

## FOR A GREAT MARRIAGE (PART VII) WHAT'S THE WORD?

BACKGROUND: In the introduction to this series on marriage, you were asked if there was one word that you believe was the basis, the foundation, the one word that has kept your marriage safe. Your word was \_\_\_\_\_. Our purpose here is to discover and reveal that one word.

**MOST SAID COMMITMENT.** “There may be nothing more important in a marriage than a determination it shall persist.” Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott,, Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts, p. 55. But noted by Eldredge “Being married to someone you know will never leave you and yet no longer truly loves you (or respects you) is not exactly what God had in mind.” John and Stasi Eldredge, Love and War, p. 193. So commitment is not the one word. (**Malachi 2:14-16, fn 2:14, 15, I Corinthians 7:10-14, 17, fn 7:12-14, I Corinthians 13:4-8, 13**) *Why is commitment a great start but not enough for a good marriage?*

**A FEW SAID LOVE.** The deep value that a woman places on love is placed in her by God. A husband is to unconditionally love his wife. This meets her deep need for love from him. But the husband's deepest value is respect from his wife, so she is to meet this need by unconditionally respecting her husband. Dr. Emerson Eggerichs, Love and Respect (Large Print), pp. 88, 89) So love is not the one word. (**Ephesians 5:33, Colossians 3:18, 19**) *Why do you think God gave different “deepest values” to men and women?*

**AND THE WORD IS**—It is my observation that the most successful marriages are the ones in which each partner has a meaningful, personal relationship with Christ. Their relationship is built on grace (God's divine power). When you receive this grace from God, you receive undeserved acceptance and love. Therefore, to live your marriage “in grace” is to extend unconditional acceptance and love to your mate. When lived by faith, grace teaches, grace forgives, grace encourages, and grace strengthens. Grace enables you to love and respect one another. So the word is “**grace**”! (**II Timothy 2:1, fn 2:1, II Thessalonians 2:16,17, Titus 2:11, 12, fn 2:11-14, Hebrews 4:14-16, fn 4:16, II Peter 1:3,4, Ephesians 5:18**) *How does being filled with the Holy Spirit, fellowshiping with other believers, and having accountability in a small group Bible study help to keep your marriage safe?*

*Pray briefly with your spouse for each other at bedtime!*