

Lifebyte 62

It's Time For Followers of Jesus To Live Repentantly—Part 5

Does Your Marriage Reflect Your Covenant With Our Father? (Lesson 2)

"Thanks be to God, Who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him. For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing." (2 Corinthians 2:14,15)

Sanctify Your Marriage Into Christ's Likeness — Repent! and Stay Repentant!!!



**Turn away from sin
and strongholds**



**Turn to Jesus and
become like Him**

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless."

(Ephesians 5:25-27)



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*“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out,
that times of refreshing may come from the Lord” (Acts 3:19)*

God the Father Versus The Queen of Heaven *The battle over your marriage*

Introduction

You’re no doubt aware that many marriages are self-destructing all around you. But we’re going to discuss a contributing cause that may be new ground for you: an age-old battle of God our Father against the demonic Queen of Heaven spirit. Once you’re familiar with this spiritual war being waged in the unseen realm, you’ll be better equipped to keep your own marriage free of this demonic influence and perhaps help others as well. (If you’re not married, please read this and come alongside couples who are hurting, or pass it along to them to prayerfully read and apply to their own lives.)

Ignorance of the Queen’s influence has left so many throughout Christendom struggling in their marriage rather than standing firm as a covenant union. The influence of the Queen of Heaven permeates countless denominations, congregations, and ethnic and racial groups. It’s no wonder that the children of divorce, particularly daughters, have chosen the path of marriage dissolution. Yet few are aware how deeply they’ve been agitated in that direction by this insidious entity.

Relatively few religious leaders are in a position to help you resist the Queen of Heaven spirit. Protestant clergy are among the occupations that lead this nation in divorce. And tragically, people who are “churched” break their marriage vows in greater numbers than do unbelievers in the US. Ask yourself: Why do so many give way to a decision which our God hates (Malachi 2:16)?

Within this past generation, another phenomenon has insinuated itself with-

in religious circles to erode the holiness of the marriage covenant: the widespread tolerance for and practice of homosexuality. For example, up to 75% of Roman Catholic seminarians admit to being homosexual — a practice that is detestable to God (Leviticus 18:22).

Please hear us. We’re *not* against the individuals who are ensnared by any form of sexual sin. Each and every one can find the freedom and power to turn from their sin through the Spirit of Christ! Yet the precious name and reputation of our God is being brought down among the nations when that which God’s Word specifically cites as evil is accepted among His people.

A powerful demonic force has been fanning flames of lawlessness especially in regard to the sanctity of marriage. We contend that contemporary western Christendom is succumbing to an ancient battle that pits our heavenly Father against the Queen of Heaven and all of her (or its, if you prefer) various manifestations. As we’ll discuss later, the Bible makes clear the nature of this spiritual battle.

Let’s begin with Adam and Eve and review how their fall into sin has negatively impacted the roles of husband and wife. Next, we’ll explore Satan’s attacks on marriage through the Queen of Heaven entity that manifests itself through a Jezebellic influence on women. And finally, we’ll discuss the Queen’s evil consorts and allies.

We encourage you to closely examine your own marriage to discern how the Queen of Heaven spirit may be damaging your covenant relationship, particularly if you have children. They’re being assaulted by a world system that is captivated by the lies of this demonic entity.

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord” (Acts 3:19)

Hurdle 2: Does your marriage suffer from the curse of Eve? Is it dominated by the Queen of Heaven? Is your wife a Jezebel? Is your husband an Ahab?



The Creation of Man and Woman

The Biblical account of creation is outlined in Genesis, progressing from the formation of the heavens and earth to the plants and animals to God’s chief handiwork, humanity. God created male and female human beings uniquely in His image to enjoy a *love relationship* with them. He enjoyed their companionship, and walked and talked with them in the Garden of Eden that He had prepared to be their home.

How firmly you hold to the Bible as truth will determine how purposeful you are in doing whatever is necessary for your marriage to reflect our Lord Jesus, and to instill loving obedience to Him in your children.

If you believe in the *One True God* of the Bible, then both the creation account and God’s design for man and woman must guide your understanding. If you believe the *Bible* to be God’s source for truth, then what it teaches about the roles of man and woman and

how they raise the next generations will direct your response.

