

Understanding My Family

An Introduction

Understanding My Family

- **New series on relationships between husbands and wives, and parents and children**
 - **Understanding My Family: An Introduction**
 - **Understanding My Wife**
 - **Understanding My Husband**
 - **Understanding My Children**

Understanding My Family

- **Consider three principles in the series:**
 - **God's plan for the family is all important**
 - **Learning and accepting the differences between men and women, adults and children is necessary for successful relationships**
 - **Our self-oriented expectations for relationships are unimportant and counter-productive**

Men And Women Are Different

- **Failure to remember and apply this fact is the second of three factors that leads to the unhappiness found in so many marriages**
- **The first is failing to apply God's marriage instructions**
- **The third is unmet expectations**

Men And Women Are Different

- **Men are not women**
 - **Physically**
 - **Mentally**
 - **Emotionally**

Men And Women Are Different

- **Women are not men**
 - “Despite my 30 years of research into the feminine soul, I have not yet been able to answer the great question: 'What does a woman want?'"
(Sigmund Freud)
 - Physically
 - Mentally
 - Emotionally

Men And Women Are Different

- **What do women need?**
 - **Expressions of unconditional love**
 - Eph. 5:25; Col. 3:19
 - **Words of affirmation**
 - **Quality time with the family**
 - **Spontaneous gifts**
 - **Physical expressions of affection**
 - **Acts of service**

Men And Women Are Different

- **Marriage requires that each partner gives 100% regardless of what one's mate contributes at any given point in the relationship**
- **“With selfishness in control, every effort to improve the relationship will create new problems. Only when the central problem of self-centeredness is faced first and squarely can a desire to do right develop, then God's instructions become a delight, rather than a box to squeeze into, or an imposition on our freedom.” (Larry Crabb)**

IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU!

- **Eph. 5:21-33**
- **Where in that text do you read that you are entitled to anything?**
 - **If you are a man, you are commanded to love your wife. There is not a word in this text that authorizes you to demand anything from her**
 - **If you are a women, you are commanded to respect your husband. There is not a word that authorizes you to demand anything from him.**

IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU!

- **Godly marriage is not about you; it's about your mate.**
 - It is not about what you want in a wife
 - It is not about what she wants to be as a wife
 - It is not about what she wants in a husband
 - It is not about what you want to be as a husband
- **All of these are subjective and often motivated by misguided priorities**
 - We need to learn what God wants us to want in a mate; and if we do, over time we will learn to be happy with what God wants for us

IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU!

- **There are three forces contending for dominance in marriages; these forces threaten to tear it apart**
 - **What one wants from a spouse**
 - **What the spouse wants to contribute to the marriage**
 - **What God wants the spouse to be**

IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU!

- **Expectations are the enemy**
 - They are oriented on the self and not the mate
- **True love is not self-oriented**
 - Love wants the mate to be happy and fulfilled
 - Love finds its own happiness and fulfillment in providing for the happiness and fulfillment of others

IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU!

- **If loving myself takes priority in deed over loving God, or my mate, or children, then loving myself is a euphemism for selfishness**
- **Modern psychology is in error on this point; one cannot properly love himself UNTIL he learns love by means of loving someone else and being loved in return**

How Do I Come To Understand And Love My Spouse?

- **I must learn what God, the Designer of marriage, wants me to know about my mate and how I am to treat her.**
- **I must learn to love her as she is by understanding that she is different from me by design, with different likes and dislikes**
- **I must prove my love to her and myself by letting go of selfish expectations for her part in the relationship**