

# Look Who's Talking

## Empowering Authentic Families [Part One]

**The Purpose of This Series:** These six messages are for the purpose of equipping individuals who are planning to or are already in a marriage. We want to assist marriages in reaching their highest potential of relationship and effectiveness. Some of the teachings may be lessons already learned, but it will never hurt to brush up to renew their simple truth. Other things might become a new revelation, and just in time, because we are not getting any younger. Keep your hearts open to allow the Holy Spirit to give you new insight to what will give you the ability to live in a life relationship as God expected marriage to be.

**The Purpose of This Message:** Today's message will help us understand the urgency and relevance of taking a second look at what our roles in marriage are all about. We will also reveal some of the differences between the man and the woman to help us know where to establish our starting points for a more authentic marriage and family.

### Two Kinds of People

As I was praying about this message I realized that there would be two kinds of people in the audience today. First, there are those who **dread** a series like this for several reasons:

- Some dread it because it means that **their spouse will make them a target of all their anger** and they will hear about all the things they are doing wrong for the next few weeks. Talking about marriage and family is a painful experience and this only will make it worse instead of better.
- Some dread it because **it feels like it only exposes** how much they personally feel like they are failing in their marriage and family and they already feel like quitting. It seems really difficult to sit in another “beat me up” service when it feels like we are doing a terrible job already.
- Some dread it because **it seems like a waste of time**. It's not really something that you care to spend any time on or have any interest in. Marriage is something that will take care of itself.

Secondly, there are those who are **excited**, some are excited in a bad way and some are excited in a good way.

- **Bad Way-** There are some who are excited about this series because they have been **looking for something to straighten out their spouse** and make them fly right. They have been waiting for a moment like this to drop the bomb on them...to wake them up!
- **Good Way-** There are some who are excited about this series in a good way. They haven't given up on God's dream for them and their family. They believe that God is the author and finisher of their faith. They believe that God can renew all, restore all, and heal all. **They know that without God they really don't have a marriage at all!**

### Wake Up!

Let me ask you a question:

**“How do you wake up? What is it that gets you out of bed?”**

That may be a strange question, but today it will be one of the most important questions you will ever be asked. The question is not simply, "What gets you out of bed in the morning," but it is, "What does it take to help you notice your eyes are shut, you are totally oblivious to everything around you and you have to make a change, a wake up or you are going to miss some great opportunities in your life." Let me go over a few.

### **1. The Alarm Clock**

Many people have an alarm clock, some have more than one. They have it to help them wake up and a back up just in case. An alarm clock is set to go off at a certain time. That way the individual can get their day going at the appropriate time. That is, if they don't hit the snooze over and over again. See, there is nothing wrong with the clock, it's just their response to the clock.

### **2. Yelled or Dragged Out**

It's becoming a regular problem with adults today who, at one time, thought they were empty nesters. But their little birds are coming back to roost. In many cultures, such as those in Africa, India, the Middle East, and East Asia, one's elderly parents were held in very high esteem and it was considered almost a duty to stay home and care for and respect them. In contrast to most Western societies, extended families were common in those places. (Webber, Christine and Delvin, David – "Empty-nest syndrome", referenced 22 February 2005)

In one article it was said that those who didn't build the discipline in their child to get out of bed on their own by their upper teenage years might have a revisit to the nest. What could be considered to be a strong maternal or paternal bond between the parent and child to constantly care for them without them taking responsibility for themselves can make the condition worse.

Yelling or dragging them out of bed day after day, even after the alarm goes off and snooze is hit several times, you may be teaching them to depend on you or someone else to get them to do what they should do in the first place. Yelling or dragging them out might wake them up or maybe not.

### **3. Fear**

What wakes many people up is nothing but fear. It wakes them up at the slightest sound or dream. Fear robs them of rest and causes them to function at less than full energy when the day has begun. This is an exhausting battle that can take place over short intervals combating with stress, physical challenges and conditions, or this can take place for years... even a lifetime. The alarm is only an additional annoyance for the lack of rest, it doesn't contribute to it.

I remember when I worked for a particular man that I dreamed about him over and over, never satisfying him with my work. I would wake up night after night afraid I didn't set the alarm clock or that the electricity might go off. I was ruled by fear and didn't know it for many weeks.

