



Discussion Questions

1. What does respect look like for most husbands? Why is respect such a crucial issue for men?
2. How do you think wives can best show respect for their husbands?
3. What does sensitivity to feelings look like for most wives? Why is emotional understanding and connection such a crucial issue for women?
4. How can husbands better connect emotionally with their wives?
5. What is the harm in speaking ill of your spouse to your friends, family, or co-workers? What's a better way you can you deal with misunderstandings between you and your spouse?
6. Are you quick to listen and slow to speak when communicating with your spouse?
7. Name one specific way you can honor your spouse this week.

“Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.” Ephesians 5:33 (NASB)

THE BURNING QUESTION: Without focusing on the shortcomings of your spouse, how can you better fulfill your God-given role in marriage? Be honest and admit if things are undermining or destroying your marriage. Identify specific areas and deal with them in specific ways. Develop a biblical strategy of response, and invest time, energy, and prayer in dealing with the destructive forces in your marriage. Don't allow barriers to build up that can hinder your communication with one another. Remember that famous line from the movie *Cool Hand Luke*? “What we have here is a failure to communicate.” Much marital strife relates to lack of communication. If you're a husband, learn how to speak your wife's language of love and emotional understanding. If you're a wife, learn to speak your husband's language of respect. By focusing on changing yourself (and not speaking badly about your spouse to other people), you will ultimately change your marriage.

Scriptures

Proverbs 15:1

[1] A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Ephesians 5:21-33

[21] Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

[22] Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

[23] For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

[24] Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

[25] Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

[26] to make her holy, cleansing^[a] her by the washing with water through the word,

[27] and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

[28] In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

[29] After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—

[30] for we are members of his body.

[31] “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”^[b]

[32] This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.

[33] However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

James 1:19

[19] My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

1 Peter 3:1-9

[1] Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives,

[2] when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

[3] Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes.

[4] Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.

[5] For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands,

[6] like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

[7] Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

[8] Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.

[9] Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.