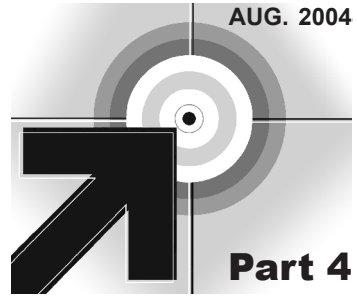


Shooting Straight

God's views on current issues and attitudes in the Family

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Part 4

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1. *(Jesus:)* The easier road is to keep yielding in the little and big things along the way, to continue yielding, forsaking, and giving your all to Me. Once you hold back and resist and let yourself become unyielded in this thing and that thing, you can get to the point that you have a very big struggle to overcome bad attitudes. This is why some people backslide completely and leave the Family, because they just can't yield and do things My way. They're so hardened in their own ways and desires that they're no longer able to yield to the new moves of My Spirit.

2. **Getting back to the basics in the spirit will help you to make progress like nothing else can**—because getting back to the basics means stripping away all the frills and remembering why you're in the Family, what your purpose and goal is in living for Me. Reminding yourself that you're here just for Me—not for a position or a title, not for a favored ministry, not for the comforts of life, not for any other reason than that you love Me, you heard My call in your heart, and you want to serve Me—will open you up spiritually to all that I have for you to learn. It will renew your desire to be close to Me. It will give you more faith to obey, because you won't be so concerned about what you stand to lose. You'll remember that with Me, you have gained all things, and that anything else on top of that is in My hands, to give or take as I will. Getting back to the basics in the spirit is the healthiest thing you can do for your spirit and your spiritual growth. (ML #3277:88, 90, GN 880).

of time for me, for entertainment, for personal fun and pleasure. I work hard and sacrifice so much, so when it's time off I just want to chill."

God's mind on the matter:

4. *(Jesus:)* It's perfectly fine to spend some time enjoying simple entertainment just for the sake of entertainment, or just relaxing and doing something on your own. There's nothing wrong with that, as long as it's kept in perspective and your motives and attitudes are right. Keep in mind, though, that if all or even most of your free time is spent in the pursuit of "me first" activities, then you're missing the mark.

5. **Unity is a big part of what makes the Family what it is, and selfishness is the perfect tool of the Enemy to destroy your sample of communal living, which is the**

Free Time Investments That Count!

The issue:

IT seems a selfish "me first" attitude has crept into the Family regarding free time and free days. (I'm mainly addressing those of you who have more free time—such as some of you singles and young people. This probably isn't a problem for those of you who have very little free time, as if your free time is minimal you probably need to spend much of that time in personal relaxation and time with our Husband.) Apparently, some people seem to feel that reaching out and doing sacrificial deeds for others takes too much work and effort during "off time." The attitude for some is: "Free time is a pool

most successful application of Acts 2:44–45 the world has seen for thousands of years. No matter how much Word is published by WS or how hard your shepherds may work to encourage unity, it's ultimately the responsibility of each person to make communal living work. This means that without exception, every single Family member must sacrifice some of their personal time to promote fellowship and unity.

6. It's important that you take regular time to fellowship with others, even if you're not doing exactly what you want to do, or even if it means occasionally doing something you really don't want to do, or that seems like nothing but hard work. It's a sacrifice well worth it, because it's this sort of selflessness that keeps your Home and the Family alive. You don't build unity by only doing what you want to do; unity is often built by doing things out of simple love and kindness with or for others that you don't personally care for.

7. Of course, everyone needs some time alone. It's actually important that you take time to relax regularly and do something you personally enjoy. If you find yourself spending all of your free time reaching out to or serving others, then believe it or not, that may be wrong too. Be careful that you don't get so into a works trip that your free time is nearly as stressful as your work time—or even more stressful. This is not what I have in mind; the worker is more important than the work.

8. Having personal time off is not wrong; it definitely has its place. But do get rid of the selfish mindset that your free time is your own precious right, and that you should dedicate most of it to bringing yourself pleasure and happiness. The ideal is that you actually spend more of your free time doing something that benefits others in some way. The best way to accomplish this is to try to find some uplifting activities you can enjoy with others, because as you relax together in the presence of My Spirit, you will strengthen your bonds of unity.

In summary:

9. (Mama:) There's a time and a place for everything. All of us need personal free time and relaxation—and there's nothing wrong with that. But we also need to claim the keys of selflessness and love and make the effort to reach out to others. That's how we do our part to build unity and preserve the sample to the world of communal living and Acts 2:44–45, which the Enemy hates and is trying to destroy.

Key promise:

10. The keys of selflessness will give you the desire to focus on the needs of others before your own, the supernatural eyesight to look outward instead of inward, and love enough to give even to your own hurt.

Dig deeper:

- "The Economy Revolution," ML #330A:10–12, Vol.3
- "Come Together—In Love," ML #3100:39–50, Lifelines 24
- "Goals for 1998," ML #3160:225–240, Lifelines 24
- "Living the Lord's Law of Love, Part 11," ML #3211:49–93, GN 814
- "Choices and Consequences, Part 2," ML #3485:30–74, GN 1070
- FJWL 1: #104, 173
- FJWL 2: #419, 426
- "Selfishness and Self-Centeredness," Word Topics

Challenging Thot:

11. (Dad:) The Devil is the king of the "me first" mindset, and I don't have to remind you about what happened when he began looking out for himself, wanting the best for himself, and thinking about himself! Pride is all about "self," and it was his downfall. So to remain in the safe zone, in a spiritually healthy state, abide by this simple rule for a happy life—JOY: Jesus, Others, then You. If you include others in your free time, the blessings of unity and love will enrich your life.

Note: The "Challenging Thots" in this Letter address commitment and discipleship in general and aren't always related to the issue being discussed.

The Greatest Enhancement!

The issue:

12. (*Mama:*) A very sad attitude is the one where people feel that time with the Lord is too much hard work, or that doing spiritual or Word-based activities isn't so cool, or that incorporating spiritual elements into one's free time or recreation or even united activities somehow makes them less fun. The attitude floating around is that "fun" is one thing, and the "things of the spirit" and time with the Lord are another, but the two don't really merge—at least not if you want to have a really "good time."

God's mind on the matter:

13. (*Dad:*) Even in your fun, free time, fellowship, and relaxation, the goal is to keep moving forward, to keep striving for excellence. Since you're looking at every area of your lives, your free times and activities and fellowships are another area you should focus in on. Ask yourselves: Are we making the most of our free times, our times of relaxation and entertainment? Are we including the Lord enough? Are we making our activities not only relaxing physically, but fulfilling spiritually as well?

14. When you think on the parties and activities that stand out the most to you, aren't they usually the ones where there's been a lot of "spirit," and when a lot of prayer and prophecy went into the planning and it shows, when you felt uplifted in some way? When there are little things here and there throughout any given endeavor or activity that bring the Lord in, that encourage unity, that move you forward in spirit, doesn't that make a difference? It gives parties, free time activities, and fellowships that extra special umph in the spirit.

15. Including the Lord and His ways and His Spirit in everything you do—including your free time, parties, and activities—only makes things better, more fulfilling, more uniting, more worthwhile, and even more fun! That's not to say that you can never just do something simple or that every party or activity has to be like a devotions or prayer meeting. That's not the vision. But parties and free time activities will be better if you're including the Lord more.

16. The Lord doesn't want to take anything away from His children—certainly not your fun, freedom, enjoyment, and times of relaxation! He wants you to enjoy life, to have fun times of uniting and fellowshiping and kicking your feet up and relaxing. You all work so hard for Him, and this is part of your reward. He simply wants to enhance everything, make everything better, and be included more.



17. (*Jesus:*) Don't forget to include Me in your free time. I understand that taking time in prayer, praise time, and reading My Word is easier for some than it is for others. Some people derive a lot of pleasure from their time in the Word, and others are blessed with amazing spiritual experiences. However, for some people, delving into the things of the spirit is more of a struggle and takes more work and effort and desperation—especially if you aren't as sensitive in the spirit as others, or have a hard time concentrating, or don't particularly enjoy reading, etc. But I have allowed even this for a reason—usually to keep you stirred up in the spirit and to provide you with the challenge you need in your discipleship and character development. I know what's best for each of My children and have given everyone their own set of battles and blessings.

18. I don't want you to feel discouraged or like there's something horribly wrong with you if you're the kind of person who finds that getting into the things of the spirit takes effort and determination and work. And it would be wrong for you who find the things of the spirit more naturally enjoyable to look down on or judge those who struggle with spiritual matters more than you do. At the same time, I don't want you who struggle to simply accept that the things of the spirit are "hard work" and that you'll never be able to find pleasure in them. You should be doing all you can to make it easier for yourself by asking Me to help you, by claiming the keys, by accentuating the aspects you enjoy, and by walking by faith even when there are no feelings involved.

19. Try to use your imagination—and most of all, My imagination—to make your times with Me come alive, so that you eventu-

ally actually look forward to them as part of your free time activities. During your free times, you don't have to be limited to praying intense prayer requests or reading the latest heavy GNs—although these can and should be done during your regular Word and prayer vigil times. The sky's the limit when it comes to bringing more of My Spirit into your times of relaxation and recreation! Do something radical, imaginative, and different! And, as much as possible, try to include others for extra moral support.

