

Biblical Verses for the Prepare/Enrich Program



Developed by:

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Greetings from Dr. David Olson

We are pleased to offer you this new booklet with *Biblical Verses for the PREPARE/ENRICH Program*. For years we have tried to organize some Biblical Verses that could be used with the PREPARE/ENRICH Program. In each attempt, we found that the end product was not as useful as we had envisioned. Then I asked Gary Oliver if he could help us and he graciously accepted. He and his colleagues at the Center for Marriage and Family Studies at John Brown University did a great deal of work developing this project.

The final booklet is organized using many of the PREPARE/ENRICH categories and a few additional categories that seemed relevant for couples and marriage. After reviewing a variety of biblical versions, the New Living Translation (NLT) was chosen for the contemporary wording and clarity of the message.

We hope that you will find this booklet to be a helpful spiritual resource in your work with couples!

Sincerely,

David H. Olson, Ph.D.
President, Life Innovations, Inc.

Endorsements by PREPARE/ENRICH Counselors

We asked clergy from various denominations who have extensively used the PREPARE/ENRICH Program to review this booklet for the relevance and accuracy of the scriptures. We want to thank them for reviewing the material and for their endorsements. These clergy have provided their endorsement and many commented that the booklet will help add a useful spiritual dimension to their work with couples.

Rev. Roy AndersonEvangelical Church
Ted BurlesonChurch of Christ
Rev. Lark Carlson Brown.....Methodist Church
Pat Higginbotham.....Baptist Church
Rev. Luke Nelson.....Foursquare Church
The Rev. Canon James Newman ..Episcopal Church
Deacon Frank SchneiderCatholic Church
Rev. Richard & Linda Staats.....Lutheran-ELCA
Dr. Sheldon White.....Presbyterian Church

PREFACE by Dr. Gary J. Oliver

Many people view the Bible primarily as a book of great wisdom and insight. It is that and so much more. In over 30 years as a marriage and family therapist I've discovered that it is also a practical tool-kit that can be used to help couples identify strengths and build stronger relationships.

I've been using and teaching the *PREPARE/ENRICH Program* since it began in the late 1970's. I continue to be impressed with the power of a specific passage of scripture to provide couples with that "aha" that sheds light on a particular issue and gives them the encouragement to take that next step. When David Olson invited me to assemble a list of key Bible references that can be used with PREPARE/ENRICH, I quickly agreed.

King David wrote, "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.*" In these pages you will find illumination for the next step as well as for the path ahead. Take time to reflect as you read through them. "*Choose my instruction rather than silver, and knowledge over pure gold. For wisdom is far more valuable than rubies. Nothing you desire can be compared with it.*" Proverbs 9:10-11 (NLT)

Gary J. Oliver, Ph.D.
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* Categories from the PREPARE/ENRICH Couple Inventories.

Communication

Psalms 19:14 May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my heart be pleasing to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

Proverbs 17:27 A truly wise person uses few words; a person with understanding is even-tempered.

Proverbs 12:18 Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing.

Matthew 7:3 And why worry about a speck in the eye of a brother when you have a board in your own?

Proverbs 20:19 A gossip tells secrets, so don't hang around with someone who talks too much.

James 1:19 My dear brothers and sisters, be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to get angry.

Proverbs 18:13 What a shame, what folly, to give advice before listening to the facts!

Conflict Resolution

Colossians 3:19 And you husbands must love your wives and never treat them harshly.

Ephesians 4:26 And "don't sin by letting anger gain control over you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry.

Proverbs 14:29 Those who control their anger have great understanding; those with a hasty temper will make mistakes.

Proverbs 17:14 Beginning a quarrel is like opening a floodgate, so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.

Ecclesiastes 7:8-9 Finishing is better than starting. Patience is better than pride. Don't be quick-tempered, for anger is the friend of fools.

Romans 12:19 Don't quarrel with anyone. Be at peace with everyone, just as much as possible.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

Romans 12:17 Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable.

Divorce

Matthew 19:4-6 "Haven't you read the Scriptures?" Jesus replied. "They record that from the beginning 'God made them male and female.' And he said, 'This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.' Since they are no longer two but one, let no one separate them, for God has joined them together."

