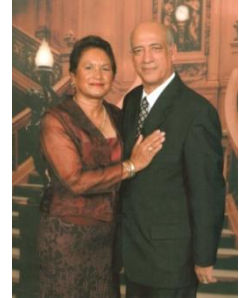


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PRE MARRIAGE COUNSELING

SESSION 8

CALVARY APOSTOLIC MINISTRIES TWELVE DECLARATIONS OF INTENT FOR A BLESSED MARRIAGE

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For our Christian Marriages to be blessed of The Lord we have to adhere to certain principles that are predetermined and agreed upon by both spouses of the Marriage. These principles are to be based on The Word of God.

Through study of The Word of God and consultation with each other these principles are to be determined and agreed upon. It is extremely essential that both spouses are involved in presenting these principles. It must never ever be presented by just the Husband or the Wife. Both Husband and Wife research The Word of God together in developing the principles that will govern their Marriage. Usually when just the Husband or just the Wife presents these Principles it can be seen as possible manipulation for control in The Marriage.

These Principles of Biblical Truth and Revelation that the Husband and Wife agree upon must be seen as the spiritual ingredients that strengthen the Marriage relationship and therefore we should address them as THE DECLARATIONS OF INTENT FOR A BLESSED MARRIAGE. No doubt there can be several more that the married couple can agree upon and live by.

Many marriage counsellors prescribe Ten Biblical Commandments for a blessed marriage. No doubt this is based upon the precedent (model, guide, pattern, standard) of The Old Testament Ten Commandments that governed the relationship of The Jewish Nation with God and their fellow man. The Church is not in The Dispensation of The Law, rather we are experiencing The Dispensation of Grace: *"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17 KJV)."* And therefore we move away from all aspects of the Law and we consider rather a DECLARATION OF INTENT THAT WILL ENRICH THE

MARRIAGE. These Declarations of Intent have a prophetic edge to them that speaks spiritual life over the married couple and family.

Though the married couple would live by these Declarations of Intent, they must be of the mutual understanding that as husband and wife The Declarations of Intent that they draw up together and agree to live by IS NOT LAW. They have to base the life together on THE PRINCIPLE OF GRACE. THE LAW DEMANDS PERFECTION BUT GRACE PROVIDES LOVE AND FORGIVENESS THOUGH THE DECLARATION OF INTENT IS BROKEN. THOUGH THESE DECLARATIONS ARE ESSENTIAL TO ANY MARRIAGE WHEN THEY ARE NOT CONDITIONED BY GRACE THEY WILL CAUSE DISSENSION. IT IS WITH THE FOLLOWING THOUGHT IN MIND THAT CALVARY APOSTOLIC MINISTRIES' PRESENTS THEIR TWELVE DECLARATIONS OF INTENT FOR CHRISTIAN MARRIAGES: *ALTHOUGH THE DECLARATIONS ARE SET IN PLACE FOR THE MARRIAGE TO BE BLESSED OF THE LORD IT HAS TO BE CONSTANTLY SEASONED WITH GRACE.*

DECLARATION ONE: POTENTIAL NOT PEFECTION

By God's grace we will not concentrate on finding PERFECTION in each other, rather we will concentrate on each other's POTENTIAL that will lead to PERFECTION.

EXPLANATION: Too often husbands and wives concentrate on each other's shortcomings and failures. Look on each other's strengths and applaud each other for them. Regardless who we are people respond far better to praise than criticism. Be an ENCOURAGER at all times.

SCRIPTURE: *"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye (Lu 6:41-42).*

DECLARATION TWO: PRAYER

By God's grace we will pray for and with each other daily.

EXPLANATION: It is vitally essential that both husband and wife have their private devotions. It is during these private devotions that prayer can be offered up for the defects and sins of the spouse. It is unwise and even hurtful to pray for each other's defects and sins when praying together. When praying together it is essential that prior to prayer that an agreed prayer agenda is drawn up and adhered unto.

SCRIPTURE: *"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much (James 5:16 KJV)."*
"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted (Ga 6:1)."

DECLARATION THREE: LOVE'S DAILY DECLARATION

By God's grace we will daily declare our love for each other.

EXPLANATION: Not only must the words: *"I love you"* be voiced and heard each day, acts of kindness, tolerance and consideration must be evident as well.

SCRIPTURE: *"And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love (1Co 13:13)."*

DECLARATION FOUR: COMPLEMENTING EACH OTHER

By God's grace we will complement each other privately and publicly, furthermore we will never embarrass each other in the company of others

EXPLANATION: Compliments of praise will resound privately and publicly. When in company we will never ever disagree with our spouse. We will not embarrass our spouse in company by challenging them.

SCRIPTURE: *"I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea (Ro 16:1)."*

DECLARATION FIVE: ESTEEM EACH OTHER

By God's grace we will esteem each other at all times.

Explanation: It is vitally essential that in all things we put the other first. The need of our spouse must be paramount.

SCRIPTURE: *"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves (Php 2:3)."*

DECLARATION SIX: ENTERTAINING GOSSIP

By God's grace we will not entertain gossip about each other.

EXPLANATION: We will not entertain negative and degrading gossip unless the person will speak in the company of the spouse who is being spoken of.

SCRIPTURE: *"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established (Mt 18:16)."*

DECLARATION SEVEN: THE FAMILY TABLE

By God's grace we will always eat with our family and guests at our family meal table.

EXPLANATION: The family table is the time of fellowship and sharing and eating apart will not foster good relationships.

SCRIPTURE: *"And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap. And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; And Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another (Gen 31 :46-49)*

DECLARATION EIGHT: FINANCE

By God's grace we will only have one banking account registered in both spouses names.

EXPLANATION: In all aspects of life the oneness must be the testimony of the married couple. Having one banking account however does not stop each spouse from having a bank account from their respective pocket money allowance.

SCRIPTURE: : *“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh (Gen 2:24).”*

DECLARATION NINE: TITHING AND MINISTRY TO THE NEEDY

By God’s grace both spouses shall tithe on their respective incomes and agree at all times on a stipulated sum for the assisting of those in need.

EXPLANATION: Christians tithe out of a heart of gratitude and love and not from obligation.

SCRIPTURE: *“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it (Mal 3:8-10).” “He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again (Pro 19:17).”*

DECLARATION TEN: CONTENTMENT

By God’s grace we shall be thankful and content with what God has blessed us with. We shall in no way covet.

EXPLANATION: We will rejoice with others when they are blessed by God, even if we do not receive the same blessings as others.

SCRIPTURE: *“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's (Ex 20:17).”*

DECLARATION ELEVEN: FORGIVENESS

By God’s grace we will forgive each other when offended and sinned against. We will not harbour bitterness and unforgiveness.

EXPLANATION: An unforgiving spirit will bring forth a root of bitterness that will not only destroy the spouse with the unforgiving spirit, it will also destroy the marriage that will eventually lead to divorce.

SCRIPTURE: *“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all*

that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses (Mt 18:21-35 KJV).” “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice (Eph 4:31 KJV).” “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled (Heb 12:15 KJV).” “Eph 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath (Eph 4:26 KJV).”

DECLARATION TWELVE: RAISING THE FAMILY

By God’s grace we will raise our children in the fear and admonishment of The Lord.

SCRIPTURE: *“Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD (Ps 34:11).” “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Pr 22:6).”*

EXPLANATION: Spare the rod spoil the child. As parents we must realize that our children represent us. The behaviour of our children is often the reflection of us and therefore we do not just raise our children for ourselves but for the world.