

The Miraculous Prescription That Could Alter Your Life Exponentially

What if I told you there is one simple change you could make that would alter your life exponentially? Would you do it?

What if I told you that I, a formerly depressed woman, now experience such joy and peace in my soul that it reaches far beyond my circumstances, past the difficult people in my life, and overcomes my socio-economic level?

Would you believe me?

It is not a “magic” fix, although it is indeed a miraculous prescription! I have found that participating in this simple yet meaningful practice delivers eternal rewards and rejuvenates the woman that I am with inexpressible joy and purpose.

If you know me at all, and you understand the miracle that God has caused to happen in my life, then you know exactly what I am going to tell you to do.

Read your Bible.

Read your Bible every day with joy and delight!

Immerse yourself in its powerful principles and in its extravagant peace.

Think about the Word of God ... talk about the Bible ... make it part of your emotional DNA.

Did you know that the Bible has healing power over sin, sickness and emotional pain?

“He sent His word and healed them and delivered them from

their destruction” (Psalm 107:20, MEV).

Did you know that the Bible is able to do for you what other resources are unable to accomplish in your life?

“My soul collapses on account of grief; strengthen me according to Your word” (Psalm 119:28, MEV).

The Bible is the greatest source of healing, comfort, wisdom and peace that has ever been known to humanity.

“This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your Word revives me” (Psalm 119:50, MEV).

Whatever you have gone through in life, the Word of God has the power to heal and to assuage your pain. I guarantee it!

Whatever you will face in all of your tomorrows will be bearable because of the wisdom and strength found in the Word of God. I guarantee it!

I believe that God’s Word is powerful and a wise counselor. I also believe that the Bible holds the answers for God’s children when applied appropriately, when treasured daily and when accompanied by a heartfelt longing for God’s opinion.

If you are wondering how to approach reading the Word of God, let me give you a couple of suggestions:

1. Set aside 15 minutes a day to read your Bible. Perhaps on the weekend, you would be able to set aside 20-30 minutes a day. We spend our lives doing so many different and various activities and ignore the importance of daily time focused on God’s heart and on God’s will. We go to the gym, play computer games, talk on the phone, watch pointless TV shows and clean things that will just need cleaning again tomorrow. The investment of time that you give to the Word of God will be the best investment of your entire life.

2. Choose a Scripture once a month to memorize. At the end of

the year, you will be the beneficiary of 12 new Scriptures that are hidden in your heart. On the first day of every month, simply write out a verse on a three-by-five card and then carry it around with you. When you are waiting in a line, read your memory verse. When you are in a doctor's office, read your memory verse. When you are on the verge of frustration, read your memory verse. By the end of the month, it will be written on your heart.

3. When you are in a difficult situation in life, get on your knees with your Bible open. Ask God to speak to you through His Word. Reverently open your Bible and bask in all that He is and all that He has. The best place to start is to study the verses that are on your daily plan for that day.

4. Make it your personal goal to share with someone once a week what you are reading in your Bible. Ask God to open doors for you to share a Scripture with someone. Perhaps you could set a monthly appointment with a friend and determine that you will only talk about the Bible.

5. Remind yourself that as the children of God, we do not primarily read the Bible for information but for transformation. Even if your mind does not understand what you have read, your spirit is being renewed, strengthened and restored. I guarantee it!

"So I will keep Your law continually, forever and ever!"
(Psalm 119:44, MEV) {eoa}

Carol McLeod is an author and popular speaker at women's conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. She has written five books, including *No More Ordinary*, *Holy Estrogen!*, *The Rooms of a Woman's Heart* and *Defiant Joy!* Her most recent book, *Refined: Finding Joy in the Midst of the Fire*, was

released last August. Her teaching DVD The Rooms of a Woman's Heart won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for excellence in religious programming. You can also listen to Carol's "A Jolt of Joy" program daily on the Charisma Podcast Network. Connect with Carol or inquire about her speaking to your group at .

The 7 Rings of Marriage and How They Lead to Success

I remember sitting in the back of the class hoping our new bundle of joy would stay sound asleep in her carrier until the class ended. We didn't want to miss anything and we didn't want anyone else in the class to be distracted.

Stephana, my wife, had been attending this church since moving to Indianapolis. I had only recently begun attending the church with her and our daughter. We just made the commitment to become members of the church and were excited to be taking our new members classes.

Then *it* happened.

The minister looked our way as we sat in the back of the class, and asked, "How long have you two been married?"

Keep in mind that at the time both of us were much more introverted than extroverted. So, sitting in the back wasn't only our way of keeping our baby from distracting others, but also our way of not being noticed or being called to answer any questions we didn't have answers to.

And there were a lot of questions we didn't have answers to as

we were twenty-somethings, and even younger in our faith. But the question came, and so did the eyes of everyone in the class. It was the worst question we could have been asked. After looking at my wife, I answered ...

“We aren’t married.”

