

# Y e s h u a MISHPACHAH

UPHOLDING HUMAN  
DIGNITY

Matt. 25:31-46

A NEWSLETTER TO THE FAMILY OF JESUS FROM RESTORATION MINISTRIES

The Hebraic family is not simply an individual or private matter. Rather, it is an institution in which the whole community has a stake. Thus, the Hebrew word "mishpachah," meaning family, not only refers to parents and children, but to the whole extended family worldwide in the body of "Yeshua"—our Jesus.

## Develop Christ-likeness — Destroy the Curse of Eve

Dear Ones in Jesus,

Since we've been writing these newsletters for many years, this seems an appropriate time to give you a little insight into the manner in which our Father prepared us to be vessels for His use.

This month it will be 10 years since Mike and I flew to Israel and returned with the facets of the Hebraic Restoration. We'd been married for almost 24 years, and for the last 10 of those, we'd taught and shared our lives with the over 5,000 people who had come to our retreat center in eastern Connecticut.

The emotional atmosphere between Mike and me couldn't have been colder. As Mike boarded the plane for Israel, he put back on his wedding ring, challenging Jesus to save our marriage. And here was the strange part: We'd been given prophecies that the *two of us* were going to come back to the US with a prophetic message for the Church. That same word was confirmed to us again while in Jerusalem.

Picture two broken people who had been certain that ministry demands came before our marriage. We were staring down into a very real abyss of a divorce. To hear that we were going to be coming back *together* was astonishing enough, never mind with an assignment from our Lord!

We can look back now and see how our Father was preparing us. He needed *empty vessels* to receive His message and to share the relational priorities He is restoring to His children.

Three years earlier, in the midst of what many would call a "successful ministry", Mike had been given a prophetic word that set the stage for future preparation. See if it's the sort of word *you'd* like to receive!

7/23/90

Hearken to my voice, my little one. For I the Lord am here to *refine by fire*. For my servant Mike *shall be broken*. I have prepared the fires that I shall make him walk through, and they shall be used to *crush the flesh* in him.

And I promise you that the sweet and fragrant aroma of Jesus shall pour forth as he is *tempered and tried by my Spirit*. And my anointing shall rest upon him in purity and power, and great prophetic words shall be uttered through his mouth. But the *testing* that is coming upon him shall *scathe him* and *be painful* as I flush out all that is not like me.

The next three years were brutal for both of us! False accusations and betrayals by church leaders whom Mike had helped in his years of counseling left him bruised and shaken. But our Lord wouldn't let him defend himself. Our friend Bert Schlossberg, with whom we would live in Jerusalem for three months, anchored a key truth that was to become part of our very core: "Mike, you can never walk in the fullness of Jesus until you wash the feet of Judas."

For three years I watched my husband go through incredible emotional pain at the hands of men for whom he had sacrificed his family to help in their ministries. Our Board of Directors sided with the false accusations without even investigating them. As a friend confided, "I guess they feel that where there's smoke, there must be fire."

In September 1993, the Board ordered us to leave the center by year's end. Mike was absolutely devastated. When we left, it was months before he could even visualize the faces of the people for whom he'd cared so much.

We could identify with David's lament:

*If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were raising himself against me, I could hide from him. But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend, with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship as we walked with the throng at the house of God (Psalm 55:12-14).*

### While Rome Burned, Nero Fiddled

Through all of this trial that was part of God's plan, 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 had a significant dream that illustrated just how isolated from

**Preparing the Family of Jesus for the Dark Days to Come**

me that Mike felt as I busied myself like a frantic hamster in a spinning 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 do you pull 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 labor 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 open up the hurt and face it with my husband.

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 develop a yielded spirit.

I had no training in how to be there for my husband in his deepest time of 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 time of trial, but I wrapped my emotions up in my chores.

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 cop-outs for not really caring enough from the heart to minister love in the way that it would be *received* as love.

How about you? Has your *doing* for surpassed your *being with*?

### **A Vessel Fit for God's Purpose Needed: A Circumcised Heart**

This is the woeful picture of who we were as we got on that flight to Israel. But God needed us empty. 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 which He ordained for the first followers of His Son, Jesus (seen in our Restoration Diagram).

These relational priorities are what made the earliest Church so intimate and so spiritually powerful. The two of us needed to not only *learn* through our research on the early Church, but also to *put into practice ourselves* the covenant understanding that God ordained for marriage in particular.

Our marriage needed to become the physical representation of our covenant relationship with Jesus. *He* had to be the core relationship that tunneled through every other relationship as a conduit — what entered through His Spirit could then be funneled out to other relational areas of family, loadbearing friends and those He put in our path to encounter Him as "Jesus, with skin on".

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 nothing to compete with that devotion. Out of our marriage, our love could 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 marriages. It isn't the *tasks* we do for others which is 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! "*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).

### **Helping Women To Be Blessed By What I've Learned**

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"!

