

## SOME RECOMMENDED BOOKS ON DATING, MARRIAGE & FAMILY<sup>1</sup>

### DATING & RELATIONSHIPS

“*She’s Got the Wrong Guy*” by Deepak Reju (New Growth Press: Greensboro, NC, 2017) 168pp. An excellent, brief book for young women, designed to keep them from falling into one of the many traps in dating & relationships that Satan lays for them. Reviewers summarize it well: “With the wisdom that comes from hours & hours of counseling brokenhearted women, the biblical insight that springs from years in the Scriptures, and the compassion that flows out of the heart of a follower of Jesus... Dr. Reju has turned the topic of dating on its head with this insightful & thoughtful look at who not to marry... As I read *She’s Got the Wrong Guy*, I kept thinking, ‘this book is like a modern-day book of Proverbs written by a father to his young adult daughter.’ ...He describes how & why many Christian women choose poorly. Wise single women will read & be grateful for his astute observations & ability to pinpoint why these wrong guys might seem right--and why smart Christian women should avoid them.”

*Tying the Knot: A Premarital Guide to a Strong & Lasting Marriage*, by Rob Green, pastor of Counseling & Seminary Ministries at Faith Church, Lafayette, Indiana (New Growth Press: Greensboro, NC, 2016) 159pp. From the jacket: “Every engaged couple hopes to build a lasting & satisfying marriage, but it doesn’t happen automatically. This interactive premarital study explores how key issues like conflict, communication, finances, and intimacy are successfully navigated in a Christ-centered marriage.” A nine-session study to help “newlyweds build their marriage on the lasting foundation of God’s grace.”

### FAMILY DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL GEARED FOR CHILDREN

“*A Faith to Grow On*” by John MacArthur (Thomas Nelson, Inc.: Nashville, TN, 2000), 191pp. This book teaches younger children Bible doctrine in a brief, interesting/interactive way. Full of eye-grabbing color & graphics, questions, in a 2 page/day format. Twelve subject areas are covered: *God, Creation, Sin, the Bible, Salvation, Worship, Prayer, Church, Forgiveness, Evangelism & Heaven*.

### GENERAL FAMILY & CHILD RAISING BOOKS

“*The First Years of Forever*” by Ed Wheat & Gloria Okes Perkins (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, MI, 1988), 191pp. Brief book that covers everything from love, faithfulness, forgiveness & communication, to sexual fulfillment, advice to husbands and wives, etc.

“*Formula for Family Unity*” by Walter & Trudy Fremont (BJU Press: Greenville, SC, 1980), 199pp. Covers all the bases in a brief, practical way. Deals first with husband/wife subjects (e.g. communication, submission, love, leadership, one flesh unity, etc.) then goes on to address how to be an effective father & mother, building character in children & reaching them for Christ, etc. Ends with chapters on depression-its causes & cures & family finances, along with appendices that address how to discipline children.

“*Successful Christian Parenting*” by John MacArthur (Word Publishing: Nashville, TN, 1998), 243pp. Begins with an overview of the demise of the family, today’s attitude towards children (they’re a burden), etc., then goes on to debunk a few secular philosophies of child-raising (e.g. Behaviorism, the self-esteem emphasis, etc.), how to lead your children to Christ, teaching obedience, not provoking to anger, giving right training, separate chapters on the father’s & mother’s role, etc.

*The Fulfilled Family* (subtitle: *The Divine Pattern for Marriage*) by John MacArthur (Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 1985, 1987), 146pp. This is basically a series of Bible studies on Ephesians 5:21-6:4 and based on sermons. Chapters include: “The Necessary Foundation; The Role of the Wife; The Wife’s Priorities; The Role of the Husband; The Husband’s Priorities; Understanding the Issues; The role of the Child & the Role of the Parents,” all coordinated to various verses in that section of Ephesians.

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<sup>1</sup> Compiled by Mike Edwards, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, West Indies, May 2013, revised Madison, Ohio, Sept. 2015.

**“Your Family, God’s Way”** by Wayne Mack (Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing: Phillipsburg, NJ, 1991), 228pp. This is all about being a good father & mother to your children, influencing them for God, maintaining good communication in the family, learning to “read” your children, etc.

