



SESSION SIX

God's First Relationship Rule: Good Management

As I've said before, the way I think, I like to have a system of truth. And what we're doing in this seminar is to present God's truth about marriage and family in a systematic form. We started with the idea that God is the architect, so He draws the plan—the blueprint—for it. And God is the builder, so He must do it. He doesn't do it all at once, instantaneous. No such thing as an instantaneous building. Building a marriage like God wants—it will take about 75 or 80 years. God has planned that two people, like these two in the hand of a mighty God, should be so related that they are one.

Suppose you've got a couple and both of them have come out of good Christian families, and they're good persons—no hang-ups. And *God* has led them together; they're *sure* of that. And just suppose—it'll never be—but just suppose for discussion's sake, that this man and this woman both are as free from that self as Jesus Christ. There is no bit of self-seeking at *all*. They never do anything because they "want." They're *always* considering the other first—completely. Would they have any problems in being one? I hear some of you saying, "No." I'm sorry. I'll tell you they'll have very few problems. We're getting it down to a very few. But I think I can prove to you from the Scriptures that they will never be one unless they take another step. Even if you were absolutely perfect, there is something else here that must be dealt with. And it is simply this.

Some years ago I was reading a secular book on marriage. It's one of the great works. And I ran across this statement. I've quoted it so many times, and the first time I ran across it I almost jumped up and shouted. This book was written by two psychiatrists and they tried to analyze marriages. What causes them to break? And this is his statement. He says, "The most easily apparent causes for these marital failures are two-fold. First, the failure to pick a suitable mate." We've dealt with that. And then he says this: "And secondly, once a mate has been chosen, the failure to work out relationship *rules*. . ." Did you hear me? Relationship *rules*. Relationship *laws* ". . . which will be durable and equitable." Marriage is an intricate relationship between *two people*. And you don't drift [apart]. Even if you were perfect, you've got to learn how to *relate* in marriage. Marriage is a *relationship*.

Somebody said, "Marriages are not made in heaven. They come as kits that must be put together." Did you ever try to put one of these kits together? Boy, I tried it. I've gotten in the woodwork in my old age, and I thought I'd get started, you know, in something simple. So I ordered a kit—a piece of furniture. And boy, when I got it, it was a box, you know, not too *big*. But when I opened that thing I bet there were 10,000 pieces of wood. And you should see the directions. And every little piece has to be put together in a certain way. And if you turn one this way, it'll blow it; it has got to be the right way. I started to send the thing back! You mean all those—! All those pieces have got to be put together in a certain relationship and *finally*—! Man, I let it set there for weeks. I was scared to touch it.

My friend, marriages are not made in heaven! There are two people and they're not like wood. When you put a piece of wood down—and especially if you nail it and glue it—it'll stay there. But you can't do that with people. *You've got to learn to relate*. And that's what we are going to deal with. How do you relate to each other?

And the first law of relationship is this. I am not going to use the word. I'm deliberately going to avoid some labels, certain abstractions with which so many people have become disenchanted. And if you want a guessing game, try to guess those terms that I'm dealing with. It is a law of relationship. It is just as sure as the law of gravity. Let me show you how it works.

About this time every year at Columbia Bible College, we who are on the faculty there go through an exercise which is quite interesting. The last week of August, every one of the 30 or more faculty members at Columbia Bible College must do this: I decide what courses I would like to teach in the fall, and what time I would like to teach them, and in what classroom. We have a big bulletin board there in the main building and so I go and tack up on the board what courses—. I'd like to give a course in Advanced Woodworking at 10:00 and we'll meet in the Shop. And I put a notice on there. And then I'd like to teach General Psychology—I don't like early classes—and I'll teach that one at 11:00. And I put that on the bulletin board. And then all the faculty members put their things up there. And on the first of September all the students come in and they file by and they pick the courses they would like to take. And everybody who believes that, raise your hands. You say, "That is utter folly!" When you come to marriage you think you can *ignore* this law and get away with it.

Do you know what the law is? You do it in *business*. You, who are in business, you know how you do? In business the law is very, very simple—and obvious. And everybody follows it. Do you know what you call it in school? We have a very beautiful system. When you get more than two people together on a common project, if you do not follow this law, it will be utter chaos. And you think you can get two people in marriage and ignore the law of relationship, and wonder why there's not oneness. You've *got* to relate this way. In schools we call it administration. In business they call it good management.