The vertical *Godly sorrow* teaches us to cry out to our Lord in trust and receive His forgiveness and renewal. That forgiveness releases His healing to us and removes the sting of the 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.

So, hopefully, as you read on, you'll find out that reflecting without regret can be a powerful instrument of receiving the changes that 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 10 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.

Our friends with whom we stayed in Israel, Bert and Exie, recognized this vital point. They didn't try to help save our marriage; rather, they helped each of us grow in our relationship with our *Lord Jesus*. In the process, both Mike and I were individually being transformed. We were being purified in fire, ground into fine powder, and molded into a couple who could more clearly reflect Jesus through 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 sisters who want to see *your* marriage shine with the love our Lord Jesus desires for you to experience.

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

### **What Do We Women Really Inherit From Our Mothers?**

After her divorce, my mother emotionally controlled my sister and me by becoming a recluse. It was her way of coping, and my sister and I quickly learned to depend on ourselves.

If someone could be INDEPENDENCE personified, that was my Mom for 35 years! And I grew up thinking that was how I should be too. Unfortunately, I didn't learn how destructive that stronghold was in my own marriage until it was almost too late.

*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 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 is really what has happened in me over the past 10 years. A curse has been replaced with a gradually growing Christ-likeness in my innermost being — an ongoing pilgrimage, to be sure. *Why* I do things now has nothing in common with the Sue who was so controlled by that curse!

The curse given to Eve and to all women is found in Genesis 3:16: *"To the woman [God] said, 'I will greatly increase your pains in child-bearing; 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 *position of authority*. For women, marriage would be an ongoing battle for control, manipulating where necessary to achieve her desired outcome. And when our husbands give into us, as spineless King Ahab did with his evil wife, Jezebel, it only makes matters worse for our families. The leading cause for men to choose a homosexual lifestyle is dominating mothers and weak, passive fathers. Think about this!

The curse we women inherit doesn't originate from Eve's relationship with Adam. It stems from her desire to live above all accountability. She gave in to Satan's temptation when she was told that by eating the fruit, her *"eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil"* (Genesis 3:5).

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 himself had the same self-exalting motive that resulted in him being driven from God's presence in heaven:

*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* as did Satan and Eve cost them everything. Satan lost his position in heaven, while our first parents lost fellowship with God in the Garden of Eden.

### **Why Look Back at Eve?**

It's an awesome responsibility that we women have in our influence in our families! It's our responsibility to destroy the curse of Eve in our generation, and to acquire the character of Jesus to model for our children.

Our Lord Jesus set the pattern for the godly union of marriage as the Bridegroom of His Bride, the Church, each of the *called-out ones* who follow Him until the end. His plan for husbands and wives was for them to faithfully represent Him in the physical realm as a picture of His relationship with His Bride.

Jesus is the Head, and His Bride is the Body. Paul's timeless instruction should be imprinted on our hearts: *"Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God...For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, but woman for man"* (1 Corinthians 11:3,8,9).

That godly pattern was shattered in the Garden of Eden. God had given authority over cre-

## 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"> <li>• Wanting to be like God; minimizing Him or His commands so that you have <i>no fear</i> of Him.</li> <li>• Wanting the authority of your husband; undermining his authority through insubordination and manipulation.</li> <li>• Independent attitude leading to "cold love" or divorce; failing to wholly fulfill your role as help-mate.</li> <li>• Difficulty with all forms of male authority figures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corrects contentious and independent attitudes; encourages a yielded, submissive spirit.</li> <li>• Establishes a sense of personal dignity in his daughter(s); she feels precious.</li> </ul> <p><u>When father fails:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willful attitudes retained; promiscuity practiced.</li> <li>• Daughter(s) not prepared adequately for marriage, contributing to strife and tension with her husband; increased likelihood of divorce.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loves his wife as he loves himself; corrects ungodly attitudes and practices.</li> <li>• Guards her dignity; guides her in living out God's commands.</li> <li>• Produces a godly generation through his wife</li> </ul> <p><u>When husband fails:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• His authority is habitually contested; children learn to be self-seeking and divisive.</li> <li>• Wife fails to experience the true love of God.</li> <li>• Spirit of independence and divorce grows, leading to dissolution of marriage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased Christ-like character develops; desires to please the Lord.</li> <li>• Sees the protective value of husband's authority; desires to remain under the protection of his authority; at peace, trusting God to guide him.</li> <li>• Provides husband with godly counsel; entrusts final decision-making to him; develops ways to maintain the <i>shalom</i>, the harmonious peace of her home.</li> <li>• Role models a submissive and peaceful spirit for her children.</li> </ul>
<p>Note: I've encountered few women who have experienced the development process God ordained. But remember! Our Lord Jesus will circumcise your heart if you will but repent and put yourself on His altar. Make Christ-likeness <i>your</i> goal!</p>			

ation to Adam as the one He selected to name the animals. Eve was called "the appropriate 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 unique human nature with loving support.

