SOAR DISCIPLESHIP COLLEGE
MARRIAGE COURSE

SECTION 1 - THE ROLES OF THE COUPLE

(LEAVE & CLEAVE)

> *"In the beginning God created everything that is and then He created mankind in His own image, male and female He created them."* **Gen 1: 27**

In **Genesis 2: 7** God gave man a body and breathed the breath of life into him and man became a living soul. God then planted a garden in Eden and put man there to look after it.

In **Genesis 2:18** God said:

> *"It is not good that man should be alone, I will make a helper suitable for him."*

So, God instituted marriage and intended for one man and one woman to live in harmony forever.

Today, a Christian marriage is intended to be an unconditional commitment between two imperfect people to each other for life.

Marriage is not only a human experience - it is a God ordained institution.

See *Hebrews 13: 4*

Since everything that God created is good and perfect, there are no bad marriages; however, there are imperfect people in them.

The first principle of a Godly marriage is found in Genesis 2: 24

> *"Therefore shall a man **leave** his father and his mother, and shall **cleave** to his wife and they shall be **one flesh**."*

We can see from this scripture that the married couple should separate themselves from their parents and relatives in order that they can "cleave" together and become a new family unit of their own.

THIS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COUPLE TO IMPLEMENT.

Unfortunately, many couples do not do this fully and often parents do not want their children to become totally independent after marriage.

HERE ARE SOME BASIC REASONS WHY COUPLES DON'T LEAVE?

1. _____ problems (The couple are afraid to leave).
2. _____ problems (Parents do not want them to leave).

REALISE THAT IF THEY DON'T LEAVE, THEY CAN'T CLEAVE

HOW IS THE WORD "LEAVE" DEFINED IN THE HEBREW LANGUAGE?

1. To _____ (No strings attached - loosen the reigns)
2. To _____ (Go away)
3. To_____ (FORSAKE - but honour parents) **Deuteronomy 5: 16**

The couple should encourage their parents to let them go and build their new life together and experience the challenges of living a godly life on their own.

It is important for a couple to receive their parents' blessing in their marriage. This will help them to continue to love and respect them.

- Leaving parent's means being responsible for the couple's own _____.
- Leaving must begin at the wedding and require transferring your _____.

REMEMBER TO "CUT THE APRON STRINGS" AFTER THE MARRIAGE.

IN WHAT WAYS SHOULD THE HUSBAND AND WIFE LEAVE THEIR RELATIVES?

THEY SHOULD:

- Leave _____ (Move away completely)
- Leave _____ (Don't call Mom or Dad when difficulties arise)
- Leave _____ (Don't depend on financial support from them)
- Leave _____ (Get "planted" in a church of their own choice)

"THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE"

HOW IS THE WORD "CLEAVE" DEFINED IN THE HEBREW LANGUAGE?

Genesis 2: 18, Matthew 19: 4–6.

E.g. Plywood glued together.

- To _____.
- To be _____.
- To _____.

WHAT MUST A COUPLE DO IN ORDER TO EXPERIENCE ONENESS IN MARRIAGE?

REMEMBER: Becoming "one flesh" is a process which takes a long time. The couple needs to be joined as one: -

- In Body (1 Corinthians 6: 16)
- In Soul – A progressive process
- In Spirit – In Christ

The soul includes the Mind (I think), the Will (I want), and the Emotions (I feel).

In **Amos 3: 3** the bible says, "How can two walk together unless they be in agreement?"

Matthew 18: 19 - Agreement brings power in prayer.

Each couple needs to progressively become less self-centered. They need to lay aside their personal wants for the good of marriage.

A COUPLE CAN BECOME ONE THROUGH UNDERSTANDING, VALUE AND HONOR.

They need to become totally open and honest with each other.

- Leave everyone else _____.
- Remain pure _____ **(1 Corinthians 7: 2-3)** - **SEE NOTES AT END ***
- Love for the _____.
- Live at _____ of living
- _____ at marital happiness **(*Deuteronomy 24: 5*) = (12 months)**
- _____ seventy times seven.
- _____ God in the centre of your marriage. **(Pray together.) (Worship together.)**

"Love at First Sight"

"Some people believe that true love can occur at the moment a man and a woman lay eyes on each other. But love at first sight is a physical and emotional impossibility because you cannot love someone you don't even

know. You simply have been drawn to the package in which they live. A lifelong emotional attachment is much more than a romantic feeling. It is more than a sexual attraction or the thrill of the chase or a desire to get married. Only when a person begins to develop a deep appreciation and admiration for another – an intense awareness of his or her needs, strength, and character – has one begun to experience true love." Extract from: "Night and Light" by Dr. James Dobson

One definition of God's kind of love is "Doing something for the benefit of another person at the expense of self".

