

7. **A Poignant Illustration** *The stars are brilliant in an inky black sky, the moon is shining, a balmy breeze rustles in the palm fronds by the seashore. The pretty young woman and handsome young man hold hands and look into one another's eyes, each saying to the other, "I love you more than life itself." Sixty years later they are sitting by the fireplace in their timeworn recliners. It is a brutally cold night. The wind is howling around the eaves and sleet is pinging on the windowpanes. They are old and gray; their faces wrinkled. The blue veins stand out on their gnarled hands as they snuggle more securely into their lap robes. They intuitively share something precious as they turn and look into one another's eyes. Without needing to say a word they both perfectly understand: "Now we really know what love is all about!" Paul's words come to mind: (Phil 1:9-10) "That your _____ may _____ yet more and more in _____ and in all judgment; that ye may _____ things that are _____; that ye may be _____." Real love is never static. It abounds! It always grows stronger!*
8. **Sharing** This is key to a successful marriage. (1 Cor 7:3) "*Let the husband _____ unto the wife due _____; and likewise also _____ unto the husband.*" Kindness is the general application although conjugal duty is emphasized in this instance. Thoughts, emotions, earthly treasures, time and consideration are all to be shared. Most certainly they must share abundantly in spiritual matters, "*being heirs together of the grace of life.*" Scripture? _____ Responsibilities and worries must also be shared. Did we not pledge, "*To love & to cherish*" our spouse, "*To have & to hold.....In health & in sickness.....In good times & bad.....For better or for worse...Forsaking all others so long as we both shall live?*"
9. **A Wholesome Christian Home Be Disciplined** God demands that we respect and obey his rules. Jesus is referenced prophetically as (Micah 5:2) "*_____ in Israel*" and, as such, is (1 Tim 6:15) "*King of _____, and Lord of _____.*" (Eph 5:23) "*The husband is the _____ of the wife*" and wives are to (1 Pet 3:1, 5) "*be in _____ to your own husbands.*" It is the husband's duty to act responsibly as "head of the family" and the wife's duty to remember (Gen 3:16) "*thy _____ shall be to thy husband, and he shall _____ thee.*"
10. **Success Demands Teamwork** If the husband abdicates his duty a dreadful burden is thrown upon the wife. The same is true of the husband if the wife neglects her duty. They both have responsibilities for and toward their children. One qualification of elders that applies to all Christian men with families: (1 Tim 3:4) "*One that _____ his own house, having his children _____ with all gravity.*" This is "his" duty as head of the household. The children's duty: (Col 3:20) "*Children, _____ your _____ in all things.*" Note that it says "parents," plural, meaning both father and mother. The women are to (1 Tim 5:14) "*marry, bear children, _____, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.*" It says "get married," not to "go live with some man."
11. **Without Little Things There Can Be No Big Things** This is true in every phase of life. Without tiny drops of rain – no mighty oceans. Without a tiny acorn – no towering oak. Without the little civilities, thoughtfulness, loving words and kind gestures – no great marriage. (Prov 25:11) "*A word _____ spoken is like apples of _____ in pictures of _____.*"
12. **Respect Is A Must** Love is barren without mutual respect! (Eph 5:33) "*Nevertheless let every one of you in particular _____ his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she _____ her husband.*" The phrase "*so love*" is pregnant with meaning. It rules out doing what you see others doing, or doing whatever selfishly suits you. Love must be tender, thoughtful and consistent.
13. **Don't Ever Quit Communicating** Husbands, now that you've wooed, charmed, and gotten her to marry you, don't fall into that "man thing" and shut her out. Wives, don't take him for granted now that he's "caught." Remember: (1 Jn 4:12) "*If we _____ one another, God _____ in us, and his love is _____ in us.*" Husbands, (1 Pet 3:7) give "*_____ unto the wife.*" Christian wives, be ladies! Don't "*usurp authority over the man.*"