

Excerpts from Chapter Four, *The Power in Agreeing and Serving*

.... Too often in marriages today, we use the “it’s all about me” approach. We have the “I’ll do this, if you’ll do that” mindset instead of learning how to serve one another and resolve our issues in a healthy manner. These selfish attitudes always result in everyone’s loss. During this false sense of agreement and service, we are actually compromising to receive what we want, instead of coming together in agreement, whereby eventually everyone is blessed. Walking in true agreement does appear to be a “win, win” situation initially, however, it always positions us to walk in power and victory. To effectively walk in agreement in marriage we must crucify our own selfish desires and exercise the wisdom and understanding mentioned in the previous chapters. This requires us to utilize a greater level of maturity in our relationship with Jesus Christ and others.

Miriam -Webster dictionary defines *agreement* as, *the act of being in harmony regarding a matter of opinion*. Another definition is, *complete accord usually attained by discussion and adjustment of differences*. Strong’s Complete Dictionary of Bible Words list the greek definition for *agreement* as *sumphoneo*, which means *to be harmonious, to accord or concur*. There is a distinct difference between agreement and compromise. *Compromise* is defined as *the settlement of differences by arbitration or consent reached by mutual concessions*. *Concession (concede)* is defined as *to acknowledge grudgingly or hesitantly*. The disadvantage of compromising is that there is hesitance, or a resentful unwillingness to come to agreement, rather than the *harmony* and *complete accord* found in exercising agreement, which produces a greater unity and power in the relationship. In a compromise both parties lose something they wanted or had strong convictions about. Failing to agree *or reach complete accord by discussing and adjusting their differences*, couples often find themselves harboring resentment, frustration, and in some cases, clinging to what they *lost* in the compromise. This creates division and confusion in marriage. Agreement affords everyone the opportunity to interject their ideas and thoughts, however, instead of compromising, they prayerfully and

harmoniously agree on a decision, or a directive by God in the situation. In order to effectively walk in the power of agreement, we must examine what the word of God says regarding it.

Agreement began in Genesis 1:26 when God said, “let us make man in our image, after our likeness...” Although many theologians disagree about who God was referring to when He said “our” image, the fact remains, man was made in agreement and harmony, as stated in His word. The Bible records in I John 5: 7, 8, “*For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one in agreement. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.*” This further validates the God ordained necessity for agreement and the power of such agreement. One foundational scripture for agreement, which wonderfully applies to marriage is, “*How can two walk together except they be agreed?*” (Amos 3: 3) This is the basis of our study concerning the power of agreement.

Consider how a lack of agreement can affect other areas in marriage. For instance, when there is no agreement, there is no understanding, communication, peace, joy, trust, or power. Generally, we do not consider the consequences of our disagreement in marriage. Although, you will have differences, you should be determined to reach a place of harmony. You should accept that when making decisions, we should be willing to *agree*, or, *reach complete accord by discussing and adjusting their differences*. Keep in mind that you are two individuals learning how to grow and function as one and you should consider that every opportunity you have to discuss issues will assist you in the integration of your thoughts and ideas. There will be many occasions when you will not have the same feelings, views, or approach, however, to victoriously overcome those instances, you must pray, discuss, and adjust. Prayer and communication with God as a team will aid you in reaching the *accord or harmony* essential for agreement. It is unfortunate that many couples do not take the time to pray together. This is the case with “seasoned” matured Christians as well as “babes” in Christ. Prayer promotes unity. The Bible promises that whatsoever

you shall ask in prayer believing, you shall receive. It further promises in James 5:16 that *the effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much*. We cannot expect to have a purposeful, fulfilling marriage useful for the glory of God when we fail to include the instructions from God's word in it? Do we think that marriage requires any less holiness than other areas of our lives? Quite the contrary, it requires much more of us.

