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ABSTRACT

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT PROGRAM FOR CHINESE IMMIGRANTS

By
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Because of an increasing number of divorces among Chinese immigrants and the rising family crisis in Chinese Christian marriages in the United States, a marriage enrichment program designed particularly for Chinese Christian church is desperately needed.

The purpose of this study is to design, implement, and evaluate a marriage enrichment curriculum for Chinese immigrants. Through a ten-week series of seminars and weekly home assignments, by means of lectures and group learning activities, the treatment will promote mutual satisfying relationships among the couples and thus foster marriage strengths and personal growth.

The curriculum is designed to concentrate in five areas: the Lordship of Christ, Intimacy, Communication, Responsibility, and Planning. Each week a subject is studied and practiced in these five areas. During the seminar, half of the time is to review the lesson learned from the previous week and half of the time is to study the new topic. All the principles of the study are drawn from the Bible.

The project adopted a quasi-experimental approach to determine the success of the treatment. The design first established two selected groups, subject group and control group, each consisting of sixteen couples. The subject group received the ten-week seminars and the control group remained untreated. Pre-tests, post-tests and delayed tests two month after the seminar were employed to evaluate the treatment. The test includes

the Spanier Dyadic Adjustment (DAS) to measure the general quality of marriage and the Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey (MRES) to measure the specific five areas touched on in the seminars.

The findings of this study demonstrate that there was significant, positive change in marriage quality immediately after the ten-week marriage enrichment seminars. The change endured for at least two months after the treatment. The curriculum proved to be a successful tool to help Chinese Christian couples improve their marriages.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

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CHAPTER 1

Understanding the Problem

Background

One cold Friday evening, Ken sat in my office. With tears in his eyes, he calmly told me that he had decided to sign and turn in his divorce agreement. Ken was a handsome young man. When I officiated at his marriage with Jodi five years ago, they were not only the most matched pair in our church, but also the first couple I ever married. I was not comfortable performing the ceremony because it was only one month into my ministry in that church. I did not have the opportunity to offer them premarital counseling prior to the wedding. They received counseling from a church elder, but not as much as I would consider sufficient.

The couple experienced many difficulties in their marriage. Jodi was a talented young lady. She had worked on her master's degree in composition in the College Conservatory of Music. Before she came to the U.S., Jodi's career was a pop music singer in Hong Kong. Her dream was to become a famous singer-musician one day. She never allowed herself to fit into the new culture. The first two years of the marriage were stable while both Jodi and Ken were busy in school. Married life became stressful after she graduated from college and could not find a job. Finally she gave up and moved back to Hong Kong with the promise that she would come back in one year. However, physical separation intensified the condition of their unstable marriage. Expensive traveling costs made it impossible for the couple to be together as often as they wished. After Ken received his degree and began working in Cincinnati, silence between them

replaced frequent arguments over the phone. A year later Ken received a letter from her lawyer, saying that a request of no-fault divorce had been filed.

Hwan Lu was a graduate student's wife. Her husband studied hard and tried to get his Ph.D. degree as soon as possible. When she first knocked on our church door, I did not know this couple. After I invited her to my office, she began to tell her story with uncontrollable tears rolling down her cheek. About a year earlier, Hwan had quit her job in China and brought her six-year-old daughter to join her husband in Cincinnati. She had been through great stress, including physical weakness and psychological complications. She sought counsel in the university's psychology center several times without much help. She fought with her husband almost daily. Sometimes he physically abused her. She desperately needed help. We took her under our wings for a while. After several months of intensive counseling and care, she became a Christian. Nevertheless, her marriage was still troubled. Her husband refused to come to church. He welcomed our visits with him but did not feel comfortable with other Christians. He was afraid that people would judge him based on what they knew about his marriage situation.

Mrs. Wei called the church office one day and asked whether there was a place she could stay temporarily. She came to United States with her husband to visit their daughter who had just graduated and gotten a job as a computer software engineer in town. She liked this country very much and intended to stay longer. However, she could not get along with her husband and had many fights in the past several months. She decided to leave her husband and try to find herself another life. The church was the only place she knew where she might be able to receive some help. So she called the church.

These and other similar accounts are typical of what Chinese immigrants encounter in their troubled married life after migrating to this country. I often ask myself: "What do those people need most?" "What can I offer them to improve their quality of life?" Of course, the ultimate answer is salvation in Jesus Christ. However, people do not readily recognize the importance of redemption. They consider their urgent problems and marriage crises as more important. If I can help them resolve or reduce the stress caused by the marital relationship, people are more willing to listen to what I say about the ultimate question in their life.

The Problem of the Study

In the United States, the traditional value of family is diminishing. The institution of marriage has been under attack during the last half century. Individualism, women's liberation, and the sexual revolution all contribute to this degeneration of this fundamental relationship of human life. Within three generations we have experienced rapid increases in the divorce rate, adultery, teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, complications in blended families, fatherless children, and many other marriage related social problems.

In the United States two of every five couples who reach their fifth anniversary will ultimately divorce, and 75 percent of divorced women and 83 percent of divorced men will remarry (Sager 279). The divorce rate in remarried couples is much higher than in first married couples, because it involves stepchildren of instant families, wrong motivations for marriage, carryover impact, spouses' life-cycle position and financial problems.

Since 1980 China has opened her door to the West and many individuals and families have come to the United States as immigrants or students. This new wave of Chinese

tends to be better-educated, more skilled, and more oriented toward academic and financial success. However, due to difficulties in starting a new life, many of them experience emptiness, isolation, and spiritual poverty. They are pressured to adopt Western culture while still maintaining their own heritage. In the past, most of these Chinese were accustomed to lean on their extended family and friends for assistance in dealing with difficulties. Now the loss of these connections caused by moving from their native country induces substantial panic in their life crises. Their inability to speak English makes them even more isolated. Racism, discrimination, and prejudice raise their frustration, causing resentment against the “new” society where they now live. In addition, financial stress and the pressure of accepting positions beneath their abilities because of lack of appropriate credentials contributes to difficulties in their families. The result is a great increase in divorces, broken families, and mental illness. “Divorce” was once a forbidden word in the traditional Chinese family but has become acceptable now.

The quality and state of US Christian marriages apparently are not much better than those of non-believers. According to Alan Booth’s report, little support is found for the belief that an increase in religious activity improves marital relations (Booth 669). There is virtually no difference in the divorce rate between average church attendees and unchurched people in the US for three reasons (Ellison 98). First, the church does not equip believers to avert family problems before they turn into crisis. Many churches are not responsive to the families and lack strategy to help the families except by referring them to self-help books (Johnson 33). Second, the church does not consider itself as a cultural force. Its impact on the culture is almost non-existent (Adams 81). Third, Christians do not apply biblical principles to family life. Our temporal values and

principles have eternal worth only when biblical truth is lived rightly. Ministers could likely deal with marital issues much more easily if the church had regular marriage enrichment programs to prevent a family crisis before the marital relationship develops into a turmoil that demands individual counseling.

This is particularly true in Chinese American churches. David Poon studied the roles of the Chinese pastor in family ministry. He found that the marriage enrichment programs are largely ignored in many churches, and only pulpit-type teaching was provided (15). Not until recently were there Chinese Christian organizations formed specifically to deal with family issues. Although many marriage enrichment programs are available in North America, there is virtually no program precisely designed for first generation Chinese immigrants. Chinese Christians are searching for help. We see more and more Christian couples whose marriages are in crisis who might be salvaged if they had been taught how to be better spouses before their relationship turned sour.

My burden is to develop a marriage enrichment program to enable new Chinese immigrants or students to improve their family life through interaction with each other in a small group setting and through their relationship with God. Although the project is designed mainly for Christian families, it also can be used among non-believers.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the proposed research is to design, implement, and evaluate a marriage enrichment curriculum for Chinese immigrants. This project tests the effectiveness of group learning about marital life in a church family ministry. The success of this project determines whether similar seminars can be held in the future. The goal is to convert this series of seminars into a regular church educational program which will

effectively equip families. This curriculum could also become a teaching resource for family ministry in other Chinese churches in North America. Further study and improvement of the curriculum will follow completion of the research experiment and evaluation.

Research Questions

1. What is the condition of the subject group's marriages prior to the ten-week marriage enrichment seminar?
2. In what way does the execution of the marriage enrichment curriculum contribute to the awareness of the subject group's commitment to their marriages as measured immediately after the seminar?
3. What is the effectiveness of the marriage enrichment treatment experienced in the changes of the subject group's marriages two months after the conclusion of the seminar?

Context of the Study

The study took place in the Cincinnati Chinese Church. Whereas the Chinese population in the U.S. is about 1.5 million, accounting for 0.7 percent of the population (Lee Experience13), only four thousand Chinese live in the greater Cincinnati area. One-fourth of them are students or visiting scholars who are here with their families from China, Taiwan, and other countries in the Far East. One-half of them are professionals who are well educated, many with graduate degrees. The remainder are laborers, restaurant workers, or illegal immigrants who "jumped ship" or were smuggled into the United States.

Cincinnati Chinese Church is the only Chinese church in the Cincinnati metropolitan area. It consists of two congregations totaling about 400 people. The Chinese speaking congregation has about 300 members and the English-speaking congregation has about 100 members. Most English-speaking members are not immigrants but are descendants of the first generation immigrants. Although they grew up in this country, they still possess many Chinese cultural inheritances. The English-speaking congregations are not the object of this study. The demographic profile of the church is about the same as the Chinese community.

Couples who volunteered were selected from the Chinese-speaking congregations and randomly assigned into two groups; the subject group (SG) and the control group (CG). Each group consisted of twenty couples, blended with different characters representing distinct backgrounds, length of marriage, and spiritual maturity. Backgrounds included people from Communist China and other areas such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Asia. The subject group received a ten-week marriage enrichment treatment while the control group remained untreated.

Description of the Project

The project consisted of two parts. The first part was curriculum development. In this period, marriage related literature and current marriage enrichment programs were reviewed. Then a comprehensive curriculum based on the needs of the Chinese immigrant family was composed. The curriculum consisted of ten-week seminars and home assignments. Each seminar concentrated on one subject. The subjects included the nature of man, the meaning of marriage, love, how backgrounds influence people, the fulfillment of needs, role and responsibility in the family, communication, interaction, conflict

resolution, and planing for the future. These subjects were grouped into five areas: The Lordship of Jesus Christ, Intimacy, Communication, Responsibility and Planning. Then the home assignment was developed based on these five areas. The curriculum was written in the English and translated into Chinese.

The second part implemented the curriculum. During the period of treatment, the subject group participated in the weekly seminar that was held each Sunday morning from 9:25 till 10:40 a.m. or Friday evening from 8:30 till 9:45 p.m. Each week a major subject was discussed in lecture form. Each seminar began with a review of the previous week's assignment followed by lecture and group activities. After the weekly seminar each couple completed a home assignment during the following week and prepared to report to the class in the next session. The seminar was conducted in the Chinese language.

Method of Evaluation

Because of the inability to achieve randomness in the selection of a limited number of participants, the project adopted a quasi-experimental approach to determine the success or failure of the test. The design first established two selected groups, subject group and control group, each consisting of twenty couples. Members of groups were married couples with diverse backgrounds who volunteered from the local church. The selection process used the block design concept in which each couple was paired up with another couple according to three criteria: native homeland, years of marriage, years of conversion. Then they were randomly assigned into two groups; SG and CG.

The effectiveness of the curriculum was measured by a series of tests administered to the SG and CG. The pre-test and post-test was executed before and after the ten-week seminars. A delayed follow-up test was conducted two months later. Then data were

collected, analyzed, and tabulated to evaluate the effectiveness of the execution of the curriculum and to predict correlation among all variables.

Both groups took the same tests, which included the Spanier Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and a more in-depth Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey (MRES) before and after the treatment, but only the subject group received ten weeks of marriage enrichment seminars and weekly assignments. A follow-up test was conducted on both the SG and CG two months after the treatment to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of the treatment.

A comparison of the data from the Spanier Dyadic Adjustment Scale results to the previous tested data (Spanier 15-26) was made to observe any possible differences between an average American couple and a Chinese immigrant couple in their marriage satisfaction. I also evaluated the progress of couples with different backgrounds in their native country to see whether there is a variance in the learning progress between immigrants from communist China and other Southern Asia regions.

Variables

The independent variable for this study is the marriage enrichment curriculum designed for members of the subject group. This variable is reflected in the five areas of the curriculum and the MRES: Lordship of Christ, Intimacy, Communication, Responsibility, and Planning.

The dependent variables are the perceived awareness of the commitment to a marriage in order to have a more mutually satisfying relationship, and the application of principles learned from the curriculum that can foster marriage strengths and personal growth.

The intervening variables include age, family background, education, professions, years of marriage, years of immigration, number of children, spiritual condition, involvement in church activities, current level of stress, living with parents or not, and motivation for growth. In addition, the expectation and the cooperation of the members with the pastor as the instructor of the treatment are also variables that may yield a more positive result.

Definitions

“Chinese immigrant” refers to a first generation immigrant from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and other Asian countries. They are Chinese speaking natives. Mandarin is their major language, although they may speak many other dialects including Cantonese, Fukienese, Shanghainese, Hakka, etc. They have similar cultural roots. Some of them are students or visiting scholars and may not stay in the U.S. permanently. A small number of them are illegal aliens. It does not include immigrants who came to the States at a younger age (<eighteen years) and grew up in the American culture.

“Marriage enrichment” refers to a movement to strengthen marriage and family life through what are basically preventive programs. The goal is better living (Smith 88). The programs are designed for couples who have fairly well-functioning marriages and who wish to make their marriages even more mutually satisfying (Otto 13). The programs are concerned with enhancing the couple’s communication and emotional life. It is not for people whose family relationship is at crisis or who are seeking counseling.

Curriculum

The comprehensive curriculum was designed to furnish ten-weeks of seminars that consisted of one weekly group meeting and five days of follow-up homework assignments.

The program of weekly group meeting included fifteen minutes of review, thirty minutes of lecture, twenty minutes of group interaction, and ten minutes of devotional time. The homework consisted of five areas: Lordship, Intimacy, Communication, Responsibility, and Planning. Each area included subjects such as daily devotion, reading of articles, activities for couples to do together, Bible study, self-evaluation tests, family worship, behavioral change exercises, financial planning, vacation planning, and setting goals, etc. In order to assure that attendees work on their assignments, each couple was asked to check each other's work and make short reports during the review time.

The lecture part of the curriculum included ten subjects: Nature of the Human, Biblical Definition of Marriage, Commitment of Love, Understanding the Influence of Background, Fulfillment of Each Other's Needs, Role and Responsibility, Communication, Interaction and Interference, Conflict Resolution and Planning for the Future. Each week one subject was studied. Each lesson included reflections of traditional Chinese views about the subject. Awareness of the cultural background is important, not only because the participants live in a "foreign" country and need to adjust to bicultural demands, but also because their concepts will eventually influence their communications, and special regard to their interactions with the next generation. Other important subjects such as sexuality in marriage, finance, in-laws, children, family crisis, elderly parents, etc., also were blended into different lessons.

Instrumentation

Testing instruments included the Spanier Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and a more in-depth Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey (MRES). The DAS is a set of questions developed by Graham R. Spanier in 1976. The reason I used the DAS is

because it is a popular device to measure the husband-wife relationship, so that data can be compared universally. The researcher designed the MRES has more detail questions to measure some specific outcomes related to the treatment. It can help couples achieve a higher degree of awareness of the strength and the weakness of their relationship. It can also create more accurate results for the evaluation.

Data Collection

One week before the first session of the seminar, a self-report pre-test survey form was distributed to each member of the subject group and the control group. The test included the DAS and the MRES. The subject group's surveys were collected at the first session. The control group's surveys were collected through mail.

The post-test, using the same DAS and MRES materials, was distributed to the subject group to be completed at the last session of the seminar. The same post-test is given to the control group through mail at the same time.

Two months after the conclusion of the ten-week of seminars, a follow-up test of both the DAS and the MRES were given to both groups. All data were collected through mail, and tabulated, and analyzed.

Delimitation and Generalizability

This study limits itself to a particular marriage enrichment curriculum designed specifically for Chinese immigrants with no intention to compare it with other available marriage enrichment or marriage encounter programs. The intent is to find out how effective the program is when used in a similar setting. The test was done in a local Chinese church with limited resources and members. The result of the study may not be useful in churches that have large numbers of Asians or other immigrants. Further study

and improvement shall be done in a greater metropolitan area such as in New York, or in Los Angeles where there are many more immigrants. Furthermore, there is no intent to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructor in this program. The instructors should be trained before conducting the seminar. No generalizations of this study can be made regarding outcomes of such a program used in other church settings. It is my wish that the materials presented here can be used in other similar settings.

Theological and Biblical Reflection

As a Christian, I believe the Bible is the revelation of God to instruct humans how to live a proper life. Therefore, answers to all major questions of human beings concerning relationships and responsibilities should be stated in the Bible. Marriage certainly is a primary subject in our lives; thus we should draw instructions from it in order to understand the nature of the marital relationship and God's purpose for it.

Norman Wright presented two basic purposes of marriage as viewed from the Scripture in his book Communication: procreation and fulfillment of each other's needs (7-8). Marriage is for the propagation of the human race (Gen. 1:27). It is designed to satisfy people by overcoming solitude and loneliness (Gen. 2:18). Furthermore, God wants marriage to be a relationship of pure enjoyment (Heb. 13:4). Therefore, God made marriage a beautifully unique relationship in which the woman as the helper is to joyfully support the man, and he as the head is to joyfully love the woman.

Wright mentioned three biblical parameters of the marriage: permanency, monogamy, and fidelity (9-11). Marriage is meant to be permanent and only can be dissolved by death (Rom. 7:3). Although polygamy was the norm in the nation of Israel until the time of the exile, the original prototype of man and woman was monogamous

(Sell 53). God ordained marriage as a deterrent to immorality (1 Cor. 7:2). In addition to these three parameters, Charles Sell added intimacy and divine intent. He stated that the basis of marriage is personal commitment, social commitment, and divinely sanctioned commitment (51-58). The Bible never treated marriage as a private, live-in arrangement. It does not only involve two persons, but two families (Gen. 2:24). Marriage is instituted both by humans and by God (Mt. 19:6).

The marriage enrichment program is designed to help couples with fair marital relationships to enhance their satisfaction with marriage life in order to prevent discontentment which can lead to separation or divorce. In the past most marriage enrichment programs were conducted by parachurch organizations. Now more and more churches and denominations are directly involved. The church bears a responsibility to equip God's people to deal with marital problems. A healthy church starts with healthy people and healthy marriages (1 Tim. 3:5). Stable and productive families are essential to the growth of a church. As Paul instructed Timothy: "If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed" (1Tim. 4:6). God desires that the Christ-church relationship be manifested through the husband-wife relationship (Eph. 5:25).

Overview

Chapter 1 defines the purpose and problems of this study; specifies the research questions; sets the context of the research; describes the approach including methodology, cites variables, defines terms, and offers instrumentation, data collection, and the delimitation of the study.

Chapter 2 summarizes literature regarding the biblical concept of marriage; the cultural aspect of the Chinese family; the condition of Chinese immigrant families; the notion of marriage enrichment and its practice; the content of each subject related to the curriculum including definition of marriage, intimacy, background, fulfillment, communication, interaction, conflict resolution, and planning.

Chapter 3 contains a description of the specific design of the study. It restates the problem and research questions; gives the hypothesis and the assumption of the study; establishes the boundaries and variables of the population; provides a detailed content of the instrumentation; generates the in-depth Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey form and data collection procedures; defines the control of extraneous variables; and presents data collection and analysis methodology.

Chapter 4 summarizes the findings. It includes the comparison and analysis of the pre-test, post-test, and delayed follow-up test data.

Chapter 5 evaluates and interprets the data, and compares with previous studies to yield conclusions of this specifically designed marriage enrichment program for Chinese immigrant families. It answers the research questions and reflects upon the implications of these findings for ministry and future study.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

This review of literature includes an overview of what is written regarding the biblical concept of marriage, the cultural aspect of the Chinese family, the condition of the Chinese immigrant families, the notion of marriage enrichment and its practice, and the content of each subject related to the curriculum including definitions of marriage, intimacy, background, fulfillment, responsibility, communication, interaction, conflict resolution, and planning.

The Biblical Concept of Marriage

What is marriage? From the first two chapters of Genesis one discovers good picture of how God intends marriage to be. In Genesis 1:27 it says, “So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” First, God originated the marriage institution; therefore marriage is a God-made covenant, not a contract. In the Old Testament are two kinds of covenants; a treaty between two parties (Gen 26:28) and a covenant between God and human beings (Gen. 17:2). A treaty or contract is when two persons come into an agreement. If one party breaks the agreement then the contract needs to be dissolved. The God-made covenant is different because it involves God: in the Scriptures a covenant is a solemn agreement between a ruler and a subject (Eryich 3). It is a contract that the ruler imposes on his subject with attached blessings and curses. The central point of covenant is that it is an unconditional commitment (Balswick 23). The first biblical mention of a covenant is found in Genesis 6:18 where God said to Noah, “I will establish my covenant with you.” God did not offer Noah any choice and he commanded a response. Although the word

“covenant” is not mentioned in Genesis Chapter 2 it implies that God initiated the first marital relationship and demanded man and woman to obey. Therefore marriage is a covenant that means a relationship between man and woman. It is intended by God to be a total commitment and permanent bond (Worthington 36). This covenant is not only made between husband and wife, but also made to God.

Second, God’s intention for marriage was to use it as an agency for nourishing children through a healthy environment. In Genesis 1:28 it says: “God blessed them and said to them: ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.’” God wants humans to multiply and to rule over the land. He blessed the couple, enabling them to fulfill this important responsibility.

Parents should provide a healthy environment for the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual growth of their children. Luke 2:52 reveals the successful parenting of Joseph and Mary in providing a family environment in which Jesus grew up in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and people (Gangel 28).

Third, God’s design for marriage meets the needs of the human being. In Genesis 2:18 it says, “The Lord God said: ‘it is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’” Man and woman have many needs that have to be satisfied, such as the need to love and to be loved, the need for deep friendship and companionship, the need for sexual satisfaction, the need for children, etc. (Wright Before 5). Woman was taken from man to complement him, therefore she was suitable spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and physically for him. A healthy marriage relationship should meet each partner’s needs when each partner’s needs align.

Fourth, marriage is a mystery that God created to help people transcend their self-centered natures to reflect his faithfulness to people (Worthington 33). In Genesis 2:23 it says: “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.’” Adam saw the woman and realized that she came out of himself; therefore, if he loved her, he loved himself. Man is egocentric. Marriage helps people realize how sacrificial love can transform their egocentrism to the faithful bond of a relationship. This joining is intimate, spiritual, and more powerful than most people realize.

Fifth, marriage is a process of two becoming one. The joining of a couple is so intimate that it is usually referred to in the Scripture as becoming one flesh (Mt. 19:5; 1 Cor 6:16; Eph. 5:3). In Genesis 2:24, “for this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.” The meaning of this phrase refers to a unique human relationship established by having sexual intercourse. Paul also related the oneness of marriage to the oneness between Christ and the believers (Eph. 5:22-32). As a believer becomes one with Christ by faith, a man and a woman become one with each other through their sexual relationship (Gangel 20). This union is necessary for the growth of a new family unit. Any form of disruption of this unity will reduce the effectiveness of the family. What hurts one will damage the other, and what nourishes one will nourish the other.

Sixth, marriage is a school for a couple to learn how to grow up in their life setting. A couple must leave parents in order to be independent, to learn how to deal with problems in their own lives (Gen. 2:24). In God’s eyes the family is a unit. Husband and wife come from different backgrounds with different concepts, thinking, feeling, and

behaving; they cannot be the same. It is impossible to depend on parents to solve their problems; they have to learn themselves. Therefore the marriage institution is a school, a learning environment in which both partners can grow and develop. David Hubbard said, "Marriage does not demand perfection, but it must be given priority" (Wright Before 6). Marriage is not a matter of finding the right partner, but of being and becoming the right person. Husband and wife need to accept and serve each other as God intended them to in order to fulfill the purpose of marriage.

The Theology of Marriage Enrichment

Everything a Christian does should have a theological basis. Apart from a person's relationship with God, marriage is the most important relationship in his/her entire life. According to Genesis 1:27, God's original intent was to use marriage as an instrument to bless humankind through family life. But unfortunately human nature was distorted after the fall, and humans became sinful beings. The relationship between God and humans was broken. However, by the grace of God people can be saved through the redemption of Jesus Christ to reestablish the relationship with God (Rom. 6:1-10). Therefore, when reconciled by the Holy Spirit, people can return to the original purpose of marriage that God intended (Eyrich 5).

The Bible offers many teachings about marriage. Jesus Christ paid much attention to it. He performed the first miracle in a wedding (John 2:11). He discussed adultery and divorce in the Sermon on the Mount (Mat. 5:27). He revealed a Samaritan woman's unsatisfactory desires in marriage by the well side (John 4:18). He illustrated the forgiveness of sins of the adulterous woman (John 8:11). He publicly refuted the Pharisees' misunderstanding of God's original intention for marriage (Mat. 19:6). In

Paul's teaching, he gave many instructions how believers should conduct their marriages, as in famous teachings in Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-21; and Titus 2:3-6.

Therefore, God desires that his children should be instructed in how to live a godly married life.

A marriage enrichment program is designed to help couples enhance their marriages in order to fulfill the purpose that God bestowed on their relationship. The church has a responsibility to equip God's people to deal with marital problems. A healthy church starts with healthy marriages (1 Tim. 3:5; 5:1-8). Stable and productive families are essential to the growth of a church. As Paul instructed Timothy, "If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed" (1Tim. 4:6). God desires that the Christ-church relationship be manifested through the husband-wife relationship (Eph. 5:25).

The History of the Marriage Enrichment Movement

Marriage enrichment began in the late sixties and is a movement of revitalization of family life to make marriage more mutually satisfying. The exact meaning of the term is hard to define. According to Herbert Otto, it is out of the "T-group" and "sensitivity training" movement and research of the fifties (12). Later, sensitivity training gradually merged into "encounter" and the human potentialities movement which offered weekend workshops and small group experiences in the early sixties. David Mace, pioneering in this field, began to work in marriage enrichment with Quakers in 1961 (Mace Marriage 1). One year later a Catholic, Father Gabriel Calvo in Barcelona, Spain, began a program now known as Marriage Encounter (ME) both in Roman Catholic and ecumenical churches.

In 1965, Leon and Antoinette Smith developed their Marriage Communication Lab program (Otto 241). In 1966, Otto began a one-day program for churches and communities through his Family Fun Council to strengthen family life.

William Genne, the coordinator of the Committee on Marriage and the Family of the National Council of Churches, organized a conference held in Indianapolis in 1973 that drew delegates from various denominations who conducted marriage enrichment programs which marked the high point of the movement in the seventies (Otto 13).

The movement continued to expand in the United States as well as in European countries developing many family or marriage enrichment programs. In the eighties some ethnic churches began to develop their own marriage enrichment programs. Among them Korean-American churches were most active. Several studies have been made to evaluate the implementation of various programs in ethnic churches (Lee Korean 5).

The Notion of Marriage Enrichment Programs

The original concept of marriage enrichment was for fairly well-functioning marriages, not for people whose marriages were in crisis or who were seeking counseling. A distinct difference exists between marriage enrichment and marriage counseling. The former is a preventive program to enhance husband-wife relationships and therefore is more suitable for regular church ministry because the church is responsible to equip God's people to deal with difficulties and problems encountered in their married lives. The latter should let trained professionals or clergies to deal with problems because often marriage counseling can only be done on an individual bases.

Early enrichment programs resembled marriage-counseling sessions. Gabriel Calvo used a couple-centered model in which dialogue was the key for opening up the inner

resources of a couple. Each couple was encouraged to use dialogue in dealing with their differences and problems with a counselor as the monitor. The Pairing Enrichment program by Robert and Patricia Travis also used this dialogue approach. Later on, Mace introduced the group process model. He put a couple in dialogue while other couples observed (Mace 132). Then more programs adopted the group process model and found many advocates among their users.

DeLoss Friesen introduced the marital pyramid model that is helpful in understanding the importance of an integrated approach to marriage. It has four layers. The bottom layer is *individual emotional health* that includes emotional responses and attitudes. It claims that to be free of any major emotional or mental problems is the foundation of a successful marriage. All psychiatric disorders must be eliminated before moving ahead in marriage counseling. The second layer is *communication skills*. Most marriage problems are caused by poor communication between husband and wife. To establish correct and effective communication is essential to achieve a higher level of intimacy in marriage. The third layer is *conflict management*. After acquiring good communication skills then the couple can learn to solve and manage conflicts more smoothly. The last layer at the top of the pyramid is *intimacy*, the hallmark of good marriage counseling (Friesen 56). The importance of dealing with lower-level issues before moving to higher-level ones is obvious in marriage counseling.

The educational model for marriage counseling presented by Harvey Joaning is a good approach to structure the role of marriage enrichment in the church. It emphasizes the positive aspects of individual strength instead of negative behavioral change. Mace stated, "Didactic programs are very poor instruments for bringing about behavioral

change” (Mace 132). On the other hand, the preventive nature of the enrichment program can increase the attendee’s interpersonal skills to expand intimacy between husband and wife and avoid deterioration of relationships that may need much complicated intervention in later counseling. Because of their awareness of the quality of their marriages, couples become more willing to change, and a more healthy relationship results. Many couples who have been through enrichment programs testify that the treatment not only changed their perspective of marriage but also improved their quality of life (Johnson 34).

The shepherding model given by Eyrich is another approach to study the foundation of the marriage enrichment (Eyrich 7). In Scripture God views his people as sheep and his ministers as shepherds. When Paul addressed the Ephesian elders he said, “The Holy Spirit has made you overseers to feed the church of God” (Acts 20:28). Later he wrote to them again and emphasized the ministerial role of equipping the saints (Eph. 4:12). Church ministers inevitably have the responsibility to feed the flock with spiritual food in order to nurture them in a godly life. He believed that marriage enrichment can help parishioners overcome the tendency to wander away from the course of a normal Christian family life.