NOTES ON SEXUAL PURITY

Cleanse yourself from any past or present immorality or infidelity in the following way:

- Stop any activity in this area.
- Pray and ask God for forgiveness.
- Apologize to spouse and seek forgiveness.
- Forgive yourself.
- Commit loyalty to each other. (Consider a pledge)

Cleaving will become stronger as the couple share more and more of their lives. They must allow complete openness and honesty in their sharing. They must forsake all competing relationships and priorities.

Cleaving refuses to allow anything to damage their _____

- When a *habit* irritates, choose _____
- When a *hindrance* frustrates, choose _____
- When a *hurt* grieves, choose _____ (is a gift)

Cleaving requires total commitment to honour your marriage _____

(Matthew 19: 4-6; Malicai 2: 14)

THE ROLE OF THE HUSBAND

(HEAD – LEAD – RULE - SERVE)

From God's perspective, the husband is to be the ***leader*** or ***head*** in the marriage.

"For a husband is the head of His wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of His body, the church." **Ephesians 5: 23**

"For instance, Sarah obeyed her husband, Abraham, and called him her master. You are her daughters when you do what is right without fear of what your husband's might do." **1 Peter 3: 6**

In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should, so your prayers will not be hindered.

1. The husband is the head of the wife because of God's _____.
    - The husband's role should not be defined by our _____.
    - Nor by his experience or _____.
    - But by the Word of God.
2. As the Head, he is to be an active leader who lovingly _____ and _____ for his wife and family.
    - *Rule* means "to _____ before" to care for the family (*1 Tim. 3v2, 4-5*).
    - *Provide* means "to_____ before" to meet the family's needs**. (1 Timothy 5: 8).**
3. The Head leads not by "lording it over" or "exercising authority" over his wife but" with understanding" and by "giving _____".
    - "*With understanding"* means to have intimate _____. (*1Pet. 3v7*)
    - Giving "honour" means to value her.

The Head is to be the spiritual leader who nurtures his wife and family to grow in the knowledge of Christ.

Statistics indicate that about 80% of husbands are passive in their leadership.

HERE ARE SOME REASONS WHY HUSBANDS DON'T LEAD?

1. **Wrong beliefs**
    - They don't _____ to lead.
    - They don't feel _____ enough to lead.
    - They don't think they will _____ in leading.

2. **Wrong behaviors**
    - Passive leadership, which is sinful
    - Emotional or physical abuse
    - Absence – (away on business)

THE ROLE OF THE WIFE

HONOUR – HELP – SUPPORT

The success of many a man is due to the encouragement of his wife in her role as his helper.

The success of a marriage depends, to a large extent, on the co-operation that a wife gives to her husband.

> *"Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him*." **Genesis 2: 18**

So, we can see that God defines the wife's role to be a helper to her husband for the purpose of assisting him to accomplish her husband's God given purpose,

In other words, she should come alongside him to help.

- As the helper in the marriage, who do you think should determine the form of help to be given to the husband?
- Since the husband is the head of the family, **he should** be the one to define the help that he needs.
- The husband should consult with his wife in order to find the most effective way for her to help.

Proverbs 31 *gives us a good guide to the help that a wife can give to her husband.*

In **1 Timothy 5: 14** the bible says that the helper is to actively "manage the house" under her husband's guidance.

Practical Pointers on the role of the Helper

- _____ respect and admiration for your husband – tell him how good he is. (**Ephesians 5: 33**)
- _____ the support of spiritually mature married women to encourage you.
- _____ your own spiritual growth in prayer and supplication.

WHAT SHOULD WIVES EXPECT FROM THEIR HUSBANDS LEADERSHIP?

At appropriate times a husband should lead in the following ways:

- As a protector, a provider,
- As a general, a priest,

- As a physician, a king.

SECTION 2 - THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HUSBAND

(LOVE AND ESTEEM)

All of a husband's responsibilities can be summarized in one biblical command

"Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the church."

