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Rafe’s Required MARRIAGE READING MATERIALS

Please read these materials BEFORE our first counseling meeting. Thank you.

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Date received: _____

Date read: _____

I, _____, confirm that I carefully read all of the above-listed items.

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

I. BIBLE VERSES RELATING TO MARRIAGE

a. **Genesis 2:18, 21-24**

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, He took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. [The "leave and cleave principle"].

b. **Genesis 3:16-19**

To the woman He [God] said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

[Do not fret or be surprised that life and work have painful toil, thorns and thistles, and that work requires the sweat of your brow. That is the "zero point." So take your eyes off of that. Expect that. And get on with life without grumbling].

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c. **Exodus 20:14**

"You shall not commit adultery." [Could it be any clearer?]

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d. **Leviticus 18:20**

"Do not have sexual relations with your neighbor's wife and defile yourself with her."

e. **Psalms 16:8**

I have set the Lord continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

f. **Psalms 101:3**

I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not fasten its grip on me.

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g. **Psalm 119:131**

I open my mouth and pant, longing for Your commands.

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h. **Psalm 139:23-24**

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.

PROVERBS.(I suggest you read the entire book of Proverbs, including the following specific verses).

i. **Proverbs 2:16-17**

[Wisdom] will save you also from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her seductive words, who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the covenant she made before God.

j. **Proverbs 3:7, 17, 27-28**

Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.

[Wisdom's] ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace.

Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbor, "come back later; I'll give it tomorrow" - when you have it with you.

k. **Proverbs 5:15-20**

Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well [your own spouse]. Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares? Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer - may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love. Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife?

l. **Proverbs 6:25, 32**

Do not lust in your heart after her [the immoral woman's] beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes.

But a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself.

m. **Proverbs 7:22-27** [Heading into adultery]

All at once he followed her like an ox going to the slaughter, like a deer stepping into a noose till an arrow pierces his liver, like a bird darting into a snare, little knowing it will

cost him his life. Now then, my sons listen to me; pay attention to what I say. Do not let your heart turn to her ways or stray into her paths. Many are the victims she has brought down; her slain are a mighty throng. Her house is a highway to the grave, leading down to the chambers of death.

n. **Proverbs 10:9, 12, 19b, 29**

The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out.

Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs.

... he who holds his tongue is wise.

The way of the Lord is a refuge for the righteous, but it is the ruin of those who do evil.

o. **Proverbs 11:4, 12b, 13b, 16a, 28**

Wealth is worthless in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.

... a man of understanding holds his tongue.

... a trustworthy man keeps a secret.

A kindhearted woman gains respect ...

Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will thrive like a green leaf.

p. **Proverbs 12:4, 9, 15b, 16, 18, 20b, 25**

A wife of noble character is her husband's crown, but a disgraceful wife is like decay in his bones.

Better to be a nobody and yet have a servant than pretend to be somebody and have no food.

... a wise man listens to advice.

A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult.

Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

There is ... joy for those who promote peace.

An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.

q. **Proverbs 13:3, 7, 10**

He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.

One man pretends to be rich, yet has nothing; another pretends to be poor, yet has great wealth.

Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.

r. **Proverbs 14:1, 16a, 17a, 22b, 29**

The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down.

A wise man fears the Lord and shuns evil ...

A quick-tempered man does foolish things ...

... those who plan what is good find love and faithfulness.

A patient man has great understanding, but a quick-tempered man displays folly.

s. **Proverbs 15:1-2, 13, 15-16, 18, 22, 30**

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.

A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit.

All the days of the oppressed are wretched, but the cheerful heart has a continual feast. Better a little with the fear of the Lord than great wealth with turmoil.

A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel.

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones.

t. **Proverbs 16:3, 8, 24, 32**

Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.

Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice.

Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

Better a patient man than a warrior, a man who controls his temper than one who takes a city.

u. **Proverbs 17:1, 9, 13, 14, 22**

Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting, with strife.

He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.

If a man pays back evil for good, evil will never leave his house.

Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

v. **Proverbs 18:1, 10, 22**

An unfriendly man pursues selfish ends; he defies all sound judgment.

The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.