***The Dad Difference*** by Josh McDowell & Dr. Norm Wakefield (Here’s Life Publishers: San Bernardino, CA, 1989) 174pp. A little bit dated, but still a lot of helpful ideas and wise advice. Chapter titles include: “*Discovering the Dad Difference; The Dad Definition; The World Your Child Faces; Barriers to Effective Fatherhood; Dad: the third Greatest Influence; Building a Quality Relationship; The dad Who Communicates; Saying ‘You Are Special!’; Nurturing Christian Values; Helping Your Child Handle Peer Pressure & The Road to Self-Control.*”

***Divine Design*** by John MacArthur (David C. Cook: Colorado Springs, CO, 1994, 2011) 272pp. From the jacket: “MacArthur tackles big issues such as authority in marriage, mothers in the home, and God’s view of equality, all while exploring the innate differences between men & women. Throughout, MacArthur provides an indispensable guide for understanding your mate & shares how embracing your unique design can foster security, balance, and love in a marriage & family.”

***Christian Living in the Home*** by Jay E. Adams (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, MI, 1972) 143pp. Another “classic” whose chapter titles include: “*A Christ-Centered Home; Hope and Help for Your Family; Communication Comes First; Bible Basics About the Family; Single Persons; A Word to the Wives’ Loving Leadership* (for husbands/fathers) *Discipline with Dignity* (on the discipline of children) & *How to Live with an Unbelieving Husband.*”

***The Christian Family*** by Larry Christenson (Bethany Fellowship: Minneapolis, MN, 1970), 216pp. This is also an older book, and it was written by a guy who leans a little in the Pentecostal/Charismatic direction. However the first five chapters of the book are tremendous and well worth the price of the book. They include: “*God’s Order for Mates; God’s Order for Wives; God’s Order for Children; God’s Order for Parents & God’s Order for Husbands.*” I’d suggest possibly skipping the last three chapters (They’re generally ok but do contain a few weird &/or unscriptural ideas, in my opinion). Part One though (Chapters 1-5) is very good.

***The Love Dare*** by Stephen Kendrick, Alex Kendrick & Lawrence Kimbrough (B & H Publishing Group: Nashville, TN, 2008), 213pp. A forty-day “devotional work book” for husbands, based on & built around the Christian film “*Fireproof.*”

### **BOOKS FOR COUPLES**

**“Strengthening your Marriage”** by Wayne Mack (Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing: Phillipsburg, NJ, 1999) 187pp. The neat thing about this book is that it is set up in a “workbook” format with lots of pages where couples are to fill in the blanks & write their answers based on the previous text, making it very practical. Chapters include: “*God’s Purpose for Marriage, the Wife’s Responsibilities, the Husband’s responsibilities, Good Communication, Financial Agreement, Sexual Unity, Raising Children & Family Religion.*”

**“Whose Money is it, Anyway?”** By John MacArthur (Word Publishing: Nashville, TN, 2000), 188pp. Entire book deals with money, giving, etc., and includes a solid, practical exegesis and application of 2 Corinthians 8-9, the most extensive passage in the entire New Testament on the subject of money & giving.

***Marriage Matters*** by Winston T. Smith, a counselor & faculty member at the Christian Counseling & Education Foundation, (New Growth Press: Greensboro, NC, 2010) 290pp. From the Preface: “The title communicates well what I hope you’ll learn about marriage. First, marriage matters, not only because it’s important to us, but also because it’s important to god and He intends to use it in ways that you may not have imagined. Second, moments that seem the most ordinary-moments of annoyance, conflict, pain, or cold indifference-can become moments in which you’re able to understand God’s incredible agenda for love & begin to do something new...I am especially hopeful that this book will be useful to those who find marriage a daily battle. I ask those couples to read this book thoughtfully and prayerfully, and with hope... let me offer a few precautions... ‘Don’t read this book simply because you think your spouse needs to read it...Instead, concentrate on learning how to live a life of live & trust God with the results. (And) Don’t allow any marriage book to become a substitute for personal support &

counsel...Strive to include trusted friends, godly pastors, and wise counselors on your journey, especially if your spouse is battling addictions or is abusive.”

**“You and Me Forever – Marriage in Light of Eternity”** by Francis & Lisa Chan (Claire Love Publishing: San Francisco, CA, 2014), 192pp. This is powerful, convicting and definitely not a typical book on marriage. They address the subject of marriage from a heavenly-minded perspective i.e. Putting God first in every area of marriage is what God desires, not “how to have a happy marriage.” This is a very thought-provoking book!

