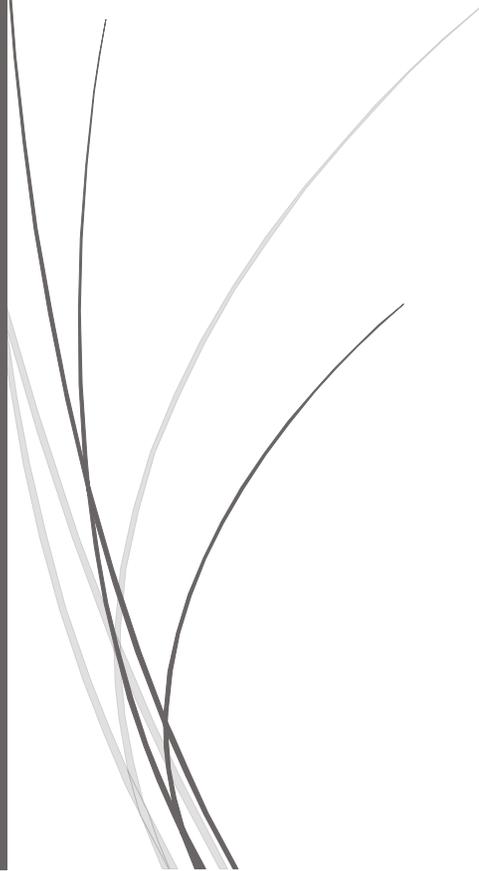


Lesson 4

**THE PATH TO SOUL  
SATISFYING LOVE**  
WHY WE FALL MADLY IN LOVE



**Marriage**Helper





# CONTENTS

<b>Storm Warning Along The Path...</b>	<b>3</b>
Biblical View Of Limerence	3
When Limerence Is Okay And When It Is Not	5
<b>A Checkup For Yourself</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A Checkup For Your Relationship</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>If You Are Not In A Relationship</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>In Conclusion</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Daily Thoughts And Prayers</b>	<b>12</b>
Day One	12
Day Two	12
Day Three	13
Day Four	13
Day Five	14
<b>Sharing Time</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Notes As You Watch The Video</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Marriage Helper</b>	<b>18</b>

## STORM WARNING ALONG THE PATH...

In the course of time, Amnon son of David fell in love with Tamar, the beautiful sister of Absalom son of David. Amnon became frustrated to the point of illness on account of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin, and it seemed impossible for him to do anything to her. Now Amnon had a friend named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man. He asked Amnon, "Why do you, the king's son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won't you tell me?" Amnon said to him, "I'm in love with Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister." (2 Samuel 13:1-4)

Limerence is the technical name of that intense romantic state in which you constantly think of the one you love, worry that s/he might abandon you, and long to be with him/her. Sometimes researchers refer to it as being "madly in love." Your world revolves around the person researchers refer to as the "limerence object," usually abbreviated to L.O.

It is important that you watch the corresponding segment in *The Path to Soul Satisfying Love* video before you do the exercises in this chapter. The video provides information about limerence so that you may more fully understand it. We do not repeat that information in this workbook.

### BIBLICAL VIEW OF LIMERENCE

The Bible does not use the word limerence; however, the concept is as old as humankind. Limerence – as you shall see in this chapter – could be described as romantic love on steroids. Sometimes it is holy, such as when spouses feel this intense emotion for each other. Sometimes it is unholy, particularly when it leads a person – married or single – to violate the laws of God.

For example, romantic love can be wonderful and lead to long-lived relationships. As we saw earlier in the Song of Solomon, the love Solomon and his wife had for each other was passionate and intense. However, as we see from the arranged marriages in the Old Testament, limerence is not a requirement for developing a fulfilling, life-long love.

## Why We Fall Madly In Love

The thing to remember is that the intense emotions known as limerence may lead one to make decisions and commit actions that negatively affect the remainder of his/her life. As Proverbs 5:3-20 warns,

*For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and smoother than oil is her speech; but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of Sheol. She does not ponder the path of life; her ways are unstable, she does not know it.*

*Now then, my sons, listen to me, and do not depart from the words of my mouth. Keep your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house, lest you give your vigor to others, and your years to the cruel one; lest strangers be filled with your strength, and your hard-earned goods go to the house of an alien; and you groan at your latter end, when your flesh and your body are consumed; and you say, "How I have hated instruction! And my heart spurned reproof! And I have not listened to the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to my instructors! I was almost in utter ruin in the midst of the assembly and congregation."*

