

Discussing How To Restore The Early Church

Returning Intimacy and Power to the Father's Children

*"I tell you that if two of you 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 am I with them."*
(Matthew 18:19,20)



SECTION 5 - LESSON 35

THE HOME

The Basic Building Block For Spiritual Growth A Closer Look At Females:

- *Sue's Pilgrimage To The Hebraic Foundations*
- *What Do We Women Really Inherit From Our Mothers?*
- *Helping Women To Be Blessed By What I've Learned*



Restoration Ministries International

Mike & Sue Dowgiewicz

email: Mikedowg@aol.com

Web: www.Restorationministries.org

Section 5 Lesson 35

THE HOME

The Basic Building Block For Spiritual Growth A Closer Look At Females:

- *Sue's Pilgrimage To The Hebraic Foundations*
- *What Do We Women Really Inherit From Our Mothers?*
- *Helping Women To Be Blessed By What He's Taught Me*



THE HOME

The Basic Building Block For Spiritual Growth — A Closer Look At Females: *Sue's Pilgrimage To The Hebraic Foundations*

From Sue especially for women:

In Lesson 34 Mike confided to you the pilgrimage of preparation our Lord mapped out to equip him to share the Hebraic foundations. In this lesson I'd like to share how He prepared me.

As Mike mentioned, we'd been married 24 years when we arrived in Israel. I remember having spent the 10-hour flight sobbing through *Hinds Feet On High Places* as I so strongly identified with the main character, Much-Afraid!

The prophecy that had warned Mike of refining fires to come as our retreat ministry wound down scorched me as well:

"I have prepared the fires that I shall make him walk through, and they shall be used to crush the flesh in him..."

As I reflect on that time frame, I can see clearly that he was journeying through the Wounded Stage of manhood, but at the time, I didn't realize it. I was too shocked, wondering what had happened to the strong warrior I'd lived with for so long!

The next three years were brutal for both of us. Mike had invested his heart and energy into coming alongside church leaders to help encourage them in their troubled marriages and chaotic congregations. Yet those who wouldn't humble themselves before our Lord and repent needed a scapegoat to ease their guilt. Who better to attack than the messenger?

What raw, emotional pain seared him at the hands of men for whom he'd sacrificed our son and me to help sustain their ministries. Yet the Holy Spirit made sure that Mike couldn't defend himself amid the betrayals and false accusations. Our Lord had plans for those refining fires, and vindication wasn't part of His greater purpose!

While Rome Burned, Nero Fiddled

Through this three-year trial of turmoil that was part of God's preparation, I had to ask myself what kind of wife I was in the middle of all this pain. Did I come alongside my husband as he was going through such extreme fires of purification? Sadly, no.

During this time, a person on staff with us shared a significant dream that illustrated just how isolated from me that Mike felt. To compensate for what I perceived as his lethargic withdrawal, I had busied myself like a frantic hamster in a revolving wheel trying to keep things going.

In the dream, Mike was flying a helicopter (appropriate since he'd been a Navy pilot for ten years). The helicopter was on fire, and Mike was doing all he could to save the aircraft and the occupants. But his co-pilot (me) was nowhere to be seen. When the fire began, I bailed out, leaving him to crash and burn alone.

The staff member then asked me, "Have you ever seen Mike crash? I don't mean in an aircraft, but in anything in life." I told her I hadn't. She responded, "Then why are you pulling away from him when he needs you the most?" I was silent.

I'm an activity-based person. If something needs to be done, I jump in and work at it until it's completed. (Perhaps you can identify with me!) During that stressful period I hid my pain in the myriad of chores that maintaining the retreat center required.

Exhaustion kept me from having to face the pain together with Mike. I'd been raised by a divorced mother, and had only limited access to my father. I didn't even have a brother to learn about how different males are in their needs, strengths, and weaknesses!

I couldn't grasp how difficult it would be for my husband to try to complete that which my father hadn't accomplished in helping me to develop a yielded spirit. I had no training in how to be there for Mike in his time of deepest need. Giving affection from my heart was not part of

my response makeup. Mike would beg me for warmth and affection to help him go through this season of trial, but I wrapped my emotions up in my chores and in homeschooling our son.

