

“Marriage Sunday”
By Brother Andy Giebler
Sunday, August 10th, 2014

We started on this last week, and we talked about marriage. I want to say that it's a privilege it is just to talk about this, and to be able to share with my brothers and sisters. I don't take it lightly to stand behind this pulpit. My wife and I want to share a couple of things off of our heart towards marriage, because we think it's important. The world has given us a skewed vision of what marriage is these days. We need to take time, as brothers and sisters, especially as married couples, to have fellowship, and to talk about these things, and take time to just strengthen one another. If we don't strengthen each other, it's not going to happen. We have—I have my wife, and we have our times together—we should talk together and share things—but we need fellowship with other couples, things that help encourage and strengthen, to kick out the nonsense of the world, and to reaffirm, from the scriptures, what marriage is all about. One thing that's on my heart is that our love for God, it doesn't grow by chance. Our walk with God doesn't improve by chance. God draws us, but it's up to us to make that relationship work, because, a lot of times, we take and use an example where we're talking about godliness and growing in God, and compare it to marriage, but I want to take it the other way,—that's really where it's at—because our relationship with God's got to be first. In our marriage, if we don't take the time to strengthen our marriage, if we don't go out of our way to do it, if we don't find things to make our marriage better, then things are left up to chance, just as if we leave our walk with God up to chance—we might find ourselves down the road, thinking, “In God, what am I doing? Why haven't I attained to something else?” I might have to stop and think, “Am I doing things? Am I reading my Scriptures? Am I praying like I should? Am I getting fellowship like I should? What am I doing to make that work?” In our relationship with our wives or our husbands, if we don't take the time to learn of each other, if we don't take time—if I don't figure out what she likes? I'm going to be in trouble. Sometimes we have a tendency to become comfortable, and we stop looking at those things. We have to go out of our way for those things. A lot of times it's learning about relationships. A lot of us were raised different ways; we have different ways that were taught to us by our parents, our grandparents, by our family around us... Some were good, some maybe not so good, I don't know. Everyone's got a different experience of people around them, how their marriage worked. That's why we have to come back to God, and we have to come back to learning some things about each other. Sometimes, and this may sound unspiritual, but, I believe sometimes, in this society, take time to get counseling. A lot of people, and I'm going to take the stigma away from it, a lot of times, all it is, is two people having a mediator between them, because a husband and wife are two human beings. Sometimes it's having a pastor or a close friend, and you're talking to them, sometimes you're able to—sometimes, we can be with a couple, and they don't even know it, and we're talking, and, because we're with a godly couple, and I can see things in myself that I wouldn't see if it was just us two. She could say something to me and I could blow it off, something that concerned her. If I see something in another godly couple, that says, now I have to take that internally with me, and it causes me to think. Sometimes reading a book can—there's a lot of godly books out there; there's a lot of nonsense out there—but I have one that I've read that our pastor has—Pastor Paine has recommended to us, called *The Five Love Languages*. It's not an end-all fix, but it's something that I needed to do to help my relationship; it's something we did together. I believe some of you have read it, too. I'm not trying to say this one particular thing; I'm saying that our marriages don't get better by chance. They don't get better by just saying, “I want to do this.” Some people do this naturally, some people do this more naturally than others, some people have to work at it. If you look at someone and think that they have the perfect marriage, and you think, “Why

don't I have that?" watch and see the things that they do. I have more that I want to share later on in the service; I'm going to ask my wife to share her heart this morning, and then I'm going to ask a few other couples to share.