One Child, No Ring, No Union, No Wedlock

Yes, we had a child, only a month old, but at that time we weren’t married. There was no ring. No union. No wedlock. No waiting until getting married. What a way to be introduced to our new members classmates.

The thing is, up until the point we began attending this church together, having a baby out of wedlock wasn’t that big of a deal. We knew plenty of people and friends who had experienced the same at much younger ages.

We were very naive to a lot of things then, especially when it came to God’s magnificent design for marriage. Without knowing it, we were laying a foundation for our relationship, for our future marriage, that would lead to many challenges.

In hindsight, we just didn’t know any better.

Growing Together With God Despite the Challenges

Yet, also in hindsight, every single choice, every single season of our relationship has been an amazing opportunity to learn and grow, to become closer, and ultimately to be an example of what God can and will do in a marriage when two people commit to following the principles He has set.

We later got to know that minister who had called us out and celebrate holidays with his wife and their family. Since those initial new members classes, we also decided to be intentional in learning more about God’s design for marriage. We took classes, read books, attended retreats, joined small groups and did anything we thought would help us grow closer to God

and to one another.

What we've learned has helped our marriage to grow and be fulfilling through each season, or what I like to call, *The 7 Rings of Marriage*.

Not one season, or "ring," of our marriage has been without challenges, though. Being called out in that class pales in comparison to what we've experienced after saying, "I do." The list includes:

- Being homeless (twice!)
- Job loss
- Financial despair
- Loneliness
- Intimacy issues
- Communication challenges
- In-law issues

The 7 Rings of Marriage

Those challenges, lessons learned and God's grace are the primary reasons I've been able to write a book on marriage, and the reasons my wife and I are able to help couples through the workshops we teach, the marriage events where we speak and the marriage coaching we do.

Through our experiences and insights from interviews and conversations with other couples who have long-lasting and truly fulfilling marriages, we've noticed there is a model for successful marriages.

This model is *The 7 Rings of Marriage*. Every successful couple we've spoken with can identify and has experienced them at some point.

1. Engagement Ring – This is the beginning. You found that special someone and you see "happily ever after" in your future. Your vision is nothing but love.

2. Wedding Ring – You said, “I do,” to the girl or guy of your dreams, and you two have become one.

3. DiscoverRing – The smoke has cleared. You see each other every day, but there are some things you wish you didn’t see. This ring is an eye opener.

4. PersevereRing – The Bible says if you don’t work, you don’t eat. This applies to marriage. Those in marriages who don’t wear this ring, don’t make it.

5. RestoRing – You’ve learned your spouse is not perfect and vice versa, but you love anyway. When you’re “all in,” that means that you may need to put some broken pieces back together from time to time.

6. ProspeRing – You’ve experienced ups and downs, issues, challenges and everything else. But it didn’t kill your marriage; it made it stronger.

7. MentoRing – Half of marriages don’t make it this far. If you have, now it’s time to teach others what you’ve experienced in marriage.

I’m so excited to share my marriage story in my new book and in a *HomeLife* magazine column every month. I pray it will help you and others grow in marriage, and ultimately reveal the model that will lead you to a lasting and fulfilling marriage.
{eoa}

*Author and blogger **Jackie Bledsoe** outlines the seven stages, or The Seven Rings of Marriage, that will equip couples for all stages in marriage. He challenges couples to keep moving through each stage for a lasting and fulfilling marriage.*

For the original article, visit .

Harboring This Emotion Can Prove Deadly in the Long Run

Unforgiveness is classified in medical books as a disease. According to Dr. Steven Standiford, chief of surgery at the Cancer Treatment Centers of America, refusing to forgive makes people sick and keeps them that way.

With that in mind, forgiveness therapy is now being used to help treat diseases, such as cancer.

“It’s important to treat emotional wounds or disorders because they really can hinder someone’s reactions to the treatments, even someone’s willingness to pursue treatment,” Standiford explained.

Of all cancer patients, 61 percent have forgiveness issues, and of those, more than half are severe, according to research by Dr. Michael Barry, a pastor and the author of the book, *The Forgiveness Project*.

“Harboring these negative emotions, this anger and hatred, creates a state of chronic anxiety,” he said.

“Chronic anxiety very predictably produces excess adrenaline and cortisol, which deplete the production of natural killer cells, which is your body’s foot soldier in the fight against cancer,” he explained.

Barry said the first step in learning to forgive is to realize how much God has forgiven us.

“When a person forgives from the heart—which is the gold standard we see in Matthew 18, forgiveness from the heart—we find that they are able to find a sense of peacefulness. Quite

often our patients refer to that as a feeling of lightness,” he said.

Barry said most people don’t realize what a burden anger and hatred were until they let them go. {eo}

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Bold Prophecy: Apostolic Women Arise and Pick Up Mantles of Old

There’s a rich root of revival in Los Angeles—and women were a key part of it.

Assemblies of God history tells us the Azusa Street Revival brought women’s ministries to the fore. Indeed, Jennie Evans Moore who married Daddy William Seymour in 1908, was a key figure. Her name is not as well known as Seymour’s but she was in the revival trenches with him, along with Lucy Farrow and Julia Hutchins. These virtually nameless and faceless, yet faithful, women helped keep the fire burning.

