

It's Your CHOICE

PREFACE

This book was first written as one of those transition events of life approached. Our oldest daughter, my precious Nikki, was engaged to marry Jonathan Lambeth.

When the first edition was completed, our sweet Laura had just graduated from high school and would be leaving in a few weeks for college. At the time of the second edition, Laura had just married Brian White. Imagine that – “an empty nest.” Oh how I thank the Lord that my dear Pamela and I have an exhilarating, fun, romantic and happy marriage. The truth is that the nest is not empty. Pam and I are happy together and the nest continues to be delightful. In fact, we are having the time of our lives!

Throughout the years I have been mindful of my responsibility before God, along with Pam, to bring up our daughters in the training and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4), and to impress spiritual truths on our children (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7). It is a high and holy blessing to be a father, and it has been a marvelous and joyful experience to join with my darling wife in the beautiful privilege and duty of parenting our lovely Nikki and Laura.

For all of those years I was the spiritual leader to my sweet daughters and the priest of our home. I passed that mantle on to sturdy young men who love the Lord. I confess that there was significant emotion in my heart before the weddings – heart tugs combined with the joy of knowing that our girls were walking closely with the Lord and were pressing forward in life according to God's will. After Nikki's engagement I began to think of the things I would like to articulate and pass on to my dear children at the times of their respective marriages. I felt a sense of urgency to share truths and principles from a Christian father to his Christian daughters.

Pam, Nikki, Laura and I put our heads together concerning what we should do as our “last family vacation” before Nikki would get married and Laura would go off to college. We decided to drive from Indiana to Manhattan and take in the city and a number of Broadway plays. I packed my Dictaphone and a number of cassette tapes for the trip. While driving there were times when my dear wife would fall asleep and the girls would either be sleeping or reading in the back seat. During those times I took hold of my Dictaphone and began to assemble what I figured would be a paper or long letter I could share with my daughters and their future husbands.

By the time we reached New York City I had dictated quite a bit of material. Consistent with my daily routine I arose early each day to have my quiet time. Since we were on vacation I stayed away from the hotel room until the girls had sufficient opportunity to sleep in. That meant that I had time to think about and do some outlining of various topics I would like to include in my collection of a father's thoughts and advice about having a happy and God-honoring marriage.

On the way back from New York there were again opportunities to complete more of such dictation. When the tapes were transcribed I realized that the expected paper or letter was going to end up being the length of a book. Being that far into the project I decided that I would see it through. Therefore this book is what this father is sharing with his own daughters. I may not be a scholar or a recognized expert, but I am entitled to share wisdom and advice as a father to my own dear children.

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I wrote this book with dependence on the Lord and in honor to my precious Pam who has been my perfect helpmate, friend and lover. I trust that what I share will be very significant to my sweet Nikki and Laura. That in itself is the sufficient purpose for this book. If anyone else outside of the family enjoys or benefits from this book I will give thanks to the Lord.

I love you, Pamela Jo. I love you, Nikki Jo. I love you, Laura Marie.