*Drink water from your own cistern, and fresh water from your own well. Should your springs be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets? Let them be yours alone, and not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth. As a loving hind and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times; be exhilarated always with her love. For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress, and embrace the bosom of a foreigner?*

Anyone drawn into an intense emotional relationship that is not holy should carefully consider the passage above. It applies equally to women as to men. Notice the key points made:

- It begins sweet as honey, but ends in bitterness and sorrow.
- A person in this situation is unstable, not considering the longer path of life, and is not aware of their instability.
- When one gives up a holy relationship for one that is unholy (violating the will of God):
  - Future life becomes cruel – compliments of the evil one – because you sacrificed real life (vigor) for the person you thought you loved more.



### Why We Fall Madly In Love

- Someone else will take the life you had, because you abandoned it. (Your possessions, your family – if your mate moves on – and all the things that gave your life strength.)
- Too late one comes to realization that s/he should have listened to those who warned of the consequences of this path.
- Rather than seeking intense emotional love, satisfy yourself with the companionship of your spouse.
  - Passion may dwindle as you grow older, but your spouse is the one with whom you must share life, even when the fires are not as intense as they once were.
  - Real satisfaction comes through a relationship with one who loves you for a lifetime, not the one who loves you until passion fades.

*For those who are not married and experiencing limerence, we remind you not to let limerence lead you into a sexual relationship before you marry. Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge. (Hebrews 13:4)*

## WHEN LIMERENCE IS OKAY AND WHEN IT IS NOT

Limerence does not occur for everyone. Many couples meet, fall in love, marry, and live their entire lives together without ever having had the experience. You do not have to experience limerence to develop a deep and lasting love. As you heard in the video, limerence is temporary, lasting anywhere from six months to three years. Then it goes away and does not occur again in your relationship with your L.O.

When two people are free to love each other without violating their beliefs and values, and without harming or destroying an existing committed relationship, limerence is great. However, when it violates the beliefs and values of either, or negatively affects a committed relationship, it brings pain and misery.



Why We Fall Madly In Love

We ask those leaving spouses because they are in limerence with another, “Do you really want to make a life-altering decision based on an emotion that will last three years at best? Are you prepared for the major letdown that will occur when limerence ends and you look back at all you gave up to be with your lover?”

We have seen so many who three years or less into the limerent relationship regret following their intense emotions, ignoring life as it really is and really will be.



## A CHECKUP FOR YOURSELF

Some people are so enthralled by the emotional high (in actuality, a chemical high) of limerence that they cannot stay in any relationship for an extended time. It appears they are just as much addicted to the thrill of limerence as are addicts pursuing other drugs. Let us see if you might be one.

1. How many times have you been in love?
2. Have any of these relationships been with a person who was in a committed relationship with another?
3. Have any of these relationships occurred with another while you were in a committed relationship (such as long-term attachment, engagement, marriage)?
4. In these relationships, do you find yourself enchanted with the emotional thrill of being so deeply in love?

What do your answers to the question above tell you about yourself? Be honest - are you going from one limerent relationship to another, sometimes leaving relationships because you no longer had the feelings you once had?



## A CHECKUP FOR YOUR RELATIONSHIP

Below is a tool that will provide you awareness if you are falling into limerence with someone other than your spouse.

The “particular person” in these questions is someone other than your spouse.

1. Is there a particular person that you feel defensive about your relationship with when other people question it?
2. Is there a particular person that you sometimes feel you share too many of your thoughts and feelings with, and that you should cut back in doing so?
3. Is there a particular person that you feel guilty about the time you spend with them, or the things you talk about?
4. Is there a particular person that is your “elevator” – the person you want to talk to or be with when you are emotionally up or emotionally down?

If you answered yes to two of the above questions, you likely will develop limerence *with* this person (if s/he reciprocates) or *for* this person (if s/he does not reciprocate). Either way, you are going to damage your current relationship.



## IF YOU ARE NOT IN A RELATIONSHIP

Be sure that you have done the exercises in the “Checkup for Yourself” section. That is critical to understanding the way you approach relationships. If you are not a “limerence addict” as explained in that section, there are still things you need to be aware of as you evaluate potential companions.