Paul and Janiece Swets advocate the communication model. They claim that most marriage problems are caused by poor communication between husband and wife (5). Communication is the key to personal growth because it allows self-disclosure to take place. There is a definitive correlation between effective communication and marital satisfaction. Their Concerned Communications program has hosted many seminars in recent years.

Edward Wimberly voiced a prayer approach model in dealing with marital problem (15). He stated that prayer is essential in marriage. It can open the source of all healing, bringing people's lives into line with God's healing activity. People "praying together will stay together." If husband and wife can invest time for devotions together, it certainly will bless their marriage and children greatly.

Ulrici, L'Abate, and Wagner developed a framework to evaluate family enrichment programs called E-R-A model (Ulrici 307). They divided programs into three categories; emotions, reason, and action, to see how effective it is in helping couples to change. Each program has its own strength and weakness and it is hard to make comparisons. However, this study was done in 1981; there is no late information about how different programs are performing recently.

It is difficult to know how many family enrichment programs are available in the U.S. since there is no ready resource that catalogues them all. Only a few programs with distinct models are mentioned here. To evaluate each program is beyond the scope of this study.

The Effectiveness of Marriage Enrichment Programs

In the past three decades many parachurch organizations have promoted marriage enrichment or marriage encounter weekend retreats for married couples. How effective are these enrichment programs? It is hard to evaluate the results because of the difficulty in assessing the change in a relationship. The long-term effectiveness of the treatment is hard to measure. However, some studies on Marriage Encounter (ME) found that 90 percent of couples returning from retreats reported varied degrees of improvement in their marriages. Since 1962, over 1.5 millions couples have attended ME weekends (Johnson

33). Hof and Miller studied various outcomes of the program and found that they were basically positive (51).

Several marriage enrichment programs have been popular and successful. The marriage conferences hosted by FamilyLife, a division of Campus Crusade for Christ, is a major program. FamilyLife holds conferences in cities around the country every year. Its goal is to assist couples to build godly marriages and families. The conference provides the emotional impact needed to reevaluate what is really important for couples with troubled marriages, or those wanting to make a good marriage better. The program has extended to train lay leaders to use its curriculum, *HomeBuilders Couple Series*, to do follow-up work after the conference. It encourages older couples with strong marriages to mentor younger couples with new or struggling marriages. In 1997, FamilyLife held 104 conferences and had more than 85,000 people attend.

Closeness Through Communication Seminar sponsored by Concerned Communications, Siloam Springs, Arkansas, is another successful program. It emphasizes the need of good communication in marriage and uses it as a tool to help enrich couples. Couples attend the seminar because they are looking for a technique to enhance the quality of their relationship. The goal of the seminar is not only to help couples improve their communication skill but also to train lay leaders to conduct similar seminars in their own community.

The Cultural Aspects of Chinese Family

In Confucianism, which ruled Chinese minds for 2,500 years, the individual manifests and fulfills himself through a series of social relationships, five in all, in which the principles of reciprocity apply. These are father-son, husband-wife, elder-younger

brothers, friends, and ruler-subjects. In the second relationship, Confucius taught a philosophy of male domination. While the husband was to be righteous to his wife, she was to be obedient to him (Fry 107). In ancient Chinese society, marriages were arranged to form a unit to meet biological, social, and economic needs. Women became subordinate and inferior to men. In *The Analects*, the sayings of Confucius, it says, “Only small men (thief) and women are hard to keep up.” Woman was put in the same category as thief.

Three aspects of Chinese traditional concepts of family relationship play important roles in dealing with family problems.

First, Male Dominance: In the past Chinese culture always considered man as superior to woman. For examples, a husband was allowed to have a second or third wife if his first wife could not give birth to a boy. Whoever produced the boy would gain the right to dominate other women in the family. Many males spent time in places of prostitution and their wives dared not say a word. Famous poets or government officials wrote their popular poetry in brothels and were considered charming or romantic. On the other hand, if a woman had an affair with a man outside the marriage she would be condemned to death. Husbands used to have the right to abuse their wives for any reason. Although equality between man and woman changed greatly after the Communists took over China in the fifty's, wife abuse still exists among many Chinese families.

Second, Clan Influence: In the past, the opinion of senior relatives within a clan was very influential. The patriarch held enormous power over members of his large family. If any domestic problem arose between a couple, it just took one word from the patriarch to settle them down. Although in the last century the patriarchal society changed greatly, the

restriction of certain deeds because of disapproval by relatives remains strong. For example, traditionally divorce has been considered shameful among Chinese and received strong disapproval by the extended family. However, if a couple moves to the United States that restriction disappears. This makes the couple more vulnerable to the availability of divorce in American society. Beginning from the mid-eighties, more and more Chinese couples divorced and are still accepted by the Chinese community (Yeun 3). Now most Chinese in this country gradually accept the concept of no moral obligation to the marriage.

Third, the Face Issue: Chinese do not like to lay open their private problems. It is considered “losing face” to let someone know of your domestic difficulties. Small conflicts were kept secret until they became too huge to resolve, then the couple separated or divorced. Rarely does a troubled couple seek outside help, especially to ask for professional counseling. One of the characteristics of Chinese is that their interpersonal relationships are based on shame, not guilt (Berg 35). It is hard to convince Chinese that he/she has sins, but it would be much easier for him/her to admit shame. Therefore, positive encouragement along with compliments can be effective in dealing with family problems.

In order to help Chinese couples deal with their marriage problems effectively, one has to pay attention to the basic traditional concepts of male-female relationships and their understanding of shame.

The Condition of Chinese Immigrant Families

Many sociologists have studied the adjustment process of immigrants in the United States, but only a few deal specifically with Chinese families from the Christian point of

view. Their basic approach is to help immigrants deal with the new environment in a realistic way; that is, to achieve stability in their daily living. Freda Cheung, the Chief of Minority Research Resources Branch of the National Institute of Mental Health in Maryland, grouped immigrant problems into five major areas (Cheung "Part I" 3).

Spiritual: Due to difficulties in starting a new life, many immigrants experience emptiness, loneliness, and destitution. They feel an existential anxiety that life is a constant rush with meaningless activities. She found that foreign-born Chinese in the States aged fifty-five and over have elevated rates of suicide.

Emotional/Mental: New immigrants are under pressure to adopt Western culture and abandon their traditional customs. Instead of feeling proud of their ethnic heritage, they feel ashamed, and thus they consider themselves inferior to others. This is especially true for Chinese women who married Caucasians (Ng 6).

Social/Political: Most Chinese immigrants are accustomed to depending on their extended family and friends to help them deal with problems. The disconnection caused by immigration creates anxiety, especially when they run into problems and do not know who to ask for help. Additionally, their incompetence in speaking English makes them feel even more confined. Racism, discrimination, and prejudice produce even more frustration and disappointment, resulting in resentment against society.

Financial: Those who are well educated can enjoy a stable income. But some are forced to accept positions beneath their abilities because of lack of appropriate credentials. It is especially difficult for those who immigrate beyond middle age. Even though they have strong professional experience they still cannot find proper jobs because of their older age and language deficiency. The unskilled and uneducated have to face financial

poverty and economic hardship. Most of the time both husband and wife must work hard long hours in order to support their family. Since the couple has few hours at home with their children, they may have additional problems in raising them.

Physical: Most Asian immigrants suffer from a physical disadvantage. They are usually regarded as unathletic and unhealthy. Because of language barriers or different therapeutic concepts, they tend to avoid medical treatment unless they have severe illness. That creates more complicated problems in the family.

The Chinese church has a great opportunity to help new immigrants to solve their problems. The basic approach can be in two directions; one is to help them to achieve stability in their daily living, thus reducing elements of conflict. The other approach is to lead them to know Christ so that they can accept the biblical teaching of the true concept of the family. In addition to regular meetings to provide social occasions and emotional support, the church can offer programs such as English classes, care ministry, family enrichment retreats, child-care, etc. These create opportunities to share the Christian faith and help immigrants to build a personal relationship with the Lord.

Many people from the Chinese mainland are immediately attracted when they first hear the Christian view of marriage, because they are victims of the materialistic view of family relationships. Chairman Mao once said that the marriage was nothing more than “a cup of water.” This means that if a person needs a cup of water desperately, he or she will do anything for it; even marry a stranger. This materialistic view of marriage still exists among many Chinese couples. They may not be ready to accept the Christian idea of God, but they certainly admire the Christian teaching of love as seen in chapter thirteen of

Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. Therefore, a marriage enrichment program is a powerful tool to reach out to these people.

Family Ministry in Chinese American Churches

The Chinese Christian Mission, founded in 1961, was the first Chinese parachurch organization in North America. Its mission has been evangelism through publishing magazines and literature. In 1979, it established a counseling department to provide family counseling for Chinese Americans. Peter Chiu directed the department. The department occasionally organized churches to host family enrichment seminars but no explicit program developed. In 1990, Chiu began his own ministry called Chinese Family for Christ (CFFC). Their ministry has grown into a multifunctional establishment including marriage enrichment retreats, family ministry leader training, family summer camps, short-term family mission teams, literature, columnists, radio programs, TV programs, an Internet information center, and professional counseling (Garden 15).

Ambassadors for Christ (AFC), founded in 1963 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is another influential Chinese parachurch organization. Its mission is also evangelism and it mainly works among Chinese graduate students. AFC started to sponsor family retreats in the mid-eighties.

There are several other organizations such as the Chinese Coordination Center of World Evangelism-USA, Overseas Evangelical Mission, and the recently formed Focus on the Chinese Family. They use literature, and hold seminars and retreats to contribute to the benefit of Chinese families in North America.

In 1996, Chinese Family for Christ published a twelve-lesson marriage enrichment curriculum called "You and Me." This material is used in a three-day marriage enrichment

retreat. Although the lessons are well written, there is no follow-up strategy and behavior change monitoring plan. Long-term results are unknown.

Contents of Marriage Enrichment Programs

Herman Green gives six sessions in his Marriage Enrichment Retreat (Otto 85). He uses group activities to conduct each session, such as games, question-and-answer, revolving dialogue, small groups, etc. His topics include love, intimacy, communication, responsibility, sex, anger control, and sharing wishes. The retreat concludes in a worship format.

Herbert and Roberta Otto's Marriage Enrichment Retreat begins Saturday morning at 9:00 and ends at Sunday afternoon at 5:00. The subjects include self-evaluation, awareness, sex, marriage habits, acceptance, communication, interpersonal conflict, love development, commitment. The program uses structured modules with varied group activities (Otto 101).

Abraham and Dorothy Schmitt's Marriage Renewal Retreats emphasize marriage therapy. The Schmitts adopt Otto Rank's model of experiential psychotherapy. They believe the experience itself heals, not the rationalizing about the experience (Otto 110). The retreat begins with the presentation of *Conflict and Ecstasy: A Model for a Maturing Marriage*. Then the leader conducts an open discussion and asks each couple to compare their marriage with the model and to share their own experiences. In the conflict phase, each couple is encouraged to speak freely about their frustration and bitterness. The session ends in reconciliation and re-commitment to the marriage vow.

Don Hayward emphasizes the small group treatment, three to six couples at a time, in his Positive Partners Retreat (Otto 121). His four sessions include the meaning of

marriage, fulfillment of needs, expectations, communication skills, active listening, checking out assumptions, sexuality, resolving differences, conflict resolution, intimacy.

Bernard Kligfeld's Jewish Marriage Encounter Weekend emphasizes commitment to God (Otto 129). It leads participants from "Encounter with the self" through "Encounter with the spouse," to "Encounter with God," and ends in "Encounter with the world." The retreat starts with Sabbath worship. Other subjects include openness, reaching out to each other, trust and respect, sanctification, matrimonial spirituality, and community commitment.

Norman Wright, in his "Marriage for All Seasons," a marriage enrichment resource curriculum, in seventeen sessions deals with evaluation, equality, mid-life crisis, identity, communication, sexuality, lust, fidelity, affair prevention, forgiveness, preparation for the future. He spends four sessions talking about sexual issues.

Sol Gordon, leading psychologist and director of the Institute for Family Research and Education at Syracuse University, gives the ten most important elements of a marriage relationship, in order: love, laughter, talk, involvement, friendship, integrity, tolerance, adaptability, sexuality, and sharing (68). Norman Wright states a similar list of elements as the eight pillars of marriage: goals, expectations for marriage, determining needs, handling change and crisis, decision-making, conflict resolution, prayer, and forgiveness (Wright Pillars 44).

In conclusion, most marriage enrichment programs include subjects such as definition of marriage, intimacy, sexuality, background, fulfillment, communication, conflict resolution, finance, and planning. It seems that a lecture followed by a small group discussion approach is the most popular way to conduct seminars.

Theological Foundations for Related Subjects

The ten subjects discussed in the following section form the basis of the development of the curriculum. Each subject is discussed in a lesson of the ten-week seminar. Related activities are assigned in the weekly homework.

Sinful Nature of Human Being

What is human's nature? God created man in his own image (Gen. 1:27). God is Spirit, so human not only has body, rationality, emotion, but also spirit. Since God's nature is holy and sinless, humans should be glory and free from sins. But humans sinned against God. Sin is disobeying God. The consequence of sin is death. (Gen. 2:17) Death means separation. In spirit we are separated from God because of sins. Therefore God's curses came upon each one. Woman has to bear pain in childbearing. She desires for her husband and he rules over her. Man has to sweat to obtain food, for the ground will produce thorns and thistles against him. (Gen. 3:16-19) Humans become sinners by nature, therefore, we are the source of problems.

All humans are under sin, (Rom. 3:9) so we need God's salvation. It is a process of reconciliation. (Rom. 5:11) Only through the salvation of Jesus Christ are we made new and created to be like God again in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:23-24).

How does our sinful nature affect our marriage? Two sinners living together surely will have conflicts. Not only are we selfish and always fatten ourselves on earth, (James 5:5) but also we are constantly under the attack of Satan and he wants to destroy us. (Gen. 3:16; Luke 22:31)

How does this world affect our marriage? In First John it says: "the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes, and the boasting of what he has and does are from this

world.” We are constantly under the bombardment of these worldly views, such as materialism, sexuality, feminist movement, homosexuality, etc., that just shift our concept of marriage from godly to evil.

Sin brings shame. In Chinese tradition one cannot let others know about his domestic problems. It is shameful to look for outside help. Most marriage problems were kept under the carpet until death did them apart. Where can we get help? There are at least three resources we can ask for help. First, God is the source of love. (1 Jh. 4:7) Second, the ministers are responsible to look after the flock. (1 Pet. 5:2) Third, one can talk to lay ministers. (Tit. 2:3-4)

There is no perfect marriage, only marriages of hard work. Marriage is a process of learning.

Marriage Is a Covenant

Is marriage a covenant or a contract between a couple? What is a covenant? Two kinds of covenants are mentioned in the Bible; a treaty between two parties (Gen. 21:27; Ex. 34:12) and a covenant between God and human beings (Gen. 6:8). Certain characteristics about the covenants of God can be observed in the covenants that God made with Noah, Abraham, and Moses (Balswick 23). These characteristics are that a covenant is always initiated by God (Gen. 6:18); it involves a relationship with God (Ex. 19:6); it is always conditional (Gen. 17:14); it is not only for that person but also for his descendants (Gen. 9:11); it has God’s promise and blessing (Dt. 7:13); it is everlasting (Lev. 24:8); it is always with a sign (Gen. 9:13); God will remember and keep the covenant (Dt. 7:12); and it has a spiritual meaning (Rom. 2:29).

The new covenant that God made with believers through Jesus Christ also possesses these characteristics: believers are chosen by God (Heb. 10:16); they become children of God (Jh. 1:12); they enter the kingdom of God through faith (Jh. 3:16); children are blessed in a godly family (1 Co. 7:14); God promises eternal salvation (Heb. 8:6); eternal life is everlasting (Heb. 13:20); in baptism and communion believers are introduced into the covenant of God (Mt. 26:28); sins are forgiven forever (Heb. 10:17); and faith is a spiritual dimension experienced in the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Co. 3:6).

According to the teaching of the Bible, marriage also has all of these characteristics: God initiated the marriage (Gen. 2:24); through marriage a relationship is established (Eph. 5:28); husband and wife must keep their purity (Heb. 13:4); marriage encourages the bearing of children (Mal. 2:15); God blesses people through marriage (Gen. 24:53); marriage is forever (Mt. 19:6); wedding and rings are tokens (Gen. 24:30); God keeps a marriage (Heb. 10:17); and marriage represents the unity of Christ and his church (Eph. 5:25).

The central idea of covenant is that it is a commitment that demonstrates God's role of fatherhood (Balswick 23). Just like children cannot choose their father, God's offer is in no way contractual. That relationship is permanent. There is no legal ground for a child to divorce his or her father. Although the covenant itself is unconditional, the potential benefits are contingent. A father always has the right to withhold his gift to his children if they do not meet his demands.

Another idea of covenant is that it is a prophetic symbol that illustrates the union between God and Israel in the relationship of husband and wife. Paul presented the same idea of marriage covenant in his epistles by portraying Christ as husband of his church

(Scott 14). God's fidelity to Israel and Christ's love to his church then become the characteristic for believers to experience in their marriage relationship.

Unfortunately, the concept of marriage has been diluted in the last fifty years. People look on marriage as a contract between two persons, "If you fulfill your duties then I will fulfill mine; otherwise, let us break the contract." People tend to become self-centered and refuse to commit to a life-long relationship. Husband and wife demand instant satisfaction in family life. Few are willing to sacrifice themselves in order to achieve the oneness of the husband-wife relationship. Therefore, we see more divorces, broken families, and fatherless children.

Love Is the Basis of Marriage

What is love? Love is a gift from God. A person cannot make himself or herself feel love or make another person love him/her, just as he/she cannot create his/her own heartbeat. It is a feeling that grows and flourishes naturally in the presence of certain conditions. Everyone has his or her own unique experience and definition of love. Love is a powerful human emotion that can bring delight and also can be covered by hurt, anger, resentment, or fear.

Love is a feeling of intimacy, a sensation of being touched by someone at the soul level, and of being transparent without filters or defenses (Bender 13). Love requires vulnerability that allows one to share intimate relationship and exclusive information with another person. The ultimate goal of marriage is to build up intimate love that keeps a couple growing toward oneness (Gen. 2:24).

Love is a commitment. Like any other commitment, it binds one to the receiver of love. When two persons exchange vows in their wedding, it expresses the intent of each

to love and to share the life of the other into the future. This commitment is not only an expectation but the yielding of a claim. Three reasons motivate a person to make a commitment of love (Scott 120). First, commitment seeks to safeguard against inconsistency. Second, it attempts to make love irrevocable and kept the relationship permanently. Third, it desires to express itself as clearly as it can. The decision to give a commitment of love is uniting oneself with the heart of the one he or she loves.

Love should be the basis of a marriage. In the biblical sense, there are three degrees of love: *eros*, *philia* and *agape*. *Eros* is a face-to-face kind of love that seeks sensual expression. It is stimulated by the biological structure of human nature. *Philia* is a side-by-side kind of love that seeks companionship. Husband and wife are friends and should be able to enjoy cooperation and communication together. *Agape* is a heart-to-heart kind of love that is self-giving, unconditional, and sacrificial (1 Cor. 13:4-7). It is the love that goes on loving even when the other becomes unlovable. Christ's love is an *agape* love. It is a personal act of commitment seeking its fullness in life. An ideal marriage should be able to demonstrate these three kinds of love. They do not naturally come with marriage. Unless couples purposely put forth their effort to increase *philia* and *agape* love, they will not know such love in marriage (Wright Before 18). Some techniques can be used to increase the intimacy of all three kinds of love. In the curriculum a section is provided for students to learn to build up an intimate relationship.

Background as a Shadow of Marriage

A person's characteristics are shaped in his or her childhood. It is important to understand the background of a person in order to build a good relationship with that person. When a couple comes together, each person brings in a value system, concept of

life's issues, and philosophy of life received from his or her own family. Each has priorities and expectations about the way people should conduct themselves in a marriage. If a couple does not communicate well, these become sources of conflict. It takes time and commitment to establish a common value system and mature agreement.

People often develop expectations of marriage by reaching a general conclusion of how marriage should be from a particular set of facts. This comes from their observations in their family of origin and from their own experiences. They then conclude that all marriages should be alike or different from this set of facts (Hardin 11). Having this particular notion can lead to unrealistic expectations of marriage and will limit the couple's growth in developing their own ways of doing things.

Chinese from mainland China and from other Asian countries have different concepts on many issues. For example, families with young children from China seem more relaxed in disciplining their youngsters. Because of the government's single child policy the only child in the family is often treated like a king. Some families from China have parents, so that there may be six adults available to spoil one child. In comparison, families from Taiwan or Hong Kong may be much more disciplinary in raising their children. If the husband and wife are from two different regions, then the philosophy of disciplining children can be a major source of conflict in their marriage. The couple needs to learn each other's cultural backgrounds and accept the differences.

This is particularly true in a mixed marriage that involves people of different races. The secret of success is for the partners to have equal exposure to each other's culture (Hendricks 110). To learn the spouse's native language is almost a necessity for building up a good relationship with the in-laws. Without parental support a couple has to struggle

with the cord cutting from the parents for certain periods of time and hope to regain their blessing later. However, cross-cultural marriages might bring great spiritual, and cultural richness to a family. The couple learns new ways of seeing life, and the children have a double heritage. Also, the family is likely to travel widely and have many friends with diverse interests.

Obviously, an individual's cultural orientation is not only based on his or her background of origin before immigration, but also on his or her length of stay in the new culture. The conflicts created by the new immigrants' strong attachment to the Chinese culture and the pressure from the American culture gradually diminish after a long period of emigration (Pang 3).

Fulfillment as the Diet of Marriage

Humans were created with desires in order to live. Although the desires could not be completely accomplished after the fall of Adam and humankind's separation from God, certain levels of desire must be fulfilled in order a person to stay alive. One of the motivating factors for marriage is the fulfillment of desires. People not only desire that their own needs be met, but also desire to meet other people's needs.

Providing counterfeit satisfaction is the same as ignoring a marriage partner's real needs, which results in a shallow relationship. It is impossible to provide others with unconditional and selfless love, because humans are self-centered sinners. Lawrence Crabb stated in his book, The Marriage Builder: "If I look to my wife to meet my needs, then our relationship is corrupted by (1) manipulative efforts to acquire what I think I need; (2) fear that my manipulations may not be effective; (3) anger and pain when they do not succeed; and (4) a nagging sense of guilt because my approach to marriage is

fundamentally selfish” (34). Therefore, he suggested that we not depend on each other to meet our personal needs, but depend on God.

People face four types of needs: physical, emotional, social, and spiritual. Physical needs are those necessary to sustain life: food, water, oxygen, rest, security, safety, etc. Emotional needs are a desire for love and belonging, affectionate relationships, sexual desire. Social needs are status, receiving recognition, companionship, knowledge, and interaction with others. Spiritual needs are self-actualization, relationship with God, and to become the person that one has the potential to be (Wright Before 35).

When a spouse’s needs are not met, the first place that fear and anger surface is in bed. Withholding sex is often the weapon of choice to express anger or dissatisfaction because sexual activity requires a vulnerability that encompasses a person’s total being (Moeller 131). Therefore, to reject a spouse sexually is the easiest way to reject his or her complete personhood. However, Moeller stated, “sexual blackmail is a high-stakes game.” One can never assume that he or she can continue intimate sexual acts with a spouse after the point is made or the argument won. There could be a hidden accumulation of danger in their relationship. That kind of behavior will eventually destroy the trust and intimacy between the couple.

The Bible talks about four specific purposes for human sexual activity: procreation, recreation, communication, and relief. Besides procreation, sex has to do with the relationship between husband and wife. It provides the means to reveal one’s affection to his or her spouse and thus is a communication tool to achieve intimacy. Since God created sex, he knows best how human beings can achieve sexual fulfillment. His advice is, “The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her

husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife" (1 Co. 7:3-4).

Sex is a major subject that causes Chinese family problems. Traditionally, sex issues are not openly discussed in the conservative Chinese community. The majority of individuals are not nearly as well informed as they could be how sexual desire influences their behaviors. Sex has always been considered as an evil driving force and led to human destruction. There is pressure to open up the discussion about how a couple feels about their sexual needs. A safe and honest environment has to be established first in order to help them to learn the subject.

In search of the gift of intimacy, Donald Joy defined three elements for parent-child transactions that can also apply to the husband-wife relationship: the skin, the mouth, and the genitals (Joy Risk 27). It is interesting to notice that the needs of these for intimate physical engagement has never died since the childhood of a person.

Role and Responsibility in Marriage

Two major elements appear in the three classical passages concerning the man's role in marriage; that is, loving leadership and gentleness (Adams 119). In Ephesians 5:21-33, four times the husband is commanded to love his wife. It is obvious that to initiate love and to keep on loving are the husband's task, not the wife's. A good example of it is Christ's love for his church, a headship of love characterized by sacrifice and forgiveness. Although the husband is assigned to lead the family, he needs to put his wife first in all things, as Christ does the church. In I Peter 3:7, the Apostle commands that the husband needs to treat the wife as a fragile vase because she is the gracious gift of life.

From the same Scripture, a woman's role in marriage can be described as a submissive helper. Submission consists of two things: respect and obedience (Adams 108). In I Peter 3:1-6, the Apostle expected Christian wives to submit to their husbands, even if they are unbelievers. Wives should respect the God-bestowed authoritative role of husbands, not the persons themselves. However, a wife's obedience to her husband shall not extend beyond her obedience to God.

David Augsburger introduced four kinds of model of marriage: complementary, competitive, cooperative and collaborative. In the complementary marriage, husband and wife each has own role and responsibilities. In the competitive marriage, the couple seeks balanced roles and equal rights. In the cooperative marriage, husband and wife make rules together. In the collaborative marriage, they share functions with little thought of rules (Augsburger 135). I consider the cooperative model is more suitable for Chinese families in the North America.

Husband and wife's roles in the family need to be clarified in order for them to function properly. Each couple should discuss and decide who is most competent to do which task. It is important for a couple to develop the rules and guidelines for their relationship as husband and wife.

In the Chinese tradition, husbands dominant wives in every aspect of life. A Confucian statement says, "A gentleman should keep himself away from the kitchen." This is not acceptable in modern society. Many Chinese men need to change their view of women first and learn not to treat them as properties. In modern urban living, more and more Chinese husbands share housework because the high living standard demands dual incomes in a family. This trend will continue in years to come.

Communication as Blood Circulation of Marriage

Communication is the most important element in life and marriage. It is to marriage what blood is to the body. Without communication it is impossible to have a relationship. Good communication from the speaker's side includes a clear message, proper tone of voice, and a complementary nonverbal expression. Communication is the process of sharing oneself, both verbally and non-verbally, in such a way that the other person can both accept and understand what he or she is hearing. On the receiver's side it includes active listening, non-judgmental attitude, mutual respect, and complete acceptance. Active listening means the listener gives evidence that he or she understands what the other person has said. Acceptance means that one understands what the other person is saying even if he or she does not agree with it. Many couples complain that they are too different in their concepts or characteristics. However, their differences will not frustrate their relationship if they have good communication.

Unfortunately, most couples ignore the importance of communication. A survey shows that American husbands and wives communicate with each other an average of twenty-seven-and-half minutes a week (Hendricks 273). Dean Merrill, in his article "Blocks to Communication" (Hendricks 271), examined five major obstacles. First is *the rat race*. Couples are too busy to talk. Many things have to be done and there is no time for deep communication. Second are *Kids*. Conscientious parents always rush to respond to the children's needs because they let their needs be known right away. If children are at the center of the communication, what happens when they grow up and move away? Third comes *the media*. Couples watch TV together but do not communicate. This is a false togetherness, and does not increase understanding of each other's needs. Fourth is

fatigue. There are “morning people” and “night people”; many people marry the opposite. Therefore there is no late night pillow talk and no opportunity for both spouses to interact effectively. Fifth is *fear of conflict*. Couples avoid sticky matters that cause argument, and hope it will blow over. No one enjoys arguing. However, small problems will become big troubles and can be lethal.

John Savage suggests there are five styles of communication. First, direct and open feedback; communication takes place openly and completely with accurate data transmitted and relationships are productive and useful. Second, open but partial communication; some key information is left out and thus the listener has to assume that what was said was complete. Third, distorted partial information; many distortions of reality are present, forcing the listener to believe or else fill in his or her own inferences. Fourth, distorted full information; listener has to fill in large gaps of information from assumptions and has difficulty trying to decide what is real and what is projection. Fifth, nonverbal communication; verbal expression is cut off completely and the listener is left with only inferences, assumptions, and conjectures that may not have any reality base (Savage 15).

Andre Bustanoby gave some practical suggestions for better communication. First, break the bad habit of communicating to coerce, such as engaging in arm-twisting to win the point of view. Second, be willing to talk about any bitterness that keeps one from caring about the spouse’s feeling. Find out the essential issue, such as why you do not listen to each other with understanding and caring ears. A root of bitterness may be poisoning communication and needs to be treated first. Third, observe the fundamental rules for good communication when talking to each other. For example, use the word “I”

instead of “you”; listen actively; do not be in a hurry to correct facts or do not defend yourself (Hendricks 286).

Interaction as the Nerve System of Marriage

In this society everyone claims their rights; civil rights, women’s rights, minority rights, gay rights. It seems we live in an unjust society. However, the Bible does not talk much about rights but focuses on responsibilities. While secular psychologists suggest setting rules for a “fair fight” in marriage, God does not want his children to fight.

Christian husbands and wives should handle their disagreements by following the example of Jesus Christ who died on the cross for those who stabbed him.