Let’s look at the truth of how humanity came into existence.

The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being....

The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. ...

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, He took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man. The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh (Genesis 2:7,18-24).

In His infinite wisdom God did not evolve mankind from other creatures. Instead, each type of life was unique and specifically created by Him *after its own kind* (Genesis 1:11-25). Yet out of all He created, only humanity was made *“in His image”* (Genesis 1:27). Only mankind was capable of a *loving relationship with Him* — a love which He poured out in exceeding abundance on humanity even though it was so inadequately reciprocated.

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Demonic Disruption of the Marital Relationship

Life in the Garden should have been wonderful for the first couple. They were loved by their God, Who had given them rule over all that He had made (Genesis 1:28). All their needs were abundantly met. Meaningful work filled their days. Their relationship with each other was satisfying and joyful. However, the chief of the fallen angels, Satan, despised both them and their God. He devised a deceitful plan to shatter the intimacy the man and woman shared with their Creator. Satan would tempt them through their **freedom to disobey**.

God didn't create man and woman to be robots! He designed them to be his responsive, loving children. For their well-being He commanded a single limitation on them so that out of their *love for Him* they might choose to obey. Their Creator even made clear the terrible consequences if they disregarded His command.

*And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were **pleasing to the eye and good for food**. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.... And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but **you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die**” (Genesis 2:9,16,17).*

This loving God had created the couple to experience only good. Everything He had created He had declared *good* (see Genesis 1). But crafty Satan, whose name means **“Accuser”**, seized his opportunity to separate the man and woman from intimacy with their Creator. His tactic?

To entice them into evil *through a lie*. Jesus describes deception as a chief weapon in Satan's demonic arsenal: *“When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is **a liar and the father of lies**”* (John 8:44b).

The Genesis account allows us to observe as silent witnesses the conversation between the tempter and the woman. Here we see how the first couple deliberately turned from their Lord's command in order to satisfy their desires *apart from His will*.

*Now the serpent [Satan] was **more crafty** than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “**Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’**” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but **God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’**” “**You will not surely die,**” the serpent said to the woman. “For God knows that when you eat of it **your eyes will be opened, and you will be LIKE GOD, knowing good and evil.**”*

*When the woman saw that the **fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves** (Genesis 3:1-7).*

God had filled the Garden with all kinds of trees that were lovely and full of tasty fruit. But Satan is a deceiver, a master at twisting the truth. He questioned Eve why she and her husband weren't

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supposed to eat from *any* tree in the garden. That was a lie! But it was enough to kindle doubt in the woman. She responded to Satan with another lie: that they weren't even to *touch* the forbidden tree. By choosing to believe Satan, she opened herself to the very goal that had gotten him kicked out of heaven: **the desire to be like God.**

Eve chose to make a decision independent of either her God or her husband. That independent thinking would be a generational bane for all women to come. Tempted by pride to be equal with God, she wanted to know what was evil as well as what was good. Thus she talked herself into doing what *seemed good in her own mind* but was forbidden by Him.

Since the fruit not only looked delicious but could also make her wise, she eagerly ate it. Note that her husband could have spoken up and refused to eat the fruit. But he didn't. Without a word of protest he joined her in sinning against God.

There is a difference here, however, in their disregard of their Lord. Adam wasn't *deceived* as Eve had been. He *intentionally disobeyed* the direct command of his God. The couple's eyes were indeed opened as Satan had promised, but what they saw produced fear and shame.

God's Curse On All Mankind

The God of the Bible is both loving and holy, full of mercy as well as justice. Adam and Eve had violated His command to not eat fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Their willful disobedience reaped tragic consequences for both them as well as for all of humanity—a curse that's been passed along from generation to generation ever since.

Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?” [Obviously God knew but was giving the man a chance to confess his wrongdoing!] So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?” [Another opportunity for Adam to confess, but again he refused.] Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” [He refused to admit his guilt and instead made excuses.]

And the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” [She too refused to take responsibility for her guilt.] So the LORD God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, you are cursed ... And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

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

Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it’: ‘Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. ... In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the



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*ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to **dust you shall return.**” And Adam called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the **mother of all living** (Genesis 3:9-20).*

Not only would their lives be marked by pain and the decay of death. Their very inclination would be to sin. Look back at how Adam responded to God’s questions. Like Adam, the core sin nature of males is to **blame** and **give excuses** when confronted with wrongdoing. Adam even *blamed God* for having given the woman to him!

