



FIVE WAYS TO BE A SUCCESSFUL HUSBAND

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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Five Ways to Be a Successful Husband

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 Peter 3:7-9

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2229

Intro paragraph justo odio, dapibus ac facilisis in, egestas eget quam. Cras mattis consectetur purus sit amet fermentum. Aenean eu leo quam. Pellentesque ornare sem lacinia quam venenatis vestibulum.

Running paragraph nullam id dolor id nibh ultricies vehicula ut id elit. Maecenas faucibus mollis interdum. Fusce dapibus, tellus ac cursus commodo, tortor mauris condimentum nibh, ut fermentum massa justo sit amet risus. Etiam porta sem malesuada magna mollis euismod. Donec ullamcorper nulla non metus auctor fringilla. Nullam quis risus eget urna mollis ornare vel eu leo.

LIFE APPLICATION

Maecenas faucibus mollis interdum. Cras mattis consectetur purus sit amet fermentum. Donec ullamcorper nulla non metus auctor fringilla?



Five Ways to Be a Successful Husband

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 Peter 3:7-9

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- 1) INTRODUCTION
 - a) As dad goes, so goes the home.
 - i) The problem in most homes today is drop-out dads who are failing to be what they ought to be.
 - b) Marriages may be made in Heaven, but the problems and battles are worked out right here on Earth.
 - c) The best thing any father can do for his children is to love their mother.
 - d) 1 Peter 3:7-9
 - i) We find five ways in this passage of Scripture that husbands should do for and with their wives.
 - (1) These are five ways to be a successful husband.
- 2) PRACTICE TOGETHERNESS AND INTIMACY WITH YOUR WIFE (1 Peter 3:7)
 - a) The deepest craving of a wife is total togetherness with her husband.
 - i) Actually, this is what marriage is all about; that we should be one flesh.
 - b) The word “intimate” comes from a Latin word meaning “inmost.”
 - i) It does not have sexual overtones.
 - ii) It means opening up and sharing; becoming one flesh.
 - c) 1 Peter 3:7
 - i) The wording used in this passage for “dwell with them” is the same that is used when Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit coming into the world.
 - (1) As Christians, the Holy Spirit dwells with us.
 - (2) If you are a Christian, then your body is an earthly temple, a house; and both you and Jesus dwell in the same house through the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) This is “dwelling together.”
 - ii) Husband and wife are to dwell together in the same house with this kind of intimacy.
 - (1) It may include physical intimacy, but it goes far deeper than that.
 - (a) There can be physical relationships without intimacy, and there can be intimacy without the physical relationship.
 - (2) Husbands and wives should desire to dwell together in the same house.
 - d) Intimacy has many facets to it.
 - i) There is verbal intimacy.
 - (1) Learn how to share your secrets, your hopes, plans and dreams.
 - (2) This not only includes verbal communication but also includes our emotions.
 - (a) Laugh together, cry together; learn to share your fears, heartaches and joys.
 - (b) Learn to have an emotional oneness.
 - ii) It involves intellectual intimacy.



- (1) Learn to share your dreams, ideas, politics, theology, etc.
 - (2) Be free to talk with one another about the thoughts of your heart.
 - iii) There is social intimacy.
 - (1) This is where we enjoy the same games, get together, the same friends and same kind of recreation.
 - iv) There is spiritual intimacy.
 - (1) A wife desires a husband who will pray with her and share the things of God with her.
 - v) Physical intimacy
 - (1) This is where two become one flesh physically.
 - e) A husband needs to practice total togetherness with his wife.
 - i) Your wife desires, needs and deserves that.
- 3) PRACTICE UNDERSTANDING WITH YOUR WIFE (1 Peter 3:7)
- a) A literal translation of this passage says to “live together with good sense.”
 - b) Men and women are different.
 - i) Men and women are equal; they are not identical.
 - ii) God made us different.
 - (1) We have been and will always be equal, yet we have never been and never will be identical.
 - iii) There are many people working hard to try to attain an equality they already have, and many are fighting over the fact that they are different and will never be anything other than different.
 - iv) We are headed for trouble if we don't understand the equality and the differences that God made when He made us in the beginning male and female.
 - (1) God called His creation good.
 - (a) Genesis 1:31
 - (2) The devil has been trying ever since to blur the distinction between men and women.
 - v) The differences between men and women have nothing to do with equality; we have sameness of worth but difference of function.
 - c) God designed the man to be the initiator and the woman to be the responder.
 - i) This is built into our spiritual nature; we love God because He first loved us.
 - (1) 1 John 4:19
 - (2) Jesus is the bridegroom of the church.
 - (3) God the Father is the Heavenly Father.
 - ii) The woman desires, by her nature, to have a husband who will lead her and her home.
 - (1) This gives her a sense of security.
 - iii) If a husband is weak and will not lead and the wife has to assume leadership, then she will become frustrated and angry.
 - (1) She will think less of him and less of herself.
 - d) Men tend to think in straight lines logically, and women tend to think emotionally (spider-web thinking).
 - i) This does not mean that men cannot be emotional or that women do not think logically.



