## Guided Separation Plan

*Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4: 1-5)*

At this point in our ministry to you as a couple we have come to a point of crisis. Due to this time of crisis the option for a time of separation has been discussed. Our main concern is the safety of your family. Our prayer and admonition for you both is that you would seek to preserve the unity that we have in Christ Jesus. We believe that you will need help establishing boundaries and a plan to help you move forward.

## Goals:

1. To clearly define boundaries and a safety plan in the event of more conflict.
2. To provide clear expectations for interaction between each other and the children.
3. To have an established plan for reconciliation while in a physically separated state. A set amount of time for the separation has yet to be determined.
4. To strive for **Safety**--helping you as a couple to stop the abusive and destructive patterns from continuing.
5. To strive for **Sanity**--helping you as a couple to separately identify the lies you’ve believed that have kept the destructive patterns going in your marriage.
6. To strive for **Stability**--helping you to individually live from your **CORE (wife’s name)** and the **5 C’s of Change (husband’s name)** (see attached) with one another and your accountability partners...developing the internal controls to continue safely and sanely within the marital relationship, rebuilding marital trust (see attached) along the way.
7. To strive for **Security**--helping you as a couple to deepen intimacy as trust is established...working on communication skills, conflict resolution skills, problem solving skills, emotional intimacy and continued practice of new habits.

## Agreements:

1. Any communication that needs to be done face to face is to be done in a public place to minimize abusive outbursts.
2. Although separated, we will remain faithful to one another emotionally, physically and spiritually, not pursuing any other relationships with the opposite sex in any format.
3. We will not end the separation prematurely regardless of how well we are doing or how difficult it becomes.
4. There will be no alcohol or drug use during this time of crisis.
5. When communicating to family and friends, we will share agreed-upon “truth statements” regarding our relationship. No criticism or slander is appropriate. We will also refrain from posting anything regarding our marriage on social media.
6. When interacting with 2-3 godly individuals for the purpose of prayer, encouragement and accountability, we will focus on our personal heart condition and not on the heart condition of our spouse.
7. We will strive to understand the biblical picture of a Godly, healthy marriage through--**Mutuality**: Mutual caring, mutual honesty, mutual respect, mutual responsibility and mutual repentance. **Reciprocity**: A healthy relationship is one in which both partners give and both receive. There is safe and open exchange of thoughts and ideas and all perspectives are valued. **Freedom**: There is also the freedom to respectfully challenge and disagree with one another without fear of retaliation or danger.
8. We are unified on a plan for living arrangements for (spouse’s name) during the separation. (He/She) will be living with (his/her) parents.
9. If necessary, this Guided Separation Plan is subject to change anytime during the process of separation.

## Guidelines:

We agree to the following guidelines designed to help provide a healthy dynamic and environment for our family.

(counselor or pastor’s name) for input.

Finances:

We will adhere to the current budget plan. If mail needs to be picked up, (spouse’s name) will pick it up when (spouse’s name) is gone.

Parenting relationship dynamics:

1. Both parents remain committed to make every effort to maintain a healthy relationship with each child. Parents cannot “force” interaction with any of the children but can initiate kind and gentle interaction.
2. Parents will work on being as open and honest with the children about the status of the relationship, sharing truth in love without criticism or slander.
3. Each parent should help the children understand that the children are not responsible for the problems in the parent’s relationship.
4. You as parents will not express anger or negative feelings towards the other parent through the children.
5. You as parents will avoid forcing the children to take sides.
6. You as parents will not put the children in the position of spying and reporting on the behavior of the other parent.
7. Both parents will remain committed to work with each other on parenting the children and to effectively co-parent with as much cooperation as possible.
8. It is possible that the children will only stay overnight with (spouse’s name) for a time to establish predictability (a new normal) and to allow ease of adjustment.
9. Visitation specifics: Kids are free to call (spouse’s name) every day. (Spouse’s name) will have the kids for \_\_\_ visits a minimum of 2 times per week.

Phone calls:

1) 1-2 phone calls per day (during the agreed upon time of day: 9am-9:30pm) unless an emergency arises.

Texts (frequency):

1) None after an agreed upon time of night: 6am-10 pm

Holidays:

Thanksgiving/Christmas: Arrival/departure separately but participating at family functions together. For Christmas morning with the kids, it is best that gift exchanges not be done in the home, but in a public place.

Birthday celebrations are to be held at a public place.

## Follow Through:

1. I, (name), will work through the “Choosing Forgiveness” study with (counselor’s name) to frame my mindset concerning biblical forgiveness and the practical application of it within my marriage.
2. I, (name), will work on the “5 C’s of Change” in addition to working through “The Exemplary Husband” study with (counselor’s name).
3. Be present at our next meeting on:

## Signing the agreement:

We each contributed to and understand the “Guided Separation Plan” as discussed at our meeting with (counselor/pastor name).

Partner

Partner

# C.O.R.E (wife’s name)

**C** – I will be **COMMITTED** to truth, no more pretending.

**O** – I will be **OPEN** to the Holy Spirit and other wise people to learn new ways of thinking and relating.

**R** – I will be **RESPONSIBLE** for myself and **RESPECTFUL** towards my abusive spouse without dishonoring myself.

**E** – I will be **EMPATHETIC** and compassionate without **ENABLING**

destructive behaviors to continue.

# Five C’s of Change (husband’s name)

**Clarity**: He sees clearly that he is part of the problem. No blaming, no minimizing or avoiding responsibility.

**Commitment**: He is committed to God, his spouse and himself to do what it takes to learn how to be a better man.

**Community**: He invites trusted others to give him feedback and hold him accountable for the changes he wants to make.

**Confession**: He is able to articulate the wrongs he has done in his marriage and take responsibility for them.

**Consequences**: He understands that negative consequences often follow sinful behaviors and does not expect amnesty (pardon), instant trust, or restoration of the marriage.

# Sanity is reached when they both realize it’s NOT acceptable for her to live that way and it’s NOT acceptable for him to treat her that way.

**Rebuilding Trust**: (4 primary areas)

**Authenticity**: She doesn’t see him one way at home and another way elsewhere.

**Reliability**: He keeps his word. If he says he will do it, he does it. If he says he won’t do it, he doesn’t do it. She can count on what he says. He is faithful to his word. If he forgets something, he takes responsibility for it and makes amends. If he messes up, he is quick to apologize and ask forgiveness.

**Competence**: He will continue to put himself around men who know how to do what he needs to learn. He is humble enough to admit he has not known how to be a godly man and desires to learn.

**Care**: She sees consistent actions that demonstrate care and concern for her well-being, financial security and physical and emotional safety. This is not to be confused with superficial, charming and grandstanding behaviors.