On the other hand, the core sin nature of females is the **desire to rule her husband** and **exercise independence** from him and his rule. Eve had exercised independence from God’s command, and had “ruled” over her husband by handing him the forbidden fruit to eat.

Later you’ll see how recognizing the *reality of the sin nature* is vital to understanding the influence of the principalities of Ashtoreth, Chemosh and Molech.

The Queen Of Heaven and Her Destructive Influence

The Bible triumphantly declares how God miraculously delivered the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and into the Promised Land. He loved them as His treasured possession and called them apart to be His very own (Deuteronomy 7:6). However, time and again they were unfaithful to Him, particularly in their worship of a demonic entity called the **“Queen of Heaven”**.

Driven by a desire for power, the Queen of Heaven spirit pursues both the *power to destroy* (as the goddess of war) and the *power to control* (as the goddess of sexual prowess and fertility). Whole families of Israelites came under control

of this demon as the wives and mothers encouraged their husbands and children to take part in serving her. Even their political leaders had deserted the one true God of Israel and turned to this evil being. From God’s perspective, their unfaithfulness was **spiritual adultery**.

*The **children** gather wood, the **fathers** light the fire, and the **women** knead the dough and make cakes of bread for the **Queen of Heaven...** “We will certainly do everything we said we would: We will **burn incense to the Queen of Heaven** and will **pour out drink offerings to her just as we and our fathers, our kings and our officials did** in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. At that time we had **plenty of food and were well off and suffered no harm.** But ever since we stopped burning incense to the Queen of Heaven and pouring out drink offerings to her, we have had nothing and have been perishing by sword and famine.”*

*The women added, ‘When we burned incense to the **Queen of Heaven** and poured out drink offerings to her, **did not our husbands know** that we were making cakes like her image and pouring out drink offerings to her?’...*

*Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying: “**You and your wives** have spoken with your mouths and fulfilled with your hands, saying, ‘We will surely keep our vows that we have made, to **burn incense to the Queen of Heaven and pour out drink offerings to her.**” You will surely keep your vows and perform your vows!’ (Jeremiah 7:18; 44:17-19,25).*

Like Eve, the Israelite women took matters into their own hands. Unconfronted by their husbands, they called upon the *Queen of Heaven* to provide for

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them and protect them. Several generations after their miraculous deliverance from Egypt, the spiritually adulterous Hebrew women ignored the Exodus account of how God had sustained their ancestors for 40 years in the desert. They disregarded His promise of blessing if they obeyed His commandments, and cast aside His warning of curse if they disobeyed (see Deuteronomy 28).

These women were not only deceived. Their *cowardly husbands* refused to confront them about their sin — the same sinful pattern between Adam and Eve. Grasping the power offered them because they had no godly male headship, these women enticed their husbands and children to worship the Queen of Heaven demon with them.

Worship of the Queen of Heaven demonic being is soundly condemned by God, yet a form of this has continued among Roman Catholics. A *spiritual counterfeit* of Mary, the Jewish woman who birthed Jesus, was declared to be the “Mother of God” in the 5th century at Ephesus, Turkey. (The city of Ephesus had been home to a lavish temple to the goddess Diana, one of whose titles was also “Queen of Heaven.”) The emphasis on Mother *of God* places this counterfeit Mary entity *above* God in the hearts and minds of people — the same goal that Satan had for himself.

In Roman Catholic doctrine, Mary is the Mother of God, showing mercy as the ever patient mother and the protectress of humanity— especially of women and children. During the Middle Ages Mary was often portrayed *forever holding*

the child Jesus. The King of kings and Lord of the universe was framed in people’s hearts as a clinging little boy dependent on His indulgent and protective mother.



This perpetual “majestic mother and needy child” image was nothing new. Long before the incarnation of Jesus, the Egyptian fertility goddess Isis loomed over her son Horus, a sun god. The Greek goddess of fertility, Demeter, was revered as the protectress of home and marriage, and was often pictured with her dependent young daughter Kore.