Do you know what I teach? I have never decided once what I would like to teach. I have never decided what hour I would like to teach it. I've never decided where I would like to teach it. I never decide any of that. Isn't that terrible? I think I'll resign! Watch it: On a very simple level, the first law of relationship is this: The engineer who designed this (two-part tool) has made it very wonderfully so these things must be related in a certain way. This thing, if it's going to do its job, if it's going to be *one* and accomplish the purpose for which it was made, this thing can never function like this (separates a two-part tool). Why? And the manufacturer made it, not to relate like this, but like *this*. Why? So it would function as one. Now that is a *simple* illustration of the first law of *human* relationships. Whenever two or more people get together to do *anything*, there must be this kind of relationship which you call good management. Somebody must be here, and somebody here. At Columbia Bible College I'm not up there, a provost is down here. I don't tell anybody what to do! They tell me what to do! And when they tell me what to do, I do it. That's beautiful. And the way they *tell* it!

Boy, I wish I could tell you about the management of Mr. McQuilkin. How beautifully he manages that thing. The first time he asked me to start having these seminars, Mr. McQuilkin said, "Buck, I think you ought to have a Family Life Seminar." I said, "Robertson, no go. Get Henry Bryant. Get Howard Hendrix. Get somebody; I'm not—." He said, "Buck, go to Ben Lippen." "Me? Robertson, you don't—." "Buck, go to Ben Lippen." "Yes, sir." Oh, what a manager he is! And you think you can get along without it in marriage? Two or more people cannot relate and be one unless there is good management.

Now I want to talk to you about what kind of management, and how it is conducted. Now, what *kind* you have and *how it is conducted* determines how well the thing will function. Alright, what kind of management do you want? One study of American marriages at this point some years ago—I'm sure it has changed since this study was made—it found this result: "Out of every five marital relationships in America, one out of the five had *this* form of management. Three out of five had *this* form of management. One out of five had *this* form of management." Now I am going to set them before you. I'm going to ask you, "Which form of management do you *think* is best?" If you have *no* management, you know what that's called? Put it in politics. If you have no government you call it what? Anarchy. And a marital relationship that has no government, no management, no administration—it's anarchy. Alright, here are the three possible forms [of family government] in American society. Here, in one out of five, here the husband is the manager, and the wife—. What do you call one who is under a manager? A managee? I don't know. He is the manager. She is the managee. Three out of five were this: The husband and wife were *co-managers*. *Co-managers*? Yeah. Have you ever seen that in business? Have you ever seen that in politics? In the last election we would have had—*co-presidents*? How many would vote for that? That's what that is on a little miniature scale. They are *co-managers*. "Nobody is going to manage anybody; we're together, are going to operate that."

One out of five, the wife is the manager and the husband in most cases is in default. He's not a manager; he just ain't around. He has turned the thing over and that's the reason many wives are having to manage this operation. He has departed. He's around. He comes in and pays the bills occasionally, but he's not involved in this relationship, and that's a sad picture.

But let's just look at these for a moment. Which do you think is the Biblical form of management? Don't answer yet. Think carefully. In politics you call this a *monarchy*. In politics you call *this* a monarchy. This is a patriarchy, the rule of a man. This is a matriarchy, the rule of a woman. Do you know what you call this? *Democracy*, where each person has a vote. So we want to decide: "Are we going to the mountains or the seashore?" So each one has a vote. In the climate of American marriage relationships, I think I understand what's happening. They have rejected this categorically, and this categorically, and this thing is expanding and they are saying, "*Nobody* is the manager. This is a partnership." I'll ask you again. Which is the Biblical pattern?

I want to turn you now to the Word of God. What is the Biblical pattern? What kind of management do you have in your marital relationship? Even *two* people can hardly function together and get a job done *with oneness* if there is not some kind of management relationship. Alright, let's turn to the Scriptures and show you what I *think* is the Biblical pattern of *this* law of relationship. I want to turn back to our model. To me, this is the absolute model of the marriage relationship. Here are two people down here who are to be *one*. And here's the great absolute model—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—who said one day, "Let Us make man in Our image." And as They are one, so relating to each other, oh, in an amazing relationship, that They are one! And God says here, "You husbands and wives ought to be *one*." And if anything I say as we conclude, what the relationship is to be between husband and wife, if you don't understand it, if you think it is unfair, if you think it is not equitable and durable, I'll push you to go back to that: The Great Model! And if it is not increasingly like that, you have missed the point. Let me ask you a few questions about the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Bible consistently says this: "Father, Son Holy Spirit." Why? The Bible, only on one occasion, says, "Son, Father, Holy Spirit." Never "Holy Spirit, Son, Father." Always consistently "Father, Son, Holy Spirit." Do you know why? Because what I think I see within the Trinity, and this is the reason: I am absolutely sure, even if you were perfect, you must learn how to relate because *They do*. There is a management relationship within the Trinity. Now, if I am pressing this too far, you correct me, but let me show you a couple of indications that within the Trinity there is a *beautiful* management relationship! All through the Old Testament, down through the Gospel records—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—I find this: Who is the manager? Who does all the planning? Who decides what will be done? The Father. And it is climaxed one day when the Father says to the Son, "I want you to go down there." And He Himself said, "As the Father has sent Me." It said what? The Father sent the Son. Who is the manager? The Father is the manager. Who is the managee? Jesus Christ. And nothing is clearer than, when He was on this earth, what did He say? "I never do anything of myself. I always do what the Father tells me." Even in the Garden of Gethsemane, what did He say? "Oh Father, not my will, but thine be done." Do you know what you've got? You've got the most beautiful management relationship. So that then They could say that "I and my Father are one." Now don't misunderstand me. And if you think I'm tampering with God, forgive me. Search the Scriptures.

