nothing to lose. - Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

We must be willing to die to our own interests, die to our own reputation, die to our own rights, die to our own ways of doing things, die to our own comfort, convenience, hopes, dreams, and aspirations. To die means to lay it all down. To give it all up, to let it all go. When we choose the pathway of brokenness and humility we are choosing to receive new life, His supernatural, abundant life. Brokenness is the entrance into life. - Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

Suggestions for Personal Brokenness by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

- a. Get a fresh vision of God, especially compared to who we are.
- b. Don't wait for God to break you; choose to be broken, humble yourself
- c. Admit your spiritual need to God and to others.
- d. Do whatever God wants you to do—Yes, Lord, Your will be done.

Lesson 21: Pride Brings You Down - Part 2



Godly Responses to Criticism

(Page 362)

- a. Stay humble, humble, humble.
- b. Listen well, think before you speak.
- c. Thank the person and promise to think and pray about their words.
- d. Apologize: it was not my intent to cause hurt or harm.
- e. Apologize: I did not realize I was coming across that way.
- f. Apologize: Express grief and remorse for own sin.
- g. Extend grace: I can understand why you feel/saw it that way.
- h. Accept: This is a good word of wisdom for me.
- i. Realize that God is giving an opportunity for growth in a certain area.
- j. Ask for accountability or "Progress Report."

Branching Out: How Humble Are You? By Stuart Scott

(Page 374)

Do you....

1. Recognize and trust God's character?
2. See yourself as having no right to question or judge an Almighty and Perfect God?
3. Focus on Christ?
4. Spend much time praying biblically?
5. Become overwhelmed with God's undeserved grace and goodness?
6. Express thankfulness and gratefulness toward others?
7. Model gentleness and patience?
8. See yourself as no better than others?
9. Have an accurate view of your gifts and abilities?
10. Listen well to others?
11. Talk about others only if it is good or for their good?

12. Respond in submission and obedience to those in authority?
13. Prefer others over yourself?
14. Feel thankful for criticism or reproof?
15. Have a teachable spirit?
16. Seek always to build others up?
17. Find ways to serve and assist others?
18. Quickly admit when you are wrong?
19. Grant and ask for forgiveness?
20. Repent of sin as a way of life?
21. Minimize others' sins or shortcomings in comparison to your own?
22. Feel genuinely glad for others and trust God for what you do not have?
23. Admit areas in which you need growth?
24. Possess close relationships?

Humility: The mindset of Christ: a focus on God and others, a pursuit of the recognition and exaltation of God, and a desire to glorify and please God in all things and by all things He has given.

Humility is caused by two things:

- an awareness of oneself as one truly is, for whoever truly knows himself would be humble
- an awareness of God as He truly is, for who could stand before Him without fear and trembling, awe and worship? – *Soul of C. S. Lewis*

Branching Out: Getting from Pride to Humility

(Page 375)

Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

– James 4:10

1. Humble yourself before God. Submit to His will, sovereignty, timing, plans, and purposes
2. Pray for God to help you put off pride and to produce humility in you.

3. Read the Psalms and the Prophets often to gain a high view of God and proper self-view.
4. Study Jesus, His earthly examples, especially in the Gospels.
5. Ask others if you come across as proud in any way.
6. Spend lots of time worshipping God in praising, prayer, reading, meditating.
7. Practice the one-another principles.
8. Work to put off pride and put on humility at the level of your thoughts and motives.
9. Work to put off pride and put on humility at the level of your communication.
10. Work to put off pride and put on humility at the level of your deeds.
11. Have the mindset that humility must be a way of life.
12. Remember what you deserve: hell, eternal punishment.
13. Remember that everything you have, are, and can accomplish comes from God.
14. Spend time with humble people.
15. Remember how much you dislike prideful people.
16. Deliberately submit yourself regularly to correction from others.
17. Remember that God loves and exalts the humble but hates and destroys the proud.

Material taken from Stuart Scott, Timothy Keller, Wayne Mack, and Max Lucado

Branching Out: How to Worship by Joseph S. Carroll

(Page 376)

- a. With your whole heart
- b. With clean hands; no unconfessed sin
- c. By living in obedience not rebellion
- d. In prayer; silent and out loud
- e. In solitude; get away from distractions and interruptions
- f. Concentrate and focus
- g. By using Scriptures, especially the Psalms
- h. By using music

Hindrances to Worship: by Joseph Carroll

- a. An unsundered heart
 - b. Unconfessed sin
 - c. Sinful attitudes toward others
 - d. Spiritual warfare
 - e. Physical exhaustion or other physical issues
 - f. Unbelief
-

Lesson 22: You're Not Judging, Are You?