Malachi 2:16 "For I hate divorce!" says the LORD, the God of Israel. "It is as cruel as putting on a victim's bloodstained coat," says the LORD Almighty. "So guard yourself; always remain loyal to your wife."

Family & Friends

Proverbs 27:9 The heartfelt counsel of a friend is as sweet as perfume and incense.

1 Corinthians 15:33 Don't be fooled by those who say such things, for "bad company corrupts good character."

Proverbs 13:20 Whoever walks with the wise will become wise; whoever walks with fools will suffer harm.

Proverbs 14:7 Stay away from fools, for you won't find knowledge there.

Proverbs 27:6 Wounds from a friend are better than many kisses from an enemy.

Finances & Money

Luke 16:13 "No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

Proverbs 3:9-10 Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything your land produces. Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with the finest wine.

Proverbs 13:11 Wealth from get-rich-quick schemes quickly disappears; wealth from hard work grows.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 Those who love money will never have enough. How absurd to think that wealth brings true happiness!

Hebrews 13:5 Stay away from the love of money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never forsake you."

1 Timothy 6:6-10 Yet true religion with contentment is great wealth. After all, we didn't bring anything with us when we came into the world, and we certainly cannot carry anything with us when we die. So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content. But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is at the root of all kinds of evil.

1 Timothy 6: 17-19 Tell those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which will soon be gone. But their trust should be in the living God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life.

Matthew 6:19-21 "Don't store up treasures here on earth where they can erode away or may be stolen. Store them in heaven where they will never lose their value and are safe from thieves. If your profits are in heaven, your heart will be there too."

Health Issues

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

Ephesians 5: 18 Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, let the Holy Spirit fill and control you.

Psalms 38:3 Because of your anger, my whole body is sick; my health is broken because of my sins.

Proverbs 3:7-8 Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the LORD and turn your back on evil. Then you will gain renewed health and vitality.

Proverbs 10:27 Fear of the LORD lengthens one's life, but the years of the wicked are cut short.

Proverbs 15:30 A cheerful look brings joy to the heart; good news makes for good health.

Daniel 1:14-16 So the attendant agreed to Daniel's suggestion and tested them for ten days. At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the rich foods and wines.

Loving Your Partner

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. Love does not demand its own way. Love is not irritable, and it keeps no record of when it has been wronged. It is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

Matthew 7:12 Do for others what you would like them to do for you. This is a summary of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.

1 Peter 4:8 Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins.

John 13:14,15 And since I, the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you.

Galatians 6:9 So don't get tired of doing what is good. Don't get discouraged and give up, for we will reap a harvest of blessing at the appropriate time.

John 13:34 So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.

Romans 12:9,10 Don't just pretend that you love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Stand on the side of the good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.

Romans 12:20,21 Instead, do what the Scriptures say: "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink, and they will be ashamed of what they have done to you." Don't let evil get the best of you, but conquer evil by doing good.

Marriage

Genesis 2:18,24 And the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion who will help him. This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one."

Matthew 19:4-6 "Haven't you read the Scriptures?" Jesus replied. "They record that from the beginning 'God made them male and female.' And Jesus said, 'This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.' Since they are no longer two but one, let no one separate them, for God has joined them together."

Ecclesiastes 4:9-11 Two people can accomplish more than twice as much as one; they get a better return for their labor. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But people who are alone when they fall are in real trouble. And on a cold night, two under the same blanket can gain warmth from each other. But how can one be warm alone?

Proverbs 31:10,11 Who can find a virtuous and capable wife? She is worth more than precious rubies. Her husband can trust her, and she will greatly enrich his life.

Ephesians 5:25 And you husbands must love your wives with the same love Christ showed the church. He gave up his life for her.

Ephesians 5:31-33 As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one." This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and she must respect her husband.

1 Peter 3:7 In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat her with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. If you don't treat her as you should, your prayers will not be heard.

Genesis 2:23-24 "At last!" Adam exclaimed. "She is part of my own flesh and bone! She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken out of a man. This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.

Matthew 18:19 "I also tell you this-if two of you agree down here on earth concerning anything you ask for, my Father in heaven will do it for you.

Amos 3:3 Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction?

Parenting

Psalms 127:3 Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from him.