Maria Woodworth-Etter was a mother figure in early Pentecost—John G. Lake called her “Mother Etter.” Her trance-marked ministry helped pave the way for the Azusa Street outpouring and ultimately the birth of a movement that changed the world.

Bold women like Aimee Semple McPherson and Kathryn Kuhlman followed in Mother Etter’s footsteps. McPherson’s Angeles

Temple is still standing in Los Angeles today. I stood behind her pulpit in her home, which the Foursquare denomination she started preserved for historical purposes.

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While in Los Angeles, I felt mantles being released; mantles for healing, mantles for miracles—and mantles for apostolic women. I began to prophesy these words:

The time is now, says the Lord. The time is now, says the Lord. The time is now, says the Lord, for apostolic women to arise and indeed they are arising even now. The time is now for apostolic women to arise and take their places in their church and take their places in the marketplace and take their places in their families, in their homes.

The time is now for apostolic women to release the revelation that I've shared with their hearts in the secret places. The time is now for apostolic women to arise and bring forth the revelation of days gone by. The time is now for apostolic women to build upon the revelation, to speak forth, to build, to build, to build and plant in the name of Jesus with the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ backing them; with all of heaven standing with them; with the ministering angels building and working alongside of them.

The time is now for apostolic women to arise in this city and in this region and in the nation and in the nations of the world. For many years apostolic women have sat in the background waiting for permission to prophesy, waiting for permission to take their places and their God-given roles in the body of Christ. And the time is now for apostolic women to come to the fore, working alongside apostolic men and prophetic believers and evangelists, pastors and teachers who have a heart to build, who have a heart to see awakening, who have a heart to see revival impact this land and who have a

heart to see the glory of My Spirit go forth in the nations and cover the earth as the water covers the sea.

The time is now. Apostolic women, the Lord says you have permission to rise up, even own and carry the mantle of Aime Semple McPherson, and carry the mantle of Kathryn Kuhlman, and carry the mantle of Maria Woodworth-Etter, and carry the mantle of those great women from generations past who were nameless and faceless.

The time is now. Rise up, says the Lord. {eoa}

Jennifer LeClaire is senior editor of Charisma. She is also director of Awakening House of Prayer in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, co-founder of , on the leadership team of the New Breed Revival Network and author of several books, including *The Next Great Move of God: An Appeal to Heaven for Spiritual Awakening*; *Mornings With the Holy Spirit*, *Listening Daily to the Still, Small Voice of God*; *The Making of a Prophet* and *Satan's Deadly Trio: Defeating the Deceptions of Jezebel, Religion and Witchcraft*. You can visit her website [here](#). You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter. Jennifer's Periscope handle is [@propheticbooks](#).

5 Daily Prayers to Cover Your Children With

Let's face it, the culture we're living in is becoming increasingly more difficult for families of faith. As society becomes more and more secular, how do parents raise their children to not only survive, but to thrive in it?

Is it possible to empower our children to stand up and even stand out in their faith when there is hostility toward them? Yes, I believe that you can. To do so, they need to have what I call “faith to follow.” Faith comes by hearing—simply meaning that when your children hear you speaking, even praying over them, they will be emboldened to follow the faith.

My friend, George Sawyer, was so passionate about children being empowered to thrive while living in a secular culture that he wrote a book entitled, *The Daniel Prayer for Parents*. George wrote the prayer based upon the young man, Daniel, who was living as a captive in another culture at the time. Daniel not only survived, but he thrived in Babylon.

“I believe that my children are **healthy**. They flourish in their diet and physical ability. They are not harmed, assaulted, wounded, nor threatened by terror.

“My child is quick to **understand**. They show an aptitude for learning. They comprehend and retain knowledge. They have discernment and wisdom to know the outcome of decisions.

“I know that my children are **resolute**. They are not compromised by this culture but stand courageously in their convictions of faith. They are not influenced to change who they are, but they influence change in this world.

“**Favor** opens doors and ushers my child into greatness. I believe that their teachers, leaders, coaches and friends are favorably disposed toward them.

“I also believe that there are **none equal** to my children. They are remarkable in their demeanor and disposition. They stand out in the crowd. They excel in their education and experience.”

This prayer is based upon the attributes that were found in Daniel’s life while he lived in Babylon. You may know that

Daniel certainly faced challenges—slander, persecution for his faith, jealousy, false accusation, imprisonment, and condemned to death by being thrown into a den of lions. Yet his life is a testimony of how a young person can not only survive but thrive in a hostile culture.

As much as we would like to have our children live in a safe and perfect world, that's simply not the case. Our children will face challenges. They may confront injustice and bigotry of all sorts. Their schools may be a hostile environment for their faith. However, I believe that we can be proactive and speak words of encouragement so that they can face life with courage and conviction.

