

**PASTORAL GUIDANCE OF THE “UNEQUALLY YOKED”
MARRIAGE PARTNERS.**

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PREFACE

My sincere gratitude and thanks to:

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- My family and friends for their input, support and prayers.
- All the respondents who were willing to open their hearts and share their experiences.
- The staff of the Jan Lion-Cachet Library and Ferdinand Postma Library of the North-West University for professional assistance.

May this study provide guidelines and hope to everybody who finds him-/herself in an unequally yoked marital relationship, in order to have a marriage of fulfilment.

To God be the glory and honour. I am his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, to do the good works which He prepared in advance for me to do. It is by God's grace that I have been able to start and to finish this study.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND AIMS

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND SUBSTANTIATION

According to Leland *et al.* (1998:537), marriage is portrayed in the Bible as the primal human bond of society, almost the foundation of all social life. Society starts with families and a family starts with a marriage - a bond between a husband and a wife. Marriage is a divine institution which means that it was God's idea for the human race. In the Old Testament we read "*The Lord God said: 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'*" (Gen. 2:18). After God created Adam, He saw that Adam was incomplete in himself and needed a companion (Leland *et al.*, 1998:538; *cf.* Walker, 1989:11). In the New Testament we read that husband and wife are "*joined together*" by God (Mt 19:6; Mk 10:9). Marriage is a covenant, a permanent bond for life. Jesus Christ is clear about the permanency of marriage: "*Therefore what God has joined together, let no man separate*" (Mt 19:6; Mk 10:9).

Den Heyer and Schelling (2001:219-220) refer to the fact that people find themselves in many different relationships, but that the marriage relationship is exceptional, as it is used in the Bible as a symbol or metaphor to portray God's relationship with humankind. The concepts of love and faithfulness play a decisive role in this relationship. If the people are unfaithful to God, the relationship is seen as adultery.

That is why, when the Israelites conquered Canaan, God's command was to annihilate the indigenous populations (*cf.* Dt 7:1-2). Such drastic action was necessary to rule out the wicked influence of these nations, as the people would be tempted to intermarry with them and that would lead Israel into idolatry (*cf.* Dt 7:3-4), which is exactly what happened because Israel did not obey God's instructions (Merrill, 1994:177-180). Prohibition of mixed marriages in Israel's time was not a *racial* issue, but a *spiritual* one. Marriages between believers and unbelievers cannot have unity in the most important issue in life – the commitment and obedience to God. Marriage implies that two people will become one flesh and if they don't agree on issues of faith, that may mean that one partner will have to compromise his/her beliefs in order to reach unity (Bible, 1997:850).

In many families and congregations "unequally yoked" couples are found. By "unequally yoked" the researcher means a couple where one partner is a believer in the Triune God and the other partner is not. The term finds its origin in 2 Co 6:14 "*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers*" – the Greek word *heterozygountes* can be translated as "other yoked" or "unequally yoked" (Garland, 1999:331).

According to Dt 22:10, God gave the command that only animals of the same species should be yoked together. Paul understood this text and applied it to the marriage relationship between believers and unbelievers. They should not be yoked together (Merrill, 1994:300; Leland *et al.*, 1998:508). There are many ideas about who the “unbeliever” (*apistoi*) is, but Garland (1999:332) suggests that the option that makes the most sense in the context is to understand *apistoi* as a non-Christian – a person whose values, beliefs and practices cause him to offer resistance to the Christian faith. Richards (1985:437) and Barrett (1994:163) agree that it is clear from 2 Co 6:14-7:1 that mixed (unequally yoked) marriages are undesirable but it is possible that one of the partners was converted after the marriage and that the whole situation then changed. The researcher is also aware of the fact that an unequally yoked marriage can arise when a Christian enters into marriage with an unbeliever, despite the clear instructions in the Word of God. It is also possible that the believer was married to a nominal believer, who later turned his/her back on the Lord.

Because of differences in religious commitments and beliefs, a marriage can experience considerable pressure. Religion becomes thus a source of stress for the marriage partners (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:395). If the partners’ belief systems don’t coincide, participation in religious activities can be experienced as time consuming and an emotional drain. Some people regard religious teachings on certain topics, especially on ethical issues, as oppressive and restrictive, which can cause major disagreements between couples (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:396). Collins (1988:412) has no doubt that when a believer and an unbeliever try to live together in a marriage, there are bound to be problems. The Bible is just too clear in its instruction (*cf.* 1 Co 7:12-16; 2 Co 6:4-16; 1 Pet 3:1-2). When the husband and wife do not agree about religious issues, there is tension in the marriage that affects many areas, e.g. choice of friends and ways of spending a Sunday. If there is agreement in the religious realm between the marriage partners, religion can be a strong, binding force, otherwise it can be a destructive force. Adams (1976:249) believes that religion is one of the most essential factors for compatibility in a good and stable marriage and that Christians should marry “only in the Lord”. He states categorically that believers cannot disobey God by marrying unbelievers and then expect their marriage to go well.

Lawler (2000), on the other hand, reports that he found in his study that joint involvement in religious activities was one of the “three greatest predictors of marital stability”. It is interesting to note that the second predictor also had a religious colour to it, namely the fewer religious differences a couple had, the less likely their marriage was to end in separation or divorce.

According to Heaton and Pratt (quoted by Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:204), decisions about leisure activities, child rearing, spending money and many other aspects of marital life are influenced by

religious beliefs and can cause considerable differences in opinions. Marriage also involves the responsibility of parenting children. The parents are primarily responsible for the physical, emotional, moral and spiritual needs of their children (Leland *et al.*, 1998:538). Wilkinson (2000:12) is of the opinion that God's intention with marriage was godly offspring (*cf.* Mal 2:15), but if one parent is not a believer, it can be very difficult for the believing parent to raise godly children, as the parents have different ideals for the spiritual upbringing of their children.

1.2 CURRENT STATE OF RESEARCH

An extensive electronic search of the following databases has been done at the Ferdinand Postma Library at the North West University:

- ATLAS – American Theological Library Association – Religious Database
- EBSCO HOST – Academic Search Elite Database
- Library Catalog
- NEXUS DATABASE SYSTEM – Dissertations and Theses
- RSAT – Repertory of South African Journal Articles
- SABINET – SA Cat - Publications

From the electronic search of the literature it is clear that research has been done on mixed marriages in the sense of interfaith marriages (*cf.* Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:158; Stover & Hope, 1993:227-228; Zinn & Eitzen, 1993:374; Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:198-205; Comfort, 1999; Chinitz & Brown, 2001), interracial marriages (*cf.* Steinmetz, Clavan & Stein, 1990:208-209; Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:158; Stover & Hope, 1993:227-228; Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:201-202) and interchurch marriages (Lawler, 2000; Williams & Lawler, 2001), but little research has been done on problems between believing and unbelieving partners in a marriage. As stated earlier, it is a common problem in congregations and communities. People are suffering in “unequally yoked” marriages and pastors need pastoral guidelines on this issue.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

How can pastoral guidance be given to unequally yoked marriage partners, meaning a couple where one partner is a Christian and the other partner not, in order to have a fulfilled marriage?

The individual problems that will be investigated, are:

- What does the Bible teach about unequally yoked marriages?
- What can be learnt from the human sciences about the problems of these couples and what resources are available?

- What can be learnt through an empirical study – a qualitative investigation with a sample of 5 couples who are unequally yoked and 5 pastors who have worked with such couples?
- How can pastoral guidance be given to an unequally yoked couple to alleviate the problems and stress of their marriage and hopefully bring about godly change?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the proposed research is to suggest possible guidelines to the pastor, in order to alleviate the problems of the unequally yoked marriage partners, so that they can have a fulfilled marriage. To attain this goal, the researcher will endeavour to reach the following objectives:

- To investigate what the Bible teaches about the unequally yoked marriage.
- To see what light the other sciences can cast on the unequally yoked marriage.
- To do empirical research on the problems of the unequally yoked marriage by using semi-structured interviews.
- To propose a biblical counseling model for pastoral guidance of the unequally yoked marriage partners.

1.5 CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENT

Pastoral guidance can and should be administered to unequally yoked marriage partners, meaning a couple where one partner is a Christian and the other partner not, in order to have a fulfilled marriage.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

The method of research corresponds with the hermeneutical model of Zerfass which consists out of a basis theory, a metatheory and a practice theory (Reinecke, 2001:9; cf. Heyns & Pieterse, 1998:36-37; cf. Heitink, 1999:113).

1.6.1 An analysis of the literature or sources

In order to reach the *first objective*, to establish a basis theory, a literature survey and a grammatical, historical exegetical study of Dt 7:1-4, Ezr 9:2; 10:2,3,44, Ne 13: 23-27, 1 Co 7:12-16, 2 Co 6:14-16, and 1 Pe 3:1-2 will be performed to establish the biblical principles undergirding an unequally yoked marriage.

In order to reach the *second objective*, to establish a metatheory, a literature survey in Sociology, Psychology and Social Anthropology will be done, with the help of an electronic search of the databases.

1.6.2 An empirical investigation

In order to reach the *third objective*, qualitative empirical study will be done by using semi-structured interviews with five couples in an unequally yoked marriage and with five pastors with experience of pastoral guidance to an unequally yoked couple. This method was chosen rather than a more formal quantifiable method, because it will enable the subjects to be more revealing about personal and intimate material (Jagger & Wright, 1999:63).

1.6.3 The proposed model

In order to reach the *fourth objective*, to establish a practice theory, a synthesis and interpretation of the basis- and metatheory in hermeneutical interaction will be done to propose a biblical counseling model for pastoral guidance of the unequally yoked marriage partners.

1.6.4 Other aspects

- In this study the American spelling of the word ‘Counseling’ and ‘Counselor’ will be used.
- The terms ‘pastor’ and ‘counselor’ will be used alternatively.
- The Thompson Chain-Reference Bible (New International Version) is always used for references from the Bible, except if specifically mentioned otherwise.
- The abbreviations for the books of the Bible are according to the NIV:

The Books of the Old Testament:

Genesis (Ge)	2 Chronicles (2 Ch)	Daniel (Da)
Exodus (Ex)	Ezra (Ezr)	Hosea (Hos)
Leviticus (Lev)	Nehemiah (Ne)	Joel (Joel)
Numbers (Nu)	Esther (Est)	Amos (Am)
Deuteronomy (Dt)	Job (Job)	Obadiah (Ob)
Joshua (Jos)	Psalms (Ps)	Jonah (Jnh)
Judges (Jdg)	Proverbs (Pr)	Micah (Mic)
Ruth (Ru)	Ecclesiastes (Ecc)	Nahum (Na)
1 Samuel (1 Sa)	Song of Songs (SS)	Habakkuk (Hab)
2 Samuel (2 Sa)	Isaiah (Isa)	Zephaniah (Zep)
1 Kings (1 Ki)	Jeremiah (Jer)	Haggai (Hag)
2 Kings (2 Ki)	Lamentations (La)	Zechariah (Zec)
1 Chronicles (1 Ch)	Ezekiel (Eze)	Malachi (Mal)

The Books of the New Testament:

Matthew (Mt)	Luke (Lk)	Acts (Ac)
Mark (Mk)	John (Jn)	Romans (Ro)

1 Corinthians (1 Co)	2 Thessalonians (2 Th)	1 Peter (1 Pe)
2 Corinthians (2 Co)	1 Timothy (1 Ti)	2 Peter (2 Pe)
Galatians (Gal)	2 Timothy (2 Ti)	1 John (1 Jn)
Ephesians (Eph)	Titus (Tit)	2 John (2 Jn)
Philippians (Php)	Philemon (Phm)	3 John (3 Jn)
Colossians (Col)	Hebrews (Heb)	Jude (Jude)
1 Thessalonians (1 Th)	James (Jas)	Revelation (Rev)

1.7 PROVISIONAL CHAPTER DIVISION

- CHAPTER 1: Introduction, problem statement and aims
- CHAPTER 2: Basic theoretical perspectives on the unequally yoked marriage
- CHAPTER 3: Metatheoretical perspectives on the unequally yoked marriage
- CHAPTER 4: Practical theoretical perspectives on the unequally yoked marriage
- CHAPTER 5: Conclusions and suggestions for further research

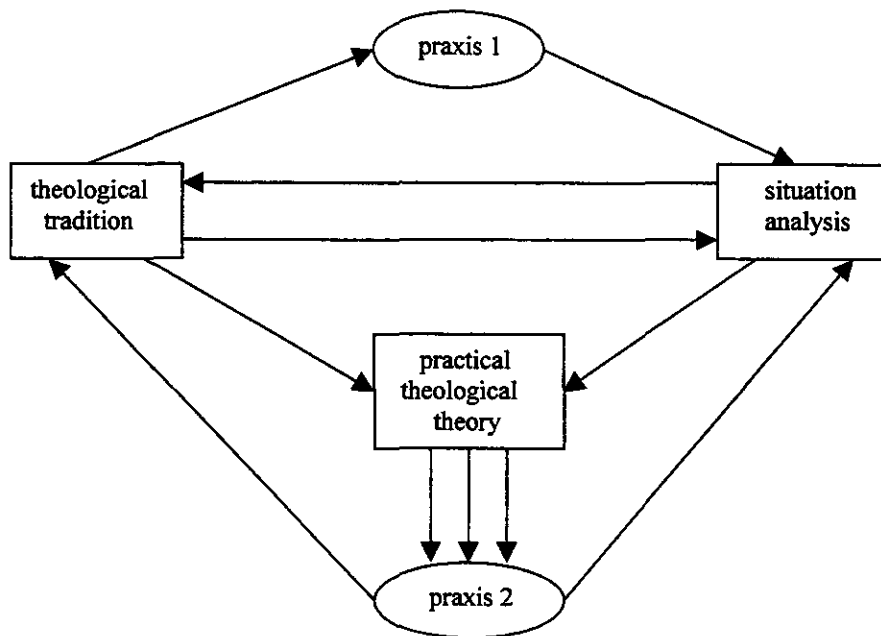
1.8 SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE CORRELATION

PROBLEM STATEMENT	RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	METHODOLOGY
What does the Bible teach about unequally yoked marriages?	To investigate what the Bible teaches about the unequally yoked marriage.	A literature survey and a grammatical, historical exegetical study will be performed to establish the biblical principles undergirding unequally yoked marriages.
What can be learnt from the human sciences about the problems of these couples and what resources are available?	To see what light the other sciences can cast on the unequally yoked marriage.	A literature survey in Sociology, Psychology and Social Anthropology will be done with the help of an electronic search of the databases.
What can be learnt through an empirical study – a qualitative investigation with a sample of 5 couples who are unequally yoked?	To do empirical research on the problems of the unequally yoked marriage by using semi-structured interviews.	A qualitative empirical study will be done by using semi-structured interviews with five couples in an unequally yoked marriage and with their pastors, with their consent.
How can pastoral guidance be given to an unequally yoked couple to alleviate the problems and stress of their marriage and hopefully bring about godly change?	To propose a biblical counseling model for pastoral guidance of the unequally yoked marriage partners.	A synthesis and interpretation of the basis- and metatheory in hermeneutical interaction will be done to propose a biblical counseling model for pastoral guidance of the unequally yoked marriage partners.

CHAPTER 2: BASIC THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE UNEQUALLY YOKED MARRIAGE

2.1 INTRODUCTION / OBJECTIVES OF THE CHAPTER

The researcher agrees wholeheartedly with Heyns and Pieterse (1990:1-2) when they say that pastors and counsellors are confronted every day with people who have spiritual needs and who are looking for comfort from the Word of God. Practical theology is that branch of theology that ensures that God's Word reaches people in their everyday lives. Pastors and counsellors are involved with the encounter between God and humanity and practical theology helps to interpret this interaction between the gospel on the one hand and the needs of people on the other hand. It helps people to live in fellowship with God and other people (Heyns & Pieterse, 1990:6-7). As Heyns and Pieterse (1990:10) mention, this specific branch of theology is called practical theology because it relates to the praxis. It formulates theories that function in practice. It evaluates these theories by analysing the praxis scientifically and if necessary, develops new theories for praxis. The focus is to help people to hear the gospel, to understand it, to accept it and to actualise it in their lives. There are a few models that facilitate the movement between theory and praxis. The purpose of a model is to help to concretise the theory and to abstract the praxis. In essence, a model helps to clarify the theory (Heyns & Pieterse, 1990:33). As mentioned in chap. 1, the method of research that will be followed by the researcher corresponds with the hermeneutical model of Zerfass which consists of a basis theory, a metatheory and a practice theory (Heitink, 1999:113; Reinecke, 2001:9). Heyns and Pieterse (1990:35) gives a schematic presentation of the model of Zerfass:



They explain the model as follows: it starts with praxis 1, where there is a problem and ends with a new, amended praxis 2. Praxis 1 has its origin in theological tradition. To solve the problem in praxis 1, a situation analysis must be undertaken which may include an empirical study making use of the knowledge of other sciences such as sociology, psychology and anthropology. This data, together with the theological tradition, is being used to formulate a theory. Praxis 2 takes form as soon as the new theory is being implemented. Praxis 2 needs to be evaluated against the situation analysis and the theological tradition, and if necessary, modified (Heyns & Pieterse, 1990:36).

The aim of this chapter is to establish a basis theory. Venter (1993:247) explains a basis theory as the exploration of theological departure points, primarily from the Word of God. To reach this aim, the researcher will pursue the following objectives:

- To propose definitions for key concepts.
- To determine how God originally intended marriage to be.
- To look at the consequences of the fall had on marriages in the Old Testament, including mixed marriages.
- To look at marriage from a New Testament's perspective, including unequally yoked marriages.
- To identify the potential problems and dangers of an unequally yoked marriage from a biblical perspective.
- To determine, from a biblical perspective, how a Christian should react in an unequally yoked marriage.

2.2 PROPOSED DEFINITIONS

There are a few key concepts that will be used regularly throughout the course of this dissertation and it is important to clarify these terms.

2.2.1 Believer

When the word 'believer' is being used in Scripture, it is not referring to somebody who holds a certain set of theoretical beliefs about God, but it is a person who 'has faith in Jesus Christ' in the fullest and most biblical sense. It is somebody who has heard the gospel of Jesus Christ and has responded to it by putting his/her trust in Him. This person has a new focus in life and he/she has joined the company of disciples and followers of the Lord (Richards, 1985:123). The researcher sees the believer as somebody who is born again by the working of the Holy Spirit.

2.2.2 Unbeliever

Throughout the history of interpretation, states Webb (1992a:43-44), the predominant view is that the word 'unbeliever' refers to a non-Christian, meaning a pagan outside the church community who does not believe the Gospel (*cf.* Plummer, 1948:206). Louw and Nida (1989:124) also give the meaning of the Greek word used for 'unbeliever' in 1 Co 7:15 as "*a person who does not belong to the group of believers in Christ – non-Christian*" (*cf.* Jordaan, 1999:479). According to Jordaan (1999:479), Paul is thus not referring to a person who does not want to believe or somebody who has gone astray or an unfaithful believer. Furnish (1984:371) also understands the term 'unbeliever' as non-Christian due to the sharp contrast Paul creates in 2 Co 6:15 between believer and unbeliever when he sets Christ against Belial (*cf.* Thrall, 1994:474).

2.2.3 Yoke

The word 'yoke' in the Bible refers to a wooden bar or frame used to join animals so that they can pull a load together. The image of the yoke is often used in the Bible to portray the idea of subjection, service or bondage (Leland *et al.*, 1998:975). The people of Israel frequently found themselves subjected by heathen nations and bowed down by a burden, as if under a yoke, because of sin (Den Heyer & Schelling, 2001:224-225). Jordaan (1999:479) draws attention to the fact that the word 'yoke' is used in the Old and New Testament as a symbol of the bondage of slavery (Ex 6:6-7; *cf.* 1 Co 7:21; 1 Ti 6:1). The prophets also make use of the term when they want to emphasise the results of a life of disobedience to God (Isa 10:27; Jer 27:11; Eze 34:27). In the New Testament Jesus Christ also uses the image of the yoke (Mt 11:28-30), but the outcome of his yoke is completely different. He promises rest for the soul, because He helps to carry the burden. The fact that two animals are yoked together also becomes an image of *close union*, like in a marriage (Leland *et al.*, 1998:975). According to 2 Co 6:14, Paul warns Christians not to marry unbelievers: "*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers*".

2.2.4 Unequally yoked

By 'unequally yoked' the researcher means a couple where one partner is a believer in the Triune God and the other partner is not. The term finds its origin in 2 Co 6:14 where the following is written: "*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers*". The Greek word *heterozygountes* can be translated as 'other yoked' or 'unequally yoked' (Garland, 1999:331). This will be studied in more detail later (*cf.* 2.6). Throughout the course of this dissertation the term 'mixed marriage' will be used alternatively for the term 'unequally yoked marriage'.

2.2.5 Marriage

'Marriage' can be defined as a divine and permanent institution, a life-long covenant between a man and a woman (De Oliveira, 2001:1; cf. Oppenheimer, 1996:548). According to Peel (1987:246), marriage is portrayed by Scripture as a lifelong (exclusive), human, male-female covenant relationship which was established by God at creation. He refers to the passage recorded in Mal 2:14 "*she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant*". Malachi is giving an admonition for loyalty to the spouse of one's youth. This corresponds with the biblical ideal of lifelong companionship and partnership in marriage (Hill, 1998:258). When Storkey (1987:170) speaks about marriage, she refers to a close and committed relationship between man and woman. Marriage, in the New Testament, is portrayed as a loving, faithful, respectful, truthful and patient relationship where the partners nourish and cherish each other. Husbands must love and honour their wives and wives must respect their husbands (cf. Olthuis, 1995:565).

2.3 MARRIAGE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT - BEFORE THE FALL

The researcher deems it necessary, to establish a foundation of what God intended marriage to be, that is, before it was corrupted by sin, in order to serve as a frame of reverence for investigating the unequally yoked marriage which is the focus area of this study.

2.3.1 Hebrew terms regarding marriage

God created the world in perfect harmony (Wenham, 1994a:63; cf. Reinecke, 2003:13). Therefore, the ideal principle for marriage, as God intended it to be, prevailed before the fall (Emmet, 1950:585). Leupold (1979a:129) states that God created man as a social being and knew man's social needs better than he knew it himself. The normal thing for man is to go through life in fellowship with a wife (cf. Richards, 1985:433). Looking at the meaning of the Hebrew words, this becomes very clear. Richards (1985:433) points out that the Hebrew uses the same word for both 'wife' and 'marriage'. By the name Adam assigns to the woman, Leupold (1979a:136) affirms, it is clear that he considers her far above all the other creatures. Adam uses a clever play of words to express his feeling. In other languages, as in English, it can only be approximated: she shall be called '*woman*', for she was taken out of '*man*'. Luther uses the words 'maennin' and 'mann'. The Afrikaans marriage formulary uses the respective words as 'mannin' and 'man' (Huweliksformulier, 1976:152). The kinship of sound gives expression to the most intimate kinship of these two beings. One can see it in the Hebrew by also taking a parallel Arabic root into consideration. 'Man' is '*ish*' and it conveys the idea of 'exercising power' and 'woman' is '*ishshah*' meaning 'to be soft'. Mathews (1996:219) also refers to their sameness when he reflects on the English meanings of the Hebrew words '*ish*' (man) and '*ishshah*' (woman).

2.3.2 Marriage as a divine institution

It is significant to note that marriage is the first and only institution established by God *before* the fall. From Ge 1:26-27 it is clear that God intended humanity to be divided in two groups, namely males and females. Adam was for a while alone, in spite of the fact that God intended two sexes. In all creation he found no suitable helper for himself and only after this search, did God create Eve (Richards, 1985:433). Leupold (1979a:133) is of the opinion that God's idea was not for man to find a mate among the beasts, but God wanted him to realise his loneliness and his need for a suitable helper. Engelsma (1977:21-23) also says that Adam only became aware of his incompleteness after he was confronted with the animals and saw how all of them were paired off, except himself. Among the animals, he could not find a suitable companion for himself. In this way God prepared him to accept his wife. God created Eve, brought her to Adam and united them (Ge 2:22). In a certain sense God performed the first marriage ceremony (De Klerk, 1997:14).

From the passages in Ge 2:21-24 and Mt 19:4-6, De Bruyn (1993:167-168) and Van Wyk (1998:75) argue that it is clear that marriage is an institution of God. God instituted marriage because He wanted a lifelong union between one man and one woman (*cf.* Eph 5:22-33). Becoming "one flesh" is part of this union between man and woman, indicating the most intimate physical relationship possible between two human beings, but God did not intend only a physical relationship. He also intended an intimate spiritual association with each other together with a deep, emotional bond (love and faithfulness) to each other. De Oliveira (2001:15) is in agreement with De Bruyn and Van Wyk by saying that if a Christian looks at the creation narrative (Ge 1-2), there can be no doubt in his mind as to the origin of marriage. The fact that God instituted marriage, further serves as a source of security and peace of mind for the Christian: if God instituted marriage, He also regulated it and will control and protect it. The fact that God orchestrated marriage is not deducible from the Old Testament only. The New Testament often refers to this fact (*cf.* Mt 19:3-12; Eph 5:22-31; 1 Co 11:11-12).

2.3.3 Suitable Helper

Richards (1985:433) shows that three aspects of the divine ideal for marriage are found in the creation story. The first is the 'shared nature' when Adam declares "*This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh*" (Ge 2:23). Mathews (1996:218) also believes that Adam is acknowledging with these words that this creature (the woman) is the same as he is. The second aspect is "*one flesh*" (Ge 2:24) which indicates that husband and wife are united and that they are to share all experiences. The last aspect is the "*suitable helper*" mentioned in Ge 2:18. Eve was suitable because she shared with Adam God's image and likeness (*cf.* Helberg, 1988:31). Worthington (1989:28) says because God created man in his image, man experiences yearnings for permanency, intimacy and productivity

in his relationships with other people. Adam and Eve can thus relate emotionally, intellectually, spiritually and physically and in this way satisfy these yearnings. When De Oliveira (2001:39-40) comments on the purpose of marriage, she says that when God instituted marriage, He had in mind that husbands and wives should help each other (*cf.* Liturgical form for the solemnization of marriage, 1972:540). That is why the woman was made equal to the man, so that she could be his counterpart to help him to govern and conquer the world. The husband's help for his wife is seen in his love for her. It is a love that sacrifices all for the sake of the beloved, just as Christ demonstrated his love for the church. The help given is not only physical-, but also emotional- and spiritual help. They complete and complement each other as they serve one another with joy.

Leupold (1979a:130) explains the woman's position with reference to man by looking at the meaning of two Hebrew words. The first word is *'ezer* which literally means 'a help'. For man to reach his objectives in life, he needs his wife's help, especially in the procreation of his kind. The second word is *keneghdô*, meaning 'like him' or 'as agreeing to him' or 'his counterpart'. She satisfies his need for help as she is able to support him mentally, physically and spiritually (*cf.* Worthington, 1989:28). The fact that the woman is the man's 'helper' is no indication that she is inferior to him. Lemmens and De Vriese (1999:29) agree that no idea of inferiority or subordination is being conveyed (*cf.* Van der Walt, 1988:9; Mack, 1991:21), because the word *'ezer* is also used to refer to God as a Helper of nations or individuals (*cf.* Dt 33:7,26,29; Ps 20:2; 30:2; Hos 13:9). For the woman to be the 'helper', Fowler (1981:25) contends, she must be the one who provides strength and support and to be able to do that, she must be of the same kind: 'fit' or 'meet'. The 'helper' must thus be a full partner who stands on equal footing (*cf.* Mathews, 1996:214). Van der Walt (1988:2-3) goes even further by stating that the biblical term "*helper*" means that the woman is actually the stronger one and she must support her weaker husband. Chapell (1998:87) also shares this opinion that the word 'helper' does not carry an idea of inferiority and continues by saying that God's intention is that the wife will complement her husband in such a way that they will be able to fulfil God's expectations for their lives more completely.

2.3.4 Companionship

From the above it can be concluded that marriage is ideally an intimate union between a male and a female, not only for reproductive reasons (Ge 1:28), but also to fulfil the human need for sharing (Richards, 1985:433). Calvin, in the time of the Reformation, stressed the companionable aspect of marriage more than the procreation aspect (Storkey, 1987:138). God created the human being with a deep longing, a desire to find comfort, companionship and fulfilment (Walker, 1989:12). Mathews (1996:213) confirms this by saying that when God speaks about unity between man and woman, He is not referring to mere sexual unity, He is also referring to sharing on a spiritual-, intellectual- and

emotional level (*cf.* Walker, 1989:12). According to De Oliveira (2001:48), people need companionship. She emphasises the fact that marriage cannot solve a person's problem of loneliness, that can only be solved between God and the person, but God created man to have fellowship with Him and, as a social being, build relationships with fellow human beings. Worthington (1989:40) refers to the cultural 'myth' that marriage can cure loneliness. He remarks that two lonely people who marry, will most likely be two married lonely people, because loneliness has more to do with perception than with objective circumstances.

Fowler (1981:11) argues that humanity is relationships and he substantiates his view by referring to the creation story, where God says that "it is not good for man to be alone" (Ge 2:18). God is concerned about the fact that man is alone. God created man, placed him in beautiful surroundings and gave him honourable work, but something was lacking. Man was "alone" (Mathews, 1996:213). So, when Adam receives Eve, says Fowler (1981:11), his reaction: "*bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh*" (Ge 2:23), shows his contentment in finding a partner. God puts his stamp of approval on this relationship when He says "*it is very good*" (Ge 1:31). Man was created to have fellowship with God, but he was also created to be a social being. Community was created by God (Mathews, 1996:213). Companionship, believes De Oliveira (2001:49-50), is part of God's intention for marriage. This is visible in the marriages of the patriarchs, as the relationships between Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah and Jacob and Rachel speak of love. Companionship also features in the New Testament, e.g. it seems as if Peter's wife accompanied him on his missionary journeys (1 Co 9:5; *cf.* Van Houwelingen, 1991:116) and Priscilla and Aquila shared a ministry from their home (Ac 18). The couple joined forces to be witnesses for the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and fellow workers of the apostle Paul (Ro 16:3; Floor, 1978:51-52,61).

2.3.5 One flesh

2.3.5.1 Procreation

Leupold (1979a:96) states that marriage is instituted by God right at the beginning of Creation. The primary purpose of marriage is indicated in the words "*be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth*" (Ge 1:28). De Oliveira (2001:41-42) shows that these words in the Hebrew are in the imperative form. It is thus clear that one of the purposes of marriage is to have children (*cf.* Liturgical form for the solemnization of marriage, 1972:540; De Bruyn, 1993:172; Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:208). This can also be seen in the New Testament: children are to be begotten, born and raised within the atmosphere of marriage (*cf.* 1 Ti 5:14). The Hebrews saw marriage as having a twofold purpose, namely procreation (Ge 1:28) and companionship (Ge 2:18). Much emphasis was laid on procreation. For the people of the Old Testament, a large family was seen as a blessing from

Yahweh (*cf.* Ps 127 & 128). For the Puritans, sexual intercourse in marriage had a twofold purpose, namely procreation and the gratification of sexual needs (De Bruyn, 1995:653).

2.3.5.2 Sexuality

Leland *et al.* (1998:538) stress the point that the companionship between lovers is more than just friendship, it also includes romantic passion, because God created marriage as the place for sexual union. As De Oliveira (2001:43) puts it, sex is a gift from God to human beings to express their love for each other, but also for the purpose of procreation (*cf.* De Klerk, 1997:23). The marriage relationship is the most intimate of all human relationships, because they become “*one flesh*” (Ge 2:24). Sexual intercourse, as De Bruyn (1993:173) points out, is the way that the couple can demonstrate their love for each other, but it is also the way that they can protect themselves against seduction and immorality (*cf.* Huweliksformulier, 1976:152). This corresponds with the view of the Puritans, who saw marriage as necessary to avoid fornication (De Bruyn, 1995:649). Leupold (1979a:137) indicates that the words “*one flesh*” show the deep attachment man has with his wife and it reflects the complete identification of one personality with another. De Klerk (1997:24) puts it as follows:

The sexual aspect causes marriage to be the most intimate interpersonal relationship possible. It implies the radical devotion of one person to another, an absolute unification of the total life. It purports the deepest and most complete surrender of one person to another.

Louw (1993:138-139) agrees that God’s intention was that they will be one (Ge 2:24-25) and that they find fulfilment in their sexuality. The best description of passion and the enjoyment of sexuality can be found in Song of Songs (*cf.* SS 7:6,10).

2.3.5.3 More than mere physical

In spite of Louw’s opinion (*cf.* 2.3.5.2), he affirms that sexuality is much more than mere physical intimacy. It is also about emotional security and mutual completion. McLuhan (1991:10-14) is also of the opinion that “*becoming one flesh*” (*cf.* Ge 2:24) must not be understood as only meaning sexual union. He argues that when Paul says that a man unites himself with a prostitute and the two “*become one flesh*” (1 Co 6:16), he is referring to something much more than a mere sexual union (*cf.* Eph 5:22-33). The union is not only a legal and sexual union, it is the full joining of two persons in their totality, a spirit-to-spirit unity, a soul-to-soul inner disclosure and openness. The sexual act is more than just a flesh-to-flesh union, it is a connection of person-with-person. It has an eternal, creative and transcendent quality - a spiritual nature, because the innermost soul of the one partner is joined with the innermost soul of the other partner. Paul stresses the point that the sexual act,

because of its spiritual overtones, has eternal significance and consequences. In God's eyes there is spiritual and emotional unity once sexual unity is attained (*cf.* Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:33-34).

2.4 MARRIAGE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT – AFTER THE FALL

2.4.1 The fall

2.4.1.1 Sin

The fall, as Lloyd (1996:368) explains, refers to the event that caused a gap between the universe as God intended it to be and how it is perceived presently. The central issue of the fall is the corruptness and perversion of man's nature (Mikolaski, 1987a:145). This is demonstrated clearly by Lloyd (1996:368) when he states that the Creator created the creatures with a free will, but exactly that, caused them to disregard His commandments by rebelling against Him and consequently, harmony was distorted. The Christian theology presents human history in three phases, namely creation, fall and redemption (*cf.* De Klerk, 1997:12-33; Verhoef, 2000:98-110; Reinecke, 2003:48). Man is tempted into sin, according to Helberg (1988:33-34), because he did not exercise dominion over the snake, which was the task that God gave him (Ge 1:28). Man wanted to be like God, independent and autonomous (*cf.* Mikolaski, 1987a:146). The idea of sin did not originate with man, he was tempted into it. God also did not create him as a rebellious creature. This emphasises man's responsibility and guilt. Instead of listening to God's command, Wenham (1994a:63) remarks, man preferred to listen to the serpent's suggestions. Helberg (1988:33-34) confirms that desire played an enormous role in the temptation (*cf.* Ge 3:6). Sin is a wrong attitude, a choice to disobey God, to do something different from what God ordered (*cf.* Connery, 1987:5). Sin can also be seen as unbelief, as man does not believe that God will punish him. Sin also reveals an attitude of ingratitude, because man believes God is withholding something good from him. The bottom line is that man does not trust God. God wants to have fellowship with man, but that requires faith, trust and obedience on man's side.

2.4.1.2 God's love

After the fall, as Helberg (1988:35-36) states, God had all the right to destroy man without a hearing, because the prohibition and the punishment were stated clearly (Ge 2:17), but God's love was too great (*cf.* Mikolaski, 1987a:146). As mentioned in 2.4.1.1, mankind's history, by God's grace, does not stop at creation and fall. God took the initiative after the fall and reached out to man. God gave man a chance to repent, but man did not use it, instead, he excused himself and accused another. God first shows evidence of grace, before He announces judgement on man's sin. He puts enmity between the man and the snake. He curses the snake, but in that curse lies hidden a promise to mankind: the

maternal promise – “*the seed of the woman will conquer the snake*” (Ge 3:15). One that will be born from the woman, will gain victory over the Evil One. The New Testament identifies Jesus Christ as the One who overcame Satan. Lloyd (1996:370) puts it well when he states that the fall is in principle, undone by the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Christ. The obedience of Christ turned the disobedience of Adam around (Ro 5:12-21) and according to Col 2:15, the principalities and powers were disarmed at Calvary. The separation between Creator and creatures, caused by the fall, was dealt with at the cross. In His resurrection lies the promise of a renewed creation. In Jesus Christ, the consequences of the fall are undone: Satan is defeated (*cf.* Ro 16:20; Ge 3:15); the curse is abolished (*cf.* Rev 22:3; Ge 3:14,17); there is access to the tree of life (*cf.* Rev 22:2; Ge 3:22-24) and heaven and earth is remade (Rev 21:1-4).

2.4.2 The immediate consequences of the fall on marriage

2.4.2.1 Separation from God

Man was created for communion with God as he was made after the image of God, but because of the fall, is separated from Him.

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden (Ge 3:8).

If the three Hebrew words used for sin, namely *hattat* (to miss the mark); *awon* (going aside from the right way) and *pasha* (transgression or rebellion) are taken into account, it is clear that no fellowship with God is possible when man harbours sin in his heart (Carey, 1987:382-383). Sin broke the intimate link between Creator and the creature. There is no longer any fellowship between God and mankind. The prophet Isaiah also speaks about this: “*your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you*” (Isa 59:2).

2.4.2.2 The curses

As an immediate result of the fall, mankind lost its innocence and is confronted with the effects of sin: guilt, condemnation, painful conditions of life and environment and death (Mikolaski, 1987a:145). Helberg (1988:37) comments that death enters the moment man cuts his bond with God. Richards (1985:434) asserts that the sinless harmony that was present prior to the fall was at once distorted when sin entered the world. Man becomes loveless, frustrated and perverse (Mikolaski, 1987a:146). It can be clearly seen in the couple’s first recorded dialogue. They immediately started to accuse and blame each other (*cf.* Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:39-40,133).

How God feels about the sin and disobedience of man is clear when He announces the curses. God first announced the curses to the woman and then to the man. He says to her: “*I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing*” (Ge 3:16a). Leupold (1979a:171) also speaks about the effect of the first curse on the woman. She would experience pain, and that not only in childbearing, but numerous forms of pains are laid on the woman because of her eating of the forbidden fruit (*cf.* Helberg, 1988:37). Many things will cause her great pain, mentally and spiritually, because of her delicate makeup. The woman, after the fall, continues thus with her role as childbearer, but now with painful labour in childbirth (Mathews, 1996:249-250). In her role as childbearer, the woman experiences hope, because she will live to bear the Redeemer (*cf.* 2.4.1.2), but through the painful childbirth, she is continually reminded of the part she played in the fall. Van der Walt (1988:14) shows that the punishment of the woman affects her relationship with her husband and her children.

Traditionally, the woman’s submission to her husband was seen as an ordinance of creation. According to Mathews (1996:248-250), God gave the woman a ‘followship’ role prior to the fall. As a result of the fall, it was corrupted. Her relationship with her husband is affected by sin and her submission is now insured. Van der Walt (1988:14) explains the result of the sin in the following way: submission, as God intended it to be (to one another), became subservience (the woman to the man). Before the fall it was willingly (equality), after the fall, however, it was forced (domination). The relationship of intimacy and love, where they support and strengthen each other, became a relationship of domination – the man over the woman. The *companion* became the *ruler*. In recent times, with the rising of contemporary feminism, there are voices proclaiming that submission is a new state resulting from sin (Mathews, 1996:248; *cf.* Cary, 2001:166).

As Ruether (1998:52-53,62) shows, contemporary feminist theologians with their egalitarian anthropological paradigm of Christianity follow strongly in the footsteps of the 17th century Quaker movement’s theology of spiritual equality of women and men in God’s creation. The Quakers believed that women were created equally in the image of God, but they rejected the doctrine that God ordained in paradise, that man should rule over woman. They saw the domination of men over women not as punishment because of sin, but as unjust tyranny – a reflection of the fallen condition of humankind. Contemporary feminist theologies also do not see the subordination of women as part of the ‘original nature’ of mankind. They object strongly to any ideology which promotes submission of women on the ground of natural inferiority, a divine mandate or punishment for a presumed priority in sinning. Cary (2001:166) ridicules social conservatives who see submission of the wife as God’s plan for feminine fulfilment. Feminism vigorously rejects any domination of men over women and views it as sinful. They also view patriarchy as a sinful social system and propagate the vindication of women’s equality as the will of God, as the authentic human nature and as Christ’s

redemptive intention (Ruether, 1998:63). The researcher does not go along with this view of the feminist theologians, but joins the ranks of Van der Walt and Mathews stating that submission of women is an ordinance established by God at creation.

In the curse, the word 'desire' occurs. There are different views as how to interpret this. One option is to see 'desire' as sexual desire (*cf.* SS 7:10-11). The words "*and he will rule over you*" (Ge 3:16) would then mean that despite her painful labour in childbirth, she will still have sexual desires for her husband. Another view is to see the broader desire of the woman to include emotional and economic reliance on her husband. She will now, after the fall, be dependent on him, whereas prior to the fall she acted independently. Her new desire is thus to be submissive to the man and in his response, he will rule over her. When Leupold (1979a:172) refers to the meaning of the word 'desire', he understands it as meaning 'yearning for her husband'. This yearning is morbid and refers not only to sexual yearning, but it includes the attraction woman experiences for man. At the fall, the woman wanted to be independent from the man and as a penalty, she finds a continual attraction to him.

Yet another way to understand 'desire' is to see it as similar to the word 'rule'. This interpretation implies that in the curse pronounced on the woman, lies hidden a struggle for mastery between the sexes. The woman will 'desire' to rule over her husband, but God ordained him to exercise the leadership role (Mathews, 1996:251). Leupold (1979a:172) remarks on this, that the woman wanted to take control over man, even lead him into temptation, but now he will rule over her – she will be controlled (*cf.* Helberg, 1988:37; Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:41). Man bears the rule, but the New Testament makes it clear that it must be done in the Spirit of Christ (*cf.* Eph 5:25-31). Although the man's rule continues, it is not to be harsh and it is not to be experienced as a burden (Leupold, 1979a:172).

After addressing the woman, says Richards (1985:434), God speaks to Adam and He puts a curse on the ground (Ge 3:17-19). It will no longer be easy to make a living from the earth (*cf.* Mathews, 1996:249). Helberg (1988:37) mentions the disharmony between man and earth – labour will no longer be pleasant and effective, it will be accompanied by sweat and pain. Leupold (1979a:173) states that the man's misdeed was that he submitted to the woman instead of ruling over her. The curse that God announces therefore, fits his sin: he shall experience insubordination on the part of the soil, instead of complete control. He will have difficulty securing his sustenance, because of the fact that the ground is cursed.

2.4.2.3 Human relationships

The theme of creation, fall and redemption is very strong throughout Scripture (Storkey, 1987:153; cf. 2.4.1.1). God as Creator is being revealed. The meaning of humanity and the rejection by man of God's norms as well as the salvation offered by Christ's redemptive death are being revealed. This theme is also prevalent in the development of the relationship between man and woman. Woman is created by God as half of mankind in His image (cf. 2.5.3.4.9). She is given the joint responsibility with man over the rest of creation. They are sexually made differently, but nothing in Ge 1 suggests a hierarchical order of man and woman. Storkey (1987:154) continues by saying, that from the creation narrative three aspects about the relationship between man and woman can be concluded, namely *equality* (they were both made in the image of God), *diversity* (they were complementing each other's sexuality with different reproductive functions) and *unity* (they were two halves of mankind united as 'one flesh' to provide companionship for each other).

Since the fall, however, man fails to live up to the image of God (Worthington, 1989:28). What God created to be fulfilling and beautiful, is being replaced by second best, unfulfilling options. Instead of permanence, man is satisfied with immediate selfishness. Man seeks cheap sexual relationships and illicit romance instead of fulfilling sexual and emotional intimacy. The end results of these second best options, are sin, hurt, blame and relational problems between man and God and between man and other people, including his wife. As Storkey (1987:154) puts it so clearly, the problems in relationships started when sin entered the world. Prior to the fall the two sexes lived in harmony with God, each other and the rest of creation, but distortion was caused by disobedience. The theme of Ge 3 is spoiled relationships. Carey (1987:383) also speaks of the consequences that the fall had on man's social life, because there is alienation between the sexes, classes and races.

Everything was corrupted because of the fall. Prior to the fall, the authority relationships were as follows:

God
Adam and Eve
Nature

After the fall the authority relationships are:

God Nature
Adam
Eve

God's authority over nature is denied, man struggles under nature and the woman is subservient to the man (Van der Walt, 1988:11).

History shows that the grim foreshadow apparent in Ge 3 regarding the influence of sin on all human relationships, came into being (Richards, 1985:434). In just the following chapter another consequence of the fall is discernible, the beginning of polygamy. God intended marriage to be an exclusive union between *one* man and *one* woman, but Ge 4:19 records the story of Lamech marrying *two* women. Leupold (1979a:219) notes that this practice originated among those who had been estranged from God, as Lamech was in the seventh generation after Adam and in the line of the Cainites.

2.4.3 Marriage among the primitive races

When Emmet and Paterson (1963:623) are discussing marriages among the primitive races in the Old Testament times, they mention two forms of marriages. The first is the matriarchal form where the husband becomes part of the wife's tribe. This was, however, not very common. The second is the more universal patriarchal form, where the wife becomes part of the husband's tribe and that implies that the wife and their offspring become the property of the husband. The husband is her "*Baal*" or 'possessor' (*cf.* Hos 2:16) and she is "*Beulah*" or 'married' (Isa 62:4). The result is that he alone has the right of divorce. The wife is completely and rigidly under the authority of her husband, her "*lord*" (*cf.* Ge 3:16), in this "*Baal*" type of marriage (*cf.* Richards, 1985:433). The researcher is of the opinion that this will imply that she must accept his belief and gods (*cf.* 2.5.3.5). As Van Rensburg (article to be published in 2004:8) points out, the patrilineal relationships could be used to control the women in the self-interest of their husbands. The patriarchal system defines the woman according to her ability to bear sons. Her value is thus primarily situated in being the mother of children and if she is childless, as Emmet (1950:585) indicates, it is a highly unfavourable situation (*cf.* Ge 16:4; 30:1-4; 1 Sa 1:4-6).

2.4.4 Marriage as metaphor in the Old Testament

Marriage is often used in the Old Testament as a metaphor to convey the close relationship between God and his people Israel (Van Wyk, 1998:84). Richards (1985:435) comments on the fact that the prophets freely made use of marriage as an allegory. They called it adultery if the people turned away from their God to adhere to other gods (*cf.* Jer 3:9; Eze 23:37; Den Heyer & Schelling, 2001:220). It is the prophet Isaiah who revealed God as a husband to Israel (Isa 54:5; *cf.* Jer 31:32). God did not reject Israel in spite of their sin, but called them back to renew their intimate marital relationship with Him. Tucker (1988:710-711) states that it is extraordinary that the prophets are utilising a mere human experience to describe the depth and intimacy of the love that God has for his people when they refer to the Lord as the "*husband*" of Israel. This relationship is characterised by righteousness, justice, steadfast love, mercy and faithfulness and it will endure forever (*cf.* Den Heyer & Schelling, 2001:220). In this metaphor God's grace and love and his willingness to forgive

become visible. Emmet (1950:587), Wilson (1988:673) and Post (2000:52) mention the striking example found in Hosea where the following stand out:

- Israel's idolatry is viewed as whoredom and adultery.
- Yahweh still loves Israel, despite her erring ways.
- Hosea's love for Gomer is but a faint shadow of Yahweh's love for Israel.