I suppose I defined my love for Mike not in terms of affection but in the things I *did* for him—preparing meals, cleaning the house, even mowing the yard so he wouldn't have to bother with it.

Those activities may have fed my esteem but did nothing to meet any of his real needs! The things I did were a cop-out for not really caring enough from my heart to minister love in the way that it would be *received* as love.

Can you identify with my testimony? What are you like when your husband needs you the most?

Have you experienced the *Wounded Male* stage of development with your husband? If so, did you try to prod him into returning to the Warrior you'd known for so long?

A Vessel Fit for God's Purpose

This is the woeful picture of who we were as we got on that flight to Israel. But God needed us empty of all that we'd relied on as personal strengths before. The one thing we still had in common was our unswerving trust in Jesus—and that was precisely what He wanted.

In the months to come He was going to rebuild not only our relationship with each other but also the relational priorities He had initiated for the first followers of His Son, Jesus. (These would be fleshed out for us in the Restoration Diagram He showed Mike in his spirit.).

These *relational priorities* are what made the earliest Church so spiritually powerful and intimate. It wasn't sufficient in our Father's sight that we *research* the early Church. He called for us to personally put into practice the *covenant understanding* He'd intended for marriage in particular.

Before we could share with others, our own marriage needed to be overhauled in order that we might be the physical representation of our covenant relationship with our Father in Jesus. HE had to be the core relationship that tunneled through every other relationship as a conduit. Whatever entered us through His Spirit could then be funneled out to the other relational areas of family, loadbearing friends and those He put in our path to encounter Him through us.

Our devotion to our Lord needed to manifest itself in a love that people could see Mike and I had **for each other** — and He wanted no other relationships or activities to compete with that devotion. Out of our marriage, our love could then flow out to others to give them hope in His faithfulness.

Unlike the couple at the retreat center who had been seminary-trained to put ministry above marriage and family, we now realize that God ordained for couples to minister out of what He has done in their marriage. It isn't the *tasks* we do for others that's critical, it's reflecting the **love of Jesus** that people

can experience through us.

Does that sound like a tall order? If we tried to do this in our own strength, you bet! But that's exactly why He is rallying us (and you!) to call out to Jesus: because we *are* dependent on His Spirit to circumcise our hearts!

Perhaps you're a woman whose marriage is hurting. Describe what you want God to change in your marriage. How do you want Him to change *you* in the process?

In what ways does your marriage covenant mirror your covenant with our Lord? In what ways does it differ? Do you *have hope* that our Father will bring about opportunity for it to be changed?

THE HOME

The Basic Building Block For Spiritual Growth — A Closer Look At Females: ***What Do We Women Really Inherit From Our Mothers?***

“You are a true daughter of your mother, who despised her husband and her children” (Ezekiel 16:45).

My mother divorced my dad when I was 10 because she wanted to work rather than stay home to raise my sister and me. She got her way, working long hours as a single mom, and struggling to

keep my sister and me from tearing each other apart in our interminable squabbles. Because our mother worked the second shift, my sister and I were “latch-key” kids long before that became a common practice.

My mother coped with her harried life by becoming a recluse when she was at home. My sister and I quickly learned to depend on ourselves. If someone could be INDEPENDENCE personified, it was my Mom! And I grew up thinking that was how I should be too.

Unfortunately, I didn't learn how destructive the stronghold of independence was in my own marriage until it was almost too late. The concept of being God's *helper* to the man I married was totally foreign to me.

Your mother may be entirely different than mine. The changes our Lord needs to make in you may not be as character-altering as mine. But each of us has another “mother” from whom we all inherited a curse that significantly influences us to undermine our marriages and families.

That mother is Eve. Through the deceived and rebellious first woman, all women are born under a curse. And this curse can only be undone by the work of Jesus Christ in each of us to circumcise our hearts into His likeness.

As I look back, this process is really what has happened in me over the past 12 years. A curse has been replaced with a gradual transformation in my innermost being—an ongoing pilgrimage, to be sure. Why I respond as I do now has nothing in common with the motivations of the Sue who was so controlled by that curse!