FivestarMan was founded in 2008 by Neil Kennedy. Kennedy has passionately promoted God's Word for 25-plus years of ministry. He is known for practically applying biblical principles that elevate people to a new level of living. As a business, church, ministry and life consultant, Kennedy has helped others strategize the necessary steps to reach their full potential.

For more information about the book that inspired this prayer, go to [. For the original article, visit {eoa}](#)

Overcoming Obesity by Exchanging Darkness for Light

Back when I was overweight, I also struggled with depression frequently. I had my “I am depressed” routine: Dark room, negative thoughts, messy house, ignored bills, neglected self-care.

But when God said to me, "It is not supposed to be this way," I had a choice: Would I believe Him? Did I want God to teach me how it was supposed to be? My answer to both questions was "Yes!" I chose to believe God's Word and that is when my whole life changed.

In John 6:63, Jesus says, "It is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and are life."

If you struggle with negative emotions and habits frequently, then you too can "come into the light." What God has done for me, He can do for you.

Several years ago, I had a vision of how I used to be when I struggled with obesity, depression, and food addiction. I saw myself huddled in a dark corner and God bathed in light just behind me. I sensed He was calling me to Himself, yet voices were whispering to me that it was safer in the darkness. But God's love was so strong that I felt compelled to follow Him.

God's love is what drew me to change, not misery nor self condemnation. I decided I wanted a better life than the one I was living. God loves you too but just like me, you are the only one who can make the decision that you want to live differently.

No one else can do it for you.

In my years of coaching people, I have discovered that there are people who are perfectly happy being miserable. They may get attention and sympathy from others because of their misery. Misery gives them something to talk about even.

They have bought into the lie that they cannot change. And part of them does not want to change because misery is all they know. Deep down, they see misery as safe because they know what that feels like and they are afraid of the unknown.

But God did not create us to live in misery. He created us to live in joy, no matter what we experienced in our past or outward circumstances in the present. He has great plans for us, plans to prosper us and not to harm us, to give us hope and a future (see Jer. 29:11)

In fact, He gives us a promise and offers us an exchange for misery in Isaiah 61:3:

“to preserve those who mourn in Zion, to give to them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.”

Here is the exchange:

- If you are mourning, God gives you Consolation and the Oil of Joy
- If your life is in ashes, God gives you Beauty
- If you have a spirit of heaviness, God gives you the garment of Praise

Are you willing to believe Him and make the exchange? Jesus did not die so that you could live preoccupied with your past, your shortcomings, and in the pursuit of gratifying your flesh. You are called to be a tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that He may be glorified.

Not only that, but 1 Peter 2:9 reminds you even more of who you really are and what you are called to do: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may declare the goodness of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

Did you get that? According to God’s Word, you are:

- A chosen generation (you were created for such a time as

this)

- A royal priesthood
- A holy nation
- God's own special people

Because this is your identity through Jesus Christ, then you were called to proclaim His praises because He has called you out of darkness and into His marvelous light.

But how will you proclaim His praise when you continue to make darkness your friend? You are called to walk in the light as He is in the light.

So how do you do that? There are two guidelines from the scriptures:

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us take off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light" (Rom. 13:12).

The first step is to renounce your friendship with darkness. Repent of any wrong thinking that has set up a stronghold in your mind. Repentance starts with an attitude of your heart. It is agreeing with God that you believe His word above your feelings. You will no longer worship at the altar of your feelings. You will instead be diligent each day to meditate on His word and trust that in time, your feelings will have an extreme makeover!

Just as physical food is designed to give you physical strength, so God's Word is designed to give you Spiritual strength. With that Spiritual strength, you will be able to handle whatever the enemy tries to throw at you.

In addition, you spend time with God in prayer. His presence is like your water—you can't live Spiritually without that! Be honest with God and yourself through prayer. In doing so, you expose the works of darkness into the light. There is an old saying that the strength of sin is secrecy.

How well I know! I used to eat “normal” in front of others and binge in secret. To stop that, I needed to protect myself from those foods that trigger binges and eat foods that helped me feel emotionally stable. In that way, I could live with integrity—acting the same way whether I was with others or alone.

So be transparent about what you are doing, tell yourself the truth, and stop justifying why it is okay that you continue to live in darkness.

Luke 8:17 says, “For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and revealed.” Your challenge today is to live in the light of God’s love and order your thinking according to God’s word.

1 John 1:5 declares: “This then is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” {eo}

Kimberly Taylor is the author of *The Weight Loss Scriptures and many other books*. Once 240 pounds and a size 22, she can testify to God’s goodness and healing power. Visit and receive more free health and weight-loss tips.

For the original article, visit .

How Religious Spirits Throw a Wet Blanket on Prophetic Ministry

There are many pastors who have prophetic wives. Some pastors want their wives to be first ladies who simply look good and

smile. Some pastors do not receive the gift that God has placed in their wives and do not allow them or release them to minister. This is shameful and needs to stop.