2.4.5 Old Testament guidelines for the selection of a marriage partner

As mentioned in 2.4.3, it was common in the Old Testament society that the patriarch ruled over his wife and children (Richards, 1985:434-435). One of the responsibilities of the father was to arrange the marriages of all his children (Ge 24; Jdg 14:1-4; *cf.* Emmet & Paterson, 1963:625; Leupold, 1979b:656; Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:79-80). In the Old Testament times, marriages between Israelites and Gentiles were not allowed (Stackhouse, 1987:259). Wenham (1994b:154) comments on the events recorded in Ge 24 and refers to Abraham's urgency that his offspring, Isaac, should marry within the family (*cf.* Speiser, 1964:183). It is worth mentioning, the role that prayer played in the accomplishment of the servant's task (Ge 24:12-14). Another example is seen in the life of Jacob when he goes back to Mesopotamia to find a wife for himself (Ge 28:1-2). This custom is backed by the law (*cf.* Ex 34:16; Dt 7:3), but also by the historical books (*cf.* Jdg 14:3; 1 Ki 11:1-2) and the prophets (*cf.* Mal 2:11). Speiser (1964:183) and Leupold (1979b:659) say that this tradition was supposed to ensure the purity of the line through which God's covenant was to be implemented.

2.4.6 The prohibition of mixed marriages

The patriarchs understood God's prohibition of mixed marriages (*cf.* 2.4.5). God forbade it due to the danger that His people would assume the lifestyle of those who do not follow His decrees and adopt their heathen practices (Bible, 1997:850). Yahweh is concerned with the fact that Israel must consider and acknowledge Him alone as her God. Israel is a holy people, because God chose her and brought her out of Egypt – separated her from the pagans (Mayes, 1979:182). That is why, when the Israelites conquered Canaan, God's command was to annihilate the indigenous populations (*cf.* Dt 7:1-2; McConville, 1994:208). Such drastic action was necessary to rule out the wicked influence of these nations, as the people would be tempted to intermarry with them and that would lead Israel into idolatry (*cf.* Dt 7:3-4), which is exactly what happened because Israel did not obey God's instructions (Merrill, 1994:177-180):

They did not destroy the peoples as the Lord had commanded them, but they mingled with the nations and adopted their customs. They worshiped their idols, which became a snare to them (Ps 106:34-36).

Mayes (1979:183) also mentions the fact that there is a definite link between intermarriage and apostasy (*cf.* Ex 23:32; Ex 34:16). God's intention with the strong prohibition, says Plummer (1948:206), becomes evident by looking at the consequences in the lives of his people when these instructions are not followed, e.g. "*Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods and bow down to them*" (Dt 11:16). God prohibits mixed marriages to prevent idolatry. The prophets also touch on this important issue, e.g. Malachi saw it as a threat to the unity of the community. He asks, according to Mal 2:10-16, the questions: "*Have we not all one father? Did not one God create us?*" The people were denying this central confession of Yahwistic faith by marrying foreigners and the result of these mixed marriages was, that they were being yoked to foreign gods (Hanson, 1988:755; *cf.* Smith, 1984:325). If only the people would have obeyed God's guidelines, it would have prevented them from being lured away from their true focus, the worship of the God of Israel (Bible, 1997:601).

2.4.7 The reality of Old Testament life – mixed marriages

Richards (1985:432) comments that marriage is found in every human culture and that the Bible presents it as a persistent, divine institution, regulated and ordained by the Word of God (*cf.* De Oliveira, 2001:1). Since the fall, however, marriage has always fallen short of the ideal God intended it to be (*cf.* 2.4.6). In the ancient Near East, during the time of Solomon, marriages between royal families were common in order to build friendships (*cf.* 1 Ki 3:1). It was this custom that caused the beginning of Solomon's downfall, because pagan ideas and practices entered the house of Israel (Bible, 1997:601). By the time Israel returned from exile, Breneman (1993:157) states, that many of the Israelites were married to foreign wives, including "*the priests and the Levites*" (Ezr 9:1). As a result of Ezra's teaching, states Williamson (1994a:431), the people began to see marriage with an unbelieving person in the same light as marriage to the local Canaanites. God had prohibited their ancestors from doing this. The leaders acknowledged that they had been unfaithful to God by taking these women into their homes (Ezr 10:2).

2.4.8 Consequences when God's guidelines are not followed

If God's instructions are not followed, there are definite consequences: intermarriage would lead Israel into *idolatry* (Merrill, 1994:177-180). This is exactly what happened. Israel did not obey God's instructions and they started to serve the gods of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites (Jdg 3:5-6). It also happened in the time of Ezra, as seen in 2.4.7. When Breneman (1993:274-275) speaks about the consequences if God's prohibition of mixed marriages not adhered to, he calls it *sin against God*. He refers to Nehemiah's observation about the great king of Israel, Solomon, and his history with his foreign wives. Nehemiah called it "*sin*", "*terrible wickedness*" and "*unfaithfulness to God*" (Ne 13:26-27).

Israel was well aware of the law against intermarriage (Dt 7:3). Ezra thus viewed intermarriage with 'pagan' women as *breaking covenant* with God. Action had to be taken. Ezra taught the people in such a way that they decided for themselves what course of action should be taken. This was done at great human cost (Williamson, 1994a:431). In this crisis situation the only way out was *drastic action* (Breneman, 1993:157-158). The 'pagan' women and their children were "*sent away*" (Ezr 10:3). Ezra chose this option as he faced the effects caused by the influence of the pagan women on the community of faith.

Nehemiah, just like Ezra, took strong measures and direct action to stop mixed marriages. One of Nehemiah's major concerns was that family relationships often threatened cultic purity, because of the influence it has on the next generation, as children are denied the blessing of being brought up in a family where faith is consistently encouraged. Instead, they are confronted with 'mixed' faith. Nehemiah had no doubt that complacency in the spiritual life can have serious consequences and turns a person numb to the effects of sin (Breneman, 1993:274-275). Williamson (1994b:440-441) also comments on the fact that Nehemiah was concerned about the identity of the Jewish community and the danger of compromise. He propagated proper worship of God.

2.5 MARRIAGE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

As seen in 2.4, God gave definite instructions in the Old Testament in order to prevent the Israelites from intermarrying with pagans and consequently being lured into idolatry. As Williamson (1994b:432) puts it, the Jewish community needed a strong sense of identity in order to survive, otherwise there would be a danger that the distinctive elements of faith would be watered down. It is clear from 2.4.8 that there are always grave consequences if God's commands are not followed. This should serve as a reminder to all Christians that they should not do anything that can be detrimental to their spiritual growth. The researcher agrees with the opinion of Hunter (1992:1-2) that the Western world's marital ethos was influenced by the early Christian thought on marriage, sexuality and procreation. It is thus important that Christians take note of the traditions of the previous generations, because it shaped their identity and the identity of the church. Connock and Van Rensburg (2001:80) indicate clearly that the New Testament echoes the use of the husband-wife codes of earlier ethical and philosophical writings. Hence it is important to take a look at the situation regarding marriage in the New Testament to form a foundation from where the unequally yoked marriage can be studied (Hunter, 1992:1-2).

2.5.1 Greek terms regarding marriage

As in the Hebrew language (*cf.* 2.3.1), the Greek word for 'husband' is the same word used for 'man', namely *anēr*, and the word for 'wife' is the common word for 'woman', namely *gynē*. The

word for 'marriage' is *gamos* and 'to marry' is *gameō*. These words portray the same meaning as the Hebrew words (Richards, 1985:435). The Jews in the New Testament times valued marriage and family just as highly as in the Old Testament times. The marital state was considered the norm (*cf.* Eph 5:22; Col 3:18) and it was the proper and honourable thing to do (*cf.* Emmet, 1950:587). Richards (1985:435) states it clearly that God intended the man to leave his parent's home and to establish a permanent union with one woman so that the couple can share their common lives on earth (Mt 19:1-9).

2.5.2 Marriage as a metaphor in the New Testament

De Oliveira (2001:33-34) and Van Wyk (1998:84) refer to the use of marriage as a spiritual metaphor in the New Testament, especially to symbolise the relationship between Christ and the church (Eph 5:22-33; *cf.* 2.5.3.4.8). Leland *et al.* (1998:948) show the spiritual applications of the marriage figure in the New Testament as Christ is portrayed as the bridegroom (*cf.* Mk 2:19; Jn 3:29) and the Church as the bride (*cf.* Emmet & Paterson, 1963:628). His love for her is clear (*cf.* Eph 5:25). She must keep herself holy and free from blemish (Eph 5:27; 2 Co 11:2). The New Testament accentuates the need for holiness and purity (*cf.* Rev 19:7; 21:2-9) through the metaphor of the wedding (Emmet & Paterson, 1963:628). Leland *et al.* (1998:538) also refer to Eph 5:21-33 where Paul reminds the Christians that their relationship with Christ is like a marriage relationship. The wives should thus submit to their husbands as the church submits to Christ and the husbands should love their wives with the same sacrificial love that Christ demonstrated to the church (*cf.* 2.5.3.4.4 - 2.5.3.4.7). In the book of Revelation, when mention is made of "*the wedding of the Lamb*" (Rev 19:7), it refers to the final union between Christ, the Lamb of God, and his heavenly bride, his people. Vine (1981:916) states that the background of this phraseology lies in the Old Testament's description of the relationship between God and Israel (*cf.* Isa 54:4; Eze 16:7-8; Hos 2:19).

2.5.3 The New Testament's teaching on marriage

2.5.3.1 Marriage: God-centred v. man-centred

The Christian view of marriage is unique (Lloyd-Jones, 1975:95-97). The common view of marriage is a pure physical one. It is all about physical attraction and physical gratification. The marriage partners are governed by instincts and impulses. Another view, a little 'higher' than the first and coming from the anthropology, is to see marriage as a *human* arrangement and contrivance. It is a matter of social development. The Christian view of marriage however, as explained by Paul, is governed by the teaching of the Word of God. Paul submits himself to the authority of the Scripture. It becomes clear that marriage is not a human arrangement, but it is instituted by God (*cf.* 2.3.2). Lloyd-Jones (1975:98) goes so far as to say that only a Christian can truly understand and appreciate

marriage. Engelsma (1977:72-73) describes the difference between a God-centred (Christian) view of marriage and a man-centred (non-Christian) view as follows:

For unbelievers, marriage begins and end with themselves: their happiness, their pleasure, their comfort and their will. For the believers, marriage begins and ends with God. It is not for the believer's sake, ease and pleasure, but for God's purpose and honour.

2.5.3.2 Jesus' teaching on marriage

The early Christians inherited a rich tradition of reflection on marriage from the Jews, but in that time there was also a strong movement of apocalypticism which caused many to stay unmarried, like Jesus and Paul (Hunter, 1992:2). Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom of God was near and this fact conveyed an urgency to be devoted to the coming of the Kingdom. There is, however, one passage which gives a different perspective. It is when the Pharisees ask Jesus about the permissibility of divorce (Mk 10:2-9; Mt 19:3-9; Lk 16:18). Jesus' answer demonstrates God's intention for lifelong, monogamous unions and His denunciation of divorce. The early Christians always referred back to this teaching of Jesus when they needed guidance on questions about marital morality. Two thoughts stand out. Firstly that the normal state of marriage is indissoluble and that means remarriage after divorce is adultery. Secondly, that marriage is inherently good, because it formed part of God's creative plan (Hunter, 1992:3).

2.5.3.3 The prohibition of mixed marriages

Breneman (1993:150) draws the attention to the fact that the same principles found in the Old Testament concerning the prohibition of mixed marriages, are also found in the New Testament. In Orthodox Judaism a marriage between a Jew and a non-Jew is forbidden (Stackhouse, 1987:259). Paul's warning: "*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers*" (2 Co 6:14) cautions the believer not to intermarry with someone who does not have faith in Jesus Christ (Breneman, 1993:150). Van Wyk (1998:85) puts it in plain words, that a marriage where neither partners are Christians, can never develop to its full potential. Richards (1985:437) acknowledges Paul's permission for singles to marry, as long as "*the partner belongs to the Lord*" (1 Co 7:39). If the unbelieving partner in the unequally yoked marriage, however, does not want to stay with the believer, the believer is free to divorce the unbeliever and may marry again, as long as *the new partner is also a believer* (Jordaan, 1999:483).

These restrictions stem from the fact that Christians today face the same problems as the children of Israel in the Old Testament times (Breneman, 1993:150). Louw (1993:55) mentions this when he speaks about the differences between Christians and non-Christians. When the couple's general philosophy of life, their convictions, their priorities, etc. drastically vary from one another, the

formation of the “*us-relationship*” in the marriage will be seriously hampered. People often say they don’t get along with their marriage partner because their personalities clash, but Louw does not believe that to be the whole truth. The real reason, according to him, why they struggle to get along, is the difference in their needs, values and norms in life. Paul’s warning: “*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers*” (2 Co 6:14) must thus not be taken lightly.

It is of utmost importance that the “*us-relationship*” of which Louw (1993:55) speaks, should be formed in the marital relationship. Unity between the partners is of extreme importance. A passage in Scripture which is not completely applicable to marriage, but which carries a relevant message for marriage, is found in Mt 6:24 (and the parallel Lk 16:13): “*No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.*” The word ‘master’ suggests a slave owner who requires total allegiance, a choice must be made (Blomberg, 1992:124; cf. Van Bruggen, 1990:116-117; Nolland, 1993:807). Service to a master demands undivided commitment. Discipleship requires in the same way absolute commitment, because where the person’s heart lies determines his interests and energy (Hagner, 1993:159-160). It is the researcher’s opinion that if the focus of the two partners in marriage differs, the formation of an “*us-relationship*” is severely impaired. This is especially true of God and Mammon. God requires self-sacrifice, while Mammon stirs up dreams of self-aggrandisement (Emerton *et al.*, 1988:642).

2.5.3.4 Paul’s views regarding the Christian marriage

There are a few reasons why it is important to take note of Paul’s opinions regarding marriage. The first reason is mentioned by Coetzee (1995:1) and Floor (1982:1): the Holy Spirit made the most use of Paul to put the Word of God on record. Paul is the author of almost half of the books of the New Testament. To be exact, he wrote thirteen of the twenty-seven books. The value and the authority of Paul’s letters were accepted right from the beginning as can be deduced from a testimony already found in the New Testament (2 Pe 3:15-16). Floor (1982:1) also mentions a second reason to indicate Paul’s importance, namely that throughout the history of the church, whenever there is a dispute, Paul often has the final say through one of his letters. He exercised great influence, perhaps as Coetzee (1995:8) puts it, it is because of the wonderful way the Lord God equipped Paul by means of his background to become an apostle of Jesus Christ to the nations. Paul speaks about this when he says that God destined and called him before his birth for service (Gal 1:15). Since his childhood, God was preparing Paul for his apostolic ministry.

2.5.3.4.1 Paul's views regarding singleness

Emmet (1950:587) says that Paul is clearly in favour of the unmarried state (*cf.* 1 Co 7:1,7,8,38) and gives three possible reasons for Paul's point of view. The first reason is temporary: because of the closeness of the Parousia (1 Co 7:31) and the consequent lack of urgency to continue the human race. His second reason for preferring the unmarried state is the difficult times in which the Christians lived (1 Co 7:26) and the last reason is situated in the fact that being married implied certain responsibilities that can cause distractions in the service to God (1 Co 7:32). Even though Paul prefers celibacy, De Oliveira (2001:45-46) mentions Paul's advice to people who struggle to control their sexual desires. A way to avoid lust and immorality, is to marry (1 Co 7:2,9; *cf.* Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:206). Marriage provides the solution for the sin of lust, because once married, the couple should not deny each other the pleasure of sex.

2.5.3.4.2 Paul's Jewish background

Emmet (1950:587) shows that when Paul speaks about the relationship between husband and wife, the influence of his Jewish training becomes evident in his teaching. The husband must love his wife (*cf.* Eph 5:28), even though he is the head of his wife (*cf.* Eph 5:23; 1 Co 11:3,7-11), the wife must obey and fear her husband (*cf.* Eph 5:22,33; Col 3:18) and she will be saved through childbearing (1Ti 2:11-15). Louw (1993:66) puts it concisely when he says that the relationship between the man's headship and the submission of the wife (Eph 5:22-24) must be understood correctly. It is the man's responsibility to take the lead and the wife's responsibility to obey and to support him, because they submitted to one another out of reverence for Christ (Eph 5:21). This is possible, because the man and the woman are equal in value in God's eyes (Gal 3:28), even though there are clear distinctions between them. Headship and submission will be studied later in more detail (*cf.* 2.5.3.4.6 & 2.5.3.4.7).

2.5.3.4.3 Forgiveness principle

Louw (1993:62) asserts that God's plan for marriage, as described by Paul (Eph 5:21-23), cannot be understood apart from the forgiveness principle (Eph 4:32). "*Be kind and compassionate to one another*" (Eph 4:32a) is the norm for any relationship, believers or unbelievers, but when Paul continues with "*forgive each other, just as in Christ God forgave you*" (Eph 4:32b), he is stressing the point that the Christian faith asks more of the Christian (Louw, 1993:59). The love that Christ demonstrated to the church, is a forgiving love. Van Wyk (1998:91) argues that a marriage in which the husband and the wife are not willing to forgive each other again and again, has no hope for survival. The importance of forgiveness lies in the fact that sin or wrongdoing causes separation and alienation between man and God, and also between husband and wife (*cf.* 2.4.2.1; 2.4.2.3). The effect is that the unity in the marital relationship is broken. But there is hope, it can be recovered - through

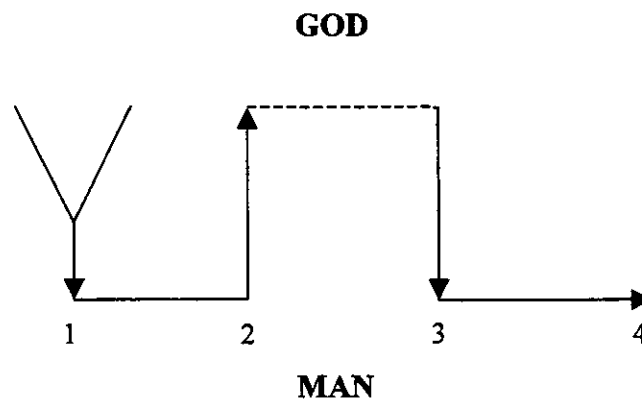
forgiveness (De Klerk, 1997:95-96; cf. Lotter, 1987:27). Furthermore, Louw (1993:59) believes that this plan which is described by Paul can only work for people whose “*minds and selves*” have been renewed (Eph 4:22-23). As far as the researcher is concerned, these opinions of De Klerk, Louw and Van Wyk clearly indicate that a marriage between unequally yoked marriage partners is extremely vulnerable. A problem arises if the unbelieving partner does not understand the importance of forgiveness and is not willing to forgive.

At this point in the study, it is important to look more closely at forgiveness. Lotter (1987:30-34) points out that there are a few Greek words found in the New Testament for forgiveness:

- *Aphiemi* can be translated as ‘let go’, ‘leave behind’ or ‘releasing from guilt or punishment’
- *Apoluo* can be translated as ‘acquit’, ‘set free’, ‘release’ or ‘pardon’
- *Charizomai* can be translated as ‘to be gracious to’ or ‘forgiving’

It is the researcher’s opinion that if somebody has not yet experienced the forgiveness of the Father and of being set free by Him, he/she will find it difficult to forgive his/her spouse. Especially if the spouse is a confessing Christian and there is a bit of animosity in the heart of the unbeliever towards the religious convictions of the believing spouse. The process that goes hand in hand with forgiveness, is the confession of guilt. Lotter (1987:38) reminds the reader that confession of guilt starts with the realization of sin. The Holy Spirit plays an important role in the process: “*When he (Holy Spirit) comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment*” (Jn 16:8).

The whole process of forgiveness is schematised by Lotter (1987:60) and the explanation follows the diagram:



- 1 – God convinces man of sin in his life through the working of the Holy Spirit.
- 2 – Man goes to God for forgiveness.
- 3 – God grants forgiveness to man on the grounds of what Jesus Christ did on the cross.
- 4 – The forgiveness man received from God, can now be extended to other people.

The researcher is of the opinion that if one of the marriage partners is not a Spirit-filled believer, this process will be seriously hampered and may not follow the whole route as only one marriage partner understands and practices forgiveness.

2.5.3.4.4 “Submit to one another”

Submission is a Christian virtue for everyone, not only women (Walker, 1989:120). According to Dahl (1988:1218), Paul alters the common tendency that the master of the house is responsible for the good order in the home by his statement that they must “*be subject to one another*” (Eph 5:21). Lloyd-Jones (1975:85-86) says that the passage in Eph 5:21 is the general and controlling principle which Paul applies in more detail in the next pericope (cf. Muddiman, 2001:256). It is fundamental to understand it, otherwise the rest of Paul’s detailed teaching will be misunderstood. For example, why is Paul addressing the women first and only then the men? The answer lies in the principle of submission. When the husband and wife are *mutually* submissive, asserts Van der Walt (1988:39), they are willing to be submissive to the norm of marriage – marriage as God intended it to be. God does not command from the one partner something that He does not expect from the other partner: *authority* over each other (1 Co 7:4), *submission* to each other (Eph 5:21) and *mutual respect* (1 Pe 3:6,7). Floor (1995:186) is also of the opinion that Paul is not referring to slave-like subjection, but to voluntary servitude.

To explain the idea of mutual submission, De Bruyn (1993:173) uses the image of the husband as the *head* of the house and the wife as the *heart* of the house. For the effective functioning of the body, these two cannot stand in a conflicting relationship, but must rather stand in a complementary relationship where they submit to each other. The fact that they must submit out of reverence for Christ, is an indication that the mutual submission is not without limits. This is only possible among people who are filled with the Holy Spirit. It means that the husband and the wife are mutually dependent on each other, they must help each other, listen patiently to each other, grant each other enough living-space, respect each other’s feelings, opinions and abilities and they must give each other the opportunities to develop their individual gifts (De Bruyn, 1993:174).

2.5.3.4.5 “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord”

“*Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord*” (Eph 5:22). Paul, according to Lloyd-Jones (1975:101-102), not only *reminds* the wives to be subject to their husbands, but he *instructs* them to submit. The reason: “*as to the Lord*”. By this Paul does not mean that the wives must submit to their husbands in exactly the same way as they would to the Lord, namely ‘slaves of Christ’. Paul means that the wives must submit to their husbands because it is part of their duty to the Lord, an expression of their submission to the Lord (cf. Eph 5:21). The woman does not submit to her husband for his

sake, but for the Lord's sake, because it is His will (*cf.* Connock, 2000:61). It forms part of the woman's discipleship. Calvin (1965:205) says that a wife cannot obey Christ if she does not yield to her husband. This creates the right spirit in the woman's heart. In this situation, the Christian wife has the opportunity to show that she is different from the rest of the world. Chapell (1998:79-81) and Slaughter (1996a:72) concur with Lloyd-Jones' opinion when they say that the submission of the wife is not determined by the fact whether the husband deserves it or not, but by God's purposes (*cf.* Connock, 2000:61). She does it in the first place for God and not for her husband. She finds her motivation to submit in her love for Christ who died and suffered for her on the cross. She obeys and submits, not because her husband deserves it, but because God deserves her devotion. The love of Christ compels her to obey God (*cf.* 2 Co 5:14). If a wife undermines her husband's authority (unless he requires her to trespass God's law), she disobeys God. Submission is thus an act of worship to God.

The researcher is of the opinion that the exhortation of Paul according to Eph 5:21-22, must be seen in the light of the passage that follows, namely "*for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church*" (Eph 5:23). Another passage in Scripture that is important to incorporate at this point is the passage according to 1 Co 11:3 "*the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God*". These passages focus the study at this point in time on the difficult subject of *headship*.

2.5.3.4.6 Headship

As seen in 2.5.3.4.5, Paul speaks of the husband as the 'head' of his wife. In the patriarchal system of the ancient Near East, men considered women as inferior and an object to do with as they pleased. Paul addresses men and women in this system about their responsibilities in marriage (Louw, 1993:67). According to Olthuis (1995:430), there is a strong movement to challenge the conclusion that headship in marriage means masculine authority and feminine submission, but, as Chapell (1998:30) puts it, the way the word 'head' is being used in the Bible, does carry the idea of authority, but then not an authority that means superiority. Piper and Grudem (1992:16) define biblical headship as the husband's divine calling to take responsibility for Christlike leadership, protection and provision.

Lloyd-Jones (1975:109-110) feels that the 'headship' of the man has nothing to do with inferiority, it is simply a question of order (*cf.* Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:26). To understand the headship better, it is necessary to look at what Paul means when he says that "*the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God*" (1 Co 11:3). He believes that Paul is saying that just like Christ submitted and subordinated Himself to the Father for the sake of the

salvation of the human race, the wife must be prepared to submit herself voluntarily to her husband. If she is not willing to do this, she may not even contemplate marriage.

Richards (1985:436) mentions two meanings of the word 'head', namely 'source' and 'authority'. He argues that when Paul is using the word 'head' (Eph 5:23), he gives to both meanings the emphasis that it must be exercised in *love* (cf. Olthuis, 1995:430). Chapell (1998:32) says that the fact that the husband's authority is compared to the authority that Christ has over the church (Eph 5:24), legitimises his authority, but also limits it. As far as Floor (1995:189) is concerned, headship means responsibility. Richards (1985:436) continues by saying that the husband must give himself to his bride in such a way that he helps her to actualise her full potential. There is no question of a tyrannically male-dominated household where the wife is only for the pleasure and benefit of the husband. Thus, Louw (1993:67) argues, Paul is not calling the wife into a slave-like submission to the selfish desires of the husband, but to a choice on her part to support her husband in his spiritual function as the head of the covenant.

According to Van der Walt (1988:32-35), 'headship' is sometimes used in the Bible to indicate the position of the superior with regard to the inferior, e.g. the fact that Christ is the head of the church. Other times 'headship' refers to equal status, e.g. God as the Head of Christ. The question is whether the Bible wants to say something about *status* when the man is called the 'head' of the woman. Contrary to Richards' two meanings for the Greek word for 'head', namely *kephalē*, Van der Walt mentions four different meanings:

- An indication of the 'whole' person.
- An indication of the 'source', 'genesis' or 'growth point'.
- An indication of an 'unifying principle'.
- An indication of 'leadership' or 'authority'.

Van der Walt argues that the meaning of 'head' as 'source', 'genesis' or 'growth point' fits in well with marriage (cf. Richards, 1985:436). Christ as head is the source of love and gives the example of how the man must love and serve his wife unselfishly in self-surrender. The man, as head/source, provides the climate for his wife to develop to her full potential. The meaning of 'head' as 'unifying principle' can also be applied to marriage. If a person's neck is severed, the whole body dies. The metaphor of the man as the head of the woman conveys thus an idea of closeness, unity and mutual dependency. It is important to remember that marriage/ 'one flesh' must not be understood only in a biological and physical sense, but also as a psychological-, educational-, economical-, juridical-, aesthetic- and religious unity. The meaning of head as 'leadership' or 'authority' is understood by many as the only possibility to correctly understand 'head'. They see marriage as having a hierarchical character. In this way, the woman is obliged to obey and submit to her husband. This

wrong understanding of 'headship' comes from the wrong understanding of the punishment at the fall. The punishment does not mean that the man *should* rule the woman and that the woman *should* give birth in pain and suffering – the result of the fall may never become the norm which human kind try to maintain.

Speaking about the 'headship' of the man, it is important to take note of the views of the Christian Feminism on this issue. Storkey (1987:180) starts by commenting on the difficulty to translate the Greek word for 'head' – *kephalē* – into an exact English equivalent (*cf.* Eph 5:23; 1 Co 11:3). She argues that the word 'head' is not used in terms of Christ's authority over the body, but in terms of Christ as 'source' or 'origin' of the body (*cf.* Col 2; Van der Walt, 1988:32-35; Chapell, 1998:29). She mentions four different views on understanding 'headship' (Storkey, 1987:181-182).

The first view is based on the passage according to 1 Ti 2:13 where the order in which man and woman were made, was laid down in creation. The divine hierarchy is understood as: Christ – man – woman. Just as man stands under the authority of Christ and must submit to Him, in the same way the woman is under the authority of man and must submit to him. The consequence of this line of thought is that men are the women's 'heads' in church, in public office, in business and in the family life. 'Headship' is thus about having *authority* and making decisions and exercising discipline.

According to a second view, 'headship' is limited to only two institutions, namely marriage and church. The woman is subordinate to the male headship of the elders in the church and may not have any position of authority (*cf.* 1 Co 14; 1 Ti 2). She must also be submissive to the headship of her husband in marriage (*cf.* Eph 5; Col 3; Tit 2:5). The authority structure between the husband and wife is however, linked to the relationship between Christ and the church, and therefore the authority will be exercised in love and care.

The third view given by Storkey (1987:181-182) sees 'headship' in terms of marriage only. To understand it properly, the analogy of Christ and the church must be taken into account (*cf.* Eph 5). Men must love their wives with a sacrificial, self-denying love as Christ loved the church. He set the example of a servant, thus the essence of headship is *servanthood*. Louw (1993:67) affirms that when Paul is referring to the headship of the man, he is not referring to the man's value, but to his *service* function (*cf.* Van der Walt, 1988:32-35). The husband must serve his wife with the reconciliation and grace of the gospel, just as Christ served the church (*cf.* Olthuis, 1995:430; Chapell, 1998:34; Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:145). Paul is not exhorting the wives to 'obey' their husbands as children and slaves must obey (*cf.* Col 3:20,22), but to 'submit' to them (Storkey, 1987:181-182). The Greek word is *hypotasso* which involves a voluntary act.

The last view that Storkey discusses, centres in Paul's concern about the unity in the body of Christ and that the unbelievers outside the church should not be caused to stumble (*cf.* Van der Walt, 1988:32-35). That is the reason why he gives his exhortation that the husbands must *love*, the slave-owners must be *lenient* and *just*, the wives must *respect* and the slaves must *obey*. By this Paul is not endorsing slavery, neither is he instilling a male-female subordinate hierarchy – he is only stressing the proprieties in those situations. Hardesty (2001:162), another feminist writer, agrees with the meaning of 'headship' as 'unity'. In conclusion, Storkey (1987:183) states that nowhere does Jesus put forward an authoritative hierarchical model, neither does Paul (*cf.* Van der Walt, 1988:32-35; Hardesty, 2001:162-163). Olthuis (1995:430) also stresses the point that any suggestion about the inferiority of the woman is in opposition to the Bible's insistence that the sexes are of equal worth (*cf.* Ge 1:27; Gal 3:28).

The researcher agrees with the opinion of Lemmens and De Vriese (1999:141-142) that teaching about submission and headship is not popular in this modern era, because the understanding of authority is affected by sin. It is however the researcher's opinion that following God's guidelines in this matter is the only way in which His full blessing can be experienced in marriage. The researcher agrees with the opinion of Richards that 'headship' carries two meanings, namely *source* and *authority*. The climate in which the husbands authority must be exercised, is love – the kind of self-sacrificial love that Jesus Christ demonstrated on the cross. Love will determine and limit his authority, because it will not be an authority of superiority, but of servitude. The researcher agrees with Van der Walt by understanding 'headship' as 'source' as the way in which the husband helps his wife to actualise her potential, to become fully the person which God intended her to be.

2.5.3.4.7 Submission

According to the researcher, a concept that goes hand in hand with 'headship', is 'submission'. Lemmens and De Vriese (1999:141-142) observe that there are many different ways in which people understand "*submit to one another*" (Eph 5:21). Submission (Eph 5:22; Col 3:18; 1 Pet 3:1) is not a popular teaching in this modern era and it is quite understandable, because the picture of authority is affected by sin, which always give rise to suppression and exploitation. It is fundamental to have a biblical understanding of submission, because it is central in God's teaching about relations. It is necessary to understand that God's order of authority has nothing to do with inferiority or superiority, but with a voluntary partnership, because it is submission as if to the Lord.

Some scholars see in the word 'headship' a hierarchy of authority (Motyer, 1995:822; *cf.* Richards, 1985:436). It starts with God, then it is reflected in human relationships and ultimately in the relationship between Christ and the church. In the same way the Son submits to the Father (1 Co

15:28), so the church submits to Christ, the wives to their husbands and everyone to the authorities ordained by God. 'Submission' is, however, different from 'obedience'. 'Submission' is the recognition of the sovereignty of God over everything that is going on in this world, including the life of the individual. Paul uses the word 'submission' in regard to marriage, not 'obedience' (cf. Connock, 2000:37). When Paul is referring to 'headship' (1 Co 11:3; Eph 5:23) it should not be understood as referring to a hierarchical authority and patriarchy, but must rather be seen as referring to intimacy, union, responsibility. In this sense 'submission' must rather be understood as self-giving in love than recognition of status.

The Greek word for 'submit' is indicated by De Oliveira (2001:62) as *hypotasso*. According to Louw and Nida (1989:468), it means to conform to some standard as a means of demonstrating its purpose and can be translated by the following English words: 'to obey', 'to conform to' or 'to submit to'. De Oliveira (2001:63) comments that this word is found in many places in the New Testament (cf. 1 Co 11:3-12; Eph 5:22-33; 1 Ti 2:11-14; 1 Pe 3:1,5-6; Col 3:18). In relation to marriage it means that the wife should place herself under the authority of her husband, all her plans and organisation must thus be done in consultation with him. It is not an *option* for the modern woman, but it is an *imperative command* from the Word of God. She must submit in obedience to God, to please her Lord. Although it is an imperative, Slaughter (1996a:70) prefers to see it as *voluntary subordination*. The biblical meaning of the word 'submission' is 'a disposition to yield' or 'voluntary yielding in love' or 'not to exercise authority over' (Piper & Grudem, 1992:15). In such a spirit of voluntary yielding, the wife will be able to complete her husband – which is God's purpose for her (Chapell, 1998:85).

Lloyd-Jones (1975:103-105) says that Paul gives two clear reasons why wives should submit to their husbands. The first has to do with this relationship between the Lord Jesus Christ and the church: "*for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church*" (Eph 5:23). The second reason has to do with "the order of creation". God ordained and decreed that the husband is the head of his wife – that is the order that God gave in creation (Ge 2). The natural priority for man follows from the fact that man was created first, the woman was taken out of the man and she was created as a "*help*" for him. Furthermore, it is to man that God gave the task to rule over creation. God gave man a position of leadership, lordship, authority and power (cf. Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:26). Calvin saw the woman as spiritually equal to the man, but in the marriage as subordinate. He based his arguments also on the creation narrative (the order of creation): the man was created first, the woman was taken out of man and the sin came into the world through the woman (Van der Walt, 1985:20). It seems to the researcher that Van der Walt (1988:6) strongly disagrees with the opinion of Lloyd-Jones and Calvin regarding this 'order of creation'-argument. Van der Walt argues that although Adam was created first, that is *temporal priority*, it does not mean that he has the authority

position and permanent superiority. The fact that the woman was taken out of the rib of the man, also does not mean that he is superior, because he played no active role in her creation. It is rather an indication of their sameness and equality.

The researcher prefers the opinion of Slaughter (1996a:70) when he understands submission as *voluntary subordination*. He is of the opinion that the biblical meaning of the word 'submission' is 'a disposition to yield' or 'voluntary yielding in love'. In such a spirit of voluntary yielding, the wife will be able to fulfil her God-given role to be a suitable helper for her husband, as Chapell (1998:85) puts it. The woman submits to her husband for the Lord's sake, because it is His will (*cf.* Connock, 2000:61). It forms part of the woman's discipleship. She finds her motivation to submit in her love for Christ who died and suffered for her on the cross. She obeys and submits, not because her husband deserves it, but because God deserves her devotion. Submission is thus an act of worship to God. In such a way, the researcher believes, a husband and wife can experience marriage as the blessing God intended it to be.

2.5.3.4.8 Christ and the church

As Lloyd-Jones (1975:97) says, to fully understand marriage as an institution by God, it is important to understand the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ and the church (*cf.* 2.5.3.4.6 & 2.5.3.4.7). Dahl (1988:1218) agrees with this opinion when he refers to the fact that Paul uses the relationship between Christ and the church as a model for the human marriage (*cf.* De Bruyn, 1993:171). He draws the attention to two important points that Paul is making regarding the husband. Firstly, the husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church (*cf.* 1 Co 11:3; Eph 1:22-23; 2.5.3.4.6). From Christ's example it is clear that headship means taking responsibility, even to the point of personal sacrifice (*cf.* Van Wyk, 1998:90). Headship needs strength of character and quality of heart (*cf.* Van der Walt, 1988:35). It is about selfless acts on behalf of those committed to his care (*cf.* Van Wyk, 1998:91). There is no room for passivity (Chapell, 1998:26-27). Secondly, the husband must love his wife as Christ loved his bride, the church, and gave his life for it (*cf.* Eph 5:25-27; Eze 16:8-14; 2 Co 11:2; Rev 21:9). De Bruyn (1993:171) emphasises the kind of love that Christ demonstrated towards the church. As Calvin (1965:205) mentions, this love is no ordinary kind of love. It is the greatest kind of love that can exist, a self-sacrificial love for the sake of the salvation of his people (Eph 5:25). This is the way in which the husband must love his wife. It is not a love that is directed towards himself, but towards his wife (De Bruyn, 1993:171).

To really understand Paul's teaching, it is important to take a closer look at this love that Christ demonstrated when He gave his life for the church. Lloyd-Jones (1975:130-135) discusses the three Greek words for the English word 'love' (*cf.* De Klerk, 1997:107-108). The first Greek word is *eros*,

but it is not used in the New Testament (*cf.* Mikolaski, 1987b:10). This love belongs entirely to the carnal flesh. It can also be translated as 'erotic' and is completely selfish (*cf.* De Oliveira, 2001:27-32). De Bruyn (1993:168) does not agree with the opinion of Lloyd-Jones and Mikolaski that *eros* does not feature in the New Testament. De Bruyn sees *eros* as the love where the sensual and the sexual are emphasised (*cf.* Ge 3:16; Pr 5:18-19; Ecc 9:9; SS 7:7-8; 1 Co 7:2-5,9). Erotic love has an important function in marriage, as marriage is a union of love where sexual intercourse plays an important role in view of reproduction, but also as an expression of the partners special love and fidelity toward each other. It is also an expression of their oneness. Lloyd-Jones (1975:130-135) continues by referring to the next two Greek words for love found in the New Testament. The one is *phileo* and the other one is *agapao*.

Phileo means 'to be fond of'. The classic illustration of the use of this word is found in the passage where the Lord speaks to Peter (Jn 21:15-17) after his resurrection to reinstate him (*cf.* De Oliveira, 2001:25-27). De Bruyn (1993:169) explains this love as the love of friendship which links two persons together in close relationship to become bosom friends. Their hearts almost become one. The relationship is characterised by confidentiality, warm-heartedness, tenderness, intimacy and understanding of each other's feelings and opinions. They also feel responsible for each other and can laugh, weep and pray together.

Agapao is used most often in the New Testament to convey God's love for mankind (Lloyd-Jones, 1975:130-135; *cf.* Mikolaski, 1987b:10). When Paul gives the husbands the order to love their wives, he is using this word *agapao* meaning 'love as God loves' (*cf.* De Oliveira, 2001:22-25). This love is the fruit of the Spirit. If a man is not a Christian, he cannot show this kind of love, because he is not filled with the Spirit. De Bruyn (1993:169-170) speaks about this love as the self-denying love - the strongest kind of love possible between people (*cf.* Mikolaski, 1987b:10). *Eros* is a love *because* of something, but *agapao* is a love *despite* something. It is a love with a purpose and it is willing to work hard and to sacrifice a lot for the sake of the beloved. Christ loves his church despite her sin and guilt. He was willing to go through bitter suffering, sorrow and the death on the cross on her behalf. Love is the essence of God's character: "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8). God is triune and love is the essence of the divine interpersonal relationship (Jn 17:23). God deals with mankind through his love (1 Jn 4:10). This love becomes the sphere of Christian life (Jn 15:9) and becomes the pattern for human relationships (Mikolaski, 1987b:11). This is how the husband must love his wife.

When Paul speaks about the wife's responsibility in the marriage, he is referring to the submission of the church to Christ (Eph 5:24; *cf.* 2.5.3.4.7). Paul urges the wives to submit to their husbands and to show respect and devotion to them in the same way that the church shows it to Jesus Christ (De

Bruyn, 1993:171). Christian marriage, marriage as God intended it to be, is thus only possible where two committed believers are joined in marriage. Paul's controlling idea with regard to the husband is to love his wife, whereas the controlling idea for the wife is submission, just as Christ loves his church and the church submits to Christ (Lloyd-Jones, 1975:130-135).

2.5.3.4.9 "One Flesh" – Two halves of one

Paul speaks about the profound mystery of the union between Christ and the church (Eph 5:32). It is important that Christians should try to understand this mystery as it throws light on the union between husband and wife (Roberts, 1990:167; Stott, 1999:231). In fact, as Guthrie (1990:539) puts it, the relationship between Christ and the church becomes the pattern for Christian home life. Muddiman (2001:271) states that throughout the history of interpretation, this text found in Eph 5:32, has become the basis of the indissoluble bond created by marriage. De Klerk (1997:76) indicates that this mystery of the union between Christ and the church gives marriage an eschatological dimension as marriage is a metaphor of the love between Christ and his church that will come to fullness at the wedding of the Lamb (Rev 19:5-9; 21:9).

Lloyd-Jones (1975:118-119) and Floor (1995:195) mention that Paul emphasises the organic, vital union, the intimate relationship between Christ and the church in the image of a body: "*the Head, that is Christ, from him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and build itself up*" (Eph 4:15-16). This same organic union, says Paul, exists between husband and wife (*cf.* De Klerk, 1997:76). Floor (1995:195) indicates that the couple must make this unity visible to the outside world. The secret of the love between husband and wife has its roots in the everlasting love that Christ has for the church. Lloyd-Jones (1975:118-119) says that, the couple forms one life and they are dependent on each other: "*Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour*" (Eph 5:22-23). Paul means by this that the wife is being kept, guarded and provided for by her husband, just as Christ nourishes and cherishes the church (*cf.* Roberts, 1990:167). That is her position in their relationship – the husband is the preserver, the saviour of the body (*cf.* Floor, 1995:189). The relationship of the body to the head is the same as the church to Christ. The idea of "complement" is strong again – it carries the idea of wholeness and completeness. The body is not a collection of parts, but it is a unity, it is whole. Just as Christ and the church are one, in the same way are the head and the body one (Lloyd-Jones, 1975:122-123).

This relationship between the head and the members of the body is an intimate one. The relationship between husband and wife is thus more than a mere external relationship. Adam says that Eve is "*bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh*" and therefore she shall be called 'woman', because she was

taken out of 'man' (Ge 2:23). Paul then says that "*we are members of his body*" (Eph 5:30). It happened through Calvary that children of God are bone of His (the second Adam) bones and flesh of His flesh. Calvin (1965:209) explains that Christ engrafted the believers into his body through the power of the Holy Spirit. Lloyd-Jones (1975:186-193) continues by saying that the church is taken out of Christ. He says that Paul wants to explain something about the extraordinary unity between Christ and the church. Adam was incomplete without Eve. The church is the fullness of Christ (Eph 1:23). Christ, as Mediator, will not be full and complete until every soul for whom He died has been gathered.

Lloyd-Jones (1975:212-221) argues that in Paul's teaching about Christian marriage, the unity – two who have become one – is essential (*cf.* Roberts, 1990:167). The husband must know that his wife is part of him. They are more than mere partners, she is the other half of the man – because they are "*one flesh*" – they are two halves of one (*cf.* 2.4.2.3). The husband's thoughts must thus always include his wife, because they are physically, intellectually and spiritually one. It is the opinion of the researcher that in marriage, the partners become physically one and the ideal is that they will also become one on the spiritual level, but they will never be able to become one intellectually. Peel (1987:246) concurs that becoming 'one flesh' means sexual union, but the couple must also become one in mind and spirit. They must care for and support each other through all stages of life. This unity is very difficult to attain if the husband and wife differ on the important aspect of religion. Lloyd-Jones (1975:212-221) insists that there is no room for individualism in marriage. Despite this, God appointed specific tasks to the two sexes and according to Paul these differences were created by God Himself (Bible, 1991:1496).

2.5.3.4.10 The roles of the husband and wife in marriage

To be able to investigate the unequally yoked marriage, it is also important to look at what is required by God of each partner in marriage.

2.5.3.4.10.1 The role of the husband

Leland *et al.* (1998:413-414) identify different roles of the husband according to the different levels of life: .

On the *physical level*: he must provide substance for his wife, just as Adam had to do for Eve. The husband is the provider and is responsible for the livelihood of his family (*cf.* Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:146).

On the *sexual level*: his role as lover and sexual partner is implied in Ge 2 and the marriage covenant with his wife calls him to lifelong sexual faithfulness. Richards (1985:437) calls Paul's teaching about sex "stunning" when he writes: "*The husband should fulfil his marital duty to his wife, and*

likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife" (1 Co 7:3-4). His teaching corresponds with the teachings of the Jewish rabbis who said that the husband owes his wife a sexual duty. De Bruyn (1995:645) mentions the fact that this view regarding sexual behaviour in marriage corresponds with the viewpoints of the Puritans in this regard. As far as they were concerned, the omission of sexual duty was a punishable transgression.

On the *spiritual and religious level*: the husband has a headship role to play (*cf.* 2.5.3.4) as the New Testament depicts him explicitly as head of the family (Eph 5:23; *cf.* Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:147).

On the *emotional level*: Col 3:19 calls the husband to nurture his wife with gentleness, love and devotion (Leland *et al.*, 1998:413-414; *cf.* Lemmens & De Vriese, 1999:146-149).

2.5.3.4.10.2 The role of the wife

The Bible depicts the essential role of the wife as consort and companion to her husband, according to Leland *et al.* (1998:947). She is created as helper and must support her husband (*cf.* De Oliveira, 2001:56-58). In Ge 3:16 the role of childbearer is mentioned and thus her role as sexual partner. Paul also refers to her sexual role (*cf.* 2.5.3.4.10.1). She accompanies her husband on his journeys through life and plays an important role in the moral and religious instruction of their children (Pr 1:8; 6:20). Lemmens and De Vriese (1999:153-154) mention that the wife must love her husband and children. She must be self-controlled, pure in word and deed with a clean conscience. She must be busy in her home, creating an atmosphere where her family can be free and feel at home (*cf.* Pr 31). Mack (1991:28) comments on the Proverbs 31 woman. According to him she shows four priorities in her life: her relationship with God, her ministry to her family, her development of godly character and her godly conduct to people in and outside her home. Finally, Paul and Peter exhort the wife to submit to her husband (Col 3:18).

2.5.3.5 Peter's views regarding the Christian Marriage

Peter stresses the worth and value of each partner in the marital relationship. He is also stressing their spiritual equality (Wheaton, 1994:1378; *cf.* Richards, 1985:437; BIP, 1993:1953). He urges husbands to "*be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life*" (1 Pe 3:7). Peter uses the word 'considerate' when he speaks about the conduct of the husbands to their wives. 'Considerate' can be understood as 'wise'. Peter urges the husbands to hear from God how they must treat their wives and then to put it into practice (Vosloo & Van Rensburg, 1999:1724; *cf.* Michaels, 1988:168; Van Houwelingen, 1991:114). The word that Peter chose to use for the love and understanding that a Christian husband owes his wife, is "*respect*" (1 Pe 3:7). This corresponds with the Bible's teaching that men and

women complement one another in their relationship. The husband is physically the stronger one in the relationship, therefore must he cherish his wife and provide for his family. Peter also commands the wives to submit to their husbands (1 Pe 3:1). If the couple is following these guidelines, they will be able to pray without hindrance (1 Pe 3:7; Vosloo & Van Rensburg, 1999:1715; Connock, 2000:49).