### The Deception of Lawlessness

The temptation for us women to be our own "head" is still present, even in the Church today. The apostle Paul warned,

*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).

A deceiving spirit is attracting many women in congregations 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 churches today.

Many church-going women have responded to the siren call to be the "god" of their own lives. How? By disregarding our Lord's relational order and rationalizing away His commands under a prevalent perverted teaching on "grace"

(as license) that permeates so much of the Church in the US today. Converting grace into permission to sin nullifies God's holiness and the importance for us to live holy lives set-apart for His use and obedient to His Word.

This lawless teaching attracts women in particular to live outside the boundaries of the Bible, especially as it pertains to their husbands. The young evangelist Timothy was warned against the danger to women who seek religious counsel that caters to their carnality. People who have a *form* of godliness [they're church-ed] but no love 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 acknowledge 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 wives gad about. Every time I read about one of these women speaking at 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 their husband's leadership?"

As a woman who has seen the curse's influence broken, 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 requires in order for you to be free from the 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?

A dear couple was scheduled to address an international conference of Christians several months 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. The Spirit gave him something to share with them. When they came to visit, he sat with both of them and addressed the issue of *devotion* that the wife 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 knew 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 really did not walk in loving respect of him. She was lacking what we call "*affectionate deference*."

*Deference* is giving the honor that's due a person. It's an *attitude of heart* that keeps us from offending those who have authority over us, and a joyful willingness to fulfill our responsibilities to them. Wives, our affection for our husband is that which he experiences from us that enables him to know in his heart the devotion we have for him. Affectionate devotion *grows* as the curse of Eve *diminishes*.

Not knowing exactly what to do in order to change in relationship with her husband, our friend went "vertical." She sought our Father for conviction to repent and turn away from her carnal responses so that she could turn toward His way of devoted love. Dear sisters, "going vertical" is the crucial step for all of us if we are to see the curse destroyed in our lives.

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

Because of that heart change, 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!

### **Independence Produces a Begrudging Attitude**

Holding onto grudges is devastating to your marriage! It's as though you are always keeping a knife in your pocket to twist when he 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 on their husbands. (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 either punish or to manipulate your own way.

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

Since this is the month that you may be consumed with "holiday preparation" and all that entails, please learn from my mistakes! The hurt you do to your family will not be overcome by the unwrapped presents and thank-you's afterward. If you find yourself a walking frazzle, STOP! Reprioritize what is really important and will have long-term benefits. Talk over with your husband and family how you can glorify and thank our Lord for His first coming in a manner that doesn't rob your home of peace!

### **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, if my husband voices correction or rebuke to me, I may retaliate by withholding a warm smile or a needed hug. It's hard for anyone to accuse me of anything, because on the outside I didn't *do* anything. But insubor-

dination 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 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 essence, you may be sitting down on the outside, but you're defiantly standing up for your desires 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 *withheld doing* that is so wrong in our Lord's sight.

A speaker at a spiritual warfare conference we attended referred to a "madonna spirit." It's 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. In response, her husband seeks out a lover.

Paul warns both husbands and wives to not deprive each other of loving intimacy (see 1 Corinthians 7:3-5). Satan delights to dangle 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 sex 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!

### **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* purposefully strayed from the standard of righteousness that her Creator had given to both her and her husband for their good. 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 usurpation 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 out from her wrath!

Now what is there in Jezebel that we should beware? First, she devoted herself to foreign gods, persecuting those 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, does 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 21.) Do you also try to manipulate your own way because you think you know what's best — and overlook 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 fathers as their protectors. 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.

### **So What Do I DO? Faithful Wounds of A Friend**

If your married life has come to the point of the manipulations 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 give you a recent 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 zip. Pausing to comfort and encourage him didn't even appear as a blip on my to-do list. But was that attitude really meeting my husband's 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 intercessors 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 in not keeping my husband as 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. 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! Too often a wife becomes so wrapped up in her kids that her husband either becomes

another "kid" in her realm of responsibility, or she expects him to be a eunuch. And tragically, she ends up driving him into temptation elsewhere.

If you have no kids 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 Gods *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 ones we care about, especially to "help them keep out of trouble with our Father!"

### **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.

And 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 maybe your husband would then come around and that's witchcraft. Changed behavior with-

out 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 regard to your view of your husband as the man he is, and the correct view 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 inner most being. The more of Jesus in your regard for your husband, the less of Eve's curse of independence and control!

Think about our mother in our trust walk, Sarah. Her husband Abraham 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 her husband 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.

Your partners in the process,  
**Mike & Sue**

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**Even if your husband doesn't change, your *perspective* of him will be altered.**

**Then, looking through eyes that reflect a circumcised heart, you can live in the affectionate deference and companionship that pleases our Father.**

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