20. Try combining different forms of entertainment with the things of the spirit. For example:

- Get some people together and play spirit helper charades.
- Have a date with someone centered around Me and loving Me intimately.
- Study what the Word has to say about a topic in a movie you've watched.
- Prepare a Word-based skit for the Home.
- Sit back, have a glass of wine, and do nothing but lie in My arms, occasionally telling Me how much you love Me and why, in a relaxed and casual way.

21. If you're the type of person who finds the things of the spirit to be hard work, the worst thing you can do is to allow yourself to become discouraged and accept things as they are. Your best course of action is to try to include Me as often as you can in your entertainment and relaxation, until you learn to enjoy the sweet waters of My Spirit, and My Word and Spirit become an integral part of your free time.

In summary:

22. (Mama:) The Lord wants us to include Him as often as we can in our relaxation, fellowship, entertainment, and free time activities. He knows exactly how to make everything fun and even better than it would otherwise be in the natural, so He'll give us Heaven-sent ideas for including Him if we ask Him!

Key promise:

23. For awesome free time guidance, spectacular activity ideas, and memorable ways to include the things of the spirit in everything you do, claim the keys! I am brimming with

brand-new ideas, radical inspirations, and revolutionary plans, and will let you in on all of My secrets.

Dig deeper:

- "The Spiritual Health Revolution," ML #3184:122–123, GN 789
- "Dad's Challenge to Change," ML #3240:33–34, GN 842
- "More on 'The Shakeup 2000,'" ML #3262:252–264, GN 863
- "Understanding Prophecy, Part 3," ML #3310:227–231, GN 914
- "The Professionals," ML #3399:273–277, GN 993
- "Exposing Bacchus," ML #3402:68–87, Post-it GN #4
- "What Is Jesus Worth to You," ML #3433:180–191, GN 1016
- "Have Fun With Jesus," ML #3437, GN 1020
- "Issues, Part 14," ML #3442:127–142, GN 1026

Challenging That:

24. (Dad:) When you include the Lord, everything is better! He makes everything so much fuller, richer, sweeter, more fun, and more complete. He's the Lord of the Dance, the Master of Ceremonies, the Perfect Party Planner, and the greatest Free Time Consultant! So why not be radical and employ His help and presence? You won't be disappointed!

Time Off: A Necessity!

The issue:

25. (Mama:) I know that most Family members are very busy, especially these days with the restructuring of the Family and all that the Lord has asked us to focus on in our lives and Homes. Some of you have been busy for years, and now you're probably busier than ever—especially if you're in an active Home, or you're a hard-working parent, or you're a shepherd, board member, or have other pressing responsibilities. Some of you probably have very little free time, others of you might have none, and lots of you hard workers and "workaholics"

have gotten used to taking little or no time off. Some of you are even of the opinion that it's not something you really need, that it's more like a luxury or indulging a weakness of the flesh. If you take time off, you feel it's wrong and irresponsible and that you're slacking off and neglecting your important work for the Lord, and that it's okay to just go without it—and work, work, work.

God's mind on the matter:

26. (Jesus:) A good balance always has been—and always will be—My delight. But it's not just good to have a balance; it's essential to have a healthy balance in every area of your life.

27. A rainbow has many colors; all colors must be present to make up that beautiful band that covers the sky. Every year is made up of seasons, and all of those seasons are vital to the cycle of nature. So just as there is variety and balance in nature, in My creation, so do I wish for you to have variety and balance in your life. In fact, I insist that you do, because it's the only way for you to have My full joy and happiness; it's the only way for you to meet the great needs that lie before you; it's the only way you'll keep from burning out.

28. Some of you don't have any, or much, free time, and this needs to change. You need time on a regular basis to relax, to take a breather, to do something fun and enjoyable. If you don't, you'll burn out.

29. Most people in the Family struggle to find balance in their lives. Some are workaholics and need to learn how to relax. Some are loafers and need to learn how to work harder. Some are personal free time junkies and need to learn how to reach out to others, how to contribute more to their "community."

30. When I was on Earth there was balance in My life. I didn't only spend time with My Father. I didn't only feed the multitudes. I didn't only reach out to My closest disciples, My "family" at that time. I didn't only relax and take time off. I did a little bit of everything. I spent adequate time with My Father, being spiritually strengthened for the big load I had to carry. I witnessed to the multitudes, I fed

the sheep, I healed the sick. Then I also spent time with My closest disciples, showing them My love and assuring them that they were important to Me.

31. And, yes, I also took time off; I relaxed, I laughed, I danced, I drank, I sang, I talked, I slept, I bathed, I enjoyed the company of others. In those days, the forms of recreation and relaxation were much simpler, but I enjoyed what I had, and I encouraged My disciples to join in these times of fellowship and relaxation with Me. I wasn't always preaching, I wasn't always teaching, I wasn't always working. When My work was done, when I had done My Father's will for the day, I took time off. I had to, because I was encased in a human body; relaxation and recreation was a need for Me, just as it is a need for you.

32. Of all the areas of your life, your spiritual life and personal relationship with Me is the most important—it should always come first and foremost. But then after that, all of the other aspects are equally important.

33. You need a balance of a little bit of everything in your life, and that's how you please Me. When you're taking the time off that you need to take—not in excess, but in moderation—then this is pleasing Me.

In summary:

34. (Mama:) You don't need gobs of free time! That's not even possible in our busy lives for the Lord. But you do need a healthy amount of free time, relaxation, and time off on a regular basis. It's essential to your happiness, well-being, and continued fruitful service to the Lord. According to the Charter, it's the responsibility of every Home to give each voting member (16+, as well as 14- and 15-year-olds who are actively involved in Home ministries) a day off not less than once every two weeks—and it's preferable that voting members get a day off every week. (*See "Responsibilities of the Charter Home: Regarding the Welfare of its Members," pages 112–113, Charter.*)

35. It's not a weakness to need time off. Jesus took time off, and He wants us to follow His example. It's not wrong to need time to relax and chill. It's necessary and important.

You're obeying the Lord when you take time off to relax and rest. So if you're not getting any free time, or not enough, please discuss it as a Home, pray and hear from the Lord about it, and work toward finding a solution. I'll say it again: Rest, relaxation, and time off is a need. It's not optional.

Key promise:

36. The keys will perform miracles of every kind when you obey Me—by giving you the faith to take time to rest and relax and be refilled even when things are very busy, by helping you to trust that I will see to the work that isn't getting done, and by making your times of relaxation and recreation exceptional in every way.

Dig deeper:

- "My Yoke Is Easy," ML #169, DB 5
- "Temple Time," ML #191, DB 5
- "Jewels on Going Slow and Resting in the Lord," ML #2939, Lifelines 21
- "Please Pray for Mama's Eyes and Strength," ML #3085:19–24, Lifelines 23
- "The Spiritual Health Revolution," ML #3184:70–75, GN 789
- "Cast Your Cares on Him," ML #3242, GN 844
- "Leadership Lessons, Part 2," ML #3385, GN 982
- "Gems and Jewels, Part 1," ML #3416:40–60, 153–157, GN 1003
- FJWL 1: #381, 447, 449, 451
- FJWL 2: #387, 395
- "Resting in the Lord," MOP 2
- "Relaxation and Free Time," Word Topics

Challenging That:

37. (Dad:) It's always a test of faith to face an impossible situation, but there's nothing like seeing the impossible become possible! So if you think there's no way you can possibly fit in the time you need to relax and take a break, ask the Lord to intervene and help you. Remember that if something is the Lord's will—and taking time off certainly is—He'll make a way! He'll give you a plan, and He'll do the miracles necessary to make that plan work!

Avoiding Mistakes!

The issue:

38. (Mama:) A fair few young people today have the attitude of, "I don't want to do what my parents—or the FGAs—did!" Or, "I don't want to make the same mistakes they did." This is a problem, because it can take you right out of God's will when you go to the opposite extreme in various areas of your life in order to prove that you know better, or to not "screw up" like your parents or others did.

God's mind on the matter:

39. (Jesus:) Your parents made mistakes; there's no denying that. Every human being makes mistakes. Your parents' generation of the Family—as dedicated as they were to Me and as wonderful as they were in many ways—were still human. They were also young when they joined the Family, and in many cases didn't have a whole lot of "life experience." They knew enough to know they hated the System and they wanted to build something new, a whole new world and society, and that's exactly what they did.

40. Because they were building a whole new society, a communal one based on the principles of the Word, completely different and separate and called out from the world, they didn't necessarily have many points of reference. They had the sample of the Early Church in the Bible, and that was pretty much it, and the specifics and details given of how the Early Church did many things are very sketchy, or simply not mentioned.

41. Your parents didn't have an example to look to or relate to as far as how to live communally to the degree that the Family today does; how to live the Law of Love and how to handle sexual and personal relationships wisely; how to train and rear and raise and teach children completely outside the norms and boundaries of the world's educational system. So, considering that, they did pretty well. And, at the same time, they set a precedent, a pattern, an example that you can look to.

42. In some ways you tend to look at them as a pattern for what not to do. That's

usually because you're too focused on one or two aspects of their lives—the ones where they made what seem to you to be their most outstanding mistakes. If you would step back a bit, though, and look at the bigger picture, you should practically fall down on your knees and thank them, because without their having gone before you to pioneer the way, you would have to pioneer all aspects of building your own new society. You would be starting from scratch with no real reference point.