To Judge or Not to Judge

(Page 379)

"We should observe and evaluate others' behavior so that we can respond and minister to them in appropriate ways.

We cross the line, however, when we begin to sinfully judge others, which is characterized by a feeling of superiority indignation, condemnation, bitterness, or resentment. Sinful judging often involves speculating on others' motives.

Most of all, it reveals the absence of a genuine love and concern toward them."

– Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker*, p. 107

Sinful judging, then, involves critically condemning the motives of others or thinking I am better, more godly, and would never do what they did.

Guidelines on When to Confront Sin

(Page 382)

- a. Will the behavior destroy the person or someone else?
- b. Is the behavior happening over and over?
- c. How close are you to the situation?
- d. The response of the sinner is not your responsibility.

Definition of Mercy, by Paul Tripp:

(Page 389)

"Mercy is the kind, sympathetic, and forgiving treatment of others that works to relieve their distress and cancel their debt. It is also compassion combined with forbearance and action."

Branching Out: Just Judging?

(Page 399)

“The truth is you won’t stop judging others until you stop seeing yourself as a measure of righteousness. The command to ‘judge not’ is not a call to stop honest evaluations about others, but to cease the hypercritical and condemning attitude that characterizes some of your thoughts, words, and actions.” – Joe Thorn in *Note to Self*

The Danger of Self-Righteousness: Five Marks of a Modern-Day Pharisee by Kelly Needham

1. Having a performance - based relationship with God
 - a. In evaluating your spiritual life, do you immediately look to what you have done for God?
 - b. Do you feel more confident after a long quiet time, giving money, or sharing the gospel?
 - c. Do you fear approaching God when you aren’t meeting your own standards of goodness?
 - d. Do you compare your spirituality to others to see how well you are doing?
2. Looking down on others
 - a. Are you comforted by the thought that you are a “better” Christian than others?
 - b. Are there certain people you find it hard to have compassion for?
 - c. Do you often think, “I would never do that! What kind of person does such a thing?”
3. Loving outward signs of holiness
 - a. Are you prideful in areas of visible holiness? Do you compare self with others?
 - b. Do you forsake spiritual disciplines in your life while you are alone?
 - c. Do you wonder how others will view you if you do or don’t do something?
 - d. Do you look for chances to tell others about your spiritual disciplines?
4. Loving honor and recognition

- a. Are you happy for others when they are honored and praised?
 - b. When others are honored, do you compare yourself to them and wonder why no one has said that of you yet?
 - c. Do you hope that those around you will notice and publicly praise you?
 - d. Do you long to be looked up to or have people serving underneath you?
 - e. Would you be content if God called you to a lifetime of service behind the scenes?
5. Always needing to justify yourself
- a. Do you have a hard time receiving compliments without explaining yourself?
 - b. Do you try to tell others why you do what you do?
 - c. Do you have a hard time doing things that might look less spiritual than you believe you are?

The Antidote: A sincere broken and humble heart

Branching Out: Restoring Others in the Spirit of Gentleness by Wayne Mack, *Maximum Impact*

(Page 400)

1. The Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth. 2 Timothy 2:24-26
2. Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. James 3:13-14
3. Gentleness is the opposite of being arrogant jealous, and selfishly ambitious. It involves being peaceable, reasonable, willing to yield, merciful, and genuine in our relationships with people.
4. Be sensitive to the feelings of other people.
5. Do what you can to make others feel at ease.
6. Treat people with respect and dignity.
7. Avoid unnecessary and unhelpful criticism.

8. Avoid the use of intimidation, coerciveness, violence, or manipulation.
 9. A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable. - Proverbs 15:1-2
 10. A man has joy in an apt answer, and how delightful is a timely word! - Proverbs 16:23
 11. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. - Ephesians 4:29
 12. He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him. - Proverbs 18:13
 13. Approach others with the attitude of a servant rather than of a master.
 14. Avoid talking to others about someone else's sins unless it's absolutely necessary.
-

Lesson 23: Holy and Helpful



Are You a Helper or a Hinderer? (Notes from *True Woman 101* by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth and Mary Kassion)

(Page 404)