- (1) They can simply approach things from a different perspective.
 - ii) A husband may misread his wife's emotional response and accuse her of being unreasonable; he can also come across as being harsh, unfeeling or cold.
 - iii) Wives want their husbands to understand, to share and to care.
 - e) Men tend to be doers, and women tend to be be-ers.
 - i) Men tend to be goal-oriented and driven.
 - (1) His greatest fulfillment is doing his work.
 - ii) A woman's greatest fulfillment is generally in her home: her children and her relationships.
 - iii) A man is more interested in immediate results; a woman is more interested in long-term relationships.
 - f) Men tend to be silent thinkers, while women tend to be talkers.
 - g) Men tend to look for success, and women tend to look for security.
 - i) A man seems to see his work as an extension of himself.
 - ii) The woman sees her home as an extension of herself.
 - (1) It is frustrating for a wife if her husband doesn't show any concern for things around the house and allows everything to become cluttered.
 - (2) Fixing things and taking care of things around the house shows that he cares.
- 4) GIVE HONOR TO YOUR WIFE (1 Peter 3:7)
 - a) In this passage of Scripture, giving honor literally means to mark her off as having great value.
 - i) Intimacy and togetherness are built on valuing and expressing appreciation for your mate.
 - b) Sometimes a wife is not given honor in her own home.
 - c) A wife fills many different roles in her home and family.
 - i) She's a meal planner, a nurse and counselor.
 - ii) She's a policeman and judge, settling internal disputes with the children.
 - iii) She's a clothier and financial planner.
 - iv) She's a teacher, a cheerleader and nursery worker.
 - v) She's a cook, a seamstress, a gardener, an administrator, a spiritual advisor and interior decorator.
 - vi) To her husband, she is a confidante, companion, partner, comforter, and much more.
 - vii) She's a church member, neighbor, volunteer, friend, and gracious entertainer to her community.
 - d) How can you honor your wife?
 - i) Put her on a pedestal.
 - (1) Not because it is psychologically smart, but because you adore her.
 - ii) Let the children know how much you love and honor her.
 - iii) Praise her in front of her friends.
 - iv) Look into her eyes, face to face and heart to heart, and verbalize your praise to her.
 - v) Praise her not only for her physical charm but also for her character traits that make her the wonderful person she is.



