

Doing Things Right  
In Matters of the Heart

By John Ensor

# Study Guide



## Chapter 1

What is the way that seems right to most men (or, if you are a woman – to most women) regarding romantic relationships? (p12)

When we follow the way that seems right to us but actually leads to death, what critical mistakes are we making? (p12)

How much thought have you given to doing things right in matters of the heart? What steps have you taken to help you in this process?

What does “every mind is a mason” mean? Why does it matter? (p15)

What kind of man would your average woman call Mr. Wonderful?

What kind of woman would your average man call Mrs. Wonderful?

Do you know any couple with a good marriage worth imitating? What makes their marriage attractive?

What are “postmodern sexual ethics”? What bitter fruit do they bear? (p18)

What does Ensor mean by “there is no condom for the heart”? (p19)

What does it mean to be paralyzed in matters of the heart? Have you experienced this paralysis? How? (pp19-20)

According to Ensor, young women want young men to be more manly. What do you think they mean by this? (p20)

## **Chapter 2**

*Kismet: fate, destiny*

How has feminism played into the hands of the Playboy mentality? (pp24-25)

What difference will it make for you if the heart is the heart of the matter instead of sex being the heart of the matter? (p25)

Do most people want what the media (movies, TV, music) offer, or is Ensor right that most people really subscribe to the “less-is-more theory”? What is the “less-is-more theory”? (p25)

How does Ensor apply I Thessalonians 5:21? [Is this a legitimate application of this verse?] How should the Ensors’ friend have tested the man in question? Why didn’t she? (p27)

How much do you think women actually absorb from the relationship advice in TV, movies, magazines, and music? (p28)

Where do men learn how to be men?

Read Shalit’s test on page 29. Which do *you* want?

Do men naturally want to marry a sexually-experienced woman? Why or why not? Do women naturally want to marry a sexually experienced man? Why or why not?

Ensor says that men need a healthy, tender, passionate, enduring, mutually satisfying relationship even more than women do. Why? (pp30-32)

What is the modesty Ensor writes about on page 33-34? Do guys really have it?

How is the “fear of man” a point of entry for sexual sin? Who are we afraid of? Whose approval are we seeking? Why? (p34)

How does the Genesis account show that God has made one man and one woman for a healthy, tender, passionate, enduring, mutually satisfying relationship? (pp35-37)

Isn't polygamy normal in the Bible? (p37)

What are some of the other ways that the Bible emphasizes that faithful, monogamous, marriage is God's plan? (pp37-38)

Summarize the main point of the section titled “4) Shakespeare”. Do you agree with the point of this section? Can you think of any more examples for art or literature that support Ensor's point? (pp38-40)

## Chapter 3

Why is it important to have knowledge and not just desire? (p44)

In what ways are you motivated by the pursuit of happiness? (p46)

Do you recognize God as your ultimate happiness? What does that mean?  
(p46)

How does a person give his or her heart to God? (pp46-47)

How have you sought to apply Matthew 6:31-33 to “matters of the heart”?  
(p47) How do you need to grow in this area?

What problems do we run into if we pursue human love and romance as the one great passion of our lives? (p48)

Have you found yourself practicing the idolatry of idyllic (by which Ensor seems to mean *idealized* or *unrealistically perfect*) love? How can you counter this tendency in yourself?

If there is no eternal bliss in breasts, what should be a man's attitude toward physical beauty? What about a woman's attitude toward physical beauty? (p49)

Define discretion. (p49)

What answers do you think most sexually active people would give to the question, "Why are you sexually active right now?" (p50)

What is love consummated in? (p 51) What does "consummated" mean?

How is unmet sexual desire better relational cement than sex outside marriage? That is, how does not having sex make an unmarried couple's relationship stronger than having sex would? (p51)

How do you seek wisdom? With what intensity do you seek it? (p52)

Who is the forbidden woman in Proverbs 5:1-4, and how should a man go about keeping his way far from her? (p53)

Are there any old customs regarding male-female relationships that you wish we still had? Why? (pp54-55)

Biblically, should a woman seek a husband? Why or why not? (pp56-57)

Have you had good examples in doing things right in matters of the heart? Who, and how were they good examples? (p57)

Have you thought about what kind of example you intend to set? What kind of example do you plan to be? (p58)

Women, do you want to be a wife and mother? Why or why not? Men, do you want to lead, provide, protect, and love sacrificially? Why or why not? (p59)

Summarize God's foundation for matters of the heart. (pp61-64)

List some ways in which divorce is harmful. What is your attitude toward divorce? (pp63-64)

Reading the section "What's Past is Prologue", and considering the gospel and Romans 8:28, what is your attitude toward your past?