According to Richards (1985:436), the Christian must continually be sensitive to the culture in which he/she lives. He/she is always under the obligation to do what is right according to the standards of the culture where he/she finds him-/herself – that is, as long as such cultural norms do not oppose the higher divine law. Connock (2000:59) does not agree with Richards' view that subjection is culture specific. That would mean that the wives must submit to their husbands in the same way as slaves to their masters. Richards (1985:436), however, is of the opinion that it seems as if Peter is exhorting the wives to submit to their husbands in the same way as the Christians must submit to the government and their slave masters. In the New Testament world, where the husbands were legally and socially responsible for their wives, such a point of view is understandable. It is appropriate that the believing wife should offer the same submission to her husband in their marriage as she does to the laws and norms of society. The submission that Peter is urging the Christian wives to practice, is submission only up to a point, because complete deference means wholehearted acceptance of the husband's religion and for him, the lordship of Jesus Christ remained non-negotiable (Van Houwelingen, 1991:109; cf. Michaels, 1988:171; Piper & Grudem, 1992:15; Connock, 2000:59).

It is important to take note of Slaughter's opinion that the word 'submit' does not imply inferiority, but the maintenance of divinely willed order (Slaughter, 1996a:70). He reminds his readers of the example of Jesus, who, as the Son of God, subjected Himself completely to the Father (Mt 26:39-42; 1 Co 15:28) and still remained equal to the Father in His divine essence. The wives must thus submit themselves voluntarily to their *own* husbands, in spite of the fact that they are honoured as fellow heirs with their husbands (1 Pe 3:7). Peter is using the words "*to your own husbands*" to illustrate the closeness and tenderness of the relationship between husband and wife. The use of these words also underscores the fact that submission is only within the marriage, not outside of it (Slaughter, 1996a:71).

Peter, according to Slaughter (1996a:67), is addressing different groups, e.g. mistreated slaves (1 Pe 2:18-21), harried wives (1 Pe 3:1-6), hassled husbands (1 Pe 3:7), believers struggling in civil affairs (1 Pe 3:8-4:19), church elders threatened by younger people (1 Pe 5:1-4) and young people chafing under the leadership of an older generation (1 Pe 5:5). To all these people comes the same exhortation: "*Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men...*" (1 Pe

2:13-17). This is why, when Peter starts to address the wives, he uses the words “*in the same way*”. Slaughter (1996a:72) confirms that it is difficult for a wife to submit to her husband when he treats her well, how much more difficult when he treats her harshly. This is also true when the wife finds herself in an unequally yoked marriage where her husband is not a believer. To help her, Peter gives a good perspective when he explains that submission is not a human endeavour, but a divine one. When she submits to him, it is not for her sake, neither for his sake, but for the Lord’s sake (1 Pe 2:13), for the One who “*bore her sins in his body so that she might die to sin and live for righteousness*” (1 Pe 2:24). Her motive for submission becomes the desire to do what is right.

Peter refers to the wife as the “*weaker partner*” (1 Pe 3:7). This does not mean that she is inferior, but all the more reason that the husband must treat her with understanding and respect and honour her as his equal (BIP, 1993:1953; *cf.* Michaels, 1988:168; Van Houwelingen, 1991:115-117). The weakness refers to the physical body and not to personhood or sexuality (Michaels, 1988:169; *cf.* Connock, 2000:72).

2.6 UNEQUALLY YOKED MARRIAGES

According to the passage in 1 Co 7:12-16, it is clear that there were in Corinth, as in most Christian congregations today, some couples where one of the partners was still unconverted. Paul addresses this situation (McLuhan, 1991:119).

2.6.1 The metaphor of the unequally yoked marriage partners - 2 Co 6:14

Paul uses the metaphor “*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers*” (2 Co 6:14) and Garland (1999:331) draws the attention to the Greek word *heterozygountes* that can be translated as ‘other yoked’ or ‘unequally yoked’ (*cf.* 2.2.4). The word used by Paul is related to the adjective used in the LXX’s version of Lev 19:19, prohibiting the mating of different species of cattle (Garland, 1999:331; *cf.* Thrall, 1994:472). Bruce (1971:214) refers to the Greek word *heterozygeō* and translates it as literally meaning ‘diversely yoked’. The poor people often had to use unequally yoked animals to do the ploughing, but the results often were unsatisfactory (Jordaan, 1999:479).

Almost all commentators agree that ‘unequal yoked’ means ‘yoking or joining together’ two different kinds of animals, e.g. an ox and a donkey (Webb, 1992b:162). Webb is of the opinion that the background probably comes from two passages in the Old Testament, namely Lev 19:19 and Dt 22:10 (*cf.* Plummer, 1948:206; Bruce, 1971:214; Barnett, 1999:130). God made a clear distinction between the species and man ought not to join together what He has set apart. Budd (1996:280) suggests that this prohibition is to maintain order, as each has its proper place. In this regard Hayes (1988:174) also says that when God created, He created “*according to their kinds*” (*cf.* Ge 1:12, 24).

By giving this instruction, God is preserving the independence of plant and animal species which were divinely established and reflects wholeness (*cf.* Miller, 1990:162; McConville, 1994:220). Wright (1994:148) is of the opinion that Israel had to demonstrate their religious separation by observing certain practical detachments in ordinary life (*cf.* Lev 19:19). Garland (1999:331) explains how Paul is applying this metaphor to the marriage where an alliance between spiritual opposites is not possible. The believer who bears Christ's yoke (Mt. 11:30) cannot share it with someone who denies Christ.

As far as Jordaan (1999:480) is concerned, the unequally yoked-prohibition in the Old Testament (Dt 22:10) can easily be understood on practical grounds, but there is also another dimension to consider. Being yoked together is more than just a *physical union*, there is also an *emotional/spiritual connotation* involved (*cf.* Mayes, 1979:308). This is being confirmed by the related prohibition found written in Lev 19:19. He believes that it was not difficult for the people of Corinth to conclude the following: it is as inappropriate for dissimilar people to be associated together as it is for dissimilar animals to be yoked together. They understood exactly what Paul meant when he spoke about the 'unequally yoked' – the Christian on the one hand and the non-Christian on the other hand. Barnett (1999:130) goes so far as to say that Paul is using this metaphor to say that the Christian is of a different breed than the unbeliever and is therefore not allowed to have any improper relationship with an unbeliever.

2.6.2 How to understand the metaphor of the unequally yoked marriage partners

There are, according to Furnish (1984:372) and Jordaan (1999:470), different views as how to understand the instruction by Paul that the believer must not be yoked together with the unbeliever. Calvin (1964:89) is of the opinion that Paul is not talking about marriage, but about partnerships as he prohibits any fellowship with unbelievers. Paul is warning very strongly against being yoked together with unbelievers, because of the danger of idolatry. Being yoked together, according to Calvin, is the same as having fellowship with the fruitless deeds of darkness. Without fellowship with an unbeliever, the believer will be free from pollution. Kruse (1994:1198) also understands the prohibition of Paul to refer only to participation in heathen feasts and other heathen practices.

Furnish (1984:372) is of the opinion that the passage does not give enough information so that these kinds of conclusions can be made. He feels that it is better to see it as a general appeal like "*keep oneself unstained from the world*" (Jas 1:26). Jordaan (1999:469) confirms that the prohibition of Paul is applicable to a wide scope of relations, like labour-, business-, religious- and political relations. From the grammatical and thought-structure analysis of the text and its socio-historical context, however, he has no doubt that it is especially applicable on marriage relationships. He refers

to older interpreters like Plummer who also understand Paul's warning as referring to the prohibition of mixed marriages (Jordaan, 1999:470; *cf.* Webb, 1992b:168-169).

2.6.3 The function of the rhetorical questions in 2 Co 6:14-16

Paul begins the passage in 2 Co 6:14-16 with an imperative. He reminds the Corinthians of the Jewish prohibitions against unnatural combinations (*cf.* Lev 19:19; Dt 22:9-11). The function of the five rhetorical questions is to show the scope of the imperative (Murphy - O'Connor, 1991:68). Jordaan (1999:481) believes that Paul wants to make it clear that there is nothing common between righteousness and wickedness (*cf.* Barnett, 1999:130). By the construction of the five questions, it is clear that a negative answer is anticipated every time. Essentially the same question is being asked and the outcome is the same (McCant, 1999:67). There can be no fellowship between light and darkness, because the moment the light appears, darkness must flee (Jordaan, 1999:481). Christ and Belial can never agree (*cf.* Calvin, 1964:90; Bruce, 1971:214). In the same way, the believer and unbeliever will never be in agreement and have nothing in common (*cf.* Plummer, 1948:206; Thrall, 1994:457). Jordaan (1999:482) argues strongly that if somebody is reconciled with God, it implies a calling on his/her life for sanctification. The Christian, because he is a temple of God, is set apart from unholy activities and unbelievers (*cf.* Calvin, 1964:91; Garland, 1999:332-336). This is true not only for the people of Corinth, but for Christians of all times and thus Paul's warning is relevant for Christians today.

2.7 BELIEVER IN UNEQUALLY YOKED MARRIAGE:

1 CO 7:12-16 & 1 PE 3:1-2

According to De Klerk and Van Rensburg (2002:49), to prevent an one-sided interpretation of any pericope, it is compulsory to consult other relevant parts of the Bible.

2.7.1 1 Co 7:12-13

Richards (1985:437) and Barrett (1994:163) agree that it is clear from 2 Co 6:14-7:1 that mixed (unequally yoked) marriages are undesirable, but it is possible that one of the partners has been converted after the marriage and as Bruce (1971:69) puts it, find themselves in matrimonial difficulties as the result of conversion to Christianity. There is no doubt in Barrett's mind that Paul is clear about the fact that the Christian partner in a mixed marriage is not to be the one who takes the initiative in ending the marriage (Barrett, 1994:164; *cf.* Louw & Nida, 1989:457; McLuhan, 1991:120). Breneman (1993:165) holds the same opinion and adds that if the unbeliever wants to leave, the believer must let him/her go (*cf.* Louw & Nida, 1989:457). Calvin (1968:147) says the believer must not only let the unbeliever go, but he/she is freed from the bond of marriage (*cf.* Louw

& Nida, 1989:475; McLuhan, 1991:122). Bruce (1971:70) explains that the fact that the believer is not bound is almost amounting to the state of widowhood and presumably remarriage is not excluded. Orr and Walther (1976:212-213) argue that although Paul takes Jesus' teachings given in Mt 5:31-32; 19:9; Mk 10:11-12 and Lk 16:18 as binding on the church, namely that Christian divorce is forbidden, he argues that the situation is different when the Christian is married to a non-Christian. Divorce is permissible, but the decision lies exclusively with the unbeliever.

2.7.2 1 Co 7:14

The relationship between husband and wife is very close (*cf.* 1 Co 6:16). Calvin (1968:148) comments on the fact that it is therefore understandable that the believer can fear 'pollution' or 'contamination' by the unbeliever (*cf.* Orr & Walther, 1976:213; Fiorenza, 1988:1177; 2.3.5.3). Paul declares that the marriage between a believer and an unbeliever is sacred and pure and that the believer needs not to fear. Bruce (1971:69) interprets Paul's words: "*For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife*" as an extension of the Old Testament principle of holiness by association (*cf.* Ex 29:37). Thus, the unbeliever is in a state of sanctification through the association with the believer. Barrett (1994:164-165) confirms the fact that the Christian partner has a sanctifying effect on the relationship and on the unbelieving partner. In this way the children are also sanctified and part of the covenant. It is important to note what Calvin (1968:148) is saying about the sanctification of the unbeliever. He states clearly that the sanctification through the believing partner has no benefit for the unbelieving partner *per se*. It only ensures that the close relationship with the unbeliever will not contaminate the believing partner.

2.7.3 1 Co 7:15

As far as Paul is concerned, a mixed marriage is considered a Christian marriage and may not be ended by the believer. Moule (quoted in Barrett, 1994:166) states that the words "*God has called us to live in peace*" can be translated as 'into a peace in which He wishes us to live'. It is God's will that men and women should live in harmony. Peace and harmony will not be furthered if the Christian partner ends the marriage on religious grounds, because that will only bring more strife (Barrett, 1994:166). As long as the unbeliever is willing to stay with the believer, the marriage must continue, but if the unbeliever wants a divorce, the Christian is under no obligation to prolong the marriage, especially if peace is at stake (Richards, 1985:437).

2.7.4 1 Co 7:16

Bruce (1971:69) comments that in the Old Testament, the words 'who knows whether' are being used in a hopeful sense of 'perhaps'. The mixed marriage has in this sense missionary potentialities (*cf.* Fiorenza, 1988:1177; McLuhan, 1991:121). Barrett (1994:167) shares this opinion by saying that the

believer should not initiate a divorce, because conversion may come as a result of the spoken or the lived witness (1 Pe 3:1, *cf.* 2.7.5.3). As long as there exists such a possibility, the Christian should endeavour to pursue it (*cf.* McLuhan, 1991:127; Jordaan, 1999:483; 2.7.5.3).

2.7.5 1 Pe 3:1-2

According to Slaughter (1996a:64), there are five major motives occurring throughout Peter's first letter, namely the believer's behaviour, the believer's unfair treatment, the believer's deference, the believer's motivation by Christ's example and the believer's anticipation of future glory. He summarises Peter's message as follows:

The behaviour of believers when they encounter unfair circumstances should reflect a spirit of deference in all relationships as they follow Christ's example and anticipate future glory.

Peter's teaching about submission by women to their husbands must thus be read against this backdrop to fully understand it and to make the right application in life.

2.7.5.1 No retaliation

Connock (2000:73) says that in 1 Pe 3:1-7, Christian wives of non-Christian husbands are seen to be discriminated against (*cf.* 2.7.5.2). Peter teaches his readers how to react as Christians in the harsh world where they find themselves being treated unfairly and unjustly (Slaughter, 1996a:64-66, Vosloo & Van Rensburg, 1999:1715). Peter wants to encourage the believers who suffer because of their faith through his letter. They must not be surprised when they experience injustice, they must rather expect it. Peter's message to them is that unfair treatment never justifies an offensive attempt for retribution (*cf.* 1 Pe 2:20; 3:8-9,14,17). On the contrary, he calls the believers to reveal a spirit of humility and respect. This implies honour, obedience, respect, submission and subordination even to those who treat them wrongly. Peter assures his readers that what he expects of them is possible, because God is with them and their imperishable inheritance awaits them in heaven. When things are difficult, they must always keep the example of their Lord (1 Pe 2:21-25) in mind.

2.7.5.2 The unbelieving husband

In the passage under consideration, Peter is specifically addressing the situation where the husband is an unbeliever (Slaughter, 1996b:200). It is even possible that the unbeliever can be openly and actively hostile to the gospel, slandering the Christians and this can result in a very difficult marriage for the believing wife (Michaels, 1988:157; Van Houwelingen, 1991:108). If the husband rejects the gospel message, sets himself against Christ and the church and intimidates his wife because of her faith in Christ, Peter's advice to her is to be submissive to her husband (1 Pe 3:1). Vosloo and Van

Rensburg (1999:1724) comment on the meaning of being submissive. They understand it as a willingness to serve the other (*cf.* BIP, 1993:1952). Paul's exhortation given in Eph 5:21 is that the husband and the wife must submit to each other. If the husband is not a believer, the submission is only one-sided which makes it even more difficult (BIP, 1993:1952). By submitting to her unbelieving husband, she is displaying her trust in God to work through constituted authority (1 Pe 2:13-17), even if the person holding that authority is disobedient to God's Word (Slaughter, 1996b:200). In this she will be following the example of her Lord (1 Pe 2:21-25). The wife of the unbelieving husband will only be able to follow Peter's advice by the spiritual power of the Holy Spirit (BIP, 1993:1952).

2.7.5.3 Spiritual fruit

The word "*winning*" (1 Pe 3:1) can be understood as leading the person to Christ, the actual conversion of the unbeliever (Michaels, 1988:157-158). Peter is of the opinion that the unbelieving husband may be won for Christ through the deferential behaviour of his wife rather than through her sharp arguments. Van Houwelingen (1991:108) is of the opinion that the gospel can become visible without a word spoken. He argues that the word and the deed are not alternatives, but that they complement and supplement each other. A holy life has a powerful influence. Slaughter (1996b:205) also believes that it is possible that the husband may not yield to the spoken word of the gospel, but that the silent demonstration of the gospel's transforming power in the wife's daily conduct, may speak very loud and clear. The believing partner is often tempted to 'preach' to the unbelieving partner if he/she does something wrong, but the wives are called to demonstrate a non-argumentative spirit (Vosloo & Van Rensburg, 1999:1724). This corresponds with Peter's exhortation to be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks about the hope they have, but it must be done in a spirit of gentleness and respect (1 Pe 3:15).

"Purity and reverence" (1 Pe 3:2) are not referring to the wife's Christian character, but to the purity and sincerity of her relationship towards her unbelieving husband (Slaughter, 1996b:207; *cf.* Michaels, 1988:158). There is in her conduct no sign of impure or manipulating motives. Her sincerity in being a godly and submissive wife, together with her respectful treatment of her husband, despite of his opposition to her convictions, will demonstrate the reality of her supernatural faith. Exactly this, may win him for Christ.

Peter's teaching (1 Pe 3:1-6) shows that even an 'unequal' marriage, in Paul's words 'an unequally yoked' marriage, can be an opportunity for the believing partner (in this case the wife), to achieve spiritual goals (Slaughter, 1996c:364). Women in such marriages often experience great distress and emotional pain, but Peter gives hope. The unbelieving husband may be won over for Christ by the

wife's sincere, respectful behaviour. This difficult situation has potential for spiritual growth for the believing wife as well (*cf.* Ro 5:2-5; Jas 1:2-4).

2.8 BASIC THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHAPTER 2

- 'Marriage' is a divine and permanent institution, a life-long covenant between a man and a woman.
- The ideal marriage, as God intended it to be, prevailed before the fall.
- The moment sin entered the world, the sinless harmony was distorted, including human and authority relationships.
- Marriage is often used in the Old and New Testament as a metaphor to convey the close relationship between God and his people.
- God forbade mixed marriages in the Old Testament due to the danger of being lured into heathen practices.
- The same instruction is found in the New Testament: Paul warns the Christians not to marry unbelievers: "*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers*" (2 Co 6:14).
- To fully understand marriage as an institution by God, it is important to understand the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ and the church, as found in the New Testament:
 - The husband must love his wife as Christ loved his bride, the church.
 - The wife must submit to her husband and show respect and devotion to him as the church shows it to Jesus Christ.
 - Marriage as God intended it to be, implies *mutual* submission.
 - Husband and wife are more than mere partners, they are two halves of one.
- An 'unequally yoked' marriage refers to a couple where one partner is a believer and the other partner not.
- Divorce is permissible, but the decision lies exclusively with the unbeliever.
- The believing wife must submit to her unbelieving husband, as he may be won over for Christ.

CHAPTER 3: METATHEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE UNEQUALLY YOKED MARRIAGE

3.1 INTRODUCTION / OBJECTIVES OF THE CHAPTER

In chap. 2 a basis theory was established according to the hermeneutical model of Zerfass. The aim of this chapter is to establish a metatheory, because, as Heystek (2000:126) explains, a practice theory is not complete without the integration of metatheoretical insights (*cf.* Lartz, 2002:9; Reinecke, 2003:49). Venter (1993:247) understands metatheory, as a theory in which scientific departure points are expounded, which are common to other disciplines studying aspects of the same nature. Disciplines in the human sciences that will be studied in this dissertation for the purpose of the metatheoretical perspective are Sociology, Psychology and Social Anthropology (*cf.* 1.6.1). These disciplines will be used interchangeably without always indicating the specific discipline.

In order to establish a metatheory, the researcher will pursue the following objectives:

- To expound certain key concepts.
- To investigate some theories on marriage and families.
- To view the changing scene of marriage and families.
- To research the important determinants for marital success.
- To investigate the influence of religion on marriage.
- To do an empirical study on the problems of the unequally yoked marriage by using semi-structured interviews.

In order to get a metatheoretical perspective on the unequally yoked marriage, it is important to understand how the human sciences view marriage, what developments or changes have been identified in the marriage relationship over the past decades and what are regarded as important ingredients for a successful marriage. As the emphasis of this study is the pastoral guidance of marriage partners, where one is a believer in the Triune God and the other partner is not, it is particularly important to explore the influence of religion on the marriage relationship.

3.2 EXPOSITION OF TERMS

Marriage and family are among the oldest human social institutions (Schwartz & Scott, 1994:2). These concepts were discussed in chapter 2 from a biblical perspective, but it is also important to look at them from a human science perspective. The researcher agrees with the opinion of Eshleman

(1994:69) when he says that the marriage and family area is highly interdisciplinary and that no single discipline will be able to answer all the questions.

3.2.1 Marriage

A recent definition of marriage is given by Davidson and Moore (1996:21): “It is a legally binding contract between a woman and a man that conveys rights and privileges, including sexual exclusivity, legitimation of any children born of the union and economic responsibilities.” Traditionally, the definition of marriage in the US was that it is a legal contract between a woman and a man who are above a specified age and who are not already legally married to someone else. As a result of the far-reaching changes that have occurred over the last few decades, Schwartz and Scott (1994:2) prefer a more reality-based definition: “A union between two people that unites partners sexually, socially and economically, that is relatively consistent over time and that accords each member certain agreed upon rights.”

The South African Family Law gives the following definition of a marriage: Traditionally, marriage is seen as the lawfully approved, life-long, voluntary commitment between one man and one woman exclusively (Cronje & Heaton, 1999:23). There are, according to Cronje and Heaton (1999:137), three conditions for the lawful ending of a marriage:

- by the death of one or both marriage partners,
- to nullify a defeasible marriage,
- through divorce.

Another popular definition, according to Lasswell and Lasswell (1991:22-25), is that marriage is an institutionalised process whereby specified men and women ceremonially begin and generally maintain a mutual relationship suitable for the purpose of founding and sustaining a family until it is dissolved by death or divorce.

The following *social criteria* are given to characterise marriage:

- There is some form of sexual access among the people involved.
- There is an economic relationship between the people involved.
- The people involved relate to one another in symbiotic patterns, that is mutual support and interdependence.
- The relationship endures over a period of time.

There are also *cultural criteria* to characterise marriage:

- The relationship is heterosexual, even though there are now movements to legalise homosexual relationships.

- The relationship is monogamous.
- The relationship is directed toward the establishment of a family, through procreation or adoption.
- There is a division of tasks with specific roles of the partners.
- There is love among the participants in the relationship.
- The marriage partners have a common residence.
- People with certain kinship relationships cannot be partners in a marriage.

Waite and Gallagher (2000:17) see marriage as a social institution which not only certifies a pre-existing relationship, but it changes people's goals and behaviour in ways that are profoundly and powerfully life-enhancing. Marriage creates a new unit of consumption and production as goods (children) are produced for the partners and the rest of society. Marriage is a creative act. The public commitment made during the wedding, changes the way a person thinks about him-/herself and the loved one and changes the way the person acts and thinks about the future. To see marriage as *a unit of consumption and production* from a Christian point of view, is extremely dehumanizing and should be rejected (*cf.* 2.3.2).

From the above mentioned definitions and from the biblical perspective given in 2.2.5, the researcher proposes the following definition: **Marriage is a divine, permanent institution, legalised by a contract, that binds a man and a woman in a life-long, voluntary and exclusive union. From this union children may be born or children may be adopted.** By virtue of the researcher's Christian convictions, the movement to define marriage in terms of a union between two people (*cf.* Schwartz and Scott, 1994:2), instead of a union between a man and a woman cannot be accepted.

3.2.2 Family

There are different ways in which a family can be defined. Davidson and Moore (1996:23) define it as follows: "Two or more people who share resources, share responsibilities for decisions, share values and goals and have a commitment to one another over time."

Sociologists prefer to make a distinction between a historic/traditional and a more current definition of a family. Schwartz and Scott (1994:3) mention a historic definition that explains the family as follows: "A family is two or more persons living together and related by blood, marriage or adoption." They also give a more contemporary definition: "Any relatively stable group of people who are related to one another through blood, marriage or adoption, or who simply live together and who provide one another with economic and emotional support. There are feelings of love, respect, commitment and responsibility to and identification with one another."

There are different types of families:

- Family of orientation: the family into which the person is born (Schwartz & Scott, 1994:2; *cf.* Eshleman, 1994:92; Davidson & Moore, 1996:23).
- Family of procreation: the new family that is formed by marrying and having children (Schwartz & Scott, 1994:2; *cf.* Eshleman, 1994:92; Davidson & Moore, 1996:23).
- Nuclear family: the basic residential family unit, theoretically consisting of two adults of the opposite sex living with their own and/or adopted non-married children (Davidson & Moore, 1996:23; *cf.* Eshleman, 1994:92; Schwartz & Scott, 1994:2).
- Extended family: the wife, husband and non-married children plus one or more other generations, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, married children, or grandchildren, occupying the same household (Davidson & Moore, 1996:24; *cf.* Eshleman, 1994:94; Schwartz & Scott, 1994:2).
- Postmodern family: a less uniform family which may include single parents, step-parents, same-sex-parents and surrogate parents (O'Neill & Pittman, 2000/2001). More attention will be given to contemporary family patterns in 3.4.4.4

3.2.3 Love

The fact is that all people need love. The medical profession affirms that love enhances physical well-being and psychologists believe that love is of crucial importance for emotional survival as it confirms the person's sense of worth. Lamana and Riedmann (1994:86) define love as follows: "Love is a deep and vital emotion resulting from significant need satisfaction, coupled with a caring for and acceptance of the beloved and resulting in an intimate relationship."

During the 70's, several studies were done on love (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:73-74). One theory, the wheel theory of love, proposes that there are four major processes in the development of love:

- Rapport – the extent to which two people feel at ease with one another.
- Self-revelation – the extent that each partner feels free to be open with the other.
- Mutual dependence – the way both rely on each other.
- Need fulfilment – the ability of each one to meet the needs of the other one.

Love grows with the flow from one process to the other in either direction (*cf.* Schwartz & Scott, 1994:99-101).

3.2.4 Religion

Religion always begins with an experience of an individual or a group of people. The individual or the group reacts on the experience and this starts the process of interaction between the religion and the community. Thus, the following definition is given by Connelly (1996): "Religion originates in

an attempt to represent and order beliefs, feelings, imaginings and action that arise in response to direct experience of the sacred and the spiritual. As this attempt expands in its formulation and elaboration, it becomes a process that creates meaning for itself on a sustaining basis, in terms of both its originating experience and its own continuing responses.”

3.3 RESEARCH ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILIES

Much research on families and marriages has been done by the human sciences and the researcher considers it important to look at some of the theories regarding families to see what can be learned from it, especially in reference to the interaction between marriage partners and the possible role that religion plays in the marriage relationship.

3.3.1 Background

The first research about the successes and failures in relationships between men and women, was published in 1929. Since then, much research has been done on different facets of family and married life (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:25). As a result of the research, a vast amount of knowledge has come into being and many theories have developed in this field. The aim of theories is to explain phenomena and to demonstrate cause and effect. There is no single theory of marriage and families in sociology (Schwartz & Scott, 1994:41). The theories guide researchers as to what to study, what questions to ask and what methods to use. Lotter (2004) remarks that recent research is more positive towards marriage as an institution.

3.3.2 Theories on marriage and families

Theories about marriage and family shed light on the reasons for marriage and why it continues, the interaction between the marriage partners, the significance for society, etc. It is not likely that one theory will be able to explain everything about a topic so vast as marriage (*cf.* 3.3.1). There are, however, a few major theoretical approaches that seem to dominate the scene (Schwartz & Scott, 1994:41; *cf.* Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:26).

3.3.2.1 Functional theory

The first theory that Lasswell and Lasswell (1991:26) mention, is the functional theory, which explains the reason for the existence of families as maintaining a population and to fulfil needs. Furthermore, the family serves the purpose of nurturing and protecting infants and teaching them to socialise, so that they can become independent. For the classic functionalist, the married male is the instrument to provide food and shelter for the family and to represent the family in the community. The role of the married female is to take care of the home, look after the children and to be available for her husband (*cf.* Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:128; Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:28).

3.3.2.2 Conflict theory

The basic assumptions of the conflict theories are (1) that humans are interested in material objects which they want to own and processes which they want to control; (2) that access to these objects and processes differ because of unequal power distribution in society; (3) that the less powerful can reorganise and use their collective strength to change existing social systems (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:27). Conflict arises due to the fact that those in power resist change in order to maintain the dominant positions. Conflict theory explains the power struggles in husband-wife relationships originating from inequality within the marriage (*cf.* Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:129; Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:32-33; Schwartz & Scott, 1994:43-45).

3.3.2.3 Symbolic interaction theory

The departure point for the interactionists is the belief that the human being is born with the necessary mechanisms to create and store meanings from sensed stimuli and that these meanings (symbols) are being used to interpret situations and behaviours of others and in the end these symbols also determine the interaction between people. The focus of the symbolic interaction theory is how people respond to each other and how they define themselves and others (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:27-28; *cf.* Burr, 1995:84-85). Each person has a subjective interpretation of the world which determines his behaviour and which is much more powerful than any truth. Davidson and Moore (1996:38-39) are of the opinion that this theory is useful to explain the societal expectations of certain roles played by family members and the identities they form for themselves. It is also useful to explain peoples' behaviour in small groups, like families (*cf.* Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:128-129; Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:30; Schwartz & Scott, 1994:46).

3.3.2.4 Exchange theory

The main emphasis of this theory is, the concepts of rewards and costs in any interaction. Human beings look for rewarding exchanges in relationships and try to keep the costs lower than the rewards. This theory helps to understand the process of decision making in a family (Davidson & Moore, 1996: 38). Every person has at his disposal certain resources, e.g. money, talent, wisdom and affection, which can be used to reward desirable behaviour of others. These rewards can unfortunately become sources of power in decision making. Couples in conflict can thus be helped effectively by giving attention to the exchanges they make. The ideal is that both partners maximise the rewards for the other partner (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:28; *cf.* Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:129-130; Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:31; Schwartz & Scott, 1994:46-48).

3.3.2.5 General systems theory

The theory views individuals not as autonomous, but as elements in a structure of interlocking relationships. The family is thus a group of related elements that interact as a whole and they influence each other. Family rules, usually unstated, are the patterns by which the family interacts. Alliances and coalitions are formed and subsystems emerge. The fundamental principles of family systems are interrelatedness and adaptability (Davidson & Moore, 1996:35-36; *cf.* Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:129; Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:28-29; Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:32; Burr, 1995:85-86; Day, 1995:93-100).

3.3.2.6 Developmental theory

Individual development and ageing of family members influence the interaction patterns in families, e.g. marital satisfaction varies over the life span of married couples (*cf.* Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:126-127; Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:28; Burr, 1995:80-82). Marriage is studied in the developmental stages: courtship, love, mate selection, marriage, child rearing, empty nest and ageing. It is clear that the life cycle is tied to changes in relationships (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:29). Davidson and Moore (1996:36-38) argue that the individual's life also evolves over his life span as he reacts to certain universal developmental challenges. There are three biological and environmental influences that shape the human life-span journey especially:

- Normative age-graded influences: people in the same age group experience the same influences, e.g. processes of puberty, menopause and retirement.
- Normative history-graded influences: historical facts that a particular generation experience, e.g. war and economic depression.
- Non-normative life events: experiences specific to the individual, e.g. teen pregnancy, death of parent and unexpected inheritance.

3.3.2.7 Feminist perspective

There is no single unified view among the feminists' theories, but the term is used to represent a diversity of feminist perspectives that contain certain common characteristics – a view of society and human experiences from a woman-centred perspective (Schwartz & Scott, 1994:49). Burr (1995:87-88) explains the main ideas of feminist theory as gender inequality which exists in society and its oppressive and stifling effect on women. There is a moral imperative that emancipation must occur. The liberal feminist movement started in the 60's with Betty Friedan, who argued that women were enslaved by domesticity and were defined by their roles as mother and wife. She did not want to eliminate marriage, but challenged women to reach outside of marriage for fulfilment (McElroy, 1996; *cf.* Segal, 1997:296). All feminists renounce the oppression of women and celebrate the ways women have taken charge of their own destinies. The purpose is not only to understand the social

attitudes and institutions that determine women's positions in society, but it is also to enhance social change to liberate women. They believe that the social structure offers different opportunities and constraints to women and men (Davidson & Moore, 1996:39-40).

Gender feminists, like Kate Millett, moving away from the liberal feminism, attack and reject the family as it is the foundation of patriarchal capitalism and thus the source of women's oppression. Recently, the outright condemnation of marriage and the family is not so strong anymore. The discussion of marriage in feminism has shifted over the past few decades (McElroy, 1996). There is an attempt to combine love and commitment, caring and freedom in such a way that it is less oppressive to women (Segal, 1997:313). Lotter (2004) asserts that recently feminism is playing a more constructive role in research on marriages and families.

3.4 A CLOSER LOOK AT MARRIAGE AND FAMILIES

The focus area of this study is the pastoral guidance of the unequally yoked marriage partners. In chap. 2, marriage was viewed from a biblical perspective, but it is also important to get a broader perspective on marriage by referring to the importance of marriage, the history of marriage, how the concept of marriage has changed over the last few decades and what the factors are, according to the related human sciences, which influence marital success and satisfaction. The researcher is especially interested to investigate the importance of different values and religious orientations on marital relationships. Perspectives from Sociology, Psychology and Social Anthropology will be used interchangeably.

3.4.1 A historic look at marriage

The ancient Hebrew family system is the earliest documented family system and it is interesting to note that several contemporary family values and customs also prevailed then (Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:30). Plato was of the opinion that the god Zeus, because of anger, cut all humans in half and love comes to a person if he/she meets his/her other half. His definition of love had more to do with beauty and goodness within a person than with sexuality. This led to the term 'platonic love' – love that does not involve sexuality. In ancient Rome and Greece, marriage was arranged and institutionalised for procreation purposes only – to ensure the merging of estates or political power of families by producing common heirs (*cf.* Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:169; Golden, 1991:64; Schwartz & Scott, 1994:88). In the 3rd and 4th century Roman empire, women had no choice but to concede to arduous family demands and arranged childhood marriages (Wittberg, 1999:504). Love was not considered important for marriage. Women's role consisted in bearing and caring for the children (Schwartz & Scott, 1994:88). This continued during the Middle Ages and led to much human tragedy as marital unfaithfulness was common (Casey, 1989:87). The early Christian communities

legislated little on marriage and it was only in the 9th century that ecclesiastical law began to take shape, for instance, marriage was not allowed within seven degrees of kinship on the father's or the mother's side (Casey, 1989:69-70).

Allowance for romantic love came into being somewhere between the 10th and 12th centuries when the views on platonic and sexual love merged (Schwartz & Scott, 1994:89; *cf.* Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:70-71). During the 12th century the foundation for the European concept of marriage was laid by spiritualising and making official sexual relationships. It was an attempt to discipline sexuality. It was also done with the full knowledge that marriage had implications for property and social hierarchy. The result of the process was that marriage became a proper contract with public witnesses (Casey, 1989:90-91). The Reformers viewed marriage as a secular vocation which worked through common sense. It was established through a contract between two responsible adults and there was no room for ambiguities like sexual sins. The moral emphasis was more on the claims of God than on the needs of man. The Puritans, with their godly zeal, required a new kind of commitment, a unilateral submission to the standards of moral behaviour (Casey, 1989:106; *cf.* De Bruyn, 1995:649; 2.3.5.2). The roots of the modern Western family and the norms by which it operates can be found in the early Judeo-Christian tradition (Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:46). Over the last thirty years, however, the most basic and universal of human institutions, marriage, has been transformed into something controversial. As Waite and Gallagher (2000:1) indicate, marriage is under attack. There are people who believe that a lifelong vow of fidelity is unrealistic and even oppressive, especially to women. Marriage is seen, already as early as the 60's, as a potential threat to individual fulfilment, as it often opposes autonomy, independence, growth and creativity.

3.4.2 The importance of family/marriage

Although modern families may experience serious problems, marriage and family are still regarded as extremely important in the Western world, people still report high levels of satisfaction with their family life and people still see "being happily married" as one of the most important objectives in life (Schwartz & Scott, 1994:8; Waite & Gallagher, 2000:3). Saxton (1993:221) stresses the point that the family is one of the basic units of society and of uttermost importance. It produces the next generation, but also plays an important role in the socialisation of the children. For most Americans, according to Aguilar *et al.* (2000:7), the family is still the central institution in their lives, the place where they experience unconditional love and acceptance, but also the place where virtues like independence and obligation towards others are cultivated.

According to Lasswell and Lasswell (1991:4), sociologists, psychologists and anthropologists emphasise that society is only possible because of the social arrangement called family (*cf.* McElroy,

1996). The family as a social institution provides for individual family members the 'roots' they need to live (*cf.* Wilson, 1993:9). Saxton (1993:222) makes it clear that the family also provides in the physical needs of the individual, as well as the needs of the individual for emotional support, intimacy and love. The indispensability theory maintains that societies will not be able to continue without some form of institutionalised family life (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:4; *cf.* McElroy, 1996).

3.4.3 The traditional views regarding family and marriage

Traditionally, the functions of the nuclear family were defined as reproduction of new members, sexual regulation, economic co-operation and education. It was later expanded to include protection and order, socialisation of the young and the transmission of individual goals and societal values (Davidson & Moore, 1996:24). By traditional family values and dynamics, DeFrain and Olson (1999:309) refer to the virtues of lifelong marriage between members of the opposite sex and children resulting from the marriage. There are a few traditional views:

- being married is better than being single,
- being married is better than living together,
- having children is better than not having children,
- two parents are better than one,
- biological parents are better than stepparents,
- a mother at home is better than a mother at work.

It is interesting to take note of the remarks of the American Assembly on the traditional family structure. They assert that recent social science research still indicates that children, on average, do socially, emotionally, intellectually and developmentally better in healthy, intact two-parent families. The research also shows that married couples are healthier, wealthier and live longer (Aguilar *et al.*, 2000:9).

3.4.4 The changing scene

Family relationships between husbands and wives and between parents and children have changed considerably in modern times. Between the late 17th century and the 20th century, there was a move from calculated to more affective behaviour. Material considerations for mate selection were replaced by romantic love and McIsaac Cooper (1999:22) is of the opinion that migration and industrialisation gave more freedom to families to live out their affective behaviour. The family ties to the outside world became weaker and privacy and intimacy increased in marriage. According to Elkind (1996), society and the family are fundamentally influenced by world events such as wars, the woman's movement and civil rights movements. Waite and Gallagher (2000:3) believe that America is on the verge of becoming a postmarriage culture which does not mean that nobody marries, but it means that marriage is viewed as unnecessary and optional – a private taste. The result is that marriage is no

longer viewed as vital to children, single motherhood is elevated in status and is no longer seen as a family tragedy. There are movements which propagate that women should have the right to have children out of wedlock. Marriage is no longer seen as a uniquely honourable relationship, but as just another relationship. In the Western world there is even a reluctance to use the word 'marriage', e.g. the Marriage Guidance Council of Australia's name changed to Relationships Australia. In the academic world, the same trend is visible: marriage is considered one form of coupling and uncoupling or one possible intimate lifestyle (Waite & Gallagher, 2000:7-8). Lasswell and Lasswell (1991:36) mention the enormous challenge that exists to balance the best of the past (traditional models) with the best of the present (ideology of equality).

3.4.4.1 Changes in families and marriages

Lasswell and Lasswell (1991:9-11) contend that there is a change in the expectations of relations between family members: a move from the institutional family model (an all-encompassing family) to a family model of companionship (a relatively liberated group of people who are tied together by affection). This includes changes in views about sexual freedom, gender roles, romanticism, mutual interdependence, mixed marriages and definitions of masculinity and femininity. McIsaac Cooper (1999:22) comments on the change that children are no longer the sole responsibility of the mother, but that the father has become involved.

There are also, according to Davidson and Moore (1996:33-34), visible changes in family and marital values:

- Individualism: there is much emphasis on individual happiness and if the individual is not feeling happy any more, divorce is justified to end the unpleasant relationship.
- Self-actualisation: it is now a goal for women in their relationships with men.
- Family well-being: a few family sociologists believe that the nuclear family is breaking up and that two essential functions of the family cannot be performed elsewhere: child rearing and the provision of affection and companionship to the family members.

Orthner (1995:4-7) also mentions a few changing family values and beliefs:

- The value of marriage v. independence: people value their independence more.
- Individualism v. collectivism: personal interests are more important than interests of others.
- Commitment v. autonomy: this refers to the responsibilities v. the freedom to enter and leave obligations.
- Nurture v. narcissism: people are more concerned about themselves than others.

When Orthner (1995:3) comments on the seemingly negative picture of the family emerging in recent times, e.g. the high divorce rates, women in the labour force, children unattended at home or in day-

care centres, non-marital cohabitation and increasing number of single people in the population, he is making a very important point. According to Orthner, the fundamental question is not how to stop the family changes, but how to minimise their disruptive potential on vulnerable groups like children.

Differences between the modern - and the postmodern family, given by O'Neill and Pittman (2000/2001), can be summarised as follows:

MODERN FAMILY	POSTMODERN FAMILY
Values togetherness	Values autonomy
Is child-centred	Is parent-centred
'Maternal love' is a universal construction	'Maternal love' is a social construction
The child is dependent on adult attention, supervision and protection.	The child is capable of dealing independently.

When Elkind (1996) discusses the differences between the modern and the postmodern family, he also mentions the family value of *togetherness* that is important to the modern family v. the *autonomy* of the postmodern family. According to him, all other relationships and allegiances are subordinate to that of the modern family, where as personal fulfilment weighs more in the postmodern family than family obligations. He also mentions the need of the children for adult protection against the world v. the idea that children are competent and more in need of preparation to handle the world.

3.4.4.2 Changes in gender roles

Over the last two generations, the roles of men and women within marriage have become blurred (Waite & Gallagher, 2000:15). In the 70's, sociologists identified four masculine roles:

- "No sissy stuff": men must dissociate themselves from anything considered feminine.
- "A big wheel": men had to reach occupational success.
- "A sturdy oak": the man must be confident and self-reliant, even tough.
- "Adventure": men must outwit, humiliate and defeat his opponents; be visible in contact sports and war.

During the 80's the "liberated" male emerged. He became emotional, sensitive, expressive, tender and valued equal relationships between the genders. Changes also occurred in the female gender roles. Traditionally women were supposed to offer emotional support, to be good listeners and to be adaptable. They were their husbands' 'helpmates' and 'good mothers' for their children. Over the past thirty years the woman's role has changed to the 'professional woman' who is independent, ambitious and self-confident (Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:52-53; cf. Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:52-54).

DeFrain and Olson (1999:320) contend that there are advantages and disadvantages involved with this trend in society that the mother has become part of the labour force. McElroy (1996) says that in 1950 only 18% of American mothers with children under 18 years were employed, but in 1980 the figure had risen to 54%. One definite disadvantage is that two jobs create more stress in the home and it can lead to relational problems. They mention some advantages (DeFrain & Olson, 1999:320):

- The income of the family increases which alleviates financial stress.
- The self-esteem of the mother increases.
- Power is balanced more equitably.

Although there are fathers who resist becoming involved in childcare and housework, there are those who have risen to the challenge and who have developed excellent relationships with their children. It is clear that both genders are capable of success in a variety of roles at home and at work (DeFrain & Olson, 1999:321). Young couples, especially if they don't have children, are more egalitarian than older couples when it comes to beliefs, feelings and attitudes about marital and family roles. It is interesting that old patterns persist, even though there are changes in gender roles. There still persists a strong distinction between "men's work" and "women's work". It seems as if housework or domestic activity is the last bastion of tradition (DeFrain & Olson, 1999:322).

3.4.4.3 Changes in marriage and family structures

Due to the importance of families mentioned in 3.4.2, it is not surprising that there is great concern about tendencies in society like the high divorce rate, domestic violence, intergenerational alienation and sexual freedom outside marriage. There are currently a variety of different family forms found in the Western world, e.g. single-parent families, stepfamilies, dual-paycheque families, communal families, cohabiting families and same sex families (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:4). This probably has happened because the traditional family does not suit the new social conditions anymore. The different kinds of family structures may not be acceptable to all, but they seem to function well (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:5).

DeFrain and Olson (1999:323) comment on the fact that there has always been diversity in family patterns, but that the diversity is currently more visible and there is a broader acceptance of different contemporary families (*cf.* Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:5). Traditionally, the classical nuclear family was the only accepted pattern, but in today's society, multiple family patterns are gaining credibility (*cf.* 3.4.3). These changes are not necessarily signs of the death of the family, but rather of the powerful struggle by families to adapt to changing societal conditions and to the needs of individual family members, as families are indispensable for society. Pluralism (the belief that reality consists of many kinds of distinct elements with no single element being considered the only correct one by the

whole population) is viewed by the majority of social scientists as necessary for the survival of mankind (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:5-6).

According to Aguilar *et al.* (2000:8), the American Assembly affirmed their commitment to respect all people within a variety of family forms, that no family type should be stigmatised and that there should not be discriminated against people on the grounds of their family identity. This is due to the enormous cultural, religious and ethnic pluralism found in the USA.

3.4.4.4 Contemporary family patterns

Over the past thirty years, far-reaching changes have occurred in society. The old norms are being changed to be more inclusive and accommodating. This has led to the acknowledgement of the existence of contemporary family patterns and relationships, like cohabitation, childfree families, single-parent families, stepfamilies, dual-career families and co-parenting (DeFrain & Olson, 1999:309). Carter (2002) speaks about 'non-traditional' families and mentions single-parents, foster parents, multi-racial parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, same-sex parents and blended households. By blended families, Carter (2002) refers to families that come into being because of divorce and remarriage. He states that there are projections that 1 out of 10 children will experience divorce at least twice before their 16th birthday. DeFrain and Olson (1999:309) do not argue that the traditional nuclear family pattern should be discarded, but that the diversity of contemporary family patterns must also be taken into account. The researcher also regards it as important, as society has an enormous influence on the choices people make regarding their life-styles and their values, without arguing or discussing the appropriateness of the choices. It is also important to take note of these non-traditional families, as their needs are quite different from the traditional family (Carter, 2002).

3.4.4.4.1 Cohabitation

Marriage is no longer seen as a prerequisite for living with a romantic partner (*cf.* Lauer & Lauer, 1991:9-10). The definition given to cohabitation is that two unrelated adults of the opposite sex share the same living quarters. DeFrain and Olson (1999:313) give different reasons why people prefer such a lifestyle:

- Marriage is viewed as a risky business, e.g. if the high divorce rate is taken into account.
- People want to break free from restricting values.
- It is a case of convenience as both get something out of the deal.
- It is a testing time to see if marriage is possible.

To these reasons mentioned by DeFrain and Olson, the researcher would like to add a few more indicated by Davidson and Moore (1996:94):

- availability of contraception,

- legalisation of abortion,
- delayed marriage due to increased educational and occupational opportunities for women,
- escalating housing costs.

It is interesting to take note of an observation by Davidson and Moore (1996:97) about the influence of religion on cohabitation: research reveals that cohabitation is more frequent among people who report no religious affiliation. Another interesting result from research regarding cohabitation is about the effect that it has on mate selection. An important motivation that people often present to justify cohabitation is to determine compatibility for marriage. It is noteworthy that research up to date has not confirmed that married people who have engaged in premarital cohabitation have greater marital satisfaction or better communication patterns (Davidson & Moore, 1996:102).