The curse given to Eve and subsequently to all women is found in Genesis 3:16:

To the woman [God] said, 'I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.'

What does this mean?

All women would be cursed with the desire to usurp their husband's authority. Isn't this where Eve went wrong in the first place, ignoring the warning God had given to Adam about the forbidden tree (see Genesis 2:17)?

For woman, marriage would be an ongoing battle for control, manipulating where necessary to achieve her desired outcome—just as Eve tempted her husband with fruit from her own hand.

And when our husbands give in to us, as spineless King Ahab did with his evil wife, Jezebel, it only makes matters worse for our families. A leading cause for men to fall into a homosexual life-style is dominating mothers and weak, passive (or absent) fathers. Think about this!

Please remember an important point: **The curse we women inherit doesn't originate from Eve's relationship with Adam. It stems from her desire to live above all accountability.**

The first woman gave in to Satan's temptation because her heart's motive for *self-determination* readied her to be deceived. By disobeying that which God had made clear, she trusted her desire for self-will: her “*eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil*” (Genesis 3:5).

Her eyes were indeed “opened”, but what she saw brought her shame and fear. Eve's quest to “*be like God*” cursed countless generations of women to contest their husband's authority. Satan found a kindred heart in the woman, for he him-

self had the same self-exalting motive that caused him to be driven from God's presence in heaven.

This passage, which addresses the presumptuous sin of the king of Babylon, well pictures the dark purpose of the one who was driving that monarch:

*How you have **fallen from heaven**, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been **cast down to the earth**, you who once laid low the nations! **You said in your heart**, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; **I will make myself like the Most High**' (Isaiah 14:12-14).*

Rebellion against the laws of God are certainly one level of disobedience. But to want to be *like Him* in power and authority as did Satan and Eve cost them everything. Satan lost his position in heaven; our first parents lost intimate fellowship with God in the Garden.

How do you respond to the reality of the curse we women have inherited from our first mother, the desire to rule our homes?

In what ways did your own mother train you to be godly? In what ways did she inadvertently train you to be like Eve?

Why Look Back at Eve?

Our Lord Jesus set the pattern for the covenant union of marriage as the Bridegroom of *His Bride*, the Church. That Bride encompasses each of the called-out ones who follow Him until the end.

Our Lord's plan for husbands and wives was for them to faithfully represent Him in the *physical* realm as a picture of His *spiritual* relationship with His Bride. Jesus is the Head, and His Bride is the Body. Paul's timeless instruction should be imprinted on our hearts:

*But I want you to understand that **Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ...** For man does not originate from woman, but **woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake** (1 Corinthians 11:3,8,9, NAS).*

That godly pattern was shattered in the Garden of Eden. God had given authority over creation to Adam as the one He selected to name the animals and tend the Garden. Eve was called the "*suitable helper*" for her husband because she was to come alongside him in the work God gave them to do. Sounds good so far, right?

By creating the man *first*, God was setting into place His pattern of relational order: Woman was designed to follow her man's leadership. In the Hebrew language, she was literally a *helper who answered to him*. She shared responsibility in the Garden work, and responded to her husband's uniquely human nature with loving support.

Do you view yourself as your husband's helper, the woman suitable for him? Yes or no? If no, how do you see your relationship to him?

THE HOME

**The Basic Building Block For Spiritual Growth — A Closer Look At Females:
Helping Women To Be Blessed
By What He's Taught Me**

“In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ”
(Colossians 2:11).

There's a reason I'm sharing these reflections with you. God's people are not called to wallow in regret; worldly sorrow leads to death. Regret leaves you with a sting every time you reflect. Rather, you need to go “vertical”, straight to Him!

The vertical Godly sorrow teaches us to cry out to our Lord in trust and receive His forgiveness and renewal. That forgiveness brings His healing to us and removes the sting of the painful memory. Then we're able to learn from our past and help others who are now facing similar circumstances with the wisdom and hope He's given us.