Don't allow religion and tradition to keep women locked up in a box. God did not give women the Holy Spirit to sit down, be quiet, and be stopped and ignored. Pastors like this will end up in trouble because they reject the gift that God has placed in their lives to help.

Prophetic Women Will Hit the Nail on the Head

This is a prophetic word God gave me for women, using the example of Jael driving a nail through the head of Sisera. Then Jael the wife of Heber took a tent peg and a hammer in her hand and went quietly to him, for he was fast asleep and tired. She drove the tent peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground, so he died. (Judges 4:21)

Hit the nail on the head means to get to the precise point; do or say something exactly right; to be accurate; to hit the mark; to detect and expose (a lie, scandal, etc.). Prophetic women, get ready to "hit the nail on the head." Your prophetic utterances will "hit the mark."

The Daughters of Zelophehad

The daughters have an inheritance, and they have an inheritance in the prophetic ministry. Apostolic fathers release the daughters to prophesy, and they bless them. Then came near the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah. They stood before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the leaders and all the assembly by the door of the tent of meeting, saying,

"Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not in the

company of them that gathered against the Lord, in the company of Korah, but died in his own sin and had no sons. Why should the name of our father diminish from among his family, because he has no son? Give to us a possession among the brothers of our father.”

Moses brought their case before the Lord. The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: The daughters of Zelophehad speak right. You will certainly give them an inheritance among their father's brothers, and you will cause the inheritance of their father to pass on to them. (Numbers 27:1–7)

Philip 's Daughters

Philip had four daughters who prophesied, as we see in Acts 21:9. The Prophet Joel said the daughters would prophesy (Joel 2:28). There were a number of women in the Upper Room (Acts 1:14). The release of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost opened the door for women to be involved in the prophetic ministry in an unprecedented way. Women are now released to prophesy in numbers that are greater than ever before.

“In the last days it shall be,” says God, “that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.” (Acts 2:17)

Miriam

Miriam, the sister of Moses, was a prophetess. In Exodus 15:20 she led the women in dancing to celebrate God's victory over Pharaoh. She is also recognized as being sent along with Moses and Aaron to bring Israel out of Egypt. She therefore played a prominent role in Israel's deliverance from bondage.

For I have brought you up from the land of Egypt, and from the house of slaves I have redeemed you; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. (Micah 6:4)

Huldah

Huldah was a prophetess who was recognized by King Josiah. When the king discovered the Book of the Law, he rent his clothes and sent men to Huldah to inquire of the Lord. Huldah was the keeper of the king's wardrobe and spoke the word of the Lord to the king about the coming judgment upon Israel.

Then the king ordered ... "Go and seek the Lord on my behalf and on the behalf of the remnant in Israel and Judah concerning what is written in the book that was found, for the wrath of the Lord that is poured out on us is great because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do everything that is written in this book."

So Hilkiah and those with the king went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tokhath, son of Hasrah, who kept the wardrobe. She lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter, and they spoke to her about this.

And she said to them, "So says the Lord God of Israel: Speak to the man who sent you all to Me" (2 Chron. 34:20–23).

Deborah

Deborah was a national prophetess and judge, and she was a mother in Israel. She was recognized throughout Israel. People came to her to settle disputes. Prophets can help settle disputes. Deborah's role as a mother represented her love and compassion for Israel. Mothers can be prophets too.

Now Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophetess. She judged Israel at that time. –Judges 4:4

Village life ceased. It ceased until I, Deborah, arose; I arose like a mother in Israel (Judges 5:7).

Isaiah's Wife

The Prophet Isaiah considered his wife to be a prophetess.

This shows that both husband and wife can be prophets. This will make a strong prophetic team. So I went in to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the Lord said to me, Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz (Isaiah 8:3).

Anna

Anna was a praying and fasting prophetess. She spoke to all those who were looking for redemption and the coming Messiah. By her prayer and fasting she helped prepare the way for the Lord to come. She prayed and fasted in the temple and did not depart from the house of God. Anna is a picture of the intercessory prophet.

And there was Anna a prophetess, a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity. And she was a widow of about eighty-four years of age who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayer night and day.

Coming at that moment she gave thanks to the Lord and spoke of Him to all those who looked for the redemption of Jerusalem (Luke 2:36–38). {eoa}

Excerpted from *Prophetic Activation* by John Eckhardt (Charisma House, 2016). *To purchase the book, click here.*

Apostle John Eckhardt is overseer of *Crusaders Ministries*, located in Chicago, Illinois. Gifted with a strong apostolic call, he has ministered throughout the United States and overseas in more than eighty nations. He is a sought-after international conference speaker and has authored more than twenty books, including *Prophet, Arise!*, *Prayers That Rout Demons*, *Prayers That Break Curses*, and *God Still Speaks*. Eckhardt resides in the Chicago area with his wife, Wanda, and their five children.

These 5 Daily Habits Contribute to a Healthy Marriage

My wife Kay and I are closing in on 30 years of marriage. I must admit that our marriage is better than I ever expected it to be and seems to get better with age.