Too many arguments are irrational and emotional, beginning and ending with harsh words. Kenn Gangel suggested the CLASP method (Hendricks 308). C- Calm down; do not say a word when angry. Try to get away from the environment to calm down first. L- Lower voice; do not yell at each other, instead use gentle words. A- Acknowledge the other’s request; listen to the other first before making any judgment or request. S- State your request; explain your opinion by using an “I” message. P- Propose a solution; acknowledge the needs of both and find out a workable solution.

Anger is the most powerful emotion that can either build up character or destroy a marriage. The Bible says, “Be angry, and yet do not sin” (Eph. 4:23, NSNB). Jesus was angry with the Pharisees. What we do with our anger makes it bad or good. If anger creates vengeance, it could become a verbal or physical abuse. Richard Meier recommended three ways to minimize the negative impact of anger (Hendricks 320). First, verbalize your angry feelings. Do not attack the other, just turn your anger into words. Second, let God be the one to get even. “It is Mine to avenge; I will repay”

(Deut. 32:35). Third, forgive the offender. Stop thinking negative thoughts and replace them with positive thoughts. Think about the good things in the present.

Conflict Resolution as Recuperation for Marriage

Conflict is a fact of life because we are imperfect human beings. Even strong marriages have quarrels and disagreements. However, by working through issues a couple learns effective communication and the couple can keep disagreements from becoming full-blown problems. The difference between a healthy marriage and a troubled marriage is not the absence of conflict but the way in which conflicts are handled.

The conflict itself is not a problem, but the kind of reaction to the conflict could be a problem. Most people do not deal with conflict openly because they do not know how to handle it. Conflict is neither personality problems nor disagreements, but a complicated interaction of many factors. Samuel Canine gives five elements that help people understand the nature of conflict: interdependence, interactive struggle, incompatible goals, interference, and interface of opposition and cooperation (Gangel 109). Husbands and wives are interdependent on each other. The pull of one person affects the position of the other. Sometimes, a couple likes to play hide-and-seek in order to attract the other's attention. When both of them want to occupy the solitary position at the top of a hill, then conflict begins. Opposition and cooperation can take place in a conflict simultaneously, creating frustration or guilt.

Jack Balswick suggested that people use five different ways to deal with conflict: avoidance, competition, accommodation, compromise, and collaboration (220). The best approach to resolve the conflict is to have an open and direct communication. Identify one's own contribution to the problem first before bringing it up to discussion and set a

plan to change that behavior. Some disagreements do not need to be completely resolved. A couple should establish the pattern of constructive conflict management to reduce their disharmony. Each person has the opportunity to express his or her thoughts clearly and completely while protecting the other from personal injury.

Gary Bennett suggested “Ten Commandments” for a “good” fight (Hendricks 310). First, you must be willing to change yourself, not your spouse. Changing yourself is the best way to change your spouse. Second, if possible, choose a good time and place to argue. Never argue before the children. Third, set a time limit to avoid endless fighting. Fourth, agree on a specific topic and stick with it. Do not bring up things out of the past. Fifth, keep your focus. Deal with the problems, not the symptoms. Sixth, do your best not to bicker and nag, no low blows, name calling, or bringing up material that you know will hurt your spouse’s self-esteem. Seventh, listen carefully. Do not presume you know what your spouse thinks or feels; just listen. Eighth, respect your spouse’s feelings. There are no right or wrong feelings. It is dangerous to use intimate knowledge of your spouse’s feelings as a weapon to hurt him or her. Ninth, try to reach a conclusion at the end of a preset time, or set another time for further discussion. Tenth, forgive readily when it is over. Put aside resentment, anger, or a get-even attitude. Ask God to heal both in the light of forgiveness and work towards mutual understanding of the actual issue. “Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry” (Eph. 3:26).

In-law relationships are not normally an initial problem among Chinese immigrants because most immigrants family units are small. Their in-laws are thousand of miles away and exert little impact on their family life. However, when the couple has a child, they may invite their parents to the United States to help them while both husband and wife are

working. The different concepts of child rearing between two generations sometimes creates tensions. The best approach is to set up principles to prevent conflict before the parents arrived. The couple should re-examine each other's roles and lay out a plan for conflict resolution. An open talk with the parents to communicate each other's concern first is a wise approach to avoid future disharmony.

Planning as the Brain of Marriage

Less than 3 percent of married couples have set goals for their marriage (Wright Before 30). Marriage without goals is like shooting without a target; it is without purpose. Some goals can be revised after a certain portion of fulfillment; some goals should not change, such as serving the Lord as a family. Goals need to be reasonable, realistic, attainable, measurable, and set a time limit.

Planning sets up strategies to achieve goals. Each stage of life requires different plans: how to raise children, how to manage money, how to make decisions, how to deal with moving, how to manage time, how to arrange vacations, how to handle crises, etc. Each stage needs a couple working together in order to achieve their goals.

Finances could be a major problem in Chinese immigrant families because of the different living standard between developed countries and developing countries. Many Chinese are not accustomed to the Western capitalistic way of money management. For example, some of them spend a lot of money using credit cards because they cannot resist the temptation of enjoying it first and paying for it later. If the couple holds differing attitudes toward money, then conflict is inevitable. The best way to resolve financial conflicts is to set up some rules together and keep communication open to achieve a common attitude about using money.

Here are some practical suggestions for making a budget by Norman Wright in his book Before You Say I Do (69). Set aside a time to so a budget together. Define family financial goals. Think first before allocating or adjusting any amount. Plan for the big expense, such as house, car, or education. Keep good record, but do not tack to the penny. Do not intermingle funds. Do not cheat the budget. Evaluate and adjust the budget every six months. Know who is in charge of what.

Making a plan for life is the teaching of Jesus Christ (Luke 4:28). However, over dependence on plans and not trusting in God's providence can also lead us to failure. One should plan the best and trust God to lead the rest. Only he knows what can happen in the future.

Summary of the Review of Selected Literature

The review of related literature surveyed the biblical view of marriage, the field of marriage enrichment, and the needs of Chinese immigrants. Everything a Christian does should have a theological basis. The theology of marriage is centered in the covenant aspect of this God-determined institution. He officiated at the first marriage in the Garden of Eden and prescribed the ground rules. Couples need to keep a permanent bond in their relationship with God and with each other.

The marriage enrichment movement has been promoted by many parachurch organizations in the past three decades. The immediate effectiveness of various programs in helping couples achieve positive change in their relationship has been affirmed by many participants. However, the long-term effects are varied, depending on how intensive the program is and how serious the participants are. Further study needs to done in this area.

Chinese immigrants have unique problems. It is the Chinese American church's duty to help these immigrants and their families. Family ministry and marriage counseling are desperately needed in most Chinese American churches. There are not enough resources for each local church to establish a specific ministry for this area. Therefore some effective and practical curricula with a certain degree of training could be the best means to help Chinese American Churches in ministry to their people.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

When Proctor and Gamble, the consumer product giant company, is about to market a new product to ensure its success, it conducts a series of marketing tests that sometimes last for long periods. For example, the new *Olean Pringles* potato chips have been under testing for more than three years. In the same way, any curriculum should be tested first before it can be used on a regular basis. This chapter explains how the Marriage Enrichment Program designed for the Chinese American church will be executed and evaluated in a local church setting to insure that it is applicable to the family ministry.

Problem and Purpose of the Study

The population of ethnic Chinese in the United States has increased significantly in the past decade. Most of the population growth relates to the open policy of the Chinese government in the eighties. According to data from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, from 1971 to 1980 there were 124,300 Chinese immigrants in this country, and from 1981 to 1990 the number increased to 298,900. This figure does not include students and their families, nor illegal aliens that were smuggled in through borders or ports. The total number of Chinese Americans has increased 104 percent in the last ten years (Hoffman 397).

In many respects, the new wave of the Chinese immigrants differs from those who came more than thirty years ago. Many of the present wave are professionals or skilled workers with better education and training. Based on occupations as classified in the national census, more than half of Chinese in America can be categorized as upper middle class, composed of highly successful professionals, engineers, doctors, scientists,

businessmen, etc. Only a small number of the new immigrants are in the lower class composed of workers and laborers. The middle class group encounters both economic and social discrimination but they eventually overcome it and move into the center of American society. They speak English, hold better jobs and live in the suburbs. The lower class perceive themselves to be outside of the larger society. They lack proficiency in English and tend to gravitate to Chinese communities where they can have a better opportunity to find jobs. They continue to struggle at the periphery of the society.

A significant difference exists between new immigrants and well settled Chinese Americans. The latter enjoy a favorable position in society. They have been accepted as a “model minority” (Pang 4). The new immigrants encounter many significant problems. Many new immigrants moved to the United States for security reasons; for better education, for a better future for their children, or for a larger degree of freedom. However, only a few fortunate people can fulfill their American dreams in the early stage. Most of them must struggle initially with language deficiency, social disadvantage, unstable employment, and identity crisis. Because of the initial lack of the feeling of achievement and unity in a foreign society, they lose their motivation and their meaning in life. Materialism replaces idealism and aspirations. Life is always a constant rush and consists of meaningless activities. In addition, because of cultural variance, they must cope with problems resulting from different lifestyles and value systems. As a result, they carry a deep sense of alienation and their psychological well-being is affected (Cheung “Chinese” 4).

Immigrants moving to a new environment must abandon their kinship networks. In the past, they were accustomed to leaning on their extended family and friends for

support. Now only their own small family unit with limited resources can help them to deal with difficulties. Family becomes their only reason to struggle in this society. However, many immigrants experience various degrees of disruption, ranging from conflicts between family members to the breakup of their relationships. Some problems are due to the changing view of the traditional Chinese family. Once they move to the United States, wives sense the power of women's liberation and begin to demand equality in every aspect of family life. Many women are well educated and capable of taking the lead in the family. Without preparation and understanding, many husbands are not equipped to change drastically their view of the husband-wife relationship, and to alter themselves accordingly, and therefore divorce results. More and more broken families and mental illnesses occur among Chinese Americans.

Chinese American churches have not paid serious attention to these problems yet. David Poon wrote his dissertation on "In Search of the Roles of the Chinese Pastor in Family Ministry." He stated that marriage enrichment or marriage counseling were not provided in many Chinese American churches. Troubled family members who were not able to receive outside professional help because of language difficulty had no one to ask for assistance. Not only is family ministry desperately needed in every church, but the shortage of full-time church workers with professional training in family ministry is an even greater problem. Because of limited resources and lack of workers, Chinese churches are not ready to use family counseling as a tool to reach out to the community. Only recently are there Chinese Christian organizations formed to specifically deal with family issues.

Another issue is that within Chinese churches the diverse languages and backgrounds intensify the needs. Generally, there are four different languages used in the Chinese church; English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Taiwanese. People from mainland China hold many different views in term of culture and politics than persons from other regions. A large cultural and communications gap opens between first and second-generation immigrants. Churches can easily divide if unity among different language and generation groups is not emphasized in the church. The divided church becomes even smaller and has few or no resources to deal with family problems. The result is that most Chinese churches in North American are already small and are unable to meet the needs of every group (Cheung “Family” 11).

This study develops and executes a marriage enrichment curriculum specifically designed for Chinese American churches and then evaluates the effectiveness of its execution in a local church setting. In order to measure the effectiveness of the marriage enrichment treatment, two scales (DAS and MRES) are used to calibrate the awareness of commitment to marriage and the application of principles learned from the curriculum. The whole program lasts five months.

Although many marriage enrichment programs are available in North America, there is virtually no program precisely designed for first generation Chinese immigrants. Chinese Christians are searching for help. Many Christian marriages could be reconciled if the couples knew how to be better spouses before their relationship becomes embittered.

Research Questions

1. What is basic marital condition of the subject and control groups as reflected in the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey scores prior to the marriage enrichment seminar?
2. In what way does the execution of the marriage enrichment curriculum contribute to the awareness of the subject group's commitment to their marriage as measured immediately after the ten-week seminar?
3. What is the effectiveness of the subject group's applying the principles learned from the curriculum that can foster marriage strengths and personal growth two months after the treatment?

Subjects

The population in the study is from the Cincinnati Chinese Church, the only Chinese church in the greater Cincinnati metropolitan area. The church has two congregations, a total of 400 people. The Chinese-speaking congregation is comprised of first generation immigrants with about 300 members and the English speaking congregation is second or third generation immigrants with about 100 members. In addition, about 100 children attend Sunday school. The English-speaking congregation is markedly different in many cultural aspects from the Chinese-speaking congregation and therefore it is not included in this study.

The demographic profile of the Cincinnati Chinese Church is quite diverse. People come from mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam, etc. Those not from the mainland, Hong Kong, or Taiwan are mostly descendants of overseas Chinese who speak Chinese as their second language. Their

professions can be divided into four categories: professionals, laborers, students, and retirees. Professionals include engineers, medical personnel, businessmen, teachers, and managers. Laborers include restaurant workers, laundry workers, and janitors. Students include graduate and undergraduate students and visiting scholars. The following is a table of the church family units based on their places of origin and their jobs. It does not include English speaking families or mixed families. A family unit is any single or couple with or without children not older than eighteen-year-old.

Table 3.1
Demographic Profile of the Cincinnati Chinese Church Chinese-Speaking Congregation

Jobs	Place	China	Taiwan	Hong Kong	Others	Total
Professional		35(14.8)	60(25.3)	17(7.2)	3(1.3)	115(48.5)
Laborer		5(2.1)	8(3.4)	7(3.0)	3(1.3)	23(9.7)
Student		23(9.7)	23(9.7)	5(2.1)	1(0.4)	52(21.9)
Retiree		10(4.2)	18(7.6)	10(4.2)	0(0.0)	37(15.6)
Others		1(0.4)	4(1.7)	3(1.3)	2(0.8)	10(4.2)
Total		74(31.2)	113(47.7)	41(17.3)	9(3.8)	237(100)

Note: 1. Number in the parenthesis represents the percent of the total family units.
2. Others in the column include people from Thailand, Vietnam, etc.
3. Others in the row include mixed professions.

About one-half of the church members came from Taiwan and one-third from mainland China. Although nearly all understand Mandarin, people from Hong Kong prefer to speak Cantonese. The Chinese writing is different too. People from the mainland use simplified Chinese script and people from other places still use the original Chinese script. Most early immigrants are from “free” regions, that means areas other than the mainland. The number of people from the mainland began to increase quickly after the late eighties.

Almost half of the church congregations are professionals who are more stable and most are married. Only one-fifth of the members are students. This is because many students do not attend church regularly and do not count as members. Students tend to move away in two or three years after they graduate from the universities. Most of the students are graduate students, and most are married with children.

The subject group (SG) and the control group (CG) are voluntary married couples selected from the Chinese-speaking congregations with diverse backgrounds. The selection process uses the block design concept that each couple is paired up with another couple according to three criteria: homeland, years of marriage, and years of conversion. Then each pair is randomly assigned into the SG and CG. Each group consists of twenty couples. The subject group receives ten weeks of marriage enrichment treatment while the control group remains untreated. After collecting the pre-test, post-test and delay follow-up test data before and after the treatment of the subject group, and data from the untreated control groups, the control group will receive the same marriage enrichment program to ensure the fairness to the participants. However, the result of the control group's marriage enrichment program will not be considered in this study.

The attendees of the subject group have to complete at least 70 percent of the curriculum and attend at least seven classes in the ten-week seminar in order to be considered as valid in evaluating their results of treatment.

Variables

The independent variable for this study is the implementation of the marriage enrichment curriculum designed for members of the subject group. The couples in the subject group participate in ten weeks of marriage enrichment seminars. Each seminar

session is seventy-five minutes long and each couple is assigned homework after the session.

There are two dependent variables in this study. One is the perceived awareness of the commitment to marriage to promote a more mutually satisfying relationship. The other is the application of principles learned from the curriculum that can foster marriage strengths and personal growth.

The intervening variables are many. They include age, family background, education, years of marriage, years of immigration, number of children, spiritual condition, involvement in church activities, current stress, and motivation for growth. In addition, the expectations and cooperation of the members with the pastor as the instructor of the treatment might yield more positive results. These variables cannot be controlled and may not be measurable quantitatively, and therefore are not part of the study analysis. However, such information will be collected and may serve as pilot information for future work.

Instrumentation

The comprehensive curriculum is designed to present ten-week seminars, each session consists of a weekly group meeting and five days of follow-up homework assignments. The philosophy in the design of the curriculum is like high school study. Different subjects are given in the classroom. Then students have daily class exercises and homework in these subjects to help them learn in each area. The same subject will be taught several times to ensure continuous and reinforced learning. Day after day, students will build on the knowledge and skills that they had attained already in each area. The five

areas in this curriculum are the Lordship of Jesus Christ, Intimacy, Communication, Responsibility, and Planning.

The weekly group meeting includes fifteen minutes of review, thirty minutes of lecture, twenty minutes of group interaction, and ten minutes of devotion. The review assures the attendants participate using what they learned from the seminars in the five areas of their lives. The lectures give general principles for establishing better relationships and to teach skills to improve different aspects of marriage life. Biblical principles form the backbone of the lecture, employing counseling skills and ideals developed by experienced family ministry experts. Group interaction in a group learning atmosphere encourages interaction among couples. Varied activities are used in each session. Meetings conclude with devotions asking God's providence upon this unique learning experience.

Home assignments consist of activities in the five areas. In the Lordship area, participants need to keep daily devotions and study the meaning of marriage. In the Intimacy area, couples are asked to do certain activities to increase closeness. In the Communication area, couples learn to practice active listening and other communication skills. In the Responsibility area, couples learn principles of child rearing and decision-making methods. In the Planning area, couples are required to do family financial or career planning. In order to assure that attendees work on their assignments, each spouse is asked to daily check the other's work and make a short report during the review time. Small gifts will be awarded as incentive to the most active couple.

The curriculum includes ten subjects: the nature of humans, the biblical definition of marriage, the commitment of love, the understanding the influence of our backgrounds,

the fulfillment of spouse's needs, our roles and responsibilities, communication, interaction and interference, conflict resolution and planning for the future. Each week one topic is studied. Every lesson includes a reflection of the traditional Chinese view about the subject. Awareness of cultural views is important, not only because the Chinese are living in a foreign country with a different culture, but also because concepts influence their relations with their children who have adopted the local culture. Other major topics such as sexuality, finance, in-laws, children, family crisis, old parents, and retirement, also will be blended into different lessons.

Measurement Method and Instruments

Due to the inability of achieving randomness in the selection of a limited number of participants, the project adopted a quasi-experimental approach to determine the success or failure of the test. The design first established two selected groups; the subject group (SG) and the control group (CG), and each consisting of twenty couples. Members of the groups had diverse backgrounds and were randomly assigned to the two groups. Both groups took the same tests before and after the treatment. The tests were the Spanier Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and a more in-depth Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey (MRES). Only the subject group received the ten-week marriage enrichment seminar and weekly assignments. A follow-up MRES test was conducted on both groups two months after the treatment to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of the treatment. The control group received the same treatment as the subject group after the completion of this project in order to keep their responses accurate and fair. The results of treatment from the control group are not considered in the study.

There are two types of measuring instruments; self-report and observational analysis. Self-report lets attendees answer questionnaires in order to reflect their cognitive learning and possible behavior change after the treatment. Observational analysis observes the attendees' performance while they are practicing their skills and learning. Both types of measurement are necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of a marriage enrichment program. However, because of the inaccessibility and time-consuming nature of the second type of measurement, only the self-report type of instrument was used here.

The instruments used were the Dyadic Adjustment Scale developed by Spanier and Cole (Spanier 27), and the Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey that I designed. The DAS was used because it is a well-established measurement and widely used by many researchers to measure husband-wife relationships. It offers much available data for comparison. According to Michel Dandeneau, it is still the most effective self-report questionnaire with very high reliability (21). However, it is primarily a simplified scale designed for mass survey, useful for comparison studies for populations, and does not yield enough information to make a correct assessment of a small intensive marriage enrichment program. Therefore a complementary survey is necessary.

The Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey was designed specifically to meet the need of this project. It consists of questions in five areas; Lordship, Intimacy, Communication, Responsibility and Planning. These questions correspond with the ten lessons of the curriculum designed to evaluate present marriage conditions. A panel of four individuals with experience in marriage counseling had validated the questionnaire. A further internal validation of the MRES is discussed in the next chapter. This more

detailed survey can also help the couples achieve a higher degree of awareness of the strength and the weakness of their relationships.

Two dependent variables were used to determine the success of this study; the marriage commitment awareness and the curriculum effectiveness. The DAS calibrates the marriage commitment awareness while the MRES measures the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Data Collection

One week before the first session, a pre-test survey form was distributed to all members of the two test groups. The tests include the DAS and the MRES. An instruction sheet attached to the survey form gave detailed directions to complete the survey. The results of the tests were collected at the first session. The control group used the enclosed stamped envelopes to send data back.

The post-test, using the same material as the pre-test, was distributed to the subject group and completed in the last session. The same post-test was given to the control group and data were collected in one week through the mail. In the delayed follow-up test, both the DAS and the MRES were given to the subject group two months after the conclusion of the treatment. All data collected are tabulated and analyzed in the next chapter and in the Appendix.

Data Analysis Methodology

After the collection of data, the mean and the standard deviations for each of the scale were determined through calculation. A coefficient of correlation was developed for each of the relationships by the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Then the relationship of the independent variable (SG) to the dependent variables (marriage

commitment awareness and curriculum effectiveness) can be subject to analysis. Different test scores for each area were compared according to the requirements of the various research questions.

For research question 1, the general marriage condition of Chinese immigrants is reflected in their total pre-test scores of the DAS and the MRES.

For research question 2, the pre-test post-test relationship before the subject and control groups can be tested by paired t analysis. A significant result is declared at a p value of <0.05 .

For research question 3, the coefficients of correlation between the subject group's post-test and the delayed post-test results can decide the effectiveness of the subject group's application of the principles learned from the curriculum to improve their marriages.

I evaluate the progress of couples with different backgrounds to see whether there is variance in progression of learning between immigrants from Communist China and from other South Asian countries. There is not be enough data to make this comparison, so analysis is merely qualitative, to provide some preliminary data that could be used in future studies.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to provide a marriage enrichment program specifically designed for Chinese American churches and to evaluate how effective this program is in a local church setting.

The methods employed in this study flow in two directions. First, a historical literature review yields a core of information used to design the contents of the marriage

enrichment curriculum. Second, an experimental approach implements the curriculum and provides data which are used to appraise the subject group's awareness of commitment to their marriages, and the application of principles learned from the seminars. The second approach shall yield answers to the research questions.

CHAPTER 4

Findings of the Study

In all human relationships marriage is certainly the foremost concern among Christians. The overwhelming response and results of the marriage enrichment program presented in this study in a Chinese church demonstrate the need for teaching and counseling married Christians among Chinese immigrants.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed marriage enrichment curriculum for Chinese immigrants. The best tangible measure of the affective, behavioral, and cognitive changes in the participants in the execution of the curriculum is to compare the pre-test, post-test, and delayed follow-up test data with the self-report survey forms. All voluntary participants are from the Cincinnati Chinese Church. The execution of the curriculum lasted ten weeks.

Three research questions directed the study: What is the condition of the subject group's marriages prior to the marriage enrichment seminar? In what way does participation in the enrichment curriculum as measured immediately after the ten-week seminar contribute to the awareness of the subject group's commitment to their marriages? What is the effectiveness of the marriage enrichment treatment in the changes in the subject group's marriages two months after conclusion of the seminars?

Profile of Subjects

The ten-week marriage enrichment seminar held at Cincinnati Chinese Church was productive. It yielded an abundance of data. In the beginning forty couples signed up for the project. They were carefully compared according to their native background, place of youth, years of marriage, and years of conversion to pair up and then be randomly divided

into two groups, the subject group and the control group. Each group had eight couples from Taiwan, six couples from China, three couples from other places, and three mixed inter-ethnic couples; the general distribution of the couples resembled the demographic profile of the church. In one couple the wife is American-born Chinese and the husband is from Taiwan. Among them were thirteen couples married more than ten years, and fourteen couples converted as Christians for more than five years. Their range of ages were from twenty-six to fifty-seven years. They immigrated to this country at least three years ago. Some have been in this country more than forty years. All of them have a college and above level of education.

As the treatment proceeded, four couples in the subject group dropped from the seminars; they either felt intimidated or failed to attend more than seven classes as required. Because of their absence, corresponding couples in the control group also had to be dropped in order to achieve balance. The total usable data came from sixteen couples from the subject group and sixteen from the control group.

Due to the size of the subject group, in order to execute the curriculum effectively, couples in the subject group were divided into two groups. One group met on Friday night while the other group met on Sunday morning. The Friday night group had eleven couples and the Sunday morning group had nine couples. Each session lasted about seventy-five minutes. I taught both groups in the same manner. The pre-test was given one week before the seminar and collected at the first session. The post-test was given at the last session of the seminar and collected at the end of the class. The delayed follow-up test was given two months after the seminars and collected by mail.

Reliability of the Tests

The survey form used for this study consists of two parts. The first part is the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) introduced by Graham Spanier in 1976. The second part is the Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey (MRES) developed by me. According to Spanier, the DAS has a Cronbach's Coefficient of Reliability Alpha 0.96 (Spanier 23). This high reliability indicates the questionnaire is rather homogeneous and consistent.

There are two ways to determine the reliability of the MRES scale. Since the DAS already has been proved to be a reliable scale, I can compare the MRES with the DAS and find out their degree of correlation. The other way is to calculate its internal consistency reliability coefficient, based on Cronbach's formula.

The pre-test Pearson Correlation Coefficient between the DAS and the MRES is 0.667 which indicates a positive relationship between the two tests. The post-test correlation coefficient between two scales is 0.813. The increase of the coefficient in the post-test suggests the users gained a better understanding of the nature of the test after the treatment. Further discussion appears in the next chapter.

The internal consistency reliability coefficient of the MRES is calculated in five different sub-scales: Lordship, Intimacy, Communication, Responsibility, and Planning. These sub-scales correspond to the five teaching emphases in the curriculum. Each scale has ten questions and each question has six responses from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The Cronbach's Alpha test calculates each question's response relating it to its total sub-scale responses to determine its internal consistency. The composite Alpha calculates each sub-scale response to the total responses. The detailed result is listed in the table in the appendix. The Coefficients of Reliability Alpha range from 0.36 to 0.71 as

shown in table 4.1. The composite coefficient for both subject group and control group is 0.64, or about the general acceptable level 0.7 of such reliability studies (Streiner & Norman 65). Therefore, the MRES can be considered as reliable.

Table 4.1
Reliability of the MRES

Sub-scales	Subject Group Reliability α	Control Group Reliability α	Both Groups Reliability α
Lordship	0.51	0.50	0.49
Intimacy	0.71	0.65	0.67
Communication	0.52	0.60	0.55
Responsibility	0.69	0.36	0.57
Planning	0.55	0.50	0.50
Composite	0.63	0.66	0.64

Both the Pearson correlation between DAS and MRES and the Cronback internal reliability check of the MRES indicate that the MRES is a dependable tool to measure the execution of the curriculum in this project.

Conditions before Marriage Enrichment Treatment

The participants' years of marriage varies from three years to twenty-seven years. The average years of marriage of the subject group is 13.7 years and the control group is 10.4 years. These yield an average of twelve years for both groups. This puts the average age of the participants to be about forty years old, close to the average age of the adult congregation of the Cincinnati Chinese Church.

Most of the participants were not from Christian families. Their years of conversion varied from one to thirty-eight. The average years of conversion was 11.3 years. This means the majority of them were married before they became Christians. However, since their average years of immigration to the United States was 14.3 years, most of them became Christians after they moved to this country. The Christian population in these countries of origins are less than 3 percent and many of them either had no chance to hear the gospel or had never been approached by Christians at all. The results of the pre-test are summarized in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2
Background Information and Average Scores of the Tests

Scales	Subject Group	Control Group	Both Groups
Years of Marriage	13.7 yrs.	10.4 yrs.	12.0 yrs.
Years of Conversion	11.4 yrs.	11.3 yrs.	11.3 yrs.
Years of Immigration	14.3 yrs.	14.4 yrs.	14.3 yrs.
DAS Pre-test Scores	110.6	110.7	110.6
MRES Pre-test Scores	174.8	176.9	175.8

The relationships between pre-test marriage quality and the period of marriage, or the period of conversion for each group and combined group data were studied by calculating the Pearson Correlation Coefficients among them as shown on the Table 4.3. The coefficient between DAS scores and years of marriage for the combined group data is -0.03 and the coefficient between DAS scores and years of conversion is -0.15. The coefficient between MRES scores and years of marriage for the combined group data is 0.21; the coefficient between MRES scores and years of conversion is 0.11. Thus there is

virtually no relation between marriage period or conversion period and quality of marriage in these tested couples.

Table 4.3
Pearson Correlation Coefficients of the Marriage Background

Marriage Background vs. Test Results	Subject Group Significance p	Control Group Significance p	Both Groups Significance p
Years of Marriage/ DAS Pre-test	0.09	-0.2	-0.03
Years of Conversion/ DAS Pre-test	-0.19	-0.12	-0.15
Years of Marriage/ MRES Pre-test	0.19	0.28	0.21
Years of Conversion/ MRES Pre-test	0.14	0.08	0.11

According to a report by Graham Spanier, the average DAS scale of 218 married persons tested in his study was 114.8 with a standard deviation of 17.8 (Spanier 23). This is slightly higher than the score of 110.6 with a standard deviation of 14.25 in the present study.

The highest possible scale for the DAS is 151 and for the MRES is 250. The percentage of the average DAS (as percentage of highest scale) in the pre-test for both subject and control groups is 0.732. The percentage of the average MRES score in the same test for both groups is 0.704. Thus these two tests maintain a close correlation.

The average DAS for the twelve couples from mainland China is 111.4 and for the twenty couples from the regions outside the mainland is 110.2. The average MRES score for the couples from the mainland is 173.5 and for the couples from other regions is 177.2.

These findings indicate little difference in their marriage quality between couples from mainland China and from other regions.