And I want to tell you, my friend, anything I share with you as to what I think God's plan for the marital relationship is, if you think that is not fair, I'll turn you back to this: How does the Father manage the Son? Does He ever force Him? Did He ever force Him to do—? Never. And the Son always did what the Father said. When you get in the rest of the New Testament, beginning with the Book of Acts, you know what you have? I hope I'm not offending anybody when I say this: The thing is under new management. Jesus Christ Himself said, "All management has been turned over to Me." One day the Son said to the Holy Spirit, "Holy Spirit, go down there." And the Son sent the Holy Spirit. And do you know what the Holy Spirit does? It's so beautiful; I just can hardly express what's here. He *never* speaks of Himself. He always does *only* what the Son tells Him to do. And the Son is the manager, and the Son sent the Holy Spirit as the Father sent the Son. And there's a beautiful management relationship between the Persons of the Trinity. And if God wants us to be like Him, and one like Him, then don't be surprised if when you come down here He says, "My dear children, I want you to be like Me."

Alright, turn with me quickly now to 1 Corinthians chapter 11 and I will set before you what I think is God's plan for the management relationship in marriage. Verse 3, "I would have you know that the Head. . ." That is a figure of speech, translates—. I can almost say that the head does what to the body? It *manages* the body. "I would have you know, that the manager of *every man* is Christ." Here's the management relationship. The Lord Jesus is the manager of every husband, and the head of every woman is the man. And then He touches what I have just touched: "And the head (the manager) of Christ is God *the Father*." If you fault this, then you better be careful. If you say, "That is unfair and not durable and equitable" then you better look at this. Here is the marital, management pattern. Now I don't want to get too deeply involved in this. Sometimes I get so mad, I could scream.

How many of you have ever heard a sermon on Ephesians 5 that says, "Wives, be in subjection to your husbands"? You hear it all the time. How many of you have heard this: "Husbands, be in subjection to Jesus Christ"? I don't hear that. I'm awfully afraid; you take Ephesians 5 out of its context and preach it like that, you know what you're doing? You're using Scripture to support a distortion in American culture, where the man is the head of the woman, and that is *never* God's blueprint. God has never said that *I* am to be the head of my wife. It is not *that*. Jesus Christ is the head of every husband, and the husband is the head of the wife. That is not a monarchy. That is not a democracy. It is the only form of government that God has ever established. In His nation of Israel in the Old Testament, in the Church in the New Testament, and in the future kingdom of the millennium on this earth—if you believe there will be one—that's the only form of government God knows anything about. Do you know what it is? It is simply this—and it's not pious talk. It is actually the rule of *God* through a man whose heart is perfect toward Him, which is called sometimes a theocracy. The marital relationship here is a little miniature theocracy where Jesus Christ is the manager. Now watch: It's not the husband who is the manager; Jesus Christ is the manager, and He manages through this person [the husband] and He gets to the wife through that (points to diagram on board). And eventually you'll get to the children. And you've got the most beautiful—! And you say, "That is amazing!"