3.4.4.4.2 Child-free families

According to Stover and Hope (1993:194), the definition of modern marriages no longer implies procreation. There are different reasons why people voluntarily choose not to have children. One reason has to do with the cost involved in raising children. Another has to do with the restrictions and disruptions children cause on an adult-centred life-style. People generally rate the emotional satisfaction and personal fulfilment that children can give them, much lower than the effort and cost involved in raising children (Eshleman, 1994:412; *cf.* DeFrain & Olson, 1999:315). Lauer and Lauer (1991:363-364) also mention a few other reasons why some people today choose not to have children (*cf.* Saxton, 1993:207-208):

- Personal fulfilment: people feel that children are a hindrance for personal fulfilment as children require time, money and energy.
- Focus on career: they do not want to spend work time and energy for child-rearing tasks.
- Focus on the marriage: they feel that they have more freedom to continue with romance and their sex life in their relationship.
- Doubts about parenting skills: people may feel that they are not equipped to deal with the demands of being parents, e.g. to be patient.

3.4.4.4.3 Single-parent families

According to Carter (2002), the single-parent family is the most recognised form of non-traditional families. He adds that more than 50% of children will experience this kind of family and that it usually has a female parent, although more fathers have entered the scene over the past decade. Lauer and Lauer (1991:450-454) state that there are many ways in which a single-parent family may occur. It may happen as a result of a divorce, or the death of one parent or a single person may decide to have or to adopt a child without getting married. Single parents and their children face many

difficulties. These range from an inadequacy of resources, an overload of responsibility, tasks and emotional pressure to antisocial behaviour, aggression, anxiety, school problems on the part of the children. In the single-parent family there is often more conflict between the siblings, less family cohesion and more family stress. The children often achieve less in their education, occupation and income. They are also less likely to have a stable marriage themselves (*cf.* DeFrain & Olson, 1999:316).

3.4.4.4 Stepfamilies

The structural differences make stepfamilies more complex, because there are more relationships involved. Greater interpersonal skills are necessary and there is no child-free phase to adjust to each other (Lauer & Lauer, 1991:559). Stepparents are more likely to perceive strains on their relationship than the biological parents. Stepfathers tend to feel inadequate. The stepchildren report less support, control and punishment than do children of biological parents. Stepmothers have worse relationships with stepchildren. Marital satisfaction is less when both spouses bring children to the family. For the stepfamily to work, the partners must give up any fantasies and unrealistic expectations about family life and clearly understand the feelings and needs of each member of the stepfamily (Lauer & Lauer, 1991:563,571; *cf.* DeFrain & Olson, 1999:318). One can ask the question whether, if the newly composed family share the same religious interests, the relationships in the stepfamily will be easier?

3.4.4.5 Co-parenting

Both parents take responsibility for the upbringing of their children as both parents are involved in securing income for the family. DeFrain and Olson (1999:322) mention a few advantages of this arrangement:

- better relationships with the spouse and the children,
- mothers have the opportunity to develop outside interests,
- fathers are drawn into the family on the emotional level.

3.4.4.6 Same-sex families

Same-sex families refer to a functioning household of two adults of the same sex (Carter, 2002). In recent years homosexual people are more open about cohabitation and many consider themselves 'married'. Some even have marriage ceremonies, although they are not legally recognised (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:146). Robinson (2004) confirms that homosexual marriages are at this stage not legally recognised in South Africa, but the commission is working on it and changes can be expected in the near future. In today's society where equality is considered very highly, people in same-sex relationships report that it is easier for them to develop equal relations in their relationship, because there must be discussion and agreement on matters like division of chores, as nothing can be taken

for granted. They also experience less emphasis on material possessions and more emphasis on emotional bonding. In one study done on lesbian relationships, a distinction was made between 'intimate strangers' in heterosexual marriages and 'intimate friendships' in lesbian relationships (Weeks *et al.*, 1999:48-49).

Research shows that many same-sex couples are very stable. Most homosexual couples are childless, but there are lesbian couples where one or both partners have children from a previous heterosexual union (Carter, 2002; *cf.* Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:146). Donor insemination is now also an option for lesbians to start their own family (Dunne, 1999:195; *cf.* Carter, 2002). Little research has been done on how children are coping in such homes, but it is possible that they may experience the same problems as other stepfamilies. The children may also be subjected to teasing and criticism (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:146). Patterson (1995) reports on research that was done on gay and lesbian parents and their children. Gender identity was studied in children between 5 and 14 years of age and all the children reported that they were happy with their sexual identity. Aspects of the children's personal development were studied and the results show normal development. Patterson (1995) states that no study showed that children of same sex families have disadvantages to those of heterosexual families (*cf.* Faderman, 1997; Kirby, 1999).

3.4.4.4.7 Interfaith families

This will be discussed in detail in 3.5.3.

3.4.5 Mate selection

There have always been two extreme possibilities for mate selection: the *arranged marriage* where the partners involved have no voice or the possibility where the partners have *free choice* and the decision is made solely by them. In the Western societies, partners usually made the decision, but the parents gave their consent and the decision was made by exercising an endogamous (in-group) selection (*cf.* Casey, 1989:194). That means that the ideal partner is usually from the same social class, religious, racial and ethnic group, otherwise, future marital problems are portended. There is a movement away from the status quo and young people are more often making exogamous (outside the group) selections (Eshleman, 1994:15; *cf.* Casey, 1989:194).

Traditionally, the places where young people looked for possible dating partners were college classes, friends and religious activities organised by the church. Today, most young people meet potential dating partners through their social networks, mutual friends and at parties. Other methods include magazines and newspapers, dating services and computer dating (Davidson & Moore, 1996:308-309). There are many websites for computer dating. A few are given:

- www.singleparentmeet.com
- www.MatchTrust.com
- www.FriendFinder.com
- www.free-online-dating-services.com
- www.search4love.com
- www.computerdatingusa.com

There are certain qualities that are desired in a mate and according to Lauer and Lauer (1991:121), research showed that the five most important qualities are intelligence, sensitivity, physical attractiveness, a sense of humour and ambition. Homogamy is an important factor in mate selection. People prefer somebody who is like them, e.g. similar in social and demographic characteristics like age, race, ethnicity and religion. Similarity in things like personality traits, values and attitudes are also important (Lauer & Lauer, 1991:125,131). Education is also a determining factor in mate selection, as men tend to marry women who are at the same or lower educational level as they are (Lauer & Lauer, 1991:130; *cf.* Saxton, 1993:140).

Research shows that religious affiliation is one of the stronger homogamous factors, although it seems as if the importance is declining (Lauer & Lauer, 1991:129). As dating often leads to marriage, interfaith dating was traditionally discouraged because it could lead to interfaith marriages which were not acceptable. (Unfortunately, the authors do not indicate a specified timeframe.) Currently there is less resistance to interfaith marriages and consequently interfaith dating is much more acceptable. Important variables in the likelihood of interfaith dating are religious devoutness of the persons involved which relates to the religiousness of the family and the dissimilarity of religion between the two partners. Interfaith dating is probably regarded as wrong if the individuals are deeply involved in their denominational activities (Davidson & Moore, 1996:306-307). According to Saxton (1993:140), race is a stronger homogamous force than religion, as there is a lower percentage of interracial marriages than interfaith marriages in the US.

3.4.6 Factors that lead to initiating and developing a relationship

Since the pastoral guidance of the unequally yoked marriage partners is the focus of this study, this area is of specific concern for the researcher. To really understand the marital relationship, it is important to know what causes two people to be attracted to each other. Pearson (1993:182-188) names a few factors that lead people to start a relationship (*cf.* Saxton, 1993:142-146):

- **Physical appearance:** physical attraction plays an important role in the early interaction with others, this is especially true for men.

- Similarity: people prefer those with similar beliefs, attitudes, values, interests and social backgrounds, as it helps with the initial conversations, it further reinforces the person's beliefs and values, it provides a shared purpose in the relationship and it probably minimises conflict and misunderstandings.
- Similarity in intelligence, dependability, warmth, honesty, ability to communicate and mental health.
- Need complementary: it appears as if people are attracted to each other because of differences between them, the differences in each other complement one another.
- Mutual liking: people choose to interact with someone who demonstrates appreciation.
- Competence: a person's ability to solve problems, make decisions and complete a task.
- Propinquity or closeness: physical proximity is an important factor in the development of a relationship as it causes familiarity.

It is interesting to the researcher to note that most of these factors that lead people to be attracted to each other and draw them later into a marital relationship, are *physical* factors. From chap. 2 it is clear that God did not intend marriage to be only a physical relationship. He also intended an intimate spiritual association with each other, together with a deep, emotional bond of love and faithfulness (*cf.* 2.3.2; 2.3.4; 2.5.3.1; 2.5.3.4.9). The fact that people do not consider the spiritual oneness as a foundational cornerstone in their relationship, may well lead to unequally yoked marriage relationships. In the process, people lose this essential resource for their marriage.

3.4.7 Reasons for marrying

As an effect of the teachings of the Reformers and the Puritans with their godly zeal, there was a new kind of commitment, a unilateral submission to the standards of moral behaviour. A moral revolution followed and it was in that time that marriage began being called *office* which indicates overtones of vocation, not merely an estate in life. The first function of marriage was seen as the companionship of man and woman, mutual aid and support, not only procreation or the avoidance of fornication (Casey, 1989:106-107).

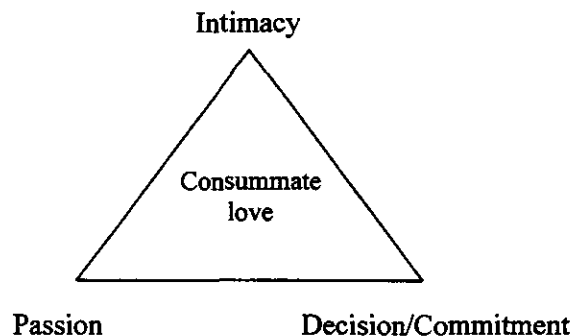
Love, as Lamana and Riedmann (1994:223-225) explain, is not the only motive why people marry, it is far more complicated than that. There are some reasons which are much more favourable for healthy marriages than others. A few less favourable reasons are premarital pregnancy, rebound (marrying just after an unsuccessful relationship), rebellion (the parents disapprove), escape, physical appearance, loneliness, pity and obligation (they feel guilty to terminate the relationship), social pressure (singles must marry, expectations during courtship, people are used to the couple being together, difficult to break an engagement) and economic advancement (*cf.* Travers, 1991b:84). A

few more positive reasons for marrying are companionship, emotional security and the desire to parent and raise children. A more in-depth look at some of these reasons follows:

3.4.7.1 Love

The concept of marrying for love became more acceptable by the 17th century (Golden, 1991:64). However, as mentioned in 3.4.5, love is not the only motive why people marry, but it is the researcher's opinion that it is very high on the list of motives. Halpern (1991:17) warns that there is a big difference between feeling in love and being in a love relationship (*cf.* Travers, 1991a:25). 'Feeling in love', requires one role player only, but 'being in a love relationship', which is necessary for marriage, requires mutual caring, sharing, respect and involvement. It requires availability, mutual passion, a desire to be together and commitment to make it work.

Sternberg explains 'love' by using his triangular theory of love (Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:92-93; *cf.* Hendrick & Hendrick, 1992:98-99). There are three components of love, namely intimacy, passion and decision/commitment. Intimacy refers to close, connected and bonded feelings in a loving relationship. Passion refers to the drives that lead to romance, physical attraction, sexual consummation in a loving relationship. Decision/ commitment refers to the short term decision that one loves someone else and the long term commitment to maintain that love.



Consummate love is the complete love when all three components are present. Passion is the first to develop, but also the quickest to disappear, although it is necessary for the maintaining of the relationship. Intimacy develops slower and includes the understanding of the other person's needs and values. Commitment is last to develop and is essential, but without passion and intimacy it is hollow (*cf.* Lauer & Lauer, 1991:106-107; Davidson & Moore, 1996:151).

Travers (1991a:26) explains love by using grammatical terms. He argues that love is not a noun, but a verb. To talk about love is cheap, but to do it is a challenge (*cf.* Vansteenwegen, 1989:259). Love is

a decision, an act of the will, which needs to be translated into action. To be a loving person is an orientation in life. Love implies the acceptance of the limitations of the beloved.

The researcher is of the opinion that love cannot be understood apart from the Word of God. The apostle John, in his first letter, wrote comprehensively on love. Only two verses will be quoted here:

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers (1 Jn 3:16).

Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth (1 Jn 3:18).

3.4.7.2 Sexuality

In the past, marriage was always the preferred avenue for sexual expression (Davidson & Moore, 1996:321; *cf.* Lauer & Lauer, 1991:243; 2.3.5.2). Saxton (1993:193) mentions that many people marry because they believe that a sexual relationship without a marriage, is morally wrong. The researcher agrees wholeheartedly with the opinion that sexual relationships are exclusively preserved for marriage. Marriage is the place where man and woman can be lovers and where they must experience physiological and psychological sexual pleasure (Davidson & Moore, 1996:79). Lauer and Lauer (1991:240) contend that marriage as a social institution is the way to regulate heterosexual relationships (*cf.* Huweliksformulier, 1976:152).

3.4.7.3 Procreation

Many couples marry because they want to have children and they want their children to be legitimatised by marriage (Saxton, 1993:195). Marriage is still the most accepted and comfortable way for bearing and caring for children (Golden, 1991:64; *cf.* Lauer & Lauer, 1991:241). The American Assembly affirmed that marriage is still the ideal family form for the rearing of children (Aguilar *et al.*, 2000:8). As Lauer and Lauer (1991:243) say, there are other ways to have children outside marriage, but marriage is the easier option, as the other options involve many difficulties. As far as the researcher is concerned, marriage is the only place for the procreation of children (*cf.* 2.3.5.1; Huweliksformulier, 1976:152).

3.4.7.4 Loneliness

Many people think that marriage will be the solution to their depression, that it will give their life meaning and that it will bring an end to their loneliness (Travers, 1991:85; *cf.* Powlison & Yenchko, 1987:43). In one study, a quarter of the singles reported that their biggest problem is loneliness

(Saxton, 1993:177). It is however a fact, that the Western world does not accept marrying only to solve loneliness as an acceptable reason for marriage (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:70-71).

3.4.7.5 Companionship

Companionship is understood by Davidson and Moore (1996:79) as the positive outcome that people experience when they are together. Some people marry because they want to experience this and they want to call somebody their own (Scher, 1991:95). Every person has a need of attachment and marriage satisfies this need and provides also a sense of security as people feel safer in the company of another (Golden, 1991:65). Part of companionship is that husband and wife are each others helpmates and consequently share household duties and related family responsibilities (Davidson & Moore, 1996:79). Waite and Gallagher (2000:26-27) speak about specialisation in the marriage in the sense that each spouse can develop some skills and neglect others as each takes responsibility for some part of the work. It increases the productivity of the couple because the talent pool is greater.

Human wellbeing depends on the quality of relationships with others. The person-to-person relationship is one of the greatest sources of pleasure, enjoyment and development in life. In this encounter there is a degree of individuality because of differences, but also a sharing of boundaries, space and bodies. In this sharing, both individuals become more than themselves, as they are changed through the encounter with the other (*cf.* 2.3.3, Huweliksformulier, 1976:152). The loving relationship with a life-long partner is often the source of deep physical pleasure, existential meaning and emotional peace (Clarkson, 1991:72-73).

3.4.7.6 Financial considerations

Today, love is considered an essential ingredient for happy relationships and the Western world does not accept marrying only for financial security as an acceptable reason for marriage (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:70-71). Even though financial considerations cannot be the only reason to marry, it is true that marriage does provide financial stability (Golden, 1991:64; *cf.* Saxton, 1993:195). Waite and Gallagher (2000:30-31) write about the power of pooling. They recall the old saying: "Two can live as cheaply as one." Marriage brings economic advantages, as the couple needs only one set of furniture, appliances, etc. One can argue that the same principle holds for cohabitation, but reality proves the opposite, as cohabiting unions are usually short-lived. They also refer to the marital insurance benefit. According to them, married people are better off because they have someone who will take care of them when disaster strikes, someone to back them up financially.

3.4.8 Factors that ensure conjugal bliss and happy families

According to Lamana and Riedmann (1994:198), people tend to marry somebody from the same background, race, age, education, religion and social class. This is called *homogamy*. In general, social scientists find that homogamous marriages are more stable albeit it is possible to have a fulfilling marriage relationship if people are able and willing to cross racial, class and religious boundaries and concentrate on points of contact like shared values (Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:202-203). Religious compatibility affects everyday life such as the rearing of children, the choice of where to live and who to socialise with, the allocation of time and resources, traditions and the sense of community that the couple share (Koenig, 1999:67).

The *self* plays an enormous role in a successful marriage. The key is not to find the 'right' partner, but to *become* the right marriage partner and for that to happen, self-knowledge is essential (*cf.* Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:98-99). Furthermore, the person's gender identity (his/her concept of self as feminine or masculine) must be clear and his/her ego boundaries (psychological self-boundaries that differentiate the person from the rest of the world) must be maintained. Once this is established, it is easier for the individual to clarify his/her own needs, attitudes and values in a marriage relationship (Davidson & Moore, 1996:7-8).

According to Kirschner and Kirschner (1991:30), there is a balance between *mutuality* and *individuation* in a healthy love relationship between two adults (*cf.* Jasnow, 1991:52; Scher, 1991:95). They share relatively equal power, have complementary roles and encourage each other's expression of autonomy (*cf.* Jasnow, 1991:53; Travers, 1991b:88). As Scher (1991:95) explains, the partner's freedom must be respected so that he/she can create a satisfying and fulfilling life. Jasnow (1991:52) mentions that this is only possible if the personalities of the partners are very flexible and that only comes with self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-esteem. Kirschner and Kirschner (1991:30) believe that in this way, the couple will be able to negotiate and resolve conflicts successfully. Four important patterns of interaction in the life of a couple are:

- attachment/caregiving,
- communication,
- joint problem-solving,
- mutuality.

Couples do disagree and have conflicts, but those who are committed to their own personal growth and that of their partner, tend to face these difficulties more openly and take responsibility for their own behaviour (*cf.* Scher, 1991:99). The key to such a healthy relationship is friendship (Travers, 1991b:88). In other words, the couple is not involved in a struggle to follow their own personal

dreams in their relationship, but they are willing to modify their own preferences. They are also willing to give constant attention to their relationship and to work hard on it (Scher, 1991:102).

According to Scher (1991:101), there are *personal qualities* of the marriage partners that can help them to maintain their marriage, e.g.:

- a sense of humour,
- a sense of proportion,
- a sense of the absurd,
- toughness (to be able to endure difficulties),
- commitment.

The spouse cannot provide in all the needs of the partner for intimacy, support and friendship. The marriage bond is strengthened if partners allow each other to have *friendships* and intimate emotional relationships outside their marriage (Scher, 1991:96). Davidson and Moore (1996:374) agree with this opinion and confirm that husbands and wives find emotional gratification and assistance from friends as enhancing to their marital relationship. Scher (1991:97-98) argues that outside friendships help to alleviate pressure on the partner to fulfil in all the needs of the spouse.

Another factor that strengthens the bond between marriage partners, is when they leave the parental environment as soon as possible after marriage, as parents can sometimes make subtle and unsubtle demands on their children, causing unnecessary pressure. This forces the couple to rely on themselves to solve their problems and deal with daily life difficulties. *In-laws* can cause much havoc in marriage relationships, but if partners resolve to be civil and respectful to the in-laws, even though they do not necessarily like them, the battle is almost won.

For a fulfilling relationship, argues Schwartz and Schwartz (1991:36-39), the difference between an illusion of who the partner is and the *reality* of his/her personhood, must be resolved. In order for this to happen, there must be an openness to discover and rediscover one another. If it successfully happens in the relationship, there is a strength and courage to trust each other to be more authentically spontaneous. The partners will experience that there is somebody with whom innermost feelings can be shared and who will respond sensitively. This means the giving up of the belief that personal happiness lies in the hands of the partner. It is not the responsibility of the one partner to make the other partner happy (*cf.* Travers, 1991b:88). If the couple have good role models and if they are willing to work hard at their relationship, their marriage has a better chance to succeed (Scher, 1991:100).

The researcher wants to draw the attention to the fact that in all the above mentioned factors which can give rise to a happy family, spiritual oneness or the presence of the same values is never stated. By referring back to chap. 2, one can ask the question, whether a family can ever really be happy if these ingredients are absent?

Earlier definitions of the family often emphasised its *utilitarian functions*: what family members can do for each other which other institutions cannot do. Because the individual's needs change and are unique in different times and situations, the forms of the families must necessarily vary. Families thus differ from one another and one family may even change over time. Lasswell and Lasswell (1991:7-9), Stover and Hope (1993:235-236) and Davidson and Moore (1996:13) report on research that was done to find out what makes families strong and six qualities stood out:

- Family members *appreciate* one another.
- They arranged their personal schedules so that they can spend *time* together.
- There are positive *communication* patterns: openness, genuineness, active listening, respect, interest and airing of differences.
- There is high family *commitment*.
- There is an awareness of a power and purpose greater than themselves – a *spiritual* orientation.
- There is an *ability to cope* with their problems and to deal positively with crises.

In the interest of this study, the 5th quality mentioned by the authors, should get special attention, namely the awareness of the family of a power and purpose greater than themselves, a spiritual orientation. It seems to the researcher that the authors are acknowledging the importance of the spiritual dimension of marriage. Problems can certainly arise if the marriage partners do not agree on their religious convictions, as in the case of unequally yoked marriage partners, as the spiritual dimension cannot play an unifying role in their relationship (*cf.* 3.5.4).

Koenig (1999:50) reports that religious faith often restores peace to a troubled marriage and serves as a buffer in times of intense stress in a family. He mentions that there is significant evidence that couples who share religious faith and practice, will divorce less often than couples without a meaningful mutual faith. Recent studies show that people with strong religious faith are more likely to protect their marriage as something sacred, to seek pastoral counseling and to take steps to modify their behaviour in order to prevent divorce. Perhaps this happens because faith can give people the necessary strength to search themselves for negative attitudes and harmful patterns of behaviour and provide the motivation and strength needed to correct them (Koenig, 1999:61).

There are many *other factors* that causes marriages to be happy. Perls and Perls (1991:56-59) mention a few:

- The couple knew each other's friends and families of origin and knew each other well before marriage.
- They believe in monogamy and trust one another.
- They never contemplate divorce as an option during difficult times in their marriage. They would rather settle for less than to demand the fulfilment of personal wishes/desires.
- Debate about controversial topics like politics is active in the privacy of their home, but in public they keep their differences moderate.
- While discussing differences, they always demonstrate mutual respect, acceptance and loyalty to each other. There is no hostility among them and no power struggles.
- They are committed to the *buddy system* and thus engage in a lot of activities together.

From the basis theory that was established in chap. 2, the importance of spiritual oneness between marriage partners in order to experience marital success and fulfilment, became clear. One should note that spirituality was not mentioned in the above list of factors that cause happy marriages and it seems that it is not viewed important by the related human sciences. It is worth while to contemplate a reason for this tendency. One possibility can be that the Western world has become so much a secular society that there is a movement away from religion and that it is no longer deemed important.

3.4.9 Factors that can cause marital problems

Three groups of causal factors for marital breakdown have been identified, namely global, sociological and clinical factors. Dominion (2001:163-164) sees the emancipation of women, the rising of emotional- and sexual expectations and the shift of marriage from an institution where roles are important to a relationship of love, where feelings are of utmost importance as *global factors*. Under *sociological factors*, he mentions the age at marriage, the incidence of premarital pregnancy, insufficient acquaintance before marriage and the occurrence of cohabitation (*cf.* Travers, 1991b:83). Social class, income and education also play an important role (Dominion, 2001:165-166). Dominion (2001:167-174) presents the *clinical factors* which contribute to marital problems in a clinical model:

First phase (the first five years of marriage)

- Social dimension
 - Parents – problems occur if one of the marriage partners does not completely leave the parents home and matrimonial issues are not discussed with the partner, but with the parents.
 - Housing and home management – if both partners are working, but the sole responsibility for the household work lies on only one.
 - Money – a common source for grievances.

- Work – unemployment (feelings of depression and low self-esteem) as well as too long hours at work (the other partner feels neglected).
- Leisure – if one partner is left out of the leisure activities of the other one.
- Emotional dimension – spouses often find that their partners presented themselves in the best possible way during the courtship period and after the marriage do not live up to the expectations.
- Sexual dimension – problems range from painful intercourse, lack of orgasm, anxiety because of sexual abuse and latent homosexuality.
- Intellectual dimension – it is influenced by the lack of common social and educational backgrounds.
- Spiritual dimension – religious affiliation of the couple does not matter much in marriage, because overt religion is not of utmost importance in society today. Mixed marriages are not a big factor for problem marriages today. The *other values* of the couple are much more important, e.g. if one spouse follows a materialistic view and the other an altruistic one.

Second phase (between 30 and 50 years of age)

- Social dimension – social status often changes in this phase and the danger is that one spouse may be left behind or be outgrown.
- Emotional dimension – emotional dependence on the spouse changes to independence, taking control of his/her life socially, economically, emotionally and intellectually.
- Sexual dimension – sexual difficulties can be on the physical or the emotional level. Physical problems can be impotence and premature ejaculation with the man and vaginal pain, lack of orgasm or loss of sexual desire with the woman. The occurrence of adultery is common in this phase.
- Intellectual dimension – the couple’s social, political and economic views may change.
- Spiritual dimension - the partners may give up their religious beliefs or they may recommit.

Third phase (between 50 years of age and the death of one partner)

- Social dimension – the children leave home and the parents retire. Many times the couple finds that they are strangers to each other.
- Emotional dimension – the couple grows even more from dependence to independence and alienation enters even more into their relationship.
- Sexual dimension – the woman enters her menopause and the man struggles with increasing impotence, which causes more stress in his sexual life.
- Intellectual- and spiritual dimension – the couple may develop different views.

The researcher is aware of the fact that Dominion is a Roman Catholic. It is a well known fact that marriage is esteemed very highly in the Roman Catholic church, e.g. the condemnation of divorce,

but it does seem as if the importance of the spiritual aspect of marriage is underrated (*cf.* Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:494).

Hitherto, the *male midlife crisis* was not acknowledged, but recent research shows that it is a reality and it has physical, psychosocial and spiritual consequences. There is no agreement on the exact age of the midlife crisis, but a safe choice, according to Lotter (2001:175-177) is between 35 and 50. Lotter (2001:180) says that the midlife crisis has real effects on the marriage:

- wives experience neglect,
- husbands feel unappreciated at home,
- the children are out of the home and the parents feel free to detach themselves from their unhappy relationship.

Another aspect that can cause problems in the marriage, is the *fear* to lose the loved one. This fear is a common dynamic in all relationships (Schwartz & Schwartz, 1991:34). It is not the fear that causes the relationship to break, but the reaction of the couple in response to the fear of loss. There are four possible ways to respond to fear that the partner may be lost:

- changing the partner,
- changing oneself,
- living with the fear,
- divorcing.

Travers (1991b:84) mentions the danger of self-fulfilling prophecy. He warns strongly that nobody may go into marriage with the idea that if it does not work, there is always the *option of divorce* (*cf.* Scher, 1991:98). Another aspect that he mentions as a frequent reason for divorce is sexual incompatibility (Travers, 1991b:90). When Scher (1991:94-95) speaks about the factors that can cause marital problems, he mentions the danger that partners are not realistic about the obligations and perils of their marriage relationship. If these *unrealistic expectations* are not met, they are not able to handle disappointments. He comments also on the role of children in marital problems. If couples do not work through *children* issues early in their relationship, whether they want children, how many and how they are going to deal with them, they are bound to have problems in their marriage (*cf.* Mack, 1979:37-38). Because issues regarding children are so complex, the conversation must continue during the child rearing days (Scher, 1991:101).

Davidson and Moore (1996:13, 397-399) mention a *few causes* of marital conflict:

- Flexibility - in this changing economical, political and social world, there is much stress on the family to adjust and adapt.

- Undesirable behaviour - lack of partner similarity, e.g. handling child-rearing responsibilities, spending money and spending leisure time with friends.
- Discrepancies in role expectations and performance - e.g. the husband expects of his wife to entertain his business clients or she expects him to help in the kitchen.
- Diverse values - this often stem from childhood socialisation experiences and religious convictions, e.g. sexual expression, child rearing and the use of alcohol.
- Dependence/Independence imbalance - unrealistic expectations may upset the delicate balance and partners may feel that they lost their individual identity, e.g. career decisions, choice of friends, lack of privacy and unmet needs.
- Communication deficits - self-inadequacies like low self-esteem or poor mental health will cause problems in communication.

The 4th cause that Davidson and Moore present, namely the influence of diverse values, is very applicable to this study, as it can have enormous effects on an unequally yoked marriage. One can name examples like how the couple spend their free time, the friends they choose and how they manage their money.

There are many things that people fight about in marriage, e.g. money issues, children (discipline, how many to have, etc.) and sex. Lauer and Lauer (1991:304) tried to categorise the reasons for marital conflict as follows:

- Decision conflicts, e.g. where to live, what to do and allocation of time.
- Failure to give attention, e.g. lack of attention, too little sex, inadequate appreciation and support.
- Division and fulfilment of responsibility, e.g. finances and chores.
- Sloppy, impulsive or careless behaviour, e.g. neatness, spending money and being punctual.

Research shows that *heterogamous marriages* are more unstable than *homogamous marriages* (cf. 3.4.9). Lamana and Riedmann (1994:203) believe that it is not necessarily so, because common values and common life-styles can contribute to stability. However, it is clear that these kind of marriages have specific problems like social disapproval and lack of social support.

3.5 RELIGION AND MARRIAGE

As the focus of this study is the pastoral guidance of the unequally yoked marriage partners, it is essential to see what the human sciences have found in regard to the influence of religion on the marriage. Lasswell and Lasswell (1991:397) are making a very strong point that religion and family are intertwined and that the church remains an outside force on marriage that must be taken into account. The reason, say Steinmetz *et al.* (1990:151), is that religious institutions have great impact

on the society's major value systems. Kephart and Jedlicka (1991:129,161-162) confirm this point, especially as far as the middle-class is concerned. Most studies, according to Saxton (1993:211), that were done on interfaith marriages, referred to marriages between Protestants, Roman Catholics and/or Jews. There is a noticeable lack in knowledge about marriages between Christians and non-Christians and thus the reason for this study.

3.5.1 Gender roles and religion

Research shows that people who are religiously more conservative, exhibit more traditional gender-role attitudes. When the husband and wife have similar religious preferences, their gender-role attitudes are also more similar (Davidson and Moore, 1996:65).

3.5.2 The role religion plays in a marriage

Research affirms the fact that religious commitment has a positive effect on marriage success and happiness, as it promotes marital and family solidarity. Religious beliefs also give the family hope and are a source of support in times of trouble (Sasse, 1997:149,234). Personal sacrifice, duty and love are important aspects in an intimate relationship and religion provides the "how-to" guidelines (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:395). Koenig (1999:67) mentions that research also shows that religion has an important impact on the success of reconciliation, especially if the couple belongs to the same religion. From the research done in America about the relationship between religion and the family, the following message emerged: "Families that pray together, stay together", independent of the religio-ethnic orientation of the people involved (Eshleman, 1994:106).

According to Eshleman (1994:253-254), religious endogamy was always very strong in the USA, but recently, things have changed. People are now willing to marry somebody of a different religion and are even willing to change their own religion to be the same as his/her spouse's religion. Lamana and Riedmann (1994:202-203) concur with the opinion of Eshleman, by saying that it often happens that one partner changes his/her religious orientation to be the same as the other partner, probably because he/she knows that research asserts the fact that interreligious marriages tend to be less stable than homogamous ones. Husbands especially, experience religious heterogeneity as a quenching factor on marital satisfaction. A possible explanation can be that fathers know that religious differences are a bigger threat for the father-child relationship as they experience themselves as outsiders in their own families (Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:204).

A strong religious orientation provides the following for the family (Davidson & Moore, 1996:360):

- a source of social support,
- an opportunity to engage in family activities and religious services together.

This is confirmed by other researchers. Agreement about religion helps the family to establish integrated social networks of advisors, friends and families which serve as effective support systems (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:395). Some sociologists believe that church attendance (as it is a coupled-centred activity) plays an important role in marriage stability and satisfaction (Lamana & Riedmann, 1994:204; *cf.* Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:395; Stover & Hope, 1993:236). Studies show that people in religious homogamous marriages tend to have greater overall marital satisfaction (*cf.* Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:494). Furthermore, when the spouses are of the same religious denomination and are religiously involved, there is greater marital satisfaction. It seems as if religious homogamy serves as a deterrent for divorce, because in these marriages, there are lower divorce rates (Davidson and Moore, 1996:331,660). This is confirmed by Koenig (1999:66) when he states that research found a high level of marital satisfaction among people who derived positive emotional reinforcement from traditional religious experiences, like prayer, devotional reading and group worship at church. There is mounting evidence that religion plays an important role in preventing divorce. Koenig (1999:69) also states that religious faith enhances positive qualities like intimacy, commitment and communication.

Spiritual wellness was one factor that Stover and Hope (1993:236) found that contributed to strong families (*cf.* 3.4.8). They found that the spiritual dimension was important for the well-being of the family as it promotes care, love and compassion for each other, but it is also important for the psychological well-being of the individual family members, as it helps them to find purpose and meaning in life. This is confirmed by Koenig (1999:71) who states that religious faith often provides a solid foundation for strong marriages and families.

When Lotter (2001:184) is speaking about counseling the man in his midlife crisis, especially in regard to his marriage, he points out the importance of spiritual resources and a shared faith which provides meaning, direction and a unified purpose in their marriage. The researcher agrees with the opinion of Lotter that it will be very difficult to give guidance to a couple who is going through a hard time in their marriage if they do not share a common faith. Common resources like forgiveness, reconciliation and praying together as a couple, which are used very effectively in pastoral counseling between counselees who are professing Christians, cannot be used in the case of an unequally yoked marriage. When referring to pastoral counseling, Lartz (1999:80) mentions the reconciliation between man and God as the essential moment (*cf.* Adams, 1976:67). This will probably not happen with the unbeliever. Common value systems usually go hand in hand with a shared faith and Stover and Hope (1993:233) stress the role that common value systems play in marital quality.

3.5.3 Interfaith/interreligious marriages

Researchers found a dramatic increase in intermarriage between Protestants and Catholics during the 1920's and 1980's. Recent studies revealed that 40% of Catholics are married to Protestants or non-Catholics (Williams & Lawler, 2001). In the past, all major faiths were opposed to interfaith marriages, but today this opposition is weakening and there are fewer religious prejudices. Religion is an influential factor in mate selection if the person takes his/her religion seriously. Different values are often given as the main reason for possible difficulties. Interfaith marriages have been opposed by the Protestant denominations on the following grounds (Davidson and Moore, 1996:328-329; *cf.* Saxton, 1993:212):

- Interfaith marriages are more unstable than religiously homogamous marriages.
- Religious participation by the respective partners probably will suffer.
- The fear that the children born of the union will not be trained in their specific faith.

Studies show less frequent participation in religious activities after an interfaith marriage, but a possible explanation can be that the partners who were willing to enter into such a marriage have already grown away from their formal religious ties (Davidson & Moore, 1996:330). In a study done by Williams and Lawler (2001), they found that marriage partners in interfaith marriages are less active in church activities or sacraments. Religious heterogamy relates thus strongly with lower religiosity. These couples also do not experience such a strong sense of belonging. Eshleman (1994:254) confirms that interfaith marriages are more common among people who are not so religiously devoted.

A study was done by Lawler (2000) among people who identified themselves as Christians and who said the person they married was also Christian at the time they were engaged. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents said both belonged to the same church when they were engaged to marry. Of those who belonged to different churches when they were engaged, roughly half remained interchurch at the time they were interviewed, but nearly half said they had eventually become same-church couples. The chief reason given for moving from interchurch to same-church was "to make the marriage stronger." Lawler (2000) said that his study revealed that joint involvement in religious activities was one of the "three greatest predictors of marital stability". The second predictor was also of religious nature: the fewer religious differences a couple had, the less likely they were to end up separated or divorced. The third biggest factor was whether the person's family approved of the spouse when they got married.

3.5.4 Difficulties in marriage because of differences in religious convictions

Looking at the consequences of interfaith marriages, Eshleman (1994:255) mentions the general opposition to these kind of marriages on the ground of the widespread belief that these marriages are more unstable and create specific problems. He also says that some researchers assert that these marriages are less satisfying and less happy than religiously homogamous marriages and that the children born from these marriages, are subjected to less intense and less consistent religious socialisation, with a secularising effect on them (*cf.* Lauer & Lauer, 1991:129). According to Stover and Hope (1993:514), to do research on the effect of religious affiliation on divorce is very difficult, as information of religion usually does not appear on divorce records. The effect that interfaith marriages have on the emphasis of religion in raising children was however studied by Williams and Lawler (2001). They found that in a homogamous religious marriage, there is more emphasis on the importance of religion in raising children than in a religiously heterogamous marriage.

Research indicates, say Davidson and Moore (1996:360), that the lack of consensus between marriage partners about religious practices leads to lower marital satisfaction. Furthermore, interfaith marriages have increased in the 20th century and have been thought to have higher failure rates than marriages where the couple share religious beliefs (Lasswell & Lasswell, 1991:405; *cf.* Steinmetz *et al.*, 1990:207,490,494; Zinn & Eitzen, 1993:374). Saxton (1993:213) reports that interfaith marriages have a 10% higher failure rate than homogamous marriages. Lauer and Lauer (1991:130) argue that the change is even smaller, that somebody in a marriage where the spouse has no religion, will report that their marriage is happy. Saxton (1993:213) warns that one cannot derive from divorce statistics the true level of tension in interfaith marriages. The fact is that people may not necessarily disagree about their religious beliefs, but they may experience unhappiness over issues like birth control, their offspring's religious upbringing or religious practices that hinder the daily routine of their marriage. These differences may not necessarily lead to divorce.

3.6 EMPIRICAL STUDY

In order to develop a practice theory for the pastoral guidance of the unequally yoked marriage partners, the researcher deems it necessary to do, as part of the metatheory, a qualitative empirical study by using semi-structured interviews with five couples in an unequally yoked marriage and with five pastors who counseled couples who are unequally yoked. This method was chosen rather than a more formal quantifiable method, because it will enable the subjects to be more revealing about personal and intimate material (Jagger & Wright, 1999:63; *cf.* 1.6.2).

3.6.1 Introduction

It is the researcher's intention to have a semi-structured interview with five believers and five unbelievers who are in an unequally yoked marriage relationship. Nosworthy and Lane (1998:181, 184) speak about co-research. This is to acknowledge the 'expert knowledge' of the people with whom the researcher is working. The purpose is not counseling, but the attaining of knowledge. By means of the interviews, the researcher wants to investigate the following aspects of this kind of union:

- their experience of their marriage,
- particular problems they have,
- mechanisms they use to handle the spiritual differences,
- successful mechanisms to make their marriage work,
- support systems they have,
- what kind of 'help' they received from pastors.

The objectives of the researcher in the semi-structured interview with five pastors, who have experience of counseling couples in an unequally yoked marriage, are the following:

- to determine how common the problem is,
- to understand what impact this kind of marriage have on believers,
- to investigate the problems that couples in unequally yoked marriages face,
- to learn from the successes and failures of pastors who have counseled such couples.

There are, according to Lartz (1999:110-111), certain preliminary aspects that must get attention before a questionnaire can be used:

- the respondent must understand the purpose of the questionnaire, so that it is not a cross-examination,
- the respondent must give his/her voluntary commitment to collaborate fully and to be absolutely honest and open in his/her answers,
- the respondent must be assured of the absolute confidentiality with which the information given on the questionnaire will be treated.

It is important that the respondent should not think that he/she must give a theoretical model answer, but he/she must be completely honest when completing the questionnaire (Kruger, 1993:292).

3.6.2 Methodology

It is important to note that the questionnaires (*cf.* 3.6.3) were compiled to be used in the empirical study and are not suitable to be used without changes in a pastoral counseling session with unequally yoked marriage partners.

The researcher identified five pastors/counselors working in different denominations. The questionnaires were given to them, he/she had the opportunity to complete it privately and a semi-structured interview, on the basis of the questionnaire, followed with each respondent. The completed questionnaires and tapes of the interviews are available at the researcher. The researcher also asked the pastors/counselors whether they could identify couples in unequally yoked marriages who could be approached to serve as respondents in the empirical study. It is noteworthy that only one pastor was willing to contact one believing partner in such a marriage. The researcher knew of believers in such marriages and contacted them. Unfortunately three of them could not be interviewed because of distance, but they completed the questionnaires and the researcher was able to clarify uncertainties over the telephone. These completed questionnaires are also available.

It is important to take note of the fact that no pastor/counselor was willing to contact the unbelieving partner in an unequally yoked marriage relationship. Thus, the researcher did not succeed in her intention to have interviews with five unbelievers in unequally yoked marriages (*cf.* 3.6.1). (These questionnaires which were intended for the unbelievers are available at the researcher.) This serves as an indication of how sensitive and difficult this whole issue is and with how much caution pastors handle it. They did not want to jeopardise the counseling already done with the couple, their relationship with the couple or the couple's own relationship by putting the unbeliever on the spot. One can speculate further on the reasons why the pastors were not willing to propose 'unbelievers' as respondents for the empirical study. One possible reason can be that people are cautious to sit in judgement on somebody else - to label somebody as an 'unbeliever'. Another possibility can be that the unbelieving partner is reluctant to classify him-/herself as an unbeliever, even though his/her life does not show the fruits of a regenerated heart (*cf.* Mt 7:15-20).

Referring to interviews, Mack (1994a:223) states that when the interviewer asks the questions, the interview must be done in a thoughtful and gracious manner, otherwise the attempt to gather data will be in vain. The way the questions are asked, must put the respondents at ease. The interviewer must also be attentive to non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication consists out of non-verbal behaviour, e.g. actions, facial expressions, eye contact, and paralinguistic communication. By paralinguistic communication Mack (1994a:228-229) means that the interviewer must not only be

attentive to *what* the person says, but also to *how* he/she says it, e.g. tone of voice and the willingness to speak.

A summary of the composition of the respondents is given in 3.6.4. All the questionnaires and available interviews were worked through in order to reach the objectives of the empirical study (*cf.* 3.6.1). The transcribed information of the questionnaires and the interviews are given in 3.6.5 and the researcher's interpretation of the responses of the respondents are given in 3.6.6.

3.6.3 Questionnaires

The different questionnaires with the accompanying letters can be found in the appendices at the end of the study:

- Appendix A1: The accompanying letter in English
- Appendix A2: The accompanying letter in Afrikaans
- Appendix B1: Questionnaire for the believing partner in an unequally yoked marriage
- Appendix B2: Questionnaire for the divorced believing partner who was in an unequally yoked marriage
- Appendix B3: Questionnaire for the pastor who counseled unequally yoked couples

3.6.4 A summary of the composition of the respondents

A summary of the composition of the respondents (RES) and their spouse (SP):

	YEARS MARRIED	GENDER RES	AGE RES	AGE SP	GENDER AND AGE CHILDREN		
B1	14	Female	38	40	M 13	F 11	F 6
B2	32	Female	53	54	F 31	M 29	
B3	17½	Female	40	41	M 15	M 13	M 9
B4	22	Female	42	45	F 18	F 16	
B5	24	Female	43	47	F 21	M 18	

A summary of the composition of the pastors/counselors and their experience counseling couples (C), believing partners (B) and unbelieving partners (U):

	GENDER	OCCUPATION	YEARS EXPERIENCE	GENDER OF B	FREQUENCY PER YEAR		
					C	B	U
P1	M	Minister	19	F - mostly	1	2/3	0
P2	M	Pastor	15	M & F	50		
P3	F	Counselor	11	F	5-10	4-6	0
P4	M	Minister	23	F	1		
P5	M	Minister	22	F	5	4	1

3.6.5 Responses of the respondents

A synopsis of the transcribed information given by each respondent can be found in the appendices at the end of the study:

- Appendix C: The responses of the believing partners in an unequally yoked marriage, named B1, B2, B3, B4 and B5.
- Appendix D: The conveyances of the pastors, in a summarised form, who already worked with couples in unequally yoked marriages, named P1, P2, P3, P4 and P5.

3.6.6 Interpretation of the responses given by the respondents

The following interpretation of the responses was done by the researcher on the grounds of the completed questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews.

3.6.6.1 The believers in an unequally yoked marriage

Respondent B1

They were both believers in Jesus Christ when they got married and served the Lord for 13 years together - he as a minister. Their marriage was then wonderful and fulfilled. Through the husband's theological studies, he got involved in the 'Historical Jesus Question' and it lead apparently to the abandonment of his faith in Jesus Christ. At his insistence, B1 continued with her religious walk, serving the Lord with all her heart. It is possible that 'Christ in her' (*cf.* Col 1:27b) became too much for him and he had to get out. She was willing to stay in the marriage and do everything possible to save it, except giving up her faith, but he was not willing. The fact that he could no longer believe in God and the Bible was the sole reason for their divorce, according to B1. He did not want to stay any longer in the relationship. She describes the year of their unequally yoked marriage as 'hell'.

It seems as if faith in Jesus Christ is the most important requirement for marriage for B1, as she is not willing to marry anyone who is not a believer. An unequally yoked marriage, according to her, can never reach its full potential, because of the spiritual wedge existing between the partners. B1 strongly warns against the common misconception that the believer will be able to 'change' the unbeliever after the marriage (it is not impossible that the unbeliever can become converted, but there is no guarantee). She mentions a few potential problems for such a marriage:

- The marriage is not founded on the right basis and starts with a backlog.
- There is no spiritual unity between the partners.
- There will always be certain things or activities where one partner is excluded and stands on the edge.
- Both parents are not involved in the spiritual training of the children.
- The believers walk with the Lord can be seriously hampered by the unbeliever by the things he/she says.

B1 is of the opinion that the believer in an unequally yoked marriage should handle the situation in the following way:

- The believer must stay close to and work hard on his/her relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The believer must seek all the help he/she can get and ask people to pray for their marriage.
- As 1 Pe 3 states, the believer must not talk, but must live an example. Talking, often has the opposite effect. It is difficult, because one's instinct says that you must fight for what is dear to you.
- The believer must learn to keep quiet and to surrender the situation to God and allow God to work.
- The believer must put his/her trust in the Lord, and not in the marriage partner.
- The believer must pray for the unbelieving partner.

B1 made one last remark regarding the unequally yoked marriage. She said that God meant it well when He prohibited it. He knows how extremely difficult such a marriage can be and wanted to protect man against the pain.

Respondent B2

Of the five believers who were contacted, B2 is the most fortunate and experiences a relatively high degree of marriage satisfaction. They agreed to disagree and gave each other the necessary space to live out their convictions. They respect, accept and love each other. Despite their happy marriage, B2 will never encourage an unequally yoked marriage because of the lack of a common philosophy of life and spiritual unity. The way they approach things, is just so different. It is also possible that because of the differences in religious orientation, they can differ on issues like values and norms. The unbelieving husband is also not able to serve his family as priest and prophet - he can thus not be a good role model for his children. She sometimes feels extremely lonely and envies couples who can serve and worship the Lord together. She sometimes experiences their marriage as shallow. When she first got to know the Lord, she wanted to 'convert' her husband and that put a lot of stress on their relationship, but in the mean time she learned to handle things differently.

