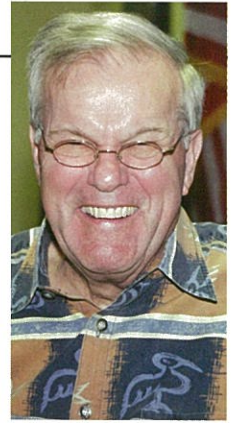


GRAPEVINE

SUMMER 2009

BIBLE TEACHING RESOURCES BY DON ANDERSON MINISTRIES





Marriage Maintenance

When I invite them to a marriage conference, more than a few of my senior saint friends respond as follows: "My marriage is just fine and I'm afraid you'll mess it up!" or "The only people who go to those things have big time problems."

My defensive response is this: "Pearl and I have been going to and doing these conferences for 56 years, and we are really happy soul mates, best friends and loving the privilege of serving Jesus together."

In wedding ceremonies I perform, at the conclusion of the service, I inform the couple that they came in to the church with a four-letter word, and they are walking back down the aisle with a four-letter word. They came in with L-O-V-E, and they are going out with W-O-R-K.

Marriage is a living organism like a plant. It must be watered, fertilized and tended to regularly.

Speaking of marriage, Paul instructs the saints at Ephesus in Ephesians 5:29: "For no one ever yet hated his own flesh, but is *nourishing* and *cherishing* it, even as Christ does the church."

The NET Bible translates the key words: "He feeds it and takes care of it." Peterson paraphrases the verse, "He feeds and pampers it."

Nourishing and cherishing are in the present tense. They are daily, continuing actions.

As Dr. John MacArthur puts it:

The husband who loves his wife as Christ loves the church will no more do anything to harm her than he would to harm his own flesh. His desire is to nourish and cherish her just as he nourishes and cherishes his own body—because that is how Christ also does the church.

When she needs strength, he gives her strength. When she needs encouragement, he gives her that. And so with every other thing she needs. Just as God supplies "all [our] needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19), the loving husband seeks to supply all the needs of his wife. The blessed

marriage is the marriage in which the husband loves his wife with unlimited caring. Something is basically wrong if she is looked at only as a cook, housekeeper, occasional companion, and sex partner. She is a God-given treasure to be loved, cared for, nourished, and cherished.

To nourish a wife is to provide for her needs, to give that which helps her grow and mature in favor with God and man. To cherish her is to use tender love and physical affection to give her warmth, comfort, protection, and security. Those responsibilities are primarily the husband's, not the wife's. As Christ provides for His church, so the husband provides for his wife and family.¹

Barclay writes the following:

Real love always cherishes the one it loves. It loves not to extract service; it loves not to ensure that its own physical comfort is attended to; it loves not for its own convenience; it cherishes the one it loves. There is something wrong when a man regards his wife, consciously or unconsciously, as the one who cooks his meals and washes his clothes and cleans his house and trains his children. He must regard her, not as a kind of permanent servant, but as the one person whom it is his duty to cherish.²

One dear lady I have had the joy of counseling refers to herself as "low maintenance." I love that. She means she doesn't need a lot of help, but a little help would surely be appreciated.

Maintenance means buying a new car and remembering, as mileage accumulates, that it takes oil changes, lube jobs, and tire rotations to keep you safely on the road.

Maintenance means well-timed pit stops for NASCAR.

Maintenance means regular deposits at the bank so you are not overdrawn.

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**If my people, who belong to me,
humble themselves, pray, seek
to please me, and repudiate their
sinful practices, then I will
respond from heaven, forgive
their sin, and heal their land.**

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From the Editor

Summer is the time for lighter schedules, leisurely reading, and lazy afternoons. This issue of the *Grapevine* we might call *Grapevine Light*, since we have shortened the magazine for the summer only. You'll find an article from Don offering tips on marriage maintenance. Pearl, too, provides a few gems of wisdom. *Bookshelf* features a few ideas for summer reading. Our fervent hope is that you will pack up family and friends and join us this August 17-22 at Trail West family camp in Buena Vista, Colorado. Frisbee golf, hiking, white water rafting, square dancing, golf... it's all available at Trail West. Timely scriptural messages from Don and special music from Larry Kent and Russell Newport guarantee a week to remember. Your package includes delicious meals and comfortable lodging in Trail West's hotel-type rooms. We hope to see you there! May the Lord bless you this summer and keep you safe. Thank you for your continued friendship and prayerful support.