Consider Matthew 18: 19, 20 which promises, "*Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*" This scripture further guarantees that when we come together in agreement for His name sake, He will not only grant our requests, but He will be in the *midst* of us. For God to be in our midst means that He is the core, center, focal point, heart, nucleus, and very foundation of our lives. As we touch and agree in prayer, we invite God and elevate Him in our situations and circumstances, allowing Him to release a greater level of understanding, wisdom, and power in us. In turn, we become closer to Him and closer to one another. If Adam and Eve had communicated regularly with one another and with God in unity, Satan's attempt may have been nullified. Consider the lack of discussion when Eve offered Adam the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Genesis 3: 6 states, she *gave her husband the fruit and he did eat*. Bearing in mind our understanding of agreement, Eve should not have assumed that she could make such a critical decision without her husband's approval; furthermore, Adam should have interjected his thoughts on the matter, taking into account what God said and knowing that they would face death as a result of disobeying God. Eve was so deceived that she actually believed this fruit could benefit them, nevertheless, these events further validate the need for prayer, communication, discussion, and agreement. The implementation of such will greatly reduce the likelihood of destruction.

When was the last time you grabbed your spouse's hands and initiated a prayer of agreement and declaration of the things of God for his/her life or for your marriage? How often do you take the time to pray or fast as a couple for direction, purpose, and success for your marriage? Consider the countless times you squabbled to no avail, circumventing the most important principle and the surest remedy of all, which is prayer. Recognizing that we can approach the throne of God in the most basic way, free from fancy words, or deep verbalization, we must simply agree on issues and go to our Father for support and where we lack the ability to agree we must pray for that too. In Matthew 16:19 the Lord declares, *"I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."* This is an awesome pronouncement given by our Lord. However, if we fail to use the keys that He has given us, we will fail to unlock the doors to the many areas of victory that await us. Agreement in prayer is critical for our success in marriage. We can not expect success in our lives, much less our marriage, without exercising these biblical fundamentals.

In the previous chapter we examined the fundamentals of understanding in marriage. Once you have mastered those basic truths, it is much easier to master the "art of agreement". Once we see these challenges as opportunities to serve the Lord in our service to one another, we will walk in a new level of anointing, victory, and purpose. We must not allow our flesh to cause us to "get out of character", as I often say! We are called to walk in agreement, which is much easier when we value our marriage and understand the importance of serving our spouse. Yikes!, sounds so difficult! Although the flesh wars against not first fulfilling our own needs and desires, the spirit welcomes the opportunity to exercise this godly and uncommon behavior. This takes us into our study of serving in marriage - the art of serving.

Consider the word of God which states in Colossians 3: 22 – 24, *"Servants obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as manpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God. And whatsoever ye do, do it*

heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Jesus Christ.” When you serve others as if you are serving the Lord, you then can discover the joy in serving. This type of service requires becoming mature and selfless Christian. Remember, we are not serving to please others, but we serve because of our recognition and respect for God. Those of you unable to remotely imagine your spouse as your master, please consider one definition of the word master according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary; *one who exercises control or authority*. You must see your service not as a slave but as a free servant of Christ, your spouse, and others. Galatians 5: 13-15 reads, *“For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in this one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”* This confirms God’s requirement to serve and affirm the power of serving, not only in marriage, but daily life. This is a powerful text, it reminds us that if we do this one thing, all the law is fulfilled! Fulfilling law is a breeze once we become disciplined enough to master these spiritual principles.

One definition for serve is *to answer the needs of, or assist others*. Consider how you feel when someone serves you. Not only does it promote unity, it begins a reciprocal process whereby you desire to serve those who have served you. In actuality this is doing for those who have already done for you; nevertheless, it increases the likelihood for sincere service to others. Something I often ask wives who complain about their husband’s lack of support, how often they serve their husbands, and if they serve them how often is it done voluntarily. I pose the same questions to husbands because the same rule applies. Can you remember the last time that you did something for your wife for no reason other than to be to be a blessing?

Here are a few things husbands and wives can do to serve one another...