Isn't this the purpose for the comfort we derive from our Father's faithfulness, ***“so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God”*** (2 Corinthians 1:3,4)?

Hopefully, as you read on, you'll discover that reflecting *without regret* can be a powerful instrument to receive the changes the Spirit wants to accomplish in you.

I don't know what the Sue of today would have in common with the Sue who got on that flight 12 years ago, except maybe my trust in Jesus. And yes, He *is* the Cornerstone for any change you yearn for in yourself or your marriage. Your relationship with your husband won't be changed until your heart, mind, and strength are built up *in Jesus!*

Our friends with whom we lived in Israel, Bert and Exie, perceived this vital point:

- They didn't try to help save our marriage; rather, they helped each of us renew our relationship with our Lord Jesus.
- In the process, both Mike and I were individually being transformed. We were being purified in His fire, ground into fine powder, and molded into a couple who could more clearly reflect Jesus in our marriage.

Through growing in union together, we could be entrusted with the message of the Hebraic Restoration. Now I can see more clearly our Lord's purposes for what He brought us through. And I can certainly appreciate the changes He has made, and continues to make, in me!

From this perspective, I hope I can help you if you want to see your marriage shine with the love our Lord Jesus desires for you to experience.

Please anchor this thought:

At this point, focus only on what God wants to do in you. Don't concern yourself right now with anything else.

(If you're not married, do remember that in the Body of Christ, no one lives in a vacuum. I'm sure you know someone for whom these lessons might bring hope. Please keep that in mind as you read!)

What is your normal tendency when trials arise in your life, especially in your marriage? Can you stay focused on *yourself* until God completes His work in you? Yes or no? If no, what distracts you from all that He would accomplish in you during His refining process?

The Deception of Lawlessness

The temptation for us women to be our own “head” is especially present in Christendom today. The apostle Paul warns against giving way to the deception that being “under grace” means we can disregard the standards and ways of God which He’s clearly laid out in His Word.

Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God (2 Thessalonians 2:3,4, apperceiving Ezekiel 28:2).

A deceiving spirit is attracting many women who follow Jesus to rebel against God’s law, particularly as it pertains to godly yieldedness to our husbands. This spirit of *lawlessness* has an affinity to our feminine nature, contributing to the epidemic of divorce in Christianity today.

Many Christian women have responded to the siren call to be the “god” of their own lives. How? By disregarding our *Lord's relational order* and *rationaliz-*

ing away His commands through the perverted teaching of “grace” as *license*. Converting grace into permission to sin “because I’m already forgiven” nullifies God’s holiness and the importance for us to live holy lives set-apart for His use and obedience to His Word.

This lawless brainwashing attracts women in particular to live outside the boundaries of the Bible, especially as they pertain to their husbands. The young evangelist Timothy was warned of the danger to women who seek religious counsel that caters to their carnality. People who have a *form* of godliness [they’re churchd] but no love for or fear of God “*worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to come to full knowledge of the truth*” (2 Timothy 3:5-7).

In our travels to share the Hebraic foundations, we’ve encountered wives who were in ministry *without* their husbands. In conversations with some of them, I’ve grieved over how little regard they have for their husbands, who stay home while their supposedly “more spiritual” wives gad about.

Every time I read about one of these women speaking at yet another conference, I want to cry out, “Where is the headship of your husband, as our Lord calls for? Why are you a ‘loose cannon’ convincing women by your lifestyle to run out from under your husband’s leadership?”

As a woman who has seen the curse’s influence broken in my life, I’d like to share with you (and with husbands who want to help their wives live free from the curse of Eve) how this can be done.

But first you must be *convinced* that

there really *is* a curse on us women to usurp our husband's authority. If not, you'll refuse to go through the fires, the grinding and the molding that our Lord will use to free you from this curse.

Keep in mind, the battle is over *who will rule*. Are you going to be in control, or will Jesus be your Lord through the headship He's given your husband (see 1 Peter 3:1-6 as an example)?

A couple dear to us was scheduled to address an international conference of Christians a while ago. They've been part of living out the Hebraic foundations with us for several years, and knew that our Lord was calling them to speak on the marriage covenant as a living representation of their Covenant relationship with God.

