LESSON NINE - Cleave Unto Thy Spouse and None Else

“Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else” (D&C 42:22).

PURPOSE
To understand and inspire fidelity and loyalty in marriage.

Preparation
1. This lesson is designed to be approximately 20 minutes unless more time is available.
2. Seek the spirit in deciding which sections to emphasize. It is not critical that you cover all the material provided.
4. Consider the needs of the participants and prepare additional questions that promote discussion and connect the principles to apartment and family life.
5. Be prepared to bear your testimony throughout the lesson at any time the spirit prompts.

Discussion

SECTION ONE
Cleave Unto Your Spouse
The Lord has said: “Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else. And he that looketh upon a woman to lust after her shall deny the faith, and shall not have the Spirit; and if he repents not he shall be cast out” (D&C 42:22-23).

“This means just as completely that ‘thou shalt love thy husband with all thy heart and shall cleave unto him and none else.’ Frequently, people continue to cleave unto their mothers and their fathers and their [friends]. Sometimes mothers will not relinquish the hold they have had upon their children, and husbands as well as wives return to their mothers and fathers to obtain advice and counsel and to confide, whereas cleaving should be to the [spouse] in most things” (Spencer W. Kimball, “Oneness in Marriage,” Ensign March 1977, 3).

“When Adam and Eve were presented to one another as companions, Adam reacted with delight, as illustrated by his statement, ‘This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh’ (Gen. 2:23). Adam’s statement is wonderfully symbolic of the closeness he felt with Eve” (James M. Harper, “A Man . . . Shall Cleave Unto His Wife,” Ensign, Jan. 1990, 28).

Questions for discussion:
• What are some suggestions you could give to a newlywed couple who are struggling to leave their parents and/or friends and cleave unto their spouse?
• What are some boundaries or guidelines they could establish?
• How does the term “bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh” change your perspective on eternal marriage and the way you look at and treat your future spouse?

None Else & Nothing Else
“It is all too common in modern times for husbands and wives to place various people or activities—work, recreation, extended family, even Church service—above their marital bond” (James M. Harper, “A Man . . . Shall Cleave Unto His Wife,” Ensign, Jan. 1990, 28).

“The words none else eliminate everyone and everything. The spouse then becomes pre-eminent in the life of the husband or wife and neither social life nor occupational life nor political life nor any other interest nor person nor thing shall ever take precedence over the companion spouse” (Spencer W. Kimball, The Miracle of Forgiveness, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969, p. 250).

“We should never flirt in any way. As much as possible, we should avoid being alone with anyone of the opposite sex and ask ourselves if our spouse would be pleased if he or she knew of our words or actions. We should remember the Apostle Paul’s counsel to ‘abstain from all appearance of evil’ (1 Thessalonians 5:22). When we stay away from such circumstances, temptation gets no chance to develop,” (Chastity, True to the Faith, 2004, 29).

For Facilitators: Thought Provoking Questions
Questions that prompt deeper thinking usually promote increased learning. These questions often begin with words such as how and why.
“We believe in chastity before marriage and fidelity ever after. This requires time, and so we need to counsel together about how much television, how many movies, videos, video games, time on the Internet, or out-of-the-home activities should be allowed” (M. Russell Ballard, “Like a Flame Unquenchable,” Ensign, May 1999, 85).

Questions for discussion:
• How can we reverse the tendency to place various people or activities above our marital bonds?
• What are some specific examples of “everyone and everything” that we can assume President Kimball is referring to when he talks about the meaning of none else?

SECTION TWO
Fidelity in Marriage

“Promise each other, sincerely and solemnly, never to keep a secret from each other, under whatever pretext, and whatever excuse it might be. You must continually, and every moment, see clearly into each other’s bosom. Even when one of you has committed a fault, wait not an instant, but confess it . . . And as you keep nothing from each other . . . you two, with God’s help, [will] build your own quiet world . . . . Remember the vow at each temptation . . . Your souls will grow, as it were, to each other, and at last will become as one” (David O. McKay, CR, April 1952, pp. 86-87).

Scenario
Camille has always made friends easily and is known for her loyalty in friendships. She has nearly 1,200 friends on Facebook and spends a considerable amount of time communicating with past high school friends, roommates, and even some past boyfriends. Her husband, John, is envious of the time spent on Facebook and questions her frequent communication with others. Camille thinks John is just jealous and has begun to dialogue in her secure inbox. She feels her intentions are harmless and her relationship with others is purely platonic. She is just friends with a lot of people and cannot imagine dropping those relationships just because she got married.

Questions for discussion:
• In what ways might Camille’s time on Facebook be a potential hazard for infidelity in her marriage?
• What is John’s responsibility in this situation? What is Camille’s?
• What are some doctrines and principles from the proclamation that could help John and Camille counsel together with the Lord to determine a solution?
• What are some other media influences similar to Facebook that can be addictive and damaging to a relationship with your spouse?
• How might these other hobbies or pursuits create a barrier for security in our marriages?

The Only Real Control in Life is Self-Control
“Along with filters on computers and a lock on affections, remember that the only real control in life is self-control . . . . If a TV show is indecent, turn it off. If a movie is crude, walk out. If an improper relationship is developing, sever it. Many of these influences, at least initially, may not technically be evil, but they can blunt our judgement, dull our spirituality, and lead to something that could be evil” (Jeffrey R. Holland, “Place No More for the Enemy of My Soul” Ensign May 2010, 45).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Application
A lesson is not complete until a challenge or invitation is extended which inspires and motivates participants to apply what they have learned. “It’s in the doing, not just the thinking, that we accomplish our goals” (Thomas S. Monson, “A Royal Priesthood, Ensign, Nov. 2007, 59-61).

As a result of the lesson, each participant should feel an increased desire to change an attitude or behavior and become a stronger disciple of Jesus Christ. Include the following steps as part of the application process:

1. Summarize what has been learned or ask a member of the group to do so.
2. Invite participants to write goals specific to what they have felt and learned. How will they apply the principles to their personal lives and apartment life (including roommate relationships)? How will they act on what they have learned as a means of preparation for marriage and family life? In short, what will they do about what they have learned?
3. Follow-up with participants on goals they have set. Regular and consistent follow-up will increase the likelihood that participants actually execute their plan of action.