Helper	Hinderer
1. Is near Psalm 22:11	1. Aloof, withdrawn, antagonistic
2. Notices and cares Psalm 10:14; 40:17	2. Pays no attention to needs
3. Comes quickly to help Psalm 22:19	3. Delays help, complains, refuses
4. Comforts Psalm 86:17	4. Critical, insensitive, adds to the problem
5. Heals Psalm 30:2	5. Source of hurt, tears down
6. Never casts off or forsakes Psalm 27:9	6. Abandons, leaves, gives up
7. Strengthens, upholds, supports Isaiah 41:10	7. Weakens, destroys
8. Keeps from falling Psalm 118:13	8. Allows, causes, pushes
9. Gives wise advise, insight Job 26:2-4	9. Gives unbiblical advice
10. Builds confidence Psalm 118:7	10. Disrespects, disdain, negative, critical

Helper	Hinderer
11. Combats fear Hebrews 13:6	11. Worries, anxious, adds or causes fear
12. Promotes order and security 2 Samuel 23:5	12. Drama queen, chaos, no order
13. Fights alongside in adversity 2 Chron. 3:8	13. Enemy, not a team, disloyal
14. Encourages and gladdens Psalm 33:20-21	14. Discourages, causes grief, selfish, negative, critical

Questions for Sexual Activities, by Linda Dillow:

(Page 406)

- a. Is it prohibited in Scripture?
- b. Is it beneficial, or does it hinder the relationship?
- c. Does it involve anyone else, even in pictures, on a screen, etc.?

God's 10 Prohibitions Regarding Sex, by Linda Dillow:

(Page 406)

1. fornication
2. adultery
3. homosexuality
4. impurity
5. orgies
6. prostitution
7. lustful thoughts
8. sodomy
9. obscenity
10. incest

God's Purposes for Sex

(Page 407)

- a. Create life
- b. Intimate oneness - God created sexual desire
- c. Knowledge of one another
- d. Pleasure
- e. Defense against temptation
- f. Comfort
- g. Picture of spiritual oneness between Christ and His Church
- h. Gift created by God but with boundaries

Lies from Satan Regarding Divorce

(Page 408)

- a. I will be happier so the children will be happier
- b. God wants me to be happy so divorce is ok
- c. I married outside of God's will so divorce is right
- d. No one will suffer from this divorce
- e. Anything is better than what I have now
- f. Some man out there will meet my needs
- g. Divorce is common and accepted now
- h. It is no big deal
- i. My situation is an exception
- j. There is no hope for this marriage
- k. All my friends agree that I should divorce

Four Ingredients to Deeper Sexual Intimacy Within Marriage

 by Gary

Chapman, adapted from his book, *The Family You've Always Wanted*

(Page 408)

Intimacy is that sense of closeness that comes when we share our lives deeply with each other.

1. Intellectual Intimacy
2. Emotional Intimacy
3. Social Intimacy
4. Spiritual Intimacy

Sexual intimacy is illusive for many couples because we have separated it from the other four areas. It flows naturally from a loving marital relationship. If you want greater sexual intimacy then focus on building closeness in the other areas of life. Physical intimacy is a wonderful sign of the union of all the other aspects of your life.

Serious Red Flags and Danger Signals

(Page 411)

- a. Thinking about the person when not with him
- b. Wondering if he is thinking about you
- c. Looking forward to seeing him or being in the same place
- d. Taking extra care in your appearance when he will see you
- e. Replaying conversations or situations with him in your mind
- f. Distancing yourself from your (annoying) husband
- g. Fantasizing about being together
- h. Jealous of his spouse; seeking closer friendship with her
- i. Prolonged personal conversations or online/phone contact

The grass is greener on the other side of the fence because that's where you're watering with your hose - or there is a septic leak. Your own pasture has dried up and died because you are not feeding or watering it. - The Language of Sex

Did You Know?

(Page 415)

- a. If a husband has no sex, he will associate his wife with frustration and resentment.
- b. If a husband is sexually fulfilled, he sees his wife as a source of intense pleasure and his love grows stronger.

Lesson 24: Don't Forget Your Left Hand!



Because God is sovereign, in control of all, everything that happens to us...

(Page 429)

1. Is preplanned – Psalm 139:16
2. Has God's permission
3. Has a divine and perfect purpose – Psalm 138:8
4. Is part of God's specific, wise plan for our lives – Jeremiah 29:11
5. Is accompanied by God's presence – Psalm 139
6. Is covered in God's protection – Psalm 91, 121
7. Is never without God's provision

My Heavenly Father knows all about this, so Lord, I receive this as from Your hand for my good and for Your glory.

