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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

For eight revelation-filled years – 1984 to 1992 – I was mentored and taught the Word of God by a woman who was truly a New Testament apostle (see Ephesians 4:11-12). I was part of a discipleship group that met weekly at the home of this anointed teacher of the Word, Elsie. Her God-given assignment was to teach younger women the Biblical precepts of having a righteous, peaceful home. Elsie was ordained into this discipling and mentoring position by the laying on of hands by four different pastors. With that much confirmation, Elsie presented the Gospel to her assigned spiritual daughters with a confidence and surety that truly grounded us. Her confidence in her call kept us steady through many years of family life.

Due to her own family situations, the regular weekly meetings became sporadic after 1992. However, Elsie was always available for impromptu group meetings in her home, or one-on-one meetings, and phone counseling. For those of us in the discipleship group, these Biblical principles were mainly taught to us at one woman's dining room table on Friday afternoons. Hence, the original title of this book was *Fridays at Elsie's*.

I have related the principles that came from this discipleship/mentoring group to many individuals during the years we were meeting and since that time. I have seen incredible results from individuals who were

willing to follow God and His Word regarding marriage, the family, and the line of authority principles – even in their workplace. But I have never sensed a right time to put it all down on paper until now. Elsie has finished her course and gone on to her glorious reward. Those of us who were taught and mentored by her are surely under a mandate from Our Lord to pass on the truths about a Christ-centered home, whether by word of mouth, by living example, by mentoring, or in my case, by writing a discourse of our times together.

This manual is written mainly for the Christian who is finding that relationships in his or her life are not working very well. These teachings are Bible-based instructions on how to conduct human relationships – primarily in the home – spousal, parental, sibling. But, the Bible instructs us on all forms of human interactions – with friends, co-workers, neighbors. All are to be in order and all in the authority line that God intended.

Just as in any divine principle, these principles will work. Just as gravity works for the believer and the non-believer, practice of the Godly authority line will work because God invented it. However, after nearly 30 years of practicing and studying and speaking these principles, I have discovered that most non-believers do not accept, or are unable to accept Godly principles for their relationships. A Christian who has accepted Jesus as the Lord of his or her life and is filled with the Holy Spirit is well able to receive the help that God has provided in order to live out Godly, Biblical principles. Therefore, I address this study manual to believers in Christ.

I lovingly invite any readers who want to join in and know Christ as their own, who desire to belong to Him, and to know His truths, to bow your heart and repeat these words aloud:

*Father God, I am sorry for and repent of my sins. I ask Your forgiveness for all my sins of commission and omission. Wash me clean of them, Lord. I believe that You shed Your Blood and died for me. You died so that I could live. So, Jesus, I give You my life. Come Holy Spirit; fill me now with Your Love and Your Power to live life more abundantly. Amen.*

If you read aloud from any version of the Bible, Romans 10:8-13, Psalm 91, and Ephesians 1:17-23, you will start to see your new position with Christ. The Word of God is alive and an activator in the human heart, so if you make a personal statement of those Bible verses you will find yourself embracing the Divine Truth that you hear.

Tell someone what you have done – that you are a born-again believer, filled with the Holy Spirit. Welcome, friend!

## chapter four



## A NEW GENERATION

**E**lsie is gone now, but there is a whole new generation of women wrestling with the same issues. Christian women continue to work out their salvation in Christ. They fervently pray for God to straighten out their marriages and families while seeking His guidance on how to live this life they have been given.

We who were discipled by Elsie in her “home church” have benefited in our families. We have told others of the value God places on the human family and the defined roles of the husband and wife. We have lived it in our own homes with our own spouses and children.

Most of us in the group with whom I was associated are now grandmothers. We are seeing the fruits of children who know that the family is specifically blueprinted by the Lord God. This is not a willy-nilly setup, subject to the winds of culture and society. It might seem to be a radical presentation of how to live in a marriage and family, but it seems radical only because a whole generation and maybe two generations are un-schooled

in the Word of God. People in our present day secular society generally do not go through the scriptures to see how to seek a mate and how to be married. Often people flail around looking for answers to these age-old situations. In the process many experience ruined relationships and undue heartache.

My encouragement to young people is to study the scriptures for Biblical answers to life's issues. See how simple, uncomplicated, and completely natural to the human species they are. Look carefully at the scriptures regarding marriage and family (pages 139-144 in this manual). Try to understand that our Creator set up the system presented in the Bible. He knows us. He knows what we are like. He knows that we have a natural tendency to "keep the hearth".