43. As much as you might think some of your parents' mistakes cost you, and as much as you think your life might have been made more difficult by those mistakes, in general, if they had not done what they did, if they had not pioneered, forsaken all, followed Me, and thrown their all into building this new called-out society, it would be much more difficult for you today.

44. You of the second generation are now, on the average, around the same age as your parents were when they were building the Family. Many of you are considerably older than they were at that time. Imagine if you were trying to do what they did. Don't you think you'd make a lot of mistakes? The fact is, you do still make plenty of mistakes on your own. And if you didn't have their examples to refer to—in both the things they got right and the things they got wrong—you'd make a whole lot more.

45. A wise man learns from the mistakes of others! There are a lot of things you can learn from your parents' and others' mistakes. But, don't forget that there is also plenty you can learn on the positive side, and so much that you have learned already that you don't always even realize you've "learned" from them.

46. It's not like the society of the Family just "happened" and came together like the "big bang" theory. Just as the universe didn't come together from nothing, neither did the Family come together from nothing. There wasn't always clear direction or organization or perfect planning; nevertheless, your parents put their lives, hearts, blood, sweat, and tears into building this Family—out of love for Me and obedience to Me. Most of their mistakes, or what

you would consider mistakes, were not made out of any kind of malice or ill intention. Rather you could attribute many, or most of them, to lack of experience, to youthful overzealousness, or to simple human nature. And those are things that, quite frankly, you are not above.

47. Maybe you won't make the same mistakes they did, but maybe you'll make worse ones. Take care not to get so focused on the one or two "bugaboos" that your parents "screwed up in" that you're determined not to—whether it's issues having to do with their personal relationships, the way they raised or disciplined their children, or things having to do with their service to Me, or whatever the case. If you are wise, you will learn from the input of others, but your primary focus will not be on "what not to do" with your lives, relationships, families, children, and ministries. Rather, your focus will be on: "What is God's highest will for me and how can I fulfill it?"

48. If your heart and spirit are focused on Me, if you're determined to find out what My will is for your life and live it, if you're hearing from Me and getting your instructions from Me, those are far greater safeguards to "getting things right" in the overall scheme of life than is the arm-of-the-flesh approach of, "I'm determined that I won't make the same mistakes my parents did." That's really quite small-minded and limited compared to the world vision I want you to have! That attitude is hindering many of you from fully seeking out and embracing My will for you. It's a distraction at least. In its worst case, it is a source of major self-righteousness and pride—this big "beam" in your eye that is keeping you from seeing where things are really at.

49. Let go of the past and embrace the future! Don't get so hung up in analyzing your own past and your parents' past and the Family's past that you forget where you're going now, today! I have a plan for you—for you as the Family overall, as the youth of the Family, as individuals, and as families. Your hearts and focus need to be on what My will is for you today, not what you think was My will for your parents and how or when or why they missed it on some points. If you are following My guidance in the

New Wine, if you are hearing from Me, if you are obeying what I show you, then your life will turn out right. I will see to it that you don't make mistakes that will harm and hinder your service for Me or that of your loved ones or children.

50. Maybe some of your relationships won't turn out so great—and maybe you'll think, "That's just like my parents." Or maybe you'll have problems with raising your children—and, again, in some cases you'll be tempted to think, "That's just like my parents." But don't let that freak you out or destabilize you. You're going to make some mistakes, and some of them might be similar to what your parents did, but that doesn't mean that your life is a failure, or that you didn't learn anything from their mistakes, or that your life is hopelessly screwed up. You've got to get your eyes away from being so focused on the circumstances, and you've got to look up to Me and toward My vision for you.

51. I haven't called you to a life of self-improvement. My commission to you isn't to cultivate the perfect marriage and build a perfect family environment for your children. I do want you to be improving and growing—physically and spiritually; I do want you to have loving, fruitful marriages, and I do want you to be giving your children the best you can. But your actual calling, your vocation, your life's work, is that of a disciple and missionary, and that's what's most important.

52. That's what was most important to your parents, and, despite the mistakes they made, that's why there is a Family at all and why it's still around today. It's because they were dedicated to the cause and they were radical, sometimes fanatical, about serving Me. I honor that and bless it. I know mistakes were made, and sometimes those were a result of overzealousness, but I'd still rather have the wildfire than no fire at all.

53. My ideal, My goal, for you of the second generation is that you can benefit from both the good and the bad in what your parents did. If you can retain that dedication, zeal, fire, and fervor they had, and combine it with the wisdom, temperateness, and prayerfulness that they have learned through their mistakes,

then you will indeed be an improvement on the stock, and you will take the Family further than it has ever gone before.

54. A balance is of the essence! And that balance isn't found by trying to go way over in the opposite direction from what your parents did. That balance is found by seeking to learn from both the good and bad in their example, and to pray for and emulate the good and ask Me for counsel and guidance so that you can avoid the bad. What it all comes down to in the end is seeking Me, hearing My voice, and obeying what I show you is My will for you!



55. (Jesus:) Your parents didn't make a mistake in obeying and following Me, even when I led them to do unorthodox things. They may have made some mistakes along the way, but their obedience to follow where I was leading was not a mistake. They were willing to allow Me to smash their idols, mindsets, and "set" rules. Had they not, you wouldn't be here and My will would have not been accomplished. Neither will My will be accomplished if you close yourself off like this—at least not by you.

56. I do not intend for the children of the children of David to go to the extreme opposite of the way their parents did things. This wrong attitude is deadly dangerous. The pattern goes like this:

57. First you slap blame on your parents, saying, "Our parents were wrong, they were negligent, they blew it." When you let that attitude take root, then it grows into, "I'll never do that." But it doesn't stop there. Pretty soon you'll find yourself going to the opposite extreme, and before you know it you're doing everything opposite of what your parents did—just for the sake of being opposite. This narrow-minded train of thought can seep into every area of your life, and you become closed. You lock yourself into a rigid set of unbending behavior patterns that you've created for yourself. Then your usefulness can only go so far, because you close yourself off to Me and My will for you, and in so doing you become handicapped.

58. If you follow this trend, you will miss out. You will miss My will. You will miss blessings, you will miss getting the job done, and you will fail. If you insist on remaining “set” on doing things a certain way, then you are trapped, you’ve become an old bottle. You’ve become a slave to a set way of behavior that you’ve forged in your own mind. You’re bound to the fact that you must do things totally different than your parents did. This is not freedom.

59. Allowing yourself to get so “set” on things is dangerous—because the minute you do, you close yourself off to Me. The only right way is My way. You will only improve things if you follow My plan for today, not your own personalized plan that won’t allow you to really think outside the box. Thinking outside the box is not synonymous across the board with doing the “opposite” of what your parents did. You’ve got to follow Me and what I tell you to do today, even if I tell you to do something similar to what your parents did.

60. You limit yourself the minute you decide you can “never” do something. You join the club of the my-mind-is-made-up, don’t-confuse-me-with-the-facts people. This is when you become “old.” Being old or young in spirit has nothing to do with your physical age. You might be young in the flesh, but if this is your mindset, in spirit you’re an old, crotchety, stiff, unbending dud. Is this what you want to be like?

61. David gave your parents the “Follow God” message, and these words are just as applicable today as they’ve ever been—even more so. This message is for you. And this should be the only criteria you have. The only “set” idea you should have is to be open to follow Me and hear from Me fresh every day and not make a move without My direction.

62. Thinking you have to do things totally different than your parents just to prove you won’t make the same mistakes is a sign of immaturity. It’s part of the childish things that I ask you to put away when you become a man or a woman. It not only limits Me, it builds up walls around yourself. This is exactly what the Devil wants. In this way, he’s getting you to close yourself off.

63. If you want to advance and change things—for My sake, your sake, the Family’s sake and the world’s sake—follow Me. You’ve got to follow My plan for today; nothing else will work—not the exact way your parents did it, and not your own set personalized plan. You’ve got to follow My plan; you can’t follow your own wisdom, your own mind, your own understanding.

64. What if I ask you to do something your parents did? So what! What is that to you? Will you still follow Me? It’s My business, and only I have the answers. Will you trust that I know best? Will you follow Me?

65. The best criteria you can have is to stay open to My lead daily. I’m a moving God! Be open to change! Be open to My lead! Never get so set in your ways that you’re not willing to change! Never “set” your mind on anything other than explicitly following where I guide you. This is radical!

In summary:

66. (Mama:) Of course those of the first generation made mistakes. But mistakes are something that you, the second generation of the Family, are not above. You might not make the same mistakes as your parents did, but you have made mistakes in the past and you will continue to make mistakes in the future; mistakes are a part of life. But if you aim to lessen the number of mistakes you make, some of the most effective ways to do this are: Finding out what the Lord’s will is for your life, obeying the New Wine, hearing from the Lord in prophecy, and doing what He shows you.

67. Don’t focus on “what not to do” to avoid making the same mistakes others did in the past, but focus on finding out what God’s highest will is for you today. It’s immature and unwise to model your life on avoiding the mistakes that others have made in the past or their actions in the present. The Lord works differently in everyone’s life, and He works things out for the best for those who love Him. You should be so grateful for the sacrifices your parents—and others—made for you personally, as well as all that they gave to make the Family what it is today.

Key promise:

68. Regardless of past circumstances, events, or situations, unleash the power of the keys of wisdom, which will enable you to make wise and prayerful decisions that will keep you in the center of My will today.