Biblical definitions of joy:

(Page 433)

1. A deep awareness of God's presence and working in your life even amidst trials and struggles.
2. A happiness based on unchanging divine promises and eternal spiritual realities. It is the sense of well-being experienced by one who knows all is well between himself and the Lord. It is not the result of favorable circumstances and even occurs when they are painful and severe. Joy is a gift from God, a delight in the blessings we possess. – John MacArthur
3. An inner peace and rest based on what you know to be true that results in thanksgiving and expectancy. – Paul Tripp

Ways We Forfeit Our Joy by Elisabeth Elliot

(Page 434)

1. Don't pray.
2. Resent God's Ways.
3. Worry as much as possible and carry all your cares.
4. Pray only about things you can't manage by yourself.
5. Refuse to accept what God gives, allows, permits.
6. Look for joy elsewhere, other than in God.
7. Try to rule your own life.
8. Doubt God's Word.
9. Allow your emotions to be in control instead of running to truth.
10. Focus on your problems, circumstances, and people.

God Always Answers Prayer

(Page 436)

- a. Direct = yes
- b. Delayed = wait
- c. Different = better
- d. Denied = no

Never make the blunder of trying to forecast the way God is going to answer your prayer. – Oswald Chambers

Thankfulness Definition

Thankfulness is an attitude of gratitude that recognizes God's goodness and prompts expressions of appreciation to God and to others. BCC

Lesson 25: Don't Forget Your Left Hand! - Part 2



Why do we sometimes feel like God doesn't love us?

(Page 457)

- a. Our sin causes a barrier
- b. Guilt and shame = unlovable
- c. Cold heart towards God
- d. Suffering, loss, affliction
- e. Unanswered prayer
- f. Other: you fill in

Prayer: One Critical Discipline

(Page 462)

- a. Prayer is a fundamental discipline of the Christian life.
- b. Prayer is powerful and must be a priority.
- c. God works through believing prayer.
- d. Prayer is our duty, responsibility, and great privilege.
- e. We must be committed to continuous conversation with God.
- f. God answers all prayer from His children: direct, delayed, delivered, denied.

Truths Regarding Trials

(Page 466-467)

- a. God has a purpose for each trial He allows.
- b. There is usually a lesson to be learned within the trial.
- c. Every trial has God's permission.
- d. God's presence is with us throughout every trial.
- e. God wants to reveal Himself to us during our trials.
- f. God uses trials to perfect our character.
- g. Trials are used to make us dependent upon God.

- h. God wants to strengthen our faith during the trial.
 - i. Trials often expose our idols.
 - j. No trial will last forever.
 - k. Because of the trial, we will be able to comfort others.
 - l. Sometimes God uses trials to get our attention.
 - m. God may use trials to discipline us. He is not out to get us, but to get us back.
 - n. God will bring good out of any situation.
 - o. We must wait on God with trust and obedience.
 - p. God wants us to praise Him, be thankful, and give Him glory throughout the trial.
 - q. God wants us to experience His sovereignty, power, and faithfulness.
-

Lesson 26: Continue On!



Being a Hearer Only

(Page 483)

a. Intellectual Response =

b. Emotional Response =

c. Convicted Response =

Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it. – Luke 11:28

Ways We Mock God

(Page 492)

- a. We make promises to Him then casually break them.
- b. We know what is right and decide to do wrong.
- c. We ignore the conviction of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- d. We do not make God or His Word a priority.
- e. We recognize our idols but cling to them.
- f. We do not hate sin but flippantly ask for forgiveness.
- g. We only come to God when we are in trouble.
- h. We take credit that belongs to God.
- i. We are self-sufficient and not dependent upon God.
- j. We rarely pray.
- k. We seldom confess or repent of sin.
- l. We look to people and things other than to God.
- m. We believe we can escape the consequences of wrong choices.

Laws of the Harvest: We are all planting!

(Page 493)

- a. You will reap a harvest of some type.
- b. You will reap what you plant.
- c. You will reap more than you plant.
- d. You will reap after you plant.

Process of Change

(Page 497)

Where are you stuck? (Stuck = what I am doing is not working)

1. Hear or read truth from God's Word.
2. Admit and agree with God's truth.
3. Realize and identify your personal need for growth.
4. Confess, repent and pray for specific help.
5. Determine specific growth steps. What changes must be made?
6. Actually do the steps.
7. Control thoughts, have emergency plan, use Left Hand
8. Have an accountability partner.
9. Repeat.
10. The Holy Spirit is involved in each of the above steps.