He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.

w. **Proverbs 19:13b, 14b**

... a quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping.

... a prudent wife is from the Lord.

x. **Proverbs 20:3**

It is to a man's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.

y. **Proverbs 21:9, 19, 21**

Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife.

Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and ill-tempered wife.

He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor.

z. **Proverbs 23:4**

Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint.

aa. **Proverbs 25:11, 24**

A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.

Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife.

bb. **Proverbs 27:23**

Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds;

cc. **Proverbs 29:11, 20**

A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.

Do you see a man who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

dd. Proverbs 30:21, 23a

Under three things the earth trembles, under four it cannot bear up: ... an unloved woman who is married ...

ee. Proverbs 31:10-31

A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

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SONG OF SOLOMON (a.k.a. Song of Songs) [This is a love song concerning marital love between a husband and a wife with the two principal characters identified as the "Lover" and the "Beloved."]

ff. Song of Solomon 1:2, 4, 10, 13, 15-16

(Beloved) Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth - for your love is more delightful than wine.

(Beloved) Take me away with you - let us hurry! Let the king bring me into his chambers.

(Friends) We rejoice and delight in you; we will praise your love more than wine.

(Beloved) How right they are to adore you!

(Lover) Your cheeks are beautiful with earrings, your neck with strings of jewels.

(Beloved) My lover is to me a sachet of myrrh resting between my breasts.

(Lover) How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes are doves.

(Beloved) How handsome you are, my lover! Oh, how charming! And our bed is verdant [green with growing plants].

gg. **Song of Solomon 2:2-6, 10 & 13-17**

(Lover) Like a lily among thorns is my darling among the maidens.

(Beloved) Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest is my lover among the young men. I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste. He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his banner over me is love. Strengthen me with raisins, refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love. His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me.

(Beloved) My lover spoke and said to me, "Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me. ... The fig tree forms its early fruit; the blossoming vines spread their fragrance. Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me."

(Lover) My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places on the mountainside, show me your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely. Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards, our vineyards that are in bloom.

(Beloved) My lover is mine and I am his; he browses among the lilies. Until the day breaks and the shadows flee, turn, my lover, and be like a gazelle or like a young stag on the rugged hills.

hh. **Song of Solomon 3:4**

(Beloved) Scarcely had I passed them when I found the one my heart loves. I held him and would not let him go till I had brought him to my mother's house, to the room of the one who conceived me.

ii. **Song of Solomon 4:1-7, 9-11, 15-16**

(Lover) How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes behind your veil are doves.

Your hair is like a flock of goats descending from Mount Gilead. Your teeth are like a flock of sheep just shorn, coming up from the washing. Each has its twin; not one of them is alone. Your lips are like a scarlet ribbon; your mouth is lovely. Your temples behind your veil are like the halves of a pomegranate. Your neck is like the tower of David, built with elegance; on it hang a thousand shields, all of them shields of warriors. Your two breasts are like two fawns, like twin fawns of a gazelle that browse among the lilies. Until the day breaks and the shadows flee, I will go to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of incense. All beautiful you are, my darling; there is no flaw in you.

(Lover) You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace. How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much more pleasing is your love than wine, and the fragrance of your perfume than any spice! Your lips drop sweetness as the honeycomb, my bride; milk and honey are under your tongue. The fragrance of your garments is like that of Lebanon.

(Lover) You are a garden fountain, a well of flowing water streaming down from Lebanon.

(Beloved) Awake, north wind, and come, south wind! Blow on my garden, that its fragrance may spread abroad. Let my lover come into his garden and taste its choice fruits.

jj. Song of Solomon 5:1-5, 10-16

(Lover) I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk.

(Friends) Eat, O friends, and drink; drink your fill, O lovers.

(Beloved) I slept but my heart was awake. Listen! My lover is knocking: "Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one. My head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night." I have taken off my robe - must I put it on again? I have washed my feet - must I soil them again? My lover thrust his hand through the latch-opening; my heart began to pound for him. I arose to open for my lover, and my hands dripped with myrrh, on the handles of the lock.