- 5) SHARE FREELY WITH YOUR WIFE (1 Peter 3:7)
- a) Husbands and wives should understand that they have an equal inheritance as children of God.
 - i) In Jesus, there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, bond nor free.
 - (1) Galatians 3:28
 - ii) We are one in the Lord Jesus Christ, and your wife needs to be treated as a full partner.
 - (1) In marriage, it is share and share alike.
 - b) More than anything else, prayer is the mark of sharing fully.
 - i) 1 Peter 3:7
 - ii) Many men fail to pray with their wives.
 - (1) One reason for this is because men are designed with a hard, outer shell.
 - (a) A husband's God-given assignment is be provider and protector.
 - (i) In the Garden of Eden, Adam's job was to keep and tend the garden.
 - 1. If Adam had been doing his job, Eve would not have been deceived because Adam had dominion over the serpent.
 - 2. Genesis 1:26
 - 3. Genesis 2:15
 - (b) The nature of the woman is to nurture; she is Eve, the mother of all living.
 - (2) Men do not mind praying to God, but they generally don't want to share with someone else.
 - (a) They are okay with taking the roof off, but they don't like letting the walls down.
 - iii) You cannot pray with someone else without total intimacy and transparency.
 - iv) A wife wants her husband to pray with her for several reasons:
 - (1) It says that he recognizes her as a spiritual entity.
 - (2) It says that he acknowledges her spiritual worth.
 - (3) He has a genuine interest in her spiritual growth.
 - (4) He has time for her.
 - (5) It says that she is part of his spiritual life; they don't have a "his" or "her" relationship but an "ours" relationship.
 - (6) He desires to have spiritual leadership in their home.
 - (7) He is tending to his duties as the spiritual leader.
- 6) DEAL GENTLY WITH YOUR WIFE (1 Peter 3:7-8)
- a) The word "weaker" in this passage does not mean inferior.
 - i) A sledgehammer is stronger than a porcelain teacup, but that doesn't mean the sledgehammer has more value.
 - ii) God made us different that He might make us one.
 - b) Husbands need to learn tenderness.
 - i) Be of compassion.
 - (1) 1 Peter 3:8
 - (a) The word "compassion" literally means "with feeling."



- (b) You are tender when you feel with her; when you understand and care.
- ii) "Love as brethren."
 - (1) 1 Peter 3:8
 - (a) The word translated "brethren" here does not mean just friends like a couple of guys or a couple of girls.
 - (b) The word here for "love" is the word for friendship love.
 - (2) Your best friend ought to be your wife.
- iii) "Be pitiful."
 - (1) 1 Peter 3:8
 - (2) This means you hurt when she hurts; you love her as you love your own body.
- iv) "Be courteous."
 - (1) 1 Peter 3:8
 - (2) People tend to be more courteous to those outside the family than to those who are inside the family.
 - (3) Courtesy is love in the little things.
 - (a) Love is more than a noun; it is a verb, and it means to do things.

7) CONCLUSION

- a) The most wonderful thing on Earth is a Christian home.
 - i) The nearest thing to Heaven that we have today is our Christian homes.
- b) You cannot have a Christian home if you are not a Christian.
- c) If you want a Christian home, then give your heart to Christ today.
- d) Husband, you can love your wife so much more if Jesus Christ is number one in your life.
- e) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- f) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Would you take God's Word and find First Peter chapter 3! And when you've found it, look up here, and in a moment I'm going to direct you to a few verses. But, since today is Father's Day, I want to speak to the dads and help you to be a good dad, because I believe as dad goes, so goes the home. And I sincerely believe that the problem in most homes is not with the woman, but probably with a drop-out dad who is failing to be what he ought to be.

Now there's a lot of problems in the home today. Marriages are made in Heaven, but, friend, the problems and the battle is worked out right here on this earth. And so I want to give you some practical ways, dads, that you can be a good husband. The best thing any father can do for his children is to love their mother. So gentlemen, I want to give you five ways to be a successful husband this morning. And these will be taken right from the Word of God.

Look if you will here in First Peter chapter 3 verses 7 through 9, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them," the them, of course, refers to the wives, "according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing, knowing that ye are thereunto called that ye should inherit a blessing."

Now what are these five ways, found in this passage of Scripture, that will help you to be a successful husband? Five things that you should do for and with your wife. Number one; you need to practice togetherness or practice intimacy with her, practice intimacy with her. The deep need of a woman's heart is to be intimate with her husband. The deepest craving of a woman is total togetherness with her husband. And really this is what marriage is all about, that we should be one flesh.

Now what do we mean by intimacy anyway? When we talk about intimacy today, most people put a sexual overtone on that, but that's not what the word intimate literally means. It's a Latin word *intimus* which means inmost. It is opening up and sharing, becoming one flesh.