This instruction from God is confirmed in the following passages of scripture.

- **Ephesians 5: 25, 28-29, & 33 & Colossians 3: 19 (MSG)**

The bible defines the word "love", used above, as "the God kind of love (agape')".

The word "agape" has the following meaning:

1. Love that is _____ **(*Matt.5 v 44)*** *(love your enemies)*
2. Love that is _____ **(*John 15v13)***
3. Love that is _____ ***(1 John 3v18)***

Here are some Practical Pointers on loving your wife

1. _____ anything that disappoints, frustrates or angers your wife.
2. _____ the "first works" of your early courtship. *(Rev. 2 v 4)*
3. _____ your love in a way that your wife actually feels loved.
4. _____ God's love today.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF LOVING YOUR WIFE

1. Love your wife actively, because God commands you to do this
   A. *Present tense* - I am to love _____.
   B. *Active voice* - I am to love _____.
   C. *Imperative mood* - I am to love by my _____.
2. Love your wife and purposefully "nourish and cherish" her. *(Eph. 5v28,29)*
   a) *Nourish* means to provide what is necessary for _____.
   b) *Cherish* means to treasure and treat with_____.
3. Love your wife fervently and never allow your love to grow_____.
   a) *Agape Love* includes both our actions and _____.
   b) *Agape Love* chooses to care deeply and lavish _____.

c) Agape Love never fails and guards against unforgiveness and _____.

4. Here are some ways that a husband could communicate his love for his wife.
   - Take her out on a date.
   - Go for a quiet walk together.
   - Plan a special weekend getaway together.
   - Buy her a gift of flowers or chocolates.
   - Enjoy a sport or recreation together.
   - Share some spiritual things with her.
   - Work on a special project around the house together.
   - 8.Do something together with the children.
   - 9.Tell her how much you love her.
   - 10. Sit down and really listen to her.
   - 11. Touch, hug, hold or kiss her.
   - 12. Send her love notes and cards.
   - 13. Surprise her with something special.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE WIFE

(SUBMIT and FOLLOW)

In **Ephesians 5: 22** and **1 Peter 3: 1** the bible says that a wife must submit to her husband. This is confirmed in **Colossians 3: 18.**

SUBMIT = UPO-TASSO = COME UNDERNEATH

- This means that a wife must _____ her life under the headship of her husband. **(1 Tim. 5: 14; Prov. 31: 27)**
- The concept here is that a wife must do this _____.
- She must submit to her own husband with joy in _____. **(Eph. 5: 24)**

This does not include anything illegal or immoral.

A wife should respect the authority of her husband regardless of his conduct.

Practical Pointers in Submitting to your husband:

1. _____ anything that disappoints, frustrates or angers her husband.
2. _____ her husband for any past hurts which may hinder her submission to him.
3. _____ her submission so that her husband feels respected.
4. _____ upon the Holy Spirit to empower her to submit.

Here are some ways in which a wife can communicate her submission and respect to her husband.

1. Manage the house keeping properly.
2. Handle the finances and keep within their budget.
3. Accept his overall leadership in the home.
4. Check with him before making any important commitments.

SECTION 3 - THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE.

(COMMUNICATE and FORGIVE)

No marriage course would be complete without some reference to “BOUNDARIES”.

Extracts from the book: “Boundaries” by Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend.

“The concept of boundaries comes from the very nature of God. God defines Himself as a distinct, separate being, and He is responsible for Himself. He also defines Himself as separate from His creation and from us.”

> *“Boundaries are anything that help to differentiate you from someone else or show you where you begin and end”.*

The most basic boundary that defines you is your physical skin. The skin boundary keeps the good in and the bad out.

Another fundamental boundary, which is not visible, is words. Words can create protective fences, one of the most powerful of these being the word **“No”** We need to remember to say no to ourselves as well as to others.

Your words also define your property for others as you communicate your feelings, intentions, and dislikes. Your words let people know where you stand and this will give them a sense of the “edges” that help to identify you. Time and distance are other examples of boundaries which we can define.

Feeling, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors all play an important part in determining our boundaries. At the end of the day, the best model that we have is God. He does not set limits on people. He sets standards and lets them be who they are and then separates Himself from them when they misbehave.

Our minds and thoughts are important reflections of the image of God, and therefore we must take ownership of our own thoughts. Many people swallow the opinions and reasoning’s of others, without taking the time to question them.