Do you see how effective are Satan’s schemes to disrupt God’s plans for husbands and wives? Even before Isis and Demeter and Mary images, sinful humanity fashioned saintly mother and child icons and placed them in sacred shrines for worship and adoration and prayer. Only the names have changed!

To worship, adore, or pray to any goddess image and her teachings is to *embrace the curse of God*. Later we’ll discuss how to overcome this particular curse, which is the desire of women to *rule over their husbands* as independent operators. But first, let’s look at other biblical examples of the curse of feminine rule.

Jezebel—The Curse Carried To Extreme

When a nation lives in obvious ongoing sin against God’s commands, He *speaks through prophets* to warn the people. He also places the people in difficult circumstances to bring them back to Him. If after these measures they still refuse to repent—to *turn from their wicked ways* and humbly seek God—they suffer yet another consequence for their rebellion:



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My people — children oppress them, and women are ruling over them. My people! Your guides lead you astray and obliterate the paths you should follow (Isaiah 3:12).

Thus was the case during the time of King Ahab's reign in Israel. Keep this in mind: *his wife Jezebel* was the real power behind the throne.

Haughty Queen Jezebel was known far and wide for her ruthless, domineering spirit. The daughter of a pagan monarch, she viciously slaughtered many of the prophets of God (1 Kings 18:4). So fearsome was her vengeful reputation that even mighty Elijah, who had been used by God to destroy Jezebel's false prophets, fled from the evil woman in terror (1 Kings 18:40)!



Let's be clear here. In order for a woman to rule over her family, a man has failed to fulfill his God-given responsibilities. Remember Adam's sinful response when he was confronted by God? He gave excuses and ducked responsibility. It was because of Ahab's childish dependence on his wife that Jezebel controlled the tribes of Israel through her schemes and witchcraft. He had only to whimper to her and he knew that she'd come up with a way to meet his desires.

Take, for example, the incident of Naboth, a righteous Hebrew and subject of Ahab. (The account is found in 1 Kings 21.) Naboth highly valued his ancestral vineyard, which unfortunately was located near the palace in view of the covetous king. When King Ahab asked for the property, the man firmly refused to sell it.

The sulking king whined to his wife, who responded like an indulgent mother with a spoiled child. Using the king's seal of authority, she hatched a plan to defame the innocent landowner, have him killed, and snatch the vineyard. Yet the consequences that befell their children were severe: Every male in Ahab's family was killed. There would be no successor to continue his line (2 Kings 10:7-11).

Like Jezebel, many married women take control whenever their husbands fail to fulfill their Biblical responsibilities. Subtle weapons of **manipulation** and **control** are wielded by women who rule their homes. How might you recognize this control? The wife responds with **passive-aggressive** behavior, that is, she pouts when she doesn't get her way. When her husband corrects her or disagrees with her wishes, she may withhold affection from him or act in ways she knows will irritate or anger him.

This kind of control pattern often begins when a wife *makes excuses* for her husband's character flaws, or *hides from him* things she's doing. Like Jezebel with Ahab, she gives up being the man's wife and begins to mother him. And he either doesn't realize he's being manipulated, or abandons trying to head his household. After all, there's a certain feeling of safety in hiding behind his wife.

The Queen of Heaven's Accomplices: Ashtoreth, Chemosh and Molech

The Queen of Heaven demonic entity has succeeded in destroying or crippling countless thousands of marriages and families. Joining her in the attack are demons noted in the Bible: Ashtoreth, Chemosh and Molech. Because Israel succumbed to the lies of these false "gods", God destroyed the nation.

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*I will [tear the kingdom apart] because they have forsaken Me and worshiped **Ashtoreth** the goddess of the Sidonians, **Chemosh** the god of the Moabites, and **Molech** the god of the Ammonites, and have not walked in My ways, nor done what is right in My eyes, nor kept My statutes and laws as David, Solomon's father, did (1 Kings 11:33).*

God repeatedly warned the Israelites against worshipping Ashtoreth, the goddess of erotic love, fertility, and feminine dominance. This emissary of Satan fostered fornication and all types of sexual perversion, so the sanctity of marriage would be violated as they gave in to their lust with this abominable idol.