Two months prior to the conference, Mike had been praying for them, and the Spirit gave him something to share. When they came to visit, he sat with both of them and addressed the issue of *devotion* that this woman needed for her husband. Without that level of intimacy, their words would ring empty at the conference.

When she heard Mike's words, the wife recognized immediately that she was holding onto areas of control and manipulation of her husband that were displeasing to our Lord. She often *went through the motions* of "submission" but wasn't really walking in loving respect of him. She was lacking what we call "***affectionate deference***."

Deference is giving someone the honor that's due. It's a *humble attitude of heart* that keeps us from offending those who have authority over us, and a joyful willingness to fulfill our responsibilities to them. If you're married, the *affectionate deference* you show your husband helps affirm in his heart your *devotion* for him.

Not knowing what else to do in order

to change her relationship with her husband, our friend went "vertical." She sought our Father for the will and power to *turn away from* her carnal responses so she could *turn toward* His way of devoted love. Dear sisters, "going vertical" is the crucial step for all of us if we're to see Eve's curse destroyed in our lives.

By humbling yourself in trusting prayer, you can receive cleansing and power from our Lord in your attitude and actions. You can walk the way of righteousness as it emanates from *Him*, not from a list of wifely do's and don'ts.

Because of the change our Lord made in her heart, our friend placed on our Lord's altar her *guardedness* against her husband that had come from past wounding. And with that healing, this couple could speak with such anointing that people at the conference commented on the wonderful love they saw between the two of them!

Affectionate deference grows as the curse of Eve disappears.

Do you display affectionate deference toward your husband? Yes or no? If no, why aren't you?

If you answered yes above, ask your husband if he lives with any apprehension about you. If so, ask him for specific areas.

Independence Produces A Begrudging Attitude

Holding onto grudges is devastating to your marriage! It's as though you keep a knife in your mind's pocket to twist when your husband makes a mistake or says something that reminds you of past battle scars. Let go! If you truly want to live as a couple whose marriage reflects Jesus's presence, then release your rationalized distrust and guarded emotions against your husband.

Withholding affection is one of those killer weapons that wives often use. (I'm speaking from sad experience here.) It's not as though you've *overtly* sinned so that others can point out your transgression. Rather, your coolness mirrors the control you're exercising to retaliate or to manipulate your own way.

My busyness in getting immersed in projects or activities might have been justified as "helping others" or being kind. But woe to Mike or to our son, for example, if they interfered with my gift preparations around Christmas time! My target-fixation on making presents for myriads of friends and relatives left the two most important people in my life feeling **apprehensive** and **expendable**.

Please learn from my mistakes! Pain-ing your family by shoving them aside will never be compensated for by other people's thank-you's. If you find yourself frazzled, STOP! Reprioritize what's really important and will have long-term benefit. Discuss with your husband and family how you can glorify our Lord in a manner that doesn't rob your home of peace.

Describe how you respond when your husband hurts your feelings.

Do you ever find yourself so busy helping people outside your family that your husband and/or kids feel like second-class citizens? Are you willing to be changed?

Independence Fans Flames of Insubordination

Insubordination is a form of rebellion. It isn't defined by what we *do*, but rather by what we *fail to do* or *withhold* from others through disobedience. For instance, when Mike corrected or rebuked me, I retaliated by withholding a warm smile or a needed hug. It was hard for anyone to accuse me of sin because on the outside I didn't *do* anything. But insubordination is one of the most serious sins we can commit.

We're told in 1 Samuel 15:23 that "*Insubordination is like the sin of witchcraft.*" Witchcraft is demonic in origin. It is the desire and the ability to manipulate things around you outside the will of God.

Insubordination is a rebellious attitude that grows like a cancer, causing you to act increasingly independent and even irrational. His insubordinate disregard for God's law drove King Saul to seek a witch for guidance!