In the pre-test of the five sub-scales of MRES, Communication has the lowest score of 32.34. Responsibility has the highest score of 37.7. Thus Chinese couples appear to feel more responsible for their families but are less communicative. Further discussion appears in Chapter 5.

Participation in Marriage Enrichment Seminar

Twenty couples attended the ten-week seminar. One couple dropped the class immediately after the first session because of intimidation by the curriculum material. The nature of the curriculum requests a certain degree of openness, especially in group discussion. Later on I visited the couple. They said they were not ready for this kind of marriage enrichment program. Another couple dropped out after the first session because the requirement of homework was too heavy for them. They had a child with a chronic disease. Two couples because of absences did not finish the minimum requirement of seven sessions; thus their test scores were not considered. Therefore, only sixteen couples completed the ten-week seminar.

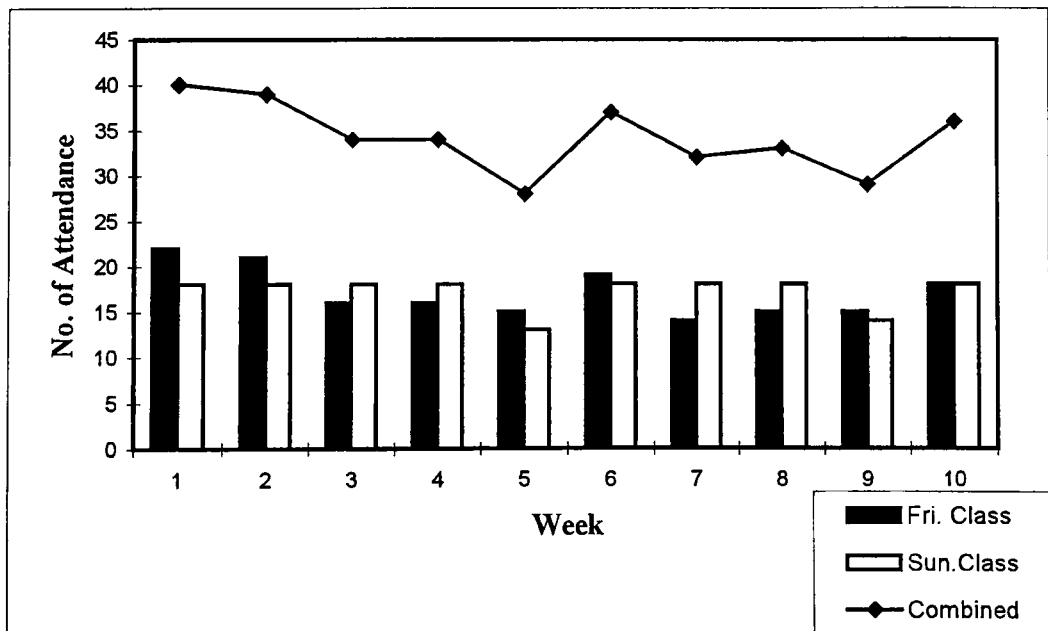
In general, the participation of the subject group was good. Most couples were willing to share the difficulties and enjoyments of their married lives. The degree of involvement was high. The Sunday morning group's ages were younger, and thus their discussion was more open. However, the Friday night group felt no time pressure, unlike the Sunday morning group which had to rush in order to attend the worship service after the session.

The home assignment seemed a little heavier than anticipated. Most participants felt that they were too busy to do a thorough job. Some routine work such as daily devotion and praying together were hard to maintain when participants became busy. On average, there was about 80 percent completion of homework in the first five sessions, and 60 percent completion in the last five sessions.

The following is the attendance chart for the ten-week seminar. Some people could not attend class because of personal reasons, i.e., business trips or illness, but their home assignments were still required.

Table 4.4
Seminar Attendance Chart

Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Fri. Class	22	21	16	16	15	19	14	15	15	18
Sun. Class	18	18	18	18	13	18	18	18	14	18
Combined	40	39	34	34	28	37	32	33	29	36



Changes after Marriage Enrichment Treatment

The post-test used the same questionnaires as the pre-test, both DAS and MRES; only the Personal Data portion in the MRES was eliminated. The post-test was given to the subject group right after the ten-week seminar. Participants were required to finish the test during the class. The same post-test was delivered to the control group at about the same time and was collected by mail.

Substantial improvement appeared in both DAS and MRES scores among the subject group. The average DAS score is 118.3, which is about a 7 percent increase over the pre-test score of 110.6. The average MRES score was 195.2, or about a 11.5 percent increase over the pre-test score of 174.8. This change appears to be due to the execution of the marriage enrichment program.

In the control group the DAS was raised from 110.7 to 111.8, a 1 percent increase, and the MRES was raised about 2 percent from 176.9 to 181. The increase of the control group's scores could be due to awareness of the marriage issue addressed in the church environment. Further discussion of the finding is presented in Chapter 5. The scores of DAS and MRES are listed in the Table 4.5.

In general, the p value of 5 percent (0.05) for a two tails paired test is considered significant. In the present study the p value of the subject group between pre-test and post-test is less than 0.001 in both DAS and MRES, which signifies a very significant change. Therefore, the execution of the marriage enrichment curriculum should be considered successful immediately after the ten-week seminars. The p value for the control group is not significant ($p > 0.1$), therefore is not considered.

Table 4.5
Change Scores for DAS and MRES Pre-test, Post-test, and Delayed Test (N = 64)

Tests	Subject Group (n = 32)		Control Group (n = 32)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
DAS				
Pre-test	110.6	14.26	110.7	14.46
Post-test	118.3*	13.07	111.8**	13.01
Delayed Test	117.3†	9.70	112.9†	14.52
MRES				
Pre-test	174.9	21.64	176.9	21.37
Post-test	195.2*	22.56	181.0**	21.77
Delayed Test	195.4†	16.74	183.8†	28.04

*Between pre-test and post-test, $p < .01$

**Between pre-test and post-test, $p > .2$

†Between post-test and delayed test, $p > .3$

The breakdown details of the MRES sub-scales are listed in Table 4.6. In the sub-scales, Communication has the lowest score of 31.97, while Responsibility has the highest score of 37.5 in the pre-test. After the treatment, Communication still remains the lowest score of 36.78 and Responsibility remains the highest score of 41.5. Lordship has the greatest increase of 4.93 points, about 14.4 percent over the pre-test score of 34.16. Intimacy has the least increase of 2.97 points, about 8.4 percent over the pre-test score of

35.56. The significance level p of the sub-scales is less than 0.001, which is consistent with the composite results. The sub-scales of MRES are listed in Table 4.6.

Changes Two Months after Marriage Enrichment Treatment

The delayed test was conducted two months after the ten-week seminar. The questionnaires were the same as the post-test. Both the subject group and the control group were asked to take the DAS and the MRES tests sixty days after the seminars. All the tests were delivered by mail and collected within a week. The results indicate a drop from the post-test in the subject group as anticipated, but the average scores are still higher than the pre-test.

As shown in Table 4.5, the DAS score in the subject group dropped slightly from 118.3 post-test to 117.3 in the delayed test, less than 1 percent decrease ($p = .059$, not significant). The MRES score remained unchanged, from 195.2 to 195.4 ($p = 0.95$, not significant).

In the sub-scales of the MRES, Communication showed the most drop of 0.37 point, about 1 percent from 36.78. Planning also dropped 0.12 point, less than 1 percent from 39.28. To my surprise, Intimacy increased 0.63 point. Possibly participants began to feel closer to each other after a period of practicing the prescribed intimate activities. The other areas remained about the same.

The results of change in the sub-scale of the MRES between the post-test and the delayed test are shown in Table 4.6. All coefficients of change p are more than 0.1 which indicates no significant change in the delayed test when compared with post-test.

Table 4.6
Change Scores for MRES Sub-scales of the Subject Group in Pre-test, Post-test, and Delayed Test (N = 32)

Sub-scales	Lordship		Intimacy		Communication		Responsibility		Planning	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Pre-test	34.16	5.26	35.56	5.95	31.97	5.83	37.5	6.97	35.59	5.95
Post-test*	39.09	4.42	38.53	5.96	36.78	6.73	41.5	4.83	39.28	4.82
Delayed Test**	39.25	3.58	39.16	4.39	36.41	5.02	41.44	4.45	39.16	4.33

*Between pre-test and post-test, $p < .01$

**Between post-test and delayed test, $p > .5$

The final results of all three tests appear in Chart 4.1 through Chart 4.3. There is an increase of DAS and MRES scores between the pre-test and the delayed test in the subject group, while the control group remains unchanged in DAS and slightly increased in MRES.

Chart 4.1
The Mean Scores of the DAS in the Three Tests

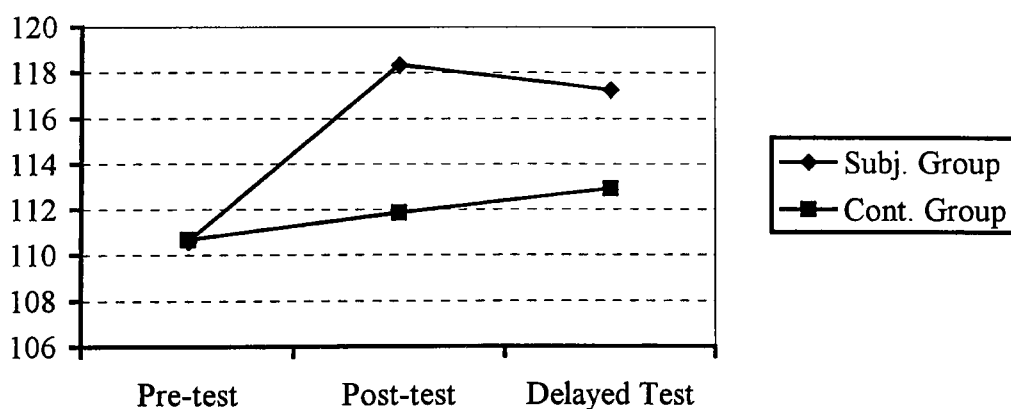
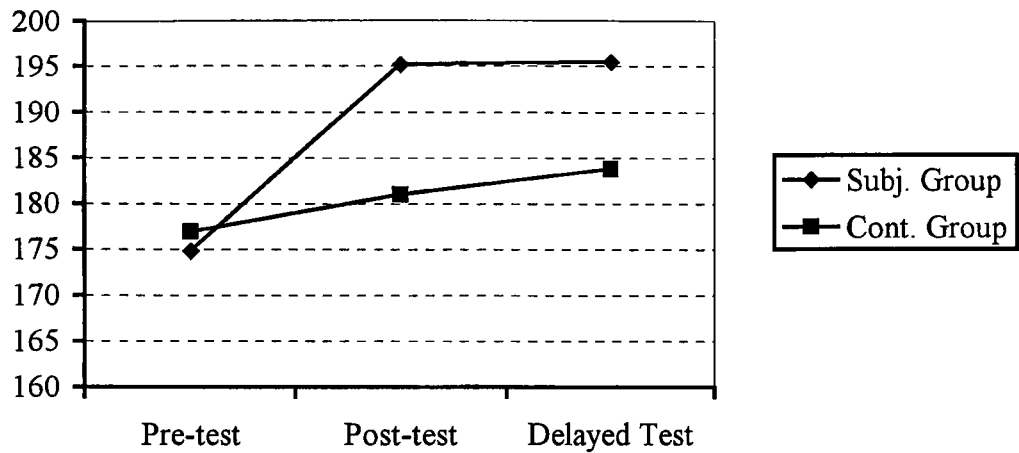
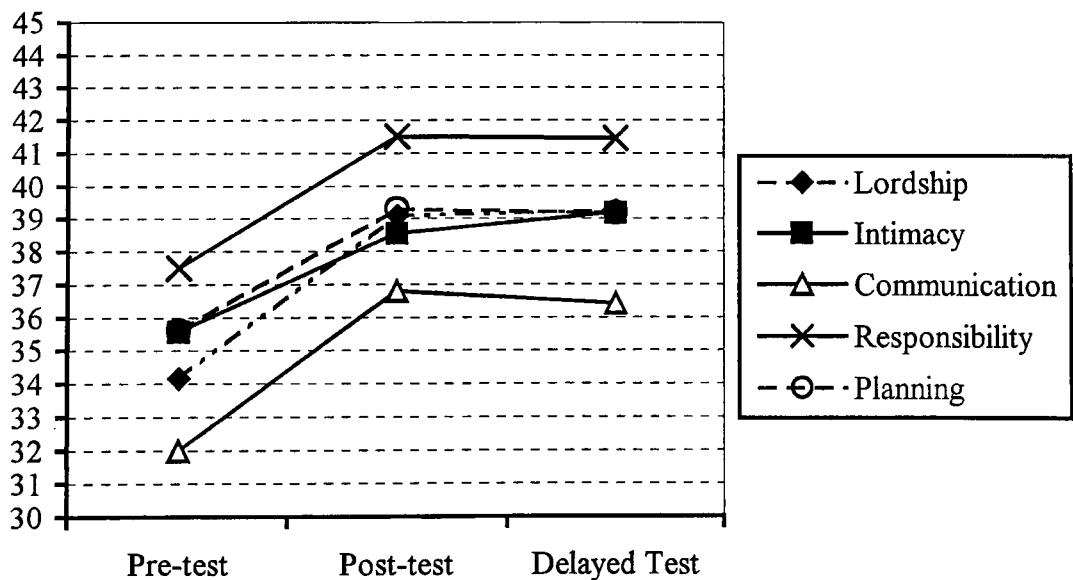


Chart 4.2
The Mean Scores of the MRES in the Three Tests



Each of the sub-scales from pre-test to post-test show an increase. The delayed test shows no change from the post-test. The significance of this is discussed in the next chapter.

Chart 4.3
The Sub-Scales of the SG MRES in the Three Tests



Summary of Significant Findings

1. Based on the correlation between the DAS survey form, the MRES form, and the internal consistency study of the MRES, the latter appears to be a reliable testing tool for this kind of research.
2. Marriage quality of the participating couples before treatment was similar to the average of American married couples tested in a previous DAS survey.
3. No direct link emerges between the years of marriage and the quality of marriage, or the years of Christian conversion and the quality of marriage.
4. Significant, positive change in marriage quality appears in the subject group as measured by the tests right after the ten-week seminar treatment.
5. The improvement of the subject group's marriage quality was maintained two months after the treatment.
6. The untreated control group demonstrated a small improvement in their quality of marriage during a similar period.
7. The execution of the curriculum was successful.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was motivated by compassion toward Chinese immigrants to the United States and their unhappy marriages. A curriculum was designed to conduct a ten-week seminar seeking to enrich these couples' marriages. This research was to evaluate how effective the curriculum is when used in a Chinese church in North America. A group of forty couples volunteered from the Cincinnati Chinese Church and participated in this study. The design of the curriculum is based on the teaching of biblical truth and principles. Although it is prepared for Christians to enrich their marriages, the same principles can be used for non-believers as well. Behavioral change takes time, therefore the curriculum emphasizes home assignments to help participants modify their behavior on a daily basis. In conjunction with personal devotion, Bible study, and activities, participants came to the weekly seminar to be accountable to each other in their commitment to change.

The teaching of the ten-week seminar was divided into five areas: Lordship, Intimacy, Communication, Responsibility and Planning. Each area is designed to strengthen the husband-wife relationship by learning biblical truth and practicing certain activities such as keeping daily devotions, praying together, learning attentive listening skills, dating, etc. Each week in the seminar half of the time was used to review how the previous teaching was practiced in their families through group interaction, and the remaining half of the time was used to lecture on a new subject and to give specific instructions for the activities of the week to come.

The whole treatment of the marriage enrichment program was evaluated by a series of self-report tests: pre-test, post-test, and delayed test. Each test included two parts, the DAS and the MRES. The former evaluated the general condition of the relationship and the latter tested the improvement of five areas taught in the curriculum.

Careful analysis of the test results in this study concludes that the proposed curriculum is a useful means to enrich the marriages of Chinese immigrants. Significant changes were observed on the test results. Although some factors could not be controlled during the treatment, such as the quality of the instructors and the openness of the participants and their current specific situations, in general the result of the treatment was positive.

The key issue of this marriage enrichment program that was stressed over and over again in the treatment was, "I believe that my marriage is initiated by God and he will bless my family if I commit to it; thus involving God in the marriage is a very important concept in a Christian family." Throughout the teaching of this program the emphasis is the triangular relationship of God-husband-wife. Based on this foundation, a couple can use the family as a learning center to build up strong ties in order to fulfill God's will in a family.

Answers to the Research Questions

Three research questions guided this study. Each question was specifically dealt with in the treatment in order to achieve the ultimate result.

Research Question #1

What was the condition of the subject group's marriages prior to the marriage enrichment seminar?

Based on the pre-test results, although there are different backgrounds and cultural settings, on the whole marriage satisfaction among Chinese immigrants in the study was about the same as other Americans. The average DAS scale in this study is only 3.7 percent below the average scale previously tested by others (Spanier 23). The difference could also be the result of the conservative nature of Asians. I surmise, however, that the basic human relationship between husband and wife is universal whether in the East or the West. Immigrants may be subject to different kinds of pressures in their lives, but the needs and purposes of marriage remain the same.

Among the five sub-scales in the MRES tests, Communication has the lowest score while Responsibility yields the highest. These findings support my contention that in Chinese culture communication between husband and wife is expressed in a more reserved manner. Husbands seldom initiate intimate communication with their wives. Some husbands even consider that intimate communication can detract from their leadership role in the family. Traditional male-chauvinism still dominates in many Chinese male minds. Males may assume that their wives need someone to talk to, making communication necessary. Therefore, husbands and wives often play guessing games with each other. Communication breaks down when they encounter difficulties and intimate feelings evaporate.

However, husbands and wives consider responsibility as an essential part of married life. In the past it was solely the husband's duty to earn money for the family while the wife's responsibility was to look after the children. Husbands and wives had their own areas of responsibilities. To be a good spouse meant to fulfill one's responsibility well. Although in the last forty years more and more women joined the work force, to perform

each spouse's duties is still the most important aspect of a Chinese family. Many distressed couples do not separate because they feel obligated to stay together for their children's sake. Due to this unbalanced concept of over-emphasis on responsibility and ignoring communication in marriage, the relationship between husband and wife may become unstable. Once the couple's duties as parents are eliminated or they reach their age of retirement, they may separate. This may explain why so many older couples separate after they migrate to this country.

Most couples were somewhat satisfied with their present condition in the areas of Lordship, Intimacy, and Planning. Because of the voluntary nature of this program, most participants were committed Christians and active members of the church; therefore their relationship with God and with each other were reasonably normal. The sub-scale Lordship had the least standard deviation, indicating that their level of commitment to the Lord was similar.

The tests indicated no strong relationship between the length of marriage and the quality of marriage. Some couples married longer than twenty years were less satisfied with their partners than those married for only a few years. According to the test, ten couples married less than five years had an average pre-test DAS score of 109.5 while seven couples married more than twenty years only had 108.5. Thus, in the Chinese marriages in the study, I speculate that partners did not feel that it was necessary to improve their marriage relationship, or that having attempted to improve their relationship, their methods failed possibly because they were inappropriate to their situation. They may settle with their partners but lack intent to increase the quality of their marriages.

The tests yielded an unexpected result in that no relationship appeared between length of period after Christian conversion and quality of marriage. This coincides with the previous study by Alan Booth (Booth 669). The Christian faith may not necessarily help married couples enjoy a better relationship if they ignore the practice of their faith within their families. Their beliefs and their lives may have no direct connection, especially if they keep their faith as a strictly private matter. Another possibility is that these Christians did not grow in their spiritual life during the period after conversion and thus their faith would have little further impact on their marriage with time. In these thoughts they would not enjoy the full meaning of marriage that God intends them to experience. The essential goal of this marriage enrichment program was to educate the couples, to make them aware that they can restore a triangular relationship among husband, wife, and God so that the true meaning of marriage can be manifested in their family.

The previous notion that Chinese immigrants from different places living under the influences of varied backgrounds should have differing levels of marital satisfaction was challenged by this study. The assumption was that under the governing of Communism, married couples might feel more dissatisfied toward their marriages than those from non-Communist countries. However, this study shows no difference in DAS scales between couples from mainland China or from other regions. Another possible argument is that all the couples who participated in this test were younger and thus less influenced by the extreme-left Maoist regime of the past in China. The general observation of older couples from mainland China does yield an impression of unsatisfied marriage relationships. Unfortunately, they were not willing to take part in this enrichment program.

Research Questions #2

In what way did the execution of the enrichment curriculum contribute to the awareness of the subject group's commitment to their marriages as measured immediately after the ten-week seminar?

The initial reaction to this program was high. Forty couples from the Cincinnati Chinese Church signed up for the task. After careful grouping to make two couples with similar backgrounds a pair, twenty couples agreed to take the first batch of treatment of the ten-week seminar. The other twenty corresponding couples were treated as the control group. The latter received the same treatment after the completion of the first twenty couples, but their results are not considered in this study. This overwhelming initial response indicates the sincerity of the participants and further enhances the success of this program.

The substantial improvements in both DAS and MRES scores among the subject group before and after the treatment testify that implementation of the curriculum did indeed increase the awareness and commitment of the couples to their marriage relationships. The average DAS score increased 7 percent while the MRES score increased 11.5 percent, a significant change.

The post MRES sub-scales indicate that Lordship saw the greatest increase of 15 percent over the pre-test score. The curriculum required each couple to spend time individually and cooperatively with the Lord in their daily devotions, which contributed to their awareness of the authority of God in their marriages. Also, the messages of oneness between husband and wife apparently raised their attention about God's original purpose for the marriage and therefore encouraged them to practice intimate interaction between

themselves. This brought up the desire to be a testimony for God among others. Many of them had increased scale in question 3 of the MRES test, “My relationship with God was rich, exciting and rewarding in the last two months.” That created the perfect conclusion for their efforts in this program.

The Communication area was the other substantially increased scale, about 15 percent over the pre-test. The curriculum devoted two chapters to teaching communication and one chapter to dealing with conflict. The home assignment required couples to practice meaningful communication at least thirty minutes a week. Other tasks such as planning a family vacation or serving the church together all contributed to it. These expanded their opportunity and ability to communicate with each other. This is reflected on many couples’ score of the MRES question number 27, “Our communication has improved in the last two months.”

The area of least improvement is Intimacy, which saw an increase of 8.4 percent over the pre-test. Presumably intimacy is the hardest habit to change among Chinese couples. Feelings of respect for each other are difficult to change quickly. The curriculum dedicated two chapters to teaching how to fulfill each other’s needs and building up intimacy within marriage. The home assignment also required couples to practice the lessons. One task required husbands and the wives to say simple intimate phrases daily, such as “Thank you”; “Forgive me”; or “I love you.” Those words are very hard for Chinese males to say. However, they did feel the power of such simple expressions of appreciation once they determined to practice them. Room for further improvement remains. Most couples showed some progress in their MRES question 13, “I am willing

to adjust myself to allow my spouse to be different,” and number 20, “I always set aside time to talk about our feelings.”

In the area of Responsibility, the post-test increased 11 percent. This is the strongest score in the pre-test and may reflect the strong sense of responsibility among Chinese. In general, Chinese couples often share house responsibilities and spend much time tending the young. Chinese parents normally are disciplined, especially among intellectuals which is the predominant group in this study. The curriculum not only taught them how to develop rules and guidelines for family decision making, but also encouraged them to create an open communication environment for their children. A reasonable increment in the score of MRES item number 35, “We have developed rules and guidelines for our relationship,” indicates that they learned a better way to share their responsibilities.

The area of Planning was designed to help couple set up their goals for managing money, rearing children, entertaining, spiritual development, and other issues in their married life. The curriculum emphasized the stewardship principles of the Bible, that Christians are responsible for what God has entrusted to us. An interesting finding from the pre-test is that many couples did not tithe regularly, even deacons of the church. This problem was apparently corrected by the treatment. The overall reaction to the teaching of this area is reflected in their improved score of the MRES question number 49, “My commitment to marriage has grown stronger than ever.”

In general, the execution of the marriage enrichment program to the subject group created positive results in their marriages. Both the DAS and the MRES post-test scores demonstrated success of the treatment.

During this period the control group demonstrated improvement in their DAS post-test. I interpret this improvement to an awareness of the entire environment of the church being geared up to the attention to marriage issues. A group of people under special treatment by the pastor should cause other members to examine their needs, too.

Research Questions #3

What was the effectiveness of the marriage enrichment treatment to the changes of the subject group's marriages two months after the conclusion of the seminar?

The DAS score was maintained two months after the conclusion of the marriage enrichment seminars. A decreased mean score two months later is understandable because of the reduced accountability and no specific homework to be done. Couples during this period did not need to report to the class what they were doing to improve the quality of their marriages. There was an average of less than 1 percent, a non-significant drop in the score, which reassures my interpretation that the participants' satisfaction and commitment to their marriages did increase due to the execution of the curriculum.

In the control group a continuous increase appeared in DAS scores from pre-test to post-test to delayed test. I interpret the high delayed test score as related to some of the control group members preparing themselves to participate in the seminars. A second batch of marriage enrichment seminars was held in the church right after the delayed test for the control group.

The MRES scores reveal the same kind of pattern as the DAS. The continued high scores indicate that behavioral change does happen after ten-weeks of intensive training and there is residual effect two months after the training.

The sub-scales of each area of the MRES delayed test remain similar to post-test results. Responsibility has the highest score while Communication has the lowest. Again, this pattern demonstrates that Chinese are generally more concerned with their duties and roles in the family than communication among members.

In the area of Lordship, the delayed test shows the highest improvement of 15 percent over the pre-test. This score may be the result of stress on personal devotion as an important part of the requirements in the seminar. After ten weeks of practice, keeping up daily devotions could be the easiest habit to retain. A good relationship with God is certainly the foundation of all other relationships.

In the area of Communication, the delayed test shows the lowest score of 36.41, which is consistent with the pattern in the pre-test and post-test. To modify the habit of poor communication takes time and commitment. Many of the skills taught in the curriculum need continued practice before they produce measurable results. However, it was the second highest improvement among the five areas.

In the area of Intimacy, the delayed test shows improvement even two months after the seminars. This may be partially due to the repetitive emphasis on the issue of marriage in the church environment in addition to the positive result of the teaching in the seminar.

During the course of the study, certain events happened to some members of the subject group that drastically impacted their scores. One husband's mother passed away in China suddenly. He had to rush back to set up the funeral and care for other matters. His DAS score dropped 8 percent and his MRES dropped 12 percent in the delayed test. Two couples attended a Christian conference just before the delayed test and their scores increased about 18 percent. Several couples went on family vacations which may also

have impacted their final scores. These episodes reminds us how vulnerable we are in reacting to the stresses of our lives.

Practical Application

The positive results of this study prove that marriage enrichment can be done in a Chinese church over a period of ten weeks. Small churches with limited resources do not have to wait to take part in a large weekend enrichment program at a far-away place. Currently most of these types of seminars are held only in the Chinese concentrated regions on the East or West coasts and are not available for less populated areas. By using this program, ministers or lay leaders can initiate seminars just by using this curriculum to strengthen the marriages of their church members. Since the program relies on the participants themselves, instructors can serve as mediators to help students be accountable to each other; therefore, even small churches without full-time ministers can still use it.

Weakness of the Study

First, any self-report type of survey is subjective and depends on the feelings of the testers at that moment. Although the questionnaires were designed to avoid momentary sentiment towards certain issues, this kind of inaccuracy cannot be totally eliminated. One couple expressed to me that their post-test may not be useful because they had a fight right before they had to complete the test. Another couple showed a very low post-test score for they had been through a family crisis; i.e. the husband lost his job. There is no guarantee that the survey accurately reflects the couples' normal condition.

Second, the testing pool is small. The curriculum was designed to use in a small group setting. It is impossible to conduct many small groups simultaneously. Therefore

the test has a large margin of error. For example, a wife's DAS score was fifty points below her husband but her MRES score was only seven points lower than his, revealing a probable error. If the testing pool were bigger this error margin would be reduced.

Third, some questions were not clear enough and caused confusion. Six questions out of fifty in the MRES test had a standard deviation of more than 1.5. This finding means that in the score of zero through five, many people are three points different in answering these questions. Possibly the test was not well designed in the first place and led to misinterpretations.

Fourth, in this study the pastor of the church gave the seminars. Many participants are long-time friends of the pastor. They recognized the importance of this project to their pastor. Therefore, they may have tilted the scores to please their leader. This is particularly true since their pastor took a long time to work on development of this project and spent three months of heavy involvement in the seminars. Furthermore, because of their close tie with the pastor they may not want him to know what is the real condition of their marriages.

Fifth, the curriculum was designed to give enough time for each student to take part in group activities. Due to the tardy habits of some students, the seminar never started on time. Therefore, some activities were not carried through properly. The weekly review of the home assignment by the participants was not thorough either. This may reduce the accountability of this program, since the homework was meant to be cooperative between husband and wife. For the future usage of this curriculum, twenty hours per course is more realistic, the curriculum can be divided into twenty weeks with one hour for each seminar instead of the ten-week program.

Further Studies

This study limits itself to a marriage enrichment curriculum designed specifically for Chinese immigrants. The intention was to find out how effective the program is when used in a Chinese church with limited resources and members. The results of this study may not be useful in churches with a large number of Asians or other immigrants. Further study and improvement can be done in a greater metropolitan area such as in New York or Los Angeles where there are many Chinese immigrants.

It was also beyond my intention to use this program as marriage counseling material. However, further study can be made to evaluate how effective this program is if used among non-believers or less motivated Christians. The dilemma is in general that they may not voluntarily become involved in this kind of program unless their marriage is in crisis. If they ask for help, a custom made program may be needed in each individual case. I believe that this program can be modified to be used as Sunday school or Bible study material. I hope to learn how effective this curriculum would be when used as part of the evangelistic material in a seeker's class.