God made us; He knows that when we are in love with a man, a natural submissive tendency develops. Think of how many times we, or women we know, have changed hair, behavior, clothes, language, habits, hobbies, etc., to attract and please a man. The Lord wants to protect us so that we are not "submitting" pointlessly, leaving pieces of our individuality all over the place. Submit the entire process to *God*. We can give Him the rights to our marriage and future. Ask Him for the man who will also submit to God's plan for the family. We can use our naturally submissive nature to our benefit! Then, keep Praising!!!

The stories that follow are of couples who are currently "working out their salvation" in the marriage and family

arena. These couples never knew Elsie or the group that met on Fridays, but they became schooled in the ways of God's order in the family from me or other members of the Body of Christ who have studied the Word in relation to the home. I think their stories will help to illuminate the concepts.

*Jackie and Kevin.* This couple is set up for role reversal. In their 15 years of marriage, she has always been the strong-minded, decisive one. Jackie is a very intelligent, highly verbal woman. She has been in leadership positions at work for much of her adult life. Kevin is quiet and rather shy. He has excellent technical and manual skills. He is a good architect, builder, repairman, and is generally skillful in numerous practical areas. There is a natural attraction between them because of their different natures. But there is also a natural tendency to allow role reversal to settle into their home.

There has been conflict over who decides and who does what in this home for many years. In one recent situation, Kevin wanted to visit a rural area in their state in order to spend a day or two investigating it for possible relocation. Jackie did not want to go for a number of logical and emotional reasons. Their children could not stay by themselves and they have several pets. Kevin noted that if the children and pets went along, the purpose of the trip – to scope out the area for relocation – would be very compromised with distractions. Jackie began presenting these and other practical reasons for not going, when she suddenly realized that she just did not want to go. She did not feel it was the right time frame for even considering



relocation. She felt it would have been a pointless trip. When she voiced these opinions to Kevin, he became quieter than usual, withdrawn, and then refused intimate talk or contact.

Jackie complained to me that Kevin was trying to manipulate her into going on a trip which was irrelevant and would disrupt their household. I told her to bring the problem before The Lord and tell Him that she is willing to be submissive to Kevin in his leadership role. I recommended that Jackie repent of refusing Kevin the leadership role, and that she lay it before the Lord as His call, not Kevin's call. I suggested to Jackie that if she go before The Lord in submission, and tell The Lord that she is willing to go, He would take over the situation. If the trip was something that The Lord wanted, He would show a way to have all of the details surrounding the trip easily handled.

Jackie did this; then, in a surprise move she went to Kevin and apologized for being balky about something that obviously meant a lot to him. She told him if he still wanted to go, she would do whatever arranging had to be done and they would go. Kevin softened and told Jackie that the reconnaissance trip meant a lot to him because he did not see an economic future for their family in the area where they currently lived.

He wanted to start scouting out other areas of the state so they would be ready in case circumstances indicated a sudden move. Jackie told Kevin that she trusted his judgment and would go whenever he wanted, if he

would just give her ample notice to make arrangements. He agreed, and started acting more loving and intimate right away.

One conversation – no more yak about it. Jackie went about her business and never mentioned it again. Neither did Kevin! What happened? Kevin was obviously won over “not by discussion”, but by Jackie’s respect and reverence for him. And Kevin acted in a natural way of a man who is revered and respected: He loved his wife as his own flesh, carefully nourishing and protecting her.

I don’t know if they ever went on the trip. The new atmosphere around the trip made it a non-issue. Jackie now trusts her husband with strategizing and planning for the future of their family. If Kevin says, “Let’s go in two weeks,” Jackie will be assured that The Lord is behind this. She asked for the Lord’s direction upon her husband, and she is in faith that He is truly giving it. If Kevin never wants to visit other areas, well, maybe the Lord dealt with him about timing or some other reality. She is no longer concerned. She let it go when she turned it over to God.



*Jim and Jennifer.* Women need their heads covered. Women feel insecure and unprotected if they are married and do not have this. It is the cause of many divorces,

although the secular world view would never term it a “headship” problem. They would term it something such as an ineffective mate who is not pulling his own weight in the home.

However, Jennifer is not secular in her thinking. She and Jim are both committed Christians. Jennifer has waited and prayed for Jim to assume the headship in their household for at least ten years. Their marriage did not start out with this premise, but after they both received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Jennifer expected their marriage and home to line up with the Word of God. She has done all that she knows to do regarding giving her husband over to the Lord and willingly submitting the leadership role to him. She is being a gentle and quiet spirit rather than a nag.