(Beloved) My lover is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand. His head is purest gold; his hair is wavy and black as a raven. His eyes are like doves by the water streams, washed in milk, mounted like jewels. His cheeks are like beds of spice yielding perfume. His lips are like lilies dripping with myrrh. His arms are rods of gold set with chrysolite. His body is like polished ivory decorated with sapphires. His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of pure gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice as its cedars. His mouth is sweetness itself; he is altogether lovely. This is my lover, this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

kk. Song of Solomon 6:1-3

(Friends) Where has your lover gone, most beautiful of women? Which way did your lover turn, that we may look for him with you?

(Beloved) My lover has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices, to browse in the gardens and to gather lilies. I am my lover's and my lover is mine; he browses among the lilies.

ll. Song of Solomon 7:1-13

(Lover) How beautiful your sandaled feet, O prince's daughter! Your graceful legs are like jewels, the work of a craftsman's hands. Your navel is a rounded goblet that never lacks blended wine. Your waist is a mound of wheat encircled by lilies. Your breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle. Your neck is like an ivory tower. Your eyes are the pools of Heshbon by the gate of Bath Rabbim. Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon looking toward Damascus. Your head crowns you like Mount Carmel. Your hair is like royal tapestry; the king is held captive by its tresses. How beautiful you are and how pleasing, O love, with your delights! Your stature is like that of the palm and your breasts like clusters of fruit. I said, "I will climb the palm tree; I will take hold of its fruit." May your breasts be like the clusters of the vine, the fragrance of your breath like apples, and your mouth like the best wine.

(Beloved) May the wine go straight to my lover, flowing gently over lips and teeth. I belong to my lover, and his desire is for me. Come, my lover, let us go to the countryside, let us spend the night in the villages. Let us go early to the vineyards to see if the vines have budded, if their blossoms have opened, and if the pomegranates are in bloom - there I will give you my love. The mandrakes send out their fragrance, and at our door is every delicacy, both new and old, that I have stored up for you, my lover.

mm. Song of Solomon 8:7, 10, 14

(Beloved) Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned.

(Beloved) I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers. Thus I have become in his eyes like one bringing contentment.

(Beloved) Come away, my lover, and be like a gazelle or like a young stag on the spice-laden mountains.

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nn. Isaiah 62:5

For as a young man marries a virgin, So your sons will marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So your God will rejoice over you.

oo. Amos 3:3

Can two walk together unless they are agreed?

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pp. Malachi 2:14-16

You ask, "Why?" It is because the Lord is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. Has not the Lord made them one? In flesh and

spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. **"I hate divorce," says the Lord God of Israel,** "and I hate a man's covering himself with violence as well as with his garment," says the Lord Almighty. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith.

qq. Matthew 5:21-26

“You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.’ “ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever shall say to his brother, ‘Raca,’ shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell. “If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. “Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, in order that your opponent may not deliver you to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. “Truly I say to you, you shall not come out of there, until you have paid up the last cent.

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rr. Matthew 19:3-9

Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," He [Jesus] replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way **from the beginning**. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman, commits adultery."

ss. Luke 6:43-45

“For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit; nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush. The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart.”

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tt. John 15:12

“This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.”

uu. **Romans 7:2-3**

For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from the law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man.

vv. **Romans 8:28-29**

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;

ww. **Romans 12:17-18**

Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

xx. **Romans 13:1b**

... there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

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yy. **I Corinthians 2:9**

However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."

zz. **I Corinthians 3:4-6**

For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men? What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one.

aaa. **I Corinthians 6:18-20**

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, Who is in you, Whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

bbb. **I Corinthians 7:1-5, 10-11, 39**

Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to marry. But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. **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. **Do not deprive each other** except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.

A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.

ccc. I Corinthians 11:3, 11-12

Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

In the Lord, however, man is not independent of woman, nor is woman independent from man. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.

ddd. I Corinthians 13:4-8a

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

eee. II Corinthians 6:14-16a [The “Equal Yoke Principle”]

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God.

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fff. Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

ggg. Galatians 6:1-2

Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

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hhh. Ephesians 4:29-32

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

iii. **Ephesians 5:21-33**

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, His body, of which He is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the Word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church - for we are members of His body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

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jjj. **Philippians 4:4-9, 11-13, 19**

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me - put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.

