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Honesty in Marriage

The Bible informs us that spousal relationships are to image Jesus' relationship with the Church (Eph. 5:20f). Yet, even Christians throughout history have clearly perverted this model. Often men tend to hold a view that 'I supply the wealth and physical goods; you supply the obedience, submission, reverence and home care duties.' Women at times may treat marriage as 'whoever is best at keeping detailed track of how many sacrifices one makes, wins the martyr contest.' Thus, men are often frustrated at what they at times view as their wife's lack of respect and appreciation. Women are frequently frustrated at their husband's lack of affection, appreciation, and respect. These and many more real and perceived deficiencies of the other spouses' behaviors do not bring the marriage to the originally anticipated idyllic relationship.

In Christian marriages there is no excuse for such combative and competitive relationships. Both parties have access to God's instruction in Scripture. Each has access to the Holy Spirit living within. We have an open-line through prayer for increasing our wisdom, sensitivity, love, humility and other characteristics that can make the marriage function in a fulfilling and healthy manner.

Yet dishonestly, often grounded in pride, frequently blows up the relationship bridge. If you have a legitimate need that is not being attended to in your marriage, you are responsible to clarify this to your Christian spouse in an honest, forthright and humble manner. Your spouse is not, nor has ever been responsible for being a mind reader. What you may think should be obvious to them, can be on the dark side of the moon to their perceptive capabilities. State it plainly and straight out; leave absolutely no room for misinterpretation. Your spouse likewise is responsible to receive it and to not go into defensive mode, and should never become aggressive. There is a difference between *confessing* your hurts and needs from *accusing* the other of their deficiencies. Christians, of all people, should recognize this difference.

Direct your questions or comments regarding *Call to Prayer* series to john@sojourn-cny.com