Both Chemosh (1 Kings 11:7) and Molech (Leviticus 18:21) demanded the sacrifice of children. Anticipating this evil, God commanded through Moses the death of anyone who sacrificed his child to

Chemosh



Molech (Leviticus 20:2-5). Profaning the sanctity of life, parents would thrust their infants onto the red-hot fiery arms of the Molech idol, then engage in sexual orgies to drown out the piteous screams.

These bloodthirsty demons were the antithesis of everything God instructed the Israelites concerning marriage and family. God our Father wanted their marriages to be holy unto Him so that they would represent the covenant union between Himself and His beloved, Israel. Through the covenant of marriage would come Godly offspring to love and serve Him as their Lord and King (Malachi 2:15).

What similarities between then and now are found when a society gives way to the demonic entities we've mentioned? Ashtoreth hated the sanctity of the monogamous marriage covenant and seduced her followers into indulging in all forms of sexual perversion—even as they proclaimed themselves to be the people of the one true God! Chemosh and Molech induced married couples to sacrifice the fruit of their flesh to appease an idolatrous demon bent on consuming God's handiwork of creation. The parents could then try to soothe their guilty consciences by gratifying their fleshly lusts.

Do you see the parallels between our day and theirs? Not only does western culture at large participate either actively or vicariously through the Internet and media in sexual depravity; many among the church, both leaders as well as flock, are in bondage to this perversion as well!

These false gods are *demonic principalities that have not disappeared*. Evidence of their influence abounds throughout Christendom today:

- divorce is rampant
- abortion is endorsed and practiced
- children are educated apart from the commands and ways of Father God
- couples limit their family size so they can pursue personal interests and pleasures instead.
- mothers with children at home are away at work

These demonic principalities thrive *within Christendom* wherever people are ignorant of the commands in God's Word *and/or* distort the character of God to conform to their own depiction of Him.

That's why *every* follower of Jesus must heed Paul's timeless admonition:

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All Scripture [both Older and Newer Testaments] is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

Again, these demonic principalities have insinuated their influence within many denominations and congregations. A striking example during the past several decades has been the movement of clergy to overemphasize God our Father as a nurturer. In the minds and hearts of many, God has become more of a gentle “mother-god” who excuses the sinful attitudes and actions of humanity. A number of modern Bible translations have even distorted the true God into a genderless or even feminized version that perverts the reality of how He has chosen to reveal Himself in His Word.

An overemphasis of His loving nature produces an imbalance that nullifies His holiness, righteousness and justice. Mankind would much rather deal with a deity who overlooks their sin than One who compels them to acknowledge their violation of His commands through confession and repentance.

It’s because of His holiness as well as His love that He has given over 600 commands in the Older Testament and 1,050 in the Newer. These instructions by our loving Father are commands to help us live righteously through His Spirit — to want to live a life that pleases Him. His ways are spelled out to show us what is good and what is evil in His sight, and delineate how we can walk intentionally and purposefully as Kingdom servants of our King.

Do yourself a favor and look through your concordance for the number of

times “pleasing God” and similar phrases appear in the Bible. In light of His gracious kindness, shouldn’t that be a priority heart response from His children?

Minimizing our Father’s holiness and nullifying any concept of sin is the deceiving work of Satan’s emissaries. By dulling people’s realization that their sinful actions violate God’s commands and ways, they feed the desires of the flesh as tantalizingly as Satan did Eve.

There’s an essential truth that’s being confronted here: Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for *mankind’s sin*. By minimizing sin and the reality of its consequence, eternity in hell, the vital reality of *our need* for the atonement of Jesus is shrouded, and His substitutionary death is relegated to dusty history. Indeed, the true motive of these demonic entities is *anti-Christ*.

When the reconciling, life-giving work of Jesus on our behalf is depreciated, people fail to recognize their own depravity before their righteous Creator. Not anguishing over their need for Jesus to pay the penalty for their sins so that they can come into covenant union with Him, they instead view Father God as universally all-accepting. The mighty Lion of Judah is transformed into a meekly mild Life-improver who can be called on to provide health and an abundance of indulgent provision.

Can you see how the combined influence of Ashteroth, Chemosh and Molech is *anti-Jesus Christ* and *anti-marriage* and family? People who have given way to these insidious lies have found themselves pre-disposed to di-



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orce, abortion, promiscuity, pornography and even reduced family size — and see nothing wrong with it.

