

**BRINGING  
PEACE & HARMONY  
— TO THE —  
BLENDED FAMILY**

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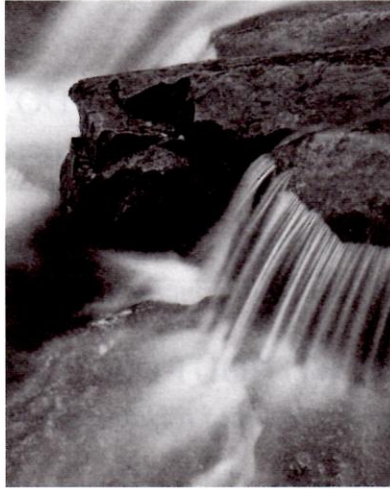
*WHERE EVERYBODY  
FEELS AT HOME*

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**DR. KEVIN LEMAN**

**WORKBOOK**

**W O R K B O O K**



# **BRINGING PEACE & HARMONY TO THE BLENDED FAMILY**

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*WHERE EVERYBODY FEELS AT HOME*

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**DR. KEVIN LEMAN**

WITH

**BELINDA JOLLEY**



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## Lesson 6



# LOOKING AT LIFE THROUGH YOUR MATE'S EYES

*Learning from What You See so Your Marriage  
Can Be All God Wants It to Be!*

### **SCRIPTURE**

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.  
--1 Corinthians 13:1-3*

### **LESSON OUTLINE**

#### **I. Biblical standards that enable any marriage to last**

- A. Love your wife as \_\_\_\_\_ loved the church. (Ephesians 5:21)
- B. Commit to become \_\_\_\_\_. (Genesis 2:23-24)

#### **II. Stages or potential stages of a blended family marriage**

- A. Expectation
- B. Reality
- C. D \_\_\_\_\_
- D. License
- E. Separation or divorce (Not the last stage!)
- F. "Graceful love"

#### **III. How to achieve graceful love through grateful attitudes**

- A. Communicate

- B. \_\_\_\_\_ together
- C. Forgive one another
- D. Avoid choosing sides or blaming

**IV. Achieving peace and harmony in the blended family**

- A. Conduct family meetings.
- B. Build one brick at a time
- C. Grow to love each other.

***DISCUSSION GUIDE***

1. Is it really possible to look at life through your mate’s eyes? Discuss your ideas with the group.

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2. Review the six stages of a blended family marriage. Think about what you have learned in the study and describe what you think Dr. Leman means by each stage. Remember, all marriages will go through stages 1 and 2 to some degree. However, stages 3-5 are potential pitfalls you may or may not experience. Stage 6 should be the goal for all marriages. Share your ideas for Stage 1 with the group.

Stage 1: Expectation - \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Do the same for Stage 2.

Stage 2: Reality - \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Read Proverbs 13:12. Describe the “*hope deferred*” in this verse that can lead to disillusionment.

Stage 3: Disillusionment - \_\_\_\_\_

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5. For Stage 4, list some examples of ways spouses might permit themselves to tamper in areas that may have been off limits before. Share some of your ideas. Remember your ideas are general, but think of specific ways you might be tempted to allow

yourself to say or do things, some of which you may feel are justified by your mate's actions or attitudes.

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6. Read Genesis 39:2-12 and James 4:7-8a. What decisions do you think Joseph made before this incident that protected his character and principles? List your ideas below.

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7. What can you say or do to lessen the chances of persons making unwelcome advances toward you? Share ideas with the group. Write helpful suggestions below.

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8. Remember that Stage 5 (separation or divorce) is a potential pitfall. Imagine one of your friends saying, "Don't worry—if it doesn't work out, you can always get a divorce." How would you respond?

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9. Dr. Leman developed his own word for stage 6. He combines grace, full, and love into one word. Work as a group to develop a definition of "gracefullove." Share with the group.

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10. Review the following unfair fighting tactics Dr. Leman has identified. Read each tactic and discuss things mates might say or do as an example of each one.