Dig deeper:

- "The Challenge to Change," ML #2680:2–9, Lifelines 19
- "Getting Back on Track for Jesus, Part 3," ML #2892:82–89, Lifelines 21
- "Be Encouraged," ML #3047:69–170, Lifelines 23
- "How to Recognize and Get Rid of Bitterness," ML #3170:25–62, Lifelines 24
- "Issues, Part 2," ML #3297:36–62, GN 894
- "Issues, Part 5," ML #3322:25–35, GN 925
- "Issues, Part 16," ML #3450:102–126, GN 1040
- "Criticism," Word Topics

Challenging That:

69. (*Dad:*) Regardless of the mistakes those of the older generation may have made, one thing you can't fault them for is their great love and zeal to follow the Lord—and me—no matter what the price. The Family wouldn't be where it is today had they not been willing to follow the Lord, mistakes and all. You young people are in a privileged position today because of the faith and obedience of the older generation. You should respect and love your parents all the more because of their tenacity and faith to keep going even when things weren't going great, and in spite of their shortcomings and problems.

**Relationships, Separations,
and Remarriages**
The issue:

70. (*Mama:*) It's not uncommon to hear negative comments from some young people regarding their parents'—or other FGAs'—past relationships, separations, and remarriages.

Some of you, even though your perspective is very limited, feel fairly free to judge such situations, voice your opinions, and blame the problems or mistakes on FFing, the Law of Love, or the FGAs' obedience to the Word, or even on the Word itself. This leads to drawing wrong, non-Word-based conclusions and closing yourself off to accepting some of these situations as God's will.

God's mind on the matter:

71. (*Jesus:*) Many FGAs were FFERs in obedience to the moves of My Spirit. I called them to witness in this radical, unorthodox manner, and they obeyed. Most FGAs also obeyed in fulfilling the sexual aspect of living the Law of Love in their Homes. This was another move of My Spirit to bring about the anointing of love and unity within their Homes—and, again, they obeyed.

72. It's probably not necessary for Me to tell you that it wasn't all a bed of roses. There were battles fought and sacrifices made in order to fulfill My will. Many FGAs married and divorced along the way, and some of you SGAs think this is a direct result of their obedience to FF and live the sexual aspect of the Law of Love. You feel that most jealousy battles, sharing battles, loneliness battles, and broken families, etc., during that time, were caused by FFing and sexual sharing.

73. That's not the case! Jealousy is an attack of the Enemy, and you can be plagued by it whether you're FFing or living the Law of Love or not. FFing has long been terminated, but jealousy is still alive in many marriages today. Marriages are still breaking up today—both FGA and SGA—and you can't blame that on FFing. And many of you can't even blame it on living the sexual aspect of the Law of Love, because many of you are not living it.

74. There are many reasons that contribute to relationship problems, separations, and marriage terminations. It's too simplistic and too easy a scapegoat to say that your parents' marriage broke up because they FFed or had sex outside of their marriage. It's too easy to say, "My parents divorced, so I'm not going to have sex outside of my marriage." It sounds like

a great reason to excuse yourself from obeying My will, but it's the wrong reason. It's just not the case and not the way it really is. There are many marriages that didn't break up that were FFing and living the Law of Love—including the sexual aspect of it.



75. (Jesus:) When your parents heard and received the truths of the Law of Love, it set their hearts and spirits aflame. It went against so much that they had heard and believed and thought when growing up, and their whole mindset had to change drastically. It was a step-by-step process, a learning and growing process. They were part of a creation of a whole new society and lifestyle. In some cases, it took people a long time to come around to receiving the truth of the Law of Love. In other cases, they misunderstood or misapplied it. In other cases, they tried very hard to do things right and be loving and prayerful, but they ended up with a broken marriage.

76. Broken marriages in your parents' generation were in some cases the result of mistakes made directly related to the Law of Love and not living it right. However, there were just as many broken marriages that would have ended up that way if there had been no such thing as the Law of Love. And there were some marriages that were in fact held together longer because of the Law of Love. The Law of Love isn't the issue here. The issue is your fear that because of the way Family society operates, and possibly because of the Law of Love, or possibly just because of "genes," that your marriage or relationship won't last, or that you'll be hurt, or end up separated or remarried.

77. Some broken relationships, separations, and remarriages didn't bear good fruit—especially when parents and children were separated. Sometimes it was the case that the relationship itself should in fact have stayed together and both partners should have fought harder for it. In other cases, the actual deed of separation or remarriage was the right thing to do, but there were things about the surrounding circumstances, the aftereffects, that could have been handled better and differently, more wisely and gently.

78. There are so many different situations and people that this is almost an impossible topic to address in a generalized way. There is so much insight that could be given about every particular situation. Something that you would be wise to do, if you haven't already, is to ask Me about your personal situation—or rather, your parents' personal situation, or whatever personal situation is getting your goat and bothering you and making you feel like you have to take control of your life to avoid getting into a similar situation. Maybe you should do some things differently. But maybe you're seeing some things wrong. Can you accept as a starting point that it's possible you don't see things clearly or understand the whole story?

79. Maybe your parents—or the FGAs involved—are or aren't available to discuss this with. Maybe they are or aren't still in the Family. Maybe their attitude is or isn't right about the situation. There are so many factors. If you can talk with them about it, and if that helps, then in some cases that would be a good idea. But in any situation, it can't hurt—and in fact it can help a lot—to come to Me for My take.

80. Maybe the thing you see as the "big mistake" wasn't actually a mistake. Maybe there was no mistake, or maybe the actual mistake was something completely different than what you assume it is. In many cases your memory of things that happened in the past is vague, or unclear, or based on feelings you had as an immature child or teen. That doesn't make them any less "real," but it certainly does have potential to make them quite imbalanced, incomplete, or one-sided. Think about that. Ponder and pray.

81. What are your issues? What are you basing your perspective on? Your childhood memory? The memory or comment of an embittered parent who never got over a relationship gone wrong? Hearsay or second- or third-hand information from others who were around at the time? Do you really even know what happened? And more than that, do you know why? Are you God, and do you see the heart, mind, thoughts, and intents of every person? No, you don't! But I do.

82. So if you're struggling with accepting what happened in your parents' lives, in particular as concerns their relationship or marriage and how it may have gotten messed up, or was broken up, or had or yet has some major complications, please bring it to Me. Don't let it become an automatic "hitching post" or "compass" for your life, in the sense that you throw your focus into not doing what they did in your relationships and/or your marriage. Maybe there are things to learn from what they did, and that you shouldn't do those things. But maybe you're seeing it wrong. Ask Me, and I'll show you. Either way, I want you to learn something from the situation.

83. Maybe I want to teach you something from their mistake, so you can see what not to do. Maybe I want you to simply learn forgiveness and mercy and compassion. Maybe I want you to develop insight and understanding that will help you in your own life, either in a similar or even very different situation than that of your parents or the adults in question. You've got to be a little more open than you are, though, to get that kind of insight from Me. You've got to start off on a premise of humility, of acknowledging that maybe you're wrong, maybe you don't have a full picture—and then come before Me to get that picture, that insight, that understanding.

84. You may know the end result, but not know all that led up to it. You may know the details of what led up to it, but you may not realize what that final straw was. Or, you may even know all the details, all the background, and all about the result, but be missing the "why" of what was in their hearts and minds, and even how I was speaking to them. Whether it's one thing or another, you've got to admit that you're not God, you don't know everything, you don't understand everything! The potential for you to misjudge a situation is greater than your potential to judge it properly. That applies to your outlook on your parents' relationships, and it also applies to a lot of other things.

85. Be wise, take heed to My Words, and be not foolish judges. Do not be hasty to condemn others, because if you do, then unto you is the greater condemnation.

In summary:

86. (Mama:) There are many reasons for separations, relationship "snags," and remarriages. In the past, with those of the first generation, there were mistakes made, of course, because no one is perfect—just as mistakes are made in relationships and marriages today. But not every separation or remarriage or relationship problem was a mistake. Just because something was different, difficult, or tumultuous, doesn't necessarily mean it was wrong or not God's will. The Lord often uses relationship battles to teach valuable lessons. Complicated or difficult situations are sometimes His will, just as separations and remarriages are sometimes His will.

87. None of us are in a position to judge, or to use situations in the past as an excuse for not obeying the Lord's will for us, or living the Word as He shows us to in our relationships/marriages today. If we have questions about problems or situations in the past, it's our responsibility to hear from the Lord and receive His insight and understanding. If we draw our own conclusions, they will most likely be wrong.

Key promise:

88. I will give you the strength you need to live the radical truths of My Word in your relationship or marriage if you depend on Me and call on the keys, and through your obedience you will be blessed and happier in every area of your life.

Dig deeper:

- "Golden Victories," ML #3162:202, 205–207, GN 768
- "Living the Lord's Law of Love, Part 5," ML #3205:69–78, GN 808
- "Are You a Disciple?" ML #3365:200–275, GN 963
- "Keep the Faith," ML #3459:69–76, GN 1044

Challenging That:

89. (Dad:) Did you ever think that your idea of "perfect" might not be the Lord's idea of "perfect"? Perhaps in His eyes the "perfect"

situation for someone to grow and learn lessons in is a less than ideal one.