And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

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kkk. Colossians 3:18-19

Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

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lll. 1 Timothy 3:2, 4, 12

Now the overseer must be ... the husband of but one wife, ... He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect.

A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

mmm. 2 Timothy 2:24-26

And the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

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nnn. Titus 2:1-8

You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

ooo. Hebrews 9:14; 10:22

. . . how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

. . . let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

ppp. Hebrews 13:4

Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

qqq. James 1:2-8

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom let him ask of God who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

rrr. James 4:4-10

You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purposes: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the lord, and He will exalt you.

* * * * *

sss. 1 Peter 2:21-25

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called that friend of God. You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works, when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?

ttt. 1 Peter 3:1-7

Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the Word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy

women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

uuu. 1 John 2:5-6

. . . but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked

* * * * *

Please **CHOOSE** to apply God's Biblical instruction to your marriage.

http://www.refior.com/your_choice/index.html

II. OUR READILY AVAILABLE STRENGTH AND SUFFICIENT PROVISIONS FROM GOD

a. Psalm 16:8

“I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.”

b. Psalm 18:1-3

“I will love you, o Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom will I trust; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies.”

c. Psalm 27:1

“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”

d. Psalm 37:4-5

“Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.”

e. Matthew 6:33

[Jesus speaking] “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

f. John 15:5

“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.”

g. Romans 8:37

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

h. I Corinthians 9:24

“Run in such a way that you may obtain the prize.”

i. Philippians 3:14

“I press toward the goal for the price of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

j. Philippians 4:13

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

k. I Timothy 1:18

“... wage the good warfare . . .” (against the enemies of Christ and the gospel)

l. II Timothy 1:7

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

m. II Timothy 4:7

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

n. Hebrews 12:28-29

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.”

III. THE IMPORTANCE AND INFLUENCE OF THE WORD OF GOD

a. Deuteronomy 17:19-20

[God's law] "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes so that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, and he and his children in the midst of Israel."

b. Deuteronomy 29:29

"The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, THAT we may DO ALL the words of this law."

c. Psalm 12:6-7

The words of the Lord are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.

d. Psalm 18:30

As for God, His way is blameless; The work of the Lord is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.

e. Psalm 19:7-10

The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether. They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

f. Psalm 19:8

"The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the command of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."

g. Psalm 19:11

"Moreover, by the [God's Word] Your servant is warned, and in KEEPING them there is great reward."

h. Psalm 25:12-14

Who is the man who fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way he should choose. His soul will abide in prosperity, And his descendants will inherit the land. The secret of the Lord is for those who fear Him, And He will make them know His covenant.

i. Psalm 29:4

The voice of the Lord is powerful.

j. Psalm 33:4, 11

For the word of the Lord is upright; And all His work is done in faithfulness.

The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation.

k. Psalm 78:1

Listen, O my people, to my instruction; Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

l. Psalm 94:12

Blessed is the man whom Thou dost chasten, O Lord, And dost teach out of Thy law.

m. Psalm 111:7-8

The works of His hands are truth and justice; All His precepts are sure. They are upheld forever and ever; They are performed in truth and uprightness.

n. Psalm 117:2

For His Lovingkindness is great toward us, And the truth of the Lord is everlasting. Praise the Lord!

[read all of Psalm 119]

o. Psalm 119:9

“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your Word.”

p. Psalm 119:101

“I have restrained my feet from every evil way that I may keep Your Word.”

q. Psalm 119:105

“Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

r. Psalm 119:130

“The entrance of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”

s. Proverbs 2:1-5

“My son, if you receive My Words and treasure My Commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; THEN you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.”

t. Isaiah 28:9-10

To whom would He teach knowledge? And to whom would He interpret the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just taken from the breast? “For He says, ‘Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there.’”

u. Isaiah 30:8

Now go, write it on a tablet before them And inscribe it on a scroll, That it may serve in the time to come As a witness forever.