We discussed in *The Gospel of the Covenant Is The Pilgrimage To Salvation* [a free download under “Hebraic Articles” at our website] that our Father intends that the covenant of marriage be the physical representation of our spiritual Covenant with Him. As a couple lovingly helps each other in their sanctification process, their marriage will reflect more and more the character of Jesus.

Tragically, widespread ignorance of the destructive work of these demonic entities throughout much of Christendom has hindered the desire and will of many to be transformed into Christ’s likeness. Studies reveal that “believers” and unbelievers in this nation have the same ungodly values, and that divorce among the churched surpasses that of unbelievers.

It’s time that we who claim to be in Covenant union with our Father and say that we follow Jesus scrutinize carefully our marriage and family to see if these principalities have made inroads. For the glory and praise of our Father, let’s rid ourselves of their influence and adapt His way of life for our marriage and family.

Please, don’t assume that you are free from these principalities! So many churched families are falling apart or are on the brink. Maybe yours is one of them, or perhaps you’re still suffering the effects of a broken home yourself. Examining *together* without blame or excuse how things got this bad may help motivate you to find ways to make drastic changes.

Each of us is a product of our upbringing which includes the traditions of our religion and/or culture. Most of this influence came at such an early age that

it seems to be an intrinsic part of our nature. Traditions are passed along so easily from generation to generation that they’re seldom questioned. Yet, every religion or culture has beneficial as well as harmful ancient traditions. It is the harmful ones with demonic origin that you need to scrutinize. To be true to God our Father and His glorious Son, you need to measure your religious and cultural inheritance *in light of His Word*.

Again, culture and tradition are acquired early in a person’s life, defining for them how men and women are supposed to interact with each other especially in their home. Why is that so important? Because *the way* mothers and fathers participate in their children’s upbringing will help determine *what kind of adults* those children become.

The *way* husbands and wives carry out their roles is affected by their religious and cultural upbringing. Perhaps you’ve unwittingly given way to demonically influenced traditions that are preventing your children from seeing Christ work in you all that He wants to.

Discuss these questions together:

- **If you’re a husband, ask your wife, family and close friends in the faith to evaluate your enactment of authority. Are you an Ahab who often gives way to his wife?**

Would others say that you willingly take responsibility for your actions, especially when you’ve been wrong? Ask them.

Do you accept responsibility when you are confronted, or do you rationalize and give excuses and blame? What do others say about your response?

How do you generally react when trials arise in your life, especially in your marriage? Ask others for feedback.

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Perhaps you're a husband 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?

- If you're a *wife*, do you have a submissive spirit? Ask your husband, family and close friends in the faith to evaluate you. Are you a Jezebel who takes control, especially when you rationalize it's for a good purpose?

How do you give way to the curse women have inherited from Eve, particularly the desire to rule your husband and the tendency to act independently?

In what ways did your own mother train you to be submissive? In what ways did she inadvertently train you to be like Eve in independence and desire to control?

Do you try to manipulate your own way because you think you know what's best? Give an example.

How do you generally react when trials arise in your life, especially in your marriage? Ask others for feedback.

Perhaps you're a wife 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?

If you work outside your home, why? Are your husband and children often likely to find you fatigued, angry or irritated toward them? What changes can be made if this is so?

- For both of you:

Do you withhold affection toward your spouse when he/she has hurt your feelings? Yes or no? Describe how you respond when your feelings are hurt.

Are you currently at peace with God and with what's going on with your family and circumstances? Explain.

How would you evaluate the overall level of peace in your home? Ask your family for their input.

Are there things that rob your home of peace? If so, what needs to be excluded or corrected?

Is there a clearly understood and respected chain of authority in your home by which even your children abide? Yes or no? If not, what have the consequences been when authority was bypassed?

Is your sex life holy, or has it been tainted by sexual perversion? What do you need to do if past immorality has interfered with your intimacy?

Do you truly regard your children as a gift from God, or do you gripe in your heart that they interfere with your pursuit of happiness? Be honest! Why didn't you have more children?

How are you training your children to discern between good and evil while they're still under your roof? What changes will you make so that Christ-like character can be modeled and instilled in them to a greater degree?