90. (Dad:) Mistakes—and the resultant lessons—are an integral part of the whole learning process, and are part of what give you understanding, compassion, and depth of character.

Abandon Your Own Will!

The issue:

91. (Mama:) The majority of our first generation raised large families in obedience to the Lord. But some of you young people today look negatively on the sample of the first generation, especially in regard to bearing and raising children. You focus on the sacrifices, the hardships, the difficulties, and the hard work, instead of the benefits, the blessings, the rewards, and the gifts of the spirit that those same parents received for their many labors of love in fulfilling the Lord's will in their parenting. This leads to the attitude of not wanting to have children, or at least not wanting larger families, because you just don't think it's worth it to trust the Lord explicitly like the first generation did.

God's mind on the matter:

92. (Dad:) Your parents had a number of kids because they believed and obeyed God! They were not deluded into thinking that "family planning" and "taking control of their lives" were right. They weren't deluded into the disobedience of this world. They obeyed and followed God wherever He led them! They entrusted their lives fully to God, and look at the tremendous fruit that was borne.

93. I dare say that the Family today is stagnating because so many of you young people, and even some of you FGAs, are getting into a habit of doing what you want instead of what God wants. Who the hell are you to tell God how to run your life? How on earth do you know what to do with your life? Who made you more knowledgeable than God? "Can a man be found more righteous than God?"

Who are you to be making terms and conditions for God? You owe your life to Him in 100% servitude; that means His wish should be your command, no matter what He chooses to do in your life or how many kids He wants you to have.

94. If God wants you to have ten children, then praise God! Praise Him for making you a parent and do the very best job you possibly can! Amen? If He's asked you to be a single, then praise the Lord and be the best single you can be. If He's only given you a few children, then praise God and make them into the best disciples you possibly can.

95. All this business of, "I know what is best for my life," and, "I'm not going to screw up like my parents did," is a bunch of malarkey! It's absolute shit from the pit! It's the direct voice of Satan, and you're obeying Satan rather than God. Is he your god? Is he the one you serve? What has he ever done for you? Did he give his life for you? Did he save you and give you eternal life? Then what the hell are you obeying him for?

96. God damn the Devil! God damn his lies! If God wants you to have children, then for God's sake and the Family's sake have them! Amen? Some of you who have been so into this "control your destiny" nonsense should take a good look at where you stand in relation to your discipleship. I don't care what the excuses are. I don't care what the "logical" and "reasonable" explanations are. You know in your heart if you're obeying the Lord or not. You know if you're 100% yielded to the Lord or not, and I hope to God that you can get down on your prayer bones and find out, if you don't already know.

97. This Family cannot go forward with a bunch of "me first" young people. If you want to be "me first" about your service for the Lord, then get out to a church where that's all they do. But for those who are going to be 100% disciples for the Lord, you're going to have to abandon your own will! You're going to have to throw your will completely into the Lord's hands and take His plan instead.

98. You're not serving Jesus to do your own thing! You're not here to serve yourself!

That's not what discipleship is about. It's about taking up your cross and dying daily—sacrificing, giving, and “hurting” so that others can live. It's not about what you want for your life. Your life is dead and hid with Christ Jesus. You've turned your life over to Jesus, and He is the One running it now. So if He chooses to bless you with His priceless treasures of children, then for God's sake don't murmur about it! And for God's sake, don't be negative and critical about those who have chosen to trust the Lord for their lives.

99. You who are like this are going to get to Heaven and realize that you only lived a fraction of your potential, because you were not willing to give up your own damn idea of what your life should be like in order to follow Jesus all the way. Enough of this damnable lie of the Devil! I'm sick of it! I've heard excuse after excuse after excuse! I'm through! No more! You find out what God wants you to do and you obey it!—Or you're not a 100% disciple in my book.

100. If you haven't got the conviction and enough love for Jesus that you're willing to forsake your own way, then for God's sake and the future of this Family's sake, go to the open arms of the church Christians who live by the code of compromise. But don't stick around polluting others with your rotten unyieldedness. Amen? You need to learn to trust God more! You need to develop a deeper, more personal, and more intimate relationship with Jesus, and believe Romans 8:28 without reservation.

101. Do you believe that God is in control and He'll work everything out for His good? Do you believe that your life is not your own? Do you believe that you are bought with a price? If so, then glorify God in your body and in your spirit! And if that means having children, then take the plunge and find your place as one of God's greats, one of His parents.

102. Those of you who have been putting down and maligning those who have trusted the Lord and who have had large families, God help you. You've been like the mockers, the unbelievers in Noah's day who all drowned for their unbelief. If you don't

believe, then why are you here? Get out! Get out now, please! Otherwise you're a drag and a drain on those who are doing God's will. And those of you who have obeyed, my hat's off to you! God will bless you for withstanding the disdain of not only the world but even some of your own brothers and sisters who were meant to be supporting you but have so unlovingly criticized you for following God.

103. Have I said enough? I hope so. I hope you never again criticize those who have obeyed God. I hope you get your life in order and find out what the Lord's will is for you and obey it. I'm tired of hearing about this! Trust God! And if you can't, then for God's sake keep your mouth shut and don't malign those who do. Don't tear others' faith down and try to pull them off the wall. Pray for them, admire them, love them, and do all you can to help them. Amen?

104. Put your life in God's hands and see what He does with it. There's nothing more thrilling than giving your life completely to Jesus and entrusting your service into His hands. He'll use you like never before. He'll turn your life into something to marvel at, and you will receive your full reward when you get to Heaven. Maybe some of you only want half your reward; maybe you're willing to settle for a dull crown rather than one that shines like the brightness of the firmament. But that's not the crown that I wanted, and you won't settle for that kind of crown either if you're a true child of David. We want the best! We want the gold! We want the full rewards! If you don't, that's fine with me, but don't get in the way of others reaching for that crown. Amen?

In summary:

105. (Mama:) Being a 100% disciple means finding out what the Lord wants you to do and then doing it!—And that includes His will when it comes to having children and raising a family, whether it's large or small. The Family is stagnating because too many of us are in the habit of doing what we want instead of what the Lord wants. That's a sobering thought, and should make each of us desperate to discover and obey the Lord's plan for us in

every area of our lives—including the area of bearing and raising children. It’s foolishness to think that we can run our lives, when He knows what we need better than we ever could.

Key promise:

106. The keys can change your outlook on the past, the present, and the future, and this new outlook will give you the faith and conviction to follow Me and obey My Word.

Dig deeper:

- “Train Up a Child,” ML #1142:1–11, Vol.11
- “Are You Willing to Sign a Blank Sheet of Paper,” ML #1927, DB 2
- “Submit Yourself to God,” ML #2224, DB 8
- “Go for the Gold,” ML #2961:1–13, 46–83, 172–204, Lifelines 22
- “Mama’s Love Story, Part 1,” ML #2992:86–89, Lifelines 22
- “The Year of the Bottom Line,” ML #3176:76–81, GN 781
- “Living the Lord’s Law of Love, Part 5,” ML #3205:145–148, GN 808
- “A Changed Man,” ML #3345:13–18, GN 939
- “Renewal: A Gift of Love to the Children,” ML #3491:44–49, GN 1075
- FJWL 2: #284
- “Willfulness and Rebelliousness,” Word Topics

Challenging That:

107. (Dad:) It’s the way of the world to say, “I know better! My way is best!” In fact, I’m going to go further and say it’s the way of Satan to say “I know better.” That’s what he’s been doing since the beginning. Do you know better than God? Do you know better than the Lord’s plan for you? Do you know how to run your life better than the Lord does? Those are serious questions you’re going to have to ask yourself. Are you doing what you think is best or are you doing the Lord’s will? Are you going your way or the Lord’s way? What are you doing today to obey and sacrifice and follow the Lord?

Recognized Marriages and Traditional Weddings

The issue:

108. (Mama:) The adoption of the System’s ways regarding marriage and weddings seems to have crept into the Family. There’s the mindset of only recognizing a couple as married if they’re married legally, with the System’s “stamp of approval” upon their union. Some people also feel, and advocate, that everything regarding marriages and weddings has to be done “by the book,” down to the tiniest details. For example: You shouldn’t have children before you get married, you need to get expensive engagement and marriage rings, you’re not really married until you have a big wedding or it’s officiated by a minister or priest, etc.

God’s mind on the matter:

109. (Dad:) What is the purpose for a marriage? Why has God advocated the union of man and woman? Believe me, it wasn’t so that it would become a private little “me and thee” union between two people. The purpose of a marriage, as God sees it, is to create a team that is bound together as a threefold cord with Him, that will help to further His work and His purpose. Marriage is a thing of the spirit; it’s the union of hearts, minds, lives, and love. But in some cases, with some of you, the traditionalism of marriage has set in, the stigma that a marriage is not “real” unless it’s done the way the System does it. And that’s not right, beloved!

110. Some weddings—which are the precursor to the marriage adventure—simply lack the Spirit of God, and reflect more the selfish concept of the union of two people, without even much reverence for the Lord or the inclusion of Him as the ultimate centerpiece of the wedding—and thus, the marriage. The wedding sets the tone for the marriage itself!—Or if you celebrate your union after you’ve been married for some time, the wedding should be a presentation and witness to the beauty and spiritual strength of your marriage! That’s why it’s so important that it carries the right spirit, glorifies the Lord, and promotes discipleship and your service to the Lord!