SONIA: Good morning. Just like Andy was sharing about our relationship with God is something that we have to invest time in. It's not something that we just allow it to flourish by chance. When we went to this, "I Still Do" conference a couple of week-ends ago, just like Andy mentioned, not because our marriage was in danger, but, because we know that we are two very different human beings being together, and so very different in so many ways, but we're willing to work through those differences. There's many things that we could stand up here and talk about, but, by all means, our marriage is nowhere near perfect. No one is perfect. We're grateful that God put us together and He's allowing us to grow together each and every day, not only enhancing our marriage, but enhancing the lives that we come across. Andy and I were talking last night about doing things specifically to enhance and strengthen our marriage, because I need my love tank filled on a regular basis, and so does my spouse. If we just leave it to chance, it's not going to happen. You have to take the initiative, and you have to work at it, just like with any interests or hobbies that each and every person has. Just like I would invest time in a hobby, because I love to do that, or I care about that—Second to God, my spouse is the most important thing to me here on earth. I know that's kind of shocking, because I love my grandchildren, I love my mom and dad, I love my friends, I love a lot of people in my life, but—In this conference they mentioned to us that your spouse should be the second most important thing in your life, and that was very shocking to me, because I love my grandchildren, I love my daughter, I love my family, I love my sisters, I love my brother, I love my mom, I love you all, but, my spouse, if I don't invest the time in him, if I don't make him feel like I'm his number one cheerleader, somebody else is going to. I can't let that in.

Andy also mentioned last week so many great points that I wanted to make. We have to protect this relationship; no one else is going to protect it for us. We have to protect it with our lives; no matter what it takes to protect that relationship, we must do it. How do we do that? we take an interest in each other. We take interest in the things that we both like to do together—a lot of the things that Andy likes to do, I don't like to do. I know that's shocking to a lot of you. My husband loves garage sales; I do not like garage sales, but I make it a point, and I know that sounds funny, but I make it a point, and I know that sounds like, "Wow! Garage sales? big deal." It's time that we spend together, whether I like it or not, I'm investing time in something that my husband likes to do, and vice versa. My husband may not like making the bed, but he goes out of his way, and makes the bed, and that makes my day. He's investing his time in something that I like done. You know, finding quality time to spend with each other; it's not the quantity, it's the quality time that you make for each other. It helps us to learn more about each other; it helps us to grow together, and learn what is it that makes him tick? what is it that makes him happy? what is it that makes him excited? If you find those small moments, that little quality time... Life is going to pass you by, and, at the end of your time, you're going to have lots of regrets. It does take lots of time, and love, and patience, and kind words, even though the other person might have wronged you or vice versa. I'm not pointing fingers. I believe that we do need to make whatever necessary, whatever sacrifice necessary to invest in our marriage, to strengthen our marriage.

There was a couple there that mentioned seven gifts that men should give to their women, and women should give to their men. I wasn't at all shocked that the number one that they talked about was godliness. We can have everything in our marriage, the love, and the patience, and the kind words, and whatever it takes for a marriage to flourish and be strengthened, but if the godliness is not there, what's it worth? If we don't put God first in our lives, this union is not going to work.

Another thing that stood out to me was the encouragement that we should give one to another. I shouldn't be verbally abusing my husband. I'm not saying that I've never done it, but verbal

affirmation is very important. I should be his cheerleader. He should feel like he is on top of the world; whatever he does, I should be cheering him on, regardless of what went wrong, or what didn't go the way he thought it was going to go. Also, loyalty: Andy should never have a question whose team we're on, whose team I'm on. It should just be so affirmative that he knows I've got his back, and vice versa. I should know the same about him. You know, there's many gifts. They talked about godliness, which I wanted to point out, and unrivalled priority, respect, of course. If I can't respect my husband, how can I expect others to respect him? Encouragement, loyalty, and confidentiality. Men to women, they talk about, of course, godliness, unconditional love, understanding—because we're so different, you know? Even though he needs my understanding, that's something that I, as a woman, need—for him to be a provider, protector, trustworthy, and assertive leader. I just want to point out that in order for this union to be strengthened and to grow, along the lines, there's going to be a lot of sacrifices made, and Andy and I, we made a vow to each other, and, yes, there's been many times that those vows have been challenged for whatever reason—deaths in the family, or whatever the challenges might have been—but I'm so grateful that God has given me a man of God that stands on his word, stands on God's Word, and, regardless of what's happening, what's going on, with no hesitation, I know that my husband is always going to stand firm on believing that it's all going to work out, because we're always going to put God first, no matter what else happens. We learned a lot of new tools, and different things to equip us as a couple. A lot of things that we probably already knew, but if you don't put those things into action, it's just like having a new pair of shoes and never wearing them.