A separate provision for training instructors should be established. This curriculum is intended to be taught by trained lay leaders. Those leaders must attend the ten-week seminar first. Possibly a short weekend session could be set up to help leaders gain more knowledge and confidence. In the future some self-study guides or course instructions can be developed to assist them to lecture or to lead group discussions and activities.

Conclusion

A marriage enrichment program is a potential ministerial tool for churches to enhance their family ministry. The need for better programs that suit different congregations is increasing. Every year thousands of Chinese immigrants settle in this country and this need is particularly urgent. This study offers a ready-to-use program with proof of effectiveness that can help Chinese immigrants improve their family lives through interaction with each other in a small group setting, and through their relationship with God. I hope it will become more available in a better format for others to use.

APPENDIX A: Tests

Letters of Transmittal

Dyadic Adjustment Scale

Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey

Letters to the Attendees

Dear

Aug. 23, 1998

As you know, I am taking courses in the Asbury Theological Seminary. I plan to finish my study by the summer of the next year. Now, I need you help to be part of my study.

I am working on a ten-week marriage enrichment program for Chinese church. This program will help couples to improve their relationship and build up a stronger marriage. I have developed a curriculum and I need to test how effective it is. I will use it to teach ten seminars. Each seminar involves lecture, group interaction, devotion, and sharing. There will be homework assigned each week. Whoever agrees to participate in the program has to commit to attend at least eight sessions. I hope to see thirty couples committed.

We will have two terms for you to choose. The first term will begin on September 4, 1998 and the second term will begin on January 17, 1999. In the first term, there will be two classes, one meet on Friday night from 8:00 till 9:15 and the other will meet on Sunday morning 9:30 till 10:45. In the second term, we will meet on Sunday morning only

I invite you to join the program. If you are willing to accept this challenge, please give me a call at office, and obtain a copy of the pre-course test.

May God bless you and your family.

Pastor Wu

Dear

Nov. 13, 1998

I need your help. Here is another test for you. Since you commit to be part of my research, I have to bother you once again.

I know you may ask: “Why do I need do this? I haven’t done anything yet!” This test will help me to understand how are you doing when the other group of brothers and sisters are about to wind up their study of the marriage enrichment curriculums.

Please fill out the attached survey forms and return to me as soon as possible. All data are confidential and will return to you when the research concluded. If you have any question, please feel free to call me at office.

May God bless you and your family.

Pastor Wu

Dear

Jan. 7, 1999

Thank you very much for your help that enable me to complete my research in the marriage enrichment program. In order to evaluate how effective the program is, I must ask you to help me once more. Please fill out this survey form and return to me before January 11, 1999. This is the follow-up test that will predict the long-term effect of the program.

All data are confidential, I will return it to you as soon as the research concluded.

May God bless you and your family

Pastor Wu

APPENDIX A
DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Name: _____

Date: _____

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occa- sionally Disagree	Fre- quently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
1. Handling family finances	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. Matters of recreation	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. Religious matters	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Demonstration of affection	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. Friend	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. Sex relations	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. Philosophy of life	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. Ways of dealing with parent or in-laws	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. Amount of time spent together	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. Making major decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. Household tasks	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. Leisure time interests and activities	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. Career decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occa- sionally	Rarely	Never
16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	5	4	3	2	1	0
19. Do you confide in your mate ?	5	4	3	2	1	0
20. Do you ever regret that you married ? (or lived together)	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. How often do you and your partner quarrel ?	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. How often do you and your mate “get on each other’s nerves ?”	0	1	2	3	4	5

	Every Day	Almost Every day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
23. Do you kiss your mate ?	4	3	2	1	0
	All of them	Most of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them
24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together ?	4	3	2	1	0

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?

	Never	less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More often
25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. Laugh together	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Calmly discuss something	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. Work together on a project	0	1	2	3	4	5

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometime disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no)

	Yes	No
29. Being too tired for sex.	0	1
30. Not showing Love.	0	1

31. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

- 5 I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.
4 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does.
3 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
2 It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.
1 It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
0 My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey (Pretest) CONFIDENTIAL

I. Personal Data:

1. Name: _____ Spouse's Name: _____
2. Telephone: () _____
3. Address: _____ Zip Code: _____
4. Sex: () Male () Female
5. Birthday: ____/____/____
6. Birth place: _____, Place you grew-up before adulthood: _____
7. Marriage status: () Divorced before; () Never divorced; () Widowed
8. How long being married: _____ years; Date of wedding _____
9. How long did you date before marriage? _____ years
10. How many children do you have and their ages: _____
11. Education: () Middle Schl. () High Schl. () College () Graduated Schl.
12. Occupation: _____
13. Faith: () Christian; Year/Baptism: _____; () No religion; () Others _____
14. What church activities do you attend regularly: () Worship () Friday Bible Study
() Local small group () Sunday School () Prayer Mtg. () Others
15. Status: () US citizen () US PR () Others
16. How many years since moved to US: _____ years
17. Did you have any formal premarital counseling? _____
18. During your marriage have you lived with your parents or in-laws? If so, how long a time? _____
19. Have you experienced a major crisis in the last two years? _____

Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement for each item. It is not reflecting your idea but a measure of how much you have been practicing:

5 - Strongly agree; 4 Moderately agree; 3 Mildly agree;
2 - Mildly disagree; 1 - Moderately disagree; 0 - Strongly disagree

II. Lordship

	Strongly agree					Strongly disagree
1. I try hard not to commit sins because I love my Lord and want to obey Him.	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. I have devotion (read the Bible and/or pray) daily.	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. My relationship with God is rich, exciting and rewarding in the last two month.	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. My marriage is not a good witness for the Lord and cannot bring honor to God.	5	4	3	2	1	0*
5. I am aware that the secular world view has some negative influence on my marriage.	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. No matter under what conditions, divorce is not an option.	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. I and my spouse are practicing "oneness" (to be united in mind and in heart) in our marriage.	5	4	3	2	1	0

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 8. I have a strong conviction that marriage is a permanent covenant between God and a couple. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 9. I do not think that my family background has much influence on my marriage. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 * |
| 10. We have a family altar (whole family's devotion) regularly. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

III. Intimacy

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 11. I feel my spouse respects me very much. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 12. I do not understand my spouse's need most of time. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 * |
| 13. I am willing to adjust myself to allow my spouse to be different. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 14. I feel very close to my spouse most of time. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 15. I enjoy sexual life with my spouse. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 16. My needs from my spouse are fulfilled most of time. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 17. I believe the man is the head of family, and woman should submit to her husband. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 18. We do things for one another regularly. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 19. In our marriage, the husband takes the wife out (without children) about once a week. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 20. We seldom set aside time to talk about our feeling. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 * |

IV. Communication

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 21. I am a good listener and open to other's opinion most of time. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 22. I can accept my spouse without agreeing with his/her opinion. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 23. I avoid talking about my deep feelings to my spouse. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 * |
| 24. I try to avoid the negative influences from my parents in our communication. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 25. I do not have any argument or fight with my spouse. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 26. When I am angry with my spouse, I try to find a proper time and place to discuss the issue. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 27. Our communication has improved in the last two month. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 28. I am not satisfied with the way we resolve our conflicts. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 * |
| 29. I can always keep my temper under control. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 30. Racial discrimination is not an issue in my life. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

V. Responsibility

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 31. We do not have clear roles and responsibilities in our marriage. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 * |
| 32. Each of us makes decisions in the areas where he/she is most gifted. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 33. In our marriage, we share household work equally. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 34. In our marriage, the wife can have her career as long as it does not interfere with child rearing. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 35. We have developed rules and guidelines for our relationship. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 36. I respect my in-laws and keep very good relationship with them. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 37. In our marriage, the husband takes the lead in spiritual matters. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 38. We believe children develop better with strict discipline. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 39. We do not allow children to express their feelings freely. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 * |
| 40. We share the responsibility of disciplining the children. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

VI. Planning

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| 41. I and my spouse plan the budget and manage money together. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 42. We have clear goals of what things we need to buy. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 43. We have special funds or reserves for children and retirement. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 44. We always give our tithe (1/10 of income as offering to church). | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 45. A high-paying job with long hours is more important than having time together with my spouse. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 * |
| 46. We have clear goals for our marriage and we discuss them frequently. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 47. So far we have achieved our marriage goals as we expected. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 48. We follow God' commands in marriage life. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 49. My commitment to marriage has grown stronger than ever. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 50. I do not believe marital counseling would be helpful to me. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 * |

Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey (Post-test & Delayed Test) CONFIDENTIAL

Name: _____

Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement for each item. It is not reflecting your idea but a measure of how much you have been practicing:

5 - Strongly agree SA; 4 Moderately agree MoA; 3 - Mildly agree MiA;
2 - Mildly disagree MiD; 1 Moderately disagree MoD; 0 - Strongly disagree SD

I. Lordship	Strongly agree			Strongly disagree		
	SA	MoA	MiA	MiD	MoD	SD
1. I try hard not to commit sins because I love my Lord and want to obey Him.	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. I have devotion (read the Bible and pray) daily.	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. My relationship with God is rich, exciting and rewarding in the last two month.	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. My marriage is a good witness for the Lord and does bring honor to God.	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. I am aware that the secular world view has some negative influence on my marriage.	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. No matter under what conditions, divorce is not an option.	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. I and my spouse are practicing "oneness" (to be united in mind and in heart) in our marriage.	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. I have a strong conviction that marriage is a permanent covenant between God and a couple.	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. I think that my family background has much influence on my marriage.	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. We have a family altar (whole family's devotion) regularly.	5	4	3	2	1	0
III. Intimacy						
11. I feel my spouse respects me very much.	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. I understand my spouse's need most of time.	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. I am willing to adjust myself to allow my spouse to be different.	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. I feel very close to my spouse most of time.	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. I enjoy sexual life with my spouse.	5	4	3	2	1	0
16. My needs from my spouse are fulfilled most of time.	5	4	3	2	1	0
17. I believe the man is the head of family, and woman should submit to her husband.	5	4	3	2	1	0
18. We do things for one another regularly.	5	4	3	2	1	0
19. In our marriage, the husband takes the wife out (without children) about once a week.	5	4	3	2	1	0
20. We always set aside time to talk about our feeling.	5	4	3	2	1	0

	SA	MoA	MiA	MiD	MoD	SD
IV. Communication						
21. I am a good listener and open to other's opinion most of time.	5	4	3	2	1	0
22. I can accept my spouse without agreeing with his/her opinion.	5	4	3	2	1	0
23. I always talk about my deep feelings to my spouse.	5	4	3	2	1	0
24. I try to avoid the negative influences from my parents in our communication.	5	4	3	2	1	0
25. I do not have any argument or fight with my spouse.	5	4	3	2	1	0
26. When I am angry with my spouse, I try to find a proper time and place to discuss the issue.	5	4	3	2	1	0
27. Our communication has improved in the last two month.	5	4	3	2	1	0
28. I am satisfied with the way we resolve our conflicts.	5	4	3	2	1	0
29. I can always keep my temper under control.	5	4	3	2	1	0
30. Racial discrimination is not an issue in my life.	5	4	3	2	1	0
V. Responsibility						
31. We have clear roles and responsibilities in our marriage.	5	4	3	2	1	0
32. Each of us makes decisions in the areas where he/she is most gifted.	5	4	3	2	1	0
33. In our marriage, we share household work equally.	5	4	3	2	1	0
34. In our marriage, the wife can have her career as long as it does not interference with child rearing.	5	4	3	2	1	0
35. We have developed rules and guidelines for our relationship.	5	4	3	2	1	0
36. I respect my in-laws and keep very good relationship with them.	5	4	3	2	1	0
37. In our marriage, the husband takes the lead in spiritual matters.	5	4	3	2	1	0
38. We believe children develop better with strict discipline.	5	4	3	2	1	0
39. We allow children to express their feelings freely.	5	4	3	2	1	0
40. We share the responsibility of disciplining the children.	5	4	3	2	1	0
VI. Planning						
41. I and my spouse plan the budget and manage money together.	5	4	3	2	1	0
42. We have clear goals of what things we need to buy.	5	4	3	2	1	0
43. We have special funds or reserves for children and retirement.	5	4	3	2	1	0
44. We always give our tithe (1/10 of income as offering to church).	5	4	3	2	1	0
45. A high-paying job with long hours is less important than having time together with my spouse.	5	4	3	2	1	0
46. We have clear goals for our marriage and we discuss them frequently.	5	4	3	2	1	0
47. So far we have achieved our marriage goals as we expected.	5	4	3	2	1	0
48. We follow God' commands in marriage life.	5	4	3	2	1	0
49. My commitment to marriage has grown stronger than ever.	5	4	3	2	1	0
50. I believe marital counseling is helpful to me.	5	4	3	2	1	0

APPENDIX B: Data Analysis

DAS and MRES Statistic Report

MRES Internal Reliability Calculation

Cincinnati Chinese Church Marriage Survey Statistic Report												
No.	Name	Origin	Yr/M	Yr/Ch	Yr/lm	DAS	DAS	DAS	MRES			
I. Subject Group						PreT	PostT	DelayT	PreTest			
									Lord.	Intima.	Com.	Resp.
1	↑Σ←ξ	China	13	12	18	116	134	130	31	42	38	41
2	∑ ...ξ←	Hongkong	13	20	22	116	126	130	33	41	38	43
3	... φ...ψ	China	12	8	10	102	101	111	36	30	31	33
4	x...J←α≈	China	12	8	10	90	105	109	29	28	20	23
5	∑R≠/Σ	China	5	2	5	125	126	121	29	42	29	44
6	f∂♣J←	China	5	2	4	104	119	120	26	29	31	36
7	x ∂±∞∑	China	4	1	3	137	135	124	36	30	28	34
8	≠∅←J←	China	4	1	3	129	130	135	29	32	26	43
9	...B°{	China	3	8	10	81	114	107	27	37	27	26
10	...B▲v	China	3	9	11	99	102	106	36	27	38	46
11	≈↓≡τ	China	4	4	6	93	89	116	31	24	34	28
12	≠∅x∅↑↓	China	4	4	4	95	89	111	33	28	36	27
13	↓∅∞∅≠	Taiwan	5	3	5	97	123	98	36	35	23	30
14	∑σxφ	Taiwan	5	10	5	120	120	117	41	45	31	46
15	...B→αx	Taiwan	10	10	10	126	130	121	45	41	42	45
16	♣ΔN≡	Taiwan	10	10	10	123	134	122	40	45	41	44
17	♣J∞≈N	Hongkong	22	21	26	101	118	109	27	30	30	32
18	Nφ◆→+f	Taiwan	22	21	25	108	104	107	35	38	31	37
19	±≥∅fN	Taiwan	26	11	27	110	119	124	40	39	32	42
20	♣J↓N♠	Taiwan	26	11	27	100	122	128	28	29	24	29
21	→}∅≤↓	Taiwan	27	2	6	136	127	127	33	42	40	44
22	∅∅∅∅∅	Taiwan	27	2	6	126	145	137	33	39	41	44
23	♣≡◆∅σ	Taiwan	22	35	27	117	123	117	43	36	35	42
24	...B...ζ∞	Taiwan	22	17	24	95	128	107	44	32	30	33
25	∅∅∅∅∅	Hongkong	19	30	25	95	107	112	38	30	32	32
26	f...J←R◆	Hongkong	19	19	29	94	101	112	37	34	26	36
27	∅∅∅∅∅	Hongkong	23	23	26	113	120	126	35	38	28	40
28	♣J∅P→	Hongkong	23	23	23	119	121	113	36	39	26	40
29	—Γ♣∅f	Taiwan	15	15	16	113	112	110	34	37	33	45
30	...v∂♣±	Taiwan	15	15	16	122	122	102	37	39	26	47
31	x∑∞≈←	Taiwan	9	4	11	119	122	125	27	46	36	39
32	"")∅∞→	Taiwan	9	4	6	118	118	118	28	34	40	29
II. Cont. Group												
1	/}Σ±λ	Taiwan	16	15	18	110	112	110	41	42	41	39
2	≈↓◆∅≈	China	16	15	28	110	112	110	40	32	43	40
3	→}↔↓	China	12	8	11	123	134	133	43	44	47	43
4	↓ ←J	China	12	8	12	124	125	136	42	40	38	44
5	÷≥♣∅↑ξ	China	5	2	8	126	126	127	38	41	22	37
6	≥↓↑↓	China	5	10	5	117	120	123	40	41	31	37
7	÷∅∞≤♥	China	4	3	4	121	122	125	32	38	32	40
8	N≠±∅	China	4	3	4	119	117	114	33	38	30	40
9	≠∅←K∞	China	7	4	6	104	108	117	29	41	32	38
10	∑ x∞	China	7	4	6	126	115	115	38	36	26	37
11	÷↑xα—	China	13	3	6	108	110	113	29	30	27	35
12	↔:....}x	China	13	3	5	98	104	110	42	31	35	29
13	♠Λf∞	China	5	9	10	91	97	102	32	29	20	36
14	—Γ°◆→	Taiwan	5	18	9	114	108	103	31	40	24	45

15	$\rho \ominus \infty \parallel]$	Taiwan	9	10	14	113	114	115	37	41	29	44
16	$\div \uparrow \leftarrow \eta \equiv \uparrow$	Taiwan	9	10	11	125	127	128	34	29	35	33
17	$\diamond \downarrow \leftrightarrow \rightarrow f$	Taiwan	26	38	41	97	94	91	39	35	32	34
18	$\pm [\leftarrow \theta "$	Taiwan	26	30	28	101	102	98	43	34	34	39
19	$\times \infty \rightarrow \oplus$	Taiwan	14	12	17	122	124	128	40	37	40	33
20	$\geq \downarrow \downarrow \times \perp$	Taiwan	14	12	13	127	124	128	39	40	38	34
21	$\spadesuit \times \supset$	Taiwan	20	5	25	96	107	117	40	34	39	36
22	$\partial \times \Sigma \mid \spadesuit \oplus$	US	20	5	47	100	100	107	29	41	37	35
23	$\downarrow \mid \heartsuit \{$	Taiwan	8	25	29	110	114	118	30	32	31	35
24	$\geq \leftarrow \mid \infty \perp$	Taiwan	8	15	11	124	124	124	27	35	34	45
25	$\dots B \pm \oplus \Sigma$	Hongkong	10	18	10	123	123	121	47	32	33	40
26	$\clubsuit \downarrow \leftarrow$	Hongkong	10	18	10	108	108	101	29	28	27	38
27	$\otimes \leftarrow \spadesuit \Psi$	Taiwan	9	7	10	116	114	113	35	27	33	41
28	$\uparrow \square \dots \zeta \dots$	Taiwan	9	7	9	66	80	80	40	25	29	29
29	$\wedge \leftrightarrow \alpha \geq \cap$	Taiwan	4	7	9	125	121	119	36	39	42	45
30	$\uparrow f : "$	Taiwan	4	13	11	120	120	121	39	40	40	46
31	$\otimes \Psi \infty \subseteq$	Taiwan	4	20	28	88	85	79	25	29	25	37
32	$\pm \Gamma - \Sigma \pm$	China	4	3	5	89	88	88	24	25	21	29
	Average	Subj. G	13.69	11.41	14.25	110.59	118.31	117.25	34.156	35.563	31.969	37.5
		Cont.G	10.38	11.25	14.38	110.66	111.84	113.13	35.719	35.188	32.719	37.906
		Both Gs	12.03	11.33	14.31	110.63	115.08	115.09	34.938	35.375	32.344	37.703
	STDEV	Subj. G	8.33	8.893	9.102	14.262	13.069	9.6954	5.2616	5.9457	5.8336	6.97
		Cont.G	6.179	8.443	10.81	14.457	13.006	14.371	5.8982	5.5033	6.7213	4.7476
		Both Gs	7.464	8.602	9.914	14.246	13.338	12.353	5.6001	5.6862	6.2544	5.9192
	Pearson		D/G	E/G	F/G	G/H	G/I	G/O	J/P	K/Q	L/R	M/S
		Subj. G	0.091	-0.189	-0.26	0.6897	0.598	0.6673	0.5157	0.6083	0.4236	0.351
		Cont.G	-0.203	-0.117	-0.3	0.9422	0.8539	0.5488	0.9229	0.7463	0.8447	0.9003
		Both Gs	-0.034	-0.154	-0.28	0.7912	0.7269	0.6073	0.7026	0.6452	0.6083	0.5401
			D/O	E/O	F/O							
		Subj. G	0.193	0.139	0.019							
		Cont.G	0.281	0.081	0.103							
		Both Gs	0.211	0.111	0.064							
	Ttest				H/I	G/H	G/I	G/O	J/P	K/Q	L/R	M/S
		Subj. G			0.59	0.0003	0.0026	9E-21	2E-06	0.0033	0.0004	0.0027
		Cont.G			0.175	0.1787	0.1078	1E-19	0.0012	0.9625	0.1008	0.0016
		Both Gs			0.988	0.0002	0.0007	1E-39	5E-08	0.0143	0.0001	0.0002
	Place A.	Subj. G				107.25	112.6					
		Cont.G				115.5	107.75					
		Both Gs				111.38	110.18					

		MRES							MRES						
		PostTest							DelayedTest						
Plan.	Total	Lord.	Intima	Com.	Resp.	Plan.	Total	Lord.	Intima.	Com.	Resp.	Plan.	Total		
35	187	40	42	38	39	40	199	35	43	39	40	40	197		
36	191	41	41	45	43	41	211	41	46	39	45	46	217		
31	161	38	33	34	36	35	176	38	32	34	37	35	176		
28	128	39	31	20	32	35	157	45	37	32	35	37	186		
37	181	39	42	38	45	41	205	39	42	39	49	41	210		
31	153	30	34	34	40	34	172	35	40	38	42	38	193		
41	169	44	38	37	45	44	208	37	38	38	41	40	194		
37	167	45	45	45	49	49	233	41	38	37	45	44	205		
27	144	36	44	40	46	37	203	38	42	31	40	33	184		
40	187	37	28	38	42	34	179	37	34	28	39	37	175		
33	150	35	29	23	38	29	154	38	39	32	41	35	185		
40	164	29	23	26	35	34	147	40	34	32	38	36	180		
30	154	41	41	33	41	38	194	40	38	36	40	42	196		
40	203	39	35	37	37	36	184	38	33	29	36	33	169		
45	218	43	38	40	45	42	208	41	37	35	37	38	188		
42	212	40	41	42	43	46	212	41	41	37	36	39	194		
29	148	36	39	32	42	38	187	37	38	33	38	33	179		
33	174	39	38	29	35	35	176	34	35	30	31	32	162		
38	191	41	47	38	45	45	216	41	47	38	45	45	216		
31	141	34	32	32	46	40	184	34	32	32	46	40	184		
43	202	42	42	43	42	45	214	45	45	44	49	40	223		
42	199	47	49	47	50	49	242	41	47	48	50	50	236		
37	193	41	36	32	43	40	192	38	43	41	45	42	209		
39	178	44	44	40	49	45	222	47	41	37	41	42	208		
34	166	39	41	41	41	41	203	46	40	41	45	45	217		
36	169	42	32	27	33	34	168	43	38	39	46	45	211		
29	170	36	39	38	33	37	183	37	38	36	40	38	189		
48	189	44	44	36	42	37	203	35	41	29	40	37	182		
31	180	38	38	39	42	35	192	43	39	38	45	37	202		
44	193	46	45	44	47	44	226	40	30	33	44	40	187		
26	174	34	44	48	44	40	210	33	43	46	42	39	203		
26	157	32	38	41	38	37	186	38	42	44	38	34	196		
36	199	40	42	42	40	37	201	41	42	40	39	36	198		
37	192	40	32	43	40	38	193	40	31	42	40	36	189		
42	219	42	39	40	46	45	212	45	45	46	49	48	233		
49	213	40	41	43	45	49	218	47	44	45	48	49	233		
27	165	41	27	30	39	26	163	42	33	24	41	25	165		
30	179	40	41	31	37	30	179	39	45	27	37	30	178		
36	178	37	38	39	46	39	199	34	35	32	43	32	176		
36	177	35	36	34	44	34	183	31	37	28	43	32	171		
34	174	30	38	29	37	33	167	33	36	27	36	33	165		
33	170	36	36	24	34	34	164	35	36	22	33	35	161		
27	148	32	34	29	39	29	163	37	39	31	44	30	181		
32	169	43	34	37	34	35	183	45	37	39	39	39	199		
31	148	36	33	22	35	34	160	40	37	24	34	37	172		
35	175	36	38	30	42	39	185	41	37	36	38	42	194		

MRES Reliability Calculation																			
Subj. Group		I. Pretest																	
No.	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1	$\uparrow \Sigma \leftarrow \xi$	4	3	2	5	1	5	3	5	3	0	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5
2	$\exists \dots \zeta \leftarrow$	4	3	3	5	1	5	3	5	4	0	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5
3	$\dots / \phi \dots \psi$	4	3	3	5	1	5	4	5	2	4	2	3	4	3	4	3	4	3
4	$\times \downarrow \leftarrow \approx$	3	3	3	2	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
5	$\exists \mathfrak{R} \neq \Sigma$	1	1	2	5	3	4	5	3	5	0	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	5
6	$f \partial * \downarrow \leftarrow$	3	2	3	4	3	2	3	4	2	0	2	3	3	4	4	4	3	3
7	$\times \otimes \pm \infty \exists$	5	3	3	4	1	5	5	5	3	2	4	4	3	5	4	4	1	3
8	$\neq \Theta \leftarrow \downarrow \leftarrow$	4	3	3	2	1	5	3	4	1	3	3	5	4	5	4	4	3	3
9	$\dots B \circ \}$	3	1	1	4	2	5	3	3	5	0	5	3	3	4	4	4	5	4
10	$\dots B \spadesuit \vee$	4	4	5	4	1	5	3	5	5	0	1	2	5	3	2	3	5	4
11	$\approx \downarrow \equiv \tau$	4	4	5	2	4	4	2	4	2	0	2	1	3	3	3	3	5	3
12	$\neq \Theta \times \square \uparrow \perp$	4	4	5	4	2	2	3	5	4	0	2	4	4	3	4	3	4	3
13	$\downarrow \square \infty \rho \neq$	5	5	3	1	4	5	4	5	3	1	4	4	5	3	4	3	5	3
14	$\aleph \sigma \times \phi$	5	5	3	5	1	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	5	5	4	3	5	4
15	$\dots B \rightarrow \alpha x$	5	5	5	5	0	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4
16	$\spadesuit \wedge \aleph P \leftarrow$	5	5	4	4	1	5	4	5	2	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5
17	$\clubsuit \downarrow \infty \approx \aleph$	3	1	3	4	1	4	3	4	3	1	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	4
18	$\aleph \phi \neq \rightarrow + f$	5	4	2	5	0	5	5	5	1	3	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	4
19	$\pm \geq \Theta / N$	5	4	5	5	1	5	5	5	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	4	4	4
20	$\clubsuit \downarrow \aleph \spadesuit$	3	3	3	5	1	3	3	5	2	0	4	2	3	3	3	2	3	3
21	$\rightarrow \} \otimes \leq \downarrow$	5	3	3	3	1	5	4	5	3	1	5	3	4	5	4	5	5	5
22	$\square \square \square \square \square$	4	4	4	4	1	5	4	5	1	1	5	3	4	4	4	4	4	4
23	$\clubsuit \equiv \neq \theta \sigma$	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	4	2	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4
24	$\dots B \dots \zeta \infty$	5	5	5	5	3	5	4	5	4	3	3	2	5	4	4	3	5	3
25	$\square \square \square \square \square$	5	4	3	4	1	5	3	5	4	4	4	2	4	3	3	3	4	3
26	$f \downarrow \leftarrow \mathfrak{R} \spadesuit$	5	4	3	4	2	4	5	5	2	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	4
27	$\square \square \square \square \square$	5	1	3	5	1	5	5	5	5	0	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	4
28	$\clubsuit \downarrow \otimes P \rightarrow$	5	4	3	5	0	5	5	5	2	2	4	2	3	5	5	5	5	4
13	$\Gamma \spadesuit \otimes f$	5	2	3	5	0	5	4	5	4	1	3	3	5	4	4	4	4	5
14	$\dots \vee \partial \clubsuit \pm$	5	5	4	4	0	5	5	5	4	0	3	4	5	4	4	4	5	5
31	$\times \Sigma \infty \approx \leftarrow$	5	1	2	4	2	0	5	5	2	1	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	4
32	$" / " \otimes \alpha \neg$	5	3	1	5	0	0	5	4	4	1	4	4	4	4	3	3	5	5
Cont. Group		I. Pretest																	
1	$\wedge / \Sigma \pm \lambda$	5	5	5	5	0	5	5	5	1	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4
2	$\approx \downarrow \spadesuit \theta \approx$	5	5	5	5	0	5	5	5	1	4	4	1	4	4	4	4	4	4
3	$\rightarrow \} \leftrightarrow \downarrow$	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5
4	$\downarrow \leftarrow \downarrow$	5	3	5	5	2	5	4	5	5	3	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	4
5	$\div \geq * \otimes \uparrow \xi$	4	4	4	0	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	4	4	5	5
6	$\geq \downarrow \uparrow \perp$	5	5	4	0	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	4	5	5
7	$\div \otimes \infty \subseteq \heartsuit$	5	3	2	0	0	5	5	5	5	2	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	5
8	$\aleph \neq \pm \otimes$	5	3	3	5	0	5	5	5	0	2	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	4
9	$\neq \Theta \leftarrow K \infty$	3	4	2	0	3	3	4	5	1	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5
10	$\exists \times \alpha$	3	5	3	5	3	4	4	5	2	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	5
11	$\div \uparrow \times \alpha \neg$	4	4	4	4	0	1	2	4	4	2	3	3	2	3	4	3	4	3
12	$\leftrightarrow : \dots \} \times$	5	4	5	5	4	4	3	5	3	4	4	1	4	3	4	4	5	4
13	$\spadesuit \wedge f \infty $	5	5	3	1	2	5	3	5	2	1	3	2	4	4	3	3	4	3
14	$\neg \Gamma \phi \spadesuit \neg$	5	4	4	3	1	5	3	5	3	1	3	1	4	3	3	3	5	4