111. Worldly-type weddings leave out some very key elements, such as your commitment as disciples, your marriage to our Husband, and your union of spirit with your Family as a whole. In a System wedding, you vow to love and care for the person you're marrying; but one thing that is meant to be different in the Family is that you're married to everyone. That's what it means to be One Wife—all married to the Lord and married to one another. But some of these pompous, selfish, exclusive ceremonies and weddings negate all that; they veil the true spirit of what marriage is all about. In these cases it's all about conformity and seeming "normal" to your family and friends.

112. A wrong attitude that some of you young people have is in using your weddings and marriages to show that you're smarter than your parents and others because you're doing it the "right" way, the "normal" way. You don't want to be lumped in with the unconventional ways some of your parents married, or how they conducted their weddings. But in trying to be different and more "correct," as you see it, you've lost the spirit the Lord wants portrayed in your wedding, and which He wants you to take with you into your marriage.

113. Take a look at some of your parents: Did they have less effective marriages because they lacked the pomp and ceremony of a traditional wedding? Not at all. In fact, some of them were never even officially or legally married, and yet many of them have had good, successful marriages, because they were blessed by the Lord and had His "certificate of marriage" in hand.

114. This little talk isn't just directed at you young people, it's to all of you who marry. Over the years, there has been a subtle creeping in of these System attitudes, which are not in accordance with the Word. If you want to know what a marriage is really meant to be about, go back and read what I wrote in "One Wife." That applies not only to how you live your married life, but also what message and spirit is portrayed in your marriage ceremony that takes place at your wedding.

115. Getting so stuck on doing things the way the System does them—starting with the

expensive engagement ring, followed by all the rigmarole of secular traditionalism of a wedding, is an influence of the world in your life. You're conforming to the ways of the world, and by limiting the Lord's power you're lessening the spiritual beauty and strength of your wedding—which will then affect your marriage! This is not wise.

116. This is not to say that all weddings that have traditional elements in them are bad; I'm not saying that at all. There have been some more traditional weddings that have been a beautiful sample of the spirit of a marriage as the Lord sees it, when couples openly declare their marriage vows not only to one another, but more importantly declare their love for the Lord and their union with Him as their Husband.

117. When a wedding is an avenue to lift up the Lord and His Spirit of love as One Wife, one body, one Family, that's what makes the difference. Or if the Lord can use a wedding as a witness and testimony to relatives, friends, and family, then that's another instance where a more traditional ceremony is used for the right purpose. But that's not the norm. More and more the selfish, non-Word-based "me and thee" spirit has crept into your weddings—which then bleeds over into your marriages. This does not contribute to the unity of the Family or promote the Lord and His love and ways.

118. When it comes to weddings—and how you live out your marriages—don't get lost in the hype of System traditionalism portrayed in movies or in what you see around you. Let the Lord's Spirit be your guide. Remember that you are married to Jesus and all of your brothers and sisters in the Family, and your wedding—and marriage—should be a testimony of this unity of spirit.

In summary:

119. (Mama:) There's nothing wrong with those in the Family getting married legally. Often it's very necessary for legal purposes. But the problem is when you have the attitude that you're only married once the System deems you married and when you've done everything the "proper" way. The problem is if you feel that

the official slip of legal paper is what “seals the deal,” and that you have to jump through every hoop the System’s way.

120. Marriage is commemorated and sealed with the Lord’s blessing. He’s the One Who joins you together as one, and He’s the only One Who will keep you together as a strong team. If you want or need to get legally married and the Lord shows you to, that’s just fine, and it’s probably a good idea in many cases. But there’s a whole lot more to marriage than signing a legal document or having a fancy wedding. Marriage is a matter of the spirit.

Key promise:

121. The keys of revolution and freedom will give you the faith to follow My perfect plan and will for you, even if it goes against the worldly traditions, attitudes, perspectives, conventions, expectations, and the status quo.

Dig deeper:

- “Public Relations,” ML #142:36, Vol.1
- “Wonderful Wave of Worldwide Witnessing,” ML #154:61–69, Vol.2
- “One Wife” ML #249, DB 5
- “Real Love—Sharing All, Even Though Married,” ML #1395, DB 1
- “2Thessalonians 1 & 2,” ML #1509:35–42, GN Book 7
- “Answers to Your Questions, No.8,” ML #1566:106, GN Book 11
- “Loving Jesus, Part 6,” ML #3032:30–44, GN 664
- “Goals for 1998,” ML #3160:165–173, Lifelines 24
- “The Beauties, Promises, and Rewards of Married Love,” ML #3194:41–116, GN 799
- “Living the Lord’s Law of Love, Part 11,” ML #3211, GN 814

Challenging That:

122. (Dad:) A marriage certificate won’t do a thing to actually hold a marriage together. It’s the Lord’s blessing, the Lord’s Spirit, and the support of the greater Family that forms the glue that keeps a Family marriage together. Use the System when you need to, but don’t let it use you, or bind you, or keep you from being

revolutionary and free to do God’s will! Don’t get bogged down by worldly conventions and traditions and attitudes and perspectives—in either your wedding or your marriage! God’s Spirit and His love aren’t bound by the ways of the world, so why should you be?

Memorable Weddings

The issue:

123. (Mama:) A trend seems to have developed within the Family of modeling our weddings and marriage ceremonies according to the world’s ways. More and more couples are opting to have extravagant weddings with all the frills—fancy white gowns and suits, bridesmaids and best men, elaborate decorations, expensive food and beverages, church-like services, etc. It seems to be becoming the norm to tailor our Family weddings after the System’s traditions, which, besides lacking the spirit, can also be expensive and time consuming, even if much of it is provisioned.

124. The issue at hand is not the commemoration of the marriage itself—even if it includes a ceremony and party, special clothes, a nice photo-op time, and good food and drinks. The problem lies in automatically opting to do things the System’s way when the Lord may very likely have a better way.

God’s mind on the matter:

125. (Jesus:) As the line is drawn more clearly between the world and My children, with the days becoming darker, I want to make My children stand out in many ways—in fact, in all ways—as being nonconformists, not stuck in the box the System has created for its own purposes.

126. A lot of the time, people choose these big, fancy, System-type weddings because it’s just easier in some ways to do it the way they’ve seen others in the world do it. It takes more work in some ways to celebrate the joining of two souls in a unique and Spirit-filled way, but this is all a part of the “school of the prophets” you’re in. It’s a part of the “ask Me everything” training I want you to continue to advance in.

127. With a System-style wedding, everything has a symbolism. From the white dress, to the gold rings, to the rice throwing, it all has some little meaning rooted in tradition. So one way to have a satisfying wedding that doesn't resemble the weddings of the Flatlander traditionalists is to ask Me for new symbolisms for everything.

128. I can tell you what color I would like you to wear and explain the special meaning of the color. I can give meaning to the decorations, to the food and drinks, to the festivities, and to any little ceremonies you do together. Your wedding can be a time of celebrating not only the union of two souls, but also the freedom of My Spirit, the beauty of the Law of Love and the One Wife vision, the wonder of My Words, the alive, refreshing, joyful excitement you can experience when you partake of My 5D realm and leave behind the 2D realm of the Flatlander.

129. Rather than trivializing your wedding, in a sense, by making it just like “every other wedding” in the world, you can pull down instructions and ideas and inspirations for a unique, out-of-this-world celebration that nobody has ever seen or heard of before! It doesn't have to be fancy, but it can be unforgettable. All that you do on your big day can have special meaning that you keep cherished in your hearts as you move into your married years, your years of becoming parents, the challenges on the road ahead that you will face as a couple rather than as singles.

130. I don't mean that My children must add special significance and meaning to every single little detail of their wedding party; that would not be realistic. But they can and should have some special messages and meanings to some things in their wedding, and bring out the spiritual aspects as much as possible and promote the new weapons and glorify Me. There's room for personal preference as far as what those getting married would like to wear, what food they'd like to eat, what drinks they'd like to drink, and even when they have the wedding itself—but all of this should still be confirmed with Me and My blessing should be upon every detail.—That is, if My brides want My greatest blessings.

131. I am not trying to put My brides in a box. I'm trying to break them out of the box they are presently in regarding weddings and marriage ceremonies. I am trying to show them that there is more, that their weddings and marriage ceremonies could be so much better and more powerful than they presently are, if they would only include Me more, seek Me more, and be more revolutionary in their approach to the celebrations of their unions. After all, I am the head of every marriage, and as such should be consulted and have a say in things. I don't want to squelch the desires and personal preferences of My brides; I want to enhance their ideas—and, in some cases, yes, show them a better way than their own way.

132. So claim the keys of planning, of ideas, of inspiration, and of new-bottlism, to seek and to suck for My ideas in direct prophecy, and for practical ways to pull off your special day. Be a testimony of My new Bride, who has nothing to hide, who loves Me openly, who declares union with Me plainly, along with union with each other. Ask Me for special marriage vows that will hold significance for you as My unique creations, for all eternity.



133. (Jesus:) I don't call all My brides to adhere to one set of rules, or one set of symbolisms, or one set of vows. The beauty of tapping into the new weapon of prophecy is that I can make your commitment vows and the accompanying ceremony just for you. I can give you a plan and the words to say to each other that I've never given anyone else. You are unique creations of Mine, created in My image and yet with a singular touch of the divine in that you are like no other human being that was or is to come.