Jane Rodgers



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Marriage Maintenance Agreement

The following contract was issued to and signed by couples who attended our spring marriage conference. We thought we'd include it here for those of our readers ready to renew their "marriage maintenance agreements" for the rest of the journey together!

"Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes, that ruin the vineyards—for our vineyard is in bloom"
Song of Solomon 2:15 NET

My **L-O-V-E** has now become **W-O-R-K**.
I promise to work on our marriage in these five areas:

COMMITMENT—I promise to seek God's wisdom on a daily basis.
"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, accommodating, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and not hypocritical."
James 3:17 NET

COMPANIONSHIP—I promise to let no one enter the secret place behind our shining barrier.
"Do you know the saying, 'Drink from your own rain barrel, draw water from your own spring-fed well'? . . . Your spring water is for you and you only, not to be passed around among strangers."
Proverbs 5:17, 20 MSG

CHALLENGE—I promise to be careful with our money and not make it our primary focus.
"You can't worship two gods at once. Loving one god, you'll end up hating the other. Adoration of one feeds contempt for the other. You can't worship God and Money both."
Matthew 6:24 MSG

COMMUNICATION—I promise to remember the words of James.
"Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters! Let every person be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger."
James 1:19 NET
My prayer is: *"May my words and my thoughts be acceptable in your sight."*
Psalm 19:14 NET

CHRIST—I promise to be consistent in my walk with the Lord.
"He must become more important while I become less important."
John 3:30 NET
"I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So the life I now live in the body, I live because of the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."
Galatians 2:20 NET

I (HUSBAND) _____ make these five promises to you.

I (WIFE) _____ make these five promises to you.

"But I will not remove my loyal love from him. Nor be unfaithful to my promise. I will not break my covenant or go back on what I promised."
Psalm 89:33, 34 NET

by Don Anderson

In these chaotic and uncertain times, I would like to recommend for your summer reading some excellent books that will help you come to peace with the fact that God is still on the throne and in complete control of all that is happening in this old world.

The Late Great United States: What Bible Prophecy Reveals about America's Last Days

by Mark Hitchcock (Multnomah)

We have reviewed other titles by Mark Hitchcock in previous *Grapevines*. As we contemplate the future, we would do well to ask where America fits into biblical prophecy. Mark paints a realistic yet forboding picture of the future of the United States of America. Note the following excerpts.

And the worst fear of all—weapons of mass destruction on American soil.

Many are openly saying that anything less than victory in the currently festering conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan will weaken America's resolve, embolden the jihadists, and force the United States to abdicate its role as world leader and to retreat into isolation. (Hitchcock 3)

It is not difficult to predict the future of America. Unless we experience a moral revival and shake off the domination of the secular humanists who control our government, media, and public education, we will be a fifth-rate power in twenty to thirty years. Does that sound like an extreme statement? I suggest you draw a simple graph of our national decline during the past thirty years and project the same rate of decline for the next thirty. We can apply that graph to the nation's morals, military might, economy, religious freedom, and family breakdown. On the increase are the size of government, taxation, secular humanist propaganda, crime, drugs, VD, pornography. Communist subversion, and a host of other harmful social influences. America will no longer be the America most of us inherited thirty years ago if we continue to decline at the present rate. (Hitchcock 171)

Inside the Revolution: How the Followers of Jihad, Jefferson & Jesus are Battling to Dominate the Middle East and Transform the World

by Joel C. Rosenberg (Tyndale)

