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CLARION REVIEW ★★★★☆ SELF-HELP

Order in the House: God's Heart Concerning the Marriage Covenant

Stacey Nelson
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You fell in love. You got married. Now what? If you're a Christian then God might be waiting for what He wants for your marriage—for you to establish His order in your house.

In this thoughtful compassionate volume Nelson encourages readers to ask themselves searching questions like "What is the purpose of marriage?" and "How can I do things God's way and not my way?" Basic questions yes but ones that are good to ponder in depth or to revisit. Hint: the answers have something to do with a covenant and a relationship that involves three not two.

As a timely reminder to the "instant gratification" generation Nelson says God doesn't move very often to benefit the present time. Sacrifice may be required. It's easy to sit back in a marriage and coast but Nelson reminds readers that in order to see the power of God manifesting in your life you have to be an active participant. "You must defend your territory and keep the enemy out. Christ works with you. He's not going to do all the work for you…"

Popular culture is filled with references to surrendering yielding and submitting to the will of another and yet most human beings resist this idea—sometimes mightily. Modern women particularly dislike the idea of submission to a man. But Biblical submission claims this fiery little book is actually a position of power. As the author joyously proclaims she is "dropping bombs into the kingdom of darkness by teaching women of God what it really means to submit." When wives submit to their husbands they are not losing a power struggle but gaining an opportunity for both people in the relationship to demonstrate unconditional love. Well all *three* in the relationship actually.

"Do not be concerned about what others think of you submitting" she writes. "That mind-set will get you in trouble every time and you'll find yourself backing up from the things of God to please man. Set your heart on all God has shown you in regards to your purpose in marriage because He did not put you together just for the benefit of yourselves…"

Of course husbands have their responsibilities also and one of them is leading the team toward the goal that the family—and God—wants to reach.

Particularly helpful are the mistakes Nelson identifies as doors that can become problems in marriage and allow the Enemy to enter such as withholding affection from each other as a form of punishment selfish ambition fits of rage not keeping fighting within the context of the marriage and not understanding that different genders and personalities express love differently.

At the end of each chapter there is a list of Daily Reminders to think about and a page for Notes. Filled with Biblical quotes and personal examples this book will help readers to choose life by bringing and keeping the life of God in their marriages.

Stacy Nelson is a wife and mother of three. She credits the Family Worship Center Church in Flint Michigan with having completely changed her life. She has been walking with the Lord for twelve years.

HOLLY CHASE WILLIAMS (July 14, 2008)

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