Fear can be a way to wake you up, but it goes off all the time and seldom on time.

### **4. Discipline**

There are others who wake up as a discipline. They are fairly regimented and do the right things that will help them get up in the morning and get the day started like...going to bed on time!

An individual who is disciplined knows that waking up when the alarm goes off is not the point, being rested is! Taking care of one's self contributes to taking care of one's day. A disciplined lifestyle doesn't rely on outside stimulants to be their solution. They take care of themselves personally and doesn't expect anyone else to be responsible for them.

Now the reason I mentioned these four ways to wake up is because many people handle their marriage and families the same way. Many don't wake up until it's too late. Some even sleep through the whole failing process. Today I want to wake you up, and yes I'll pound on the pan, pull your leg, scream at you if I have to, to wake you to the urgency of your marriage and family. My goal is to assist you in developing a DISCIPLINE for your marriage and family so that you will not be surprised when difficulties come your way. Wake UP!

Hey, I've got something for you. My sister-in-law was at a conference and picked up this quote: **"If you find yourself in hell...don't stop!"**

### **What Are God's Intentions For Your Marriage?**

Marriage might seem like the best simple decision you have ever made, you were so in love you couldn't imagine ever living apart, thus deciding to spend your lives together. Or, there might be some who struggled with the idea of marriage. It wasn't an easy decision, it was a grueling challenge, just the opposite of the other person just mentioned.

The models for modern day marriages seem to be adrift. Many people have observed marriages that lacked love and stability. Whatever went into making a good marriage is now a mystery and the idea of having one, or even handling the one you have may seem like a clouded venture rather than exciting adventure!

### **Your Greatest Testimony**

Jesus was praying to God and said,

***"I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."***

**John 17:23**

There is a key word that we can learn about that actually lets the world know that Jesus is the Son of God, the Savior of the World and the source for our peace and forgiveness from the Father God. **That word is "unity."**

Everyone talks about "oneness in marriage, but what does that really mean? What does that look like? As a couple, how do I live that out? Oneness is the heart of marriage and family. One seasoned married couple once stated,

**"Until you are in complete agreement, you should delay making a decision. Sometimes it takes a lot longer, but it's always worth the wait."**

When we say "oneness," I believe it is more accurate than a common term used for marriage, and that is a partnership. See, a "partnership" highlights that two distinct individuals will work

together for the same purpose. But “oneness” highlights that there is no distinction between one or the other because they are woven together in their identity. Here is an important point:

**How you understand your “oneness” will largely determine your “destiny!”**

Notice that two things occur for UNITY to happen, according to Jesus,

1. Our ability to be deeply connected to others, (“***I in them...***”)
2. God's ability to be deeply connected to us, (“...***you in me.***”)
3. Time for these to be developed and completed, (“... ***be brought to complete unity...***”)

There is something very insightful in Genesis 1.

**“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”**

Genesis 1:27

**“God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it...’”**

Genesis 1:28a

God made Adam and Eve on the sixth day and gave a mandate. He gave it to a couple, not just Adam. He gave it as a destiny for them together, in oneness! Look how this plays out, and God's first plan of action,

1. **God Blessed Them**- There is nothing that we can do without His help. God had to bless what needed to be blessed. We need the blessing of the Lord on our relationships and without it, we are in a war on our own. God began with a blessing when it came to their relationship.
2. Be **Fruitful, Increase, Fill** the earth, **Subdue** it!- Which of these four things could be done without the other? The ability to be fruitful, increase in number to fill the earth and subdue...yes, subdue was dependent on both of them. God's statement to them was, have babies, have a lot of them, have so many that it fills the earth, with this mission in mind- “**Subdue the earth!**” What's that all about? Why would you subdue the earth? Make it serve you. Subdue means to bring it into subjection. So what am I bringing into subjection?