Oh, the implications of this! Let me draw three or four implications. That is not pious talk. Do you realize that some evangelical writers now, as they try to answer the Woman's Liberation Movement in screaming about a distortion of this, they have thrown this out and said, "This is a subordination of women"? They've cut Scripture and they say, "This subordinates the woman." Do you know what it means to subordinate a woman? If you say that, then Jesus Christ was subordinated by the Father. Do you know what subordination means? It means that you take somebody and put him in a different class, and thus make him inferior. The Bible is very clear. If you want an explanation of it, if you want what it *really* means—. Do you think that the Son is inferior to the Father when He submitted Himself to the Father? If you think so, you're a heretic. He is God of very God, He is same in substance, equal in power and glory. But in order that they might be one, they are what? Related in this way. I don't want to get mad but I'm about to blow a gasket. There are evangelical writers who are throwing this out on the basis that it subordinates and makes a woman inferior. My friend, the Bible is built on this thesis, that men and women are equal. Same in substance, equal in power and glory. When I say that this means that the husband is the head of the wife under Jesus Christ, it does not mean that the wife is inferior. She is equal. "What do you mean, equal? Same in *height*?" Do you think my wife is as tall as I am if I stand up straight? Do you think same in *strength*? She can't do nothing! She can't even open a jar of orange juice. She calls me, "Buck, come open this jar!" And I get there and I rip the thing apart (laughter)! My friends, you'd better think *precisely* and stop all this sloppy talk about equality—and you don't know what you're talking about. Excuse me, I'm getting mad! "What do you mean, equal?" Equal in what? Equal in strength? Well obviously women are not equal to men in strength. You'll never have one that will match the front line of the Pittsburgh Steelers. God didn't make their bodies equal. "Well what do you mean men and women are equal?" God has created all people equal. And if you buy that then, my friend, you've got to say that about your babies, your children; they're equal. If you are going to plead for women's equality, I'm going to make you plead for child equality. "What do you mean equal?" It simply means this: that every human being, in soul, is made in the image of God and has the same capabilities. A woman can think like a man. A woman can choose. She can feel. She can do the same things that a man can do, and the same things that God does. They are *equal!* As *persons!* And if you don't believe that, if you think this is a distortion of that, you'd better watch this: When God put Jesus Christ under the Father, that does not subordinate Him, does not make Him inferior. It is in order that we might be one!

Just because you're a man and because you're bigger than a woman gives you absolutely no right to rule over a woman. She is equal to me. I have no right to tell another person what to do. Do you know what the implication of this is? My wife is a better manager than I am. She can manage things. I don't know what I'd do without her. My friend, do you know what that means? It means, as a husband, I am to submit myself totally to Jesus Christ. *I am not running this family. I am not running this marital relationship, He is running it. It is not my thing. I'm not doing my thing and expecting my wife to fit into it. I am doing His thing.* This law is going to be equitable and durable. And if you think it's a man doing his thing and expecting a wife to come along and support him and do what he says, that's not it. You men, you are in total submission. It's what the Lord Jesus wants. He's the manager. And I'm asking you husbands afresh, submit yourself to Him. Don't you ever dare put anything on your wife or your children, unless you're sure it's what He wants.

The second responsibility of husbands . . . As you give yourself to Him, then you, in that awful place of responsibility where you must manage this little society as Jesus Christ manages you. . . . Is He a good manager? Does He rule you well? Has He ever forced you? Has He ever cut you down? You watch the way He manages *you*. You've got to manage your wife as He—. In fact, He will *manage* through you, and He will *plan* through you, and He will *organize* through you, and He will *lead* through you, and He will *control* through you—everything that a good manager does. How many men want that? “Man, what an awful responsibility! Man, you'd better get on your knees! Lord, I can't handle it. And boy, if there is anything I can't do, I'm *not* a manager.” And yet God says, “Buck you've got to.” “But Lord I *can't*.” And here's what happened: My wife tells me things to do and I do it, and I get the credit. Now, I'm not joking. I don't know what would have happened to our marriage and our family if she had not had ideas. And she—. “Why didn't I think of that?” And we'd go, and everybody thinks it's great. And I get the credit. She does all the managing. But God said, “Buck, you've got to be there.” Do you know what the wife does? It's equitable, my friend. I'm not doing my thing. If you think I'm running this thing like *I* want it. I'm doing *His* thing.

Now, what's she doing? She submits herself to Jesus Christ as *her* Lord. And then she submits herself to her husband as unto the Lord. And do you know what? That is very, very beautiful. That means you wives, submit yourself to the Lord. “Lord, I'd do anything you want me to do.” And you know what He'll tell you? “Alright, do whatever your husband says.” “You mean anything?” “Yes.” Oh, sure, if he tells you something that contradicts the Word of God, if he tells you to wife swap, of course you don't. That's not the problems I hear between husbands and wives. When the wife submits herself to the Lord and the husband submits [to the Lord] and she submits herself to him, do you know what you've got? You've got a relationship. And they are what? They are *one*. That is the only reason for it! It is not to put a woman down, or a man up. It's equitable. Both of them are in submission to the Lord, but the Lord knows it will never work like this. So He has made—just like in this—He has made the woman this way, and the man this way. And when a man leads a woman like God leads him and she submits to him, then they can function as one. That's God's law of relationship, number one. They did it in the Trinity. Why do you think we can get along without it and still be one?