Now notice our Scripture, First Peter 3:7, it says, "Husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge." Now that means, actually *sunoikos* is the word. *Sun* means with. *Oikos* is house. It's the same word that is used when Jesus talked about the Holy Spirit coming into the world, and Jesus said, "He will dwell with you." Now folks, if you're saved, you know something about intimacy with the Holy Spirit, Amen? He dwells with us. Our body is an earthly temple, a house, and Jesus and I both dwell in this same house through the Holy Spirit. That is *sunoikos*. It is dwelling together.

Now sir, you and your wife are to dwell together in the same house with this kind of intimacy. Now it may include physical intimacy, but it goes far deeper than that. You can have physical relationships without having intimacy. And you can have intimacy without the physical relationship. Now this intimacy is like a diamond; it has many facets to it. This is what a woman's heart desires and



what a man's heart should desire, that we dwell together, that sunoikos in the same house.

Now it is a verbal intimacy. You silent types, you need to listen. You need to learn how to share your secrets, your hopes, your plans, your dreams. Intimacy includes our verbal communication. But not only does it include that, it includes our emotions. When we are intimate, we share not only our words, but we share our emotions; that is laughing together, crying together. We share our fears, our heartaches, our joys. There is that intimacy where we have that emotional oneness.

And then, not only that, but it involves intellectual intimacy where we share our dreams, our ideas, books, politics, theology, all of these things. We're free to talk with another individual about the thoughts of our hearts and our lives. And then there's social intimacy, where we enjoy the same games, the same parties, the same friends, the same kind of recreation. And then, of course, there is that spiritual intimacy. A woman wants a man who will pray with her and share the things of God with her. And we'll talk a little bit more about that later on. And then, all of this is climaxed by that physical intimacy, where two become one flesh, physically.

And so, the rest of the message is going to tell you how to achieve that intimacy, but, first of all, the very first thing I want you to understand is that you need to practice with your wife that intimacy, that total togetherness. She desires that, she deserves that, she needs that, and she wants that. And you, as her husband, if you would be a successful husband, you had better learn to give it and, guys, it does not come naturally. It's not the male trait naturally. Look at the magazines. Women's magazines; "How to Achieve Intimacy in Your Home." Men's magazines; "How to Get Better Gas Mileage," "How to Remodel Your Garage." I'm telling you, we're just not wired that way normally, naturally. But if you would be a successful husband, the Bible says, "Husbands, dwell with them," that is, to share that intimacy, that intimacy, that inmost life.

Now number two; not only should you practice intimacy with her, but, number two, you should be understanding of her. Now look at the Scripture again, First Peter 3 verse 7. It says, "Dwell with them," what's the next phrase, "according to knowledge." Now most men are knuckleheads when it comes to marriage. Actually, if you were to give it a literal translation it says, "Live together with good sense, live together with good sense." "Dwell together with knowledge."

Now, that's easy for a man to understand if we put it in another idiom. What does it mean to own an automobile with knowledge? Well, you get out your automobile manual. Who was it, somebody said in our pulpit a while back, "The most unread book in the world is the automobile manual." Only time you pull it out is when? When you're in trouble. "Where's that thing? It's in the glove compartment somewhere." And you get it out to see why the thing won't go. But probably it would still be going had you read it first and done what you were supposed to do.

Now in the automobile manual, the owners' manual, it tells you what kind of fuel to use, what kind of oil to use, or how much air pressure to keep in the tires, and so forth, and you keep an eye on the gauges. And you read those gauges to get that feedback. When you look at the gauges on the dashboard of your automobile, what you're doing is becoming sensitive to your car's needs. Now guys, you need to understand that there's some gauges if you'll just read them; to dwell with her



according to knowledge.

One thing that men need to learn, and need to learn well, is that men and women are different. They are absolutely different. Let me say with all of the firmness and straightforwardness that I can say without any stutter, stammer, apology, equivocation; men and women are equal. Men and women are equal. Let me say also, they are not identical. God made them different. We have been, and we always will be equal, yet we never have been, and never will be identical.

