

What are you believing for yourself and your family for 2020?

Seven Areas of Breakthrough This Year:

1. Faith – your personal walk with God
2. Family – marriage, relationships with children
3. Finances – managing our money, etc.
4. Freedom – areas of our lives that we have strongholds
5. Fun – we need to enjoy life (Satan did not create fun, he just perverted it.)
6. Field of endeavor (job or vocation)
7. Friendships (social relationships)

If you are married and listening to this message, do not listen for your spouse; listen for you.

If you are not married, please don't feel like these messages don't apply to you because the Holy Spirit will make it relevant to you too.

Last week: Marriage is not a contract, marriage is a covenant.

Contract Defined: A contract is designed to protect your rights and to limit your responsibilities.

That is the reason that we enter into a contract.

In a covenant, we give up all of our rights and we pick up all of our responsibilities.

Here are the three rights that we have to lay down if you want a Godly marriage:

1. The right of priority.

“I give you the right to be the first priority in my life and to protect that place against anything that YOU perceive as competition.”

2. The right of ownership or possession.

“I give you the right to co-own and administrate everything I own in my life.”

3. The right to privacy.

“I give you free and unhindered access to every part of my life. I give you the right to complain and to confront me in any issue without fear of retaliation.”

Do not listen to these scriptures and apply them to your spouse. Look for your responsibilities.

Ephesians 5:21-33 | NIV (21) Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. (22) Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. (23) For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. (24) Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. (25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (26) to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, (27) and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. (28) In this same way,

husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. (29) After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— (30) for we are members of his body. (31) "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." (32) This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. (33) However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Three responsibilities that you must take up in marriage:

1. Submission.

Ephesians 5:21-22 | NIV Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. (22) Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.

"I assume the responsibility to serve you by first submitting my life to the Lordship Jesus Christ and by surrendering to His Word as the standard for my life and our marriage and family."

Submission: yielding control to a more powerful or authoritative entity.

In the home, there is an authority structure ordained by God.

The wife is called to submit to the authority of her husband if there is disagreement on leadership. It does not mean she becomes subservient to her husband as a slave or robot.

Submission does not happen until there is disagreement.

The Word must be the standard as the absolute in our lives and we will use it to address any issues in our marriage. The authority in your household is Jesus.

It cannot be a matter of whoever has the strongest will wins.

2. Love.

"I assume the responsibility to love you according to the standard of Christ's love and to never justify any action or word that falls below that standard."

God's love is unconditional and ours must be unconditional as well. Marriage works only if you are willing to say, "Whatever you do, I am going to love you."

I am going to do my responsibility no matter what you do.

A covenant is unconditional, irrevocable and unbreakable.

In a contract, if you don't fulfill your responsibility then I don't have to fulfill mine.

In a covenant, you still meet your spouse's needs even if they are not meeting your needs.

Don't ever say, "If my spouse ever did this, that is the one

thing that I could not get over and forgive.” When you say things like this, the devil simply says, “thank you” because you gave him the key to destroying your marriage and allowed him to narrow his focus to that one area. Say, “There is nothing that my spouse could do that would ever end my marriage. Divorce is not an option!”

We are not saying that we will not fall below the standard of Christ’s love, but we are saying that we will not try and justify it.

We are responsible for our actions and reactions not our spouse’s actions and reactions.

We make the decision to walk in love or not.

3. Honor.

Ephesians 5:25-27 | NIV (25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (26) to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, (27) and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

“I assume the responsibility to honor you and to do everything possible to help you achieve your highest potential and God’s perfect will for your life.”

God designed for a man to reach his highest potential with a woman helping him and for a woman to reach her highest potential with a man helping her.

Note that God did not create two men to help each other to reach their highest potential, nor did He create two women to help each other reach their highest potential.

He created a man and a woman and gave them to each other as a perfect gift.

The only way that a man or woman can reach their highest potential without the help of a man or a woman is if they are called to a life of celibacy.

Men, you will never reach your full potential until your goal is to help your wife reach her full potential.

Men will never reach their full potential without a woman honoring him.

Ephesians 5:33 | TLB (33) So again I say, a man must love his wife as a part of himself; and the wife must see to it that she deeply respects her husband—obeying, praising, and honoring him.

You can praise your husband into success or nag him into failure.

This could be why your husband would rather be hanging out with his buddies because they will honor him on the basketball court or on the golf course.

That is what Ephesians 5:33 says that we are supposed to love our wives and wives are to respect or honor their husbands.

Nothing justifies an unloving husband and a dishonoring wife.

If you have a bad marriage, put medicine on the wound and not salt. In other words if you have a husband that won't love you, honor him and that will bring him to a place of loving you. If you have a dishonoring wife, love her unconditionally and she will begin to honor you.

Medicine for a less than perfect marriage: A loving husband can heal a dishonoring wife and an honoring wife can heal an unloving husband.

You do the right thing and let God do His part.

Important truth to understand: **When you enter into a marriage, for the first few years of that marriage you are eating a crop you did not plant, both positive and negative. Years into your marriage, you are eating a crop you did plant, both positive and negative.**

The key is what seeds are you planting in your spouse that you will reap later?

We must accept these things by faith whether we understand them or not.

When you and I decide that we are going to base our lives

on covenant and not on contract, God can do more in our relationships than we can possibly imagine.

When we give up the right to priority, ownership, and privacy and pick up the responsibility to love, honor and submit your marriage can be heaven on earth.

Covenant means to cut. In a covenant relationship, you must be willing to be the redeemer. In other words, you must be willing to be cut first.

Jesus was cut, sacrificed and died so that He could enter into a relationship with you.

If you are going to get married, you must be willing to get cut, sacrificed and die for that marriage to work.

Every marriage problem could be solved if both people would die. We are talking about your flesh dying to the will of God. Marriage is not that hard if you will just give up and die. All you have to do is give up your will and your way.