15	$\rho \ominus \infty \parallel \uparrow$	5	3	3	5	0	5	4	5	3	4	5	4	3	5	5	5	4	5
16	$\div \uparrow \leftarrow \eta \equiv \uparrow$	4	3	3	4	2	5	2	5	3	3	3	2	3	4	4	3	4	4
17	$\diamond \downarrow \leftrightarrow \neg f$	5	5	4	4	3	5	4	5	1	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4
18	$\pm \uparrow \diamond \theta''$	5	5	5	5	0	5	5	5	4	4	5	1	4	4	4	3	4	4
19	$\times \uparrow \alpha \rightarrow \times \oplus$	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	0	3	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	4
20	$\geq \downarrow \downarrow \aleph \alpha \perp$	4	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	0	3	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	4
21	$\spadesuit \times \supset$	5	4	5	5	3	1	4	5	5	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
22	$\partial \aleph \Sigma \uparrow \spadesuit \otimes$	5	4	3	4	0	1	3	4	5	0	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	5
23	$\downarrow \uparrow \heartsuit \rho \}$	3	2	3	5	1	4	4	4	3	1	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	4
24	$\geq' \leftarrow \alpha \perp$	5	0	2	5	0	5	4	5	1	0	5	5	4	5	1	4	5	4
25	$\dots B \pm \otimes \Sigma$	5	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	1	4	4	4	4	5	4
26	$\clubsuit \downarrow \diamond \rightarrow \leftarrow$	3	3	2	4	1	4	3	4	4	1	4	1	3	3	3	3	3	4
27	$\otimes \leftarrow \spadesuit \Psi$	5	4	4	2	2	5	5	4	1	3	3	2	4	4	3	4	4	0
28	$\uparrow \square \dots \zeta \dots$	5	5	5	3	3	5	4	5	1	4	2	2	3	2	2	1	5	3
29	$\wedge \leftrightarrow \alpha \geq \neg$	4	3	3	5	4	5	5	5	1	1	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4
30	$\uparrow f \cdot '' \mid$	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	1	1	4	5	3	5	5	4	5	4
31	$\otimes \Psi \infty \subseteq$	5	1	3	2	1	5	3	5	0	0	3	2	4	3	4	3	5	4
32	$\pm \uparrow \rightarrow \Sigma \pm$	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	4	1	3	3	4	2	3	2	5	2
AVG	Sub.G	4.31	3.3	3.3	4.2	1.5	4.3	4	4.7	3.1	1.6	3.7813	3.6	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.7	4.2	3.9
	Cont.G	4.47	3.7	3.7	3.7	1.9	4.3	4	4.8	2.6	2.6	4.0625	3.3	3.9	4	3.8	3.7	4.3	4
	Both Gs	4.39	3.5	3.5	3.9	1.7	4.3	4	4.7	2.8	2.1	3.9219	3.4	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.7	4.3	3.9
STDV	Sub.G	0.97	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.4	1	0.7	1.3	1.6	1.1566	1.2	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.8
	Cont.G	0.76	1.2	1	1.8	1.7	1.3	1	0.5	1.8	1.5	0.84	1.5	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	1
	Both Gs	0.87	1.3	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.3	1	0.6	1.6	1.6	1.0127	1.3	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9
Alpha	Sub.G	0.51										0.710							
	Cont.G	0.50										0.65							
	Both Gs	0.49										0.67							

19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39		
2	2	5	4	5	5	0	4	3	5	2	5	5	5	5	5	2	5	0	4	5		
1	2	5	4	5	5	0	4	3	5	2	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	0	5	5		
1	3	3	4	3	4	2	3	4	2	2	4	2	2	4	4	3	4	3	4	4		
0	5	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	2	1	2	3	2		
0	5	3	4	5	5	2	0	5	4	0	1	5	5	5	5	2	5	4	5	4		
0	3	3	3	4	4	1	3	3	2	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3		
1	1	2	4	5	1	0	1	3	4	3	5	4	5	5	1	1	4	2	3	5		
0	1	2	4	2	3	1	2	1	4	2	5	3	5	5	5	5	4	3	3	5		
2	3	3	4	1	3	3	3	3	1	2	4	0	1	2	4	2	1	3	4	4		
1	1	5	5	5	5	1	4	3	1	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	5	5		
0	1	3	4	2	4	3	4	5	1	3	5	2	3	2	4	2	2	4	4	1		
0	1	3	5	5	4	3	3	5	1	2	5	2	2	2	4	2	2	4	4	1		
0	4	4	4	2	4	0	1	2	0	1	5	4	4	2	2	1	1	4	4	4		
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												Lords	Intim.	Com.	Resp.	Plan.	Total
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4	5	5	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	3	34	28	30	34	41	167	

APPENDIX C:
Marriage Enrichment Curriculum

Marriage Enrichment Curriculum

Walk With My Lover This Week

Week One

I. Lordship:

Read your Bible daily: D1___ D2___ D3___ D4___ D5___

Pray for your spouse and success of this program daily _____

Complete the Bible study "A Covenant of Marriage" _____

II. Intimacy:

Complete the evaluation "Personal Spiritual Inventory" _____

Do at least 20 minutes intimate meaningful conversation
with your spouse _____

III. Communication:

Sit down with your spouse and go over the MRES
evaluation sheet with him or her _____

Pray with your spouse at least twice a week _____

IV. Responsibility:

Make a list of things that you do for your family each
week _____

Do a special thing for your spouse and be ready to share
it in the next meeting _____

V. Planning:

Plan with your spouse to take a vacation _____

SESSION ONE -- Sinful Nature of Human

I. Review:

The purpose of this marriage enrichment program is to help you and your spouse to have a better marital life in accordance with Biblical principles through your commitment and cooperation. Therefore, your participation is very important. The required weekly assignment is an essential part of this training. Please take it seriously. We will go through everyone's assignment each week first.

Each person is required to complete the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and the Marriage Relationship Evaluation Survey (MRES) prior to the seminar. Forms are included in the package distributed to you before this first session. If you have not done so, please do it now.

II. Lecture: "Understand Human Nature"

1. You may feel there is room for improvement in your marriage, or you may be dissatisfied with your spouse, or even lose enthusiasm to put in any effort. The good news is you are not alone, and God can help you to fix it. However, first you have to understand yourself. You are the source of problems.

2. What is human nature?
 - (1) God created man in his own _____ (Gen.1:27). God is Spirit, so the human not only has body, rationality, emotion, but also _____
 - (2) Sin is disobeying God. The consequence is _____ (Gen. 2:17). The human is separated from God. Curses of sins came to human: The woman bears pain in _____ and desires for her _____ Husband will _____ over her. Man has to sweat to the brow to obtain _____. (Gen.3:16-19)
 - (3) All human are under _____ (Rom. 3:9) We need God's salvation. There is a process of _____ (Rom. 5:11)
 - (4) Through the salvation of Jesus Christ, we are made new and created to be like God in true _____ and _____ (Eph.4:23-24).

3. How does our sinful nature affect our marriage?

(1) Two sinners living together, surely will have conflicts. We are _____ on earth. (James 5:5)

(2) Satan tries to attack us and destroy us. (Gen. 3;16;Lk. 22:31)

4. How does this world affect our marriage?

(1) The _____ of sinful man, the _____ of his eyes, and the _____ of what he has and does are from this world. (1 Jh. 2:16)

(2) Materialism, sexuality, feminist movement, homosexuality, and the shift of the concept of marriage.

5. Have you ever received premarital counseling before wedding? Do you ask outside help when your marriage is in trouble? Why not?

6. What do you think the Chinese traditional concept: "We cannot let others know about our domestic problem?" _____

7. Where can we get help?

(1) God is the source of love. (1 Jh. 4:7)

(2) Ministers are responsible to look after flock. (1 Pet. 5:2)

(3) Talk to lay ministers. (Tit. 2:3-4)

8. There is no perfect marriage, only marriages of hard work. Marriage is a process of learning.

III. Group Activities:

1. Each couple takes out their DAS and reviews them together. Notice the following criteria:

- (1) Compare each item. If there are two points or more difference, stop and spend time to discuss why.
 - (2) Add up total scores and compare with your spouse. The less difference the better you know each other. The mean of scores for an average American couple is 114.8 with a standard deviation of 17.8.
2. Each couple reviews their MRES scores, and prepares to share the results. Each couple should discuss their MRES in detail after they go home.
 3. Each couple shares their results and encourages each other with praise.

IV. Devotion:

1. Have one student read John 15:9-17.
2. Each couple pray together. Ask God to help you in three things:
 - (1) To give you strength to face the problems of your marriage and be willing to overcome them through God's help.³
 - (2) To grant you a gentle heart to accept your spouse as yourself and to keep a good harmony in the family for the week to come.
 - (3) To help you overcome the temptation of skipping assignments and to help other classmates as well.

WEEK ONE – Home Assignment

I. Bible Study: “A Covenant of Marriage” Gen. 1:26-2:25

1. Man and woman were created in God’s image. What does “image” means?

2. How did God bless humans after He created them?

3. Man could not find a suitable helper, therefore God created a woman for him. From this, what is the basic purpose of God intended marriage?

4. When the man saw the woman, what was his reaction? What does it mean “bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh?”

5. What does it mean “to be united to his wife?” Another translation is “shall cleave” (KJV).

6. Should woman leave her parents as well?

7. What does it mean “to become one flesh?”

8. List five behaviors that you could perform in marriage to promote and maintain the oneness of marriage.

9. Read Malachi 2:13-14. Why did the Lord not pay attention to their offering?

10. Why was the Lord acting as the witness between the husband and wife? What does this imply to a Christian marriage? _____

11. What does it mean "she is your partner?" _____

12. Why did God call the marriage a covenant? _____

II. Evaluation: Personal Spiritual Inventory

A always; U - usually; S sometimes; R - rarely; N never

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. I have a daily quiet time with the Lord. | A U S R N |
| 2. I try to make Christ Lord of my life. | A U S R N |
| 3. I feel close to the Lord throughout the day. | A U S R N |
| 4. I try to discipline myself. | A U S R N |
| 5. I am aware that the Lord disciplines me. | A U S R N |
| 6. I ready my bible daily. | A U S R N |
| 7. I study my bible each week. | A U S R N |
| 8. I memorize a verse of Scripture each week. | A U S R N |
| 9. I take notes as I hear, read, or study the Bible. | A U S R N |
| 10. I keep a prayer list and pray for the persons on the list. | A U S R N |
| 11. I have experienced a specific answer to my prayer during
the past month. | A U S R N |
| 12. Each day my prayers include praise, thanksgiving,
confession, petition, and intercession. | A U S R N |
| 13. I seek to live in peace with my fellow Christians. | A U S R N |
| 14. I seek reconciliation with those who have problems
with me or with whom I have a problem. | A U S R N |
| 15. Others know I'm a Christian by the way I love God's people. | A U S R N |

16. I live in harmony with other members of my family. A U S R N
17. I pray regularly for lost persons by name. A U S R N
18. I share my testimony with others when there is an appropriate opportunity. A U S R N
19. I share the plan of salvation with those who are open to hear it. A U S R N
20. I witness for Christ each week. A U S R N
21. I follow up and encourage person I have won to Christ. A U S R N
22. I serve Christ through my job in my church. A U S R N
23. I give at least a tithe through my church. A U S R N
24. At least once a month I do kind deeds for persons less fortunate than I. A U S R N
25. I have goals for my life which I keep clearly in mind. A U S R N
- X4 X3 X2 X1

Total Score: _____

@ Taken and modified from *LIFE Lay Institute for Equipping* "Master Life."

III. Daily Bible Study Schedule:

The following is a Bible study schedule for the ten weeks in this course. If you do not have your own daily schedule, you can follow this one:

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Week 1	Prov. 1	Prov. 2	Prov. 3	Prov. 4	Prov. 5
Week 2	Prov. 6	Prov. 7	Prov. 8	Prov. 9	Prov. 10
Week 3	Prov. 11	Prov. 12	Prov. 13	Prov. 14	Prov. 15
Week 4	Prov. 16	Prov. 17	Prov. 18	Prov. 19	Prov. 20
Week 5	Prov. 21	Prov. 22	Prov. 23	Prov. 24	Prov. 25
Week 6	Prov. 26	Prov. 27	Prov. 28	Prov. 29	Prov. 30
Week 7	Prov. 31	Rom 12	Rom. 13	Rom. 14	Rom. 15
Week 8	1 Cor. 5	1 Cor. 6	1 Cor. 7	1 Cor. 11	1 Cor. 12
Week 9	Ehp. 1	Eph. 2	Eph. 3	Eph. 4	Eph. 5
Week 10	1Pet. 1	1 Pet. 2	1 Pet. 3	1 Pet. 4	1 Pet. 5

Walk With My Lover This Week

Week Two

I. Lordship:

Read your Bible daily: D1___ D2___ D3___ D4___ D5___

Pray for your spouse and success of this program daily _____

Complete the Bible study "Love is Everlasting" _____

II. Intimacy:

Complete the evaluation "Personal Inventory Chart" _____

Go out to have a date just between you and your spouse, have
dinner together, watch a movie or go shopping _____

III. Communication:

Call your relatives, mother or father, or in-laws, talk to them
over the phone and ask your spouses' involvement _____

Read out "A Couple's Prayer" with your spouse _____

Pray with your spouse at least twice a week _____

IV. Responsibility:

Take care of your young children so that your spouse can have at
least an half hour break _____

Make a list of thing that you need to do in the next four
weeks _____

V. Planning:

Work out a budget plan with your spouse _____

SESSION TWO -- Marriage is a Covenant

I. Review:

How did the first week go? Did everyone have home assignment completed? What is the toughest thing to do in your assignment? Please do not be discouraged. Remember the Chinese Proverb: "All things have a hard beginning."

We are easily influenced by the culture of the place where we stay. Everyday we hear or watch people living together or separating without a marriage bond. How has our view changed about the marriage since we moved to this country? Do we care what is God's original intention for marriage?

II. Lecture: "What Is Marriage?"

1. What are the purposes of marriage?

- (1) Gen. 1:28 _____
- (2) Gen. 2:18 _____
- (3) Gen. 2:18 _____
- (4) Gen. 2:23 _____
- (5) Gen. 2:24 _____
- (6) Eph. 5:22-33 _____

2. Who originated the marriage institution?

3. Is marriage a contract or a covenant? (Mal. 2:14)

4. What is a covenant? How can marriage be a covenant?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| (1) God initiated (Gen. 15:18) | (Gen. 2:18) _____ |
| (2) Relational (Gen. 17:4) | (Eph. 5:28) _____ |
| (3) Conditional (Gen. 17:14) | (Heb. 13:4) _____ |
| (4) Involves descendants (Gen. 17:2) | (Mal. 2:15) _____ |
| (5) God promised (Gen. 17:8) | (Gen. 2:28) _____ |
| (6) Everlasting (Gen. 17:7) | (Matt. 19:6) _____ |

- (7) With a sign (Gen.17:11) (Gen.24:30)_____
- (8) God remembered (Gen.17:19) (Heb.10:17)_____
- (9) Spirituality (Gen.22:18) (Eph.5:25)_____

5. Is there an exception clause in the Bible that allows a Scriptural divorce? If not, why did the Old Testament law allow divorce? (Matt.19:3-9; 5:31-32)

6. What is the goal of marriage?

(Gen.2:24; John 17:20-23) _____

7. What does "oneness" mean?

Marriage is God's _____ for oneness that includes Body, _____, and _____

Before a couple can experience marital oneness, they must _____ their parents and _____ to one another.

8. What are some practical ways can promote and maintain the oneness characteristic of marriage? _____

9. In Chinese traditional family what activities between husband and wife will promote oneness? _____

III. Group Activities:

1. Think of a couple in our church who is a good example of a near "perfect match." What is it that seems so make their relationship a good one?

2. What are some barriers to marital oneness in society today? How can we overcome those barriers in our own home?
3. Each person shares his/her Personal Spiritual Inventory survey results.
4. Everybody says something to encourage the others.

IV. Devotion:

1. Read 1 Peter 3:7; Malachi 2:13-14. What do these texts have in common? Why does God place such high value on consideration, respect, and commitment?
2. Each couple prays together. Ask God to help you in three things:
 - (1) To give you strength to face the problems of your marriage and willing to overcome them through God's help.
 - (2) To grant you patient and perseverance to practice what you have learned from the class in your family life.
 - (3) To help you overcome the temptation of skipping assignments and to help other classmates as well.

WEEK TWO – Home Assignment**I. Bible Study: Love Is Everlasting** 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

1. These verses indicate that love consists of many elements, both negative and positive. Give an example of how did you, or can you, experience each in your marriage.
2. Suffers long _____

3. Is kind _____

4. In not envious, but content _____

5. Is not arrogant, but humble _____

6. Is not boastful, but reserved _____

7. Is not rude, but courteous _____

8. Is not selfish, but self-forgetful _____

9. Is not irritable, but good tempered _____

10. Is not vindictive or wrathful, but generous _____

11. Does not bring other' sins to light, but obey the truth _____

12. Is not rebellious, but brave _____

13. Is not suspicious, but trustful _____

14. Is not despondent, but hopeful _____

15. Is not temporal, but long last _____

16. What is Chinese traditional way to show love to a spouse?

17. Why it is easier to show love to children than to spouse?

18. What is your way to reinforce husband-wife love? _____

II. Evaluation: Personal Inventory Chart

a - to a high degree b - usually c - to a slight degree

d - to a slight degree e - usually f - to a high degree

Put X for husband, Y for wife

	a	b	c	d	e	f	
1. Works well with others	__	__	__		__	__	Wants to work alone
2. Likes opposite sex	__	__	__		__	__	Antagonistic toward opp. Sex
3. Generous	__	__	__		__	__	Stingy
4. Neat and methodical	__	__	__		__	__	Careless
5. Shows affection	__	__	__		__	__	Undemonstrative
6. Calm	__	__	__		__	__	Emotionally tense; nervous
7. Interested in spirituality	__	__	__		__	__	Uninterested in spirituality
8. Strict on sex conduct	__	__	__		__	__	Lax on sex conduct
9. Conservative in opinion	__	__	__		__	__	Radical in opinions
10. Assumes responsibility	__	__	__		__	__	Seeks to escape responsibility
11. Takes initiative	__	__	__		__	__	Lacks initiative
12. Happy and cheerful	__	__	__		__	__	Moody, easily depressed
13. Sociable	__	__	__		__	__	Unsociable
14. Careful with money	__	__	__		__	__	Spends money freely
15. Quietly self-assured	__	__	__		__	__	Lacks confidence
16. Tends to be practical	__	__	__		__	__	Impractical
17. Would rather be liked	__	__	__		__	__	Wants to be thought important

than thought important

18. Unselfish	__ __ __ __ __ __	Selfish
19. Good sense of humor	__ __ __ __ __ __	No sense of humor
20. Enjoys home life	__ __ __ __ __ __	Doesn't want to stay home
21. Listens to reason	__ __ __ __ __ __	Won't admit it when wrong
22. Truthful	__ __ __ __ __ __	Modifies truth on occasion
23. Takes suggestions	__ __ __ __ __ __	Won't take suggestion
24. Is not easily hurt	__ __ __ __ __ __	Easily hurt
25. Appreciative	__ __ __ __ __ __	Overly critical/ complaining
26. Good listener	__ __ __ __ __ __	Talks too much
27. Willing to learn things	__ __ __ __ __ __	Resist to learn new things
28. Mild, good temper	__ __ __ __ __ __	Stormy, hot temper
29. Love kids	__ __ __ __ __ __	Not care much for kids
30. Respect elderly	__ __ __ __ __ __	Treat elderly the same as others

@ take and modified from James R. Hine, "Alternative to Divorce."

III. A Couple's Prayer:

Please read the following couple's prayer with your spouse:

"Heavenly Father, we are grateful that you instituted marriage for the welfare and happiness of mankind. Forgive us when we go our own way, when we're thoughtless and don't accept each other the way you accept us. Teach us the joy of honoring each other above ourselves and the discipline of a life-long commitment. We ask you to hear our prayer and to make us a more perfect match, for we pray in Jesus name." -- Amen.

IV. Useful Information:

The following are eight marriageability traits that give a person a greater success to have a satisfying marriage:

1. Adaptability and flexibility - the ability to change and adapt.
2. Empathy - the ability to be sensitive to the needs, hurts, and desires of others, to feel with them and experience the world from their perspective.
3. The ability to work through problems.

4. The ability to give and receive.
5. Emotional stability - accepting one's emotions and controlling them.
6. Communication.
7. Similarities between the couple themselves.
8. Similar family background.

Walk With My Lover This Week

Week Three

I. Lordship:

Read your Bible daily: D1___ D2___ D3___ D4___ D5___

Pray for your spouse and success of this program daily _____

Complete the Bible study "Under the Shadow" _____

II. Intimacy:

Complete the evaluation "How Your Background Influences You" _____

Do at least 30 minutes intimate conversation with your spouse _____

III. Communication:

Sit down with your spouse and go over the evaluation "Personal Inventory Chart" with him/her _____

Pray with your spouse at least twice a week _____

IV. Responsibility:

Do a grocery shopping together this week _____

Look after your children's homework or teach them something that is meaningful _____

V. Planning:

Arrange a task that you and your spouse both can do together at church _____

Check calendar to make sure that you do not miss any important dates or anniversary _____

SESSION THREE – Love is the Basis of Marriage

I. Review:

We all have experienced love since childhood. In every stage of life we give or receive love. Most couples married because they felt love between them. If you are in the court and trying to convince a jury that you love your spouse, in order to be allowed to continue your relationship with him/her., what facts would you be able to present to the jury that can prove you love your spouse?

1 Corinthians 13 gives us God's perspective of love. What do you learn from the Scripture? Do you practice this kind of love in your marriage?

II. Lecture: "The True Meaning of Love"

1. The meaning of Love is _____

2. There are three kinds of love:
 - (1) "Eros" _____
 - (2) "Philia" _____
 - (3) "Agape" _____
3. Emotional-love likes _____, it needs fuel, care, air, attention to keep burning. A couple needs to fan the flame of feelings and nourish their relationship.
4. Friendship-love likes to make friends, your need to _____ your partner.
_____ is the key word to describe the way you feel about your spouse. (Matt. 6:21)
5. Commitment-love is like a _____ that bonds two persons together.
_____ is the key word to balance our need for togetherness with our need to retain our uniqueness.

6. Marriage needs all three kinds of love. Your love will either live or die. What can kill love? _____

7. How will the presence of Jesus Christ in your life help you to love you spouse?

8. The differences between man and woman:

	Man	Woman
(1) Direction of life	_____	_____
(2) Interests	_____	_____
(3) Foundation	_____	_____
(4) Reaction to Change	_____	_____
(5) Characteristics	_____	_____
(6) Judgment	_____	_____
(7) Tendency	_____	_____
(8) Work	_____	_____
(9) Attitudes	_____	_____
(10) Sexuality	_____	_____
(11) Sexual Drive	_____	_____
(12) Attraction	_____	_____
(13) Foreplay	_____	_____

9. What does the Bible teach about man and woman?

(1) Man is the head (Eph. 5:22-24) _____

(2) Woman is the heart (Eph. 5:25-30) _____

10. Love is acceptance. Your partner is not you, and he or she is created in God's image not yours. He/she has right to be another person, to be treated and respected as another.

III. Group Activities:

1. Case Study:

After eight years of marriage John tells a counselor that he no longer has any feeling for his wife. He says: "It isn't like when we were first married. I loved her very much then, and I had strong emotional feelings. But now it is all gone. She is a good wife and mother. I am more attracted to another girl." Mary is frustrated over the whole matter. She wants to hold her family together. Neither wants a divorce. "How can I regain that feeling for my wife?" he ask. "Was it something I did to destroy his love for me?" she asks.

Discuss the following questions:

- (1) What are the causes of the problem?
- (2) What should they do to resolve the problem?
- (3) What suggestions does Rev. 2:1-5 give on how to fall in love again?

2. Each couple shares their learning experiences from this course. Say some encouraging words to each other.

IV. Devotion:

1. Have one student read 1 Corinthian 13:4-7 loudly.
2. Divided students into four persons per a group to pray. Ask God to help you in three things:
 - (1) To regenerate and to refresh the love between you and your spouse.
 - (2) To give up yourself and be willing to accept your spouse the way he/she is.
 - (3) To start doing something that will please your spouse and to change the behaviors that your spouse asks you to do.

WEEK THREE – Home Assignment**I. Bible Study: “Under the Shadow” 2 Samuel 11:1-27; 13:1-39**

1. Behavior patterns are passed down from generation to generation. Good behaviors in well-functioning families as well as unhealthy behaviors in poorly functioning families all show up through the years. How do we identify the ill behaviors and prevent them from passing on is the duty of parents.

2. What sins did David commit? Why did he commit these sins?

3. How is the sin progressive as David continued to harbor the desire in his mind?

4. Why did David ask Uriah to go home? _____

5. What sins did Amnon commit? Is there any similarity between father and son?

6. How did Amnon let his desire continue to harbor until the opportunity came?

7. Why didn't David discipline his children and prevent this tragedy from happening?

8. What is the result of this family scandal? Did David pay his price for sins?

9. How do you perceive the behavior patterns that are passed on from parents to children? _____

10. Do you have any behaviors, good or bad, that are passed down from your parents?

List some: _____

11. Most behavior patterns can be changed or improved. What are good ways to break bad patterns? _____

12. Accountability is the most effective way to deal with behavior modification. It relies on open and honest involvement of your spouse. Is there anything that your spouse can help you? _____

II. Evaluation: Check How Your Background Influences You

- 5 - Always Agree; 4 - Almost Always Agree;
 3 - Occasionally Disagree; 2 - Frequently Disagree;
 1 - Almost Always Disagree; 0 - Always Disagree

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. In my family I often heard the phrase "I love you" spoken among family members. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 2. In my family each person's feelings were important, and we were encouraged to share about them. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 3. My parents complimented the children openly. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 4. It is important in my family to respect the rights and privacy of each person. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 5. My father frequently complimented my mother. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 6. Being on time was important in my family. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 7. In my family the house was kept neat, orderly and clean. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 8. My family saw the world as being fair. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 9. My parents believed that the father was the head of the family. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 10. In my family, it was common for friends and family to drop in without an invitation and be welcomed. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 11. My mother preferred to stay home and raise the kids. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12. My parents believed that household tasks, such as washing dishes, should be shared by all members in the family. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 13. In my family, divorce was out of the question. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 14. My family prays together at times other than at meal. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 15. My family had clear goals of what they needed to buy. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 16. My parents were very cautious about going into debt. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 17. It was important in my family to save for future emergencies. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 18. My parents spent a lot of time shopping for a good buy before making a decision. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 19. My family never had financial problems as long as I remember. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 20. My parents believed that to spend time with the family is more important than to earn more income. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 21. My parents hugged and kissed in front of the children. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 22. I felt free to ask my parents anything about sex issues. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 23. In my family, sons were treated equally with girls. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 24. My father used to tell stories to the children. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 25. My parents never got angry and slapped the children. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

@ take and modified from James R. Hine, "Alternative to Divorce."

III. How did they resolve conflicts:

Place a "X" at the spot where your family members solved conflicts and place a "Y" for how you think your spouse's family members solved conflicts.

	Win	Yield	Withdraw	Compromise	Resolve
1. You	___	___	___	___	___
2. Your father	___	___	___	___	___
3. Your mother	___	___	___	___	___
4. Older brother	___	___	___	___	___
5. Older sister	___	___	___	___	___
6. Younger brother	___	___	___	___	___
7. Younger sister.	___	___	___	___	___
8. Others _____	___	___	___	___	___

Walk With My Lover This Week

Week Four

I. Lordship:

Read your Bible daily: D1___ D2___ D3___ D4___ D5___

Pray for your spouse and success of this program daily. _____

Complete the Bible study "Meet Each Other's Needs" _____

II. Intimacy:

Complete the evaluation "What Is the Matter with You?" _____

Do at least 30 minutes intimate conversation with your spouse. _____

III. Communication:

Sit down with your spouse and do family map together. _____

Pray with your spouse at least twice a week. _____

III. Responsibility:

Call your parents and tell them that you are in this course and thank them for giving you all your good characteristics. _____

Take your children to zoo or do something together. _____

V. Planning:

Look into the possibility of starting an educational fund. _____

SESSION FOUR -- Background as a Shadow of Marriage

I. Review:

Your background and environments where you grew up have tremendous impact on your life. Your feelings about marriage, children, religion, sex, work and careers, and money management all were influenced by your parents or other adults in your life. After marriage the differences become the sources of conflict. It is important for you to go back and trace the root of some problems and openly communicate them with your spouses.

II. Lecture: "Under the Shadow"

1. A woman was born in 1740 named Ada Take. She was a liberal woman and committed sins shamelessly. She died a confirmed drunkard. Altogether she had 700 descendants. Among them were 100 children born out of wedlock, 181 women of the street, 142 beggars, 46 work-house inmates, and 76 criminals. How parents can influence their children is very obvious.

2. Write down the possible influences from your father (or mother, depending on who was the dominant force in your home):

(1) List your father's good qualities _____

(2) List your father's shortcomings _____

(3) What was your father's expectations about you? _____

(4) What was your most happy and worst experiences with your father?

3. Can you summarize how your parents' family impacted on you and your family?

4. "Parents are the pride of their children." (Pro. 17:6) What does it mean? Have you ever been proud of your parents? _____

5. "In those days people will no longer say: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." ...The time is coming, when I will make a new covenant..." (Jer. 31:29-31) What does this verse mean? Can sins pass down from generation to generation? What is the new covenant? What is the impact of this new covenant to family life? _____

6. Before you became a Christian, what was your idea about marriage? Would you consider divorce a sin against God? _____

7. Have you noticed that people married in different periods of time and places have different outcomes of their marriages?