v. Isaiah 34:16

Seek from the book of the Lord, and read: Not one of these will be missing; None will lack its mate. For His mouth has commanded, And His Spirit has gathered them.

w. Isaiah 40:8

The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of God stands forever.

x. Isaiah 55:11

So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

y. Isaiah 55:8-9

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts then your thoughts.”

z. Jeremiah 15:16

Thy words were found and I ate them, And Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; O LORD God of hosts.

aa. Jeremiah 23:28-29

“The prophet who has a dream may relate his dream, but let him who had My word speak My word in truth. What does straw have in common with grain?” declares the Lord. “Is not My word like fire?” declares the Lord, “and like a hammer which shatters a rock”

bb. Jeremiah 42:3

“. . . that the Lord your God may tell us the way in which we should walk and the thing that we should do.”

cc. Matthew 4:11a

Then the devil left Him;

dd. Matthew 7:24-27

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall.”

ee. Matthew 15:10

And after He called the multitude to Him, He said to them, “Hear, and understand.”

ff. Matthew 22:29

But Jesus answered and said to them “You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of God.”

gg. Matthew 24:35

“Heavens and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away.”

hh. Mark 6:52

. . . for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their heart was hardened.

ii. Mark 7:14, 18 [Christ]

“Hear Me, everyone, and understand.” “. . . are you without understanding? Do you not perceive . . .”

jj. Mark 8:17, 21 [Christ]

“Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart still hardened? How is it you do not understand?”

kk. Mark 12:24

“Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?’”

ll. Mark 13:31

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”

mm. Luke 1:38

And Mary said, “Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

nn. Luke 1:70

As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old -

oo. Luke 7:40

And Jesus answered and said to him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.”

pp. Luke 8:10

And He said, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is in parables, in order that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND.

qq. Luke 10:23

And turning to the disciples, He said privately, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see, . . .

rr. Luke 11:28

But He said, “ON the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it.”

ss. Luke 16:17

“But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail.”

tt. Luke 21:33

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”

uu. John 1:1, 2, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full grace and truth.

vv. John 2:22

When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken.

ww. John 8:31

Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine.”

xx. John 14:15, 21

(Jesus Christ) “If you love Me, KEEP My Commandments” . . . “He who has My commandments and KEEPS them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be *loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.*”

yy. John 16:13

“But when He, the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.”

zz. John 17:17

[Jesus speaking] “Sanctify them by your truth. Your Word is truth.”

aaa. Acts 17:11

Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.

bbb. Act 27:25

“Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told.”

ccc. Romans 3:4

May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, at it is written, “THAT THOU MIGHTEST BE JUSTIFIED IN THY WORDS AND MIGHTEST PREVAIL WHEN THOU ART JUDGED.”

ddd. Romans 11:33

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

eee. Romans 15:4

For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

fff. Romans 16:25-27

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made know to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

ggg. Romans 1:16

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.”

hhh. Romans 10:17

So faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ.

iii. Romans 15:4

“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”

jjj. 1 Corinthians 1:25

Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

kkk. 1 Corinthians 2:10-16

For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no man. For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE SHOULD INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

lll. 1 Corinthians 3:19-20

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written, “He is THE ONE WHO CATCHES THE WISE IN THEIR CRAFTINESS”; and again, “THE LORD KNOWS THE REASONINGS of the wise, THAT THEY ARE USELESS.”

mmm. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, 6-7

Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that in us you might learn not to exceed what is written, in order that no one of you might become arrogant in behalf of one against the other. For who regards you as superior? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

nnn. 1 Corinthians 10:6

Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved.

ooo.2 Corinthians 4:6

For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

ppp. Galatians 1:11-12

For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

qqq. Galatians 4:16

Have I therefore become your enemy by telling you the truth?

rrr. Galatians 4:30a

But what does the Scripture say? “CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON, . . .

sss. Ephesians 3:3-5

. . . that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit.

ttt. Ephesians 4:20-21

Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

uuu. Ephesians 6:17

“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God . . .”

vvv. Philippians 1:9

“ . . . that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and discernment.”

www. Philippians 4:9

“The things which you *learned* and *received* and heard and saw in me, these DO and the God of Peace will be with you.”

xxx. Colossians 1:24-27

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body (which is the church) in filling up that which is lacking in Christ’s afflictions. Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, to who God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

yyy.1 Thessalonians 4:9

Now as to the love of the brethren you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.

zzz. 1 Timothy 4:6, 13, 15-16

In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.

Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture to exhortation and teaching.

Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.

aaaa. 1 Timothy 5:17

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.

bbbb. 1 Timothy 6:3

If anyone advocates a different doctrine, and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness.

cccc. 2 Timothy 1:13

Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

dddd. 2 Timothy 2:2

And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

eeee. 2 Timothy 2:8-9

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.

ffff. 2 Timothy 2:15

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.

gggg. 2 Timothy 3:14-17

You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of knowing from whom you have learned them; and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

hhhh. 2 Timothy 4:2

. . . preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

iiii. Titus 2:1

But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.

jjjj. Hebrews 1:1-2

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

kkkk. Hebrews 4:11-12

Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit of both joints and marrow and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

llll. Hebrews 6:17-18

In the same way God desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, in order that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us.

mmmm. Hebrews 11:3

By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

nnnn. James 1:22-25

“But be DOERS of the Word, and not *hearers* only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a *hearer* of the Word and not a DOER, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and CONTINUES IN IT, and is not a forgetful *hearer* but a DOER of the work, this one will be *blessed* in what he does.

oooo. 1 Peter 1:22

“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart . . .”

pppp. 1 Peter 1:23, 25

. . . for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God.

“. . . BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ABIDES FOREVER.” And this is the word which was preached to you.

qqqq. 1 Peter 2:22-25

WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to

righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

rrrr. 2 Peter 1:2-4

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He had granted to us His precious and magnificent promises in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

ssss. 2 Peter 1:16-21

For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is my beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased” – and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word made more sure to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

tttt. 2 Peter 3:14-16

But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. **AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED**, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

uuuu. Jude 3

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you content earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

vvvv. Jude 17

But you beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . .

wwww. Revelation 1:3

“Blessed is he who reads and those who *hear* the words of this prophesy, and **KEEP** those things which are written in it; for the time is near.”

xxxx. Revelation 22:18-19

I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book; if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

See also John 16:12-23; 13:7; Luke 24:45; II Timothy 2:7; Hebrews 5:11; Isaiah 28:9-10; Hosea 8:12; I John 2:27; I Corinthians 2:6-16

IV. VERSES TO PRAY IN PREPARATION FOR BIBLE STUDY

a. Psalm 51:6

“Behold, You desire TRUTH in the inward parts, and in the hidden part YOU WILL MAKE ME TO KNOW WISDOM.”

b. Psalm 86:11

TEACH me YOUR WAY, O Lord; I will WALK in YOUR TRUTH; UNTIE my heart to fear Your name.

c. Psalm 119:9

“How can a young man cleanse his way? By TAKING HEED ACCORDING TO YOUR WORD.”

d. Psalm 119:18

“Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your Law.”

e. Psalm 119:30b, 33-35

I have chosen THE WAY OF TRUTH . . . TEACH me, O Lord, THE WAY OF YOUR STATUTES, and I shall KEEP it to the end GIVE ME UNDERSTANDING and I shall KEEP Your Law; indeed I shall OBSERVE it with my whole heart. Make me WALK in Your commandments, for I DELIGHT in it.

f. Psalm 119:50

This is MY COMFORT in my affliction, for YOUR WORD has given me LIFE.

g. Psalm 119:73

Give me understanding that I may learn Your Commandments.”

h. Psalm 119:80

Let my heart be blameless regarding Your statutes, that I may not be ashamed.

i. Psalm 119:101, 104

I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may KEEP YOUR WORD . . . therefore I hate every false way.

j. Psalm 119:105

YOUR WORD is a LAMP unto my feet and a LIGHT to my PATH.

k. Psalm 119:131

I opened my mouth wide and panted. For I longed for Thy commandments.

l. Psalm 119:133

Direct my STEPS by YOUR WORD.