According to the passage written in 1 Pet 3, the wife must be quiet, for she may win her husband through her example - her behaviour. She is worried about her example, because for years it seems as if he does not see anything worthwhile to follow in her. The researcher is reminded of the scripture written in 1 Co 7:16 which states: "How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband?" It is true that conversion is only the Lord's work. At least, by keeping quiet and by respecting him, she is not driving him further and further away from the Lord.

Her advice for women in an unequally yoked marriage:

- The believer in an unequally yoked marriage experiences, in a certain sense, a form of persecution - and there are many people whose faith just grows stronger and stronger under such

circumstances - she must persevere and be diligent to feed herself with spiritual food. God is faithful, He gives the believer the strength needed for every day.

- She must be quiet and just live out her example, pray for her husband and not put any pressure on him by demanding things from him, e.g. to go to church with her.
- She must be sensitive to read the atmosphere - sometimes she may talk and other times she must rather be quiet - she must trust the Holy Spirit to guide her.
- She must practise her faith at times that will not interfere with her time with her husband.
- The wife must always be prepared to ask forgiveness.

Respondent B3

There is a possibility, that if B3 and her husband had not engaged in premarital sex, they would not have married, but the moment there is sexual contact, the situation becomes complex and it is so difficult to get out of it. People that never should have married, marry then 'because it is the right thing to do'. B3 also feels that she was too young to make the right choices. She describes the marriage they had as having little happiness, satisfaction and fulfilment. They experienced the following problems:

- Communication broke down. He could only speak on one topic.
- Her husband withdrew from any religious activities and manifested aggressive behaviour and swearing.
- He expected her to reject some of her family members because of his convictions and allowed no space for anyone who held other opinions.
- She experienced a spiritual battle between light and darkness.

She is not sure whether she would marry again, but if it happened, she would require from her potential husband that:

- He must have a strong identity and personality not to be influenced easily by other people.
- He must know that happiness lies in himself.
- He must give space for others to differ from him.
- He must accept other people unconditionally.
- He must share her faith in God.

An unequally yoked marriage cannot really work, because light and darkness do not go together. She went for all kinds of help. It helped her, but it did nothing for their marriage. If B3 were to help somebody in a similar situation, she would be available to support the person through prayer, to listen, not to judge and not to give advice. She would respect the processes of struggle, anger and despondency.

Respondent B4

She realises that young people who are in love, are not open for outside counsel and advice, and that things like culture, race and religion play a very important role in a marriage. It is interesting that the objections that her parents had against B4's intended marriage to her husband, are exactly the things that she acknowledges years later as big problems in their marriage, e.g. that fact that she must take all the responsibility. When they got married, she was still not a very mature Christian and the inequality in religion between her and her husband was not a big issue, but when she started to grow spiritually, a gorge started to open up between them. In the beginning their relationship was happy, fulfilled and highly satisfactory, but as she grew spiritually and he became more radical in his opinions against religion, things changed and she describes their relationship now as a relationship on its knees.

Some of the problems that she experienced in their relationship:

- He made the vows at the baptism of their children, but did not play any role in the spiritual upbringing of the children.
- She cannot share any spiritual experiences with him and there is no unity on the spiritual level - they can never be fully one.
- Sometimes her church activities interfere with his lifestyle and her religion spoils his fun.

It seems as if the couple has enough common ground between them to make their marriage enjoyable, but something important is missing. This is especially visible when they are alone, because they struggle to communicate. This makes the situation very serious, because as long as they are out with friends and family doing the things they like to do, things go well, but the moment they are alone, the problem of communication becomes evident.

She tries not to witness in words, but to be Jesus for him, through her everyday living and her positive attitude. She however knows, that she often fails and is giving him more reason to point a finger in the process. She finds support in her Bible study group. She has been to see a clinical psychologist a few times and her husband has been once, but they only touched the tip of the iceberg. They have not addressed the heart of the matter. The way, she believes, to support somebody in such a marriage, is to pray with the person. Also to pray for the conversion of the unbelieving partner, because only then will the inequality be changed to equality - as there is only one Spirit.

Respondent B5

On the one hand, B5 has lots of insight in their situation, but on the other hand is it also true that she is confused and sometimes conveys different messages. She says that she is not willing to go through the trouble of a divorce, but then again says that she is not willing to stay too long in the marriage, as 'the price is too high'. She is also aware of the fact that her strong points, like her intellectual ability, her ability to use words, her ability to take the lead and to make a success of whatever she does, are a

threat to her husband, but she is also not 100% willing to compromise these things for the sake of her marriage. She still uses some of these things as weapons against him.

Surviving mechanisms she uses:

- She lives on a 50% level of consciousness, but she knows that it is not effective to ignore things, because it can be ignored for 3 months, but when it pops up, it is much worse, because then a lot of emotion is also included.
- She comforts herself with food, as she does not experience her husband's pampering anymore. She also realises that she does not comfort him anymore as she used to do.
- The way she learned to survive, was to build walls to protect herself from hurt. She knows that it will be necessary to break these walls down, but it does not look as if she is willing to do that, because of the risk and possible pain involved.
- She speaks quite regularly to Christian friends who pray with her.
- She has surrendered the situation to the Lord.

It is B5's opinion that an unequally yoked marriage cannot be fulfilled, because if it is the believer's desire to get to know the Lord more and more, he/she will automatically move further away from the unbelieving marriage partner.

Some of the problems that she experiences in their marriage:

- Her husband manifests hostility and aggression against her relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and she may not speak about spiritual things at home.
- He has undergone a personality change and it is difficult for her to accept this new man.
- He isolates her from other people, but does not satisfy her emotional needs.
- He feels threatened by her success and abilities and it probably makes him feel inferior.
- There are different values and norms.
- She does not trust him any more.

Her advice to young people who are looking for a marriage partner, is the following: Have a good look at your partner's family. Look at the way they handle crisis, because that will probably determine how your partner will handle a crisis.

3.6.6.2 The pastors/counselors who worked with unequally yoked married couples

Desirability of unequally yoked marriage

All five respondents stated categorically that if a couple comes to them for marriage catechesis, they will first of all ask about their individual relationships with God. If it becomes evident that one is a believer and the other one not, they will address the situation immediately. If it is possible, they will lead the unbeliever to Christ, otherwise they will strongly point out the dangers of such an union. Some of the pastors said that they will not marry the couple.

Quality of unequally yoked marriage

There is no doubt among the respondents that such a marriage is problematic, difficult and risky. The problem is that the two partners operate from two different frames of reference with different norms and values. This will undoubtedly lead to tension and frustration between the couple. The marriage can work, but it will require extremely hard work and the fulfilment will only be up to a point, because they will never be able to be completely one.

The unequally yoked couple

In most cases the respondents reported that the wife is the believing partner and she comes for counseling, while the husband is the unbelieving partner who is normally not interested in counseling.

Counseling the unequally yoked couple

The respondents differ in their approaches. Some are willing to see the believer alone after they have seen the unbeliever at least once. If the unbeliever is willing to continue with the counseling, it is usually an indication that there is hope for the marriage relationship. Others feel strongly about the fact that they will never see only one of the partners, as it can easily cause a break in trust. One respondent believes it is profitable to first see them separately, to give each one the opportunity to tell his/her story and only after that, to see them together.

Objectives for counseling the unequally yoked couple

The respondents also differ in regard to what they want to achieve in the counseling session. One respondent is of the opinion that the unbeliever must be converted, and if it does not happen, the intervention is not successful. Another respondent has the conviction that the pastor must respect the counselee's choice and not misuse the situation to convert the person. They all however agree that the aim of the counseling should be to help the believer *and the* unbeliever to handle the situation better and to have a fulfilling marriage. In order to work on their relationship, the counselors suggest the following things get attention:

- Communication skills.
- Understanding personality types and making adjustments.
- Both partners must understand their roles in the marriage relationship.
- The couple must enter each other's world so that they can understand each other better.
- They must learn to listen to each other, to respect each other and to accept each other with their mistakes.
- They must go back to the hurt of their childhood.

The believer must also receive special attention:

- The believer must be strengthened to be an example to the unbeliever.
- The believer must learn not to look at the unbelief of the partner as an insurmountable obstacle, but as an opportunity to witness.

- The wife (as the believer) must accept the fact that she will not be able to change her husband, but that she has a responsibility to act in a godly way towards her unbelieving husband. She must rather learn to be quiet and to pray for him.
- One of the most important coping mechanisms for the believer, is his/her personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. That is where he/she gets the strength, mercy, power, patience and wisdom to live out the fruit of the Holy Spirit every day. The wife (as the believer) must learn that she can handle the situation correctly by being quiet, spending time with the Lord, listening to and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- To give hope.

Biblical guidelines for the unequally yoked marriage

It was interesting to note that certain passages in Scripture were repeatedly mentioned by the respondents, and some of these passages also received attention in chap. 2. Some of these passages are:

- God's plan and the result of sin - Ge 2 & 3
- Passages of encouragement - Jer 29:11, Mt 11:28, Lk 4:18,19 & Heb 13:5, etc.
- Conjugal fidelity - 1 Co 7:13
- The 14 rules of love - 1 Co 13
- The fruit of the Spirit - Gal 5:22-23
- To die to yourself - Gal 2:20, Col 3:3 & Jn 12:24
- Submission - Eph 5:21-33
- The example of the believing wife - 1 Pet 3:1-2

Specific problems encountered by the pastors/counselors

There are a few problems that seems to recur in all counseling sessions with unequally yoked marriage partners. Only a few are mentioned here (*cf* Appendix D):

- One partner (usually the unbeliever) does not want to continue with the marriage.
- The moral values of the partners differ, there is often a 'third party' involved.
- The believing partner often makes an appeal on the other partner's moral values and feelings to force him/her to stay in the relationship. This behaviour is destructive, because it only angers the unbeliever more.
- Manipulation - the partners throw each other with passages from the Bible.
- The unbeliever does not have insight to realise his/her responsibility to work at the relationship.
- It is difficult to break down the aggression and the biases between the couple and to build trust.
- The couple does not have common norms and values to use as a basis to work from.
- Christians do not live like Christians.

- There is an unwillingness, especially with men, to seek counseling, because of self-righteousness and pride.

Successes in counseling the unequally yoked couple

The respondents have different definitions for success. The one determines success on whether the marriage was saved, and this particular respondent has a 50% success rate. The success is of course determined to a large extent by whether the unbeliever is willing to come for counseling. Another determines the success on whether or not the unbeliever is converted. Another respondent is of the opinion that the intervention was successful if the couple manage to enter each other's world so that there can be more understanding for each other. As long as there is improvement in the relationship, even if the unbeliever is still an unbeliever, the counseling was successful. Yet another pastor/counselor focuses on the believing partner (usually the wife) and feels that the counseling is successful if the wife is empowered to stay in the marriage; if she understands the behaviour of her unbelieving husband better and if she realises that it is not her responsibility to change her husband and thus reacts in different and more positive ways.

3.7 METATHEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHAPTER 3

- Marriage is a divine, permanent institution, legalised by a contract, that binds a man and a woman in a life-long, voluntary and exclusive union.
- In recent times, there is a movement away from a life-long vow of fidelity in search of individual fulfilment, autonomy, independence, growth and creativity, although the family is still considered as the central institution in life and indispensable for society.
- Changes in family and marital values and family patterns cannot be ignored and cannot necessarily be stopped, but their disruptive potential must be minimised.
- Traditionally, the ideal partner was seen as somebody from the same social class and the same religious, racial and ethnic group, but it seems as if the importance of homogamous religious affiliation is declining.
- Many factors have been identified that enhance fulfilling marriages, e.g. balance between mutuality and individuation, self-awareness, self-acceptance, self-esteem, communication, problem-solving, but also an awareness of a power and purpose greater than themselves - a spiritual orientation.
- Among different factors that cause marital conflict, diverse values and different religious convictions are mentioned.
- Research affirms that religious commitment and homogamy has a positive effect on marriage stability and marital satisfaction as it helps the family to establish effective support systems and is a deterrent for divorce.

- From the empirical study the following preliminary conclusions were made:
 - Believers
 - An unequally yoked marriage will never be encouraged - it is just too difficult.
 - The believer's (usually the wife) relationship with Jesus Christ carries her through, but she must make sure that she practises her faith in such a way that it does not drive the unbeliever further away from her and from God.
 - The wife must not try to win her husband through words, but must witness through her example and trust the Lord to save her husband in His time. She must be sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
 - A relatively fulfilling marriage is possible if the two partners agree to disagree, if they respect each other and if they give space for each other. However, there will always be something missing - to be one in the spiritual sense.
 - It seems as if there are, in such a marriage especially, three problems which cause much heartache:
 - a breakdown in trust,
 - difficulties in communication,
 - if the husband does not take his responsibilities as priest in the house, the wife is inclined to take over all the responsibilities and the husband experiences that his wife does not accept his authority.
 - Pastors/counselors
 - An unequally yoked marriage will never be encouraged - there are just too many problems.
 - The believing partner is usually the wife.
 - The first objective for counseling should be to help the couple in their relationship, that they can accept each other, learn to live with the differences and to have a fulfilling marriage, as far as possible.
 - The second objective should be to encourage and strengthen the believer to live as an example to the unbeliever.
 - The Word of God gives specific guidelines on how to handle the situation.
 - Pastors/counselors and believers must be sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 4: PRACTICAL THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE UNEQUALLY YOKED MARRIAGE

4.1 INTRODUCTION / OBJECTIVES OF THE CHAPTER

The purpose of this study is to suggest possible guidelines to the pastor in order to alleviate the problems of the unequally yoked marriage partners so that they can have a fulfilled marriage (*cf.* chap. 1). In order to reach this goal, a basis theory was established in chap. 2 according to the hermeneutical model of Zerfass. The objective of the basis theory is to establish biblical principles undergirding an unequally yoked marriage. In chap. 3 a metatheory was established by investigating the human sciences' view of marriage, what developments or changes have been identified in the marriage relationship over the past decades and what are regarded as important ingredients for a successful marriage. As the emphasis of this study is the pastoral guidance of marriage partners where one is a believer in Jesus Christ and the other partner is not, it was particularly important to explore the influence of religion on the marriage relationship.

Part of the metatheory was a qualitative empirical study. It consisted of semi-structured interviews with five believers who are or were in an unequally yoked marriage and semi-structured interviews with five pastors who counselled couples who are unequally yoked. The aim of the empirical study was to learn from the experience of people who are in such a situation. To hear from them what problems they have, what mechanisms they use to handle the situation, what support systems they have and what help they received. The researcher also wanted to learn from pastors who have experience in counseling unequally yoked couples.

The aim of this chapter is the establishment of a practice theory. It will be done by an analysis and a synthesis of the basis- and metatheory in hermeneutical interaction with each other in order to propose a biblical counseling model for pastoral guidance to the unequally yoked marriage partners.

4.2 PASTORAL GUIDANCE

Pastoral guidance is about helping individuals, families and groups to cope with the pressures and crises of life. People have problems in their relationships with themselves, with other people and with God (Van Arkel, 1988:7-8). This is, as far as Collins (1988:16-17) is concerned, the ministry of sensitive and caring Christians. He concludes this from the scriptural teaching that *all believers* are to bear the burdens of one another. The goals are not only to change behaviour, attitudes, values and

perceptions, to teach skills and responsibility, to give support and guidance and to increase counselee's competence. It is also to stimulate spiritual growth, to encourage confession of sin and to model Christian standards, attitudes, values and lifestyles.

MacArthur (1994:3) agrees with Collins concerning the role of believers in counseling. He argues that counseling was considered a normal function of the church in the New Testament times. The New Testament is full of instructions regarding this:

- Ro 15:14 *"I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another."*
- Heb 3:13 *"But encourage one another daily..."*
- 1 Th 5:11 *"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up..."*
- Jas 5:16 *"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."*
- Gal 6:1-2 *"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ."*

Guidance, where the Word of God is employed and applied, argues MacArthur (1994:3), is the duty of Christian life and fellowship. It is the result of true spiritual maturity:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God (Col 3:16).

However, as Powlison (1994:45-47) points out, something happened in the 19th and early 20th century. Christians lost the use of truths and pastoral skills they formerly possessed. They lost that which is necessary for the cure of souls, like wisdom to know people, knowledge on how people change and how to help them to change. Liberal theology and secular psychology were ascendant in the counseling domain and claimed counseling expertise and insight in human nature. The Christians took the Bible and the psychologists took people. Biblical counseling did not only disappear, but became unthinkable and secular psychology dominated the counseling scene. The social, behavioural and medical sciences attained enormous social power, intellectual prestige and self-confidence.

However, by the second half of the 20th century, biblical counseling was rediscovered and this movement is primarily linked to the life and efforts of one man: Jay E. Adams. He published his first book in 1970 and saw the Bible's way of guidance as radically dependent on the work of the Holy Spirit to apply the Word of God to people's lives. He called his approach 'nouthetic counseling' and described it as *confrontation* that is done out of *concern* for the purposes of changing something God

wants to *change*, like attitudes, beliefs, behaviour, motives and decisions (Powlison, 1994:49-52; Adams, 2004). The prime goal of Christian counseling is to honour and glorify God through the change brought about in the life of the counselee (Adams, 2002). Adams defines this change as *progressive sanctification* (Powlison, 1996:3). As far as Adams is concerned, Jesus Christ must be the centre of all true Christian guidance, otherwise it is not Christian. God's will is given in Scripture as well as directions for counseling people with personal problems (Adams, 1976:41). Adams (Adams, 1978:23) puts it even stronger when he says that there is a biblical solution to every problem, because Jesus "*has been tempted in every way, just as we are*" (Heb 4:15). Furthermore, the Bible teaches extensively and accurately about human personality and there is no further need for theory, because God has provided all the facts (Adams, 2003b). Adams goes so far as to say that if Scripture is not the primary textbook for counseling, then there is something wrong with the counseling (Adams, 2003a).

There are today pastors and church leaders who are rediscovering the importance of biblical counseling (MacArthur, 1994:4-5). They are realising that:

- Scripture is superior to human wisdom - 1 Co 3:19 "*For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight.*"
- The Word of God is a more effective discerner of the human heart than any earthly means - Heb 4:12 "*For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*"
- The Spirit of God is the only effective agent of recovery and regeneration - Eph 5:18-19 "*Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.*"
- All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are found in Christ Himself - Col 2:2-3 "*...Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*"

MacArthur (1994:20) believes that the church must recover her confidence in the spiritual resources God provides:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Ti 3:16-17).

Collins (1988:22) comments on the fact that some writers have rejected psychology completely and have concluded that the Bible is all that a Christian counselor needs to help people with problems. He agrees that the Word of God is a healing balm for people who are struggling with life's problems, because it speaks to people today in a profound way and has lasting relevance to the pastor's work

and to the needs of his/her counselees. But the Bible never claims to be a textbook on counseling, as it is the Book of Salvation. It does, however, deal with loneliness, discouragement, marriage problems, grief, parent-child relationships, anger, fear and more, but it was never meant to be God's only revelation about helping people. Much can be learned from medicine, teaching and other 'people-centred' professions about God's creation. Collins (1988:22) asks the question why psychology is singled out as the one field that has nothing to offer the counseling profession. He argues that careful psychological research and data analysis have led to a vast reservoir of conclusions that are known to have helped counselees and counselors.

In the late 1980's, John MacArthur and his co-labourers, people like Bob Smith and Wayne Mack, turned their attention to the issue of biblical counseling and secular psychology (Powlison, 1994:55). People like Mark McMinn, Neil Anderson, Terry Zuehlke and Julianne Zuehlke have joined the ranks of Collins and advocate the integration of theology and psychology. For Christian counselors, according to Anderson *et al.* (2000:14), to be truly effective, the truth of God's Word must be integrated with compatible methodology from the science of psychology. Then pastors will be able to work with the wounded emotions of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and will be equipped to work in such a way with non-believers that they might, as a result of the loving exposure to the Truth, decide to put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

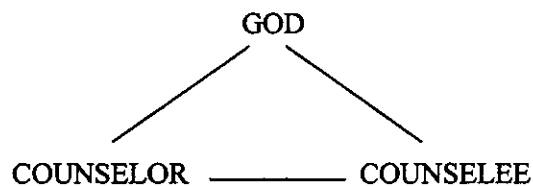
It is important that pastors/counselors should take note of the opinion given by McLeod (2003:372) in a secular book on counseling about the effects of integrating Christian beliefs with counseling. He mentions that research has identified four sources of benefits to the counselees if Christian beliefs are being incorporated in counseling:

- *Better results*: If Christian beliefs and values are being accommodated within established counseling techniques and approaches, there are slightly higher rates of improvement.
- *Mobilising hope*: Hope enables counselees to enter and stay in counseling and equipped them to give more collaboration. Christian beliefs and practices like prayer, can be powerful sources of hope.
- *The use of scriptural truths*: The Bible can provide guidelines for action and explanations for problems.
- *Intervention by a divine agent*: Some Christian counseling approaches seek to facilitate inner healing through the acceptance of "God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit". (The researcher concludes from McLeod's use of the word 'or' that the author does not understand the concept of the Triune God.)

The researcher agrees with the opinions of Collins, Anderson and other Christian counselors that much can be learned from secular psychology as many of the skills, competencies and tools are effective. But the researcher also underwrites the approach of Anderson *et al.* (2000:219) who pass these secular intervention techniques through the refining grid of Scripture to find the biblical basis for their effectiveness. If they are found to be humanistic, utopianist or New Age, they must be discarded. The researcher appreciates the opinion of Louw (1998b:1) who prefers to see pastoral guidance is an encounter between God and man (*cf.* also Louw, 1998a:6). [The researcher wants to mention that Louw (1998a) is not an exact English translation of the Afrikaans version, Louw (1998b), and that certain passages were omitted in the English translation. Therefore the researcher deemed it necessary to refer to both sources.] It is not only about the human being's experience of life, but also about the human being's relationship with God. Is it not only *psychology*, but also *theology*. Louw understands pastoral guidance as lying between *grace* and *human need* and between *God's love* and *man's search for meaning and identity*. Louw (1998b:3) states clearly that there are two important aspects in the pastoral encounter, namely the human situation on the one hand and the reality of the fact that God is present and that He can be trusted on the other hand. Pastoral theology is thus the interpretation and understanding of the Christian truth in terms of the human experience of the world (Louw, 1998a:2). Pastoral counseling, says Lotter (2001:180), has as departure point specific biblical principles and is therefore different from other contemporary therapies. The aim of pastoral care, as Louw (1998a:182-188) puts it beautifully, is spiritual maturity.

4.3 ROLE PLAYERS IN THE PASTORAL GUIDANCE PROCESS

Anderson *et al.* (2000:112-113) agree with Louw (*cf.* 4.2) that the pastor/counselor wants to integrate God into the therapeutic process as he/she knows that apart from Christ, nothing can be done (Jn 15:5). He/she wants to be filled with and led by the Spirit of God. Every pastoral guidance session thus includes three participants and it can be illustrated as follows (*cf.* Adams, 1978:4):



- The pastor/counselor has a relationship with God.
- The counselee stands in a certain relationship with God, it can be good or not so good.
- During the counseling session a relationship must be established between the pastor/counselor and the counselee.

All three participants have a role to play which cannot be played by any other without hindering the process.

The pastor is completely dependent on God in the pastoral guidance session. God is the central figure in the process with the Holy Spirit prompting, guiding, convincing and enlightening the minds of the counselor and the counselee (Adams, 2002; *cf.* Louw, 1998a:68, 168; Lartz, 1999:124,127; Minnie, 2001:100; Reinecke, 2003:105). The presence of the Holy Spirit turns the pastoral guidance session into something more than a dialogue, it becomes a *trialogue* - God becomes an active participant in the conversation (Louw, 1998a:247). The human being who is seeking help and the God who is seeking human beings meet each other through the working of the Holy Spirit (Louw, 1998b:307). Anderson *et al.* (2000:171-172) explain how the Triune God is at work in the pastoral guidance session:

- *God the Father* is the Senior Surgeon: He is in control of the process, gives his wisdom and care.
- *God the Son* is the Wounded Healer: He is the co-counselor. He shared in the problems and sufferings of human kind and took it on himself.
- *God the Holy Spirit* is the Counselor and Revealer: The indwelling Spirit of God provides guidance and leads us in all truth. He provides the power to overcome the evil forces.

Pastoral guidance should thus be grounded in prayer and in the explicit identification of Jesus as the Healer of individuals and the Restorer of relationships (Worthington, 1989:24). This is the reason why pastors do not depend on techniques to induce change, but on the Holy Spirit to work change in the couples. The task of the Christian counselor is co-operation and collaboration with God in the healing process. It is to invite divine intervention to direct inner healing of emotional hurts (Houston *et al.*, 1999:241). Prayer is the main weapon in this warfare: prayer for the couple and prayer for the pastor's discernment, wisdom and obedience to the leading that God supplies. God works through techniques, through the personality of the pastor and through His miraculous intervention (Worthington, 1989:197-198). Reinecke (2003:113) also confirms the importance of prayer when she states that prayer forms an integral part of the pastoral guidance process.

4.4 THE PASTOR/COUNSELOR

In the pastoral encounter, as Louw prefers to call the counseling session (*cf.* 4.2), the creativity and the personal touch of the pastor may not be underestimated (Louw, 1998b:12; *cf.* Adams, 1982:53-55). When Adams (1976:59-62) writes about the qualifications of the pastor for counseling, he refers to the passage written in Ro 15:14: "*I am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another.*" Paul gives certain qualifications to which the pastor must adhere. He names goodness and knowledge. Paul refers here

to knowledge of the Scriptures. It corresponds with Paul's word in Col 3:16 where he says that the "word of Christ must dwell in you richly". This means that the pastor/counselor knows the meaning of Scripture for his own life, he/she is able to solve his/her problems scripturally and can help others to do the same (cf. Houston *et al.*, 1999:241). Goodness means that the pastor/counselor has the welfare of others at heart. That is what pastoral care is all about, the caring task of the pastor in relation to individuals and communities (Gerkin, 1997:11).

Paul mentions further qualifications for the pastor. It is given in the passage according to 2 Ti 2:24-26 and Anderson *et al.* (2000:124-130) expound it as follows:

- The pastor must be a *servant* of the Lord Jesus Christ who is totally *dependent* on God.
- He may *not quarrel*. Quarrelling only puts people on the defence and it is not the pastor's task to convince people, only to share the truth in love.
- The pastor must be *kind* to everyone. It is a prerequisite for Christian counseling.
- Paul mentions the pastor's ability to *teach*. It is not only to communicate, but to apply the truth. The mind and the heart is involved in the process. It is in the heart that the mind, will and emotions come together. Intellectual knowledge needs to become experiential truth before behaviour change sets in.
- The pastor must *not be resentful*, but must be patient when wronged. When somebody shows patience while under fire, God's grace is absolutely evident and it may be an open door for ministry.
- The last trait of the pastor that Paul mentions is *gentleness*, which is a fruit of the Spirit. It is essential for the pastor who works with hurting people, because that is the example that Christ gave in Mt 11:28-30.

Apart from these character traits mentioned by Paul, there are also other traits and skills important to the pastor, like congruence, empathy, genuineness, concreteness, listening skills and probing techniques (Anderson *et al.*, 2000:126-127; cf. Worthington, 1989:101). Counselor characteristics such as personal faith, Christian values, Christian worldview and personal pursuit of excellence are mentioned by Houston *et al.* (1999:250). The pastor must never forget that together with these traits and skills, he/she also has the gospel, a theology of resolution that can set people free from their past. The Holy Spirit brings conviction and leads the person to confess and repent before God (Anderson *et al.*, 2000:126-127).

McLeod (2003:479-480) mentions the following about the skills and qualities of the effective counselor:

- *Interpersonal skills*: Competent counselors are able to demonstrate appropriate listening, communicating, empathy, presence, awareness of non-verbal communication, sensitivity to voice quality, responsiveness to expressions of emotion, turn-taking, structuring time, use of language.
- *Personal beliefs and attitudes*: Capacity to accept others, belief in the potential for change, awareness of ethical and moral choices. The counselor is sensitive to his/her values and those held by the counselee.
- *Conceptual ability*: Ability to understand and assess the counselee's problems, to anticipate future consequences of actions, to make sense of immediate process in terms of a wider conceptual scheme and to remember information about the counselee. The counselor has cognitive flexibility and skills in problem-solving.
- *Personal 'soundness'*: Absence of personal needs or irrational beliefs that are destructive to counseling relationships, self-confidence, capacity to tolerate strong or uncomfortable feelings in relation to clients, secure personal boundaries and abilities to be a counselee. There is an absence of social prejudice, ethnocentrism and authoritarianism.
- *Mastery of techniques*: Knowledge of when and how to carry out specific interventions, ability to assess effectiveness of interventions, understanding of rationale behind techniques and the possession of a sufficiently wide repertoire of interventions.
- *Ability to understand and work within social systems*: Including awareness of the family and work relationships of the client, the capacity to use support networks and supervision. Sensitivity to the social worlds of clients who may be from a different gender, ethnic, sexual orientation or age group.
- *Openness to learning and inquiry*: A capacity to be curious about counselee's backgrounds and problems. Being open to new knowledge. Using research to inform practice.

Worthington (1989:101) also mentions the importance of a good sense of humour, as long as it is used appropriately. He draws the attention to some specific, unhelpful behaviour:

- Counselors who do not structure the early session, risk losing the confidence of the couple.
- Counselors who intervene too quickly and confront too early, can drive the couple away.
- Counselors who label unconscious motivations too early.
- Counselors who stimulate interaction between the spouses, but who are not careful enough to prevent destructive interaction. Couples want to know that the counselor will allow them to work out some of their difficulties, but they also want to feel secure that he/she has the process under control.

4.5 PRELIMINARY ISSUES

4.5.1 Separate or together

A prevalent question in marital therapy is whether the couple must be seen together, separately or whether the pastor/counselor can see only one partner if the spouse is unwilling to attend counseling. The same question is relevant for the pastoral guidance of the unequally yoked married couple. From the empirical study, it is clear that the pastors differ on this point. Some are willing to see the believer alone after they have seen the unbeliever at least once. Others feel strongly about the fact that they will never see only one of the partners, as it can easily cause a break in trust (*cf.* 3.6.6.2).

Worthington (1989:98) states that marriage counseling is most effective when both spouses attend sessions together. If a couple informs him that one cannot attend a session, he tells them that the success rate when only one partner attends is less than 50%, but when both attend it is about 66%. He also stresses the point that if he sees one spouse alone, they are going to treat the session as if the other spouse is present. That means that anything the counselee tells the counselor is going to be treated as known to the spouse - this is to prevent difficult situations. Although there are advantages of seeing a partner alone, like the chance to gather more information about secrets, feelings and opinions, Pearlmutter (1992:71) sees the above-mentioned problem of Worthington as one of the biggest disadvantages of individual interviews. It is difficult for the pastor to be burdened with information which cannot be used in joint sessions and thus inhibits his/her spontaneity and manoeuvrability in working with the couple.

In the empirical study, the pastors also reported that in most cases the believing partner is the wife and she is the one who comes for counseling, while the husband is the unbelieving partner who is normally not interested in counseling (*cf.* 3.6.6.2). As seen in 4.2, the point of departure for pastoral guidance is the Bible. It can thus be assumed that the unbelieving partner will probably not seek help from a Christian counselor. The guidelines that the researcher will propose for a possible model of pastoral guidance to the unequally yoked couple, will thus primarily focus on the *believing partner*. There is however a possibility that the unbeliever may join the believer for counseling and in that instance the issue of informed consent is raised.

4.5.2 Informed consent

The definition of the 'unequally yoked' was given by the researcher as meaning, a couple where one partner is a believer in the Triune God and the other partner is not (*cf.* 2.2.4). The important question is raised whether the pastor may or should share the Gospel of Jesus Christ as Saviour to the unsaved spouse. Anderson *et al.* (2000:328) mention that there are different opinions on this very sensitive issue. Some say it is unethical to impose values on a counselee. They say therapy should not be used

to promote religious or spiritual ideology. Another opinion is that it is ethical for a counselor to share his religious faith in therapy if:

- They are dealing with clinical problems that would be best helped by spiritual or religious intervention.
- They are working within the counselee's belief system.
- They have carefully defined the therapy contract or informed consent has been given to include the use of religious interventions and resources in the sessions.

Informed consent means that when people come to a counselor, they should be given thorough and accurate information about the proposed counseling procedures. If a couple agrees to counseling with the assumption that standard counseling techniques will be used and spiritual interventions like prayer and the reading of verses from Scripture are being used, it is unethical. Informed consent helps to prevent such situations (McMinn, 1996:24,90,122).

The pastors who served as respondents in the empirical study also disagreed on this point (*cf.* 3.6.6.2). Respondent P5 said that the unbeliever must be converted, and if it does not happen, the intervention was not successful. Respondent P2 has the conviction that the pastor must respect the counselee's choice and may not misuse the situation to try to convert the unbeliever (*cf.* Appendix D). The researcher underwrites the view of Anderson *et al.* (2000:328) when they state their two goals for counseling. The first concerns the Christian counselees: that they will realise their freedom in Christ and become mature in their faith. This will help the believer in an unequally yoked marriage relationship to have the strength to continue in this relationship according to Paul's admonishment (1 Co 7:12-13). The second concerns the counselor's reaction to the unbelievers: that they have the opportunity to share the gospel with those who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ if they have the permission of the unbeliever to do so. This concurs with the opinions of respondents P2 and P4 given in Appendix D.

A further question, related to the question whether the pastor may share his/her faith with the unbeliever in the counseling session, is whether the pastor may include spiritual interventions in the counseling session when the unbeliever is present. Anderson *et al.* (2000:220-221) use the following principle: If the counselee is a believer, a nominal Christian or if informed consent has been given, the tools and the treatment approach will include biblical references. The Holy Spirit can use this to draw the person to the Truth. If the counselee is a non-Christian or did not give informed consent, the same tools and treatment plan will be used, but the biblical references will be omitted.

As stated in 4.5.1, the unbeliever will probably not come for pastoral guidance to a pastor, but if he/she comes, the researcher believes that the unbeliever must have the opportunity to give informed consent and after that the pastor is free to use spiritual interventions.

4.5.3 The importance of a contract

At the beginning of the counseling, the counselee is being told that the pastor wants him/her to commit for three sessions during which they will assess the marriage, its difficulties and resources for solving those problems. After that the couple and the counselor are free to decide whether they want to continue. Worthington (1989:99-100) names some reasons why time limits are important:

- Short-term counseling is as effective as long-term counseling.
- Short-term counseling keeps the counselee motivated.
- Time and money are important to the counselee.
- A limit on the number of sessions gives the counselee a target for change and allows him/her to concentrate his/her efforts.
- A time limit also serves as motivation for the counselor to help quickly, which helps him/her to plan interventions.

Crowe and Ridley (2000:85) concur with the opinion of Worthington by mentioning that research shows that change usually occurs in the first three or four sessions. It is also common that a couple stops counseling after one or two sessions. There is thus not unlimited time.

As far as the researcher is concerned, the contract is not only about the number of sessions, but also about the fact that the counselee must realise his/her responsibility in the counseling effort. He/she is responsible for change. The contract also gives the counselee the assurance of confidentiality, as the counselor commits him-/herself to treat the content of the counseling sessions confidentially. Reinecke (2003:108) mentions another aspect that justifies a contract. She speaks about the situation where there are signs of self destructive behaviour or an inclination to suicide. In such instances, a contract is advisable to indemnify the pastor of liability.

4.5.4 Looking at expectations

Going for help is difficult and counselees often are anxious during the first session. They are afraid that they will not be able to express themselves or that they will hear things they do not want to hear. They can also be afraid that they will find out that the problems they are experiencing are their own fault and that nothing can be done to help them (Hughes, 1991:18-19). The counselees thus need to be broadly informed on what they can expect (Butler & Joyce, 2000:16). McLeod (2003:329) speaks about pre-counseling information. The researcher regards the following aspects as important to be included in the pre-counseling information (*cf.* Worthington, 1989:116-117; Glick *et al.*, 2000:386):

- A clear description of the goals for pastoral guidance to the unequally yoked couple:
 - To help them build a more satisfying, more intimate and less conflictual marriage. It is not to help them endure an unsatisfactory marriage.
 - To identify and solve interactional problems.
 - To recognise each one's contribution to the problems.
 - To clarify and specify each spouse's needs and desires in the relationship.
 - To decrease coercion and blame and to increase intimacy.
 - To develop clear communication and resolve conflictual interaction.
- Suggestions to the counselees helping them to make the most of counseling:
 - Counseling takes time and it is hard work. The counselor will ask the counselee to make changes in the way he/she is currently acting. It is not easy to change, but the counselees who benefit the most from counseling, are those who follow these suggestions.
 - It takes time and patience to change current behaviour. Perhaps some things the counselee will be asked to do may feel unnatural, awkward or silly. He/she must remember that not all things are meant to be permanent, but for maximum effectiveness, they should be followed at least for the time of counseling.
 - There will be ups and downs in their relationship during the time of counseling. The counselee must be prepared for swings in his/her feelings about the spouse and about the benefits of counseling.
 - The counselee must not quit too early. Sometimes counseling gets 'stuck' and takes time to free itself.
 - The counselee must not expect perfection from his/her spouse. Everybody is human and despite good intentions, fails. Forgiveness must be practised instead of judgement.
 - The counselee must be willing to change first and not wait for the partner to change.
 - It is worth taking the risk.
- The importance of homework assignments.

4.5.5 The importance of hope

Biblical change cannot take place without hope (Mack, 1994c:189). Hope for God's healing may be a factor of unique source of gain when it distinguishes Christian psychotherapy from secular therapy (Houston *et al.*, 1999:241). In all counseling, says Collins (1988:69), the chance for improvement is better when counselees are given a sense of realistic hope about the future - that things will get better (*cf.* Louw, 1998a:449). The Bible confirms the importance of hope (*cf.* Mack, 1994c:189-190):

Perseverance: *But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently* (Ro 8:25).

Confidence: *Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold* (2 Co 3:12).

Faith and love: ...*the faith and love that spring from the hope...* (Col 1:5).

Endurance: ...*and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Th 1:3).

Stability: *We have this hope as an anchor for soul, firm and secure* (Heb 6:19).

More intimate relationship with God: ...*and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God* (Heb 7:19).

Personal purity: *Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure* (1 Jn 3:3).

People hurt when their marriages get into difficulties, but there is hope for the troubled marriage. If the couple is willing to step back and take a good look at their marriage, it is not only possible to keep the marriage afloat, but it can be restored to something better (Clinton, 2001:1576). The dimension of hope causes the believer to be different from the unbeliever in Jesus Christ, because hope enables the believer to reach beyond him-/herself. This is true for the pastor and for the believing partner in the unequally yoked marriage. The Christian faith does not safeguard the believer against life's difficulties, but it does offer the consolation that he/she does not need to walk the road alone (Lotter, 2001:181). The believer also has access to the *hope-giving Book*, because the Bible contains the promises of God (Lotter, 1987:118). As far as Louw (1998a:448-450) is concerned, pastoral guidance is essentially connected to God's faithfulness and his promises, in such a way that he speaks of *promissiotherapy*. God's faithfulness to his promises encourages faith in the human heart and that offers certainty and hope. Adams (1978:40) says that the pastor/counselor must be a man/woman of hope, because every counselee needs hope and the Word of God is adequate to give hope (Adams, 1978:46; cf. Collins, 1988:69):

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Ro 15:4)

Worthington (1989:106) states that the careful assessment done during the beginning phase of the counseling (cf. 4.5.6), instills hope, as it gives the couple confidence in the pastor's ability to handle them. Another task during the beginning phase that can increase hope is the negotiation of expectations (cf. 4.5.4), because the information that the pastor presents to the couple regarding the goals for marital counseling and suggestion to get the most out of it, demonstrates hope and belief that the couple will improve. Worthington (1989:115) gives a strong warning in this regard. The pastor must avoid blind, groundless reassurances, but clear, thorough rationales behind the directives gives hope, because it communicates that the couple is intelligent and are responsible participants in the process (cf. Collins, 1988:70). Throughout the course of counseling, hope will be instilled every time the pastor verbalises his/her appreciation for the genuine efforts of the couple (Adams, 1978:48).

Another approach that the pastor/counselor can follow to instill hope, is to confront the counselee with self-defeating logic, e.g. thoughts like 'It will never get better' or 'Nothing can be worse than this'. These ideas should be challenged gently with a question like 'What is the evidence for your conclusion that it will never get better?' (Collins, 1988:69-70). Mack (1994c:202) concurs with Collins when he says that one way to instill hope in counselees is to teach them to think biblically. People must be reminded about the possibilities for good and about the divine resources available to them. People must also think biblically about the nature and cause of the problem and about what they say (Mack, 1994c:202-206).

4.5.6 Assessment

Assessment is not possible if the necessary information has not been gathered. Worthington (1989:105) considers assessment as the cornerstone of treatment. The counselees are the experts on their situation while the counselor is only the consultant. The counselees must get the opportunity to present the information (Hart Morris, 2004:3). In narrative therapy the term 'not-knowing' is used when referred to the position of the therapist. Therapy is seen as a process in which there is a movement towards what is 'not yet known'. Questions are not being asked from a position of pre-understanding. The best way to achieve the not-knowing position, is by listening (Freedman & Combs, 1996:44-45). Mack (1994a:210-211) mentions the example of Job's counselors who never asked questions or gathered information and just assumed that they knew all about his problems. As a result, their counsel to him made his situation worse and added to his distress. To be effective, the pastor must gather enough information to adequately understand the person and his/her problems. It is not an easy process, because people often feel embarrassed about their problems and are reluctant to share them with somebody else.

Mack (1994a:222) mentions that there are different methods of gathering information (*cf.* Reinecke, 2003:108):

- Using personal data inventory forms (PDIF). MacArthur and Mack (1994:387-390) provide an example of a Personal data inventory form (PDIF) and a copy of it can be found in Appendix E at the end of the study. As the PDIF was created by Americans, it will be wise to adapt it culturally for use in Africa.
- Asking good questions.
- Observing halo data.

There is more than one reason why a PDIF is a useful tool in the initial stage of counseling (*cf.* Hughes, 1991:19):

- The form provides constant access to basic information about the counselee.

- Completing the form helps the counselee to think about the issues he/she wants to discuss.
- Discussing information from the form with the counselee can provide a natural and appropriate entry point into the counseling session.

During the process of gathering information, Mack (1994a:223-225) remarks on the importance of asking 'appropriate' questions. The amount of data the pastor gathers depends largely on the quality of his/her questions. The quality of questions is determined by the following:

- Appropriate questions are thoughtful and gracious: The questions should be asked in such a way that the counsees will be set at ease. The question must be asked in a 'advance-retreat' method. That means that when the pastor senses that the counselee becomes apprehensive or uncomfortable with the line of questions, he/she must retreat a little.
- Appropriate questions are relevant: All questions should relate to issues the pastor is seeking to address. They should not serve merely to satisfy curiosity. Irrelevant questions can distract people from the real issues.
- Appropriate questions produce facts: It is better to ask 'what' questions than 'why' questions. The answer to a 'why' question is often 'I don't know' and the person does not give any more information, but questions like 'What is happening? What do you mean? What have you done about it?' give the opportunity for more talking. Another helpful word to use in a question, is 'how', e.g. 'How do you feel? How have you acted? How have you tried to resolve it?' Open-ended questions cannot be answered by a 'yes' or a 'no' and provide more information, e.g. 'Do you want to get married?' vs. 'What are your thoughts about marriage?'

The last method, mentioned by Mack (1994a:228-229), to gather information, is to observe 'halo data'. 'Halo data' refers to information that can be gained by observing non-verbal behaviour and paralinguistic communication (Crowe & Ridley, 2000:77):

- Non-verbal behaviour: Facial expressions can reveal anger or sorrow. The way the couple places the chairs can reveal a lot. The chair's handles can be squeezed or the couple may look down when certain topics are mentioned.
- Paralinguistic communication: The information is not only conveyed by *what* the person says, but also by *how* he/she says it, e.g. tone of voice, speed or anxiousness. Paralinguistic communication also involves what counsees are willing to talk about and which topics they evade.

Assessment, it was said, is not possible if the necessary information has not been gathered, but assessment is also not completed before the information obtained is not interpreted and conclusions drawn from it (*cf.* Mack, 1994b:231). Part of the conclusions drawn from the assessment, is to set

goals for the counseling that will include change (Worthington, 1989:93). The accurate understanding of the meaning of the collected data thus provides strategic direction for the pastoral guidance process. Mack (1994b:235-244) provides a strategy for the accurate interpretation of the data. This can be found in Appendix F at the end of the study.

4.5.7 The SER cycle: Surge-Euphoria-Relapse

Sometimes there is a surge forward in the couple's relationship and the counselee feels euphoric and stops coming for counseling because he/she thinks that the relationship is completely restored. This is dangerous, because there is often a relapse after the first surge. If he/she is not in counseling when the relapse occurs, he/she may think that changes cannot be maintained without continual counseling or that counseling only produces temporary gains. When the couple begins to progress, the pastor must warn the counselee that continued counseling is important to make sure that the changes are lasting. This gives the counselee positive expectations, because if a relapse happens, it will be experienced as normal. It is therefore important that the counselee must not stop counseling too early and that a relapse must be expected. The relapse must be viewed as another challenge to be conquered and not as an indication that the couple cannot progress (Worthington, 1989:106-107). The fact that couples expect relapses, helps them many times to avoid it (Worthington, 1989:304).

4.5.8 The value of homework assignments

The counselee often needs some direction after the first session. The pastor must give him/her some task that he/she will be able to perform. Accomplishing small beginnings reinforces the motivation and enthusiasm and gives an initial feeling of success (Hughes, 1991:45). When Adams (1978:301-310) speaks about the purpose for homework assignments, he mentions the following:

- Regular homework assignments set a pattern for expectations of change: The counselee must know that there is more to the counseling session than just talking.
- Homework assignments clarify expectations: With written assignments misunderstandings can be avoided.
- Homework assignments enable the counselor to do more counseling more rapidly: It speeds up the counseling as work is not only confined to the counseling session.
- Homework assignments keep the counselee from becoming dependent on the counselor: The counselor coaches the counselee, but he/she must do the work as change is the responsibility of the counselee.
- Homework assignments enable the counselor and the counselee to gauge progress or lack of it: The assignments may serve as an encouragement and it may give hope, but it can also serve as a spur to work harder.

- Homework assignments help the counselor to deal with problems and patterns that develop under controlled current conditions: it is easier for the counselor to ‘spot’ where the problems are and where the difficulties originate.

Collins (1988:56) confirms that the counseling effect does not stop in the counseling room, because what has been learned there can be practised and reinforced outside the counseling room. Learning happens through hearing, seeing and doing. Homework assignments are ideal for that. Specific goals with homework assignments:

- To help keep the counselees aware of the counseling goals.
- To help the counselee to gain additional information through reading or listening to tapes.
- To develop and practice new skills / to try out new ways of thinking and acting.
- To eliminate harmful behaviour.
- To test what was learned in counseling.

4.6 THE RELATIONSHIP NECESSARY FOR PASTORAL GUIDANCE

The establishment of a supportive, yet challenging therapeutic relationship between the counselor and the counselee at the beginning of the pastoral guidance process is extremely important, but it must be maintained throughout the process. This happens through specific behaviour of the counselor (McLeod, 2003:343-344):

- Sensitive, empathic listening.
- Seeking clarification.
- Encouragement.
- Expression of caring.

