



QTR 3 2008

## Marriage Enrichment Ministry

Genesis 2:18-25

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41 Evidences of Pride



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## *To the Wives: Pride vs Encouragement*

By Ellen Barnes

*The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life. (Proverbs 31:11-12)*

One of my favorite radio shows is "Revive Our Hearts" with Nancy Leigh DeMoss. She speaks directly to women about the what, when, why, and how Godly women do what God requires of them. From the importance of forgiveness to supporting your spouse, she covers it all.

As I browsed her website recently ([www.reviveourhearts.com](http://www.reviveourhearts.com)), I came across exactly what I needed but, as usual, didn't want to face. I read through the "41 Evidences of Pride" and the "30 Day Husband Encouragement Challenge" topics. It soon became vividly clear that, for me, the real challenge was to not let pride prevent the encouragement! Is that the case with you?

We've listed the "41 Evidences of Pride" on the last page. Wives, take a look and let's purpose in our hearts to make at least two or three changes in our behavior to conquer that demon and remove it from our marriages.

I have decided to take the "*30 Day Husband Encouragement Challenge*" starting August 1. Perhaps some of you wives will take it with me. *It requires the wife on a daily basis to not say anything negative about her husband to her husband or anyone else. She also must say something that she admires or appreciates about her husband to her husband and to someone else.* Go to the Revive Our Hearts website for full details and daily encouragements.

Feel free to check in with Tony or I from time to time to find out how it's going. This will be a huge challenge for me but an equally huge blessing to our marriage. I'll pray for you. Please pray for me.

### Ministry Purpose

We strive to provide a forum for couples to have fun and create new memories; freely interact and share their joys and pains; and ultimately reenergize their marriage through God's word.

*WE WANT TO CELEBRATE MARRIAGE!*



## **The impact of the MEM**

### **What this ministry has meant to me.**

By Delbert Griffin

This ministry has come at a time of my life when I really needed it. Lora and I have an empty nest and we're retired. Both of these situations require an adjustment.

We have really lived our lives for our daughters. It seems like they grew up so fast, and here they are both grown, out of college, and married. What do we do?

When Lora and I were still working that helped. Then Lora decided that teaching school was becoming too much about administrative duties rather than teaching the children. So, without a retirement plan in mind, we went to the retirement office. After looking at how our salary would be cut it was kind of scary, but I stated that God will provide. We have never been wealthy but we had set goals and priorities, that were mainly centered around our daughters. We wanted to make sure that they were provided a college education and to give them both a wedding. We had

achieved that goal. Praise God we owe nothing for their schooling or weddings! I found out that when you pray and set goals and priorities, God will see you through your most difficult times.

Along comes my retirement October 2006, 5 years after Lora's. When I retired, I had a lot of issues. First being that I did not have alone time, and I somewhat resented that Lora had been retired quite some time and was able to have all those years of doing anything she pleased, when she pleased. However, let me not forget that she did babysit our first grandson, Drake Anthony, her first two years of retirement. (Don't want to leave that out...I don't want to hear Lora's mouth. LOL)

One suggestion to any married couple is if you can retire at the same time, I think that the adjustment would be easier. That's just one man's opinion.

With the empty nest and retirement, what do you do with each other? Sounds strange, but, it's like starting all over again getting to know one another. You ask yourself who is this stranger that I am living with? What do you do for recreation? How do you enjoy one another the way you did when you first

got married? Just how do you handle this adjustment?

Since being involved in this marriage ministry, I have found it helpful in helping us get back on track with each other. Somehow, Lora seemed to adjust faster than I. Thanks to this ministry the love, joy, and happiness are still there. We just have to continue praising God and staying in His word.

Thank you Marriage Enrichment Ministry. You have been a blessing to our marriage.

### **Intimacy in Marriage By Rosalind Miller**

When Ron and I were asked to teach a lesson on intimacy, we had no idea how we were going to present this topic. As a couple, we had never discussed intimacy in our own marriage and what that meant to us. Many couples don't address issues concerning their marriages because in many families, particularly Afro-American families, those topics are taboo.

As a couple we were faced with that same dilemma. How were we going to open up to each other in-order to educate others on this topic? One morning I was watching the "Today Show" with Robert Robison, and the

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discussion was centered around couples praying together, and the many benefits couples receive. We had always had our own quiet time separately. But it never dawned on me that we should become united as one in our prayer life. I began to pray and ask God to give my husband a receptive heart, before approaching him with this idea.

As we were having breakfast together, I popped the question, and to my surprise, Ron said “yes.” When we first started we weren’t quite sure how we should do our devotion time. The guest who was on the Pat Robison Show, Squire Rushnell, former CEO and President of ABC Children’s Television, and his wife Louise Duart who is a comedic impressionist, was discussing their book “Couples Who Pray” so I decided to buy the book and read it. We had already started praying together prior to me buying the book, but I was so surprised at the many benefits that couples can receive from doing such an intimate act together.

Before embarking on this assignment, we had no idea how we were going to present this topic. We really had no sense of direction. We started praying together. This was the catalyst that began our study about intimacy, and how we were going to present this topic to couples of our church. It was amazing that this simple act of praying together started us on the road to reading, laughing, and discussing information that

would have never been discussed. The assignment became effortless because we became united through prayer.