- m. Psalm 119:125**
“Give me understanding, that I may know Your testimonies.”
- n. Psalm 119:144**
“Give me understanding, that I shall live.”
- o. Psalm 119:169**
“Give me understanding according to Your Word.”
- p. Isaiah 28:9**
“Whom will He teach knowledge and whom will He make to understand the message?”
- q. Isaiah 42:16**
I will BRING the blind by a WAY they did not KNOW; I will LEAD them in PATHS they have not KNOWN. I will MAKE darkness LIGHT before them, and NOT forsake them.
- r. Isaiah 50:4-5**
The Lord God has given Me the tongue of disciples, That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple. The Lord God has opened My ear; And I was not disobedient, Nor did I turn back.
- s. Isaiah 55:11**
So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.
- t. Jeremiah 42:3**
“. . . that the Lord your God may tell us the way in which we should walk and the thing that we should do.”
- u. Luke 24:27 [Jesus on the road to Emmaus]**
“And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”
- v. Luke 24:45 [Jesus to His Disciples after the resurrection]**
“And Jesus opened their understanding that they might comprehend the Scriptures.”
- w. John 16:13**
[Jesus] “The Spirit of Truth will guide you into all truth . . .”
- x. Ephesians 1:17-18a**
“. . . that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know . . .”

y. Colossians 1:9b-10

. . . that you may be FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL IN ALL WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING; that you may WALK worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the KNOWLEDGE OF GOD;

z. II Timothy 2:7

“Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.”

V. **SOBERING REALITIES**

(a) **Warnings:**

1. **Deuteronomy 23:4**

“For the Lord your God moves about in Your camp to protect you and deliver your enemies to you. Your camp must be holy so that He will not see anything indecent and turn away from you.”

2. **Psalm 119:118**

“You reject all those who STRAY from Your statutes.”

3. **Proverbs 19:27**

“CEASE listening to instruction, my son, you WILL STRAY from the words of knowledge.”

(b) **Instead, make this commitment:**

1. **Psalm 119:16**

“I will delight in Your statutes; I will not forget Your Word.”

VI. A LIST OF ABSOLUTES FOR MUTUAL COMMITMENT

You will certainly agree that marriage is infinitely more than a list of do's and don'ts. Yet one of the problems these days is that so many couples fail or refuse to acknowledge important do's and don'ts, and these couples do not make or fulfill important commitments and promises. Do you want a happy and God-honoring marriage? Then I suggest that you make the following commitments before the Lord and that you verbally express these commitments to your spouse (yes, eyeball to eyeball, and over again regularly).

1. I will always choose to love you.
2. I will always be absolutely honest with you.
3. I will never divorce you.
4. I will never abandon you.
5. I will never have sex with anyone but you.
6. I will never touch any person besides you in a sexual or romantic way.
7. I will pray for you every day.
8. I will never hit you, slap you, punch you, or in any way touch you violently or with the intention of causing you pain.
9. I will never yell at you, talk harshly to you, or say anything to you with an intention of hurting you or cutting you down. I will never call you a demeaning name.
10. I will always support you and nurture you.
11. I will always keep you and our relationship as being more important and of higher priority than any relationship with anyone else; and I will not cause you to suffer competition for my time and attention with any other friend or associate of mine.
12. I will remain open for you to constructively alert me of mistakes I am making or wrongs I have committed.
13. I will do everything I can to assist you in developing your talents, gifts and abilities and in reaching your highest potential.
14. I will immediately and always come to your defense.
15. I will do everything I can to make and keep our home as a safe harbor, a refuge, an oasis and a happy place to be.
16. I will do my best to be a **giver** rather than a **getter** (aka taker) in all aspects of our marriage.
17. When I am with others or in public I will never cut you down, ridicule you, demean you, or make you the object of any joke.
18. When I am with others or in public I will always support you, honor you and uphold you.
19. I will never break our confidences, and I will never share with others about our intimacy or our private matters.
20. I will do everything I can to contribute to a happy and God-honoring marriage relationship.

Make these commitments to each other and before the Lord. **CHOOSE** to **KEEP** these commitments. Reaffirm all of these commitments to each other regularly.

http://www.refior.com/your_choice/index.html

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