If there were ever a relationship where boundaries could get confused, it is a marriage, whereby design the husband and wife “become one flesh.”

Boundaries tend to foster separateness. Marriage has the requirement for the couple to become “one” instead of two.

Intimacy is only possible when the couple apply the laws of boundaries and learn to allow each other to have responsibility for their own feelings. Feelings are a warning signal telling us that we need to do something.

The need to reveal boundaries is important, more so in a marriage than elsewhere. Passive boundaries such as withdrawal, triangulation, pouting, affairs, and passive-aggressive behavior are damaging to a marriage.

Every marriage needs to be made up of two main ingredients, togetherness and separateness. In a good marriage these must be in balance.

A marriage is more than a partnership, a corporation or a company.

A partnership is defined as a legal relationship existing between two people who are appointed as joint principals in a common enterprise.

Marriage is better described as the husband-and-wife merger.

Webster defines a merger as "the absorption of an estate, a contract or an interest in another".

> **Genesis 2: 24** describes the marital merger with these words, *"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."*

Such a marital merger in no way implies the dissolution of individual identity or personality. Each partner is entitled to retain his or her own personal characteristics, and yet they become one in unity.

Remember that "becoming one" is a process which takes time. People differ in character and nature as remarkably as do their faces. God has created no two people alike. Even identical twins have their own distinguishing characteristics. The world is filled with diversity.

Unity must never be seen as uniformity.

Our Creator is a God of infinite diversity and herein lays the key to life's melody.

Unity of mind and singleness in spirit, in the midst of diversity is **symphonic.**

In **Matthew 18: 18-19** Jesus makes a very significant statement regarding the power and harmony which is found in unity:

> *"I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will loosed in heaven. Again, I tell you that if two of you (A husband and wife) on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in My Name there I am in their midst."*

The word "agree" here has nothing to do with mental acquiescence. The word in the original is "soomphonia" which is the Greek root word for "symphony".

This word means harmony, unison of sound, a concert of instruments. (To harmonize) In modern speech, what Jesus is saying is this:

"If as husband and wife you have a harmonious relationship, there is nothing on earth that can withstand your resolve!"

It is little wonder then, that the unity of the home is so hotly contested by the enemy satan. Disharmony, frequently called "incompatibility", is the primary cause for domestic tensions, infidelity and divorce.
Jesus clearly identified satan's motives for such disharmony when He declared:

"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand!" **Matthew 12: 25**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR A HEALTHY MERGER

- Be co-heirs together - **1 Pet. 3: 7**
- Be in agreement - **1 Pet. 3:** 8
- Submit to one another - **Eph. 5: 24**
- Good communication - **Eph. 4: 29**
- Be compatible - **Matt. 19: 8**

When these guidelines are applied to a marriage, a healthy, happy merger will result.

THE RESULTS of a Happy Merger

- Answered _____ - **1 Pet. 3: 7**
- Health and _____ - **Prov. 3: 1-2**
- _____ and Well Being - **1 Kings 2: 2-3**
- A _____ Marital Merger - **Eccl. 9: 9**

Marriage has a spiritual significance – a purpose in the Kingdom of God.

Don't let your marriage be merely a partnership, establish an interest in each other.

REMEMBER: A relationship is only as good as the two individuals who make it up.

Nothing helps a relationship more than when you shine the spotlight on **yourself** and see your own faults, issues, baggage, hurts and weaknesses. As you begin to understand yourself you can begin to resolve your own personal issues, learn to love unselfishly, and improve your communication with each other by giving more and more grace.

CHANGE YOURSELF - YOU CANNOT CHANGE YOUR SPOUSE

Perhaps you think your marriage is OK, but it needs real closeness and complete openness to become fulfilling, which is what most people desire. We don't want someone to love us because they have to; we want them to love us because they want to. I have thought hard and long in deciding what are the woman's major needs.

1 Samuel 1: 1–28 gives us a BIBLICAL PICTURE OF A GOOD HUSBAND

- He fulfilled his priestly role – *v 3*
- He provided well – v 4
- He loved her – *v 5*
- He was sensitive to her emotional needs – *v 8*
- He met her sexual needs – v 19
- He respected her judgment – *v 23*

1 Peter 3: 7 speaks to husbands to live with their wives with consideration and respect.

REMEMBER:

- The _____is the best place to find examples as role models for life.
- The _____ is the person to tell her husband what her needs are.