So, I just want to say that God has given us this union and I don't want to take for granted the love and the patience and all the great gifts that have come through all the challenges, and through all the happy and not so happy times, we're in it for good. We just thank God that He's allowed each and every one of you to be a part of our lives and we just pray to continue to grow together. One thing that I'd like to leave you with is they said sacrifices made for each other determine the strength of our marriage. I do believe that. When you make the necessary sacrifices, and you stand on God's Word, and you work through it together, God is going to give you the strength, and He is going to the knowledge, and He's going to give you what you need to get through it. We do have to protect our marriages, we have to stand on God's Word, and we have to continue to work together. I pray that we continue to help each other through whatever relationships we have together and whatever challenges we face and, as we go forward, let's just continue to help each other and stay encouraged in God.

ANDY: Mike and Mary Ogden, if you could come on up. I've asked them to share what they do to protect their marriage and strengthen their marriage. How long have you been married, Mike?

MIKE: Coming up on thirty-eight years.

ANDY: Coming up on thirty-eight years. Amen.

MIKE: I got to know Mary when I was nineteen. We went together; we started out when we were in college, and I had no idea that she was looking for anyone. My roommate had a party going on, he invited a friend; she brought Mary. I didn't party. I was into painting; that's all I wanted to do. Mary didn't party; she was just kind of like a wallflower. She just wanted to sit on the bed and needlepoint. I looked at her, and I thought, "That's a person I really want to get to know." Over the next month, I knew that she was the person I was going to marry. I knew that so well, I bought the rings on the third year of just going together. I knew I was going to marry her. I should say, let's go back—what do I think Mary is? I go back to Adam and Eve. God made Adam, and then Adam was alone, and then God provided Eve. He took her in marriage, and that was the first marriage. They messed up; got kicked out of the garden; they stayed together, and they started a civilization. Even after they messed up, their

faith was still in God. I said within the first year, I knew I was going to marry Mary. God gave her to me; I wasn't looking for her, but God said, "Here." I was smart enough to say okay. By the end of the fifth year, I talked to Mary, and I said, "I give myself to you. I give my soul to you; everything" So, when it came time to get married, I was already married. I was already married because God put us together; He joined us. Nothing was ever going to separate us. We became two sides of a coin. Over thirty-seven years, I have asked her if I could cash a check for a dollar, anything. Our hobbies are the same. I know exactly what she's going to say before she says it. Have I gotten mad at her? no. Frustrated? yeah. She does things that frustrate me, but she's never done anything to make me mad. I frustrate her a lot. She's my better half, and when I look at her, I see God.

MARY: That's right, were two sides of the same coin. He's arts, I'm crafts. He's the head of the household; what he says—when he makes up his mind, that's what's going to happen. Part of my job is to make sure that it happens. Think resident and vice-president. The president is the head, but the vice president is usually the one running around making things happen. Through the years, there have been times when we've been at church, and we've been in two different places in the congregation. I've had people come up to me and say, "You're married?" because this young man is so self-effacing that he's my support, but people don't see him like they should. One of the many things that I have learned, growing up in the church, since we came here, is that I need to allow him to be the head of the household. I need to be the person that's second, not the person that's first. That makes a big difference when you talk about supporting something—if you're trying to be first, then you're competing, you're not supporting. So, you have to sit back, and you have to support. We've had some challenges; I won't tell you that we've had a perfect marriage. There's some things that could have just blown us out of the water before we even came—me joining the military and then coming here. Michael had to make a decision, you know? I had to make a decision, too, because, at that time, we were both very cranky, and very hard to live with. We had to stick with our decision; we were going to get married once, we were going to get married to each other, and that was it. God put us together, we weren't going to let anything take us apart. We didn't, we talked about this before we got married. This wasn't something that we waited until after we got married to talk about. When we came to Christian Fellowship, we were still right off base, and outside the Chinese restaurant there was this dark stairway that went pretty much straight up and at the top was your access to Heaven. That's where we learned about baptism in Jesus' name. Now, we'd been looking for years. We started out in college looking for the place that we were going to call home; when we arrived at Christian Fellowship, we knew that we had it. When the decision came, baptism in Jesus' name, yes or no? We had the Bible study. The gentleman that was with us was very kind, and stepped away so that we could talk. We both said, "I'm not doing this without you." There's no reason to step into God and His guidance without doing it together. This is from 2 Corinthians 6:14 "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" I can't even imagine walking this path by myself. I don't know how couples even try to do that. This is—I don't understand that.