Proverbs 22:6 Teach your children to choose the right path, and when they are older, they will remain upon it.

Proverbs 13:24 If you refuse to discipline your children, it proves you don't love them; if you love your children, you will be prompt to discipline them.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are away on a journey, when you are lying down and when you are getting up again.

Ephesians 6:1-2 Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. "Honor your father and mother." This is the first of the Ten Commandments that ends with a promise.

Colossians 3:21 Fathers, don't aggravate your children. If you do, they will become discouraged and quit trying.

Exodus 20:12 "Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the LORD your God will give you."

Leviticus 19:32 "Show your fear of God by standing up in the presence of elderly people and showing respect for the aged. I am the LORD."

Matthew 19:13-15 Some children were brought to Jesus so he could lay his hands on them and pray for them. The disciples told them not to bother him. But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these." And he put his hands on their heads and blessed them before he left.

Personality Issues

2 Peter 1:5-6 Knowing God leads to self-control. Self-control leads to patient endurance, and patient endurance leads to godliness. Godliness leads to love for other Christians, and finally you will grow to have genuine love for everyone.

Proverbs 11:11-12 Upright citizens bless a city and make it prosper, but the talk of the wicked tears it apart. It is foolish to belittle a neighbor; a person with good sense remains silent.

Proverbs 11:13 A gossip goes around revealing secrets, but those who are trustworthy can keep a confidence.

Proverbs 12:22 The Lord hates those who don't keep their word, but he delights in those who do.

Proverbs 25:19 Putting confidence in an unreliable person is like chewing with a toothache or walking on a broken foot.

Proverbs 12:25 Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up.

Proverbs 17:22 A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength.

Matthew 6:34 "So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today."

Praise Each Other

Proverbs 25:15 Patience can persuade a prince, and soft speech can crush strong opposition.

Proverbs 12:18 Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing.

Proverbs 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but harsh words stir up anger.

Ephesians 4:32 Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

Ephesians 4:29 Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

Proverbs 15:30 A cheerful look brings joy to the heart; good news makes for good health.

Proverbs 25:11 Timely advice is as lovely as golden apples in a silver basket.

Ephesians 4:29 Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

Self-Control

Proverbs 25:28 A person without self-control is as defenseless as a city with broken-down walls.

Galatians 5:22-23 But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law.

2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

Titus 2:2 Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have strong faith and be filled with love and patience.

1 Peter 1:13 So think clearly and exercise self-control. Look forward to the special blessings that will come to you at the return of Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:5,6 So make every effort to apply the benefits of these promises to your life. Then your faith will produce a life of moral excellence. A life of moral excellence leads to knowing God better. Knowing God leads to self-control. Self-control leads to patient endurance, and patient endurance leads to godliness.

Sexuality

Proverbs 5:18-20 Let your wife be a fountain of blessing for you. Rejoice in the wife of your youth. She is a loving doe, a graceful deer. Let her breasts satisfy you always. May you always be captivated by her love.

1 Corinthians 7:3 The husband should not deprive his wife of sexual intimacy, which is her right as a married woman, nor should the wife deprive her husband.

1 Corinthians 7:4-5 The wife gives authority over her body to her husband, and the husband also gives authority over his body to his wife. So do not deprive each other of sexual relations.

Hebrews 13:4 Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery.

Ephesians 5:28 In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man is actually loving himself when he loves his wife.

Song of Solomon 7:10-12 I am my lover's, the one he desires. Come, my love, let us go out into the fields and spend the night among the wildflowers. Let us get up early and go out to the vineyards. Let us see whether the vines have budded, whether the blossoms have opened, and whether the pomegranates are in flower. And there I will give you my love.

Spiritual Beliefs

Psalms 23:1 The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want.

Psalms 27:1 The Lord is my light and my salvation - so why should I be afraid? The Lord protects me from danger - so why should I tremble?

2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

Hebrews 13:5,6 For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never forsake you." That is why we can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper, so I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

1 Peter 5:6,7 So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and in his good time he will honor you. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about what happens to you.

Deuteronomy 31:8 "Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord is the one who goes before you. He will be with you; he will neither fail you nor forsake you."

Matthew 10:39 If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give it up for me, you will find it.

The End