Insubordination is clinically called "passive-aggressive" behavior. In other words, you may be sitting down on the outside, but you're defiantly standing up for your own will on the inside! It's the worst of all prisons for people to try to

help you out of because your most common response is, “What did I do wrong?” But your violation isn’t what you *did* but what you *didn’t do* that’s so heinous in our Lord’s sight.

A speaker at a spiritual warfare conference we attended referred to a “**Madonna spirit**.” This spirit is manifested when a married woman has children, then turns her devotion away from her husband to make her children the total focus of her affections. To her husband, she becomes like a madonna, a mother rather than his wife. In response, he may then seek out a lover, someone who appreciates him.

Paul warns both husbands and wives to not deprive each other of loving intimacy (see 1 Corinthians 7:3-5). Satan delights in dangling temptation in front of your husband if you substitute excuses for intimacy!

When a husband is robbed of the affectionate deference due him by his wife, it may not be a sexual companion he is driven to. Perhaps work or hobbies will increasingly keep him from involvement at home.

Only a humble yieldedness to cry out to our Lord in repentant trust can help an insubordinate woman. She must be willing to yield “self” on His altar in order for Him to bring about true heart changes, the kind our Father knows are real and overflow to her husband!

Have you ever calculated your use of affection to control your husband? Do your children receive more attentive love than your husband does?

Independence Leads to Usurping Authority, and Usurping Authority Ultimately Leads to Witchcraft

Have you ever noticed that when you try to follow an idea that’s contrary to your husband’s will or God’s plan, you end up with an awful mess? Eve chose to act independently of God’s commands and her husband’s leadership, foolishly placing herself in proximity of the forbidden tree and its tantalizingly luscious-looking fruit.

Eve’s **independent action** purposely strayed from the standard of righteousness that her Creator had given to both her and her husband for their good. As I wrote earlier, her independent attitude led her to rebel by giving in to the temptation set before her *to be like God*. Jumping out of her Father’s envelope of protection under Adam, Eve wanted life on *her* terms.

Another woman of the Bible who walked forcefully in Eve’s independence was Jezebel. Her seizure of her husband’s role struck fear into a generation of men. She combined her usurpation with witchcraft, and in the process almost destroyed the prophets in Israel. Even the mighty Elijah fled in terror to hide from her powerful wrath!

Now what is there in Jezebel that we should beware? First, she devoted herself to foreign gods, persecuting people who followed the one true God.

- You may not be following another god, but do you really *trust and obey* the One Who has revealed Himself in His Word and by His Spirit?
- Are you *at peace* with God and what is going on around you?
- Do you walk with a *quiet spirit* that pleases Him in relationship to your husband?

Or, do your control and manipulation cause your family to fear getting on the wrong side of you?

Jezebel, like many women today who exercise control by their independent attitude, made decisions behind her husband's back, rationalizing that it was "for his own good." (Read this sorry account in 1 Kings, chapter 21.) Do you also try to manipulate your own way because you think you know what's best, overlooking our Father's plan of male headship in the process?

Among the Navajo it's traditional for a young girl to undergo the *kinaldah* ceremony when she begins menstruating. It's an initiation into womanhood. However, the underlying goal for the ceremony is to establish the girl's right to authority as *head of her home* when she gets married.

Sadly, too many of these girls see themselves as independent operators, not recognizing their father as their protector. Soon after her initiation into womanhood, the girl becomes a target for hormonally-driven young men looking for easy prey. Wanting to be accepted, and delighted to be an object of desire, these gals often find themselves used and pregnant. Their sexuality becomes their means of control—a wile that continues into marriage.

Do you find intercourse with your husband to be an intimate expression of your loving gratefulness for him? Is intimacy a renewal of your marriage covenant for you?

So What DO I Do?

Faithful Wounds of A Friend

If your married life has come to the point of the manipulation that characterizes witchcraft, or the insubordination of withholding the affectionate deference you should be giving your husband, you need help!

Intervention by family in Jesus who care for you is essential. There's a vital relational need that we each have for someone who can get our attention and bring us up short because they love us too much to see us stumble into foolishness and harm any longer.