**“...Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”**

Genesis 1:28b

**“Then God said, ‘I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.’ And it was so.”**

Genesis 1:29-30

Everything was Adam and Eve's. It was theirs, both of them. Not one or the other, both of them. God's directives were appointed, focused on a unified couple who understood their oneness. **How you understand your “oneness” will largely determine your “destiny!”**

Genesis 2:1-23 basically retells the Genesis 1:27-31 again with more detail. So the two stories catch up with each other at Genesis 2:23 and connects in verse 24,

***“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”***

**Genesis 2:24**

Again, what's the reason?

1. **God Blessed Them**- God's blessing is still on the relationship of a man and a woman, it has never been changed!
2. **Be Fruitful, Increase, Fill the earth, Subdue it!**- This is not going to be given to you, this is something that is yours...if you want it. This is an amazing revelation when you notice all the key mandate words God gave Adam and Eve and that those same key mandate words are given in the New Testament. The purpose of unified couples has changed from that of Adam and Eve, but only to bear a different kind of fruit. Jesus tells a parable about the different soils, the hard soil, the rocky soil, the shallow soil and then He tells us about the good soil.

***“But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”***

**Matthew 13:23**

There is no fruit bearing in our lives without 1) **good soil** and 2) **HEARS** the **Word of God** sown into it 3) **UNDERSTANDS** it. What is important is that we get the Word of God in us to the point that we understand it. Look what happens, produces a crop that yields only **WHAT WAS SOWN!**

***“Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.”***

**II Corinthians 9:10**

God loves pouring it on, increasing your seed! Remember, God was talking to a couple in Genesis and I believe He is talking to a couple in the New Testament. Jesus tells us to “Go into ALL the world...make disciples” (Matthew 28:18-20). To subdue it is to make this world a disciple of Christ.

3. **Rule**- You have to take your position. Rule over what you should rule over.

This is the reason why a man would leave his own home and take a woman to be his wife, to help fulfill their destiny...not just his!

**How you understand your “oneness” will largely determine your “destiny!”**

## **SHAPE**

A few years ago we did Rick Warren's 40 days of purpose. In that we learned that we all had a **SHAPE**, which was an acrostic for: **Spiritual gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality and Experiences**. These alone make up when compared to someone else makes us so much difference in that other person. When these differences are combined, the two of you make the majority. But too often we see our differences as a weakness, not a strength. Before you know it, instead of combined forces, we are speaking different languages. Eventually we

entertain attitudes that will keep us from connecting, from uniting, from oneness.

## **Computer Management**

I am amazed at people who really understand the computer and how they can make it work for them. Over time I have learned to have four or five windows open so when ready I can pull the screen up that I am working on. But that's it. I look at one screen at a time and then go to the next screen when ready. That is exactly how I think, one screen at a time. I can think about a car, close that screen and open up the weather.

My wife will have many different thoughts and feelings running throughout her brain, all at the same time. I tend to think about one thing at a time. Where I would tend to process thoughts and feelings sequentially- working on one screen one at a time, closing it, and moving on to the next- my wife is likely to have many screens open simultaneously and is able to jump back and forth between them at will. And in many cases, against her will.

One recent survey found that nearly eight of ten women under forty-five and those with middle-school or younger children at home described themselves in almost the exact same way. For a guy, this doesn't really make sense. It really is amazing isn't it, to watch your wife deal with a cranky kid, cook supper, talk on the phone with a friend and overlook the older kids homework, all at the same time.

A woman's mind can alternate countless relationships, manage a web of commitments, deal with family members and hold down a full time job. That is amazing. Most guys are different to say the least.

Often when I am doing nothing, Carol will ask me, what are you thinking? What do you think I will answer? "Nothing! My computer screen was empty with the screen saver up and no one was home. Any of you guys understand that?"

Few women get that. One woman put it this way:

**"There's never a time that there's nothing going on in my head.** If I answer 'nothing,' it's because I'm mad at him!"

- **This is why women jump topics in the middle of the conversation.** When that happens, guys might think,
  - a) **she is going off on a tangent,**
  - b) **she's muddled,**
  - c) **she's not paying attention,**
  - d) **she's not being respectful,** or
  - e) **all of the above.**

Guys have one window open and one conversation going on. (Waffle) Women have several things going on all the time, interconnected, (spaghetti).

- This is why your wife or girlfriend, by comparison, often has so much more than you to talk about at the end of the day. At the end of a very busy day, guys have run down one track all day and it has exhausted him, but not women. Tired? Yes, one track, no!