**“What did you Expect? – Redeeming the Realities of Marriage”** by Paul David Tripp (Crossway: Wheaton, IL, 2010), 287pp. Another “outside the box” book by a well-known author that comes with high recommendations. Among the topics covered are confession & forgiveness, growth and change, building trust, love, dealing with differences & protecting your marriage.

**“To Tie the Knot or Not—a Biblical Study of Marriage & the Single Life”** by Gil Rugh, (Indian Hills Community Church: Lincoln, NE, 1985), 68pp. This is a short booklet based on Matthew 19 wherein Jesus addressed three subjects: Marriage, Divorce & Celibacy. Rugh is not well known but is an excellent Bible teacher who has pastored the same church in Nebraska for nearly forty years. Written in his earlier years. Good & helpful. This & all of their materials can be downloaded *free* off of the internet. ([www.ihcc.org](http://www.ihcc.org))

### **PHYSICAL INTIMACY IN MARRIAGE**

**“Intended for Pleasure”** by Ed & Gaye Wheat (Revell), 284pp. The classic on the subject, by a medical doctor and his wife. “A classic for thirty years, Intended for Pleasure is an easy-to-read reference book that combines biblical teaching on love and marriage with the latest medical information on sex and sexuality” (from the publishers description).

**“The Act of Marriage—The Beauty of Sexual Love”** by Tim & Beverly LaHaye (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, MI, 1976), 294pp. Covers all the bases in an easily readable style.

**“The Act of Marriage after 40”** by Tim & Beverly LaHaye (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, MI, 2000), 261pp. This book was written specifically for older married couples, not young couples. It addresses many issues relevant to such individuals including: menopause, erectile dysfunction, breast & prostate cancer, dealing with sexual temptation in middle age, the impact & importance of exercise & nutrition, etc.

**Sexual Happiness in Marriage** by Herbert Miles, Ph.D. (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, MI, 1967), 160pp. An older classic that is probably still available via [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), or other such sources.

### **HUSBANDS/FATHERS**

**“The Exemplary Husband—a Biblical Perspective”** by Stuart Scott (Focus Publishing, Inc.: Bemidji, MN, 2002), 363pp. This is a companion/counterpoint volume to “The Excellent Wife.” Covers such things as a husband understanding his relationship to God, others, his spouse, etc., as well as his responsibilities in such areas as leadership in the family, physical intimacy, stewardship, sensitivity, communication, conflict resolution, etc. Finishes with chapters on how to overcome anger, anxiety, fear & lust.

**“Dangers Men Face—Overcoming the Five Greatest Threats to Living Life Well”** by Jerry White (NavPress: Colorado Springs, CO, 1997), 222pp. Under the general categories titled “Danger of Loss, Danger of Sin, Danger of Freezing, Danger of Confusion in Life & Danger of Withdrawal” he deals with many dangers & problems. They include: loss of motivation, position, influence, confidence & identity, sexual temptation, conflict, anger, pride, withdrawal, etc.

### **WIVES/MOTHERS**

**“The Excellent Wife: A Biblical Perspective”** by Martha Peace (Focus Publishing, Inc.: Bemidji, MN, 1995, 1999, 2005), 302pp. This is probably considered the classic in the field as far as a biblical approach is concerned. It starts

by helping a wife understand her relationship to God, relationships, marriage, etc. Continues by advising on walking with Christ, running the home, love, a correct understanding of respect for & submission to her husband, physical intimacy, controlling the tongue & maintaining a “quiet” spirit. Ends with chapters on overcoming anger, fear, loneliness & sorrow.

### **FOR SPOUSES STRUGGLING TO SAVE THEIR MARRIAGES**

***How to Save Your Marriage Alone*** by Ed Wheat (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, MI, 1983), pp. 62pp. This is simply a pamphlet-sized reprint of two chapters from Wheat’s larger book: *Love Life for Every Married Couple*.

***The Case of the “Hopeless” Marriage – A Nouthetic Counseling Case from Beginning to End*** by Jay E. Adams, with Greg Dawson and Bert & Sue Lancaster (Timeless Texts: Stanley, NC, 2006) 142pp. This is a marriage counseling manual &/or workbook that attempts to be a counseling “play by play” of a fictitious couple who have come to their pastor/counselor because their marriage is falling apart. It’s divided into ten “sessions” which are basically composites of marriage counseling cases drawn from Adam’s many years of counseling experience.