- If you develop limerence for a particular person, s/he may not develop limerence for you. That will hurt, but it is not the end of the world. You will get over it when one of two things happens: 1) you finally emotionally accept that there will be no reciprocation, or 2) you develop limerence for another.
- If you move quickly from limerence with one person to limerence with another, do not trust your judgment. Ask trusted friends to help you evaluate the person and the relationship. Do not rush into a committed relationship until you are at least one year past the previous relationship.
- It may occur that someone develops limerence for you that you do not want to be involved with. If that occurs, starve his/her limerence by clearly demonstrating that there is absolutely no reciprocation.
- If limerence begins to develop between you and a person in a committed relationship, get away from it as quickly as you can. Do not believe the lie, “Our relationship was over long ago. I’m just waiting for \_\_\_\_\_ before divorcing/leaving.” Thousands can testify to how badly that turns out.
- If limerence develops between you and a person that is a good relationship (see the second paragraph under “When Limerence is Okay and When It is Not”), enjoy it but be careful in making any life decisions while in that state without sound counsel. We recommend premarital counseling from a minister or counselor.



Why We Fall Madly In Love

With those considerations in mind, here is a checklist you may use to evaluate your relationship when you develop limerence with another.

1. Am I really in love with this person or am I actually more in love with this feeling?
2. What are the things about this person that I find attractive other than the fact that I feel so much for him/her?
3. Am I honestly evaluating what a future with this person would be like, or am I allowing myself to think with a “fairy tale” mindset?
4. Do I honestly believe that I would wake up with this person when I’m seventy years old and be thankful that s/he is there?
5. How do the friends and relatives I trust to be objective evaluate this person?
6. Would I want my children to be like this person in every way that is important to me?
7. Who could be hurt – including me – if this relationship develops to long-term commitment?
8. Would a long-term relationship with this person help me grow, or would it likely keep me stagnant or even deteriorate?
9. Can I truly trust this person with my heart, my life, my money, my children, or anyone or anything else valuable to me?
10. Because I feel such intense emotion, am I overlooking this person’s flaws that could harm or destroy our relationship in the future?



## IN CONCLUSION

Limerence is something that may or may not happen as you traverse the LovePath.

Never trust your judgment while in limerence. Get wise counsel from others that you trust, as recommended in Proverbs 19:20: *“Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.”* If it does occur for you, do everything you can to not let it overcome your knowledge, wisdom, and instincts.

Do not let limerence occur between you and another who is in a committed relationship. It will lead only to heartbreak. Do not let limerence develop with another if you are in a committed relationship. Live up to your commitments. Be a person of integrity and character.

Accept the fact that limerence is short-lived. If you experience it, it will last anywhere from six months to three years. When it fades, do not think that the relationship is no longer a good or viable one.

If you bonded without experiencing limerence, do not feel cheated. Actually, you may be the one who did it the better way and will have a better relationship as long as you live.



## DAILY THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

### DAY ONE

Spend a few minutes meditating and talking with God about why He made us in a way that we can feel deep joy and ecstasy in love relationships. Jot your thoughts here.

The one thing that I will make sure I pray about today that will help me love wisely is....

### DAY TWO

Spend a few minutes meditating and talking with God about any love experiences you have had that didn't turn out as you expected them to. Jot your thoughts here.



Why We Fall Madly In Love

The one thing that I will make sure I pray about today that will help me love wisely is....

### DAY THREE

Spend a few minutes meditating and talking with God about why He didn't intend for romantic love to always be ecstasy and bliss. Jot your thoughts here.

The one thing that I will make sure I pray about today that will help me love wisely is....

### DAY FOUR

Spend a few minutes meditating and talking with God about what you truly and deeply want in your love relationship with your mate or future mate. Jot your thoughts here.



Why We Fall Madly In Love

The one thing that I will make sure I pray about today that will help me love wisely is....

## DAY FIVE

Spend a few minutes meditating and talking with God about how you can experience deep feelings of love and closeness with Him. Jot your thoughts here.

The one thing that I will make sure I pray about today that will help me love wisely is....





Why We Fall Madly In Love

4. How could a person overcome limerence and give up a relationship that is not right? What would have to happen? Have you ever seen it happen?

5. What are ways you can safeguard your marriage (or future marriage, if you are single) to keep you or your spouse from falling into limerence with another?



## NOTES AS YOU WATCH THE VIDEO



## MARRIAGE HELPER

If your marriage is in crisis—or if you love someone whose marriage is in crisis—our success rate since 1999 is three out of four marriages. It doesn't matter if one spouse comes reluctantly or under pressure. It doesn't matter if one is madly in love with someone else. Our success rate remains just as high. It is, of course, by the grace of God Almighty.

If you wish a miracle for you or someone you love, call now toll free 866-903-0990 or visit us at [www.marriagehelper.com](http://www.marriagehelper.com).