These differences are only one of the reasons for our differences. It's hard on both sides to feel like the other one genuinely cares to listen and understand. Our differences are unique and

are God given. Without recognizing our differences we will neglect our similarities and how to meet each others intimate needs, the core of unity and oneness!

## Unity Makers

There are primary three key statements to “empower authentic unity” at every marriage ceremony. These not only create unity, but they create deeper unity...intimacy. You and your spouse may have pledged to do these three things:

1. **“Love, honor, and cherish”**- dealing with the **“emotional intimacy.”**
2. **“Forsaking all others.”**- dealing with the **“physical intimacy.”**
3. **“What God has joined together”**- dealing with the **“spiritual intimacy.”**

When you think about these three key statements, which one do you think God would want you to become intimate with first with another person? If you were to ask anyone who did not consider God in their life, you would definitely get a different answer. The truth is, God wants us to have a depth of intimacy in each of these three areas, “emotional, physical and spiritual intimacy.”

Oneness or unity doesn't just happen because we have the same last name or live under the same roof. Becoming one in marriage is a relationship that involves the body, soul and spirit. Just like we need food and air for survival, any marriage that wants to survive has to be nurturing and attentive in each of these three dimensions.

For us two to become one flesh, (Genesis 2:24), one, unified, we need to learn to become closer and deeper in our relationship with the one to whom we are married to. A question to ask yourself is, of the three dimensions of marriage, is any one part of it lopsided, expending all of your energies in only one or two dimensions of your relationship?

## Getting It All Out

Since we are at this point, there is no need to hold back, we might as well get it all out. Here are a few questions for you to ask yourself:

- How do you view the “spiritual” dimension of your relationship? (1-3)
- How do you view the “friendship” dimension of your relationship? (1-3)
- How do you view the “physical” dimension of your relationship? (1-3)

## Keep It To Yourself

One individual revealed that when he was growing up he was taught to keep his needs and feelings to himself. His dad's favorite phrase was, “Keep a stiff upper lip.” His mother was also stern with the same idealism. She would often say, “Big boys don't cry!” And the boy grew up believing that he could never feel or show any emotion, even when his mother would apply the stinging red iodine, (monkey blood) on his cut knee, she would applaud him for showing no emotion during the ordeal.

What was important in this family was pride and self-reliance. Without thinking one day, he told the neighbors about his dad losing his job and when word got home he was spanked soundly for revealing family secrets and making people feel sorry for him. When people offered help, he watched offers of love and assistance be turned away again and again.

He heard more than once, “We don't need anyone, we can make it on our own.” He learned

to put his guard up, never reveal any needs. A few years after he had married his wife accused him of being distant, unapproachable, and unable to connect emotionally. When his wife understood how he had been raised, she made every effort to show him unconditional love. She urged him to reveal his feelings and needs and over time he allowed some of his walls to fall down and they connected on a whole different level.

If we are going to learn to connect on every dimension of intimacy needs, we need to learn what the needs are and how we might can meet them. There are ten intimacy needs below.

1. Mark three in “Your Needs” column most important to receive from your spouse.
2. If married, mark three in the “Spouse's Needs” column that you think your spouse would consider their most important need to be met by you.

### Test- Top Ten Relational Needs

(Both lists are from David and Teresa Ferguson, Intimate Encounters, Relationship press, 1997, pp. 12-14)