Empathetic listening is one of the basic skills necessary to build a therapeutic relationship. Empathy is the power of understanding and imaginatively entering into another person’s feelings (McLeod, 2003:169; *cf.* Lartz, 1999:102). When Snyder (1998:41) speaks about empathy, there is an element of ‘identification’ involved, as if the pastor/counselor ‘becomes’ the other partner. This helps the one person to step into the lifeworld of the other person. This technique can also be called ‘becoming’. Lotter (1987:111) does not agree with this idea that the pastor ‘becomes’ like the counselee, but rather that the pastor must try to understand how he/she feels. The pastor needs to make, according to Butler and Joyce (2000:41-42), an intuitive mental leap in order to capture the exact nuance of what the counselee is feeling (*cf.* Atwood, 1992:44). The pastor takes a neutral stance with the counselee and does not judge him/her (*cf.* Fenell, 1998:342-343). Empathetic listening requires balanced

interaction. McLeod (2003:174-175) also speaks about the importance of congruency on the side of the counselor in the therapeutic relationship. The counselor must be real, authentic and willing to be known. That means that his/her outward responses must match the inner feelings and sensations which he/she has in relation to the counselee. This is not a skill to be learned, but a way of being. Here are some reasons why it is valuable in the therapy:

- It helps to develop trust in the relationship.
- If the counselor expresses and accepts his/her own feelings of vulnerability and uncertainty, it becomes easier for the counselee to accept his/her own.

It models one of the intended outcomes in therapy - being straightforward and honest in relating to others.

According to Worthington (1989:114-115), the counselor's behaviour plays an important role in building a relationship with the counselee. He suggests a number of things that the counselor can do to promote this necessary relationship:

- Be courteous, friendly, but businesslike.
- Answer questions about counseling style, theory and fees.
- Start and end the appointments on time. This shows respect for the counselee.
- Give counselees clear directions to find the office.
- Shake hands at the beginning and the end of the first interview.
- Greet the counselee by going to the door or meeting them in the waiting area.
- After the pastor has sat down, he/she can move his/her chair slightly forward.
- The pastor may not look at his/her wristwatch while the counselee is talking.
- The pastor must introduce him-/herself in the way he/she would like the counselee to address him/her. Also establish how the counselee would like to be addressed.
- After the session, the pastor must walk the counselee to the door and must repeat the time of the next appointment.
- The counselor must apologise if he/she is late for an appointment or if the appointment must be cancelled.

4.7 GUIDELINES FOR A PROPOSED MODEL WITH REGARD TO PASTORAL GUIDANCE TO THE UNEQUALLY YOKED MARRIAGE PARTNERS

4.7.1 Introduction

The model that the researcher proposes for the pastoral guidance to the unequally yoked marriage partners consists of three phases each with its own particular tasks associated with it. The process of pastoral guidance can be divided into three parts, namely:

- *Commencement* - the beginning phase, the first few sessions.
- *Continuation* - the middle phase, when the problems are being addressed.
- *Conclusion* - the end phase, when the pastor and counselee prepare to terminate the contact.

The three stages with their respective tasks will now be discussed in more detail.

4.7.2 Commencement of pastoral guidance

For pastoral guidance to commence effectively, the counselee and the counselor must build a therapeutic relationship. There are certain things that the pastor can do during the first contact to promote this relationship (*cf.* 4.6). The counselee and the counselor must also obtain certain information.

4.7.2.1 Information given to the counselee

It is unlikely that a counselee will go to a pastor immediately when the difficulties start in the marriage relationship. By the time the counselee has gathered enough courage to seek help from a pastor, he/she probably feels intertwined, caught up and stuck in a confusion often too big to ever see the light. Going for help is difficult and the counselee often feels confused and anxious during the first session. In order to create some structure and hope in the turmoil, the pastor can provide the counselee with the following pieces of information:

- I. Pre-counseling information: To give the counselee an idea about what can be expected during the pastoral guidance process (*cf.* 4.5.4; 4.5.7; 4.5.8).
- II. Informed consent: To give the counselee an idea about the counseling procedures that will be followed (*cf.* 4.2; 4.3; 4.5.2).
- III. Contract: To give the counselee an opportunity to commit him-/herself to the process (*cf.* 4.5.3).
- IV. Case study: To give hope to the counselee, the positive experience of a woman in an unequally yoked marriage will be included (*cf.* Appendix C).

I. Pre-counseling information

A description of some of the goals for pastoral guidance to the unequally yoked couple:

- To help build a more satisfying, more intimate and less conflictual marriage. It is not to help endure an unsatisfactory marriage.
- To identify and solve interactional problems.
- To recognise personal contribution to the problems.
- To clarify and specify each spouse's needs and desires in the relationship.
- To decrease coercion and blame and to increase intimacy.
- To develop clear communication and resolve conflictual interaction.
- To enhance the believer's spiritual maturity and relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- To increase the spiritual resources of the believer.

Suggestions to the counselees, helping them to make the most of counseling:

- Counseling takes time and it's hard work. The counselor will ask the counselee to make changes in the way he/she is currently acting. It is not easy to change, but the counselees who benefit the most from counseling, are those who follow these suggestions.
- It takes time and patience to change current behaviour. Perhaps some things the counselee will be asked to do, feel unnatural, awkward or silly. He/she must remember that not all things are meant to be permanent, but for maximum effectiveness, it should be followed at least for the time of counseling.
- There will be ups and downs in their relationship during the time of counseling. The counselee must be prepared for swings in his/her feelings about the spouse and about the benefits of counseling.
- The counselee must not quit too early. Sometimes counseling gets 'stuck' and takes time to free itself.
- The counselee must not expect perfection from his/her spouse. Everybody is human and despite good intentions, fails. Forgiveness must be practised instead of judgement.
- The counselee must be willing to change first and not wait for the partner to change.
- It is worth taking the risk.

SER-cycle:

Sometimes there is a surge forward in the marriage relationship and the counselee feels euphoric and wants to stop counseling because he/she thinks that the relationship is completely restored. This is dangerous, because there is often a relapse after the first surge. If the counselee is not in counseling when the relapse occurs, he/she might think that changes cannot be maintained without continual counseling or that counseling only produces temporary gains. When the counselee begins to make progress, the pastor will urge him/her to continue with counseling to make sure that the changes are lasting. It is important that the counselee must expect a relapse and must view it as another challenge to be conquered and not as an indication that he/she can't progress.

The importance of homework assignments:

- Pastoral guidance does not stop in the pastor's office: what has been learned there must be practised and reinforced at home - that is the responsibility of the counselee.
- Learning happens through hearing, seeing and doing and homework assignments are ideal for that.
- Homework assignments help that intellectual knowledge becomes experiential truth and only then will behaviour change sets in.
- Homework assignments also enable the pastor to do counseling more rapidly.

II. Informed consent

The counselee must read through the following declaration of the pastor in order to be thoroughly informed about the content and procedures of pastoral guidance.

Declaration from the pastor about the content and procedures of pastoral guidance:

I am a Christian pastor/counselor and am completely dependent on God in this pastoral guidance sessions, as He is the central figure in the process with the Holy Spirit prompting, guiding, convincing and enlightening my mind and yours. The presence of the Holy Spirit turns this pastoral guidance session into something more than a *dialogue* between you and me. It becomes a *trialogue*, because God becomes an active participant in the conversation. Something beautiful happens in the pastoral guidance session: The Holy Spirit orchestrates an encounter between **God** (*who is seeking human beings*) and a **person** (*who is seeking help*).

I believe that God's will is given in Scripture and that it gives clear directions for people's problems in life. Together we will seek the biblical solution to the problems you are experiencing, because:

- *"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin."* (Heb 4:15)
- *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."* (2 Ti 3:16-17)
- *"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness."* (2 Pe 1:3)

I furthermore believe that prayer forms an integral part of pastoral guidance. Through prayer we acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Healer of individuals and the Restorer of relationships and invite His divine intervention to direct inner healing of emotional hurts. Together we will pray for you and for me, for discernment, wisdom and obedience to the leading that God supplies.

Apart from the above mentioned spiritual resources that will be used in the pastoral guidance sessions, I believe that much can be learned from the medicine-, teaching- and other 'people-centred' professions. There are, therefore, useful interventions from the field of psychology that can be integrated in the process of pastoral

guidance, as long as it is tested against the truth of God's Word. In this way I will be able to work with the wounded emotions of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and will also be equipped to work in such a way with non-believers that they might, as a result of the loving exposure to the Truth, decide to put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I accept the procedures, methods and interventions of pastoral guidance as stated in the declaration by the pastor.

DATE

COUNSELEE

PASTOR/COUNSELOR

III. Contract

I, as pastor/counselor, commit myself to absolute confidentiality and will not do or say anything outside the session without the consent of the counselee.

I, as counselee, declare that I have read the declaration of the pastor. I commit myself for at least three pastoral guidance sessions. During these sessions I will give my co-operation as I realise my responsibility in the counseling effort. I undertake to do the homework assignments given to me and to be completely honest. I further undertake to pay the fees as agreed upon. I am responsible for my own life and indemnify the pastor of all liability.

DATE

COUNSELEE

PASTOR/COUNSELOR

IV. Case study

X is already 32 years very happily married to her unbelieving husband. When they met, they both 'believed', but she was not a born again believer in Jesus Christ and the Lord did not play a decisive role in her life. From the beginning they respected each other and gave space to each other. They enjoyed to do things together, to spend time together and to be there for each other. Only later did she get to know the Lord as her personal Saviour. X then wanted to convert her husband and that created a lot of stress between them, until she learned to leave him alone and to walk the spiritual road alone. Older and wiser Christians told her that it is not her 'job' to convert him - she can only pray for him. That made it much easier. From the passage written in 1 Pe 3,

she learned that she must be quiet and that she might win her husband through her example. X many times wonders about the quality of her example, because they have been married many years, but up to now he never thought that she had something special and worthwhile to follow and never showed interest.

She goes to church and cell group with his consent, but he does not want to have anything to do with it. She never spends her quiet time with the Lord where he can see her, because she knows that it makes him feel uneasy. She wants to respect him as he respects her. It is important for their relationship that she does not demand certain things from him, like going to church in the holidays. If she had done that, he would have withdrawn, but now, for example, he goes to weddings with her. He does not close his eyes during prayer, but at least he goes. X appreciates it that her husband does not pretend. She respects him for that and because of that, she will never put any pressure on him or attack him. She realises that the fact that he does not make it difficult for her to practice her faith, is a big blessing and helps her to cope with the difficult parts. She also experiences that God gives her the strength she needs to handle it each day.

There are specific difficulties that X experiences because of the fact that she and her husband are unequally yoked in their marriage. It is especially true when it comes to their children and the problems their children face. They, as parents, often hold different views concerning the problems of their children. For instance, when their daughter and her husband went through difficult times in their marriage, X and her husband had different opinions as to how to intervene in the children's situation. She would have liked it if they could find their guidance from the Word of God and pray together about things. She sometimes experiences their marriage as shallow. Another area where she experiences the difference in perspective between her and her husband, is when they watch TV. For her it is unacceptable if the name of Jesus Christ is taken in vain. X often feels lonely and she finds it more and more difficult to walk the spiritual road on her own, e.g. to go to church alone. She envies couples who can worship the Lord together.

Despite these difficulties, she still describes her marriage as happy in almost all aspects. She sees a great future for them together. X absolutely adores her husband and places him on a throne. She has high appreciation for her husband as he is solid, a man of integrity on whom she always can trust. She has never contemplated divorce, but if there is one thing that she would like to change in her husband, it is that he will get to know Jesus Christ.

4.7.2.2 Information given by the counselee

The counselee is the expert on his/her situation while the pastor acts as a guide. It is therefore important that the counselee must get the opportunity to present the information so that the pastor can understand the person and his/her problems. It is not an easy process, because people often feel embarrassed about their problems and are reluctant to share it with somebody else. Completing a form is an "easier" way to "speak" about the marital problems and it helps the counselee to think about the issues he/she wants to discuss. Discussing the information on the form provides a natural and appropriate starting point for the pastoral guidance session. The PDIF is a comprehensive tool to

gather general information, but for the purpose of this study, more specific information regarding the marital situation of the couple is necessary (cf. 4.5.6). The Personal Information Form was developed for this purpose and it can be found in Appendix G at the end of the study.

4.7.3 Continuation of pastoral guidance

Throughout the duration of the pastoral guidance process, the pastor must work on the therapeutic relationship with the counselee (cf. 4.6). After the completion of the form by the counselee, the pastor must evaluate the content. The first step is the identification of the principal problems and a proper understanding of the problems. This will include an understanding of the origin of the problems, contributing factors and the consequences of the problems on the marital relationship. The next step is to investigate what the Word of God teaches regarding the problem. From the Bible, certain guidelines will come to the fore as how to handle the situation and possible actions to be taken. Depending on the problem, there can exist other interventions for trying to solve the problem. By now, a lot of intellectual knowledge has been acquired of actions to be taken. It is important that the pastor and the counselee pray about it and ask God's guidance, protection and blessing on the endeavours to put this knowledge into practise. This will instill hope in the counselee's heart that something can be done. It is of vital importance that the counselee should leave each pastoral guidance session with hope. Part of instilling hope for the counselee, is that the pastor must give specific homework assignments so that the counselee can practise the new behaviour. Change, which is the overall purpose of counseling, is only possible if knowledge is put into practise. The main elements of the pastoral guidance process can thus be summarised as follows:

- **I - Identification and Understanding:** A discussion of the origin, contributing factors and consequences of the problem on the marital relationship.
- **S - Scripture:** In an attempt to find biblical solutions to the problem, the pastor and counselee could work through certain passages in Scripture.
- **O - Other interventions:** There are other interventions that could be used to alleviate the problem.
- **P - Prayer:** Suggestion for topics that the pastor and counselee could use in prayer.
- **H - Hope:** Scripture is a source of hope.
- **A - Assignments:** Guidelines for possible assignments which the counselee could do in order to reinforce and further change.

The above mentioned scheme will be applied to each problem presented by the counselee. The counselee's relationship with the Lord is the most important aspect in pastoral guidance. Although there are general problems that unequally yoked marriage partners experience, some of which unbelieving couples also experience, each couple's situation is unique and deserves to be treated as

such. The ISOPHA-scheme will now be applied to some of these general problems. If the pastor/counselor is confronted with a problem that is not treated in the following pages, he/she can follow the same method by trying to help the counselee with the aid of the Holy Spirit.

4.7.3.1 Intimacy

- **I - Identification and Understanding:**

Human beings were made for intimacy with God and from reading the opening passages of Genesis, also intimacy with each other. God intended married couples to experience intimacy. Scripture describes intimacy as oneness of spirit, soul and body (*cf.* 2.3.1-2.3.4; 2.3.5.3). Research shows that religious faith enhances intimacy (*cf.* 3.5.2). Most troubled couples experience problems with intimacy, also the unequally yoked marriage couple, because there is an absence of spiritual oneness as one partner has not committed his/her life to God. All five respondents in the empirical study commented on the lack of spiritual unity and consequent friction in their marriages (*cf.* 3.6.6.1). This is confirmed by psychologists and sociologists. They argue that the chance is smaller for somebody in a marriage where the spouse has no religion, to report that their marriage is happy (*cf.* 3.5.4). This causes emotional pain and hurt and the couple try to fix it in various ways, often by pointing out the faults in the partner. These attempts usually fail and instead of drawing each other closer, they push each other further and further away. Eventually, the unresolved pain becomes unbearable. One respondent explains how she learned to survive: she built ‘walls’ around her heart to protect it from the hurt and the pain (*cf.* 3.6.6.1). What actually happens when these ‘walls’ go up, is that the spouse disconnects emotionally from the other one, leaving the partner feeling empty and far apart. Studies show that it is not *what* the couple is fighting about or the fact *that* they fight that threatens the marriage, but the danger that they disconnect emotionally. This emotional disconnectedness is also apparent in the lives of some of the respondents (*cf.* 3.6.6.1; Clinton *et al.*, 2002:209-211).

- **S - Scripture:**

- God instituted marriage for human beings to experience intimacy:

- Read Ge 2:20-25.

- :23 - “*bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh*”

- God created the human being with a deep longing, a desire to find comfort, companionship and fulfilment (*cf.* 2.3.4).

- Adam’s reaction shows his contentment in finding the right partner. Man was created to have fellowship with God, but he was also created to be a social being (*cf.* 2.3.4; 3.4.7.5).

- :24 - “*and they will become one flesh*”

- This indicates a lifelong union between one man and one woman (*cf.* Eph 5:22-33).

- Becoming “one flesh” indicates the most intimate physical relationship possible between two human beings (*cf.* 2.3.2; 2.3.5.2).
 - God did not only intend a physical relationship, but also an intimate spiritual association with each other together with a deep, emotional bond of love and faithfulness (*cf.* 2.3.2).
 - “*One flesh*” indicates that husband and wife are united and that they are to share all experiences (*cf.* 2.3.3).
 - Man was created by God in his image, thus man experiences yearnings for permanency, intimacy and productivity in his relationships with other people. Adam and Eve thus related emotionally, intellectually, spiritually and physically and in this way satisfied these yearnings (*cf.* 2.3.3).
 - Sex is a gift from God to human beings to express their love for each other (*cf.* 2.3.5.2; 3.4.7.2).
 - It shows the deep attachment between a man and his wife and it reflects the complete identification of one personality with another. *It implies the radical devotion of one person to another, an absolute unification of the total life. It purports the deepest and most complete surrender of one person to another* (*cf.* 2.3.5.2).
 - The union is the full joining of two persons in their totality, a spirit-to-spirit unity, a soul-to-soul inner disclosure and openness. The sexual act is more than just a flesh-to-flesh union, it is a connection of person-with-person. It has an eternal, creative and transcendent quality - a spiritual nature, because the innermost soul of the one partner is joined with the innermost soul of the other partner (*cf.* 2.3.5.3).
- Is intimacy possible between marriage partners in an unequally yoked marriage? What about the spiritual oneness?
 - Read 1 Co 7:12-16 and 1 Pe 3:1-2:
 - What is the instruction to the believer in an unequally yoked marriage - stay or divorce?
 - Under which circumstances is there an exception?
 - Is it correct to conclude that God wants the marriage to continue?
 - Does this mean that the unequally yoked couple is not granted the experience of real intimacy in their marriage because of their spiritual disunity?
 - Is that true to God’s character?
 - What can we learn about God’s character from the following verses?

▪ Ex 34:6-7a	▪ Hos 11:4
▪ Isa 30:18	▪ Mic 7:18-19
▪ Jer 29:11	▪ Zep 3:17
▪ Jer 32:37-41	

- Is it correct to conclude that God wants the best for you, that He wants you to experience intimacy in your marriage and that He wants to help you?
 - Read Ps 40
 - What do you learn from verses 1-5?
 - What is the desire of the author in verses 11-12?
 - What assurance do you get in verse 17?
- Examples of unequally yoked marriages in the Old Testament:
 - Samson and the young woman from Timnah - Judges 13-15
 - What do we know about Samson already before he was born? Jdg 13:5
 - What is known about him when he grew up? Jdg 13:24-25
 - Whom did he choose for a wife and what did his parents think about it? Jdg 14:1-3
 - What was God's plan with this marriage? Jdg 14:4
 - How can we conclude that God was with Samson and used him? Jdg 15:14,19-20
 - *What is your opinion, did Samson and his wife experience intimacy in their marriage?*
 - Hosea and Gomer (unequal in the sense that he was a prophet and her lifestyle did not honour God):
 - What do we know about the life of Gomer? Hos 1:2; 3:1
 - Why did Hosea marry Gomer? Hos 1:2
 - How did God work through this marriage? Hos 3:1-5
 - *Did Hosea and Gomer, according to you, experience intimacy in their marriage?*
- The New Testament's teaching about unequally yoked marriages:
 - Read 1 Co 7:12-16
 - :14 - *"For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife"*
 - Paul declares that the marriage between a believer and an unbeliever is sacred and pure and that the believer needs not to fear (*cf.* 2.7.2).
 - :15 - *"God has called us to live in peace"*
 - As far as Paul is concerned, a mixed marriage is considered a Christian marriage (*cf.* 2.7.3).
 - It is God's will that men and women should live in harmony (*cf.* 2.7.3).
 - *What is your opinion, is intimacy possible between a believer and an unbeliever?*
 - Read 1 Pe 3:1-2
 - :1 - Christian wife of a non-Christian husband
 - Peter's message to her is that unfair treatment never justifies an offensive attempt for retribution (*cf.* 1 Pe 2:20; 3:8-9,14,17). On the contrary, he calls the believer to reveal a spirit of humility and respect. This implies honour, obedience, submission and subordination (*cf.* 2.7.5.1).

- Peter assures her that what he expects of her is possible, because God is with her and an imperishable inheritance awaits her in heaven.
- When things are difficult, she must keep the example of the Lord (1 Pe 2:21-25) in mind (*cf.* 2.7.5.1).
- Peter's advice to her is to be submissive to her husband and by that is understood a willingness to serve the other (*cf.* 2.7.5.2).
- Paul's exhortation given in Eph 5:21 is that the husband and the wife must submit to each other. If the husband is not a believer, the submission is only one-sided which makes it even more difficult. By submitting to her unbelieving husband, she is displaying her trust in God to work through constituted authority (1 Pe 2:13-17), even if the person holding that authority is disobedient to God's Word. The wife of the unbelieving husband will only be able to follow Peter's advice by the power of the Holy Spirit (*cf.* 2.7.5.2).
- :2 - "*purity and reverence*"
 - Peter is not referring to the wife's Christian character, but to the purity and sincerity of her relationship with her unbelieving husband. There must be in her conduct no sign of impure or manipulating motives (*cf.* 2.7.5.3).
 - Her sincerity in being a godly and submissive wife, together with her respectful treatment of her husband, despite his opposition to her convictions, will demonstrate the reality of her supernatural faith (*cf.* 2.7.5.3).
 - *What is your opinion, is intimacy possible in an unequally yoked marriage?*

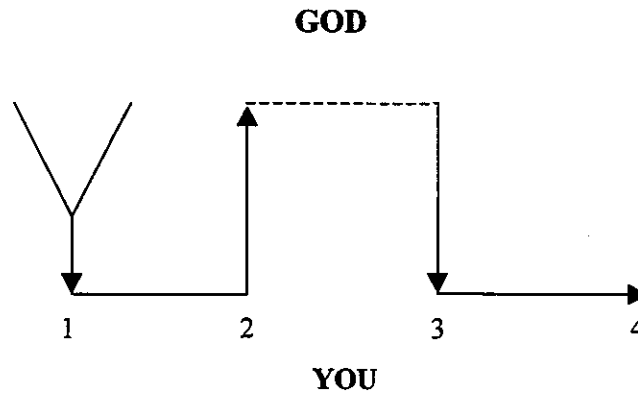
- **O - Other interventions:**

- You need to become emotionally connected with your spouse again:

Step 1: Ask forgiveness

You need to ask your partner's forgiveness for erecting walls and consequently disconnecting emotionally. The forgiveness process (*cf.* 2.5.3.4.2):

- 1 – God convinces you of the wrongness of your behaviour through the working of the Holy Spirit.
- 2 – You go to God in prayer and ask His forgiveness.
- 3 – God grants you forgiveness on the grounds of what Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross when He died for our sins.
- 4 – Because you are forgiven by God, you can now ask your partner's forgiveness and grant him/her your forgiveness.



Step 2: Be the first to change

You are probably scared of change, because change equals vulnerability and vulnerability equals risk and that is how you got hurt in the first place. You choose to keep your distance, to stay one step removed, protected and on guard. However, you must risk change, because you are the only person you have control over and your relationship and your marital commitment are too important to simply abandon. For the sake of your emotional and physical health, it is important to take the risk.

Step 3: Pack away your radar system

We all have radar systems to protect our hearts. In the marriage relationship it is always on alert to look for signs that your spouse is about to let you down or that he/she will not be there for you. If the alarm goes off, e.g. your spouse is not listening or is not considerate, you react by complaining bitterly, criticising his/her intentions and attack or withdraw. You must shut the radar down. The moment you 'hear' something that you do not want to hear, you must back off, quiet your heart and allow your intellect to override your instincts and react in a positive way. As long as your radar system is on, you will without doubt find 'proofs'. It is always important to ask yourself whether your fears are based on facts or on what you think might be going on. More often than not, your fears are based on your thoughts and not on facts.

Step 4: "I grace you"

It is not impossible to make such a change. See your spouse as somebody whom Jesus loved so dearly that He was prepared to hang on a cross for him/her. He/she is thus worthy of your respect. Remember also that you were given to your spouse by God so that He can work through you to influence your mate to become more and more like Jesus. That means that you need to be like Jesus too. The work 'grace' should thus be written over your life. Grace heals, forgives and does not retaliate. Forgiveness is not turning around and walking away, but re-establishing the appropriate relationship - opening up those parts of yourself that you have kept locked.

Step 5: Accept offers for connection from your spouse

When your spouse makes a comment, tells a joke, asks a question or shares an interesting point, take the opportunity to move closer and to connect. From your side, be intentional about small ways to connect, e.g. kissing your spouse before he/she leaves for work, seeking out your spouse when you come home, holding and kissing each other for a few moments before falling asleep. This creates relationship rituals and it gives a sense of safety and connectedness.

Step 6: Pray

As your spouse is an unbeliever, the two of you will not be able to pray together, but it is vital that you should pray about your relationship. Prayer demands vulnerability and it will have a powerful impact on your attachment bond. It softens your heart, it turns your focus on God and makes you willing to be shaped and refined by God's gracious touch (*cf. Clinton et al., 2002:223-229*)

- ❑ You need to give attention to your love for your spouse. The wheel theory of love gives an indication of the four major processes in the development of love. You need to give anew attention to - and rekindle each stage as they are interdependent:
 - Rapport – you must let your spouse know that you feel at ease with him/her.
 - Self-revelation – you must open yourself to your partner.
 - Mutual dependence – you must let him/her know that you rely on him/her and that he/she can do the same.
 - Need fulfilment – you must work on your ability to meet the needs of your spouse and you must make your needs known to him/her.

Love grows with the flow from one process to the other in either direction (*cf. 3.2.3*).

- ❑ You and your spouse need to commit to the *buddy system*. This implies that the two of you must engage in activities together. This means effort, time and creativity to plan these activities (*cf. 3.4.8*).
- **P - Prayer:**
 - ❑ Praise God that He wants you to experience intimacy and that He is willing to help you in the process.
 - ❑ Confess wrongdoings, causing a break down in the couple's intimacy.
 - ❑ Confess actions to disconnect emotionally from the spouse in an attempt to prevent further hurt.
 - ❑ Ask God's forgiveness and His help to restore the intimacy in the marital relationship.
 - ❑ Ask God's healing of the emotional hurt and pain.
 - ❑ Ask God's protection as the counselee opens his/her heart.

- **H - Hope:**

- The fact that God instituted marriage serves as a source of security and peace of mind for the believer: if God instituted marriage, He also regulates it and will control and protect it (*cf.* 2.3.2).
- No marriage is beyond the reach of God's healing hand. God wants the couple to experience intimacy, even though they cannot experience spiritual oneness. He wants them both to be seen, to be understood, to be cared for and to be loved by each other.
- If God asks us to do something, He also gives us the strength and power to do it.
- Three verses from Scripture to meditate on:
 - *Is anything too hard for the Lord?* (Ge 18:14)
 - *Who among you fears the Lord and obeys the word of his servant? Let him who walks in the dark, who has no light, trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.* (Isa 50:10)
 - *I can do everything through him who gives me strength.* (Php 4:13)

- **A - Assignments:**

- God wants intimacy between husband and wife. Which emotions can you identify when looking at the relationships of some couples in the Bible?
 - Abram (Abraham) and Sarai (Sarah): Ge 12:11-13, 17-19; Ge 16:1-6; Ge 23:1-4
 - Isaac and Rebekah: Ge 24:63-67; Ge 25:21
 - Jacob and Rachel: Ge 29:18,20-21,30
 - Boaz and Ruth: Ru 2-4
 - Elkanah and Hannah: 1 Sa 1:4-8, 19-23
 - King Xerxes and Esther: Est 2:17-18; Est 5:1-3
 - Joseph and Mary: Mt 1:18-25
- The rules of love: Read 1 Co 13
 - Identify the different rules of love.
 - What is the implication of each one on your relationship with your spouse?
- Learn to love your spouse again:
 - Read Jn 13:34-35 and Jn 15:9-17
 - How must you love?
 - What is this love willing to do?
 - What is the result if you love this way?
 - Read Mt 5:43-48
 - How should you treat those who hurt you?
 - What will be the result?
 - Read Tit 2:4-5
 - What are the instructions to the women?

- What will be the result if they follow these guidelines?
- ❑ Read Chapter 10 in the book by Tim Clinton and Gary Sibcy called *Attachments. Why you love, feel and act the way you do.* (Integrity Publishers - 2002).
- ❑ Read the book by Archibald Hart and Sharon Hart Morris called *Safe haven marriage. Building a relationship you want to come home to.* (W Publishing Group - 2003).
- ❑ Listen to the song by Don Francisco - Love is not a feeling
 - The sentence continues by saying 'it's an act of your will'.
 - Write down your commentary on this statement (at least 100 words).
- ❑ Practical things that you can do to increase intimacy with your spouse:
 - *Rearrange time schedules:* If you and your spouse are too busy to have time for each other, you must make changes in your time schedules.
 - *Hobbies:* Identify those things you and your spouse liked to do when you met and ask him/her that the two of you make plans to do it again. Set the date and do the planning. It can be a great way to increase your intimacy. You can also start new hobbies like camping, hiking or boating.
 - *Wish list:* Have a chat with your spouse and ask him/her to compile a long list of things he/she would like you to do that would demonstrate intimacy. You must do the same. These suggestions can be put in two jars and each day each spouse must draw one item from the partner's jar to improve the intimacy between you.
 - *Caring days:* You and your spouse must create a list of specific, small, positive behaviours, e.g. serving coffee in bed in the morning. Each spouse selects five to perform daily, regardless of whether the spouse does his/hers.
 - *Fifty-two presents:* At Christmas or at your birthdays, each partner gives his/her spouse a little box with 52 slips of paper, each listing an activity that he/she or they together could do. Each Sunday the spouses may select one paper from the jar which describes the activity to be done during the next week.

4.7.3.2 The believer's relationship with God

• I - Identification and Understanding:

God prohibited Israel in the Old Testament to marry people from the heathen nations (*cf.* 2.4.6; 2.4.8). Likewise, in the New Testament, God used Paul to warn Christians not to marry unbelievers (*cf.* 2.5.3.3). The reason for this consistent warning is found in the fact that God knew beforehand what detrimental effects a marriage with an unbeliever can have on the believer's relationship with Him. According to one respondent, God meant well when He prohibited it, because He knew how extremely difficult such a marriage can be and wanted to protect his people against the pain. All five believers who acted as respondents in the empirical study commented on the fact that their unequally

yoked marriage puts a lot of strain on their relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ (*cf.* 3.6.6.1). This happens in various ways:

- ❑ The content of the unbeliever's reasoning can have a negative effect on the believer's relationship with God.
- ❑ The unequally yoked marriage is seen as a form of persecution.
- ❑ The marriage is a constant spiritual battle between light and darkness.
- ❑ No spiritual experiences can be shared with the spouse and church activities sometimes interfere with the unbeliever's lifestyle.
- ❑ Manifestations of hostility and aggression against his/her relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The pastors in the empirical study all agree that the believer's personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ must receive special attention as it is one of the most important coping mechanisms that the believer has at his/her disposal. It is there where he/she gets the strength, mercy, power, patience and wisdom to live out the fruit of the Holy Spirit every day (*cf.* 3.6.6.2).

- **S - Scripture:**

It is important that the believer's relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ must be strengthened. The pastor and the counselee can work together through the following passages in Scripture:

- ❑ Ex 33:7-23
 - Why did Moses go to the tent of meeting?
 - Did God speak to Moses? Also refer to Nu 12:1-8.
 - Name at least five things that Moses asked from God?
 - What was God's promise to Moses?
 - *Are these promises only true for Moses, or can we claim these promises also for our every day living?*
- ❑ Read Ps 34
 - What does the author of the psalm say about God?
 - What does the psalm say about man?
 - Name the instructions given to man. What are the consequences if these instructions are followed?
 - What emotions are you experiencing while reading the psalm?
 - *What does the Holy Spirit want to teach you through this psalm?*
- ❑ Read Isa 30:15-21
 - Give the attitudes that God expects from us in verse 15.
 - In verse 16-17 man chose another reaction, what is it and what are the consequences?
 - What is God's reaction on man's disobedience? :18
 - Give the promises of God in verses 19-21.

- *How does this apply to your life?*
- Ro 8:28-39
 - What are the promises in verses 28-30?
 - What does it mean to you?
 - List all the things in which you find consolation in verses 31-35.
 - Name the wonderful assurance that Paul gives in verses 37-39.
 - *What does this mean for you in your unequally yoked marriage?*
- **O - Other interventions:**
 - You must strengthen your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Personal devotional time where you can read from the Word of God and pray, is of utmost importance. There are excellent books available. Only a few are mentioned:
 - Daily Devotionals: *My utmost for his Highest* by Oswald Chambers
Every day with Jesus by Selwyn Hughes
 - Bible study books: *Experiencing God* by Henry Blackaby
The purpose driven life by Rick Warren
 - Spiritual books: *Hind's feet on high places* by Hannah Hurnand
The Jesus I never knew by Philip Yancey
What's so amazing about grace by Philip Yancey
Where is God when it hurts? by Philip Yancey
Victory over the darkness by Neil T. Anderson
The bondage breaker by Neil T. Anderson
Celebration of discipline by Richard Foster
 - Biographies: *No compromise* by Keith Green
Abandoned to God by Oswald Chambers
 - The value of spiritual music cannot be underestimated. It depends on personal taste, but music by Integrity Music, Vineyard Music or Hillsongs are always a safe choice.
 - Keep a spiritual journal where you can keep record of what the Lord told you in your personal time with Him. This can serve as a reminder and an encouragement.
 - Join a Bible study group or any other small group in your church for support, encouragement and spiritual growth (cf. 3.5.2; 3.6.6.1).
 - Do a specific course that will help you to discover your spiritual gifts and find out where you can practise these gifts in your church or in your community, e.g.
 - Doing visitation at a hospital or an old age home.
 - Becoming involved with AIDS-orphans, CANSA or Hospice.
 - Joining the praise and worship group at your church.

- **P - Prayer:**

- Spiritual growth.
- Wisdom as how to be a loving spouse and strength to live out an example.
- Guidance for where to become involved.

- **H - Hope:**

- God made wonderful promises to us and we can hold on to them in dark and difficult days.
- Three verses from Scripture to meditate on:
 - *God has said: "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." (Heb 13:5)*
 - *Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. (Jos 1:8)*
 - *His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. (2 Pe 1:3)*

- **A - Assignments:**

- Respondents gave the following advice to believers in unequally yoked marriages: stay close to the Lord, persevere and be diligent to feed yourself with spiritual food. God is faithful and He will give you the necessary strength for every day (*cf.* 3.6.6.1).
- Read Ps 73
 - Write down the experiences and emotions of the psalmist in verses 1-15.
 - Where and what is the turning point for the author?
 - Describe the change in his attitude as visible in verses 21-28.
 - Write down his conclusions as you find it in verses 23-28.
- Read La 3:1-33
 - What does the word 'lamentations' mean?
 - Describe Jeremiah's experiences as found in verses 1-20.
 - Give reasons why verse 21 can be seen as the turning point.
 - Make a list of the things that give him hope according to verses 22-33.
- Go through the book of Isaiah and write down all the promises given. Also indicate in each case the chapter and verse so that you can refer to it for future purposes.
- Meditate on Jn 15:1-17
 - Explain the task of each role-player.
 - What does *to remain in the Lord* mean practically?
 - What are the promises if you remain in the Lord?

4.7.3.3 Submission

- **I - Identification and Understanding:**

Believing wives find it difficult to submit to their unbelieving husbands. The respondents have commented as follows on this issue (*cf.* Appendix D):

- The wife makes the children biased towards her husband instead of honouring him as the father of their children and helping them to respect him, despite his mistakes.
- The wife does not respect, accept nor esteem her husband.
- The wife often wants to teach her husband and speaks from a position of 'know it all'.

The wife often expects certain behaviour from her husband, but as he is not a believer, he is not able to meet her expectations. Something of this can be seen in what one respondent said about her unbelieving husband: "he is not able to serve his family as priest and prophet and can thus not be a good role model for his children". What quite often happens, is that the wife then takes over the husband's responsibilities, he feels inferior and complains that his wife does not accept his authority. As one respondent confessed, the wife can also follow another option, namely trying to change him: when she got to know the Lord, she wanted to 'convert' her husband and that put a lot of stress on their relationship (*cf.* 3.6.6.1). Submission is not a popular teaching in today's world. The reason is that the woman's submission to her husband was an ordinance of creation, but as a result of the fall, it was corrupted. Sin changed submission as God intended it to be (to one another) to subservience (the woman to the man). Before the fall submission was voluntary (equality), but after the fall it was forced (domination). The relationship of intimacy and love where the partners support and strengthen each other, became a relationship of domination. The *companion* became the *ruler* (*cf.* 2.4.2.2).

- **S - Scripture:**

- Read Eph 5:21-33
 - :21 - "*be subject to one another*" (*cf.* 2.5.3.4.4; 2.5.3.4.7)
 - Submission is a Christian virtue for everyone, not only women.
 - This is the general and controlling principle and must be understood, otherwise the rest of Paul's detailed teaching can be misunderstood.
 - When the husband and wife are *mutually* submissive, they are willing to submit to the norm of marriage as God intended it to be: not slave-like subjection, but voluntary servitude.
 - To understand the meaning of mutual submission, think of the following image: the husband is the *head* of the house and the wife is the *heart*. For the effective functioning of the body, the head and the heart cannot stand in a conflicting relationship, but must have a complementary relationship where they submit to each other.

- The result is that the husband and wife are mutually dependent on each other, they help each other, listen patiently to each other, grant each other enough living-space, respect each other's feelings, opinions and abilities and they give each other opportunities to develop their individual gifts.
- :22 - "*Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord*" (cf. 2.5.3.4.5; 2.5.3.4.7)
 - Paul does not only *remind* the wives to be subject to their husbands, but he *instructs* them to submit. His reason: "*as to the Lord*". He sees it as part of their duty to the Lord, an expression of their submission to Him.
 - The woman does not submit to her husband for his sake or because he deserves it, but for the Lord's sake, since it is His will. She finds her motivation to submit in her love for Christ who died and suffered for her on the cross. She obeys and submits, because God deserves her devotion. Submission is thus an act of worship to God.
 - It becomes part of the woman's discipleship and in it she has the opportunity to show that she is different from the rest of the world.
 - The love of Christ compels her to obey God (cf. 2 Co 5:14). If she undermines her husband's authority (unless he requires her to trespass God's law), she disobeys God.
 - In a spirit of voluntary yielding, the wife will be able to fulfil her God-given role to be a suitable helper for her husband.
- :23 - "*the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church*" (cf. 2.5.3.4.6; 2.5.3.4.7)
 - The way the word 'head' is being used in the Bible, carries the idea of authority, but not an authority that implies superiority or inferiority. It rather refers to the husband's divine calling to take responsibility for Christlike leadership, protection and provision.
 - To understand the 'headship' better, look at what Paul means when he says that "*the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God*" (1 Co 11:3). Paul is saying that just as Christ submitted and subordinated Himself to the Father for the sake of the salvation of the human race, in the same way the wife must be prepared to submit herself voluntarily to her husband.
 - It must thus be exercised in *love*. There is no question of a tyrannically male-dominated household where the wife is in a slave-like submission to the selfish desires, pleasures and benefits of the husband.
 - The Greek word for 'head'- *kephalē* has different meanings. We mention just two. The first one is 'source', 'genesis' or 'growth point'. Christ as head is the source of love and gives the example of how the man must love and serve his wife unselfishly in self-surrender. The man as head/source provides the climate for his wife to develop her full potential and to become the person God intended her to be. The other meaning is

'leadership' or 'authority'. The climate in which the husband's authority must be exercised, is love – the kind of self-sacrificial love that Jesus Christ demonstrated on the cross. Love will determine and limit his authority, because it will not be an authority of superiority, but of servitude.

- ❑ One of the pastors who was a respondent made the following remarks on Eph 5:21-33:
 - “*Submit to one another out of reference for Christ*” it is a reciprocal principle - it goes both ways.
 - This passage can easily be misused by unbelieving husbands to instruct the wives to submit - even though he does not believe the Bible.
 - The context of this passage: ±30% of the verbs are about submission and ±60% about love.
 - The principle of love stands to the principle of submission in the relation 2:1.
 - Mutual love must thus get more attention. This is the *agape* love - the interest of the other one weighs more than own interest.
- ❑ Read 1 Pe 3:1-2
 - :1 - “*wives, in the same way be submissive to you husbands*” (cf. 2.5.3.5; 2.7.5.1-2.7.5.2)
 - Peter is exhorting wives to submit to their husbands in the same way as Christians must submit to the government and Christians in those times had to submit to their slave masters.
 - The believing wife should offer the same submission to her husband as she does to the laws and norms of society. The submission that Peter is urging Christian wives to practice, is thus submission up to a point.
 - The wives must submit themselves voluntarily to their *own* husbands, in spite of the fact that they are honoured as fellow heirs with their husbands (1 Pe 3:7). Peter is using the words “*to your own husbands*” to illustrate the closeness and tenderness of the relationship between husband and wife and also to underscore the fact that submission is only within the marriage, not outside of it.
 - It is difficult for a wife to submit to her husband when he treats her well, how much more difficult when he treats her harshly or if she is in an unequally yoked marriage. To encourage her, Peter's perspective is that submission is not a human endeavour, but a divine one. When she submits to him, it is not for her sake, neither for his, but for the Lord's sake (1 Pe 2:13), for the One who “*bore her sins in his body so that she might die to sin and live for righteousness*” (1 Pe 2:24). The desire to do what is right is her motive for submission.
 - Peter calls her to reveal a spirit of humility and respect. This implies honour, obedience, submission and subordination even to those who treat her wrongly.
 - By submission can be understood a willingness to serve the other.

- **O - Other interventions:**

Practical advice to the believing wife of an unbelieving husband was given by respondents in the empirical study (*cf.* 3.6.6.1; Appendix D):

- ❑ As 1 Pe 3 states, the believer must not talk, but must live an example. Talking often has the opposite effect. It is difficult, because one's instinct says that you must fight for what is dear to you.
- ❑ The believer must learn to keep quiet, to surrender the situation to God and allow Him to work.
- ❑ She must not put any pressure on him.
- ❑ The believer must put her trust in the Lord, and not in her husband.
- ❑ She must pray for her husband.
- ❑ She must be sensitive to read the atmosphere: sometimes she may talk and other times she must rather be quiet. She must trust the Holy Spirit to guide her.
- ❑ The wife must always be prepared to ask forgiveness.
- ❑ She must be loyal to her husband and not speak to every one about her marriage and the problems they experience.
- ❑ The wife must keep the crown on her husband's head, even though he does not fulfil his role as priest and prophet in their home.
- ❑ Sometimes wives force their husbands to be head of the house, e.g. "Here's the Bible, read", and by acting in such a way, she is actually showing that she is the head of the house.
- ❑ The wife must accept the fact that she will not be able to change her husband, but that she has a responsibility to act in a godly way towards her unbelieving husband.
- ❑ She must learn to be a wife to him in such a way that he will experience that she loves him and that she accepts him for who he is.
- ❑ It may be difficult for the wife to change her behaviour, because it has become a way of life for her. It is necessary that she must make a decision to break the pattern.
- ❑ She must always keep the example *par excellence* of Jesus Christ in mind.
- ❑ It is also important that she must remember the economics of God, e.g.
 - If you want to be big, you must be small.
 - If you want to be first, you must be last.
 - If you are weak, you are strong.
 - If you want to be important, you must serve.

- **P - Prayer:**

- ❑ Ask God's forgiveness if she has not handled her relationship correctly.
- ❑ Praise God for his wisdom and guidance.
- ❑ Ask His help as she sets out to live according to His ordinances.

- **H - Hope:**

- Peter's teaching in 1 Pe 3:1-6 shows that even an unequally yoked marriage can be an opportunity for the believing partner to achieve spiritual goals. Women in such marriages often experience great distress and emotional pain, but Peter gives hope. The unbelieving husband may be won over for Christ by the wife's sincere, submissive and respectful behaviour.
- This difficult situation also holds potential for spiritual growth in the believers life (*cf.* 2.7.5.3).
- What do you learn from the following passages in Scripture?
 - Ro 5:3-5
 - Jas 1:2-4
- Two verses from Scripture to meditate on:
 - *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.* (1 Co 10:13)
 - *Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.* (Col 3:15)

- **A - Assignments:**

- Sarai (Sarah) is an example of a wife who was submissive to her husband.
 - Read Ge 12:10-20
 - What was Abram's instruction to Sarai? :11-13
 - What happened to her? :14-15
 - What happened to Pharaoh? :17
 - How did God protect Sarai? :19
 - Read Ge 20
 - What was Abraham's instruction to Sarah? :13
 - What happened to her? :2
 - What happened to Abimelech? :3, 6, 7
 - How did God protect Sarah? :3-7
 - How does God honour a wife who is willing to submit to her husband?
- Read Heb 11.
 - Write down the name of every person who is listed and the reason why he/she is mentioned.
 - Choose two people as role models and explain why you chose them.
- Find other references in the Bible regarding submission.
 - What do you learn from each one?

4.7.3.4 Communication

- **I - Identification and Understanding:**

The ability to communicate is one of the factors that can lead to the initiation and development of a relationship between two people (*cf.* 3.4.6). Studies showed that positive communication patterns like openness, genuineness, active listening, respect, interest and airing of differences make families strong (*cf.* 3.4.8). Disagreement, unfortunately, will always be part of a marriage relationship and it cannot be prevented, but people can be taught to handle it properly. As seen earlier, it is not the fact *that* a couple fights that causes marital problems, but *how* they fight (*cf.* 4.7.3.1). People must learn how to discuss their issues better, to present their positions clearly and to understand the position of the partner accurately. It is also important that while the couple is discussing differences, they should always demonstrate mutual respect, acceptance and loyalty to each other. There should be no hostility and power struggles among them (*cf.* 3.4.8). Research shows that religious faith enhances qualities like commitment and communication (*cf.* 3.5.2). Communication problems often stem from self-gratification and self-centredness. It becomes visible in behaviour which is selfish and manipulative (*cf.* Appendix D). One or both partners often 'clamps up' - withdrawal (*stilstuip*). It can only be remedied if the couple becomes more other-centred. Self-inadequacies like low self-esteem and poor mental health can also cause problems in communication and should be addressed (*cf.* 3.4.9).

Believers in unequally yoked marriages confirm the problem of poor communication. One respondent says that she realises that communication is one of their biggest problems. They struggle to speak to each other, because he thinks she means one thing and she is actually trying to convey something totally different and vice versa. She believes that if they can communicate more effectively, 80% of their problems will be solved. Another respondent reported that the way she handles their relationship, is by living on a 50% level of consciousness. She thus ignores many of the things that hurt her. In this process, however, she becomes emotionally dulled (*cf.* Appendix C).

Pastors who have done counseling with unequally yoked couples, also mention the importance of communication skills. One partner often reports that the other partner does not listen and does not understand him/her. One of the respondent's objective in pastoral guidance is that the couple must get together so that they can enter each other's worlds for better understanding. This can only happen if they have empathy for each other and if they have learned to die to themselves (*cf.* Appendix D).