The irony of ironies is this; that many people are working themselves to death to try to attain an equality that they already have, and they're fighting over the fact that they're different and will never be anything other than different. And we're headed for deep trouble if we don't understand the equality and the differences that God made when God made us in the beginning, male and female. And God said, "That is good." And the devil ever since then has been trying to blur the distinction between the sexes. It has nothing to do with equality. We have the sameness of worth but difference of function. And men need to understand that wives are different and make some adjustments.

There's an old story. You've probably heard it. The ships were out for maneuver, and the man said, "Captain, there is a huge, hulking form in front of us in the fog in the darkness." The captain said, "Send them a radio message and tell them to alter their course 10 degrees to the north." They got a radio message back, said, "You alter your course 10 degrees to the south." The captain said, "Send them another message and tell them this is a battleship. Alter their course 10 degrees to the north." The message came back, "You alter your course 10 degrees to the south." He said, "Send them a message! I'm the captain! Alter your course 10 degrees to the north." The message came back, said, "I'm a seaman third class. Alter your course 10 degrees to the south." The captain said, "Send them a reminder one more time. This is a battleship." The message came back, "This is a lighthouse."

Now guys, I want to tell you something, there are some F-A-C-T facts, and we'd better learn to adjust to them when we dwell with a wife according to knowledge. You know, a man may think he understands a woman because he thinks she is like he is. Guys, you will never change her basic nature. Women are different physically. Women are different emotionally. Women are different psychologically. And this is not a disadvantage. God made us this way, because it's a part of God's wonderful plan.

Now what are some of the differences? If you would dwell with a woman according to knowledge, what are some of the things that you need to learn, mister? Some lighthouse truths.

Number one; God designed the man to be the initiator and the woman to be the responder. Now this is built into our spiritual nature. We love God because He first loved us. Jesus is the Bridegroom of the church. God the Father is the Heavenly Father. The man is supposed to be the initiator. The woman desires, by her nature, to have a man who will lead her and her home. It gives her a sense of security. Now if a woman has a weak man who will not lead, and she has to assume the leadership and her husband follows and cowers along, she will become angry and frustrated. She will think less of him and she will think less of herself. Sir, you are to lead because God by nature made you to be a leader and made you to be an initiator. By nature, He made her to be a responder.

I'll tell you something else about men and women. Men tend to think in straight lines logically;



women think emotionally, spider-web thinking. Now listen carefully, because I don't want any angry women after this. It doesn't mean that a man can't be emotional, and it certainly doesn't mean that a woman cannot be logical, but they come at things differently. A woman will make, sometimes, an emotional response that the husband may not understand, because she leads with her emotions, and her plea is for her husband to take it and put it all together. Now if he misreads that need in her life, he can seem harsh. And he can begin to scold her for being unreasonable, or illogical, or even worse, stupid. And if he does that, he's headed for trouble. Now at the same time, she's going to accuse him of being hard, unfeeling, logical, cold, and insensitive. Joyce has said to me many times, "Don't listen to what I say; listen to what I mean." So you have to be an interpreter.

You know, sometimes when women have problems, they come tell the husband about it, what's the first thing a husband wants to do? Fix it. Fix it. I may have told you this before, but Joyce called me from Knoxville. She said, "Adrian." I said, "What?" She said, "I missed my plane." I said, "Well, is there another plane?" She said, "No, I missed my plane." She said, "They shut the door. They wouldn't let me on." I said, "Well, what airline are you on?" She said, "Adrian, I missed my plane." I said, "Would you check and, and go to..." She said, "I missed my plane." I wanted to fix it! She wanted me to say, "Honey, I'm so sorry you missed your plane." See, I'm telling other people and I myself am so stupid, so dumb. They want you to understand and to feel and to share and to care. Men tend to think logically and women emotionally.

Men tend to be do'ers, women tend to be be'ers. Men are goal-oriented, reaching out, driving on. A man's greatest fulfillment is doing his work. A woman, if she's living according to her God-given nature, her greatest fulfillment is in her home, her children, her relationships. A man is more interested in immediate results. She is more interested in long-term relationships. Now these are generalities, and you could pick with any of these and say, "Oh, I know a difference there." I'm talking now about generalities.