| Your Needs | Definition  | Spouse's Needs |
|------------|---|----------------|
|            | <b>Acceptance:</b> Receiving others willingly and unconditionally (even when their behavior has been imperfect) and loving them in spirit of any differences that may exist between you (Romans 15:7).  |                |
|            | <b>Affection:</b> Expressing care and closeness through physical touch and through words such as “I love you” or “I care about you.” (Romans 16:16; Mark 10:16)   |                |
|            | <b>Appreciation:</b> Expressing thanks, praise, or commendation, particularly in recognition of someone's accomplishments or efforts (I Corinthians 11:2; Colossians 3:15b)   |                |
|            | <b>Approval (Blessing):</b> Building up or affirming another person, particularly for who they are (as opposed to what they do); affirming both the fact and the importance of our relationship with another person (Ephesians 4:29; Mark 1:11)             |                |
|            | <b>Attention:</b> Conveying appropriate interest, concern and care; taking notice of others and making an effort to enter into their respective worlds (I Corinthians 12:25 NASB)   |                |
|            | <b>Comfort:</b> Caringly responding to a hurting person through words, actions, emotional responses, and physical touch; hurting with and for others in the midst of their grief or pain (Romans 12:15 NASB; Matthew 5:4; II Corinthians 1:3-4)             |                |
|            | <b>Encouragement:</b> Urging others to persist and persevere in their efforts to attain their goals; stimulating others toward love and good deeds (I Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 10:24)  |                |
|            | <b>Respect:</b> Valuing one another highly, treating one another as important, and honoring one another with our words and actions (Roman 12:19; I Peter 2:17)  |                |
|            | <b>Security (Peace):</b> Establishing and maintaining harmony in our relationships and providing freedom from fear or threat of harm through expressions of vulnerability, deepening of trust, and the successful resolution of conflict (Romans 12:16, 18) |                |
|            | <b>Support:</b> Going alongside others and providing gentle, appropriate assistance with a problem or struggle (Galatians 6:2)  |                |

Next: To identify what you and your spouse most enjoy, check the items that appeal to your mate in Column 1 and the ones that appeal to you in Column 2. Check only four items in each column.

| Spouse | Myself | Activity      |
|--------|--------|---------------|
|        |        | Holding hands |

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
|  | Going for a walk                  |
|  | An unexpected hug                 |
|  | Finding a love note               |
|  | Receiving a surprise gift         |
|  | Being served a favorite meal      |
|  | Being told "I love you"           |
|  | Helping with the kids             |
|  | Being approached sexually         |
|  | Receiving compliments on my looks |
|  | Taking a shower together          |
|  | A surprise "date"                 |
|  | Getting a back rub or massage     |
|  | Having dinner out                 |
|  | Being praised for achievements    |
|  | Having a quiet conversation       |
|  | Helping with parts of my job      |
|  | (Other)                           |
|  |                                   |
|  |                                   |

After you and your spouse complete your lists, share them with each other during a private time this week. It's important for each other to understand what makes your spouse feel loved and cared for. Pay careful attention to and respectfully consider both sets of answers.

**How you understand your "oneness" will largely determine your "destiny!"**

### Fireproof

In the movie Fireproof, **Caleb and Catherine Holt** have been **married for seven years**. Although **once in love, they have grown apart** and find themselves **headed for divorce**. **Tension** fills the air in their **demeanors, attitudes** and **conversations**. Both of them are **self-centered**, which causes many arguments to ensue. They **point the finger** at the other party and exaggerate one another's shortcomings to a fault. In reality **they lack something or someone to hold them together and to restore their lost love—that someone is Jesus Christ**. Only **when Caleb finds Christ and begins to love his wife** the way Christ loves the church do the tables begin to turn.

At one point in the movie **Caleb has come to Christ, but Catherine is still skeptical**. She has **seen a change**, but she's not sure why and even **doubts his motives**. **One day while Catherine is sick** at home in bed, **Caleb comes in with some medicine** and begins to open up his heart to her.

Caleb: Can you take this medicine and eat something?

Catherine: Why are you doing this?

Caleb: Because I've learned that you don't leave your partner, especially in a fire.

Catherine: What's happened to you?

Caleb: Dad asked me if there was anything in me that wanted to save our marriage, and he gave me this notebook. He said it saved their marriage.

Catherine: So what day are you on (in the notebook)?

Caleb: 43.

Catherine: But there's only 40 days in the book.

Caleb: Who says I have to stop?

Catherine: Caleb, I don't know how to process this. This is not normal for you.

Caleb: Welcome to the new normal.

Catherine: You didn't want to do this at first did you?

Caleb: No, but halfway through, I realized that I never really understood what love was. Once I figured that out, I wanted to do it.

Catherine: Caleb, I want to believe this is real, but I'm not ready to say I trust you again.