There are many factors that make for a good marriage. Some are tangible, like provision (shelter, food) and protection (financial security, safety). Other factors are less tangible but just as real, such as understanding, respect and empathy.

While the aforementioned factors are important, there is also a very practical approach men can use to ensure happiness in marriage.

Here are five practical habits of men in the happiest marriages:

1. Grooming. Do you remember what it was like to go on your first dates? You probably put a lot of effort into making yourself as presentable as possible. Unfortunately, somewhere in the daily grind, men seem to lower their standard of physical presentation. It doesn't have to be that way. I strongly recommend that you present your body to your wife as a reasonable service. Don't brush this off like it doesn't matter.

I've seen an evil under the sun. A middle-aged man goes into a marriage crisis and finds himself alone. What does he do? He goes on a diet, updates his clothing, goes to the barber, joins a fitness center, gets a new car. Why? Because he is

trying to reclaim his manhood. I recommend you do these things while you're married.

2. Cleaning. One of the first principles my wife and I implemented in our marriage was not going to bed with the house in disarray. It was uncomfortable and made for a restless night for me if the house wasn't in order. I always help around the house. I have a habit of picking up after myself. If I see a need, I fulfill it. If there are dishes that need to be cleaned or put in the dishwasher, I do it without thinking. We're in this together and we want our house to be comfortable. Amazingly, we've found that this simple habit helps keep strife out of our home.

3. Attention. We're living in a very distracted culture. Take a look around the restaurant the next time you're out. How many couples are looking at their phones rather than at each other? We are very connected without being intimate.

I've made it a habit to leave my phone off or on silent when I am with my wife. When we talk, I look at her and make eye contact. I listen and really engage in the conversation, regardless of what we're talking about. I am blessed that my wife is one of the smartest people that I've ever met—and I've met a lot of really smart people. After 30 years of marriage, she is still intriguing to me.

4. Affection. Affection is emotional and physical attention. Giving affection is something a man should be proactive in doing. Some men get out of the habit of pursuing their wife. They allow their hands to become cold, their words to become boring and their heart to become hardened.

Couples who are very active and proactive in affection have the happiest marriages. Again, it gets better with age. The longer your marriage endures, the more precious and esoteric it becomes.

5. Prayer. I am not sure why it was difficult for me to start

this habit but once I did, it brought us together closer than anything else. I want my prayer time with my wife to be authentic, private and intimate. I started preparing and having communion and prayer with my wife when we set aside the tithe to be paid to our church. It really has become one of our most cherished times. We celebrate the goodness of God in our lives, for our families, and in the provision of our household. Prayer is a difference maker in happy marriages.

In the last five years, our three children have all gotten married. It is interesting to see them navigate their young marriages and develop their habits within their relationships. It really is a miracle when two people come together in covenant to embark on their joint venture. Developing a few good practical habits early on will help their marriages remain strong and exciting.

*Fivestarman was founded in 2008 by **Neil Kennedy**. Kennedy has passionately promoted God's Word for 25-plus years of ministry. He is known for practically applying biblical principles that elevate people to a new level of living. As a business, church, ministry and life consultant, Kennedy has helped others strategize the necessary steps to reach their full potential.*

For the original article, visit .

10 Godly Ways to Really Love a Woman

Note: This is an excerpt from my new book Man Alive. I wrote Man Alive because I'm tired of watching men go to events, get all amped up, charge out determined to do better,

soar briefly, then glide (or crash) back to earth. In my experience these men are deeply frustrated that they can't sustain the change. It doesn't have to be that way.

So what's going on? There are seven primal needs that, when met God's way, can stop the spiritual roller coaster. If you know a man like that, or if that's you, order a copy of Man Alive today and let me walk you through a process to become "alive through Christ" (Eph 2:4-5). Or start a small group to discuss the questions at the end of each chapter.

No need is more primal than to love and be loved without reservation. I've been married to Patsy for 39 years and I love her more today than the day we married. I mentioned this to a single female lab tech yesterday and she wanted to know the "secret." I told her several practical ideas, but at the end I said, "We're Christians and each of us have given Jesus the first place in our lives. When Christ is first, everything else just seems to fall into place." I watched as comprehension slowly spread across her face.

Here are the 10 ten most practical marriage ideas I've picked up over four decades of working with men. Discuss these with your single men, too!

1. Pray with your wife – Shaun from Bozeman, Montana, asked his men's group, "How many of you pray with your wives?" Only one of the eight men said that he did. They started holding each other accountable. Here's what Shaun said about it a year later:

The benefits when we are obedient in this area are amazing. Here are some comments from the men about what happens when they pray with their wives on a consistent basis:

- "I feel a closeness to my wife that wasn't there before."
- "Communication between us is better."
- "The petty things are just not a big deal anymore."

And I'll tell you this, it's pretty hard to be upset with your wife or to be arguing and still come before God with a clean heart. It forces us to communicate and humble ourselves with each other before we do something as intimate as praying together. It just permeates through the rest of your family and day.