I have some other things. I want to re-emphasize some things that Sonia was saying. You have to put God first. There have been lots of times that, you know, we talk about things, and I've got a goal in mind, you know, get up in the morning and Mike says, "What's on today's agenda?" I'm talking about all the errands I've got to run. Sometimes he says yes, sometimes he says no, sometimes we put them on hold. He makes decisions. I encourage him. I've encouraged him to continue to be the artist. I've encouraged him to find a job. We even, at one point, for two months, he was going to be the house-husband. He tried that for two months, and he said, "I can't stand it!" and went and found a job. So, whatever he's decided, I try to be there. I try to be very loyal to him. I've had to step back sometimes and say, "Am I respecting my husband, or am I belittling him?" If my self-talk is belittling, if I am doing

that internally, I'm also going to say that externally. So, I watch my self-talk when I'm thinking about my husband, when I'm thinking about my family, when I'm thinking about my church, because I don't want those things in my life.

If you watch TV over the years, they started out with married couples being in two beds in a room. That was a married couple: two beds in a room. Over the years, they got so it was one bed, and then TV went to, "It's okay to divorce." The stuff that it is hard for us to deal with, TV is bringing it into our lives and saying, "Look what people are doing," and people are looking at it and saying, "Oh, this must be normal." Gay is the current thing, you know, let everybody be the same. It's hard to deal with sometimes, but, what you put in here is what you and God are dealing with. You have to deal with this, too. So, we don't watch a lot of television. When somebody comes up to Michael and offers him a better deal on his cable, Michael says, "Can you beat the deal that we've already got?" "How much do you pay?" "Nothing." We are limiting the amount of influences coming into our lives; we are picking things that we watch. That is a choice that we've made. Over the years, we've gotten rid of a lot of the garbage music. Things that were cutting down life, cutting down marriages. We don't listen to a lot of country; I don't know, once you've lost your wife, your dog, your house, your car... Really? Is this where I want to be? No, I don't want to live this way. My sweetheart here has a deal with me; so, if I cut the cake, he gets to pick the first slice. Think about it, guys. God bless you.

ANDY: You know what happens if you play a country song backwards? You get your house back, your dog back, your wife back...

We need to hear more people's hearts. I'm going to ask Bill Adams to come up next; I had asked Bill and Becky, but Becky is away tending to a grandchild. They had to rush her to the hospital, so let's keep that in prayer. That's what mothers do. I was going to ask both of them, but I'm going to ask Bill to share his experience in putting God first in marriage.

BILL: Thanks. The granddaughter didn't have to be rushed to the hospital, we thought we were going to have to rush the daughter to the hospital, and they're fine. James writes, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." (James 4:1-3) Now, he says, "...come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" the husband and wife are one flesh. Left arm, right arm; these are your members. The left arm and the right arm don't always get along. Paul wrote, "...and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." 1 Corinthians 12:31) James says, further on down, he says, "Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?" (James 4:5) Doesn't everybody want to have their own way? Doesn't everybody want to be the one who's right? But, Paul says, the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13). Yet, show I unto you a more excellent way. Jesus said, "Before you knew Me, I created you, I formed you in the womb, before you were even born, I called you." (Jeremiah 1:5) Sonia has already testified, God is above our relationship with our spouse. Our spouse is the second most important relationship. After James says, "Do you think that the Scripture sayeth in vain, 'The spirit that is in us lusteth to envy.'" He says, "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." (James 4:6) I get to talk a little bit about my wife, since she's not here. How do we learn—how do we know about putting God first in our lives? well, because we've stumbled a couple of times. My wife and I, our personalities are very much alike and so we knock heads, actually, quite a bit. Honestly, because of love, most of it's not fighting so much as just kind of bumping into each other trying to get to the same place. That same place has gotten to be Heaven. The whole point of it is, get to Heaven. If you're in love with somebody, that's great, don't you want to see them go, too? Now, honestly, I had a very privileged childhood. No, we weren't rich. My childhood was