I'm so grateful for a dear couple who are with Mike and me heart and soul. They go "vertical" on our behalf, praying earnestly and regularly for us. Then they share what our Lord has revealed so we can confirm it with His Word by His Spirit, and apply to our lives what God has revealed through them.

Let me share an example of how needful a timely word of rebuke can be! Mike had been laid low for almost four weeks with a sinus infection that spread to his lungs and sapped his energy and even his thinking ability. I succumbed to my usual double-time in getting things done but found my empathy quotient about zero.

Pausing to comfort and encourage him didn't even appear as a blip on my to-do list. But was my performance attitude meeting Mike's real need? Or was I just feeling good about my competence but exercising an independence that made him feel like an obligation?

In response to their prayers God told our intercessor friends what I was doing and why Mike's illness was lasting so long. I'm so grateful that these prayer warriors called to deliver the "*wounds of a friend*" that bring conviction and a turn-around.

Mike's extended illness turned out to be a classroom for me to exercise compassion and kindness, not to crank out chores! My *behavior* wasn't the issue. My *unChrist-likeness of heart* in not keeping my husband the primary focus of my affections was what our Lord wanted changed!

Think about when your husband is under going difficulty or stress. Does anything in your life override affectionate interaction with him? Perhaps this is when all those nasty little mental conversations crop up in your head of past hurts or irritations at his hand.

If our Lord Himself stressed that the second-highest command is to ***“love your neighbor”***, just who do you think that your first line of affection belongs to? The “neighbor” with whom you're in marriage covenant!

Perhaps you've found substitutes for sharing affection with your husband. Obviously our children do need our devotion—but our husbands shouldn't have to wait for love leftovers!

Just as in a “Madonna” situation, you can become so wrapped up in your kids that your husband becomes another “kid” in your realm of responsibility, or you expect him to be a “eunuch” because you're so tired meeting everyone else's needs. And tragically, you may end up driving him into temptation elsewhere.

If you have no children at home, maybe you're among the millions who lavish attention on a pampered dog or cat. That strikes home with me. I found that our dog was always willing to show gratefulness for every little thing I did, or be a silent recipient of painful tears on his neck without finding fault.

While that seemed infinitely more soothing than showing love to the covenant partner who had just caused me distress, I wasn't growing in Christ-

likeness by giving the dog my highest affection either!

You may find that you're giving too much of yourself at work. Because you're bringing in income, you justify your fatigue and busyness as something your husband just has to live with. Our Father didn't intend it to be this way!

Whatever the temptations you're facing, please solicit the prayerful support of those who will seek God's *rhema* on your behalf. It's not just a matter of someone saying a prayer for you; your real need is for those who will sincerely come before His throne in expectant anticipation on your behalf!

Mike in particular senses our Father's call to lift up the people we care about, especially to “help them keep out of trouble with our Father!”

Do you have another woman who can speak correction into your life? Yes or no? If no, why don't you?

Who displaces your husband in the affection realm? Is your affection unconditional, or is it dependent on how you think he'll react? What would Jesus do?

Whatever You Do, Go Vertical!

In our **October/November 2003** newsletter we addressed various facets that deal with “going vertical.” Please

review the chart in that newsletter.

Remember, DON'T try to change your attitude or your behavior through actions done in your own strength. That would be *manipulating* your relationship in the hope that your husband might respond the way you want. That's witchcraft. Changed behavior without a circumcised heart doesn't bring the Christ-like love that both of you need in your marriage.

Go vertical! Let our Father revamp your heart, both in your view of your husband as the man he is, and the correct perspective of your need for our Father's circumcision of your heart. Our Lord isn't angry with you. He grieves over the love, joy and peace you're missing in your marriage!

Our Father knows that as you call upon Him with humble yearning to be the woman and the wife He wants you to be, He can then change your innermost being. The more of Jesus you evidence in your regard for your husband, the less you'll exhibit Eve's curse of independence and control!

Think about our mother in our trust walk, Sarah. Her husband, whom Paul calls our "father" Abraham (see Romans 4:16), pulled a lot of boners in their marriage, even offering her up to Pharaoh's harem to save his own skin! Yet she was able to walk "in the vertical", not demanding her husband to change but trusting that as she loved and served him as "lord", God would intervene on her behalf. (See 1 Peter 3:4-6.)