Ask your wife if you can take some time each day to pray together. Patsy and I always start the day with prayer for one to three minutes, and then we pray again when we're together for dinner.

2. Pray for your wife – Not long ago I wrote a book called *The Marriage Prayer* with David Delk. The book is titled after a very specific sixty-eight-word prayer that we believe captures the essence of what the Bible teaches on marriage.

One day, a few months after I had started praying the marriage prayer myself, I was settled into my favorite chair and deep into a book when I saw Patsy walking by with the trash. I literally leaped out of my chair and said, "Here, let me get that for you."

Immediately I stopped. *What just happened here*, I wondered, since I was pretty sure I had never done that before!

And then a phrase from the marriage prayer popped into my mind: "I want to hear her, cherish her and serve her—so she would love You more and we can bring You glory."

This prayer has also been transforming for other men. One man said he started putting his empty Splenda packets in the trash instead of leaving them on the counter. You have to start somewhere.

Here's the whole marriage prayer:

*Father, I said, "Till death do us part"—I want to mean it.
Help me to love You more than her,*

*and her more than anyone or anything else.
Help me bring her into Your presence today.
Make us one, like You are three-in-one.
I want to hear her, cherish her and serve her
So she would love You more and
we can bring You glory. Amen.*

Think about this: you are likely the only person in the whole world who will remember to regularly pray for your mate. Tear out or copy this prayer, pray it every day for your wife, and watch God work. Learn more about the Marriage Prayer—including a version for a wife to pray—at .

3. Spend time with her alone. How we spend our time reveals what is really important to us. Successful couples spend time together. They develop shared interests, such as bowling, reading, hiking, Bible studies, board games or walking around the neighborhood. Patsy and I have always kept a weekly date night as a top priority.

Early in our marriage, I started hanging out at the table after dinner for about twenty minutes just to be with Patsy. We've done this for decades. A few years ago I also started rubbing her feet with lotion as we talk. I can guarantee you who she'll say is her best friend!

4. Listen to her deeply without giving an overly quick reply – Communication invariably shows up as the number one problem in marriage surveys. And the greatest weakness in communication with our mates is the problem of giving an overly quick reply. We attach high value to our mates when we listen sincerely and patiently to each other. Listening deeply requires that we don't respond too quickly, don't criticize and don't give advice unless the other person asks for it. Everyone dreads being "fixed." Listening lubricates marriage and cuts down on friction.

5. Touch her – Successful couples touch each other. They hug,

squeeze, embrace, pat, hold hands, put their arms around each other and sit close enough to touch when watching television. Nonsexual touching leads to genuine intimacy. Touching her is like recharging her battery.

6. Accept her unconditionally – Happy wives don't feel like they have to perform to be loved. They don't feel like they will be rejected if they don't meet a set of standards. For Pete's sake, if your wife has fat ankles, don't say something stupid like, "Why don't you do ankle exercises?" Jesus accepts each of us "just as I am," as the old hymn says, and smart mates accept each other as is, too. Intimacy means that I know who you are at the deepest level and I accept you.

7. Encourage her with words – Your mate has an emotional bank account into which you make deposits and from which you make withdrawals. If you're grumpy when you get home from work, you are making a withdrawal from her account. When you encourage your spouse when she feels down, you are making a deposit. Make sure to keep track of the account balance!

We all need to be lifted up when we feel blue, but the most successful couples go one step further—they create a positive environment. They verbally affirm each other at every opportunity. They try to catch each other doing things right. They pass along compliments others make about their mate. They never pass up an opportunity to express appreciation: "I love the way you fix your hair." "That was a great dinner." "I love having you for my wife." "Thank you for running such a smooth home."

Encouragement is the food of the heart, and every heart is a hungry heart.

8. Take care of her financially – Money problems create more stress on a marriage than any other outside threat. Here is the money issue in a nutshell: Is it right to spend so much on a lifestyle today that your wife would be forced into panic

mode if you were not around anymore? Successful couples have resolved to live within their means. They do not live so high today that they fail to provide for retirement and premature death.

9. Laugh with her – The antidote to boredom in marriage is lively humor. If your partner says something even remotely funny, laugh! Keep track of what brings a smile to her face and what makes her laugh until her sides hurt. If neither one of you is funny, watch funny movies and make some funny friends.

10. After God, but before all others, make your wife your top priority – Once I called three friends to pray for a difficult challenge I faced the next day. One week later I called each of them to let them know how it turned out. “Oh yeah,” every one of them said, “I’ve been meaning to call you.”

Sure.

Men, you and your wife are the only two people who are really in this thing together. Everyone else will phase in and out of your lives—even your children. One day soon the party will be over and all your golfing buddies will have moved to Florida to live in little condominium pods and drive around on streets made for golf carts. And there will be only two rocking chairs sitting side by side. One for you, and one for her.

Doesn’t it make sense to invest today in the person who will be sitting next to you then? Be your wife’s best friend. {eo}

Patrick Morley is the founder of Man in the Mirror Ministries. For the original article, visit .