## Chapter 4

In what ways were men and women created equal? (pp68-70)

What are the “two spheres” of our labor? (p69)

What is the spiritual result of sin and rebellion against God in both men and women? (p70)

What kind of attitudes does the gospel protect us from? (p71)

What does “complementarity” mean? (p71)

In what ways are masculinity and femininity obsolete (outdated and no longer useful) in our culture? (p72)

“Men show themselves to be oriented toward and to have a primary interest in the mastery of the external world. Women tend to be oriented toward and to show a primary interest in the mastery of relationships.” (p73) Men, women, do you think this is true of yourself?

What biblical evidence is there that a man should lead in a relationship (pp76-79)

How was Adam to lead his wife spiritually? (p78)

Enns says we sin in complementary ways. How so? (p79)

In what ways did Adam and Eve abdicate (give up) their God-given roles when faced with the serpent’s temptation? (p80)

Why was Adam more at fault? (p81)

On page 82, Enns lists two sinful temptations that men face and two that women face. Which of these is most likely to be a problem for you? Why?

## **Chapter 5**

What is the heart of the matter? (p88)

How is a healthy marriage like pairs figure skating? (pp88-89)

## **Chapter 6**

Do you agree with Ensor that it is cowardly for a man to wait to ask until a woman signals that she will say yes? (pp91-92)

Do women want men to initiate?

Men, have you ever felt like J. Alfred Prufrock? If so, what were you afraid of? Why were you afraid? (p92-93)

Men, have you ever been rejected? Why? Women, have you ever rejected a man? Why? Did you learn anything from the experience? What?

How should a woman appropriately “crackle the leaves a bit?” (p94)

If there were such a thing as a marriage where everything was equal (*same, interchangeable*, as claimed by the man Ensor mentions on pages 95-96), do you think that man and woman could be satisfied and happy in their relationship? Why or why not?

What are some potential problems a relationship faces if the man doesn't realize that he is the initiator? (p96)

## **Chapter 7**

How does the woman provide guidance? (p97)

How does a husband lead in an understanding way? (p98)

What are the likely relationship consequences if the woman nags? (p99)

Give an example or two of how a woman could teach by example? (p99)

Who changes the man when the woman submits to him and respects him?  
(p100)

What if the woman is obviously better equipped to lead? (pp100-101)

## **Chapter 8**

How is a woman's sexual self-control a powerful force in society? What happens to a society when its women do not exercise sexual self-control?  
(pp104-105)

What do you think of the way men are described on pages 104-105?

What are some of the differences between an immature man and a mature one? (p105)

Modesty and chastity will get rid of most of the sexual predators, but won't even the good guys give up if a woman isn't a little immodest and sexual?

Women, have you made up your mind that you will not only wish but require that the man in your life marry you? How will you enforce this decision? (p106)

## **Chapter 9**

How is it honoring a woman to treat her as a weaker vessel? (p111)

Why do you think the boys in the focus groups cringed at the notion of cracking up a girl? (p112) (What do you think the impact of games like Grand Theft Auto might be on boys' naturally protective attitudes toward women?)

If the lifeboat seating on a modern day Titanic was split 50/50 men and women, what sort of men do you think would get on the lifeboats? What sort of women would stay on the boat while men got into the lifeboats? What do you think would really happen? (pp112-113)

Women, do you care whether or not the man walks on the road curbside, enters the house first, or drives the car? Why or why not? (p113)

Men, how do you think your attitude toward your own safety (like the seatbelt wearing Ensor mentions) would change if you were engaged or married? (p113)

## **Chapter 10**

Why is sexual purity harder for men than for women? Is it? (p115)

In I Thessalonians 4:3-8, what does it mean that “the Lord is an avenger in all these things”?