Unfair Fighting Tactic	Example
Universalizing – Avoids identifying or dealing with specific problems	
Character Killing – Attacks people, not problems	

Cloud-covering – Clouds the issue	
Upping the ante – Tries to bring up an incident that seems worse than the present one	
Scatter-bombing – Presents a long list of unrelated faults.	
Moth-balling – Pulls out old hurts	
Spitting in your soup – Lays on guilt while making the situation worse for himself or herself	

### ***PERSONAL APPLICATION***

11. We began lesson 1 thinking of this study as a journey. In what direction is your family now headed? If you look back, you will discover that you shared something about your blended family's situation by completing one or more of the statements below. (You may have written your own.) Complete your statement again. Remember, your answer may or may not be the same. Share your answer with the group. Today my blended family journey is more like a ship...

...in dry dock being fitted out and loaded.

...pulling away from the dock.

...making solid progress on course.

...headed for stormy seas.

...trying to chart a course to calmer seas.



12. This study in itself has been a journey of sorts. You're getting ready to head back to your homeport. Dr. Leman's closing words of advice were to conduct family meetings, build one brick at a time, and grow to love each other. Jot down what you think has been most helpful to you in the study.

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13. Just as you may have picked up valuable information and “souvenirs” to take home with you, you may have decided to leave some unnecessary items behind. What harmful “baggage” do you need to discard before resuming your journey? List some attitudes or actions you will commit to leave behind that may prevent you from achieving peace and harmony in your house.



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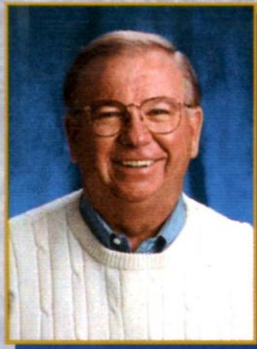
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Remember, it can take as much as 3-7 years for a blended family to achieve the goal of peace and harmony. Blending is an ongoing process. There may be conflicts and disagreements along the way, but with Christ’s help your ship will arrive safely at it’s destination. Remember, “*Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life*” (Proverbs 13:12). Share in the tree of life made possible through Jesus Christ.

*Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.*  
--Proverbs 13:12



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**D**R. KEVIN LEMAN is an internationally-known Christian psychologist, best-selling author, speaker, and radio and television personality who has ministered to and entertained audiences worldwide with his wit and common sense psychology.

Dr. Leman is a frequent guest on FOCUS ON THE FAMILY, Moody Network's MIDDAY CONNECTION and OPEN LINE, as well as numerous radio and television appearances on OPRAH, LIVE WITH REGIS AND KATHIE LEE, CBS' THE EARLY SHOW, TODAY, THE 700 CLUB, and THE VIEW WITH BARBARA WALTERS. Dr. Leman also served as a consulting family psychologist to ABC's GOOD MORNING AMERICA for several years.

Dr. Leman is the founder and president of "Couples of Promise," an organization committed to helping couples remain happily married. He is currently the host of the new television program REALFAMILIES.COM and co-host of the nationally syndicated radio program, PARENT TALK.

Dr. Leman's 21 books include the following bestsellers: *The Birth Order Book*, *What A Difference A Daddy Makes*, *Sex Begins In The Kitchen*, *The Six Stress Points In A Woman's Life*, *Making Children Mind Without Losing Yours*, *Keeping Your Family Together When The World Is Falling Apart*, *Becoming The Parent God Wants You To Be*, *Bringing Up Kids Without Tearing Them Down*, *Women Who Try Too Hard*, *When Your Best Is Not Good Enough*, *Becoming a Couple of Promise* and *The New Birth Order Book*.

Dr. Leman is affiliated with the American Psychological Association, American Federation of Radio and Television Artists, National Register of Health Services Providers in Psychology, and the North American Society of Adlerian Psychology. He received his Bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Arizona, where he later earned his Master's Degree and Doctorate. He and his wife, Sande, live in Tucson, with their five children.



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