Caleb: I understand. But whether you get to that point or not, I need you to know something. Catherine, I'm sorry...I have been so selfish. For the last seven years I've trampled on you with my words and my actions. I've loved other things when I should have loved you. In the last few weeks God has given me a love for you that I've never had before. I've asked Him to forgive me and have been hoping...praying that you would somehow be able to forgive me too. I don't want to live the rest of my life without you.

Catherine: Caleb, I'm supposed to give the divorce papers back to my lawyer next week. I need some time to think.

Caleb: You can have all the time you need.

Maybe you are at the point of giving up on your marriage, or maybe someone gave up on you. You may be living with the sting of divorce, burned by an unfaithful mate. Or you may be living under the same roof with your spouse, but it's just a house and not a home. How do you survive? How do you restore the love you once had? How do you prevent your marriage from crumbling beneath the pressure? How do you make the choice to never leave your partner behind, especially in a fire?

When a couple is going through a time of conflict, emotions start to escalate and our differences become more exposed. It doesn't take long before anger, frustration and emotions are out of control. A root of bitterness begins to grow. Concerns become complaints, complaints become threats, and threats lead to disaster. One spouse begins to put down the other. Suddenly there's nothing in the home but name calling, putdowns and cutting remarks.

Thoughts invade your mind like,

- "I just married the wrong person."
- "We have nothing in common."
- "They would be better off without me."
- "I was too young when we got married."
- "I didn't know what I was doing when I got married."
- "I feel like I was force to get married."

Once you start down this path, each person begins to withdraw and shut down emotionally. They may even begin to sleep in separate rooms. An intervention must take place. But it

may be hard to hear the alarm, but you are being annoyed by all the screaming. A couple cannot let themselves start to think or threaten of divorce. Once the “D” word is mentioned, problems escalate to a whole new level.

One Hollywood couple’s marriage lasted fifteen days. Any couple married more than ten years in Hollywood is considered a rarity. Now the church is following Hollywood’s lead. Marriages don’t last. Instead, **couples say “as long as our love shall last” in place of “till death do us part.”**

If you want your marriage to burn up quickly, just neglect communicating to one another. According to New Man Magazine (January/ February 1995),

**“The typical U.S. married couple only spends four minutes per day in ‘meaningful conversation’ with each other.” That’s only 0.3% of the hours in a day. The only way your spouse can know your thoughts and feelings is to communicate with them. They can’t see your heart or read your mind. Years ago I heard the following statistic: Only one in four-hundred Christian marriages where there is time spent together spiritually will fail. If that statistic was true back then, it’s truer than ever today. Choose to invest in your marriage spiritually.**

**Every living thing has to be nourished to survive.** Whether you are talking about plants, animals, people, churches or marriages, nourishment is a necessity for health. When a couple communicates they are nourishing their marriage. If the husband loves his wife the way he loves himself then he will feed his marriage emotionally, physically, verbally and spiritually. Communication has nothing to do with being extroverted; it has to do with being the person God has called you to be.

Here are a few suggestions:

1. Take your wife out on a date regularly. Plan it, prepare for it and court her the way you did when you were dating. (7/7/7)
2. Beginning September 7, Take the 40 Day Love Dare **Challenge**. "The Love Dare" is now in its fifth printing with more than 500,000 copies. It is a challenging and often difficult process, but an incredibly fulfilling one. To take this dare requires a resolute mind and a steadfast determination. Go to [www.familylife.com/](http://www.familylife.com/) and in the search type in **40 day Love Dare Challenge**. Sign up and you will get a daily love dare challenge for the next 40 days.
3. Get involved this week in a six week Fireproof life group. There is one starting a week from now since tomorrow is Labor Day. Look at the tables and see what works for you.
4. Sign up for the “Fire Proofing Your Marriage” with Michael Smalley, October 16-17.
5. Begin a staff meeting with your spouse. Find one hour during the week that you meet with your spouse, don't spend money on food, maybe a small drink. Keep it simple and deal with one or two issues only. Be careful to not get in major conflict, even though that might have great potential since you may have not had the chance to communicate in a while. Bring a calendar, a pen and a listening ear!
6. Turn control of your finances over to the Lord.
7. Pray together that you can put down roots and have stability in your home.