privileged in that, from the time I was old enough to read, what I was reading was the Bible. From the time that I was old enough to understand how to share my things t-with the other kids, I was taught that, yes, you always want to be right, but, if you think you're right, it doesn't necessarily mean that you are right. The first thing that you better do is make sure that what you think is right is right. If you're presented with the evidence that you're wrong, you don't change the evidence, you change yourself. That's why, for example, when Rich Brand looked me in the eye, and said, "What are you going to do about it?" I said, "Where's the water?" My wife wasn't with me at that point, but I already knew her heart. We were already—I don't want to say destined, what's another word for destined?—Oh, destined is good enough. We were already destined to get married. When she arrived here, that was the first thing that she did, because, like Mike and Mary said, doing this without the other... because you can't be unequally yoked with unbelievers. Not because somebody's holding a hammer over your head and saying, "You can't do it," but because it doesn't work. Mix oil and water; good luck.

Now I'm going to switch over and do my wife's part. Philippians 2:3 "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." It goes on to say, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death..." (Philippians 2:5-8) Now, your spouse is part of you. So, my wife, being found in the form of Bill Adams, did not think it robbery to be equal with Bill Adams, but made herself of no reputation, and took upon herself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of... But, you see what I'm saying, here? And, I am equal with her, and, being found in the form of Becky Adams, it doesn't bother me to humble myself, although, sometimes it's difficult to get to that place, because I have to wade through all of myself. But, to humble myself, look at her side, see whether she's right, and, how does the Bible say to deal with it if you are the one who's right in the matter and your spouse is not? well, the same way you would deal with a brother; you teach them in meekness. Talk with them, pray, in faith believing; that's how we overcome every obstacle in our lives, by faith; take it to God. It doesn't say everything except marriage. But, putting God first in your life will ensure that your heart is right, that your spouse's heart is right, and, if both your hearts are right with God, then God Himself is going to solve the problem. Amen.

ANDY: I want to focus on what was said, something very similar: Mike and Mary talked about you were hearing the truth for the first time, and you looked at each other and said, "I'm not doing this with out you." It's important that they made that decision. They were both putting God first in what they did. Bill talked about it as well. As soon as Becky came here, even though Bill had already been baptized, it was the first thing that she did. They both knew that they wanted a life together, and they both knew they needed to put God first. You might be asking, "Why is this even important? Why are we going all over this?" First of all, this is our month of sound doctrine, and the Bible talks quite a bit about this. There's a lot of things in the Bible talking about marriage. Paul talked about it in several places in the letters. I find it unique, because I was looking through the Gospels, and what Jesus said most about it was divorce—or, not divorcing. I'm not going to go into that too deep today, I'm just pointing out that was what Jesus said when marriage came up. It makes you wonder what was going on there that marriage just came up. It asks in several places about giving a bill of divorce. Jesus spelled it out, "Moses wrote this in the Law because of the hardness of your heart, but..." I don't want to go to far into that, but I just want to point out that Jesus mentioned it, that's what He mentioned about marriage. That's why we draw the importance on it here, today. If He was staunch a=enough to say, "No, from the beginning, that's not how it was supposed to be." Your commitment, a man and a woman, that's your commitment; that's your vow before God. He really put an exclamation mark on that when He was asked about it. We get a lot of our advice from Paul, through his letters to the churches.