- **S - Scripture:**

- Selfishness is often one of the biggest obstacles in good communication. The only way to handle it, is to address the core problem, namely the importance of dying to the self:

- Read Mt 10:38; 16:24; Mk 8:34; Lk 9:23; 14:27
 - What is the central message in these verses?
 - What does it mean in your situation?
 - How can this improve your communication with your spouse?
- Read Gal 2:20
 - What does it mean that you are *crucified with Christ*?
 - How do you understand the phrase that *Christ lives in you*?
 - What light does Gal 5:24 shed on this issue?
- Read Col 3:3
 - What does it mean that *you have died*?
 - What about your desires, your rights, etc.?
- Read Jn 12:24
 - Which lesson can be learned from the kernel of wheat?
 - Also refer to 2 Ti 2:11.
- Listening is a very important aspect of communication.
 - Read Jas 1:19
 - What is James' advice in this verse?
 - What behaviour changes do you need to make?
 - How are you going to manage these new behaviour patterns?
 - Read Pr 18:13
 - What is the error of this person?
 - What is the result of this error?
- The Bible gives clear instructions on speaking.
 - Read Pr 13:3 and Pr 21:23
 - What advice is given in these verses?
 - What are the consequences if it is followed/not followed?
 - Read Pr 15:23 (Compare Pr 25:11)
 - What is a *good answer* biblically?
- Read Gal 5:22-23: The fruit of the Spirit
 - How does each of the mentioned fruits influence the communication process?
 - *What adjustments do you need to make?*
- **O - Other interventions:**
 - Communication must be separated into two components, namely *process* and *content*. The process is the style of communication, how each one treats the other one - the '*how*'. The content is the issues and topics at hand - the '*what*'.

❑ The communication process:

There are two role-players in the communication process: speaker and listener. Each role has its own set of rules.

The speaker:

- Needs to speak for him-/herself using 'I' statements, e.g. I think... or I feel... or I want...
- Must remember that he/she can only invite the partner to understand him-/herself accurately.
- Cannot expect or require the partner to agree.
- Must remember that there is a big difference between invitation ('would you?') and expectation ('you must!'). There is also a big difference between advice (trying to fix) and support (listening).

The listener:

- Must remember the most important rule: to pay attention, e.g. put the book down or turn the television off.
- Must understand the position of the speaker, not necessarily agree, but understand.
- Must paraphrase and echo back what has been said, in that way the speaker knows that he/she has been understood until the speaker is finished, and then the roles must be reversed.

When each partner has had the chance to speak, the question is asked: "Do we agree?" If the answer is 'yes', the discussion is over, but if the answer is 'no', a solution must be negotiated. This will be handled further in 4.7.3.5 (*cf.* Zuehlke, 2000b:292-295).

❑ Change expectations:

Most people are raised in families and watch their parents behave. In this way they are forming expectations about how married couples should relate. They are often unaware of these expectations. When these expectations differ, it often causes crossed communication. The counselor must help the counselee to identify these expectations (*cf.* Worthington, 1989:253-256).

❑ Questioning mind reading:

In mind reading, the one spouse is assuming that he/she knows what the spouse wants. One way to break destructive mind reading, is to question it, e.g. 'How do you know she wants you to come home directly after work?' By questioning longstanding assumptions, the counselor shakes the counselee's confidence in his/her knowledge of his/her spouse's likes and dislikes (*cf.* Worthington, 1989:257).

● **P - Prayer:**

- ❑ Praise God for insight and a teachable spirit.
- ❑ Confess any self-gratification, self-centredness and manipulative behaviour.
- ❑ Lay down his/her life and take up the cross and follow Jesus Christ.

- ❑ Asks God's help to break down old patterns and to be quick to listen and slow to answer.
- ❑ Trust the Holy Spirit to culture the fruit of the Spirit in his/her heart.

- **H - Hope:**
 - ❑ The moment you gave your life to Christ, you do not live anymore, but Christ lives in you. There is thus no reason to have a low self-esteem:
 - *To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Col 1:27)*
 - *See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me. (Isa 49:16)*
 - *"Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has compassion on you. (Isa 54:10)*
 - ❑ God wants to teach us to listen and to speak:
 - *The Sovereign Lord has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught. (Isa 50:4)*

- **A - Assignments:**
 - ❑ Read 2 Pe 1:5-7
 - Write down the different aspects that Peter mentions in these verses.
 - What can you do practically to develop each one of the above mentioned qualities?
 - *How will that influence your communication with your spouse?*
 - ❑ The counselee could write the content of 1 Co 13:4-7 on a card and put it on the fridge to read every day.
 - ❑ Remember: Positive communication begets positive communication and negative communication begets negative communication.
 - ❑ There are a few practical skills that the counselee should practice:
 - Listen to what your spouse says and validate it.
 - Summarise each message until the spouse is sure that the message is understood.
 - Share true feelings without harmful communications.
 - Avoid the tendency to argue pointlessly.
 - Be aware of hidden agendas.

4.7.3.5 Conflict

- **I - Identification and Understanding:**

If there is not agreement on an issue, people must learn how to resolve conflict. That means that they must learn how to win together as a team. Studies show that a high family commitment together with the ability to cope with problems and to deal positively with crises, makes families strong (cf. 3.4.8). There are many things that couples fight about, e.g. money issues, children (discipline, how many, etc.) and sex. Reasons for marital conflict can be categorised as follows (cf. 3.4.9):

- ❑ Decision conflicts, e.g. where to live, what to do and allocation of time.
- ❑ Failure to give attention, e.g. lack of attention, too little sex, inadequate appreciation and support.
- ❑ Division and fulfilment of responsibility, e.g. finances and chores.
- ❑ Sloppy, impulsive or careless behaviour, e.g. neatness, spending money and being punctual.

In the case of the unequally yoked marriage, the difference in religious convictions undoubtedly serves as a big source of conflict in the marriage. This was confirmed by the believers who acted as respondents in the empirical study (cf. Appendix C). There is no doubt among the pastors that such a marriage is problematic, frustrating, difficult and risky. The problem, according to them, is that the two partners operate from two different frames of reference with different norms and values (cf. Appendix D). Personal sacrifice, duty and love are important aspects in conflict resolution and religion provides the “how-to” guidelines for the believer, but the unbeliever lacks this knowledge. Religion also has an important impact on the reconciliation process after conflict, because research shows that “*Families who pray together, stay together*”, but if there is no religious homogeneity, it cannot serve as a deterrent for divorce (cf. 3.5.2).

- **S - Scripture:**

- ❑ Read Gal 5:22-23
 - Which of the fruit of the Spirit are indispensably in a conflict situation?
 - What can you do to develop more of this fruit in your life?
- ❑ Read Jas 3:1-12
 - What do you learn from :2?
 - What must you do if you make a mistake?
 - James uses three images to explain how ‘dangerous’ the tongue is. How can you apply it to your life?
 - How is the tongue described in verses 7-8?
 - What is the admonishment that James gives in verses 9-12?
 - *What does this mean to you in your marriage?*

- Forgiveness is of utmost importance in a conflict situation:
 - What can happen if you are not willing to forgive? Mk 11:25
 - How many times must you forgive your spouse? Lk 17:4
 - Why should you forgive? Eph 4:32 (Compare Col 3:13)
- What guidelines can you identify in the following verses regarding the handling of anger?
 - Ps 37:8 ▪ Pr 16:32 ▪ Ecc 7:9 ▪ Jas 1:19
 - Pr 14:17 ▪ Pr 20:3 ▪ Eph 4:26
- **O - Other interventions:**
 - Couples do disagree and have conflict, but those who are committed to their own personal growth and that of their partner, tend to face these difficulties more openly and take responsibility for their own behaviour. The key to such a healthy relationship is friendship. In other words, the couple is not involved in a struggle to follow their own personal dreams in their relationship, but they are willing to modify their own preferences. They are also willing to give constant attention to their relationship and to work hard at it (*cf.* 3.4.8).
 - Four important steps in the conflict resolution process:
 - Agenda setting: Both must agree on the topic to be resolved.
 - Brainstorming: Propose various, creative solutions to the problem.
 - Agreement and compromise: Narrow the proposals to specific solutions that both are willing to try. There must be a willingness to compromise.
 - Follow-up: Set a specific time to evaluate how well the compromise is working. At that time small changes may be necessary to make the agreement work better. Follow-up is important, because it holds each partner accountable for his/her end of the agreement.
 - Time-Out:

It is an intervention that either partner may use to prevent a 'meltdown' when a argument occurs. There are a few rules:

 - Either partner may call a Time-Out.
 - Person A may call a Time-Out whenever he/she feels the conversation is headed toward a 'meltdown'.
 - The only thing that Person B can then say, is "Okay, when can we continue?"
 - Person A must set a time within 24 hours to resume, but it may not be after 22:00 or before 06:30.
 - Since Person A called the Time-Out, he/she must go to Person B at the appointed time to restart the conversation.
 - If the Time-Out was too short to have achieved the objective, either person can again call another Time-Out (*cf.* Zuehlke, 2000b:292-295).

- **P - Prayer:**

- ❑ Praise God for a willingness to change and that He gives the desire and the strength to do it.
- ❑ Confession of self-centredness and the desire to be always right.
- ❑ Ask God for help to forgive wrongs committed against the person.
- ❑ Ask God for patience to practice the skills required.

- **H - Hope:**

- ❑ To learn to control what you say has eternal consequences:
 - *He who guards his lips guards his soul, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin. (Pr 13:3)*
 - *Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. (1 Pe 3:10-11)*
- ❑ It pays to be humble
 - *A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offence. (Pr 19:11)*
 - *Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the Lord's anger. (Zep 2:3)*
 - *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. (Jas 4:10)*
 - *Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. (1 Pe 5:6-7)*

- **A - Assignments:**

- ❑ Meditate on the following verse. How can this help you in a conflict situation?
 - *He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Mic 6:8)*
 - *Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. (Ro 12:12)*
 - *...because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace. (Lk 1:78-79)*
- ❑ Read Ro 12:9-21
 - Write down all the instructions for practical living.
 - What changes must you make?
 - How are you going to manage these changes?

- Read through the following passage about the **Exchange theory** (cf. 3.3.2.4):

The main emphasis of this theory is the concepts of rewards and costs in any interaction. Human beings are looking for rewarding exchanges in relationships and try to keep the costs lower than the rewards. This theory helps to understand the process of decision-making in a family. Every person has at his disposal certain resources, e.g. money, talent, wisdom and affection, which can be used to reward desirable behaviour in others. These rewards can unfortunately become sources of power in decision making. Couples in conflict must be helped to give attention to the exchanges they make. The ideal is that both partners maximise the rewards for the other partner.

- What do you learn from this?
- How can you apply it to you marriage?

4.7.3.6 Different values and norms

- **I - Identification and Understanding:**

Studies show certain factors that cause two people to be attracted to each other. Among others is similarity: people prefer those with similar beliefs, attitudes, values, interests and social backgrounds, as it helps with the initial conversations, it further reinforces the person's beliefs and values, it provides a shared purpose in the relationship and it probably minimise conflict and misunderstandings (cf. 3.4.6). In the case of an unequally yoked marriage, these similarities do not exist since there are differences between Christians and non-Christians. Their general philosophy of life, convictions, priorities, needs, values and norms drastically vary from each other. This seriously hampers the formation of an “*us-relationship*” in the marriage. This is one of the reasons why people in an unequally yoked marriage often are unhappy (cf. 2.5.3.3). In general, social scientists find that homogamous marriages are more stable. Religious compatibility affects everyday life such as the rearing of children, the choice of where to live and who to socialise with, the allocation of time and resources, traditions and the sense of community that the couple share. This is not always true in an unequally yoked marriage (cf. 3.4.8). Studies isolated certain causal factors for marital conflict (cf. 3.4.9):

- Undesirable behaviour - lack of partner similarity, e.g. handling child-rearing responsibilities, spending money and spending leisure time with friends.
- Diverse values - this often stems from childhood socialisation experiences and religious convictions, e.g. sexual expression, child rearing and the use of alcohol.

Different values are often given as the main reason for possible difficulties (3.5.3). The believers in the empirical study assent to the fact that differing values and norms cause difficulties in their marriages (cf. 3.6.6.1).

- **S - Scripture:**

- It is implicit that there will be differences between the believer and the unbeliever's thinking and judgement, because somebody who is in Christ, is a new creation, the old has gone and the new has come (2 Co 5:17).
- Read Ro 12:1-2
 - What do the following concepts mean:
 - spiritual worship?
 - transformation?
 - renewing of the mind?
 - What will be the result of a renewed mind?
- Read Eph 4:22-24
 - Who are the two 'different people' mentioned in these verses?
 - How does the Bible describe each one?
 - Which area of your life needs to change?
 - *What is the implication of this on your marriage?*
- Read Jos 1:8
 - What is the instruction given to Joshua?
 - What must he do day and night?
 - What will be the result?
 - *What does it mean practically?*
- Read Ps 40:8
 - What is in the heart of the author of the Psalm?
 - Is this also true of your life?
 - What is the effect of this in the author's life? What is his desire?

- **O - Other interventions:**

- The fact that you and your husband differ on things like values and norms, will not change, unless he becomes a believer, and that is the work of the Holy Spirit which He will do in his time and in his way. In the mean time, there is a responsibility on you as the believer, to stay true to your calling, but to do it in such a way that you will not drive your husband further and further away from God.
- You will have to put into practice some of the things that have been discussed:
 - Submission (*cf.* 4.7.3.3).
 - Communication (*cf.* 4.7.3.4).
 - Conflict resolution (*cf.* 4.7.3.5).
 - Agree to disagree and negotiate a compromise that satisfies both partners.

- Respect each other's opinions.
- **P - Prayer:**
 - ❑ That God will help him/her to stay true to his/her convictions
 - ❑ To be sensitive and wise in order to handle difficult situations.
 - ❑ To be an example to the unbeliever that will draw him/her closer instead of pushing him/her away.
 - **H - Hope:**
 - ❑ If you have committed your life to God, He changes you and you think in a new way. You have a new value system, new perspectives and new priorities that will differ from the world. God's promise is that He will bless you and that you will be successful if you follow in His steps.
 - ❑ You are not alone:
 - *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. (Heb 12:1)*
 - **A - Assignments:**
 - ❑ Verses to meditate on:
 - *Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Ps 51:10)*
 - *Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. (Col 3:9-10)*
 - *It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. (Tit 2:12)*
 - ❑ Read Ps 1:1-3
 - What does the righteous man do?
 - What does his life look like?
 - *What must you do to follow in his footsteps?*
 - ❑ Read Col 3
 - Write down all the 'rules' given in this passage.
 - How can you apply it in your life?
 - What is specifically said about your heart and mind in verses 1-2 and 15-16?

4.7.3.7 Children

- **I - Identification and Understanding:**

The issue of children plays an enormous role in marital problems. Couples have to work through children issues early in their relationship: whether they want children, how many and how they are going to raise them. Because issues regarding children are so complex, the conversation must continue throughout the child rearing days, otherwise they are bound to have problems in their marriage (*cf.* 3.4.8; 3.4.9). All the respondents commented on the difficulties in the unequally yoked marriage regarding children. As was seen, it is usually the father who is the unbeliever and he can therefore not play his God-given role as king, priest and prophet in his home. The wife must then take full responsibility for the spiritual upbringing of the children and they find it extremely difficult (*cf.* 3.6.6.1; Appendix C). In the Old Testament, Nehemiah, just as Ezra, took strong measures and direct action to stop mixed marriages. One of Nehemiah's major concerns was the fact that family relationships often threaten cultic purity because of the influence they have on the next generation since children are denied the blessing of being brought up in a family where faith is consistently encouraged. Instead, they are confronted with 'mixed' faith. Nehemiah had no doubt that complacency in the spiritual life can have serious consequences and makes a person numb to the effects of sin (*cf.* 2.4.8). Perhaps this, together with the example of the unbelieving parent, are some of the concerns for the believing partner regarding the children.

- **S - Scripture:**

- There are special duties incumbent upon parents by God:

- To teach: Dt 6:7; 20-21
- To nurture: Eph 6:4
- To train: Pr 22:6
- To control: 1 Ti 3:4
- To provide for: 2 Co 12:14
- To love: Tit 2:4

- Parents also have received the sanction from God to correct and discipline their children:

- 1 Sa 3:13
- Pr 22:15
- Pr 13:24
- Pr 29:15

- Parents are instructed to train their children concerning spiritual life:

- Dt 4:9; 11:19
- Dt 31:13; Ps 78:5
- Ps 34:11

- Parents serve as an example to their children:

- A negative example: 1 Ki 22:52; 2 Ch 22:3; Jer 9:14
- A positive example: 1 Ki 9:4; 2 Ch 17:3; 26:4; 2 Ti 1:5

- **O - Other interventions:**

- ❑ As mentioned before, the fact that you and your husband probably differ on the rearing of your children, will not change, unless he becomes a believer, and that is the work of the Holy Spirit which He will do in his time and in his way. In the mean time, you have the sole responsibility for the spiritual training of your children. You must do it in such a way that your unbelieving spouse will not be able to use it against you. That means that you must still be submissive to him and respect him as the father of your children. You must also teach your children that they must respect him as their father (*cf.* 4.7.3.3; Appendix C; Appendix D).
- ❑ It is very difficult for one parent alone to bring their children up in the fear of the Lord. The believing parent needs all the help he/she can possibly find.
 - Churches usually have special programs for children and teenagers.
 - There are organisations to which your children can belong where they get sound training together with other skills.
 - Organisations like YFC, YWAM and OM often offer opportunities like holiday programs, outreaches and camps during week-ends.
 - The believing parent must make sure that there are good videos for the young ones to watch at home.
 - Edifying music and books are invaluable aids in the rearing of children.
 - You must also work on your own relationship with God so that you will have the strength to walk the road alone (*cf.* 4.7.3.2).

- **P - Prayer:**

- ❑ Praise God for the counselee's faith.
- ❑ Ask God to give her wisdom and strength to train their children in His ways.
- ❑ Ask God to help the wife to honour her unbelieving husband as the head of their home.
- ❑ Pray God's protection over each child by name.
- ❑ Ask God to save all the children.

- **H - Hope:**

- ❑ Jesus Christ understands your situation and wants to help you:
 - *...for we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin. (Heb 4:15)*
 - *Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Heb 4:16)*
- ❑ Verses from Scripture to meditate on:
 - *Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. (Ps 37:3)*

- *Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. (Ps 37:4)*
 - *Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: (Ps 37:5)*
 - *He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun. (Ps 37:6)*
- **A - Assignments:**
 - Read Pr 3
 - Why is it worthwhile to obey these teachings? :1-2
 - What is the instruction in verse 3 and what will the result be if it is followed (:4)?
 - What about your own wisdom? :5
 - What is the promise in verse 6?
 - List the rest of the instructions in this chapter.
 - Examples in the Bible of devout fathers:

▪ Abraham: Ge 18:19	▪ David: 1 Ki 2:1-4
▪ Isaac: Ge 27:26-27	▪ Zechariah: Lk 1:67
▪ Jacob: Ge 35:2	▪ Cornelius: Ac 10:2
▪ Manoah: Jdg 13:8	
 - Examples in the Bible of devout mothers:

▪ Sarah: Ge 21:6	▪ Mary: Lk 1:46
▪ Hannah: 1 Sa 1:22	▪ Eunice: 2 Ti 1:5
▪ Elizabeth: Lk 1:41	
 - Examples in the Bible of parents who prayed for their children:

▪ Abraham: Ge 17:18	▪ The father of the demoniac: Mt 17:15
▪ David: 2 Sa 12:16; 1 Ch 29:19	▪ The Syrophenician mother: Mk 7:26
▪ Job: Job 1:5	
 - The book of Proverbs is a collection of wise teachings - read every morning, as part of your daily devotions, one chapter from Proverbs (there are 31 chapters - one for each day of the month!).
 - The best thing any parent can do for his/her children, is to pray daily for them. Mention their names individually before the throne of God. If you can do it aloud, it is even better. Something happens in a child's heart if he/she hears his/her parent praying for him/her.

4.7.3.8 Divorce

- **I - Identification and Understanding:**

Research shows that religious faith often restores peace to a troubled marriage and serves as a buffer in times of intense stress in a family. There is significant evidence that couples who share their religion are less likely to divorce than couples without a meaningful mutual faith (*cf.* 3.4.8; 3.5.2).

Recent studies show that people with strong religious faith are more likely to protect their marriage as something sacred, to seek pastoral counseling and to take steps to modify their behaviour in order to prevent divorce. Perhaps this happens because faith gives people the necessary strength to search themselves for negative attitudes and harmful patterns of behaviour and provides the motivation and strength needed to correct them. Another possibility is that their faith does not 'allow' them to contemplate divorce as an option during difficult times in their marriage (*cf.* 3.4.8). Authorities agree about the danger of self-fulfilling prophecy. They warn strongly that nobody may go into marriage with the idea that if it does not work, there is always the option of divorce (*cf.* 3.4.9). It seems as if religious practices like prayer, devotional reading and group worship at church, provide couples with positive emotional reinforcement and it apparently plays an important role in preventing divorce (*cf.* 3.5.2). In an unequally yoked marriage, these resources mentioned above are not available to the couple. It is therefore possible that such a marriage can end up in the divorce court, as was the experience of two of the respondents in the empirical study. If the couple is still married, it is possible that one or both partners are contemplating divorce, like two of the other respondents (*cf.* Appendix C).

- **S - Scripture:**

The believer who is in an unequally yoked marriage and comes for pastoral guidance, will probably have questions about the permissibility of divorce which he/she will address to the pastor. It is important that the pastor must direct the counselee to the teaching and authority of the Word of God. (We are not going to treat divorce in general, but only as it applies to the situation of an unequally yoked marriage.)

One verse that probably will bother the believer, is Mt 5:32 (*cf.* Mt 19:9; Lk 16:18):

But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to commit adultery, and anyone who marries a woman so divorced commits adultery.

The believer will probably conclude from this verse that if the unbeliever wants a divorce, he/she will be seen as an adulterer in the eyes of the Lord.

Paul gives very clear instructions to the believer in the unequally yoked marriage (*cf.* 1 Co 7:12-13,15). Paul takes Jesus' teachings given in Mt 5:31-32; 19:9; Mk 10:11-12 and Lk 16:18 as binding on the church, namely that Christian divorce is forbidden, but he argues that the situation is different when the Christian is married to a non-Christian. Divorce is permissible, but the decision lies exclusively with the unbeliever. The Christian partner in a mixed marriage is not to be the one who takes the initiative in ending the marriage. If the unbeliever wants to leave, the believer must let

him/her go and the believer is free from the bond of marriage and remarriage is presumably not excluded (*cf.* 2.7.1).

It is God's will that men and women should live in harmony. Peace and harmony will not be furthered if the Christian partner ends the marriage on religious grounds, because that will only bring more strife. As long as the unbeliever is willing to stay with the believer, the marriage must continue, but if the unbeliever wants a divorce, the Christian is under no obligation to prolong the marriage, especially if peace is at stake (*cf.* 2.7.3).

- **O - Other interventions:**

If the believer is divorced or if the unbelieving husband wants a divorce, it is advisable that he/she should become part of a support group for divorcees in the church or in the community.

- **P - Prayer:**

- Perseverance and strength to stay in the marriage.
- A willingness to forgive the unbelieving partner if he/she wants a divorce.

- **H - Hope:**

- God will always be with you:
 - *The Lord delights in the way of the man whose steps he has made firm; (Ps 37:23)*
 - *though he stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand. (Ps 37:24)*
 - *I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. (Ps 37:25)*
- God will also look after your children:
 - *He who fears the Lord has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge. (Pr 14:26)*
 - *The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed are his children after him. (Pr 20:7)*

- **A - Assignments:**

- It is important that the believer must be obedient to the guidance that he/she has received in the Word of God for his/her situation.
- Learn from the lives of some figures in the Bible who were obedient to God's commands, even when those commands were extremely difficult:
 - Noah: Ge 6
 - Abraham: Ge 12:4, Ge 22
 - Joshua: Jos 1-6; 11:15
 - Hezekiah: 2 Ki 18-19
 - Peter and John: Ac 4
 - Jesus Christ: Heb 5:8

□ God promises blessings if we are obedient:

- Ex 19:5
- Dt 5:29; 7:12
- Dt 28:1-14
- 1 Ki 3:14; Job 36:11
- Jn 14:23; 1 Jn 2:17
- Jas 1:25; 1 Jn 3:21-22

4.7.3.9 Negative thoughts

• **I - Identification and Understanding:**

Humans are very complex beings. Our behaviour is mostly influenced by our thoughts. What makes the situation so dangerous is the fact that our thoughts are not always based on the truth. The reason: reality is distorted by Satan's lies. The Bible tells us that he is the father of lies (Jn 8:44). These biblical untruths and irrational beliefs prevent counselees to live a free and productive life. It is important that the counselee's mind must be transformed. That means that the world's views must be replaced by God's truths. The Word of God is the truth (Jn 17:17).

• **S - Scripture:**

□ What does the Bible teach about the sinful mind?

- Ps 64:6
- Ps 94:11
- Ro 1:21,28
- Ro 8:7
- Col 1:21
- Tit 1:15

□ What does the Bible teach about the spiritual mind?

- Ro 8:5-6
- Ro 12:2
- Eph 4:23-25

□ The Bible teaches that the heart is the centre of life:

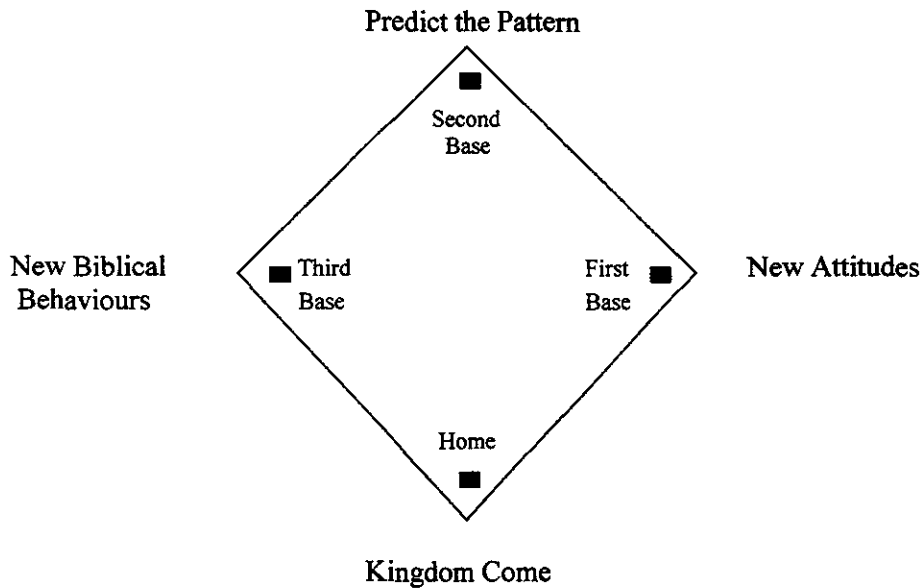
- Pr 4:23
- Jer 17:9-10
- Lk 6:45
- Ro 10:10

□ The renewal of the mind:

- Rom 12:1-2
- 2 Co 10:5
- Eph 4:22-24

• **O - Other interventions:**

- Cognitive-behaviour therapy is very effective to combat negative thought patterns.



First Base: New Attitudes

Pr 27:19 *As he thinketh in his heart, so is he* (King James Version)

1 Pe 1:13 *...prepare your minds for action: be self-controlled...*

People's feelings and behaviour are controlled by the way they think. The process can be explained by using the letters A, B and C.

A: The **activating event** or the 'stimulus'.

C: The **consequence** or the 'response'. The response occurs on two levels: as a behavioural manifestation (e.g. blushing or a headache) and an emotional manifestation (e.g. anger, anxiety or depression).

The secular society thinks that A causes C, but cognitive-behaviour therapy emphasises the importance of B.

B: The **belief system**. Attitudes, expectations, interpretations, perceptions, values, thoughts and self-talk are other names for the belief system.

The mind controls the human being's responses. The mind is the source of the person's reactions. The process is subliminal and rapid. In order to change negative behaviours or feelings, it is important to look at the person's thoughts and self-talk. A handy tool is to keep a "Diary of Discontentment". It must be done in the following order: C-A-B. First identify the negative consequence, then write down the activating event and then list the beliefs in that situation. This diary helps people to understand their behaviour and thinking. Then D and E can be added.

D: **Discern**, dispute, debate and decide whether this thought is biblical and appropriate. If it is, it can stay, if not - something needs to be done.

E: **Effort** to restructure or stop the thought so that behaviour can change.

Second Base: Predict the Pattern

Ro 12:2 *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

Review the journal entries and identify patterns of predictable perceptions that lead to negative feelings and counterproductive behaviour. Look for the common denominators. This gives the counselee courage, because he/she sees that the problems are not unpredictable and beyond control. The 'triggers' can now be identified.

Third Base: New Biblical Behaviour

Pr 20:18 *Make plans by seeking advice; if you wage war, obtain guidance.*

Ps 19:14 *May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.*

1 Co 10:13 *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

2 Co 10:5 *We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

Php 4:19 *And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.*

For healing, it is not enough to only identify the negative thought processes and to understand them, new biblical behaviour and support systems must be developed. The "I can't" or "yes, but..." must be changed. Activities that can be helpful in the process are daily devotions, Scripture memorisation, fasting, a weekly Bible study, participation in an accountability group, journaling, developing church relationships, increased Christian fellowship, etc.

Home: Kingdom Come

Mt 6:33 *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

Now the fruit of the Spirit replaces all the negative thoughts and behaviour. Christian growth and maturity become evident. The human being cannot serve two masters. Cognitive-behaviour therapy enables the person to reprogram his/her mental computer and double-mindedness is dissolved.

Php 4:6-7 *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

(cf. Zuehlke, 2000a:223-227)

• **P - Prayer:**

- Acknowledge his/her inability to control his/her mind.
- Ask God to take over the control and to renew the mind.

H - Hope:

- God wants us to renew our minds
 - *The Lord detests the thoughts of the wicked, but those of the pure are pleasing to him. (Pr 15:26)*
 - *Jerusalem, wash the evil from your hearts and be saved. How long will you harbour wicked thoughts? (Jer 4:14)*
- Change is possible
 - *Not that I already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. (Php 3:12)*
 - *Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, (Php 3:13)*
 - *I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Php 3:14)*
- Victory is assured:
 - *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. (2 Ti 4:7)*
 - *Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day... (2 Ti 4:8)*

• A - Assignments:

- What does the Bible teach us about God's thoughts?
 - Ps 40:5
 - Ps 139:17-18
 - Isa 55:9
 - Jer 29:11
- Passages in Scripture that you can use to meditate on:
 - Ps 8
 - Ps 16
 - Ps 18
 - Ps 23
 - Ps 27
 - Ps 51
 - Ps 119
 - Ps 139
- When you 'catch' yourself thinking negative things, you must actively decide to switch your thoughts to positive subjects. Examples of a few 'positive' options:
 - 1 Sa 12:24
 - Job 37:14
 - Ps 27:3-4
 - Ps 48:9
 - Ps 63:6
 - Ps 143:5
 - Php 4:8
 - Col 3:1-3

4.7.4 Conclusion of pastoral guidance

Pastoral guidance does not continue forever. There will come a time that the pastor/counselor and the counselee sense that ongoing counseling is no longer necessary. It is effective to see the penultimate session as part of the termination. During these last two sessions, there are a few aspects that need to get attention.

For the last session the following written assignment could be considered:

- A description of the counselee's life before pastoral guidance.
- An evaluation of the present situation.
- A list of learned behaviour and areas where changes were made.
- Proposed ways in which these changes can be maintained.

The pastor/counselor could prepare a termination summary for the last session in which the following aspects should be addressed:

- Description of definite changes observed.
- List areas that still need special attention.

Guidelines for the final session:

- A discussion of the pastor'- and the counselee's views regarding the 'successes and failures' of the pastoral guidance intervention.
- If necessary, referral to specialists in the financial-, legal- or medical field.
- The pastor should be aware of the possibility that the counselee may experience feelings of loss, fear and anxiety because he/she is going to lose the 'support' of the counselor. The counselee must be reminded that *God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble* (Ps 46:1).

Examples of passages from Scripture to comfort the counselee:

- | | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| ➤ Ge 28:15 | ➤ Ps 28:7 | ➤ Pr 18:10 | ➤ Isa 46:4 |
| ➤ Ex 33:14 | ➤ Ps 71:3 | ➤ Isa 41:10 | ➤ Mt 28:20 |
| ➤ 2 Ch 16:9 | ➤ Ps 139:5 | ➤ Isa 43:2 | ➤ Heb 13:6 |

- The possibility of follow-up sessions could be mentioned without the counselee feeling that it might be an indication of failure.
- Close with a final prayer to hand the counselee over to God.

May the following be true of every pastor/counselor:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (Lk 4:18-19)

4.8 PRACTICAL THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHAPTER 4

- Pastoral guidance is about helping individuals, families and groups to cope with the pressures and crises of life. It is the ministry of *all believers* who are to bear the burdens of one another.
- The goals are not only to change behaviour, attitudes, values and perceptions, to teach skills and responsibility, to give support and guidance and to increase counselee competence. It is also to

stimulate spiritual growth, to encourage confession of sin and to model Christian standards, attitudes, values and lifestyles.

- The pastor is completely dependent on God in the pastoral guidance session. God is the central figure in the process with the Holy Spirit prompting, guiding, convincing and enlightening the minds of the counselor and the counselee.
- Pastoral guidance is thus grounded in prayer.
- The pastor/counselor knows the meaning of Scripture for his own life. He/she is able to solve his/her problems scripturally and can help others to do the same.
- The guidelines that the researcher proposed for a possible model of pastoral guidance to the unequally yoked couple, focused primarily on the *believing partner* as the unbeliever is often not willing to come for pastoral guidance.
- The process of pastoral guidance can be divided into three parts, namely:
 - *Commencement* - the beginning phase, the first few sessions.
 - *Continuation* - the middle phase, when the problems are being addressed.
 - *Conclusion* - the end phase, when the pastor and counselee prepare to terminate the contact.
- The main elements of the proposed pastoral guidance model can thus be summarised as follows:
 - **I - Identification and Understanding:** A discussion of the origin, contributing factors and consequences of the problem on the marital relationship.
 - **S - Scripture:** In an attempt to find biblical solutions to the problem, the pastor and counselee could work through certain passages in Scripture.
 - **O - Other interventions:** There are other interventions that could be used to alleviate the problem.
 - **P - Prayer:** Suggestion for topics that the pastor and counselee could use in prayer.
 - **H - Hope:** Scripture is a source of hope.
 - **A - Assignments:** Guidelines for possible assignments which the counselee could do in order to reinforce and further change.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.1 BASIC THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHAPTER 2

- 'Marriage' is a divine and permanent institution, a life-long covenant between a man and a woman.
- The ideal marriage, as God intended it to be, prevailed before the fall.
- The moment sin entered the world, the sinless harmony was distorted, including human and authority relationships.
- Marriage is often used in the Old and New Testament as a metaphor to convey the close relationship between God and his people.
- God forbade mixed marriages in the Old Testament due to the danger of being lured into heathen practices.
- The same instruction is found in the New Testament: Paul warns the Christians not to marry unbelievers: "*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers*" (2 Co 6:14).
- To fully understand marriage as an institution by God, it is important to understand the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ and the church, as found in the New Testament:
 - The husband must love his wife as Christ loved his bride, the church.
 - The wife must submit to her husband and show respect and devotion to him as the church shows it to Jesus Christ.
 - Marriage as God intended it to be, implies *mutual* submission.
 - Husband and wife are more than mere partners, they are two halves of one.
- An 'unequally yoked' marriage refers to a couple where one partner is a believer and the other partner not.
- Divorce is permissible, but the decision lies exclusively with the unbeliever.
- The believing wife must submit to her unbelieving husband, as he may be won over for Christ.

5.2 METATHEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHAPTER 3

- Marriage is a divine, permanent institution, legalised by a contract, that binds a man and a woman in a life-long, voluntary and exclusive union.
- In recent times, there is a movement away from a life-long vow of fidelity in search of individual fulfilment, autonomy, independence, growth and creativity, although the family is still considered as the central institution in life and indispensable for society.

- Changes in family and marital values and family patterns cannot be ignored and cannot necessarily be stopped, but their disruptive potential must be minimised.
- Traditionally, the ideal partner was seen as somebody from the same social class and the same religious, racial and ethnic group, but it seems as if the importance of homogamous religious affiliation is declining.
- Many factors have been identified that enhance fulfilling marriages, e.g. balance between mutuality and individuation, self-awareness, self-acceptance, self-esteem, communication, problem-solving, but also an awareness of a power and purpose greater than themselves - a spiritual orientation.
- Among different factors that cause marital conflict, diverse values and different religious convictions are mentioned.
- Research affirms that religious commitment and homogamy has a positive effect on marriage stability and marital satisfaction as it helps the family to establish effective support systems and is a deterrent for divorce.
- From the empirical study the following preliminary conclusions were made:
 - Believers
 - An unequally yoked marriage will never be encouraged - it is just too difficult.
 - The believer's (usually the wife) relationship with Jesus Christ carries her through, but she must make sure that she practises her faith in such a way that it does not drive the unbeliever further away from her and from God.
 - The wife must not try to win her husband through words, but must witness through her example and trust the Lord to save her husband in His time. She must be sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
 - A relatively fulfilling marriage is possible if the two partners agree to disagree, if they respect each other and if they give space for each other. However, there will always be something missing - to be one in the spiritual sense.
 - It seems as if there are, in such a marriage especially, three problems which cause much heartache:
 - a breakdown in trust,
 - difficulties in communication,
 - if the husband does not take his responsibilities as priest in the house, the wife is inclined to take over all the responsibilities and the husband experiences that his wife does not accept his authority.

- Pastors/counselors
 - An unequally yoked marriage will never be encouraged - there are just too many problems.
 - The believing partner is usually the wife.
 - The first objective for counseling should be to help the couple in their relationship, that they can accept each other, learn to live with the differences and to have a fulfilling marriage, as far as possible.
 - The second objective should be to encourage and strengthen the believer to live as an example to the unbeliever.
 - The Word of God gives specific guidelines on how to handle the situation.
 - Pastors/counselors and believers must be sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

5.3 PRACTICAL THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CHAPTER 4

- Pastoral guidance is about helping individuals, families and groups to cope with the pressures and crises of life. It is the ministry of *all believers* who are to bear the burdens of one another.
- The goals are not only to change behaviour, attitudes, values and perceptions, to teach skills and responsibility, to give support and guidance and to increase counselee competence. It is also to stimulate spiritual growth, to encourage confession of sin and to model Christian standards, attitudes, values and lifestyles.
- The pastor is completely dependent on God in the pastoral guidance session. God is the central figure in the process with the Holy Spirit prompting, guiding, convincing and enlightening the minds of the counselor and the counselee.
- Pastoral guidance is thus grounded in prayer.
- The pastor/counselor knows the meaning of Scripture for his own life. He/she is able to solve his/her problems scripturally and can help others to do the same.
- The guidelines that the researcher proposed for a possible model of pastoral guidance to the unequally yoked couple, focused primarily on the *believing partner* as the unbeliever is often not willing to come for pastoral guidance.
- The process of pastoral guidance can be divided into three parts, namely:
 - *Commencement* - the beginning phase, the first few sessions.
 - *Continuation* - the middle phase, when the problems are being addressed.
 - *Conclusion* - the end phase, when the pastor and counselee prepare to terminate the contact.

- The main elements of the proposed pastoral guidance model can thus be summarised as follows:
 - **I - Identification and Understanding:** A discussion of the origin, contributing factors and consequences of the problem on the marital relationship.
 - **S - Scripture:** In an attempt to find biblical solutions to the problem, the pastor and counselee could work through certain passages in Scripture.
 - **O - Other interventions:** There are other interventions that could be used to alleviate the problem.
 - **P - Prayer:** Suggestion for topics that the pastor and counselee could use in prayer.
 - **H - Hope:** Scripture is a source of hope.
 - **A - Assignments:** Guidelines for possible assignments which the counselee could do in order to reinforce and further change.

5.4 FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The Bible gives clear guidelines on unequally yoked marriages. Pastoral guidance must focus on the believer's relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ as it gives him/her the strength to follow the instructions in the Word of God to live as an example to the unbelieving partner.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Pastoral guidance to the unbelieving partner in an unequally yoked marriage.
- Pastoral guidance to parents with children in unequally yoked marriages.
- Pastoral guidance to parents with unbelieving children.
- Pastoral guidance to children of unbelieving parents.
- Pastoral guidance to couples where there are tendencies of religious manipulation.

SUMMARY AND KEY TERMS

PASTORAL GUIDANCE OF THE “UNEQUALLY YOKED” MARRIAGE PARTNERS.

This study deals with problems of the unequally yoked marriage partners (a couple where one is a Christian and the other not). The practical theological model of Zerfass was followed by establishing a basis-, a meta- and a practice theory.

The basis theoretical perspective shows that God forbade mixed marriages in the Old Testament due to the danger that His people could be lured into heathen practices. In the New Testament, Paul warns Christians not to marry unbelievers. Unequally yoked marriages happened when one of the partners got converted after the marriage. Paul's advice to believers is that divorce is permissible, but the decision lies exclusively with the unbeliever. If the unbeliever wants to leave, the believer must let him/her go. Peter's advice to the believing wife is that she must submit to her unbelieving husband and not say a word, as he may be won over for Christ through her deferential behaviour.

From the metatheoretical perspective, the literature consulted shows that religious commitment and homogamy have a positive effect on marriages. Believers in unequally yoked marriages revealed in the empirical study the problems they experience and how they cope. A relatively fulfilled marriage is possible. Pastors consulted in the empirical study want to help couples to accept each other and to learn to live with their differences. The pastors focused mostly on the believer's relationship with God.

Guidelines for a possible model which pastors can follow in their pastoral guidance of the unequally yoked couple are given and focus primarily on the believing partner. Prayer and Scripture are fundamental in the pastoral guidance.

KEY TERMS

- Unequally yoked
- Marriage
- Marriage conflict
- Divorce
- Marriage partners
- Choice of marriage partner
- Faith
- Religion
- Believer and unbeliever
- Mixed marriage

OPSOMMING EN SLEUTELTERME

PASTORALE BEGELEIDING AAN DIE “ONGELYKE JUK” EGPAAR.

Die studie handel oor die probleme van egpare wat ongelyk gejuk is ('n egpaar waar een lid 'n Christen is en die ander nie). Die praktiese teologiese model van Zerfass is gevolg deurdat 'n basis-, 'n meta- en 'n praktyktoerie gevorm is.

Die basisteoretiese perspektief toon dat God in die Ou Testament gemengde huwelike verbied a.g.v. die gevaar dat sy volk by heidense praktyke betrokke kon raak. Paulus waarsku Christene in die Nuwe Testament dat hulle nie met ongelowiges moet trou nie. 'n “Ongelyke juk” huwelik kan ook ontstaan indien een lid tot bekering kom. Paulus sê dat egskeiding in só 'n geval toelaatbaar is, maar dat dit slegs deur die ongelowige geïnisieer kan word. Indien die ongelowige wil skei, moet die gelowige dit toelaat. Petrus se advies aan die gelowige vrou is dat sy aan haar man onderdanig moet wees. Hy kan, sonder dat sy 'n woord sê, deur haar gedrag vir Christus gewen word.

Vanuit die metateoretiese perspektief toon die literatuurstudie dat godsdienstige toewyding en homogamie 'n positiewe effek op huwelike het. Gelowiges in ongelyke huwelike het in die empiriese studie hul probleme wat hulle ondervind en maniere om dit te oorkom, laat blyk. Vervulling in só 'n huwelik is tot 'n groot mate moontlik. Pastors wat in die empiriese studie geraadpleeg is, help egpare om mekaar te aanvaar en leer hulle om met hul verskille saam te leef. Die pastors fokus primêr op die gelowige se verhouding met God.

Riglyne vir 'n moontlike model wat pastors kan volg in hul pastorale begeleiding aan ongelyke juk egpare is gegee en fokus primêr op die gelowige party. Gebed en Skrifgebruik vorm 'n integrale deel van die proses.

SLEUTELTERME

- Ongelyke juk
- Huwelik
- Huwelikskonflik
- Egskeiding
- Eggenoot en eggenote
- Keuse van huweliksmaat
- Geloof
- Godsdiens
- Gelowige en ongelowige
- Gemengde huwelik

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APPENDIX A1

The accompanying letter in English

11 Amajuba Street
Kanonierspark
Potchefstroom
2531
17 November 2003

Dear

I am busy with my Masters degree in Pastoral Studies. The objective of my study is to investigate a marriage where the one partner is a believer in Jesus Christ and the other not. I have spoken with you and you have agreed to be a respondent in the study. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your willingness to participate in the research and assure you that all the information will be handled in absolute confidentiality and anonymity. The material will remain in the possession of the researcher and will not be published uninterpreted.

I would appreciate it if you could complete the questionnaire as thoroughly as possible in your own time. If you find that there is not enough place on the questionnaire, please feel free to turn the page over and continue at the back (please number your answer clearly). You are also free to complete the questionnaire in Afrikaans or English.

After you have complete the questionnaire, we will meet again to discuss any uncertainties.

Yours faithfully

Petria Theron

Contact numbers: 018 - 297 4844 (H)
0723 903 767 (Cell)

APPENDIX A2

The accompanying letter in Afrikaans

Amajubastraat 11
Kanonierspark
Potchefstroom
2531
17 November 2003

Geagte

Ek is besig met my meestersgraad in Pastoraal. Die doel van my studie is om 'n huwelik te ondersoek waar een eggenoot 'n gelowige in Jesus Christus is en die ander een nie. Ek wil graag my opregte waardering uitspreek vir u bereidwilligheid om deel te neem aan die navorsing en verseker u dat die inligting in die strengste vertroulikheid en anonimiteit hanteer sal word. Die materiaal sal in my besit bly en sal nie ongeïnterpreteer gepubliseer word nie.

Ek sal dit waardeer indien u die vraelys so volledig as moontlik in u eie tyd kan voltooi. Indien u vind dat daar nie genoeg spasie vir u antwoord is nie, kan u vrymoedigheid neem om op die agterkant van die bladsy voort te gaan (nommer net asb. u antwoorde duidelik). U is ook welkom om die vraelys in Afrikaans of Engels te voltooi.

Nadat u die vraelys voltooi het, sal ons weer ontmoet om enige onduidelikhede te bespreek.

Byvoorbaat dank.

Petria Theron

Kontak nommers: 018 - 297 4844 (Huis)

0723 903 767 (Selfoon)

APPENDIX B1

Questionnaire for the believing partner in an unequally yoked marriage

1. Gender:

2. Age:

3. How old were you and your spouse when you got married?

4. How long have you been married?

5. Children:

AGE					
GENDER					

6. Did your parents agree with your marriage choice? Explain.

7. Were you a believer and your spouse an unbeliever from the beginning of your marriage, or how did the unequally yoked marriage start?

8. Did you receive any pre-marital counseling and if you did, how did you feel about it?

9. How did you get to know the Lord Jesus Christ?

10. Why did you marry your spouse?

11. What are the joys in your marriage?

12. How was the spiritual inequality handled at the beginning?

13. When did it start to become a problem and why would you say it happened?

14. How do you practice your faith?

15. Explain how your spouse feels about your religious activities.

16. Describe the specific problems/difficulties (related to religion) that you experience in your marriage.

17. How do you try to overcome it (coping skills) and how effective are you?

18. Describe your marriage in regard to happiness, satisfaction and fulfilment.

19. If you already have gone for counseling, what kind of counseling was it - religious or secular and describe how you experienced it.