(1) What are the characteristics of couples who were married during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976)? _____

(2) What are the characteristics of couples who were married in the eighties? _____

(3) What are the characteristics of couples who were married at the nineties

(4) What are differences between Chinese couples from China and from other southern Asian areas? _____

8. Are there any bad habits that you need to work on and get rid of?

9. In Chinese tradition, how a son can object to his parents some improper behaviors?

III. Group Activities:

1. Divide into three couples per group and discuss the following questions in the small groups.

(1) As a child did you parents respect your privacy at home?

(2) Were your family members close to each other? Were they encouraged to share their feelings freely?

(3) Was there a great deal of arguing and fighting in your family?

(4) How did your parents deal with their conflicts?

(5) Is there anything that you do not want to bring into your own family?

(6) Are there any good things that you want keep in your own family?

IV. Devotion:

1. Share you answer of II.8 above with your spouse and ask your spouse to pray for you.

2. Each couple pray together. Ask God to help you in three things:

(1) To remind you to be a good parent and set an example for your children.

- (2) To overcome those bad habits that you have accumulated since childhood, and to change your temper that does not please your spouse, and causes negative influence to your children.
- (3) To help you to forgive and forget what bad thing your parents or relatives did to you. Pray for your parents to have a good healthy life.

WEEK FOUR – Home Assignment**I. Bible Study: “Meet Each Other’s Needs”**

1. Rom. 5:8 - How does God meet our spiritual needs first?

2. Rom. 8:35 - What is God’s promise to meet our emotional needs?

3. Matthew 6:33-34 - How does God meet our physical needs?

4. Is there a condition attached before God fulfills His promise? How can these principles can apply to marriage life? _____

5. Gen. 3:16 - What unique need did God put inside woman after the Fall?

6. Gen. 3:17 - What unique need did God induce in man after the Fall?

7. I Peter 3:7 - What is the wife’s need that God commands the husband to provide? Do you practice it? _____

8. Eph. 5:33 - What is the husband needs that God wants the wife to do it?

9. Gen. 1:28 - What evidence does this verse give that sexual activity is for reproduction?

10. Prov. 5:18-19 - How does the Bible encourage the enjoyment of sex? Can sex be entertainment? _____

11. Sex was intended to provide a means of totally revealing oneself to the beloved. Is it a means of communication? Why?

12. There are some myths about sex. Please choose "R" for right and "W" for wrong:
- | | |
|---|-----|
| (1) The man should not show his emotional feeling in sex. | R/W |
| (2) The most important element in sex is lasting. | R/W |
| (3) Man should initiate sex and always take the lead. | R/W |
| (4) Men always think about sex and can do it anytime. | R/W |
| (5) All intimate caresses should end with intercourse. | R/W |
| (6) Sex means intercourse. | R/W |
| (7) Intercourse has to have ejection. | R/W |
| (8) Good sex always end with ejection. | R/W |
| (9) Sex has to be natural and done promptly. | R/W |
| (10) Men enjoy sex more than women do. | R/W |
13. Heb.13:4 - What is the nature of sex in God's eyes? _____

14. 1 Cor. 7:2-5 What are the responsibilities of husband and wife in sex?

II. Evaluation: "What is the Matter with You?"

If you have been bothered by any of the following statement about your spouse, put a circle at yes. If don't know, put a circle at "?".

- | | | | |
|--|-----|----|---|
| 1. He/she seldom expresses appreciation or compliments me. | Yes | No | ? |
| 2. He/she is selfish and self-centered. | Yes | No | ? |

3. He/she pays no attention to his/her appearance. Yes No ?
4. He/she is thoughtless and careless. Yes No ?
5. He/she is grouchy. Yes No ?
6. He/she spends money foolishly. Yes No ?
7. He/she has a bad temper. Yes No ?
8. He/she is childish and immature. Yes No ?
9. He/she thinks more of his parents than of me. Yes No ?
10. He/she won't take an interest in our children. Yes No ?
11. He/she spends too much time away from home. Yes No ?
12. He/she is more interested in his work or recreation. Yes No ?
13. He/she does not take enough interest in outside activities. Yes No ?
14. He/she is always criticizing me. Yes No ?
15. He/she never brings me flowers or presents. Yes No ?
16. He/she has no sense of humor. Yes No ?
17. He/she shows too much interest in other females/males. Yes No ?
18. He/she is no longer physically attractive to me. Yes No ?
19. He/she does not satisfy my sexual needs. Yes No ?
20. He/she is too demanding in sex relationship. Yes No ?
21. He/she drinks/smoke too much. Yes No ?
22. He/she gambles too much. Yes No ?
23. He/she never wants to do things I want to do. Yes No ?
24. He/she won't go to church with me. Yes No ?
25. He/she cannot support the family adequately. Yes No ?
26. His/her discipline of the kids is not what I think it should be. Yes No ?
27. He/she won't talk over our problems with me. Yes No ?
28. He/she continually nags about our problems. Yes No ?
29. He/she doesn't share in work with house, children. Yes No ?
30. He/she does not respect my parents. Yes No ?
31. He/she doesn't think I have good judgment. Yes No ?
32. He/she is too stubborn. Yes No ?
33. He/she withdraws and refuses to talk when troubles come. Yes No ?

34. He/she never notices when I'm not feeling well. Yes No ?
35. I never should have married him/her in the first place. Yes No ?
- @ take and modified from James R. Hine, "Alternative to Divorce."

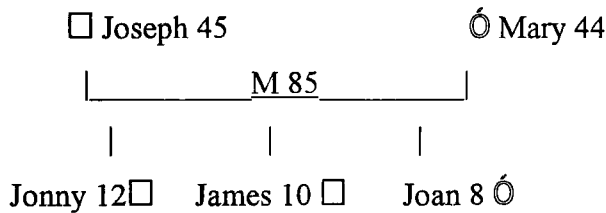
III. Find out your family:

Do a family map by using the following symbols:

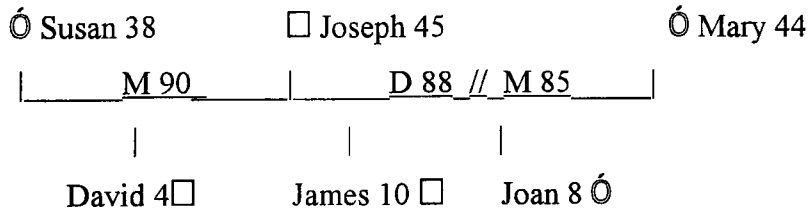
Male: Female: Marriage: M 85 (Married 1985)

Deceased: Divorce: // D 86 (Divorced 1986)

Children:



Divorced:



Walk With My Lover This Week

Week Five

I. Lordship:

Read your Bible daily: D1___ D2___ D3___ D4___ D5___

Pray for your spouse and success of this program daily. _____

Complete the Bible study "Roles and Responsibilities" _____

II. Intimacy:

Complete the evaluation "Who Does What?" _____

Reserve 15 minutes before sleep to talk with your spouse
about your feeling about this seminar _____

III. Communication:

Review "What Is Matter With You" with your spouse. _____

Pray with your spouse at least twice a week _____

IV. Responsibility:

Discuss with your spouse what needs to be done around
the house. _____

Think about at least one thing that your spouse is longing for.

Tell him or her you are willing to do it. _____

V. Planning:

Plan to have a night out and enjoy something you never
tried before. _____

SESSION FIVE -- Fulfillment as the Diet of Marriage

I. Review:

Are you satisfied with your marriage? In marriage counseling the major complaint couples usually bring up is not having their needs met. One of the motivating factors for marriage is the fulfillment of needs in one's life. It is honorable to say that we are fulfilling the other person's needs, but to be honest, we do hope our needs are met as well.

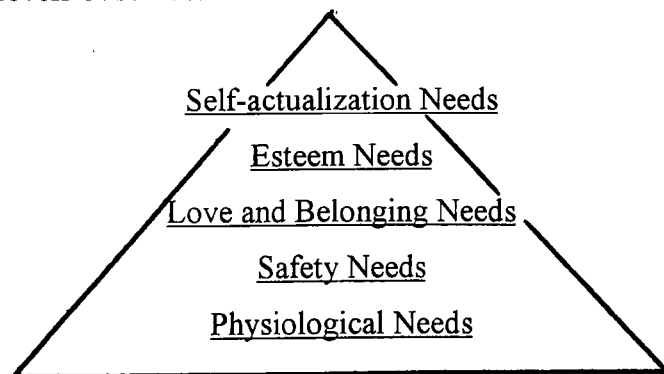
When you finished your Bible study for the last week assignment, did you feel that God can judge you as a suitable husband or wife for your spouse? Is there anything you need to improve?

II. Lecture: "Fulfilling Needs in Marriage"

1. The human has four basic kinds of needs:

- (1) _____ such as: _____
- (2) _____ such as: _____
- (3) _____ such as: _____
- (4) _____ such as: _____

2. Maslow's Five Levels of Needs:



3. Please write down a typical need for each category:

- (1) Physical: _____
- (2) Emotional: _____
- (3) Spiritual: _____

(4) Social and Intellectual: _____

4. Self-esteem is one of the most important foundations of marriage. If one has low self-esteem, he or she may seek to have the spouse to give him or her a sense of meaning. There are four elements in building up self-esteem:

(1) Status: _____

(2) Belongingness: _____

(3) Worthiness: _____

(4) Competence: _____

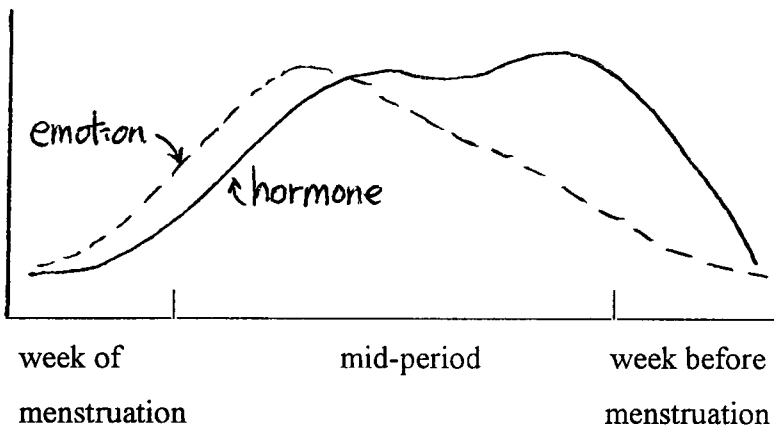
5. Gen. 1:27 "In the image of God He created them." What has this verse to do with self-esteem? _____

6. How can you help your spouse to build up his or her self-esteem?

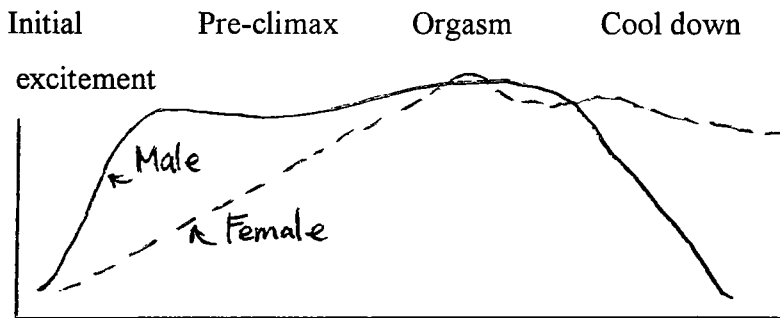
7. Sex is a great emotional need for both man and woman, although most people consider the male has greater need in sexual fulfillment. Why do you think that the male desires more sex than the female?

8. Why do wives complain that their husband are beset with sex obsession?

9. Female's menstrual secreting of hormones and emotional variation:



10. The male and female's reactions during the intercourse:



11. Biblical concept of sex:

Sex is _____; Sex is _____, Sex can be discussed openly;
 Sex should be _____; Sex between husband and wife is _____; Sex is to
 satisfy your spouse not yourself; Sex is a spiritual _____

III. Group Activities:

1. Divide into three couples per group and discuss the following questions:

- (1) Is there a need of yours that your spouse is not aware of or not considering well?
- (2) What effect did you spouse make recently that fulfills your particular needs?
- (3) List five greatest needs in your life and share them: _____

IV. Devotion:

1. Each couple pray together. Ask God to help you in three things:
 - (1) To care and for satisfy your spouse more than for yourself.
 - (2) To accept your spouse as he or she is and not try to change his or her weakness.
 - (3) To enjoy intimate relationship with your spouse.

WEEK FIVE – Home Assignment

I. Bible Study: “Roles and Responsibilities” Eph. 5:21-33

1. What does the Bible say concerning the roles of the wife and the husband? Use one word to summarize a wife’s duty to her husband:

2. What do the words “as unto the Lord” suggest about the wife’s role:

3. Are there any limits placed upon the wife’s submission by Col. 3:18 and Acts:29?

4. What is the man’s role? Is submission ever part of his role or function?

5. What two words in this section summarize the husband’s responsibility? Compare with Phil. 2:4

6. What example should the husband exhibit as he leads in the marriage relationship?

7. For whose benefit is the headship of Christ exercised? In light of this, for whose benefit should the headship of the husband be exercised?

8. What are the ways in which Christ loved the church? Relate each of these to the way a husband should love his wife.

9. Prov. 31:10-31, in what way has this wife been given great responsibility and was able to use her gifts? What gifts does your wife have that you do not?

10. In #9, how did the husband praise and express appreciation to his wife?

11. Christ as head of the church, how did he demonstrate a leader-servant role in leading his people? (Matt. 20:28) _____

12. What are some creative ways that a husband can be a loving leader-servant?

II. Evaluation: Who does What?

Circle the letter of the person who performed the task in your original family (left column) and in your own family (right column).

H Husband; B - Both; W Wife; N Neither

- | | | |
|-------------|---|---------|
| 1. H B W N | Do the grocery shopping. | H B W N |
| 2. H B W N | Take care of the children when they are sick. | H B W N |
| 3. H B W N | Decide what T.V programs to watch. | H B W N |
| 4. H B W N | Decide if the children can go someplace. | H B W N |
| 5. H B W N | Help the children with homework. | H B W N |
| 6. H B W N | Pay the bills and do bookkeeping. | H B W N |
| 7. H B W N | Repair household appliances. | H B W N |
| 8. H B W N | Discipline the children. | H B W N |
| 9. H B W N | Do the hugging in the family. | H B W N |
| 10. H B W N | Take out the trash. | H B W N |
| 11. H B W N | Set up social activities. | H B W N |

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------|---|----------------|
| 12. | H B W N | Decide where the family will go on vacation. | H B W N |
| 13. | H B W N | Buy the gifts for extended family members on
birthdays and holidays. | H B W N |
| 14. | H B W N | Work for family income. | H B W N |
| 15. | H B W N | Vacuum the house. | H B W N |
| 16. | H B W N | Do the yard work. | H B W N |
| 17. | H B W N | Keep the cars in running order. | H B W N |
| 18. | H B W N | Arrange the furniture in the home. | H B W N |
| 19. | H B W N | Make a major purchase on credit. | H B W N |
| 20. | H B W N | Buy the gifts for extended family | H B W N |
| 21. | H B W N | Shop for clothes for the family. | H B W N |
| 22. | H B W N | Wash the dishes. | H B W N |
| 23. | H B W N | Cook. | H B W N |
| 24. | H B W N | Bathe the children. | H B W N |
| 25. | H B W N | Feed the children. | H B W N |
| 26. | H B W N | Do the laundry. | H B W N |
| 27. | H B W N | Go to the children's sports and school activities. | H B W N |
| 28. | H B W N | Dress the children. | H B W N |
| 29. | H B W N | Wash the dishes. | H B W N |
| 30. | H B W N | Is the boss. | H B W N |

@ Taken and modified from Jerry Hardin and Dianne Sloan, "Getting Ready for Marriage."

III. Read the following statement:

When a man and a woman unite in marriage, humanity experiences a restoration to wholeness. The glory of the man is the acknowledgment that woman was created for him; the glory of the woman is the acknowledgment that man is incomplete without her. The humility of the woman is the acknowledgment that she was made for man; the humility of the man is the acknowledgment that he is incomplete without her. Both share an equal dignity, honor, and worth. Yes, and each shares a humility before the other, also. Each is necessarily dependent upon the other.

--- Dwight H. Small

Walk With My Lover This Week

Week Six

I. Lordship:

Read your Bible daily: D1___ D2___ D3___ D4___ D5___

Pray for your spouse and success of this program daily. _____

Complete the Bible study “**Communication Guideline**” _____

II. Intimacy:

Complete the evaluation “**Communication**” _____

Arrange and take time to have enjoyable sex with your spouse. _____

III. Communication:

Sit down and go over with your spouse the evaluation “**Who does What?**” _____

Pray with your spouse at least twice a week. _____

IV. Responsibility:

Make a list of work around the house or children to share responsibilities between you and your spouse. _____

Make an agreement that how you and your spouse will make decisions in different areas. _____

V. Planning:

Make a will for you and your spouse _____

SESSION SIX -- Role and Responsibility in Marriage

I. Review:

Failure to clarify the husband-wife roles in a relationship is a major cause of marital disruption. We have tendency to follow our parents' examples to assume responsibilities in the family. However, the cultural norm has changed, and individual abilities and training have changed. We need to develop our own rules and guidelines for relationships. These rules should not be rigid but allow flexibility.

The Bible gives a basic model for man and woman's roles in the family. There is an order in the family that the husband should assume the headship in the family. It does not mean that wife is inferior nor does it stifle her initiative. It just simply mean an order of the sequence. Just like in a play, the one who comes out first is not necessarily the major figure.

II. Lecture: Roles and Decision Making

1. There are four kinds of ways wives have been treated in marriage:

(1) Property: _____

(2) Complement: _____

(3) Junior Partner: _____

(4) Equal Partner: _____

2. There are fundamental differences between male and female:

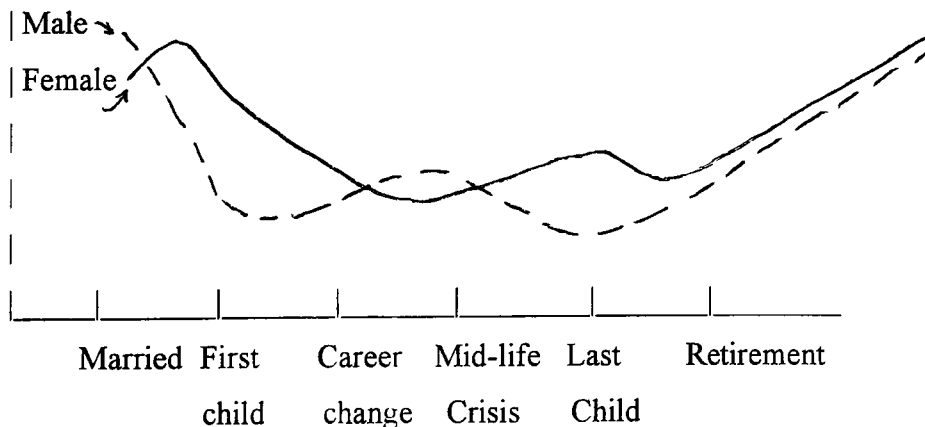
(1) The male is more rational, he can be _____ (Eph. 5:22-24). If a woman tries to reason with a man, she will meet a defensive response. But if she submits and uses more feeling, she will _____

(2) The female is more emotional, she needs _____ (Eph. 5::25-30). If a man tries to be rational with a woman, he will engage in a fight. But if he demonstrates his love and feeling, he will _____

3. Here are some differences between man and woman:

	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>
Goal of life	person orientated	matter orientated
Interests	people, feeling	things, matters
Foundation of personal value	relationship, family	achievement, career
Basic needs	security	challenge
Adaptability	slow	fast
Characteristics	emotional, jealous intuitive, careful	rational, self-pride analytic, careless
Sexual desires	menstruation dependent	stable
Sources of sex desires	romantic, touching, sweet talk	visual stimulation
Attracted by	male's characteristics	female's appearance
Enjoyment of sex	takes time	instant

4. The periods of marriage:



5. The definition of a good marriage:

(1) Wife's definition is based on whether her husband loves her,

(2) Husband's definition is based on whether his career can be successful to support his family, _____

6. Who makes the decisions in the marital relationship? Shouldn't each make decisions in the areas where he or she is most gifted? For examples:

7. The majority of couples have not considered how they arrive at decisions. Who made most of the decisions in your family? _____

8. Have you established guidelines to distinguish between major and minor decisions? What are they? _____

9. What are some practical ways you can promote and maintain the oneness characteristic of marriage? _____

III. Group Activities:

1. There are four kind of roles as wife; consider yourself, what kind of role are you? Husbands share their perspectives.
2. Divide into groups and discuss the following questions:
 - (1) What procedure will you follow when there is an important decision must be made?
 - (2) How will you decide upon responsibilities for household chores?
 - (3) In what areas of family life will you have the right to make decisions without consulting your spouse?
 - (4) Will you have any "veto power" over your spouse's decisions? If so, what is the basis for it?

IV. Devotion:

1. Each couple prays together. Ask God to help you to be a more responsible and considerate spouse in the following areas:
 - (1) Sharing household work
 - (2) Taking care of children
 - (3) Relationship with God
 - (4) Making family decision
 - (5) Fulfill your commitments

WEEK SIX – Home Assignment

I. Bible Study: “Communication Guidelines”

Please find out the principles of good communication according to the given Scriptures:

1. Prov. 18:13 _____

2. Jams 1:19 _____

3. Eph. 4:15; Col. 3:9 _____

4. Prov. 16:23 _____

5. Prov. 17:14 _____

6. Prov. 15:1; 25:15 _____

7. Eph. 4:26; 31 _____

8. James 5:16 _____

9. Col. 3:13 _____

- 10. Prov. 10:19; 17:9 _____

- 11. Rom. 2:1; 14:3 _____

- 12. Gal. 6:1; 1 The. 5:11 _____

- 13. Rom. 12:17; 21 _____

- 14. 1 Peter 3:9 _____

- 15. Phip. 2:1-4 _____

II. Evaluation: "Communication"

A - Always; U - Usually; S - Sometimes; R - Rarely; N - Never

- 1. I listen to my spouse carefully. A U S R N
- 2. My spouse listens to me carefully. A U S R N
- 3. I understand what my spouse is trying to say. A U S R N
- 4. My spouse understands what I am trying to say. A U S R N
- 5. I show appreciation when my spouse does things for me. A U S R N
- 6. My spouse shows appreciation when I do things for him/her. A U S R N
- 7. I show interest in my spouse's ideas, thoughts, feelings,
and activities. A U S R N
- 8. My spouse shows interest in my ideas, thoughts,
feelings, and activities. A U S R N

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 9. I feel comfortable disagreeing with what my spouse says. | A U S R N |
| 10. My spouse feels comfortable disagreeing with what I say. | A U S R N |
| 11. I keep no secretes between me and my spouse. | A U S R N |
| 12. My spouse keeps no secretes between us. | A U S R N |
| 13. I am able to express feelings and emotions. | A U S R N |
| 14. My spouse can express feelings and emotions. | A U S R N |
| 15. I am not angry when my spouse points out my shortcoming. | A U S R N |
| 16. My spouse is not angry when I point out his/her shortcoming. | A U S R N |
| 17. I am satisfied with my spouse's way of expressing anger. | A U S R N |
| 18. My spouse is satisfied with my way of expressing anger. | A U S R N |
| 19. I communicate the message "I love you" by voice and action. | A U S R N |
| 20. My spouse communicates the message "I love you"
by voice and action. | A U S R N |
| 21. I try not to interrupt my spouse when we talk. | A U S R N |
| 22. My spouse tries not to interrupt me when we talk. | A U S R N |
| 23. I try to reconcile a conflict as soon as possible. | A U S R N |
| 24. My spouse tries to reconcile a conflict as soon as possible. | A U S R N |
| 25. I do not hit, or "call names" of my spouse. | A U S R N |
| 26. My spouse does not hit, or "calls name" of me. | A U S R N |
| 27. I am happy to just share and spend time with my spouse. | A U S R N |

@ Taken and modified from Jerry Hardin and Dianne Sloan, "Getting Ready for Marriage."

III. Something for you to read:

Ten Dishonoring Behavior (by Gary Smalley):

1. Ignoring or degrading another person's opinions, advice or beliefs.
2. Burying oneself in the TV or newspaper when another person is trying to communicate with us.
3. Creating jokes about another person's weak areas or shortcomings
4. Making regular verbal attacks on loved ones; criticizing harshly, being judgmental, delivering uncaring lectures.

5. Treating in-laws or other relatives as unimportant in one's planning and communication.
6. Ignoring or simply not expressing appreciation for kind deeds done for us.
7. Distasteful habits that are practiced in front of the family - even after we are asked to stop.
8. Overcommitting ourselves to other projects or people so that everything outside the home seems more important than those inside the home.
9. Power struggles that leave one person feeling that they are a child or are being harshly dominated.
10. An unwillingness to admit that we are wrong or ask for forgiveness.

Walk With My Lover This Week

Week Seven

I. Lordship:

Read your Bible daily: D1___ D2___ D3___ D4___ D5___

Pray for your spouse and success of this program daily _____

Complete the Bible study "Love and Forgiveness" _____

II. Intimacy:

Complete the evaluation "Why Do We Act the Way
We Do?" _____

Do at least 30 minutes intimate conversation with your
spouse _____

III. Communication:

Practice on the "I message" everyday this week _____

Go over the evaluation "Communication" with your
spouse _____

IV. Responsibility:

Record down how much time you communicate with
your spouse at levels two and one this week _____

Do a special thing for your spouse and ready to share
it in the next meeting _____

V. Planning:

Make a monthly budget plan with your spouse _____

SESSION SEVEN -- Communication as Blood Circulation of Marriage

I. Review:

Communication is to love what blood is to life. It is impossible to have any kind of relationship unless there is communication. There is no impossible marriage but there is incommunicative marriage. It is very important for couples to learn how to communicate effectively in their marriage.

What do you learn from the Scriptures reading? What are the principles of communication that you have already practiced in your marriage?

II. Lecture: "Communication as the Key to a Good Marriage"

1. Communication involves three elements:

(1) Speaker (2) Message (3) Listener

Sender's thoughts => Sender's words => Hearer's words

⇨ Hearer's interpretation

2. There are six possible messages that can get through:

(1) What you mean to say.

(2) What you actually say.

(3) What the other person hears.

(4) What the other person thinks he hears.

(5) What the other person says about what you say.

(6) What you think the other person said about what you say.

3. Every message has three components. Confusing messages are often sent because the three components are contradicting one another:

(1) Content: _____%

(2) Tone of voice: _____%

(3) Nonverbal communication: _____%

4. What are the nonverbal communications? Give some examples:

5. Listening is very important. Here is a good communication pattern:

- (1) The husband threw a ball to his wife.
- (2) The wife looked at the ball and threw it back to her husband and said: "I received a ball, is that you passing me the ball?"
- (3) The husband examined the ball and said: "Yes, this is the ball I threw to you."

6. Some obstacles to listening:

(1) Defensiveness:

- a. Premature conclusion: _____
- b. Reading into their statements: _____
- c. Rehearsing our response: _____
- d. Responding to gunpower words: _____

(2) Attitudes or biases:

(3) Our own inner struggles

7. Communication at five different levels:				% of total
level 5	Greeting	No sharing	Strangers	60%
level 4	Reporting	Share news	Acquaintance	25%
level 3	Opinions	Share thoughts	Friends	10%
level 2	Feelings	Share feelings	Trustworthy	4%
level 1	Transparent	Share self	Total commitment	1%

8. There are five personal qualities that can prevent inappropriate communication in marriage:

S - (Col. 4:6) _____

P - (Rom. 12:12) _____

A - (Rom. 12:16) _____

R - (1 Cor. 1:10) _____

K - (Eph. 4:31-32) _____

9. Five elements of ill communication:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

10. Five elements of good communication:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

11. The fundamental reason of bad communication:

(1) Gen. 3:8-24 _____

(2) Matt. 7:3-5 _____

III. Group Activities:

1. Share what are your communication levels? At what level does your spouse usually respond? When do you feel most like responding at levels two or one? On which level do you usually share with God?
2. "I Messages": Each couple sits down and faces to each other, and take turns to say a sentence begin with "I..." to the spouse. You can say anything you feel like saying. Such as "I feel angry when you talk to me in a judgmental tone." You have to say at least 12 sentences.

IV. Devotion:

1. Each couples pray together. Ask God to help you in three things:
 - (1) To improve your communication levels.
 - (2) To break your bad communication patterns.
 - (3) To avoid conflicts.

WEEK SEVEN – Home Assignment

I. Bible Study: “Love and Forgiveness” I John 4:7-20

1. Love is a _____ to promote the _____, happiness, and well-being to others. Where does love come from? I John 4:7

2. How can we have more love? I John 4:16-17 _____

3. What does it mean “abiding in God’s love?” _____

4. Why can love drive out fear? _____

5. Who is a liar? I John 4:19 _____

6. What is God’s order? I John 4:20 _____

7. How can we gain our first love back? Rev. 2:4-5 _____

8. The power of forgiveness is that it _____ frustration, irritation, and the desire for revenge. To practice forgiveness, we must give up _____, and we must give of ourselves in true repentance.

9. Why are we judgmental? Mat. 7:1-5 _____

10. How do we avoid judging others? John 8:7 _____

11. What is the relationship between prayer and forgiveness? Mark 11:25-26

-
12. If we do not forgive others, what can happen? _____
-
13. How many times should I forgive others? Matt. 18:22 _____
-
14. What is the motivation of forgiveness? Col. 3:13 _____
-
15. What is the difference between “judgment” or “rebuke” ? Luke 17:3
-
-
16. Are there any kind of sins that cannot be forgiven? _____
-
-

II. Evaluation: “Why Do We Act the Way We Do?”

Do you have conflicting ideas about what a marriage should be?

A- agree; D- disagree; and “?” not sure.