I want to highlight something in this vein, also, going back to last week's service. Parrish talked about, "Jesus Saves." He talked about Jesus saving us is not something that just happens one time. Sure, we're buried in baptism, and we follow in that covenant, we take on His name, but that's not something that's just a one time thing. Sometimes we ask the question, "Are you saved?" What are we really asking when we ask that question? Are we asking, "Have you taken on the name of Jesus? Have you been buried in Jesus' name?" Really, when you say, "Am I saved?" what does that mean for me, today, if I say, "Yes, I'm saved?" That's the condition of my soul. We talked earlier about putting things into your relationship with God. that determines the state of your walk with God, by putting things into it. As we relate it to marriage, how's our marriage doing? It's directly related to what we're putting into it. What was that quote you said, Sonia? Investments. Sacrificial investments. The product of your marriage is a direct result of your sacrificial investments. So, if you don't make those sacrifices, you're not going to get the results you want. We'll look at a scripture for some context. We talked a lot about putting God first, and protecting your relationship. Let's look at Ephesians 5:22, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." Men, we like to stop here; it sounds pretty good, but, it goes on, there's a lot more to this: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." (Ephesians 5:23-24) That's what society likes to highlight, just that part, when they want to talk about God and marriage. That's where they stop. It says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." (Ephesians 5:25-31) I'm going to go back to the second part, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church..." That's not an authoritative, beating over the head type of thing. If we look at the Scriptures, at everything Christ did for the church, if He ever get what we would call violent, it wasn't to the church. He went into the Temple and drove out the moneychangers, those that would make a marketplace, of the sanctuary, of the Temple, of God's House. That's where you saw Jesus get mad. That's where you saw Him take authority and drive someone out. Mostly what you see is teaching, exhorting, going to the people that needed Him. That's something that I take, as a man—there's a Scripture they referred to in the Old Testament, that the disciples said, "Thy zeal hath eaten me up." (Psalms 119:139/John 2:17), referring to Jesus driving out that which did not belong. That's part of what I take—not all of it—but, as the head of the household; we talk about making decisions, that's true, we're the head of the household, but, also, in that, I'm the head of the household; I have to drive out anything that doesn't belong. That's not talking about my wife, I mean anything that would be in between us. Anything in the world that would defile that relationship; anything in the world that would separate me and the love of my wife. That's something that I don't hear a lot of. We talk about these scriptures, and we talk about how we should have our household affairs in order. We talk about responsibility; we use it in terms of responsibility, who does what. In marriage, if we look at the scripture, there's nothing that tells me that the woman's got to take out the trash, or the man's got to do this, the woman's supposed to make the bed and cook. A lot of that's done by society, by tradition. A lot of it is how you were raised, I mean, if that's what works in your relationship, and you work it together... I've seen a lot of relationships work a lot of different ways; the man does one thing and the woman the other. What I've found as we go into marriage, we take and try to justify Scriptures based on our family tradition, by our cultural tradition, by our—just the way we were raised. I find that works the best is both of us—we were just sharing what Bill was sharing this morning, putting God first. The

scripture talks about, we being Gentiles do things contained in the Law without the Law; we do things by nature (Romans 2:14). We do things because we're in tune with the Spirit of God. We do things because we're seeking Him, without even knowing the Law, without reading Scriptures, but God puts things in our hearts. He shows us what's right and wrong. A lot of people make marriage work, but the marriages that are going to last, put God first. As soon as we put God first, I'm putting God first, God's going to make those things work. I don't have to sit down and figure out all these little bitty things that the world says I have to do this; I've got to be the breadwinner, and she's got to make the babies, and feed me, and have the house perfectly neat when I get home, no. Our society is totally different, but because of my love for God and her love for God, we work things out. Yes, I am still the head of the household, and I don't say that arrogantly, I don't say that in any way that involves myself, except for the fact that's the way God set it up. I'm standing on sound doctrine; I didn't write this. This is the way God set up the union between a man and a woman to be. The more that we are in tune with the Spirit of God, then what we get in between us is going to work so much better. I'm not going to belabor this too long; I just have a point I want to share. This is a Scripture that's not necessarily directed at marriage; it's talking about brothers and sisters, how to conduct ourselves.

1 Thessalonians 5:14 *Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.*

If we look at that as individuals, if a husband does that, and a wife does that, then how can a marriage not work right? But, we are corruptible flesh and we need to be strengthened. At this time, I want to ask all of the married couples to come forward. I would like to come together in a prayer of unity to strengthen one another. Those of you who are not married, don't feel left out; I want you to pray for those that are up here, because we're all one body, whether we're married or single, we're all one body in Christ. Even if your spouse is not here, please come up. If you need to sit, bring your chair up here. Even if your spouse isn't here, if you're a husband or you're a wife, even though your spouse isn't here, come on up, we want to pray for you.

PARRISH: I anoint you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.