So many times a man will pursue a woman to get her to marry him because that is an object of achievement. And once he's done that, once he gets married, well, then he goes to other pursuits; his job or whatever. But she, because she wants this being, she wants more and more of an intimate relationship, and if we're not careful the marriage will draw apart.

The man tends to be a silent thinker; the woman tends to be a talker. Have you noticed that? Now wait a minute. That's not to say that the thinker can't talk and the talker is not thinking. But how many people know the problem of the silent man and the talkative woman? Say Amen. You know what I'm saying is true. The silent man; the talkative woman. Now, both men and women need to work on this. And, ladies, listen to me now, and gentlemen listen to me, we need more talking thinkers and we also need some more thinking talkers. Men tend to be silent; women tend to talk. Now God made us this way, generally, but we can take it to extremes.

A man tends to look for success, when a woman tends to look for security. The man seems to see his work as an extension of himself. The woman sees her home as an extension of herself. And so, guys, if you don't show any concern for the things of the house, if you allow the house and everything to become cluttered, the yard, there's no sense of order there, that's frustrating to a



woman. Do you know what'll please Joyce a lot for me, how I can please her? Is to fix something at the house. Not to have somebody else fix it, for da big guy to fix it. For me to fix it. To get a screwdriver, you know, or something like that and just fix some little thing. What is that? That is saying, "He cares about our home, he cares about the things that I care about." When the house is cluttered, she feels cluttered. She is sensitive when something is wrong at the house. We need to be understanding of our wives.

Now here's the third thing I want to say that you would, if you would be a successful husband; give honor to her, give honor to her. Look again at the Scripture, First Peter 3 verse 7, "Husbands, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor." Do you see that? Dwell with them according to knowledge. Understand there is a difference between men and women. And then, give her honor. This literally means to mark her off as having great value. Now intimacy and togetherness are built on valuing and expressing appreciation for your mate.

Gary Smalley and John Trent have said in their book, "The Gift of Honor" this, and I quote, "Honor is a decision we make to place a high value, worth, and importance on another person, viewing him or her as a priceless gift, and granting that person a position in our lives worthy of great respect. And love involves putting our decision into action." Mister, do you really honor your wife?

One husband and wife had lived for a long time and they had a very wonderful home. And somebody asked the man, "What is the secret?" He said, "Well, for one thing, when I got married, my father-in-law to be, before the wedding, gave me a beautiful watch. And on the face of that watch was engraved these words; 'Say Something Nice to Sally.' And every time I look at the watch I'm reminded that I need to say something nice to Sally."

Now, what about working women? Why do women work? Well, some women work because they have to, it's necessary for the home, and if that is necessary, my hat is off to you. And one of the markers, I believe, one of the measuring sticks is this; does your work, lady, add to the home or does it take from the home? That's very interesting. You need to consider that. But why are so many women in the workplace when they don't need to be? Because at least in the workplace they can get honor. And many times, the home suffers because she can get a paycheck and says, "This is what you're worth."

What kind of an emotional paycheck, mister, are you giving to your wife? Do you honor your wife? Have you ever thought about what your wife does? Let's say what she does for the family. Here's what Dennis and Barbara Rainey have given us a list of things that a wife is. She's a meal planner, she's a nurse, she's a counselor and comforter, she's a policeman and judge; that is, she settles internal disputes with the children. She's a clothier, wardrobe consultant, she's a budget and financial planner, she's a teacher and a tutor, she's a cheerleader, she's a spiritual advisor, she's a nursery worker, she's a seamstress, she's a cook, she's a maid, she's a linguistics expert, she specializes in the dialect of two-year-olds, and she's a resident Emily Post, she's a gardener, she's administrator, schedule planner, interior decorator, chauffeur, environmentalist, maintaining proper home environment, a family historian, and preserver of family history. To her husband she's a confidante, companion, lover, advisor, encourager, partner, comforter, hostess, and entertainer. For



the community she's a neighbor, a gracious entertainer, a volunteer, a counselor, a friend. She's a church member. She does all of these things. Who gives her the honor that she is due to help build her self-esteem?