How and to whom are sexual sins damaging (pp116-117)

How does God’s grace train us to renounce worldly passions (p117)

If a chaste man is protecting women, what is an unchaste man doing? Does it make any difference if the woman is willing? (p117)

What are the two sources of a man’s power to abstain? (p117)

Men, how would you fare if you took the Mature Manhood test on page 118.  
Women, does the man in your life pass the test?

## **Chapter 11**

Enns says, "Self-control is weakened by love." Is it? How so? (p120)

What if a man is "afire with passion" for a woman but doesn't think he should marry her? What should he do and avoid doing? (p121)

Women, how long do you wait for the right guy to come along? Where do you go to wait for him? (p121)

How would you apply Song of Solomon 2:7 (p122)

Is a 3-6 month engagement wise? Is it feasible? (p123)

## **Chapter 12**

What makes a man morally handsome and creates inner beauty in a woman?  
How so? (pp125-126)

Why is it important to look for moral integrity/inner beauty early on instead of just asking “Are you a Christian?” (p126)

Define “godliness”:

Define “integrity”:

How can you train yourself in godliness? Have you been? (pp126-127)

We know from I Peter 3:4 that God finds a gentle and quiet spirit very precious, but do men actually find a gentle and quiet spirit beautiful in a woman? (pp127-128)

How much effort should a woman put into physical beauty? I Timothy 4:8 might apply. (p128)

## **Chapter 13**

How important is it to get this sacrificing and submitting right? Why? (p131)

Men, if a woman is going to submit to you, what kind of a person should you be? (p132)

What does Ensor mean by “In a sense, when two people strive to become one, four desires are striving to become one.” (p132)

How is speaking the words “what about what I want” or “what about my needs?” like saying “I don’t believe in fairies!” while in Neverland? (p135)

Are husbands and wives equally called to submit to one another? If so, how? If not, what is the point of Ephesians 5:21? (p136)

How does the husband submit to Christ? (p136)

How does the wife submit to Christ? (p136)

What if the husband asks the wife to do something sinful? How likely is this to happen? How often? (pp136-137)

Ensor says, "I will add by way of encouragement that submission is simply not that hard on a day-to-day basis." Easy for a man to say! Do you think his assertion is true? (p138)

What might a godly man sacrifice for his wife? How often would he be called to sacrifice? (p139)

Men, are you looking for a woman to serve you or for a woman for you to serve? (p140)

## **Chapter 14**

Men, how do you benefit from sacrificial love? What gain is there in sacrifice? (p144)

Women, how do you benefit from submissive love? What gain is there in submission? (p144)

Is it okay to seek our own joy? Why or why not? (p146)

How does the principle “If my wife is hungry, I have not yet finished eating” play out in real life (think money, goals, interests, hobbies, rest and relaxation, education, etc.)? How should a wife be nourished and cherished? (p147)

What is the difference between bad selfishness and good self-fulfillment? (p148)

## **Chapter 15**

How and when should a wife supplement her husband’s income? (p150)

What does it mean for a woman to “work at home” (Titus 2:4-5)? (pp151-152)

Why is there inherent dignity in motherhood? (pp152-153)

How can a woman grow in dignity as a wife and mother? (p153) How can a husband foster this growth?)

## **Chapter 16**

Why do women find able providers more attractive? (pp155-156)

Men, how are you preparing to provide for a wife and children? (pp155-156)

Summarize Ensor's teaching on who disciplines when both parents are home. (pp155-156)

What do you think of Dobson's statement: "If the children are disrespectful and disobedient, the primary responsibility lies with the father . . . not the wife." Could you back this statement up with scripture? (p155)

Men, how will you go about bringing your children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord? Do you have any sort of plan or even some ideas? (p156)

Why is it important that fathers father? (pp147-148)

## **Conclusion**

Ensor finishes the book with the statement, "Consider the heart to be a dollar bill. Now what will you do with it?" He's not saying, "What if your heart was only worth a dollar?" The little boy in the Shel Silverstein poem in the previous chapter received a gift that he considered valuable (a dollar bill) from his father and then was foolishly taken advantage of until he had almost nothing left. In the same way, you have been given a valuable gift (your heart) by your Father. Will you invest it wisely or will you give away this precious treasure in foolish ways?

Based on what you've learned in this study, are there any changes you need to make? What do you need to do first?