THE PORTRAIT OF A MAN'S NEEDS

- He desires a _____ **- 1 Cori 7: 2–5**. Sex is man's strongest drive.
- He desires a _____ - **Matt. 18: 18-19**
- He desires a _____ - **Gen 2: 18**. A helpmate - not a therapist
- He desires a wife who_____ him. – *Prov. 12 v 4 & 31 v 10*. Someone who respects & acknowledges him

SECTION 4 - THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

The one thing that sets the human race apart from the rest of God's creation is our ability to communicate through **conversation**.

Dr. Les Parrot once said "Communication is the very life blood of any relationship".

We cannot have any kind of relationship without good communication.

No other creature is able to share the beauty of an evening sunset, the plans for an upcoming event or the design of a new project.

- **James 3: 2-6** - *speaks about the dangers of the tongue.*
- **James 3: 5** - *tongue as a fire.*
- **Prov. 12: 18** - *tongue as a sword.*
- **Prov. 18: 21** - *Life & death in the tongue.*

There is a huge difference between **communication** and **just talking**.

Talking merely exchanges bits of information, whereas communication is sharing ideas, concepts, and emotions.

Talking about how you affect each other, or about how you have been disappointed by someone, and how you felt when you have been let down will result in real, meaningful communication.

Good communication is a learned skill and does not often come naturally. It requires an open, honest and non-confrontational environment to develop.

Communication between men and women is complicated by the fact that they think very differently, they perceive things differently, and respond differently.

In general, men are logical thinkers and women are emotional feelers.

Understanding the differences between male and female thinking is the key to success.

See example from "Men are Like Waffles, Women are Like Spaghetti".

Non-verbal elements such as gestures, facial expressions and body language play an important part in all communication.

There is also a huge difference between **hearing and listening**. Hearing is passive, it requires no effort.

We can hear sounds all around us, all the time, but really listening to something is a very different matter. Listening is active; it requires energy and focused concentration.

Listening implies empathy, reflection on emotions and it demands a response.

James 1: 19 says ***"Therefore, my beloved brothers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath".***

Speak the truth in love - forgive promptly - stop saying wrong

> *Therefore putting away lying, let each man speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry, and do not sin. Do not let the sun go downupon your wrath, neither give place to the Devil. Let him who stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, so that he may have something to give to him who needs. Let not any filthy word go out of your mouth, but if any is good to building up in respect of need, that it may give grace to the ones hearing. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you are sealed until the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and tumult and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you."* **Eph 4: 25-32**

Simple, truthful communication facilitates forgiveness and eliminates misunderstanding and offense. The root problem lies in the heart of man. Not every word spoken is heard - words are interpreted against the background/experience of the individual.

Jesus said in **Matthew 12: 34**

> "*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks".*

We will have to give account of every word spoken. **(Matt. 12: 35)**

LISTENING MORE AND LECTURING LESS, MAKES A HAPPIER HOME.

SECTION 5 - THE IMPORTANCE OF SEX IN MARRIAGE.

Sex within its intended domain of marriage is a special gift from God. It is God who created us with our sexual desires and within marriage sex is intended for pleasure as well as for procreation.

Hebrews 13: 4 ***"Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled, but fornicators and adulterers God will judge."***

Statistics tell us that approximately 85% of all marital problems are related to some form of sexual dysfunction.

Here are some key scriptures that present God's view of sex within marriage.

- Sexual needs are to be met _____**1 Corinthians 7:2–5**.
- God requires us _____ l our spouses sexual needs.
- _____ authority over your body to your spouse.
- _____ from sex is permissible only if both spouses agree.
- _____ sexual relations with your spouse after the agreed time of abstinence.
- God warns of satanic sexual temptation if _____.

1 Thessalonians 4: 3-8 *makes reference to "possessing one's own vessel in sanctification and honor ".*

- _____have sex outside of marriage.
- _____ from yielding to immoral temptation.
- _____ how to handle your own sex drive.
- _____ how your sexual drive can be fulfilled.

God created sex – He instructed Adam and Eve to be fruitful, multiply and replenish the earth.

1. Reproduction can only occur through heterosexual activity.
2. Sex education for their children is the responsibility of parents.

Read 1 Cor. 6: 16-20 (Loyalty - Remain pure before the Lord.)