Let me tell you how you can honor your wife. Number one; put her on a pedestal. I have my wife on a pedestal, not because it's psychologically smart; I just adore that woman, put her on a pedestal. Number two; let the children know how much you love and honor her. Number three; praise her in front of her friends. Number four; look into her eyes, face to face, heart to heart, and verbalize your praise to her. Next, when you praise her, praise her not only for her physical charm, but praise her for her character traits that make her the wonderful person that she is. Give her honor.

All right, next. Share freely with her. Now listen to what the Scripture says. It says here in First Peter 3:7, that we are, "Giving honor unto the wife, as to the weaker vessel, as being heirs together." Do you see that? Do you see that in verse 7? "Being heirs together of the grace of life." Husbands and wives need to understand that they have an equal inheritance as the children of God. Galatians 3 verse 28, there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, bond nor free. We are one in the Lord Jesus Christ. And your wife needs to be treated as a full partner. We are heirs together of the grace of life. She needs to know that in your marriage it is share and share alike.

Now, what is the mark of this sharing fully? Do you know what it is? More than anything else, it is prayer. Look at it again in this verse 7. And, guys don't miss this now, "As being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered." A woman wants a man to pray with her. And I'm convinced this is where most of us fail. We men fail more than anything else in failing to pray with our wives.

Now why do we fail to pray with our wives? It's because the way we're built. We're built with a kind of a hard outer shell. And that's God-given. What was Adam's job? Adam's job was to keep the garden and tend the garden. Now think about it. To keep the garden; that means he's to protect the garden. And Eve never would have gotten into trouble if Adam had been doing what he ought to do, because he had dominion over the serpent. His job was to keep the garden. And his job was to tend the garden. That is, the husband, therefore, is to be what? He is the provider and the protector. That is the God-given assignment for the man. He is the provider and he is the protector. So God has given him that exterior to be the protector because he's got to be tough. And a provider, he's got to have that strength. God gives him the muscles and the physical frame to hoe and to chop and to bring in whatever is necessary. He is to keep the garden and he is to tend the garden.

Now, with that as an exterior, what is the nature of a woman? Well, she is to nurture. She is, she's the mother of all living. She is Eve. She is taken out of the man and so that is the nature that God gives to a woman. Well why does a woman desire to pray with her husband? Well it means so much to her. It means that it's an affirmation of her. It speaks of equality. It speaks of trust.

Why do we men find it so difficult to pray with our wives? Because we've got that shell around us. Most men will get out in the woods and pray to God. They don't mind praying to God. They don't mind getting the roof off; they just don't want to get the walls down. They just don't want to share with



somebody else. It's too something. Men just don't like to do that, and it is hard for the men sometimes.

Now when you pray with someone, you cannot pray with someone without total intimacy and transparency. If you do, if you try to pray without total intimacy and transparency, you'll feel like a hypocrite, or your prayers will be just a little, you know, little memorized, verbalized phrases.

But why does a woman want a man to pray with her? Well number one, it says; "My husband recognizes me as a spiritual entity." Number two; "My husband acknowledges my spiritual worth." Number three; "My husband has a genuine interest in my spiritual growth." Number four; "My husband has time for me." Number five; "I am a part of my husband's spiritual life. We don't have a 'his' and a 'her' relationship, but we have an 'ours' relationship. Next, "My husband desires to have spiritual leadership in our home." Next, "My husband is tending to his duties as the spiritual leader." What a relief, what a release it gives to a woman when the man will pray with her. It is very hard for men to do it, and many of you men, some of you deacons, some teachers, some pastors, will not pray with their wives, other than just simply a little prayer, thanking God for the food in the morning, or perhaps a little goodnight prayer at night. But if you would be a successful husband, learn to pray with your wife.

I want to confess it's been one of the most difficult things for me in my earlier years to want to pray with Joyce. I loved her, but there's something in the male nature that does not want to do that by nature. So, I want to encourage you to do this to share fully with her.