134. (Jesus:) It's the spirit that makes the difference. If you have the spirit and you're hearing from Me about everything—this I will bless. If you are including Me and letting Me lead the wedding, that's what will make it a day to remember. The clothing and festivities will come and go, and they're not what will make or break the wedding. It is the spirit and including Me that will make the difference, and

build memories you will cherish forever. Marriage ceremonies made in Heaven far surpass any earthly traditions.

Additional reading:

135. (Mama:) Since the Lord mentioned asking Him for special marriage vows for your wedding, and for His perfect plan, I thought you might be interested in seeing two sample ceremonies that He gave in prophecy.

136. The first one was for two SGA couples in WS who had a double wedding. These same young people also heard from the Lord about the many details regarding their wedding—from the symbolism of the color of the dresses they wore (which, by the way, weren't white), to the meaning of the flowers, to the entertainment, to the food, etc. He blessed them with new ideas and a beautiful, Spirit-filled wedding.

137. The second ceremony was received and used by another SGA couple in WS. They, too, heard from the Lord about their wedding celebration plan and got His ideas and inspirations and symbolisms, down to the tiniest specifics. It was a beautiful celebration of our Husband's love, their love, and the love and unity of the "One Wife" Family.

138. Isn't it wonderful that by tapping into the gift of prophecy you can have meaningful, happy, satisfying, wonderful weddings and marriage ceremonies with the help of our Husband and the insight that He gives? He doesn't make weddings dull or lackluster, but better and more complete than anything you could come up with on your own. He knows just how to start His brides off on the right foot in their married life for Him!

Sample marriage ceremony #1:

139. (Jesus:) The union of two lives becoming one is a marvelous thing in My sight. Your love for one another is My love, and your joining together as a team is an expression of your love and commitment to Me, as well as your commitment to one another. This I will honor and bless. As you, My brides, devote yourselves in marriage to one another, we as three shall be a holy union—one that will bear fruit

for My glory, and bring with it much happiness, many blessings, and the treasure of fulfillment and contentment.

140. My love for you has led you to this beautiful, refreshing love you share. As you join together in each other's love, and as your love is touched with My love, you will experience love as you have not known it before. For I am Love! My love is what makes your love complete. My love is perfect. My love is generous. My love is caring. My love is compassionate. My love is forgiving. If your love is blessed with My love, then your love will not die. It will not run dry. It will not get old. It will not fade. I am the Giver of true love, and it is My pleasure to bestow My love on you so that your love will grow, flourish, and blossom over and over and over again! (*Pause; the one conducting the ceremony and reading the message handed out glasses of wine to those being wed.*)

141. (Jesus continues:) Take these glasses of wine in your hands. Lift your glass and touch it to that of your love. This wine is a symbol of My covenant with you, My brides, and the sacrifice that I made for you.

142. Sip the wine now, as a symbol of your covenant with Me, your Husband, above all, and a symbol of your commitment to be the vessel of My love for each other.

143. As I laid down My life for you, I call you to lay down your life in love and care for this one by your side, the one I have joined you together with. I ask that you follow My example, that you serve one another in love, that you pledge to always put the needs of your mate above your own, to give of yourselves for one another, as well as give your lives in service for Me.

144. Take the rings now, and as you put them on, declare your pledge of love and devotion to one another. (*Pause; men put the rings on women.*)

145. (Man's pledge to the woman:) Accept this ring as a token of my love—the love that Jesus, our Lover, has blessed us with. As we stand in the presence of our mates, brothers and

sisters in spirit, I declare to you before all my gratefulness for your love, which is God's love for me. I likewise pledge to love and care for you, to love you as Jesus loves you, through good times and bad times, without conditions or limits; to be kind, caring, compassionate, forgiving, understanding, and supportive; to do what I can to help you be all that you can be, so that together as a team we will glorify our Husband and His love, and bear fruit for His Kingdom. *(Pause; women put rings on men.)*

146. (Woman's pledge to the man:) As I place this ring on your finger, I choose to commit my life and my love to you. I thank Jesus, my Lover, for making you a part of my life. You are His gift of love to me. Thank you for loving me, and letting me love you. I will do all that I can, by God's grace, to be His vessel of love to you, to love you with His love, to treat you always with unconditional kindness, gentleness, compassion, and understanding. I pledge to stand by your side, in good times and bad times, that together, as man and wife, we might be an example and witness of our Husband's love to many.

147. (Jesus continues:) I have joined you together as husband and wife. I have blessed this union already with wonderful fruit in many ways, and as you grow in love and dedication to Me and to one another, you will enter into blessing upon blessing, and go from strength to strength. You will stand together in love and in unity, and the fruit of your love will continue to bring you much joy. You may now, with a kiss, seal your vows of love to one another. *(Pause for the kiss.)*

148. (Jesus continues, speaking to all:) This is a day to celebrate love and to celebrate unity. On this day, I renew My pledge of love and devotion to you, My Bride. When I say you, I speak to each one, and to all. We are joined together in love already, as Husband and wife, and I have pledged to love you, to care for you, to be there for you, always. Never doubt My pledge, for I am faithful. I will prove this to you over and over again, as often as you will let

Me. I will be there for you always, through all of life's ups and downs, and I will remain ever close to you, whether you sail calm seas or you brave tempests.

149. You are My Bride, and I have also married you to one another, in love and in unity. As I promise to faithfully love and care for you always, I ask you to renew your pledges of love and devotion to Me, and to one another as well.

150. (Dedication from the Bride to Jesus:) We stand before You now, our Husband and our Lover, and rededicate ourselves, our lives, our love, our hearts and minds, to You. We are Yours, and are thankful and proud to be called by Your Name and to belong to You. We testify now of our love for You, and renew our pledge to love You and be faithful to You. We love You because You first loved us. Your love for us is so great, we could never return it in full. Yet we pledge to do all we can to show You, through our words, through our deeds, through our lives, how grateful we are for Your love and how much we love You.

151. As You gave all of Yourself for us, we pledge to give all of ourselves to You, and to love You, honor You, trust You, serve You, and obey You. You are the most loving, caring and faithful Husband there is, and we want to be the Bride that You deserve.

152. (Jesus continues, speaking to all:) I receive your vows of love and rededication with great rejoicing. Though we are married already, I never tire of hearing you tell Me how much you love Me. I want to hear it a hundred times a day. And I want to tell you every day, in a hundred ways, how much I love and care for you. We are one, Husband and wife, and will live and love together for eternity, glorifying love, and glorifying My Father.

153. I call you now to testify of your love toward one another and your marriage in spirit to your co-workers and friends. Turn toward your mates on your right, and on your left, and greet each one with a holy kiss on the right cheek, and then on the left. This kiss is a symbol of your bonds of love, and your com-

mitments to love one another, to stand by one another, to support one another, to care for one another, to be Me for one another.

154. As you, My brides, continue to give your love to Me and to share My love with one another, you will grow in strength, in beauty, and in love. You will shine as lights in this dark world, and together, as one, married to Me and to one another, you will burn brightly, drawing many more to Me, and into Our divine marriage. (*End of marriage ceremony script.*)



155. (A toast to Jesus, our Husband:) Thank You, our Breath, our Everything, for the special moments of life, which You take such care to prepare. For the wonder of Your attention to the tiniest details of our lives, we praise You. For the splendor of Your magnificence, we adore You. For all that is good and comely and lovely in our lives, we worship You.

156. So here's to our Blessed Redeemer. Here's to the Ultimate Matchmaker. Here's to the Dearest Person to our hearts. We lift our glasses in praise and thanksgiving to You, the One Who has done all things well. To Jesus, the Greatest Husband ever!



157. (A toast to love:) Love is a life force we cannot live without, a delightful spiritual fragrance that beautifies the world, a shimmering treasure that cannot be bought or sold. We toast to the love that we are blessed with, in all its lovely forms. And above all, we toast to the freedom our greatest Lover gives us to enjoy heavenly love with all our loved ones in our greater marriage on earth. To love!



158. (A toast to the women, from the men:) We toast to and praise our Creator for you, our wonderful women. You are Jesus' comfort for us, a tenderness we can feel and touch and see. When we are burdened, you lift the weights with the lightness of your touch, the wisdom of your words, and the assurance of your smiles.

159. When we are hungry for passion, your lips begin to feed us. You make us complete in helping us be what we need to be for

our King and Savior by your steadfastness, conviction, and determination to serve the Lord—unwavering, with all your hearts, souls, and minds, as His called-out brides of love. It is an honor to serve and give our hearts to you and Jesus. To our women!



160. (A toast to the men, from the women:) We toast to and love the things you mirror of our great Husband.—The attributes we adore in you are because you were created in His likeness and His love. You are so like Him that it causes our hearts to melt—in the way you touch us to let us know we're not alone, in the way you kiss us to let us know we are deeply loved, in the way you pray for us that gives us the strength to be the brides of Jesus that we need to be.

161. You make us reach out to be more than what we would ever be on our own. You make our hearts complete by filling it so full of Him that it overflows on others. You help us to fulfill our destiny by being like the rock of His Word and the rod of His love in our lives. It is an honor to love you and Jesus, and be so deeply loved in return. To our men! (*End of toasts—which were read at the dinner after the marriage ceremony.*)

Sample Marriage Ceremony #2:

(*Beginning song: "You're Him to Me," LJ 05.*)

162. (Jesus:) Come, My beautiful brides! Step forward! Come into the chamber of divine love! Come into the sacred, hallowed spot where I join man and woman, where I bring out the treasures of My eternal love and give to those who are willing to humble themselves before Me to be joined together.