If you have been wounded or defiled by sexual sin there are certain steps that need to be taken to insure, you're healing.

- **Repent** of sexual sin before and outside of your marriage.
- **Repent** of all perverted sexual activity and allow the blood of Jesus to cleanse you. **1 John 1: 9**
- **Forgive** anyone who has used you or wounded you sexually and then forgive yourself.
- **Sever all soul ties** that were established by previous sexual activity. **1 Sam. 18: 1**
- **Take authority** over any spirits that may have been assigned as a result of sexual sin. Break all generational and/or demonic holds over you and your family.

MAINTAINING THE VICTORY

- Maintain your healing by keeping yourself from impurity and renewing your mind with the Word of God.
- Guard your sexual union together as husband and wife by locking your shields of faith together.
- Establish an accountable relationship with a trustworthy person and meet frequently to review progress.
    - At these meetings, consider the following questions:
    - Are you maintaining a healthy balance between work, family, ministry and personal time?
    - Have you compromised your integrity in any way?
    - Have you been anywhere that could compromise your integrity?
    - Have you been honest in answering these questions?

- Keep a constant look out for behavioral warning signs such as over- tiredness, boredom, depression, covetousness, laziness, and clandestine actions.

REMEMBER: Sex is more than a physical activity – your mind is your most important sex organ.

Men and women respond differently to sexual stimulation.

SECTION 6 - THE WAY AHEAD

Conflict in marriage is inevitable and is a natural part of growth and family life. It is a sign of emotional health. God has created each of us in a unique way and each member of a family will have its own desires, wants, needs, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and behaviour. It is these very differences that make us interesting and special.

John 16 v 33 *Says, "In this world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer".*

REMEMBER: OUR REACTION TO CONFLICT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE CONFLICT ITSELF.

No conflict is insolvable with God's help - *Eph. 2 v20; Prov. 3 v 5-6*

Here are some reasons that can cause conflict and stress:

- _____- don't understand.
- _____- don't care.
- _____ - just accept situation.
- _____ - me, my, mine.
- _____- hardness of heart.
- _____ - low self-esteem, no confidence.

Whenever conflict or stress arises in a relationship it is vital to deal with it as _____.

Do not expect that it will go away or get any better on its own - in fact, if left alone, it will gradually bring strife and bitterness.

Here are some means for resolving conflicts.

- Honesty without condemnation - (speak truth in love).
- Communication without confrontation - (discuss without blame).
- Identification without rejection - (acknowledge without accusation).
- Be tactful, tender and forgiving.
- Abandon all personal rights to Jesus - **1 Pet. 5: 7**.
- Be the first one to apologize.
- Choose a time for discussion when neither party is tired, hungry or in a hurry.
- Do not attack the person, focus on the issue and aim for a win/win solution.

QUESTION: -

- What happens to love after the wedding?
- What makes you feel loved?

Dr. Chapman believes that everyone has a physical "love tank" that needs to be constantly filled up.
He also suggests that we are not always going to feel loved – yet we can make a commitment to act with love.

He has identified 5 ways in which our "love tanks" can be filled up, which he calls the **"THE 5 LOVE LANGUAGES".**

In his book of the same title, he identifies these as the following:

1. Quality time
2. Acts of service
3. Words of affirmation
4. Giving of gifts
5. Physical touch

SPEND TIME TOGETHER TO FIND OUT WHICH OF THESE IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOUR SPOUSE AND FILL THEIR LOVE TANK TO OVERFLOWING.

R E M E M B E R

Every marriage goes through several stages of development which can be categorized as the following:

- **STAGE 1**: The marriage union (honeymoon)
- **STAGE 2:** Home-making
- **STAGE 3:** Adolescence
- **STAGE 4:** Empty-nest (mid-life crisis)
- STAGE 5: Retirement
- STAGE 6: Heaven

RECOMMENDED READING:

"The Act of Marriage" by Tim & Beverley La Haye
"The Five Love Languages" by Dr. Gary Chapman

GROUP QUESTIONAIRE

1. What is the biggest problem in most marriages?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. What is the greatest need in most marriages?

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. What is one of the greatest tools that the enemy uses to destroy marriages?

_____
_____
_____

4. What specifically does having a “happy marriage” mean to you?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

ADDENDEM

- Detailed questionnaire for each person.
- *“Am I a good listener“?*
- List of “ Feeling Words “