Now just by way of review, before I come to the last point, what have we said? What have we said? What, what are five ways that you can be a successful husband? Number one; live intimately with her. Number two; be understanding of her. Number three; give honor to her. Number four; share freely with her.

And here's the final thing. Number five; deal gently with her, deal gently with her. Look at this Scripture again, if you will, and see what it says here in First Peter 3:7, "Likewise ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel." Do you see that? "The weaker vessel." Now don't think that means the inferior vessel. When she's weaker, that doesn't mean that she is inferior to you. What is weaker, a porcelain teacup or a sledgehammer? Well, a sledgehammer is stronger but it doesn't mean it's of more value. As a matter of fact, a porcelain teacup is more fragile, it's of more value. You say, "But you can't drive spikes with a teacup." No, but you can't drink tea from a sledgehammer. God made us different that He might make us one.

God made the woman, not of blue denim. He made her of fine silk. And the silk may be weaker than the blue denim. You, sir, are the blue denim. She is the silk. You're the sledgehammer. She is the teacup and what you need to do is to learn this tenderness. Deal gently with her.

Now, how do you do that? Well, he goes on to say how to do this. Notice he says in First Peter 3 verse 8, first of all, be of compassion. Look as he continues in this passage, "Finally brethren, be of one mind, having compassion." That is, you're tender with her when you feel with her. The word compassion literally means with feeling. Look at her and say, "I understand and I care."

And then it says, "Love as brethren." Now, the word, it's translated here brethren, doesn't mean like just friends, between a couple of guys or a couple of gals. But it's the word not for agape love,



we've already talked about that, but this is the word for friendship love. Let your wife be your pal. Let your wife be your, your friend. Your best friend ought to be your wife. I'll tell you one thing, it's a whole lot cheaper. You can buy the same kind of sporting equipment and go to the same vacations.

Somebody wrote these words. I copied them down. "Someone asked me to tell the time our friendship stopped and our love began. Oh, my darling, that is the secret. Our friendship never stopped."

So how do you have this gentleness, compassion, love as brethren? "Be pitiful," he goes on to say. What does that mean? It means I hurt when you hurt. I love you as I love my own body. And then it says, "Be courteous." Oh, if there's anything that's needed in the modern home today, it is courtesy. Why are we more courteous to those who're outside the family than we are those who are inside the family? What is courtesy? Courtesy's just love in little things. These are the things that make for tender action for tender emotions. Love is more than a noun. Love is a verb. It means to do things.

All right, I'm going to sum it up. Here you are guys. You want to teach that teenage boy a lesson? You want on Dad's Day to do something good for your kids? You make this little list now. Don't forget these things. I'm going to give them to you. If you haven't written them down, I'll give you one more chance. Here it is. All right: live intimately with her, be understanding of her, give honor to her, share fully with her, and deal gently with her. The Scripture; First Peter 3 beginning in verse 7.

Now, let me just wrap this up by saying, the most wonderful thing on Earth is a Christian home. I wouldn't take anything for our Christian home, for our children, our grandchildren, the joy that we have, the fun that we have, the love that we have and the future that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. The nearest thing to Heaven, the closest thing to paradise that we have today is our homes. Thank God for a Christian home.

Now do you want a Christian home? Listen carefully. You can't have a Christian home without Christians any more than you could have a cherry pie without cherries. If you want a Christian home, then give your heart to Jesus Christ. And, dads, if you've never given your heart to Christ, for your sake, for your wife's sake, for your kids' sake, give your heart to Jesus. Let Him save you today.

I'm so grateful that as a teenage boy, Jesus Christ came into my heart and in my life. Joyce knows that she's not number one in my life. She knows she's number two. She knows that Jesus is number one. And she knows that I love her a whole lot more making Jesus Christ number one than I could ever love her by making her number one. And I want to ask you to do that today. If you've never done it, I want to ask you to say, "Lord Jesus, right now, with all of my heart, forever, I open my heart. I receive You into my life as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Save me, Lord Jesus. And begin now to make me the person you want me to be. Amen."



PO Box 38300 | Memphis TN 38183-0300 | (901)382-7900