163. I am so pleased to be here with you this lovely day. My heart is filled with joy and gladness at your decision to commit and consecrate your lives together in My service. My heart swells with pride to look upon you, My two beautiful children, My loves, My strong ones. You have grown in the faith. You have walked the path of your life bravely in searching and seeking after Me, and in doing so, I have revealed to you the treasure of your

soul mate, your companion, your strength, your helpmeet, your reward.

164. Look deep into each other's eyes and savor the knowledge that I have brought the two of you together. Indeed, I have engineered many things to make your paths cross, and from that point, to lead you to this very moment in time. You have been blessed with this gift of love. Now, as you make your declarations of love to each other, to the witnesses gathered, and to Me, you will receive the anointing of love for one another, the blessings that come from this reserved chamber that I am in, this very moment.

165. Open your hearts, open your hands, open your minds, open your spirits. The measure with which you open yourselves to Me and yield yourselves to Me is the measure with which I can give you gifts and blessings here, this day, at this time. And these gifts and hidden blessings will carry you through your lives together. At any time, you can be transported back to this very moment to be refreshed and renewed and reminded of all the heavenly power that I have given you to walk together on this new journey of life, as one, as a unified team, as lovers of Me.

166. With such a word and such a promise, enter into the chamber now and let us hear your vows. Receive My blessings and gifts upon your union, which is blessed with My Spirit as you keep your eyes ever forward, looking into My face, heeding My voice, responding to My love, and standing firm in the knowledge that I have called you, that I have put you together, and that I have a purpose and plan for your lives—a calling in these Last Days that I am moving you toward. Your union is part of this plan, and moves you one step closer to your final destiny, your ultimate future, the happiness of eternal life.

167. Come now, My loves! Let Me officiate. Let Me join you together. Let the love begin!



168. (Jesus:) If you think you have marriage figured out, then that's a sure sign you don't, because I have designed marriage to

be an endless package of surprises. Some of these surprises can make you feel ecstatic, whereas others will make you wonder, at first, why you opened the package in the first place. But you can be sure that if I have ordained you to marry, then every surprise that comes your way is designed to make your life happier, richer, and more effective for Me.



169. (Jesus:) When a man and woman bind their hearts together in holy matrimony, their hearts are bound with the golden chain of My love. The chain's links are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. This chain is tighter and stronger than all the laws, rules, or protocol of man, for it has been bound by Me, and I am Love.



170. (Jesus, on the symbolism of the blue clothing worn by those being married:) Let the blue clothing I led you to dress yourselves in today represent the ocean of My love. Let this blue represent the currents of My love and My perfect will. So many of My children worry and wonder how they will ever maneuver themselves into the path of someone who will be their life's mate. It's human nature to wonder how on earth, on a planet of billions of people, you will find a soul mate. So let this blue represent the currents of My ocean of love, and how those currents gently brought you both together. It wasn't through any planning or conniving or straining on your part, but as you allowed your lives to be moved along the ocean currents of My will, I took care that your paths would cross. It was all My doing, and as you continue to allow yourselves to be moved along the currents of My will, at My pace, you will find that I do all things well, and that the ocean of My love and the currents of My will can give you all you ever need in life.



171. (Jesus, on the symbolism of the silver rings:) Let these wedding rings represent My silver lining that is always present in your lives, no matter what the circumstances. Let these wedding rings represent the shining armor

I have given you both, as you join together to be a team in My spiritual army in these Last Days. And last but not least, let these wedding rings represent the aura of supernatural love I have placed around you as a couple. As My love shines forth from your hearts, it will warm and enlighten many in the dark days to come. *(The husband and wife kiss.)*



172. (Jesus, on the symbolism of the communion:) Just as you can stop and commune with Me, no matter where you are, so I have given you this symbolism of communion to have, in whatever situation you are in. And so I give it to you this day as well, as a symbol of your uniting with Me, your Husband, with each other, and also with your fellow brides. As you share the bread, let this represent the sweet fellowship of believers I have given to you. As you share the wine, let this represent not only how I have laid down My life for you, but how you also can lay down your lives daily for each other and for your brothers and sisters. Let this sharing of the bread and the wine symbolize your commitment to live for My Name, even when that commitment means sharing in My suffering, or being unpopular with the world.



173. *(Read excerpts of “Come Together in Love,” ML #3100:12,18,21–24,33. Then pass out little slips of paper and pens to each person in the room. During the song “My Lady,” from LJ 06, each person can receive something very short from the Lord for the person next to them.)*

(Another idea is that you could have each person’s name in a hat, and have everyone randomly pick out a slip with a name, and then pray and receive a very short message for that person in prophecy sometime after the wedding.)

(Or you could simply close your eyes and listen to the song and think about Jesus.)



(Pass around a box/bowl of chocolates, with each person taking one.)

174. (Jesus:) As you share these assorted chocolates amongst yourselves today,

remember that life’s ups and downs and joys and hardships are represented by this box of chocolates. Do you see rocks strewn amidst the chocolates? No, everything in this box is good to eat. The chocolates come in all different flavors and consistencies, but just as there are no rock-filled chocolates in the box, so I never send you rock-filled challenges in your lives.

175. You can accept each new challenge, each new experience in life as just another one of life’s chocolates. Trust Me and have faith, that whatever the challenge, whatever the difficulty—even if it’s a new unexpected flavor or a bit hard to chew—it is from My hand and will work together for good in your lives. So enjoy the life of faith I’ve given you, and even the difficult challenges I send your way, for I promise that each challenge is meant to strengthen you, to draw you closer to Me, and to fashion you into vessels of use in My household. *(Close with song: “All I Want to Be,” FTT10, and a love feast.)*

In summary:

176. (Mama:) The Lord isn’t giving a big “correction” to those who have done or are thinking of doing a traditional wedding. Instead, He’s showing us a better way. He loves marriage and the union of two of His brides under the blessing of His love, but He doesn’t want us to be conformed to the System’s ways of doing things. Instead He wants us—as His new and young bride, His new church, His children of David—to have the wild spirit of freedom that He has given, and the desire to follow His plan and let His Spirit bleed over into this aspect of our lives.

177. The point is not that you can never have a white wedding dress or wear a tuxedo, but He wants to be included and He wants His Spirit to reign supreme in every Family wedding and marriage ceremony. Your wedding is a representation of what your marriage will be like, so it’s very important that it reflects His Spirit in every way. He is the greatest Wedding Planner there is, and will give you new, unique, meaningful, and Spirit-filled wedding ideas and inspirations as you seek Him!

178. (Jesus:) There will, of course, be times when I will show My brides to have a more traditional wedding ceremony for the sake of System relatives. But even something like this does not have to be modeled totally after the System's traditions. In the world, the bride and groom have the say in how their wedding is performed—they choose the venue, they choose the bridesmaids and best man, they choose the food and drinks, they decide on the vows, they choose what they will wear, and the list goes on and on.

179. So even if I lead a couple to have a wedding that is more traditional in theme—perhaps because it is the desire of the System relatives and I confirm it's My will to do it for their sake—you can still choose to include aspects that promote the freedom of My Spirit and your dedication to Me. You can make your wedding a greater witness of your love and My love than the average System wedding. You can weave elements into the wedding that will make it more special and meaning-

ful and memorable, without stumbling or offending your System relatives.

180. The point is that you seek Me, that you hear from Me, and that you desire My will above your own, and above the ways of the world. Maybe I will tell you to have a traditional wedding for the sake of your relatives, but then I'll help you to modify the plan and program so that it's fresh and alive with My Spirit, and becomes a testimony of your love for Me and your commitment to Me. Don't flow along with a traditional plan just because it's what your relatives want. Ask Me what's best. In some cases, that will be what's best, with a few modifications or additions. Other times it will not be what is best, and I will show you to make your wedding—even for your System relatives—more of a testimony of your faith and a greater witness. Or I might tell you to have a small wedding for your System relatives, and then a more Family-oriented one with your Home or area. The important thing is that you seek Me and do things My way.

Key promise:

181. I'm the ultimate Wedding Planner, and My services don't cost a cent. Just call on the keys of planning, inspiration, new-bottlism, faith, and 5D vision to receive My perfect wedding plan for you, and your special day will be a testimony of your love for Me and My love for you—an occasion that you will treasure forever.

Dig deeper:

- "Mama's Love Story, Part 5," ML #2996:53–58, Lifelines 22
- "A Sample Marriage Ceremony," ML #3195, GN 799
- "Mama's Memos, No. 12," ML #3287:29–46, GN 885

Challenging That:

182. (Dad:) Some people in the Family have forgotten what a marriage is all about, and this has affected your attitudes regarding weddings. In a good number of your minds, a wedding is a picture of pomp and frills and, in a sense, conformity to the traditional trends of the System standard of what "makes" a wedding. It's not that the concept of the traditional wedding in itself is wrong, but it's the attitudes that have crept in with the whole traditionalism of marriages in the Family these days. In many cases, the weddings themselves have lost something in the spirit and are dull in the message they convey about what a real marriage is or should be.