However, in recent days she has gone to the Lord and told Him she is still married and still does not have a covering – no real headship. The Lord reassured her in prayer that He would be taking over the areas of headship that were missing in her marriage. A whole new peace has come over her, a security that was divine and supernatural. All she had to do was tell Abba Father about this and He covered His daughter.

I am sure God is honoring Jennifer for staying in the marriage and for honoring her husband. She has truly put Jim in God’s hands. She is no longer concerned about him, but prays that he accepts God’s full blessings in his life. The Holy Spirit is in control.

*David and Julie.* This is a couple who had been raising their family in biblical order for many years. They had secular jobs when their children were in the home; then, when the children were out of the house, they became missionaries to the Philippines. Their work in the Philippines necessarily kept them away from their family for months at a time. David could see that after a few years of this life, Julie was starting to get homesick for her children, grandchildren, and her elderly parents. She actually felt so sad and distressed that she asked her husband to go with her to a Christian counselor. David did not want to go; he told her all the answers were right in the Bible. Julie did believe that the Bible had life's answers, but it did not stop her from longing to be with her family. She felt so far away.

When her father died rather suddenly, Julie packed up and returned to the United States immediately. When she asked David how soon he could come, he said that he had to stay in the Philippines. Such resentment rose up inside Julie that she wanted a separation.

She felt as if David were ignoring the answers that he claimed were in the Bible. Julie thought he was ignoring Biblical principles regarding a man nurturing his wife and caring for her as he would his own body. She was suffering and felt as if David did not care. Julie finally went to a counselor who told her that she needed to separate from David for a while. They did separate and it was a disaster. David was brokenhearted, and Julie felt as if she were violating the marriage contract. What to do? What does the Bible say about a situation like this?

Ephesians 5:21 admonishes us to submit to one another in the fear of the Lord. This couple has a lot of submitting to do! They are literally pulling in different directions. The first thing they need to do is to acknowledge that fact, then repent of it.

When a Christian couple is called into ministry together, they need to be aware that if they pull in different directions they will rip the anointing to shreds. Once the couple acknowledges that they are not moving in the same direction, they must go back to the place where they left each other.

At what point did one or the other take off in a direction on his or her own? Once they identify that point in their relationship, they must repent – and truly repent – of it. Then, they must realize that God hates divorce because of what it does to the people involved as well as their children. And if God hates divorce, they need to seek the Holy Spirit about how to avoid divorce. Wise counsel would instruct them to seek the Holy Spirit for God's direction and not make any decisions or changes until agreement in and through the Spirit of God has come to both about their marriage.

A Christian couple with marital problems would do well to stop ministry as much as possible for a while. Seek The Lord in prayer about what is good about their marriage and what is corrupt. As they focus on marital healing, they must own up to the truth that they themselves produced a messy situation in their marriage by violating Divine Principles of marriage. If they calm

down and stop activity for a while, the Lord will help them identify what is wrong. If both parties are willing, The Lord will help them make any necessary corrections and changes.

In the case of David and Julie, it would help David to grasp the concept in 1 Peter 3:17 – he is to live with his wife with understanding. This “understanding” refers to knowledge of The Word regarding marriage, and an understanding of his particular wife – Julie. Her soul has been sorely wounded by his lack of understanding that she needs to be with her children more. Her soul was pierced when he would not accompany her to the funeral of her father. She was not there when her father died; then, his own son-in-law refused to go to the funeral. To Julie, it felt as if her whole family had been assaulted. David needs to examine his priorities: Is “ministry” supposed to be first? Where does family fit into that? The Lord will speak to him if he asks.

Julie, on the other hand, needs to seek the Lord about who this is that she married. If she asks for Godly Wisdom concerning David, she will receive it. Their relationship is different than it was when they decided to go into missionary ministry. The decision they made at that time needs to be reevaluated in prayer for the current time frame and situation. In prayer, Julie could ask the Holy Spirit to bring her back to their original leading about their missionary work: What specifically did they hear from the Lord? What exactly did they agree upon? Where did they deviate from the original leading?

In order to calm her anger and hurt down to a level where she can hear from God and communicate effectively with her husband, she needs to go through an interactive exercise similar to the one at the end of this study. She would be wise to examine all the ways that she “sees” David, concentrating heavily on the positive. In addition, a forgiveness exercise which addresses all the hurts that she feels David has inflicted upon her, will move her into clearer, more Godly thinking.

David and Julie’s road will probably not be easy, but regrouping and reestablishing their calling in Christ is entirely possible. As they commit to the Love of Christ and the Word of God dwelling in their hearts fully, their spiritual eyes will open. The adjustments needed for God’s order in the home will become clear.