Our walk as wives isn't predicated on what our husbands need to do to shape up. WE are blessed if we give up fear that things will never change, and choose instead to forsake the things the Spirit shows us are hindering our own growth in spirit. Even if our husbands don't

change, our *perspective* of them will be altered. Then, looking through eyes that reflect a circumcised heart, we can live in the affectionate deference and companionship that pleases our Father.

Forget What The World Is Telling You

It's an awesome responsibility that we women have in our influence in our families! This God-given role and responsibility has been severely undermined by those who cherish the curse of Eve, **the feminist movement**. Supported by the National Education Association, feminists have undermined the importance of wives and mothers. So many married women are snared by the deception that claimed Eve. They're missing the blessing of their God-given role.

Until the beginning of the 1900's the word "education" was defined in dictionaries as the relationship a mother has with her children. This emanated from God's command to children, "*do not forsake your mother's teaching*" (Proverbs 6:20; see also Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

Raising children to be godly is an amazing privilege and responsibility from our Lord: "*But women shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with self-restraint*" (1 Timothy 2:15, NAS).

Remember, God brought about the marriage covenant so that "*godly offspring*" would be raised (see Malachi 2:15). The one who bears these children and trains them by word and example to walk in Jesus' steps finds the favor of His promise resting on her.

A mother's biblical role wasn't just academic. She molded the future of her children as she imparted wisdom in her daily interaction with them. In fact, studies today show that the mother is the

only source that motivates her children.

The former USSR and the Scandinavian countries which previously led the world into **day care** are leaving it behind. They've determined from years of experience that day care stifles motivation and creativity. Some countries now pay mothers to stay home and raise their children!

Very special friends of ours live on the Navajo reservation. The mother is determined to be God's conduit of truth to her children and has elected, with her husband's enthusiastic encouragement, to educate their children at home.

A very talented seamstress as well as carpenter, this energetic mom includes handicrafts as part of her children's education. She has started a cottage industry, making high-quality aprons to sell. Her sons create woodworking projects that have supplied them with cash as

well as a skill for the future. She's living proof that being at home doesn't mean isolation or boredom!

It's our responsibility as followers of Jesus to destroy the curse of Eve in our generation, and to acquire the character of Jesus to model for our children. Every woman has a choice:

The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down (Proverbs 14:1).

How would you respond to a mother who wants to stay at home with her children but feels they can't make it on just her husband's salary?

Pilgrimage from the Curse of Eve to Christ-likeness

The Curse: Independent Rebellion	God's primary process to bring freedom and blessing for women		The Blessing: Christ-likeness
	Father	Husband	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanting to be like God; minimizing Him or His commands so that you have <i>no fear</i> of Him. • Wanting the authority of your husband's servant leadership; undermining his authority through insubordination and manipulation. • Independent attitude leading to "cold love" or divorce; failing to wholly fulfill your role as loving helper. • Resistance to all forms of male authority figures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrects contentious and independent attitudes; encourages a yielded, submissive spirit. • Establishes a sense of personal dignity in his daughter(s); she feels precious and valued. <p><u>When a father fails:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willful attitudes magnified; promiscuity practiced. • Daughter(s) not prepared adequately for marriage, contributing to strife and tension with her husband; increased likelihood of divorce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loves his wife as he loves himself; corrects ungodly attitudes and practices. • Guards her dignity; guides her in living out God's commands. • Produces a godly generation through his wife <p><u>When a husband fails:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • His authority is habitually contested; children learn to be self-seeking and divisive. • Wife fails to experience the true love of God. • Spirit of independence and divorce grows, leading to dissolution of marriage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Christ-like character develops; desires to please the Lord. • Sees the protective value of husband's authority; desires to remain under his protective servant leadership; peaceful heart, trusting God to guide husband. • Provides husband with godly counsel; entrusts final decision-making to him; develops ways to maintain <i>shalom</i>, the harmonious peace of their home. • Role models a submissive and peaceful spirit for her children.