20. Have you ever or are you considering divorce? Why?

21. What is the one thing you would like to change in your partner and motivate your reason?

22. How do you think that will help to solve your marital problems?

23. What is the one thing that you think your spouse would like to change in you and why do you say so?

24. Does he/she think that all your problems will then be solved? Give a reason for your answer.

25. Are you prepared to undergo such a change if that can improve your marriage? Motivate your answer.

26. Explain how do you see the future of your marriage.

27. Do you think that people who are unequally yoked can have a happy and fulfilled marriage? Give a reason for your answer.

28. What advice would you give to young unmarried people regarding mate selection?

29. How would you help somebody who is in a similar position as you are?

30. Any other remarks:

APPENDIX B2

Questionnaire for the divorced believing partner who was in an unequally yoked marriage

1. Gender:

2. Age:

3. How old were you and your ex-spouse when you got married?

4. How long were you married?

5. How long have you been divorced?

6. Children:

AGE					
GENDER					

7. Did your parents agree with your marriage choice? Explain.

8. Were you a believer and your ex-spouse an unbeliever from the beginning of your marriage, or how did the unequally yoked marriage start?

9. Did you receive any pre-marital counsel and if you did, how did you feel about it?

10. How did you get to know the Lord Jesus Christ?

11. Why did you marry your ex-spouse?

12. What were the joys in your marriage?

13. How was the spiritual inequality handled at the beginning?

14. When did it start to become a problem and why would you say it happened?

15. How did you practice your faith while you were married?

16. Explain how your ex-spouse felt about your religious activities.

17. Describe the specific problems/difficulties (related to religion) that you experienced in your marriage.

18. How did you try to overcome it (coping skills) and how effective were you?

19. Describe the marriage you had in regard to happiness, satisfaction and fulfilment.

20. If you went for counseling, what kind of counseling was it - religious or secular and describe how you experienced it.

21. What is the one thing you would have liked to change in your ex-spouse and motivate your reason?

22. How do you think that would have helped to solve your marital problems?

23. What is the one thing you think your ex-spouse would have liked to change in you and why do you say so?

24. Do you think he/she thought that all your problems would then be solved? Give a reason for your answer.

25. Were you prepared to undergo such a change if it could improve your marriage? Motivate your answer.

26. If you are contemplating marriage, describe your ideal partner?

27. Do you think that people who are unequally yoked can have a happy and fulfilled marriage? Give a reason for your answer.

28. What advice would you give to young unmarried people regarding mate selection?

29. How would you help somebody who is in a similar position as you were?

30. Any other remarks:

APPENDIX B3

Questionnaire for the pastor who counseled an unequally yoked couple

1. Occupation: Pastor/Counselor, Minister, Other?

2. Gender:

3. Years of experience in counseling:

4. Frequency of counseling unequally yoked couples per year:

a) The couple:

b) The believing marriage partner:

c) The unbelieving marriage partner:

5. Gender of the believing and unbelieving partners:

a) The gender of the believing marriage partner:

b) The gender of the unbelieving marriage partner:

6. The main problems presented by the male believing partner:

7. The main problems presented by the female believing partner:

8. The main problems presented by the male unbelieving partner:

9. The main problems presented by the female unbelieving partner:

10. In your experience, how would you describe the overall quality of unequally yoked marriages?

11. How do you go about doing counseling to the unequally yoked marriage partners?

12. What are the objectives when counseling the unequally yoked?

13. What specific difficulties do you experience when counseling the unequally yoked marriage partners?

14. Describe your successes achieved in the pastoral counseling of the unequally yoked marriage partners:

15. What are your personal views regarding marriage between a believer and an unbeliever?

16. In your opinion, what are the possibilities that unequally yoked marriage partners can have a fulfilling marital relationship and what role can counseling play?

17. Any other remarks:

APPENDIX C

A synopsis of the transcribed information given by believing partners in unequally yoked marriages:

Respondent B1

B1 was married for 14 years to a minister of a traditional reformed church. Her parents agreed to their intended marriage on the grounds that he was a Christian and that they loved him. She received the Lord Jesus Christ when she was a small child. She was convinced that the Lord brought them together. They went for pre-marital counseling and it helped them a lot in their communication. Three children were born from their marriage. She described the first 13 years of their married life as the happiest time of her life. She and her husband had a wonderful relationship. They loved each other and did every thing together. They had good communication and loved and enjoyed their children. They served the Lord together and their relationship with the Lord was the foundation of their marriage. Together, they experienced great high lights.

He is an intellectually gifted academic man and as theologian started to move in the direction of the sciences. He started to reason about God and the Bible and could no longer believe as a child. He went for further studies overseas and when he returned, he told her that he could no longer believe in the fact that Jesus existed, neither in the Bible nor in a personal God. All this happened very suddenly and shortly after his return, he resigned as a minister of the church. The last year of their marriage was hell. He was suddenly another person. B1 could not understand how and why it happened and wrestled with God. It felt as if her whole life had collapsed.

During the last year of their marriage, he still tried to serve the Lord with her and the children, went with them to church and cell group and even took responsibility for family devotions. He never hindered her in the practising of her faith, on the contrary, he encouraged her, because he did not want her or the children to lose their faith as he did. He said he would never do anything to jeopardise the childrens' faith, but now he is actually doing exactly that by not taking them to church and not reading for them from the Bible or praying for them when they are visiting him.

In this time, her personal relationship with God deepened, because where she always relied on her husband, she had to stand on her own. He started to destroy every relationship he had with people around him. B1 experienced immense hurt by the things he said to her and things he said about God. The person who always protected her, who never allowed anybody to say a wrong word to her, was now the person who hurt her the most. She felt as if there were two personalities. Sometimes the old person came through, but other times he was cruel. B1 was in tears every day, the children knew something was wrong, but her husband did not want them to know about it and she could speak to nobody. She felt very sorry for the children, because they must have experienced fear and confusion.

She only tried to survive. She asked strength from the Lord for every day. She wrestled with God. At a certain stage things were getting too much for her and she contemplated suicide. She said good bye to the children and phoned her mum. Her mum drove in the night to her and prayed for her. That was the turning point for her. In that time she got to understand what Job meant when he said: "My ears had heard of you, but now my eyes have seen you." (Job 42:5). During that time, God revealed a lot of things to her. She tried every thing to change things back to how it was before, but could not. She believed that God would rescue her marriage and never contemplated divorce. She would have done everything to save their marriage, except to lose her faith, because she had made a promise before God that she would be faithful to him. Her marriage was very important to her, but also for the sake of the children. He, on the other hand, was not willing to stay in the marriage. He was like an animal captured in a cage - he just had to get out. He was not willing to go for counseling, but saw a psychologist for a year. She went to her pastors, which was difficult, because they were her husband's colleagues. They could not understand what had happened to him. She went for every kind of help and many people prayed for them. Her husband's psychologist told her that she did nothing to bring it about, that there was nothing that she could have done to prevent it and that there is nothing that she could do to change it. After B1 understood this, she felt so powerless and decided to give it to the Lord.

She experienced the Lord as the faithful and almighty One, full of mercy and love. She never thought that she would be able to cope alone with the children, but from the moment her husband left the house, many times she just stands amazed at how well she is coping by the grace of God. After the divorce, B1's relationship with the Lord has deepened even more. She has started to reach out to other people with pain and problems and it has helped her to concentrate less on her own hurt. She is now involved in a ministry reaching out to divorced people.

Respondent B2

B2 has been very happily married to her unbelieving husband for 32 years. When they met, they both 'believed', but she was not a born again believer in Jesus Christ and the Lord did not play a decisive role in her life. First her parents were not happy with her choice in a marriage partner as they believed that she could do 'better', but she loved him and got married to him. From the beginning they respected each other and gave space to each other. They enjoyed to do things together, to spend time together and to be there for each other. Only later did she get to know the Lord as her personal Saviour. B2 then wanted to convert her husband and that created a lot of stress between them, until she learned to leave him alone and to walk on the spiritual road alone. Older and wiser Christians told her that it is not her 'job' to convert him - she can only pray for him. That made it much easier. From the passage written in 1 Pet 3, she learned that she must be quiet and that she may win her husband through her example. B2 often wonders about the quality of her example, because they have been

married many years, but up to now he never has thought that she had something special and worthwhile to follow and has never showed interest.

She goes to church and cell group with his consent, but he does not want to have anything to do with it. She never spends her quiet time with the Lord where he can see her, because she knows that it makes him feel uneasy. She wants to respect him as he respects her. They have agreed to give each other space. It is important for their relationship that she does not demand certain things from him, like going to church in the holidays. If she did that, he would have withdrawn, but now, for example, he goes with her to weddings. He does not close his eyes during prayer, but at least he goes with her. B2 appreciates it that her husband does not pretend. She respects him for that and because of that, she will never put any pressure on him or attack him. She realises that the fact that he does not make it difficult for her to practice her faith, is a big blessing and helps her to cope with the difficult parts. She also has experienced that God gives her the strength she needs to handle it each day.

There are specific difficulties that B2 experiences because of the fact that she and her husband are unequally yoked in their marriage. It is especially true when it comes to their children and the problems that their children face. They, as parents, often hold different views when it comes to the problems concerning their children. For instance, when their daughter and her husband went through difficult times in their marriage, B2 and her husband had different opinions as to how to intervene in the children's situation. She would have liked it if they could find their guidance from the Word of God and pray together about things. Another area where she has experienced the difference in perspective between her and her husband, is when they watch TV or see a film - for her it is difficult and unacceptable if the name of Jesus Christ is taken in vain. B2 often feels lonely and she finds it more and more difficult to walk the spiritual road on her own, e.g. to go to church alone becomes more difficult the older she gets. She envies couples who can worship the Lord together.

Despite these difficulties, she still describes her marriage as happy in almost all aspects. She sees a great future for them together. The most important aspect that is lacking, is that he is not a believer in Jesus Christ. This causes their marriage sometimes to be shallow. B2 absolutely adores her husband and places him on a throne. She has high appreciation for her husband as he is solid, a man of integrity on whom she always can trust. She has never contemplated divorce, but if there is one thing that she would like to change in her husband, is it that he will get to know Jesus Christ.

Respondent B3

B3 got divorced after 17 years of marriage with her husband. Her parents agreed to her marriage, as they came from the same economic, educational and religious background. He was a pleasant, good looking young man and they felt attracted towards each other. They practised premarital sex and she believed as a result of her Calvinistic upbringing that she should marry him. At that stage she did not feel morally bound because of the sex to marry him, but if she looks back now - that is probably how

she felt. Once there is sexual contact, there is a soul tie and it is extremely difficult to break it. She also felt it was the virtuous thing to do. Before they got married, they had a conversation with the pastor and also attended 'something' for engaged couples. He could not fit in very well, did not function well in the set-up and thus the content was ignored. At the beginning, they went to church together and were very involved in church activities.

After 12 years of marriage, her father-in-law got involved in the British Israel Movement and started to indoctrinate her husband by sending books, pamphlets and cassettes. According to this movement, only the true Israel will be saved and that excludes non-whites. Non-whites are descendants of Satan and according to them, a white person is committing adultery if he/she marries a black person. At the beginning she listened to her husband and his opinions and tried to say nothing, because she did not know how to respond. Perhaps he perceived her silence as if B3 agreed, but the true reason for her silence was that she did not know how to respond and did not see her way clear to engage in conflict. He no longer went to church with her and the children and they no longer had family devotions on the farm with her in-laws. He could no longer speak about anything other than his convictions. His father continued to influence him. Perhaps he wanted to 'please' his dad. She continued to practice her faith, independent from him. He did not say much about it, but accused her that she had sold her soul by accepting black people as human beings.

Problems between them got worse when her sister got involved with and later married a black man. He did not want to have any contact with his sister-in-law and also did not allow B3 and the children to visit them. He expected her to reject them on the grounds of his religion as mentioned above. She could not do that. She noticed that his personality 'changed'. His motive in life became hatred and fear, while the crux of her faith is love and mercy. He cursed a lot and started to react aggressively. B3 experienced a battle between light and darkness between herself and her husband. She tried to live out her example, but it made him even more angry and she gained nothing from it. She was not able to live up to his expectations. There was little happiness, satisfaction and fulfilment in their marriage. Shortly after they got married, they went for help to the university's psychological services. It did not help, because the problem was always hers and she had to go again for extra help. She received Rational Behaviour Therapy. Five years later, they spoke to the pastor of their congregation, but that did not help. B3 also saw a clinical psychologist and she received hypnotherapy. This helped her a lot, but her husband did not want to go for help.

If she could have changed one thing in him, it would be that he would be more open to people who differ from him. That he would make space for others and that he would learn to accept and love others unconditionally. In that way, perhaps they could reach a compromise. She thinks he would have liked to change her background. Her grandfather was a missionary and of course worked among black people. Her husband would also have liked her to be thinner. He always tried to stop her from getting fat.

Respondent B4

B4 has been married for 22 years and from their marriage there are two daughters. Her parents gave their blessing for the intended marriage, although they perhaps thought, that he was not the best choice for her. Before they got married, they had one conversation with the pastor, but she cannot remember the content. Anyway she would have thought that their love was strong enough to surmount any problems. They were and still are very much in love with each other. They are opposites in many aspects, and for that reason complement each other very well. They have many things that they enjoy together, e.g. riding on the motorbike, camping in the wild and sitting by a fire. They enjoy outdoor living, watching movies and reading. When they got married, she believed that he was a believer, because they prayed together and read the Bible together. Now she realises that she initiated all the religious activities. Shortly after their wedding, religious activities stopped and she walked the spiritual road alone, as she had committed her life to Christ 5 years earlier. Right at the beginning of their marriage, she realised that she would have to take responsibility for many things in and around the house. Before her wedding, her parents warned her that she would have to take the responsibility, and she was willing to do that.

It bothered her that he made the vows at the childrens' baptism and that she knew that he is not doing anything, but she never made an issue about it. She herself was not such a mature Christian, and therefore the spiritual differences did not matter so much and were not so visible. As a young mother, however, she grew spiritually very much through a Bible study group which she attended. Later on she could not share anything with him anymore, because he viewed everything with suspicion. He never stopped her practising her faith, but she always tried not to irritate him with it. Consequently, she has her personal devotions early in the mornings when he is still asleep. She is always free to go to church, although it sometimes irritates him if he wants to do something when she and the children are at church. She could not chat too long at church, because then he wanted to know why church does not end on time. As time passed, he became more and more radical in his opinions about religion and her religion started to interfere with his lifestyle.

For B4, Christ is her life and therefore her whole life is saturated with Him. This is a thorn in her husband's flesh, because it 'spoils' a lot of 'fun'. B4 believes that the human being is soul, spirit and body and because of her religious orientation, there is not one of these levels where she and her husband are equal. The result of this inequality is that their marriage has become more and more crippled and at this stage they are crawling. In the beginning their marriage was happy, fulfilled and they experienced a lot of satisfaction, but now their relationship is going through rough seas and she really pleads with God that He will restore the ties. She tries not to witness in words, but to be Jesus for him through her everyday living and her positive attitude. She however knows, that she often fails and is giving him more reason to point a finger in the process.

She has gone alone for pastoral counseling and has seen a clinical psychologist a few times. Her husband has been once with her to the psychologist. They received practical tips, but looking back, she has realised that it was only cosmetic changes. They only touched the tip of the iceberg. She has already contemplated divorce, but will never initiate it, as she believes that they are one. She loves him very much and it will be very difficult for her to go on without him. Divorce will also be very hard for the children and it will break their hearts.

She realises that one of their biggest problems is communication. They struggle to speak to each other, because he thinks she means one thing and she is actually trying to convey something totally different and vice versa. She believes that if they can communicate more effectively, 80% of their problems will be solved. B4 thinks that her husband would have liked it if she could accept things more easily without always asking questions and wanting to know more detail, but he actually does not think that their marriage is going through difficulties. She is willing to undergo changes if it can better their relationship, but she is not willing to compromise her religious convictions.

She stays hopeful that God will intervene so that their marriage relationship can be restored, but acknowledges the fact that an unequally yoked marriage can never be fully satisfying and fulfilled. (It is perhaps partly possible.)

Respondent B5

B5 and her husband have been married for 24 years and have two children. Her parents agreed to her intended marriage. She was attracted to his cheerful and gentle nature. They both grew up in Christian homes, but experienced a spiritual deepening after they recommitted their lives to Christ 13 years ago. They served the Lord together wholeheartedly. His relationship with the Lord was an inspiration to her. He received his guidance from the Lord and she followed his leadership. About two years ago, several things happened in their lives. He was extremely disappointed and turned his back on God. When that happened, she tried to speak to him and to convince him to come back to God, but he resisted it strongly.

She has started to practise her faith inconspicuously and has ignored his hostility to her relationship with the Lord. If he becomes too aggressive, she speaks to him about it and he stops his behaviour, only to repeat the cycle later again and again. He has undergone a total personality change and she finds it difficult to accept the man he is now. He rages against the black people for example while he knows she does not approve of his behaviour. He has also started to curse in a terrible way, but he has stopped with that after she stopped him speaking in such a way - they live on the school grounds. It seems as if he is using it as a weapon against her.

He does not stop B5 going to church, he even sometimes go with her (even though he is then aggressive about it), and she is also part of a cell group. She participates in the ministries of the church which are not so noticeable. She has chosen such ministries as her husband feels threatened

by her. He feels threatened by her success in her work, her intellectual potential and her ability to take the lead. He does not prohibit her, but he would prefer it if she would not participate. If she were not so much in the forefront, he would probably feel better about himself. She has her daily devotions at home and leads the Christian group at school. She lives her Christianity by supporting her children and friends spiritually, but she may not speak about spiritual things at home. The biggest part of her life is thus a forbidden subject. He reacts hostilely against other Christians and tries to isolate her from other people, but does not fulfil her emotional needs. She feels as if she does not know him anymore.

At this stage it appears as if they have different values and norms. Certain topics bring immediate tension among them, like money, his and her relationships with their children, alcohol and politics. The way she handles them, is to live on a 50% level of consciousness. She just ignores many of the things that hurt her and she realises that it is not effective, because she can ignore something for 3 months, but suddenly it pops up and then it is much worse, as then there is a lot of emotion. In this process, she also has become emotionally dull. As a result, as far as spiritual things are concerned, she cannot use her gifts. She realises that she is comforting herself with food, as she does not experience her husband's pampering anymore. She also realises that she does not comfort him anymore as she used to do. She experiences her marriage at this stage, as a relationship which only pulls her down and poisons her. She gets nothing positive from it.

B5's husband is not willing to go for any counseling, as he grew up in a house where things were never discussed. She speaks to Christian friends who encourage her and pray for them, but she feels the encouragement is not objective, because they only hear her side of the story. She is considering divorce, as she hopes that it will force her husband to look at himself and take responsibility before God, but for the sake of the children, she will never do it. She thus surrenders their situation to the Lord and struggles to stay human. If only he could return to God. She believes that it will bring an end to his bitterness and then there will again be place in his heart for her. He will then again be the same person she married 24 years ago. It will be very difficult for her to trust him again, especially with the finances. The way she has learned to survive, is to build walls. It will be a very big risk to break the walls down, and apart from the risk, it will probably be very painful.

She is not willing to undergo changes in her personality to become somebody different from the person he married 24 years ago. She is also worried that after the changes, she will still be unacceptable to him. She does not see much of a future for their marriage. Only a miracle can change things, but she is not prepared to wait too long, because the price is too high.

APPENDIX D

The perspectives of the pastors who have worked with couples in an unequally yoked marriage

Respondent P1

The main problems presented by the female believing partners:

- Her husband does not support her religious activities.
- Her husband does not support her in raising the children with Christian values, e.g. he does sport on Sundays and the children want to do the same.
- Her husband's moral and social values differ from her own.

The main problems presented by the male unbelieving partners:

- His wife is over-religious.
- She is not supportive in the economic field.
- His wife puts the children against him, instead of still honouring him as the father of their children and helping them to respect him, despite his mistakes.
- His wife is disloyal. She speaks to her friends about their marriage and the problems they experience.
- His wife is rebellious. She does not want to submit to his authority.

The quality of unequally yoked marriages:

- The marriage is stormy, unstable and risky.
- The wife (often the believer) is bitter and rebellious.
- Females often enter a marriage with the idea that they will 'convert' their husbands. That is a very dangerous line of thinking, as it often does not happen.
- There are exceptions, where such a marriage can be fulfilling, but that requires extremely hard work.

The objectives when counseling the unequally yoked:

- Communication skills.
- Coping mechanisms.
- Understanding personality types and making adjustments.

Counseling the unequally yoked marriage couple:

- P1 believes that for more effective marriage counseling, it is important to see the couple together. The problem with seeing the partners separately, is that a breakdown in trust can so easily happen. The one thinks that the pastor is on the side of the other one.

- In a certain sense, it is more difficult to see them together, because it is not so easy to give objective Biblical truths when one partner is not open to them.
- It often happens that the wife comes to the pastor to speak about her marriage. P1 then asks her to tell her husband that she was with him, and that P1 would like the husband (the unbeliever) to phone him. If he does phone, P1 has hope for the marriage, but often the husband will say to his wife: "You go, just leave me alone."
- It happens that P1 sees the believing partner alone, but then with the consent and blessing of the unbelieving partner.
- If specific problems are presented, P1 addresses them, e.g. if the husband complains about rebellious reactions of his wife, the problem must be addressed because this is contrary to the teachings of the Bible. The Bible teaches that the wife must submit to the authority of the husband and must accept it as far as humanly possible. It is difficult to break such behaviour patterns, because they have developed over years and have become defence mechanisms.
- The pastor has a big responsibility to give guidelines to the believer as how to react towards the unbeliever.
- P1 likes to use the ENRICH marital enrichment course.
- He likes to concentrate on communication and conflict resolution skills, especially for the unbeliever who also needs skills to cope.
- One of the most important coping mechanisms for the believer, is his/her personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. That is where he/she gets the strength, mercy, power, patience and wisdom to live out the fruit of the Holy Spirit every day.
- The pastor can minister to the believer on promises in the Word of God, e.g. Heb 13:5 "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."
- P1 once or twice has had the opportunity to lead the unbelieving partner to Christ.

Biblical guidelines for the unequally yoked marriage:

- Eph 5:21-33 - Submission
 - Submit to one another out of reference for Christ - it is a reciprocal principle - it goes both ways.
 - This passage can easily be misused by unbelieving husbands to instruct the wives to submit - even though he does not believe the Bible.
 - The context of this passage: ±30% of the verbs are about submission, and ±60% about love.
 - The principle of love stands to the principle of submission in the relation 2:1.
 - Mutual love must thus get more attention. This is the agape love - the interest of the other one weighs more than my own interest.

- Conjugal fidelity
 - The Word of God is clear in its denouncement of divorce.
 - Paul gives the advice that if the unbelieving husband wants to stay with his wife, she must not divorce him - 1 Co 7:13
- 1 Pet 3
 - The wife can win her husband through her example, but there is no guarantee.
 - It asks a lot of patience and perseverance - it is not easy.
- Practical advice
 - The wife must keep the crown on her husband's head, even though he does not fulfil his role as priest and prophet in their home.
 - The wife must use the opportunities to enrich her relationship with the Lord.
 - Sometimes wives force their husbands to be head of the house, e.g. "Here's the Bible, read", and by acting in such a way, she is actually showing that she is the head of the house.

The willingness of the unbeliever to listen to Biblical guidelines:

- It depends on how desperate the unbeliever is to save his/her marriage.
- It often happens that the unbeliever uses the Bible as it suits him/her.

Specific difficulties in counseling the unequally yoked:

- One partner (usually the unbeliever) does not want to continue with the marriage.
- The moral values of the partners differ, there is often a 'third party' involved.
- In such a marriage, one or both of the partners are usually frustrated. This leads to certain behaviour and then there are often more aggravating circumstances that make the situation even more complex. The differences in religious ideas are then just one of the many factors that needs attention.
- The believing partner often uses his/her spiritual life to manipulate the unbelieving partner.
- The believing partner often makes an appeal on the other partner's moral values and feelings to force him/her to stay in the relationship. This behaviour is destructive, because it just angers the unbeliever more.
- Manipulation - the partners quote the Bible to each other.

Successes:

- About 50% successful in saving the marriage.

Respondent P2

The main problems presented by the female believing partners:

- He does not listen to her.
- He does not support her.

- He does not understand her.

The main problems presented by the male unbelieving partners:

- His wife does not respect him.
- She does not accept him.
- She does not esteem him.

The quality of unequally yoked marriages:

- Sometimes these marriages can be better than marriages between believers, but P2 will never encourage such a marriage, because there are two different ‘cultural’ worlds.

The objectives when counseling the unequally yoked:

- The couple must get together so that they can enter each other’s world to understand each other better.
- They must go back to the hurt of their childhood.
- To strengthen the believer to be an example to the unbeliever.
- The believer must not look at the unbelief of the partner as an insurmountable obstacle, but as an opportunity to witness.

Counseling the unequally yoked marriage couple:

- P2 never works with only one partner, but always see the couple together.
- It is P2’s strong conviction that the relationship dynamics between unbelievers and believers are exactly the same, because they were created by God.
- P2 approaches this couple thus in the same way as any other couple.
- P2 will never say to the couple that the reason they have problems in their marriage is because one of the partners does not believe, but concentrates on the relationship problems. The faith problems will be addressed later.
- P2 thus works primarily on the relational level and never uses faith as an equaliser, because then people can think “if only my husband can be converted, all the problems will be solved”. In practice, it does not work that way.
- Relational problems often occur because of an irreconcilability which has its origin in the hurt and brokenness in the person’s childhood.
- Believers and unbelievers are broken people and when they marry, they are supposed to heal each other, but they do not know how.
- If it can be done from the perspective of faith in Jesus Christ, it is wonderful, because the faith then forms a solid foundation, but it is not a prerequisite.
- P2 works primarily on the relational level, helping the couple to be able to enter each other’s worlds. If that happens, the unbeliever understands what it means to die to yourself. The same is true for the believer, because many times people have the theory, but they have not put it into

practice. The biggest problem is that people do not want to die to themselves, otherwise, there would be no problems in relationships.

- The first phase: Communications techniques to help them to have empathy with each other and to understand the reason for specific feelings. In the process they discover that they can listen to each other and they discover that there is also another world.
- The second phase: Take them back to their childhood days to discover that 90% of their frustrations stem from there.
- The third phase: Go to the Gospel - there are wonderful guidelines to help a couple to have a good relationship.
- The couple must know that if they cannot make this relationship work, the next relationship will also not work. A relationship can only work if the past is sorted out. If the person has faith, the past can be sorted out much easier, because Christ can make the person free. Christ helps the person to forgive and to forget.

Biblical guidelines for the unequally yoked marriage:

- Gal 5:22-23 - The fruit of the Spirit
 - For such a marriage to work, a lot of work is necessary. Things like respect, honesty and communication
- 1 Co 13 - The 14 rules of love
 - These guidelines are important, even if one partner is not a believer.
 - The unbeliever will also be able to follow these guidelines, because he is a creation of God.
 - For the unbeliever it is a tool, but for the believer it comes from his inner most being.
- Gal 2:20, Col 3:3 and Jn 12:24 - To die to yourself
 - This is the basis for a successful relationship - to stay in the dying-position.
- Eph 5:22-33
 - Marriage is compared to the relationship between God and the church.
 - These are not only guidelines for when one feels like this, but it is a command.
- Ge 2 & 3
 - It is important to know God's plan and to see how it goes wrong as a result of sin.
 - The effect of sin was immediately apparent - the people covered themselves.
 - People hide from each other and do not want to reveal things.
- The whole Bible, from beginning to end, deals with relationships.

The willingness of the unbeliever to listen to Biblical guidelines:

- When the couple comes to P2, they know that P2 is a pastor and knows that he will work from a religious point of view.

- P2 feels strongly about the fact not to misuse his position, to first make sure that everyone is converted, because he respects everybody's right to be the person he/she chooses to be.
- Faith will not necessarily be the departure point, but counseling will be done within a Christian framework. Somewhere, in one of the sessions, P2 will speak about faith, because its his responsibility, but he will not misuse his position.
- It is P2's experience that most of the counselees are open to this approach, although he sometimes sees an unbeliever who is not willing to participate. P2 gives that person the freedom of choice, because it is only the Holy Spirit who can convince a person after all.

Specific difficulties in counseling the unequally yoked:

- Believers often misuse the faith issue because they are unwilling to work at their marriage relationship - manipulation.
- Sometimes the unbelievers are not willing to walk the difficult road of counseling.
- It is possible that a person can see him-/herself mistakenly as an unbeliever, while the person only has an aversion to religion because of past hurt administered by Christians.
- Women enter more easily into such a relationship than men do, because they tend to look at the potential of the man. They often think that they will be able to win the man for Christ after the marriage, but in practice it does not work that way, because it is much easier to pull someone down than to pull him/her up.

Successes:

- As far as P2 is concerned, the intervention is successful if the couple manage to enter each others world so that there can be more understanding for each other.
- If there is improvement in the relationship, even if the unbeliever is still an unbeliever, the counseling has been successful.

Respondent P3

The main problems presented by the female believing partners:

- The husband does not want to admit and take responsibility for defects in the marriage.
- He does not support her emotionally and there is no communication.
- They never pray or read from the Word of God together and he never goes to church.
- He is selfish, manipulating and withdraws (stilstuipe).
- He is almost never at home, plays golf and if he is at home, he watches TV all the time.
- He never takes the lead or control at home.
- He is sexually inactive and there are often 'third party' relationships.

The main problems presented by the male unbelieving partners:

- He does not feel that they have problems in their marriage, his wife complains about unnecessary things. He does not understand his wife's unhappiness.
- He feels his wife is jealous and only wants to restrict him.
- He often admits that they do not communicate well.
- His wife is sexually cold.

The quality of unequally yoked marriages:

- It is risky. In ±98% of cases it is a very difficult, unfruitful marriage.
- Women are emotional beings and men function on the logical level. They often struggle to meet and satisfy each other's needs. If the couple is unequally yoked, it is even more difficult and the wife often stays emotionally unfulfilled.
- P3 had little success up to now in explaining this to the unbelieving husband, so the wife is taught coping skills to help her to survive.

The objectives when counseling the unequally yoked:

- P3 wants to help them to have a fulfilling marriage despite of the fact that they are unequally yoked.
- Both partners must understand their roles in the marriage relationship.
- Both must consider the other one more important than him-/herself.
- They must learn to listen to each other, to respect each other and to accept each other with their mistakes.
- The wife must accept the fact that she will not be able to change her husband, but that she has a responsibility to act in a godly way towards her unbelieving husband.
- P3 wants to strengthen the believer for her task to be an example to her unbelieving husband.

Counseling the unequally yoked marriage couple:

- The unbeliever usually does not want any help. P3 usually asks him to come just once to tell his side of the story. He often does not mind that his wife comes for counseling - they must just leave him alone.
- P3 then concentrates on the believer and encourages her from a spiritual point of view.
- The believer is taught ways to handle the situation and to understand the unbeliever partner better.
- She must be taught not to succumb to the fear of manipulation.
- 1 Pe 3 - the wife must understand how important her example is and that she may not dominate him and quote Bible verses the whole time. That only aggravates the situation and pushes her husband further away from her. She must be warned against manipulation on her side, e.g. to cry the whole time or psychosomatic illnesses.

- She must learn that she can handle the situation correctly by being quiet, spending time with the Lord, listening to and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- She must learn to relax, to take one day at a time and to allow God to work in His time.
- She must learn to be a wife to him in such a way that he will experience that she loves him and that she accepts him for who he is. She must learn not to take over and make the husband feel inferior, otherwise he will go and look for somebody who will not dominate him. It may be difficult for the wife to change her behaviour, because it becomes a way of life for her. It is necessary that she must make a decision to break the pattern.
- In order to understand the behaviour of the unbeliever better, it is important to look at his childhood. It often happens that these insights help the wife to have more sympathy with her husband. For example, he did not grow up in a home where his dad took the lead and played the role as priest and prophet, so he had no role model to follow. If the husband did not have a good relationship with his dad, he probably will struggle with his relationship with God.
- The wife must also know that she has the sole responsibility to lead her children to Christ. She must make sure that their Father-image of God does not suffer damage because of their relationship with their earthly father.

Biblical guidelines for the unequally yoked marriage:

- 1 Co teaches a lot on marriage.
- Eph 5 - submission is important, but it does not mean that the wife must become a doormat, she must develop her identity and talents and use her gifts.

The willingness of the unbeliever to listen to Biblical guidelines:

- The unbeliever usually does not want any help and does not want to come for counseling.

Specific difficulties in counseling the unequally yoked:

- The unbeliever does not have insight to realise his/her responsibility to work on the relationship.
- He often does not want to come for counseling.

Successes:

- The wife feels empowered to stay in the marriage.
- She understands the behaviour of her unbelieving husband better.
- She realises that it is not her responsibility to change her husband and thus reacts in different and more positive ways.

Respondent P4

The main problems presented by the female believing partners:

- Her husband does not fulfil his role as priest in the house and does not take the lead when it comes to the spiritual things and she must take all the responsibility.

- The wife finds it difficult to explain the father's behaviour to the children: "Mum and the pastor say one thing, but dad does another."
- If she is also working, the burden is very heavy and she does not always have enough patience to handle conflict situations correctly. He then uses this against her: "You say you are a Christian, but look at your behaviour..."
- It is possible that the unbelieving husband tries to stop his family going to church, e.g. he hides the keys of the car.

The main problems presented by the male unbelieving partners:

- He is uncertain about his role as father and husband.

The quality of unequally yoked marriages:

- Problematic. If possible, they must be prevented. The point of departure may never be that the believing partner will convert the unbeliever later.
- Different values and norms are followed, e.g. the language used in the house.
- An unequally yoked marriage is not God's will, but his general mercy is always available and fulfilment up to a point is possible.

The objectives when counseling the unequally yoked:

- To address the problem in the relationship, just like any other relationship where there are difficulties.
- If the unbeliever is willing to come for pastoral counseling, it is a good sign. P4 works from a Christian framework, but does not necessarily want to convert the unbeliever.

Counseling the unequally yoked marriage couple:

- The problem must be addressed, but the pastor must be very sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- P4 prefers to do marriage counseling by first seeing the one partner, then the other one and then the couple together. This is to prevent the dominant figure in the relationship to 'arrange' the situation to benefit him/her. This often causes a misrepresentation of the situation.
- If they are alone, the more quiet person has the opportunity to open his/her heart. This method takes more time, but it is worthwhile to get the real picture.
- It also offers an opportunity to build a friendship relationship with the unbeliever. Friendship evangelism is important.
- P4 is careful not to misuse his position as pastoral counselor to force the Bible on the unbeliever. The Word of God must be used with much wisdom. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring a person under conviction.

- Counselees often expect the counselor to have a certain approach, and if the counselor then uses a different angle, the wind is usually taken out of the counselee's sails, e.g. instead of confronting, speak about love - love that does not keep record of wrongs.

Biblical guidelines for the unequally yoked marriage:

- P4 sees love as a very important topic to discuss. The couple must understand the different forms of love, especially agape love - love that serves the other person.
- It is also important that the couple must understand the economics of God, e.g. if you want to be big, you must be small, if you want to be first, you must be last, if you are weak, you are actually strong, if you want to be important, you must serve, etc.
- They must see the example *par excellence* of Jesus Christ.

The willingness of the unbeliever to listen to Biblical guidelines:

- If the unbeliever is willing to come for pastoral counseling, it is a good sign.

Specific difficulties in counseling the unequally yoked:

- It is difficult to break down the aggression and the biases between the couple and to build trust.
- The couple does not have common norms and values to use as a basis to work from.

Successes:

- If P4 can succeed in winning trust without condemnation, the intervention is successful.

Respondent P5

The main problems presented by the female believing partners:

- Her husband does not attend church and refuses to participate in family devotions.
- Her husband refuses that the children attend Sunday school.
- Her husband practices pornography and expects her to participate.
- Different standards are being followed to raise the children.

The main problems presented by the male unbelieving partners:

- He accuses his wife of being too much involved in church activities.
- He accuses his wife of not being interested in sexual activities.

The quality of unequally yoked marriages:

- There are always moral and social differences between the partners which cause tension and misunderstandings.
- Religion is sometimes used as a weapon: "You say you are a Christian, but look at what you do and say." This leaves the believer feeling discouraged.

The objectives when counseling the unequally yoked:

- To try to harmonise their values and norms. As long as they are unequal, it cannot happen, but then the believer must try to minimise conflict. She must learn rather to be quiet and to pray for him.
- To strengthen the believer to cope with the situation.
- To give hope.
- To solve the problems.

Counseling the unequally yoked marriage couple:

- P5 prefers to see the couple together, but if the unbeliever does not want to come, the believer is seen alone.
- If the believer comes alone, P5 tries to strengthen his/her faith to be able to cope with the situation. The problems will not necessarily be solved, but the believer will be stronger.
- In order to reach this goal, P5 works on things like self-knowledge, self-acceptance and positive self-communication.
- The believer must realise that his/her happiness must come from inside and must not be determined by outside circumstances.
- The believer must be helped to apply the passages from Scripture to the every day living - people often have the knowledge, but they do not always apply it.
- The believer must also realise that the situation will not necessarily change and that he/she must accept that.
- If the unbeliever comes, P5 leads him/her to Christ and proceeds with marriage counseling
 - The wife must not try to teach her husband - they must get somebody from outside to guide them both.
 - They must work on their relationship, because much damage has been done through the years.
 - There are misunderstandings and wrong perspectives that need to get attention.
 - Communication needs to be restored.

Biblical guidelines for the unequally yoked marriage:

- 1 Pet 3 - the wife must reach out to her husband without using a word, because men do not want to listen to their wives. She must demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit.
- Promises like Heb 13:5, Mt 11:28, Jer 29:11 & Lk 4:18,19
- Principles like forgiveness (believers must forgive themselves for marrying an unbeliever), acceptance and responsibility.

The willingness of the unbeliever to listen to Biblical guidelines:

- If the unbeliever is willing to come for counseling, 50% of the victory is certain.

- If the unbeliever is not willing to come for counseling, there is no success.

Specific difficulties in counseling the unequally yoked:

- The unbeliever is sometimes quick to use the Bible in his/her favour, even though he/she says that he/she does not believe in it.
- The believer sometimes also uses the Bible against the unbeliever - it is destructive and drives the unbeliever further and further away from Christ.
- Another problem is that Christians do not live like Christians.
- There is an unwillingness, especially with men, to seek counseling, because of self-righteousness and pride.

Successes:

- If the unbeliever is willing to come for counseling, 50% of the victory is certain.
- P5 has about 90% success in leading the unbelievers to Christ.
- If the unbeliever is not willing to come for counseling, there is no success.

C. RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND:

1. Denominal preference: Member:
2. Church attendance per month (circle): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10+
3. Church attended in childhood:
4. Baptised? Yes No
5. Religious background of spouse (if married):
6. Do you consider yourself a religious person? Yes No Uncertain
7. Do you believe in God? Yes No Uncertain
8. Do you pray to God? Never Occasionally Often
9. Are you saved? Yes No Uncertain
10. How much do you read the Bible? Never Occasionally Often
11. Do you have regular family devotions? Yes No
12. Explain recent changes in your religious life, if any:

D. PERSONALITY INFORMATION:

1. Have you ever had any psychotherapy or counseling before? Yes No If yes, list the counselor or therapist and dates:
2. What was the outcome?
3. Check any of the following words which best describe you now: active ambitious shy self-confident persistent nervous hardworking impatient impulsive moody often-blue excitable imaginative calm serious easy-going quiet good-natured introvert extrovert likeable leader hard-boiled submissive lonely self-conscious sensitive other
4. Have you ever felt people were watching you? Yes No
5. Do people's faces ever seem distorted? Yes No
6. Do you ever have difficulty distinguishing faces? Yes No
7. Do colours ever seem too bright? Too dull?
8. Are you sometimes unable to judge distance? Yes No
9. Have you ever had hallucinations? Yes No
10. Are you afraid of being in a car? Yes No
11. Is your hearing exceptionally good? Yes No
12. Do you have problems sleeping? Yes No

E. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY INFORMATION:

1. Name of spouse:
2. Address: Phone:
3. Occupation: Business Phone:
4. Your spouse's age: Education:
5. Religion:
6. Is your spouse willing to come for counseling? Yes No Uncertain
7. Have you ever been separated? Yes No When?
8. Date of marriage:
9. Your ages when married: Husband: Wife:
10. How long did you know your spouse before marriage?
11. Length of steady dating with spouse: Length of engagement:
12. Give brief information about any previous marriages:

13. Information about children:

Previous Marriage:	Name:	Age:	Sex:	Living:Y/N	Education	Marital status
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14. If you were reared by anyone other than your own parents, briefly explain:

15. How many older brothers sisters do you have?
16. How many younger brothers sisters do you have?

F. BRIEFLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. What is your problem?

2. What have you done about it?

3. What can we do? (What are your expectations in coming here?)

4. As you see yourself, what kind of person are you? Describe yourself.

5. What, if anything, do you fear?

6. Is there any other information we should know?

APPENDIX F

INTERPRETATION OF GATHERED INFORMATION

Mack (1994b:235-244) suggests that the pastor asks the following questions and the answers to these questions will help him/her to draw tentative conclusions:

- What biblical category best describes the counselee?
 - Is the counselee saved or unsaved? (The Christian has certain resources available to him/her.)
 - Is the counselee spiritually mature or immature? (This will determine the depth of the instruction given.)
 - Is the counselee unruly (rebellious, self-willed, stubborn), fainthearted (discouraged, weary, despondent) or weak (deficient in some way, e.g. lack of education, opportunities, finances, physical problem)?
- What biblical language best describes the problems of the counselee?
- What insights does the Bible provide about the proximate causes of such problems? (The Bible speaks directly of the reasons behind what people do.) Examples:
 - Conflict - Jas 4:1-2 - selfishness
 - Instability - Jas 1:8 - double-mindedness
 - Lying - Ge 18:1-15 - fear of rejection, failing, losing respect
 - Confusion - Jas 3:16 - sins of jealousy or selfish ambition
 - Fear - 1 Jn 4:18 - lack of understanding of God's love, lack love for others
 - Insecurity - Pr 28:1 - sin, guilt, deceit
 - Bizarre behaviour - 1 Sa 21:10-15 - to deceive others
 - Worry or anxiety - Lk 10:38-42 - priorities not right
 - Judgmentalism - 3 Jn 9-10 - pride
- What does the data suggest about the relationship of the various problems to each other?
 - The question is: 'Which came first, the chicken or the egg?'
 - Look for a common denominator.
- What hindrances to biblical change exist in the counselee's life?
 - Does the counselee understand the role of self-discipline in sanctification?
- What does the data indicate about the counselee's expectations and desires for the counseling process?
- What does the data indicate about any possible organic or physiological factors?
 - It is important that the counselee should see a physician.

- What does the data indicate about the counselee's motive for wanting to change?
 - It is the wrong motive if the wife wants the husband to change just to make her life easier.
 - It is the wrong motive to want to change just to win the approval or acceptance of people.
- Have I as counselor ever experienced a similar situation or problem?
 - One's own experience can help to interpret what is happening in the counselee's life.
- Have I as counselor ever counseled someone with similar problems?
 - Be careful not to judge too quickly.

In order to formulate a possible interpretation, the pastor must consider the heart of the counselee (Mack, 1994b:245-246). The Word of God teaches that sinful behaviour is merely an outward indication of problems in the heart, e.g.:

- Pr 4:23 *"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."*
- Pr 27:19 *"As water reflects a face, so a man's heart reflects the man."*
- Jer 17:9-10 *"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"*
- Eze 14:3,4,5,7 *"idols in their hearts"* - The people outwardly claimed to be devoted to Jehovah, but in their hearts they were worshipping, serving, fearing and depending on other gods. The primary problem is not man's behaviour, but man's heart that is turned from worshipping, serving, fearing and depending on the true God.
- Mk 7:21-23 *"For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean'."*
- 1 Co 10:6-7 *"Now these things occurred as examples, to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: 'The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry.'"*

These tentative conclusions must be tested for their validity, because pastors are human beings, finite and fallen. Mack (1994b: 247-248) suggests a few steps to validate the interpretation:

- Review mental and written notes to confirm that information acquired provides a factual basis for the conclusions.
- Consider the possibility that there may be other ways of understanding the situation.
- Solicit additional information, knowing that more information may change the perspective.
- Without giving identifying details, discuss the case with other experienced biblical counselors and ask for their viewpoint and suggestions.
- Lovingly, gently and prudently explain your interpretation to the counselee and ask for feedback that would either confirm, invalidate or provide an alternative interpretation.

APPENDIX G

PERSONAL INFORMATION FORM

1. Name: Name of spouse:
2. Age: Age of spouse:
3. Occupation: Occupation of spouse:
4. Your mental and physical health:
5. The mental and physical health of the spouse:
6. How long did you know your spouse before marriage?
7. How old were you and your spouse when you got married?
8. How long are you married?
9. Own children:

NAME				
AGE				
MARITAL STATUS				

10. Give brief information about any previous marriages:
11. Children from previous marriages:

NAME				
AGE				
MARITAL STATUS				

12. Is your spouse willing to come for counseling? Yes No Uncertain
13. Have you ever been separated? Yes No When?
14. Have you ever or are you considering divorce? Why?
15. Are there legal proceedings in hand? Yes No
16. Were you a believer and your spouse an unbeliever from the beginning of your marriage, or how did the unequally yoked marriage start?
17. How did you get to know the Lord Jesus Christ?
18. How did they meet and what attracted them to each other?
19. What are the joys in your marriage?
20. How was the spiritual inequality handled at the beginning?
21. When did it start to become a problem and why would you say it happened?
22. How do you practice your faith?
23. Explain how your spouse feels about your religious activities.

24. Describe specific problems/difficulties that you experience in your marriage regarding the following:
- a) Money:
 - b) In-laws:
 - c) Employment:
 - d) Household duties:
 - e) Values:
 - f) Sex:
 - g) Interests:
 - h) Friends:
25. How do you try to overcome your problems and how effective are you?
26. Are there things present like violence, threats of suicide, drug or alcohol abuse? Explain.
27. Are there significant third parties involved in the relationship like family members or other individuals? Explain.
28. What are your expectations of your spouse? Think about your parents' and your spouse's parents' marital roles and how this influence your expectations.
29. Name significant events during your marriage:
30. Describe your marriage in regard to:
- a) Happiness:
 - b) Satisfaction:
 - c) Fulfilment:
 - d) Intimacy:
 - e) Communication:
 - f) Conflict:
 - g) Hurt, blame and sin:
 - h) Commitment:
31. What is the one thing you would like to change in your partner and motivate your reason?
32. How do you think that will help to solve your marital problems?
33. What is the one thing that you think your spouse would like to change in you and why do you say so?
34. Does he/she think that all your problems will then be solved? Give a reason for your answer.
35. Are you prepared to undergo such a change if that can improve your marriage? Motivate your answer.
36. Explain how do you see the future of your marriage.
- (*cf.* Appendix C; Worthington, 1989:131-163; Hughes, 1991:28-41; Brock & Barnard, 1992:13-14; MacArthur & Mack, 1994:387-390; Butler & Joyce, 2000:36-39)