

## Biblical Counseling for Marriage and Families

Grace Fellowship's Reconciliation Ministries offers FREE Biblical Counseling for hurting families and marriages. We offer as a part of our marriage and family counseling "Steps of Relationship" for marriages that seem to have lost their hope, or are looking at possible divorce. "Steps of Relationship" assists couples to start their relationship anew by developing new memories and a new marriage.

God designed that we take our marriage relationships very seriously. It was God's design that the sexual union between a man and a woman should be only under the covering of marriage. God knew that sexual relations outside the covering of the God ordained marriage relationship would have far reaching effects that could damage each person and their marriage.

Today in our society we have gotten away from God's plan for relationships. Many couples have gone from first glance to the bedroom, never developing a relationship other than the one in the bedroom. Other couples have had so much hurt in their marriage relationship due to drugs, alcohol, domestic violence, and/or marital infidelity. They need to practically start anew in their marital relationship in order to save their marriage.

When we read Song of Songs we can see the beauty of the developing relationship as the couple go through the steps of attraction, getting to know each other, dating, engagement, and finally marriage. The couple that goes through these God-ordained steps of relationship and waits on their sexual relationship until after they are under God's covering of marriage is giving each other a gift that is precious. They are also protecting their marriage by putting their marriage under God's covering. Our God is so gracious that even if a couple did not wait for marriage, or if their marriage was damaged for any other reason, God is the God of second chances. 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 says, "The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you." The word "time" is (kairos) which means a fixed time or season. Taking a time out from sexual relations with our partner can be the most beautiful gift a husband and wife can give to each other. It is the gift of love and respect. It is saying, "I love you enough to want the best for our relationship. I love you so much that even though I want and desire you, I love and respect you enough to wait for your sake, our sake, and our relationship with God."

We must understand that until we fall in love with the author of love (Jesus Christ) we can never know how to truly love the other person the way that God intended because God is Love.

The "Steps of Relationship Exercises" are designed to give the couple time to work on their relationship with God and each other. To heal the marriage relationship and develop new memories and go through all the steps of relationship which may have been skipped before.