What You Should Do If Your Church Does Not Have Prophetic Ministry or Training

“Prophecy has been despised before. Moses, finally convinced that God wanted to delegate His governing authority to a larger number, called seventy elders to a “committee meeting” at the tabernacle. Two failed to show up. The Spirit of God fell on the sixty-eight who attended. But the Spirit also came upon the two who remained in the camp who began to prophesy as well.

“Everyone wanted them to stop, uncomfortable at the direct voice of God and jealous for Moses’ uniqueness as God’s prophet. They reported the incident to Moses and demanded that he stop them. One can almost see Moses chuckling, and then longingly reflecting on the blessedness of the Spirit’s presence in his life: *‘Oh, that all the Lord’s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!’* (Numbers 11:29).” – Dr. Ralph F. Wilson

I have been asked many times, as I have participated in prophetic roundtables around the country, what to do if a church is not active in prophetic ministry. Some have wondered if they should just start their own church or move to a different church because the church they attend does not operate in the prophetic anointing. Unless you have a grace to start a church, I wouldn’t recommend that you do that.

Starting churches is really an apostolic function, although prophets can start churches. I don’t recommend that you become a fringe group away from the local church where you meet only outside the church. Instead get a core group of people

together who are also interested in the prophetic gift and pray and study together.

Read books on the subject. Come together and discuss them. Use the group to stay sharpened, connected and inspired so that you won't dry up and die spiritually.

I also recommend that you become activated. You can attend a prophetic conference to receive activation. Then connect with a prophetic association or network so you can consistently stay in contact with mature prophetic people.

has a listing of prophetic ministries you can access. But you still need to be submitted to a local church as well, to be able to hear the Word. Also consider connecting with the authors of the books you are reading to receive activation and impartation.

If your church doesn't flow prophetically, but is a fellowship that preaches and teaches the Word, has good worship and is filled with love, it is important that you remain connected and accountable. You don't want to be a renegade prophet who is not connected or accountable to anybody—not submitted to any authority. Prophets who are all alone and don't listen to anyone are sometimes walking in rebellion. They are proud and independent.

This is when a prophetic person can really get into trouble, because if he is off on his own and is operating in error, no one can correct him. Being a part of a prophetic team, a prophetic company or a prophetic church will bring you into accountability with other prophets. In 1 Corinthians 14:29–30 it says, "Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge." Prophets can judge one another because prophets know prophets. They can tell when a prophet is wrong or when he is bitter, rebellious, independent, getting into false doctrine or becoming controlling.

I know prophets can be persecuted and rejected, but if someone

is always saying, "Nobody loves me, I am persecuted, nobody trusts me," it could be that they are just rebellious and won't submit to anybody. I am very wary of people who have no friends, no relationships, no accountability, no local church and never submit. They just want to pop up and prophesy.

This goes against God's instruction that prophets are to be a part of the church. "God has put these in the church ... prophets ..." (1 Cor. 12:28). Remember that under the old covenant, prophets were primarily often isolated and alone because they were dealing with an apostate nation. Now under the new covenant, the church is different. The church is a place full of people who are born again, new creatures who are also filled with the Spirit of God. A prophet can never say, "I'm outside the church." You can't be in certain churches because they don't accept it or they fight it, I understand that. But the prophet is supposed to be part of the church, functioning inside the church. The prophet is a part of the body. Your hand does not run off and say, "I'm not part of the body anymore."

I am a pastor. I am a shepherd. I believe in the local church. I love the local church, and even though the local church can vex me, I never separate myself from the local church. Even as an apostle, I am accountable to other leaders, and I am accountable to my elders. I don't say, "I am the apostle. You don't tell me anything." No. If I get off course and if my lifestyle is not right, they have a right to correct me and challenge me.

So it is very important that you remain connected to a good Bible-believing fellowship, where the Word of God is honored and taught. If there is no openness to the prophetic gift, get with other prophetic believers and pray and study together, as I have already stated. Join a network of prophets. Buy prophetic books. Attend prophetic conferences.

Buy CDs, listen to podcasts and follow strong prophetic

leaders in social media so that you continue to stir and strengthen your gift. Then pray and believe God to raise the prophetic level in your region.

Remember, even as Elijah thought he was the only one, God reminded him, “I have preserved seven thousand in Israel” (1 Kings 19:18). Sometimes you think you are the only one, but there is always a remnant moving with God. {eo}

Excerpted from *Prophetic Activation* by John Eckhardt (Charisma House, 2016). *To purchase the book, click here.*

Apostle John Eckhardt is overseer of Crusaders Ministries, located in Chicago, Illinois. Gifted with a strong apostolic call, he has ministered throughout the United States and overseas in more than eighty nations. He is a sought-after international conference speaker and has authored more than twenty books, including *Prophet, Arise!*, *Prayers That Rout Demons*, *Prayers That Break Curses*, and *God Still Speaks*. Eckhardt resides in the Chicago area with his wife, Wanda, and their five children.