Many of you who are reading this are wondering are we still praying. “Well, I have to be honest that we have met some challenges.” We are still

praying together, but at times we have allowed other things to get in our way, or if we had a disagreement that day it was very difficult to pray together. So we decided to set small goals. Our goal is to get at least 4 days in during the week. But I must caution you that someone has to encourage it. Ron and I usually pray after breakfast. Sometimes we pray before going to bed. Each couple must find their own way of praying together, and the time of the day that best fits your schedule. Is the effort worth it? We must say it certainly is! Just try it and see if it doesn’t improve other areas in your relationship!

We challenge couples of our church to read the book “Couples who Pray” by Squire Rushnell and Louise Duart. There are many tips that help couples to get started on this road to intimacy with God and your mate. This book challenges couples to participate in a Forty Day Prayer Challenge.

We also suggest the couple’s devotional book “Minute Meditations for Couples” by Bob and Emilie Barnes.

In today’s world where Satan is working non-stop to destroy families, it’s important that we protect the fortress of our marriages. Mark 19:6 states “What God has joined together let not man put asunder.” We encourage each couple to cleave together in prayer.

## Calendar of Events

### Q3

#### July

##### *Discussion: 5 Love Languages*

Host: Richard and Lisa Burtin

Date: Monday, July 28th

Time: 6:30 – 8:30pm

Location: Burtin’s residence

#### August

##### *Discussion: Conflict in Marriage*

Host: Delbert and Lora Griffin

Date: Saturday, August 23

Time: 6:30 – 8:30pm

Location: Griffin’s residence

#### September

\_No scheduled activity

### Q4

#### October

Retreat: Sunlight Spa

Date: October 25

#### November

No scheduled activity

#### December

##### **Christmas/year in review**

Location and date – TBD

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## 41 Evidences of Pride

By Nancy Leigh DeMoss

1. Do you look down on those who are less educated, less affluent, less refined, or less successful than yourself?
2. Do you think of yourself as more spiritual than your mate, others in your church?
3. Do you have a judgmental spirit toward those who don't make the same lifestyle choices you do . . . dress standards, how you school your kids, entertainment standards, etc.?
4. Are you quick to find fault with others and to verbalize those thoughts to others? Do you have a sharp, critical tongue?
5. Do you frequently correct or criticize your mate, your pastor, or other people in positions of leadership (teachers, youth director, etc.)?
6. Do you give undue time, attention, and effort to your physical appearance—hair, make-up, clothing, weight, body shape, avoiding appearance of aging?
7. Are you proud of the schedule you keep, how disciplined you are, how much you are able to accomplish?
8. Are you driven to receive approval, praise, or acceptance from others?
9. Are you argumentative?
10. Do you generally think your way is the right way, the only way, or the best way?
11. Do you have a touchy, sensitive spirit? Easily offended? Get your feelings hurt easily?
12. Are you guilty of pretense? Trying to leave a better impression of yourself than is really true? (Would the people at church be shocked if they knew what you were like at home?)
13. Do you have a hard time admitting when you are wrong?

14. Do you have a hard time confessing your sin to God or others? (not just in generalities but specifics)
15. Do you have a hard time sharing your real spiritual needs/struggles with others?
16. Do you have a hard time praying aloud with others?
17. Are you excessively shy?
18. Do you have a hard time reaching out and being friendly to people you don't know at church?
19. Do you resent being asked or expected to serve your family, your parents, or others?
20. Do you become defensive when you are criticized or corrected?
21. Are you a perfectionist? Do you get irked or impatient with people who aren't?
22. Do you tend to be controlling—of your mate, your children, friends, those in your workplace?
23. Do you frequently interrupt people when they are speaking?
24. Does your husband feel intimidated by your "spirituality"?
25. Does your husband feel like he can never measure up to your expectations of what it means to be a good husband, spiritual leader, etc.?
26. Do you often complain—about the weather, your health, your circumstances, your job, your church?
27. Do you talk about yourself too much?
28. Are you more concerned about your problems, needs, burdens than about others' concerns?
29. Do you worry about what others think of you? Too concerned about your reputation or your family's reputation?
30. Do you neglect to express gratitude for "little things"? To God? To others?
31. Do you neglect prayer and intake of the Word?
32. Do you get hurt if your

- accomplishments/or acts of service are not recognized or rewarded?
33. Do you get hurt if your feelings or opinions are not considered when your mate or your boss is making a decision or if you are not informed when a change or a decision is made?
34. Do you react to rules? Do you have a hard time being told what to do?
35. Are you self-conscious because of your lack of education or natural beauty, or your socioeconomic status?
36. Do you avoid participating in certain events, for fear of being embarrassed or looking foolish?
37. Do you avoid being around certain people because you feel inferior compared to them/don't feel you measure up?
38. Are you uncomfortable inviting people to your home because you don't think it's nice enough or you can't afford to do lavish entertaining?
39. Is it hard for you to let others know when you need help (practical or spiritual)?
40. When is the last time you said these words to a family member, friend, or co-worker: "I was wrong; would you please forgive me?" (If it's been more than a month, mark it down!)

41. Are you sitting here thinking how many of these questions apply to someone you know? feeling pretty good that none of these things really apply to you?

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### **WE NEED YOU!**

If you have suggestions or thoughts about future events, please send them to Tony or Ellen at [tonybarnes@yahoo.com](mailto:tonybarnes@yahoo.com) or [ellenk32@yahoo.com](mailto:ellenk32@yahoo.com).