This is a large volume based upon a mountain of research that makes it invaluable. You are probably

familiar with Joel Rosenberg, his book *Epicenter*, and the five novels he has written about the last days. We have reviewed all five in previous *Grapevines*. Joel's latest book is a marvelous work which gets us up to speed about what is going on around the world. He does a beautiful job of relating current events to biblical prophecy. Let me quote just a little snippet from the last part of the book, a section entitled "The Big, Untold Story":

"In Iran," another Iranian Christian told me, "you don't go after people with the gospel. They are coming to you to ask you about the Lord. Let me give you an example. I went to the doctor's office because I was feeling very ill. I asked the receptionist if I could see the doctor right away, but she was a veiled woman and a fanatical Muslim. She had no intention of making life easier for an 'infidel,' and she told me I would have to wait for two hours. 'You will regret that' I said with a smile, and then sat down in the crowded waiting room. A few moments later, the doctor walked by to pick up a file. 'Hello, Reverend,' he said to me. I greeted him back. Then everyone in the waiting room asked me, 'Are you really a reverend?' I said I was. 'How can I know Jesus?' they asked. I told them and five Muslims prayed with me in the waiting room to receive Christ as their Savior. 'See how you will regret making me wait?' I told the receptionist, again with a smile. She has never made me wait again." (Rosenburg 383)

I challenge you to set aside the time to read the work. You will be blessed beyond words.

The Twelfth Angel

by Og Mandino (Random House)

My good friend Dr. Dick Knarr gave me this little book. Inside, Dick inscribed the definition of courage: "a quality of mind or temperament that enables one to stand fast in the face of opposition, hardship, or danger." You will discover that the twelfth angel, Tim, epitomizes such bravery. May we all be as courageous as he. Pearl and I both agree that you will need Kleenex to make it through this work. What a great little story it is, and what a message it brings to all who want to finish well. May we, too, with little Tim, be able to say, "I never, never, never gave up!" (Mandino 163).

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Also available for an incredible price: #CD201CB Abraham (recorded at Cannon Beach in 2007). For only \$10 you will receive a binder with the CD series and study guide. As a special bonus, you will also receive our 35th Anniversary tote bag.

Donna's Delights

Our new contributor, Donna Anderson Skorheim, offers these easy recipes with a common ingredient: cream cheese. Try making Oreo balls with the kids this summer.

Corn Casserole

- 1- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1 stick of margarine
- 4 cans whole kernel corn

Soften cream cheese in the microwave or bring to room temperature. Melt margarine. Put cream cheese and melted margarine in a baking dish. Drain corn and stir the corn in the cream cheese and margarine until corn is coated. Bake in 350 degree oven for 20-30 minutes until bubbly.

Oreo Balls

- 1 package Oreo cookies, ground up
 - 1-8 oz. cream cheese (room temperature)
- Mix together and shape into balls. Dip in white almond bark.



CLIPBOARD

continued

Marriage maintenance may mean weekly date nights, flowers, cards, and special surprises. These serve as emotional deposits that you can draw upon in a crisis. It takes discipline and determination to remember to do the little things well and regularly. We must forego pride and admit we cannot go it alone and that we need our spouse.

The key to marriage maintenance is to nourish and cherish your mate daily until the time of final parting comes.

J. C. Ryle in his book *Holiness* quotes Venn's letter to Stillingfleet, announcing the death of his wife:

"I have some of the best news to impart. One beloved by you has accomplished her warfare, has received an answer to her prayers, and everlasting joy rests upon her head. My dear wife, the source of my best earthly comfort for twenty years, departed on Tuesday.³"

When James Means lost his wife to cancer, he wrote a wonderful, heart-searching book called *A Tearful Celebration*. He writes the following:

A precious life has been taken away. I feel great grief and pain. It sears my every waking hour.