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. A wife should obey her husband in general. | A | D | ? |
| 2. Money should be strictly budgeted. | A | D | ? |
| 3. The wife should not be employed outside the home. | A | D | ? |
| 4. The husband should manage the family finances. | A | D | ? |
| 5. Being critical of your partner will help correct his/her faults. | A | D | ? |
| 6. A marriage is a fifty-fifty proposition. | A | D | ? |
| 7. Children are the responsibility of the mother. | A | D | ? |
| 8. Conflict is normal in marriage. | A | D | ? |
| 9. Honesty is always the best policy in marriage. | A | D | ? |
| 10. Married couples should not live with in-laws. | A | D | ? |
| 11. Family life should be democratic. | A | D | ? |
| 12. One good way of bringing the other person to his senses after a dispute or quarrel is to withhold your affection until he does. | A | D | ? |
| 13. Children should be strictly disciplined. | A | D | ? |

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 14. Talking over your marital problems to friends is shameful. | A | D | ? |
| 15. Both partners should be allowed to see their opposite sex friends alone after marriage. | A | D | ? |
| 16. Adultery on the part of either partner is sufficient cause for divorce. | A | D | ? |
| 17. Cooking and housekeeping are the wife's job. | A | D | ? |
| 18. The wife should build her life around her husband. | A | D | ? |
| 19. It is a sign of weakness to go to a marriage counselor. | A | D | ? |
| 20. Arguments can be constructive as well as destructive. | A | D | ? |
| 21. It is all right to modify the truth a little bit in order to avoid unpleasantness in the home. | A | D | ? |
| 22. Sexual adjustment depends much more on psychological than upon physical factors. | A | D | ? |
| 23. There is perfect partner somewhere for every person. | A | D | ? |
| 24. Good dispositions are more important than financial security. | A | D | ? |
| 25. For most women crying is the natural way to relieve tension. | A | D | ? |
| 26. Having a baby is a good way to settle marital difficulties. | A | D | ? |
| 27. Two children are enough for any family. | A | D | ? |
| 28. The wisest course to take when an argument seems to be developing is to remain silent or to leave the room. | A | D | ? |
| 29. Two persons pray together will stay together. | A | D | ? |
| 30. Husbands should lead spiritual activities such as family devotion. | A | D | ? |

@ Take and modified from James R. Hine, "Alternative to Divorce."

III. Some Good Topics for Communication:

1. I would like others to say of our marriage when we have passed away.....
2. I was thankful today for.....
3. I find it difficult to communicate with others because.....
4. I feel weak when.....
5. I have feelings of pure pleasure when.....
6. I wish I could stop.....

7. I need help in.....
8. I see your beauty when.....
9. I appreciate you today because.....
10. I discover something new about myself that....
11. I would like to do with you.
12. I feel incomplete without your involvement in.....
13. I love you because.....
14. I have a dream about.....
15. I like our children.....

Walk With My Lover This Week

Week Eight

I. Lordship:

Read your Bible daily: D1___ D2___ D3___ D4___ D5___

Pray for your spouse and success of this program daily. _____

Complete the Bible study "Handle Your Anger." _____

II. Intimacy:

Complete the evaluation "Sources of Our Conflicts." _____

Complete the evaluation "Manage Our Conflicts." _____

Practice "Intimate Conversation" at least three times. _____

III. Communication:

Go over the evaluation "Why Do We Act the Way We Do?" with you spouse. _____

Do levels one or two communication with your spouse. _____

IV. Responsibility:

Spend time with your children every day, try to use the listening skills you learned. _____

Do a special thing for your spouse and be ready to share it at the next meeting _____

V. Planning:

Plan to have a date with your spouse. _____

SESSION EIGHT -- Interaction as the Nerve System of Marriage

I. Review:

For years we searched for the right person to be our mate. At last we find one and we were married. Then are we satisfied? Not exactly. We begin to reform our mate and the struggle comes. Our mate may not want to change. Why are we so reluctant to change? What happens when we honestly want change but feel that we should not or cannot do anything to make it happen?

The interaction between husband and wife is dynamic. It is like the nerve system in our body; it reacts according to how you stimulate it. It is delicate and sensitive. Whether it causes pain or enjoyment, depends on where you touch it.

There are some other subjects we need to deal with such as in-laws. Marriage is not just two persons bonding together, but two families joining together. There are in-laws and relatives that need to build new relationships. It is your choice whether you want to expand your friendship.

II. Lecture: "Mature in Change"

1. (Phil. 3:12-14) What is Paul's attitude towards change? _____

2. (1 The. 5:11) Should we desire and request change in our spouse?

3. What happens if change doesn't occur?ⁱ
 - (1) Resignation: "I give up." _____
 - (2) Martyrdom: "I am no good for you." _____
 - (3) Revenge: "Vengeance is mine." _____
 - (4) Withdrawal: "I choose not to be involved with you." _____
4. Why are we reluctant to change?

- (1) Habit: _____
- (2) Ignorance: _____
- (3) Uncertainty: _____

5. Why do we desire change?

- (1) Renewal: _____
- (2) Suffering: _____
- (3) Variety: _____
- (4) A new me: _____

6. How much you know about feelings?

- (1) Feeling is feeling, there is no right and wrong.
- (2) Everyone has a right to have and to express feelings.
- (3) We cannot force another person to have the same feeling as ours.
- (4) We should accept the other person's negative feeling.
- (5) We should not criticize the other feeling.

7. We need to learn how to express our feeling positively.

- (1) "I appreciate your...."
- (2) "I enjoy to do..... with you."
- (3) "I like the way you....."
- (4) "I feel so good when you....."

8. Daily practice "Intimate Conversation" with your spouse:

- (1) Side by side: _____
- (2) Eyes to eyes: _____
- (3) Hand in hand: _____
- (4) Heart to heart: _____

9. How do we build up good relationship with our in-laws? Here are some in-laws guidelines:

- (1) Take a positive, optimistic view of in-laws.
 - (2) Recognize the importance of your in-law's family.
 - (3) Evaluate family customs and traditions.
 - (4) Consider in-law needs.
 - (5) Treat in-laws like friends.
 - (6) Handle advice like a friend's advice.
 - (7) Are they meddling or concerned?
 - (8) Look for their positive qualities.
 - (9) Keep visits short.
 - (10) Separation is gradual.
 - (11) Give them advice when they ask for it.
 - (12) Keep disagreements between you and your spouse.
 - (13) Don't use your family as a model.
10. If you have to live with your in-laws, how can your spouse help you in dealing with them?

III. Group Activities:

1. Do the following test and share with others:

(1) A strong person does not expose his inner feeling.	Y/N
(2) A spiritual leader should not express his feeling publicly.	Y/N
(3) If you do not think about it, it will disappear by itself.	Y/N
(4) I am responsible for my spouse's anger.	Y/N
(5) Feeling is automatic, I cannot control it.	Y/N
2. Share something happened recently that makes you happy. Try to describe it pictorially.
3. Share your experience how you deal with your in-laws. Is there a good example in the church that we can learn from?

IV. Devotion:

1. Everyone takes turn to read Ephesians 4:17-32, verse by verse.
2. Each person uses the verse he or she read to make a short prayer.

WEEK EIGHT – Home Assignment

I. Bible Study: “Handle Your Anger” Eph. 4:25-32

1. Is anger always bad? (4:26) Did Jesus have anger in the temple? (John 2:13-17)

2. What does it mean “to give the devil a foothold” ? (4:27) _____

3. Why will the Holy Spirit grieve? (4:30) _____

4. What will anger do? (James 1:20) _____

5. There are four typical responses to anger, give an example for each

(1) Suppression: _____

(2) Expression: _____

(3) Repression: _____

(4) Confession: _____

6. What can we do with anger? (Prov. 29:11)

(1) Identify the cause: Hurt? Fear? Frustration? _____

(2) Did your partner do something intentionally? _____

(3) How is your anger helpful or useful? _____

(4) “Consulting with yourself” _____

(5) “Conscious delay” _____

(6) Identify the cues which contribute to anger. _____

(7) De-ice your spouse. _____

7. What are possible stumbling blocks in your marriage? (Rom. 14:13)

8. Anger = Emotion + Expression

We cannot change our emotion, but we can change our expression. How does the Scripture teach us to express our emotion positively?

(James 1:19) _____

(Prov. 15:1) _____

(Prov. 15:23) _____

(Rom. 12:19; 21) _____

(Eph. 4:26) _____

(1 Peter 3:9) _____

9. How do we light up each other?

F - _____ (Matt. 6:12)

I - _____ (Gen. 2:25)

R - _____ (Prov. 23:4)

E - _____ (1 The. 5:11)

II. Evaluation 1: "Sources of Our Conflicts"

What irritates me most from my spouse (or I irritate my spouse most):

3 very much; 2 - irritating; 1 - some; 0 not irritating

My spouse to me:						I to my spouse:				
1.	3	2	1	0	Insincerity	3	2	1	0	
2.	3	2	1	0	Feeling too easily hurt	3	2	1	0	
3.	3	2	1	0	Conceited	3	2	1	0	
4.	3	2	1	0	Interferes with my business	3	2	1	0	
5.	3	2	1	0	Narrow-minded	3	2	1	0	
6.	3	2	1	0	Argumentative	3	2	1	0	
7.	3	2	1	0	Quick-tempered	3	2	1	0	

8.	3	2	1	0	Poor housekeeper	3	2	1	0
9.	3	2	1	0	Spoils children	3	2	1	0
10.	3	2	1	0	Neglects children	3	2	1	0
11.	3	2	1	0	Interferes with my discipline of children	3	2	1	0
12.	3	2	1	0	Nagging	3	2	1	0
13.	3	2	1	0	Selfish, inconsiderate	3	2	1	0
14.	3	2	1	0	Critical	3	2	1	0
15.	3	2	1	0	Complaining	3	2	1	0
16.	3	2	1	0	Has annoying habits and mannerisms	3	2	1	0
17.	3	2	1	0	Slovenly	3	2	1	0
18.	3	2	1	0	Dishonest	3	2	1	0
19.	3	2	1	0	Unaffectionate	3	2	1	0
20.	3	2	1	0	Unresponsive sexually	3	2	1	0
21.	3	2	1	0	Unfaithful	3	2	1	0
22.	3	2	1	0	Disorganization	3	2	1	0
23.	3	2	1	0	Desire to escape from things	3	2	1	0
24.	3	2	1	0	Attitude towards in-laws	3	2	1	0
25.	3	2	1	0	Naive	3	2	1	0
26.	3	2	1	0	Stingy	3	2	1	0
27.	3	2	1	0	Wasting resources or money	3	2	1	0
28.	3	2	1	0	Desire to escape from things	3	2	1	0
29.	3	2	1	0	Demanding sex	3	2	1	0
30.	3	2	1	0	Rejects religion	3	2	1	0
31.	3	2	1	0	_____	3	2	1	0

@ take and modified from James R. Hine, "Alternative to Divorce."

III. Evaluation 2: "Manage Our Conflicts"

A - always; U - usually; S - sometimes; R - rarely; N - never

- I know when I am angry. A U S R N
- I control myself when things do not go my way. A U S R N
- When I am angry with my spouse, I try to find proper

- time and place to discuss it with him/her. A U S R N
4. I freely express my ideas, even when they differ from those of my spouse. A U S R N
5. I only carry on serious discussion with my spouse about our difference when children are not around. A U S R N
6. When my spouse hurts my feelings, I confront my partner and discuss the matter with him/her. A U S R N
7. When my spouse is angry with me, I do not immediately strike back with my own feelings without thinking.. A U S R N
8. When my spouse asks me if I am angry, I freely admit that I am. I do not hide my feeling. A U S R N
9. I am satisfied with the way in which I settle my differences with my spouse. A U S R N
10. I compromise with my spouse when conflicts arise. A U S R N
11. It upsets me a lot when my spouse disagrees with me. A U S R N
12. I tend to withdraw from my spouse when I become angry. A U S R N
13. I tend to keep things inside until I finally explode with anger. A U S R N
14. I have tendency to feel very sorry or guilty after getting angry at my spouse. A U S R N
15. When my spouse hurts my feelings, I have a tendency to pout or sulk for a period of time. A U S R N
16. I let my spouse have his/her ways in order to keep peace in the family. A U S R N
17. I tend to take my anger out on my spouse rather than the person I am actually angry with. A U S R N
18. Our argument tends to have no focus, and problems for discussion are not defined. A U S R N
19. I tend not to listen to what my spouse says, when we engage in conflicts. A U S R N
20. I always forget to ask God to help when I am in angry. A U S R N

@ Taken and modified from Norman Wright ,“Communication, Key to Your Marriage.”

Walk With My Lover This Week

Week Nine

I. Lordship:

Read your Bible daily: D1___ D2___ D3___ D4___ D5___

Pray for your spouse and success of this program daily _____

Complete the Bible study **“Where Is Your Treasure?”** _____

II. Intimacy:

Complete the evaluation **“Money Matters”** _____

Do at least 40 minutes intimate conversation with your spouse _____

III. Communication:

Go over the evaluations **“Sources of Our Conflicts”** and **“Manage Our Conflicts”** with your spouse. _____

Continue to practice **“Intimate Conversation”** _____

IV. Responsibility:

Take your family out to dine in a nice restaurant. _____

Participate with your spouse in a church ministry. _____

V. Planning:

Make a list of things or issues of disagreement that need more time to explore and to solve. _____

SESSION NINE -- Conflict Resolution as Recuperation for Marriage

I. Review:

It is hard to control our anger, if we are a short temper person. Temper may not be able to change, but how to express our anger is something we learn through our lives. The only way to handle our temper is to practice expressing it in a positive way.

Conflict is a fact of life. We are imperfect people. Each of us has our own desires, wants, needs, and goals. Whenever any of these differ from another person, conflict may occur. The conflicts themselves are not the problem, but rather our reaction to them. How to manage conflicts is a lesson that we have to learn through our marriage life.

II. Lecture: "Anger and Conflict"

1. Anger comes from three basic reasons:

- (1) Hurt: _____
- (2) Fear: _____
- (3) Frustration: _____

2. Make the most out of anger:

- (1) Anger is neither right nor wrong.
- (2) Anger can be released in a right or wrong way.
- (3) You are vulnerable when angry.
- (4) Uncontrolled anger leads to bitterness, hatred and even violence.
- (5) Be constructively, creatively angry.

3. What causes conflicts? (James 4:1-3) _____

4. Healthy reaction approaches to anger

- (1) Be aware of your emotions.
- (2) Don't be afraid to admit your emotions.

- (3) Investigate how the emotions got there.
- (4) Share your emotions with your spouse.
- (5) Decide what to do with your emotions.

5. Unhealthy reaction approaches to anger:

- (1) Ignore your emotional reactions.
- (2) Keep your anger down in the pit of your stomach where it won't bother your head.
- (3) Keep on denying your emotions.
- (4) Keep your mind on the argument and how you can get back at your spouse.
- (5) If you really get mad, blame your spouse.
- (6) Don't learn from your emotions.

6. The progressive stages of conflict:

<u>Assumptions</u>	How things ought to be handled.
↓	
<u>Context</u>	Who we are? Who knows the best?
↓	Who do we trust?
<u>Events</u>	Things that trigger the battle
↓	
<u>Engagement</u>	Avoid it, Confront it, Contain it, Refer it
↓	
<u>Conclusion</u>	Decisions are made, changes are made

7. Conflict is a natural part of growth and family living. Many conflicts are simply symptoms of something else. For example: _____

8. How do we deal with conflict?

- (1) Withdraw: _____
- (2) Win: _____

- (3) Yield: _____
- (4) Compromise: _____
- (5) Resolve: _____

9. Twenty ways to cope with conflict:

- (1) Don't avoid conflict with the silent treatment.
- (2) Don't save "emotional trading stamps."
- (3) If possible, prepare the setting for disagreement.
- (4) Attack the problem, not each other.
- (5) Don't throw your feelings like stones.
- (6) Identify each person's understanding of the problem.
- (7) Stay on the subject.
- (8) Offer solutions with your criticisms.
- (9) Focus on solution.
- (10) Never say, "You never..."
- (11) Don't manipulate your mate with, "It's all my fault."
- (12) Don't pull cracks about in-laws or relatives.
- (13) Don't pull cracks about your mate's appearance.
- (14) Don't dramatize the facts.
- (15) Don't say "I want a divorce."
- (16) Allow for the needs of each partner to be met.
- (17) Accusations should be backed up with facts.
- (18) Remember to forget.
- (19) Be humble- you could be wrong.
- (20) Close the issue.

10. Results of conflicts:

- (1) Negative results of conflict:
 - a. Spent resources on non-productive activities.
 - b. Relationship breaks down.
 - c. Bad example and impression imprint in children's minds.

- (2) Positive results of conflict:
 - a. Awakes person from apathy.
 - b. Learn who we are.

11. Domestic violence problem:

- (1) It could be a habitual behavior.
- (2) It has to be stopped abruptly by outside authority.
- (2) The person needs an accountable counselor.
- (3) It may need professional help.

III. Group Activities:

1. Do a case study “the Overdone Duck.” Use role play approach.

The wife has worked hard during the day preparing her husband’s favorite dinner-roast duck. But he left office a bit of late, got caught in traffic coming home and is an hour late. He did not call because he was on the freeway and could not get to the phone. Now his wife is hurt and angry. Naturally, the husband is not in too good a mood either, because he has been battling traffic and has a headache. As he walks in the door, the dialogue goes like this:

Husband: Hi, I’m home. What’s for dinner tonight?

Wife: Just where have you been? (A cold voice)

Husband: Well, I got caught in traffic, ... what a hassle. How late is it?

Wife: Well, just take a look at this duck! (She holds the shambles of an overdone duck under his nose.)

Husband: Wow! What happened to that?

Wife: What do you mean what happened? It was beautiful an hour ago! But I had to try to keep it warm and it got overdone. Now it’s all dried out and ruined! Why in the world didn’t you stop and call me and tell me you were going to be this late?

Husband: For Pete’s sake, I couldn’t. I got caught in the traffic on the freeway!

Wife: Oh, don’t give me that. You could have called. IF you had any consideration you would have gotten to a phone-

Husband: I couldn't call! Why did you start cooking the duck so early, anyway?

Wife: Now you're saying it's all my fault. If you had any consideration you would have called me before you left the office or found a way to get out of traffic and call me.

Husband: Well, if you knew anything about cooking, you wouldn't have gotten that duck so done and it wouldn't be a burnt offering right now! (He leaves the room slamming the door behind him.)

@ Taken from *Communication : Key to Your Marriage*.

IV. Devotion:

1. Each couple reads 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 in unison.
2. Each couple prays together. Ask God to help you in three things:
 - (1) To change your attitude and help you to control your temper.
 - (2) To uphold other members in your group in their efforts to improve their relationships.
 - (3) To give your patience and wisdom in dealing with conflicts.

WEEK NINE – Home Assignment

I. Bible Study: “Where Is Your Treasure?”

Study the following passages to discover the Biblical principles of managing your money. Summarize each verse with a statement.

1. Deut, 8:17-18 _____

2. Prov. 11:24-25 _____

3. Prov. 11:28 _____

4. Prov. 13:22 _____

5. Prov. 22:1,4,7 _____

6. Eccl. 5:10 _____

7. Jere. 9:23-24 _____

8. Mat. 6:19-21 _____

9. Luke 12:13-21 _____

10. Rom. 13:6-8 _____

11. 1 Tim. 6:3-10; 17-18 _____

12. Heb. 13:5 _____

II. Evaluation: "Money Matter"

SA - 5 Strongly Agree; MA - 4 Mildly Agree; N - 3 Not Sure;

MD - 2 Mildly Disagree; SD 1 Strongly Disagree

	SA	MA	N	MD	SD
1. It is important to have a budget and try to live within it.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I have clear goals of what things I'd like to buy.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I think we should shop for lower prices whenever possible.	5	4	3	2	1
4. Credit card balances should be paid off each month.	5	4	3	2	1
5. All our money should go into the same pot and all expenses be shared.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I think it is okay to ask our parents for financial help.	5	4	3	2	1
7. Children (6-12 yr.) need to have money of their own.	5	4	3	2	1
8. Vacations are more important to me than saving money.	5	4	3	2	1
9. I think that I am the one who should control the money.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I always balance my checkbook to the penny.	5	4	3	2	1
11. I think it is important to save for the future.	5	4	3	2	1
12. It is important for me to have some money for which I don't have to be responsible to you.	5	4	3	2	1
13. I think to buy lottery tickets is gambling, I disapprove.	5	4	3	2	1
14. We should have two checking accounts.	5	4	3	2	1

15. I would not borrow money from my friends.	5	4	3	2	1
16. Men should always make more money than women.	5	4	3	2	1
17. I think that I should be able to lend money to a friend or relative without asking you.	5	4	3	2	1
18. I tend not to worry about financial matters.	5	4	3	2	1
19. Time together with my spouse is more important than a high-paying job with long hours.	5	4	3	2	1
20. I believe it is important for us to tithe.	5	4	3	2	1
21. I want to eat at a restaurant at least once a week.	5	4	3	2	1
22. I always tip 15 percent at a restaurant.	5	4	3	2	1
23. I want us and our children to have the latest fashions if we can afford them.	5	4	3	2	1
24. I think we should help our parents financially in their old age if at all possible.	5	4	3	2	1
25. I believe it is important to pay the bills on time.	5	4	3	2	1
26. I think the husband should handle all family investment.	5	4	3	2	1
27. It is important to keep God's instructions about money.	5	4	3	2	1
28. To set up education funds for children is very important.	5	4	3	2	1
29. To support missionaries is important to me.	5	4	3	2	1
30. I think leftovers should be eaten and not be thrown away.	5	4	3	2	1

@ Taken and modified from Jerry D. Hardin , *Getting Ready for Marriage*.

III. Causes of Extra-marital Affairs:

1. Middle age causes
2. Power or control
3. Dull, boring life
4. Lack of rewards in career or marriage
5. Marital neglect
6. To get out of a marriage
7. Anger
8. To sustain a failing marriage

9. Sexual dysfunction or deprivation
10. Yearning for romance
11. External and internal encouragement
12. Perfectionism
13. Escape
14. Emotional deprivation
15. Desire of lust

Walk With My Lover This Week

Week Ten

I. Lordship:

Read your Bible daily: D1___ D2___ D3___ D4___ D5___

Pray for your spouse and success of this program daily _____

Complete the Bible study "Vision of Life" _____

II. Intimacy:

Complete the evaluation "Our Plan for the Future" _____

Do at least 40 minutes intimate conversation with your
spouse _____

III. Communication:

Go over with your spouse the evaluation "Money
Matters" _____

Pray with your spouse at least twice a week _____

IV. Responsibility:

Complete all unfinished assignments _____

Conduct out a family alter time. Have all members
involved in the worship and prayer. _____

V. Planning:

Complete the "Vision of Life" and share your plan with
your spouse and pray together for it. _____

SESSION TEN -- Planning as the Brain of Marriage

I. Review:

Money matters cause the most conflict in a marriage. Your attitude about money comes from your family origin. The Bible has substantial teachings relating to this subject. The principle is fairly simple: “you should love people and use things, not love things and use people.” We ought to be good stewards of our money and make wise investments. We should not treasure things more than relationships because our hearts will be where our treasure is.

Less than three percent of married couples have set goals for their marriage. Goals are important. Unless you have something in mind that you want to work toward or achieve, you will not get very far. What goals do you have?

II. Lecture: “Goals of Your Life”

1. Husband and wife united to be one is God’s desire for family in order for human to experience:

(1) John 17:21,23: _____

(2) John 17:23,26: _____

(3) John 17:22,24: _____

2. This unity can be fulfilled in Christ (Eph. 2:13-14). _____

2. The characteristics of unity: (Gen. 2:25)

(1) No shame: _____

(2) No guilt: _____

(3) No barrier: _____

(4) No pretense: _____

(5) No defense: _____

3. A matched couple is

- (1) **M** - _____ (Gen. 2:24)
 (2) **A** - _____ (Gen. 2:23)
 (3) **T** - _____ (1 Peter 3:7)
 (4) **C** - _____ (Mal. 2:13-14)
 (5) **H** - _____ (Rom. 12:10)

4. Do you have a budget for your family? Here are some suggestions for making a budget:

- (1) Set aside a time to do a budget together.
- (2) Define your financial goals. What is the purpose of it?
- (3) Think first, before you allocate or adjust amount.
- (4) Plan for the big expenses: house, car, child, savings, etc.
- (5) Keep good records, but do not track to a penny.
- (6) Do not intermingle funds.
- (7) Do not cheat your budget.
- (8) Evaluate and adjust your budget every six months.

5. The basic principles of borrowing money:

(1) For consumer loan: Borrow the amount that you can repay immediately, if you sell the goods. _____

(2) For investment loan: Borrow the amount that you can allocate resources to pay it back, if you have to. _____

6. What are your goals for your life:

(1) God: (Matt. 6:33) _____

(2) Self: (Matt. 5:16) _____

(3) Marriage: (Col. 3:18-19) _____

(4) Children: (Prov.22:6) _____

(5) Career: (Col. 3:22-23) _____

(6) Church: (Heb.10:25) _____

(7) Ministry: (John. 15:13) _____

7. It is important to have a resolution for the thing you plan to do. What is your resolution after this training? _____

8. How are we going to continue to support each other in the future? How about organizing a small group and meet once a while? Write down the names of couples you plan to invite in the your small group.

III. Group Activities:

1. Think about two things that you plan to do within three years, and share with the others how are you going to accomplish them.
2. Imagine that if you only have three days to live,
 - (1) What thought will occupy your mind the most? _____

(2) Who will you miss the most? _____

(3) What matters will become important suddenly? _____

(4) How are you going to spend the rest of your three days of life?

IV. Devotion:

1. Each couple pray together. Here are things to pray about:

(1) Thank God who gave you strength to go through this ten weeks training.

(2) Ask God to help you practice what you have learned in this training and continue all good changes you have made in your relationship with your spouse.

(3) Pray for a good couple that can be a supportive family for you.

WEEK TEN – Home Assignment

I. Bible Study: Vision of Life

“Where there is no vision, the people will perish.” (Prov. 29:18)

1. What did Jesus say about his purpose for living? (John 4:31-34) _____

2. A life purpose is an overarching objective to be accomplished in one’s life. Do you have a life purpose? _____

3. The writer of Ecclesiastics found meaning of life. (Eccl. 12:13)

a. _____

b. _____

4. What is Jesus’ summary about the duty of man. (Mark 12:29-31)

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

5. What do you want people to remember you as? Write a statement of your life purpose in relation to God. _____

6. What is the reason that you feel worthy and love yourself? (Rom. 8:15-17)

7. Jesus’ life purpose was to accomplish God’s plan for the redemption of human. To achieve that purpose, he had goals such as (1) training his disciples, (2) dying on the cross, (3) and resurrecting from the death.

9. The goals that Jesus set had three important characteristics: (1) They were God-revealed rather than man-conceived. (2) They were large enough to be unattainable without God's power. (3) They made possible the achievement of life purpose.
10. After you settle your life purpose, then you need set goals to actualize your purpose of life.. _____

11. When you make important choices in life, such as vacation, career, you need to ask: Will this choice help me to achieve God's purposes in my life?

II. Evaluation: "Our Plan for the Future"

- | | | | |
|--|-----|----|---|
| 1. I believe that birth control is the responsibility of the female. | Yes | No | ? |
| 2. I think abortion is not an acceptable means of birth control. | Yes | No | ? |
| 3. I believe children need to learn how to manage money as they grow up. | Yes | No | ? |
| 4. I think children should earn their allowance. | Yes | No | ? |
| 5. It is important to me to have a son. | Yes | No | ? |
| 6. I think Christian education is very important; we should have a family altar at home. | Yes | No | ? |
| 7. He/she does not take enough interest in outside activities. | Yes | No | ? |
| 8. I think it's parents' responsibility to teach children about sex. | Yes | No | ? |
| 9. I believe daily schedules are important for young children. | Yes | No | ? |
| 10. It is important that we have a budget and to live within it. | Yes | No | ? |
| 11. I think we should shop for lower prices whenever possible. | Yes | No | ? |
| 12. Credit card balances should be paid off each month. | Yes | No | ? |
| 13. All our money should go into the same pot. | Yes | No | ? |
| 14. I think that I am the one who should manage the money. | Yes | No | ? |
| 15. I think life insurance is important to us. | Yes | No | ? |
| 16. We should have two checking accounts. | Yes | No | ? |

- | | | | |
|---|-----|----|---|
| 17. I think that we should have a week-long family vacation at least once a year. | Yes | No | ? |
| 18. I think that I should be able to lend money to a friend or relative without asking you. | Yes | No | ? |
| 19. Time together with the family is more important than a high-paid job. | Yes | No | ? |
| 20. I want to eat at a restaurant at least once a week. I want us and our children to have the latest fashions if we can afford them. | Yes | No | ? |
| 22. I think we should help our parents in their old age. | Yes | No | ? |
| 23. I think saving money for the future is important. | Yes | No | ? |
| 24. I think to prepare a will is very important now. | Yes | No | ? |
| 25. I think one should have an Individual Retirement Account. | Yes | No | ? |
| 26. I think we need to save money for the children's education. | Yes | No | ? |
| To provide children as much as talent development activities is important to me, so long as we can afford it. | Yes | No | ? |
| 28. I think it is Okay to declare bankruptcy. | Yes | No | ? |
| To have our own house is very important to me. | Yes | No | ? |
| 30. I would like to change a new car every two or three years. | Yes | No | ? |

@ Taken and modified from Jerry Hardin and Dianne Sloan, "Getting ready for Marriage."

III. Conclusion:

Congratulation! You have been through this marriage enrichment program and survived. However, this is not the end of your efforts to improve your relationship with your spouse and the family. It is just a new beginning for you to explore. Everything you learned from this course you will lose it very soon, if you do not continue to practice it. By the power of the Holy Spirit, I wish that you will achieve your life purposes, and have a meaningful life.

Please do not forget to finish your post-course testing and return it to the teacher.

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