At a time like this, it is imperative that I remember that God has not promised to keep my life bubbling with good, pleasing sensations. I must not prostitute God by giving Him the responsibility of being an

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In It for the Long Haul

by Pearl Anderson

As Don reminds us in his article, car maintenance is important. It makes the car operate trouble free for a longer time.

Whenever Wesley Anderson (Don's dad) decided to trade in a car, several people waited in line to buy it. He had a reputation for keeping a well maintained car. His son is also on a first name basis with all the mechanics at our local Jiffy Lube brake and alignment shop. Every three to four thousand miles, the oil is changed, tires rotated and aligned. Whatever is on the maintenance list is done.

When one of our sons was younger, he felt certain he had found the first car he would ever own. We suggested that he take it to a mechanic and get it checked out before putting any money down. He came home without the car. The mechanic said it looked as if the former owner had never changed the oil. Gunk and sludge had ruined the engine.

The importance of marriage maintenance cannot be overstated. If a healthy, happy marriage is to last a life time...if a couple is to stick together happily for the long haul, they must work on maintenance every day.

When two people drive their marital car on the bumpy road of life and never refuel, never replace the spark plugs, or never pause for a realignment, sooner or later they will end up stalled by the side of the road.

How can we keep our marital car running on all cylinders and on the right road to marital bliss?

1. Maintain connection: share, talk, plan, express.
 2. Maintain faithfulness: one man + one woman; put God first, your marriage second, others third.
 3. Maintain relationship with God: His infinite sovereign power will keep the relationship safe. This is vital!
 4. Maintain relationship together—nurturing each other.
- Be totally committed to the care and happiness of your friend, lover, and partner for life.

Catch Don!

Sundays, 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. services @ Hideaway Lake Community Church. 1500 Lake Park Circle, Hideaway, TX 75771. See www.hideawaychurch.com for more information.
Fall Tour, **September 21-October 29, 2009**. Details will be available in the next issue of *The Grapevine*.

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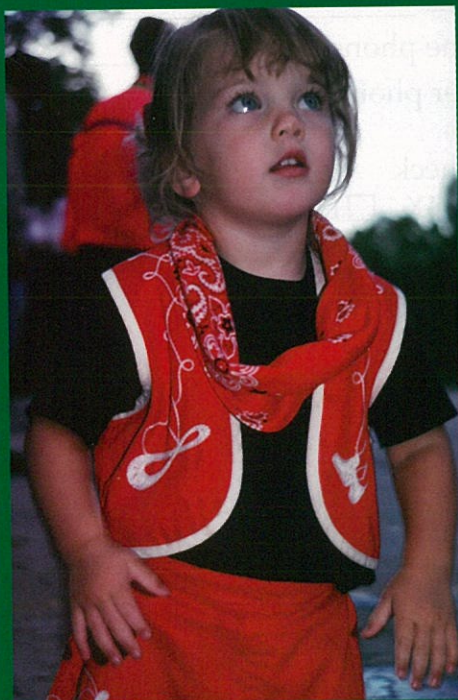
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CLIPBOARD *continued*

indulgent Santa Claus in the heavens. God is not my servant. I am His servant.

... God's comfort is not insulation from difficulty; it is spiritual fortification sufficient to enable me to stand firm, undefeated in the fiery trials of life. God's provision is not always the green pastures and still waters. Sometimes God leads into the valley of the shadow, but I may walk there with confidence.⁴

Friends, stay faithful to your maintenance duties. That way, you won't have to struggle trying to make up for lost time in the home stretch.

1. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Ephesians* by John MacArthur, Jr. Chicago, IL: Moody Press. © The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1986. p. 301.
2. *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians: The Daily Study Bible* by William Barclay. Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press. © The Saint Andrew Press, 1960 – second impression. p. 207.
3. *Holiness* by J. C. Ryle. Welwyn, Hertfordshire, England: Evangelical Press. © Evangelical Press, 1989 - fifth impression. p. 190
4. *A Tearful Celebration* by James Means. Portland, OR: Multnomah. © Multnomah Press, 1985. p. 19.