

HOW TO TREAT YOUR WIFE

MIKE GREIF

Every aspect of our spiritual walk, including the marriage relationship, is a growing and maturing experience. The fact that we have not yet reached a mature status, does not mean that it is unattainable. God is making real to us not what we are, but what we can become in the strength and power of the Holy Spirit. Philippians 1:6 says, *“Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”* It is through God’s love shed abroad in our hearts that we can manifest the nature of Christ in our marriages and it is in this spirit that the following article is written.

As husbands, marriage provides one of the best environments available to us to implement the principles of Christian living and the opportunity to be Christ’s representatives on the earth. If we

can be His representative and ambassador in our own homes where life at times is the most heated and challenging, then we can be more effective as His representatives outside of our homes and to the world. However, it starts in our homes, and especially with our wives.

The following points that I will be making are things that I’ve written in the back of my Bible over the last 40 years concerning how to treat my wife. Since I’ve only been married for 25 years, the first fifteen years of my searching of how to treat my wife took place before I even met her.

These points that I will share are things that God has spoken to me over a long period of time. Hopefully, they will mean something to you as well. I want to challenge husbands to be the very best husband and

father that they can be and to honor God with their lives. All scriptures that are referenced are taken from The New American Standard translation of the Bible.

Husbands Love Your Wives and Treat Them as Equals

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25). Also, read Ephesians 5:22-33. Husbands are instructed here to love their wives in the same way that Christ loved the church as he died and gave his life for it. God wants us to die to self and possibly literally for our wives and to love them with all of our heart. If a husband loves his wife in this way, dying to self for her, she will have no problem loving and respecting him in return. In essence, a husband is called to lay down his life for his wife.

Husbands and wives are both equally important in God’s eyes. One of the brethren told me that it’s like a house. The husband functions as the roof of the house and the wife functions as the walls. The roof covers the house but the walls hold up the roof. Both are of equal value and importance.

Bear the fruit of the Spirit toward her: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Also show compassion, humility, meekness, bearing with one another, forgiving one another, being thankful always for her, not jealous, not arrogant, not bragging, not rude, not selfish, not provoked, not taking into account a wrong suffered (Galatians 5:22-26 and Colossians 3:12-14).

“Be of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose” (Philippians 2:2). Make 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8 your marriage roadmap, *“Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag, and is not arrogant, does not act rude; it does not seek its own, is not provoked or made angry, does not take into account a wrong suffered when it is offended, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails....”* Let us ask the Holy Spirit to help us apply these things to our lives.

Your Wife is a Very Special Gift of God to You

Your wife is a gift from God, so treat her as a precious jewel, a queen, an equal to you. Utmost care should be taken to protect, defend, preserve, love, honor, appreciate, and enjoy her. Your wife comes before your children. After God, she is first. If you put her in this place, your children will learn to be unselfish, and they will have constant reminders that they are not the center of the universe and are to be servants, as well. Remember that, *“He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord”* (Proverbs 18:22). *“Houses and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord”* (Proverbs 19:14). If God sees your wife in this way, don’t you think you should also?

Be a servant to your wife and in your home. You’re not called to be served but to serve (Philippians 2:3-8). Matthew 20:26 says, *“If you want to be great in God’s kingdom learn to be the servant of all.”* This especially applies to your wife and all of your household. A wise wife is from the Lord. Appreciate who she is and what her gifts are. Encourage those gifts anytime you can (Proverbs 31).

Treat Your Wife with Good Manners

Always be a gentleman during dating and especially after you are married. Open the door for her in the car. Seat her in the restaurant. Always treat her the way a gentleman treats a lady.

When I was 23 or so, I took my mother on a 4,000-mile road trip to see all of her relatives on the west coast of the United States. While we were visiting my brother in Los Angeles, we were invited to dinner by a very wealthy friend of my brother, Dan. This man was in his 80s. When we got out of the car to go into the restaurant, he got out quickly and opened the door for my mother. Then he took her arm up the steps to the restaurant to open the door for her and proceeded to seat her at the table. He wouldn’t sit down until she did, and anytime she got up, he stood. This was a very wealthy man in Los Angeles, who lived in a house that looked like a castle in Hollywood. He had a large table full of pictures showing him with movie stars, several presidents of the United States, and other very important people of that time.

Yet, he treated my mother like she was the Queen of England. He treated her as if she were a special guest in his home even though we were in a public place. In that one evening, I saw how to treat a lady and I never forgot it.

Seek to Please Your Wife and Make her Feel Secure

Always be looking for ways to make her happy. Take care of your finances so money won't be a problem. Make your family your priority rather than toys or hanging out with the boys, and other things that would take time away from your wife and your family.

Make a point to spend your own personal time in prayer and in the Word of God each day. Make this your habit. Really invest in building your own personal relationship with God and getting to really know Him, and to be led by His Spirit, and to feel His presence daily. This will pay great dividends towards the success of your marriage.

Practice Good Communication

Spend lots of time just talking with one another, sharing your thoughts and feelings with each other. Be open and totally honest. Don't play guessing games. Don't hide your feelings. Be transparent. Don't expect her to know what you're thinking or feeling. Practice speaking the truth in love. Never be too tired to listen to her when she wants to talk with you. If she is experiencing a problem, she may just wish to share it with you and want you to just listen to her without trying to solve her problem. Although arguments will arise from time to time, avoid becoming angry with one another and treat each other with respect. You don't always have to have the last word. Be slow to speak, and just let things settle down a bit before you respond. Thinking we have to say something, usually results in saying the wrong thing and causing hurt feelings.

"Be angry yet do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger" (Ephesians 4:26). There are two lessons to be learned here. First, we are all going to have times when we're angry, but anger turns into sin when we give in to it. If we say that hurtful word, scream or say what we know we shouldn't, that is when our anger turns into sin. Just listen

quietly to the Holy Spirit. Second, we must not let the day come to an end still holding on to our anger. That's easy to understand, but harder to apply. In essence, this scripture is telling us to reconcile. We can choose whether we remain angry or whether we humble ourselves, ask forgiveness, and try to make things right again. It's pride and self-righteousness that prevent us from doing this. One of the brethren used to tell us that he never went to sleep after an argument without making up first. It is to a man's glory to overlook a shortcoming or a fault. Don't dwell on your wife's shortcomings and faults, rather, overlook them.

If you are both physically able, go on walks together. There's no better place to communicate and talk to your wife than when you're walking alone with her. Leave your phones at home, and just talk and walk and listen.

Most importantly have daily devotions with your wife (and family if there are children at home). Pray together each day. It is almost impossible to pray together and be angry with each other at the same time.

Be Understanding with Your Wife

1 Peter 3:7-9, *"You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way (functional knowledge gleaned from personal first-hand experience, connecting theory to application. Put into practice what you know to be right. Put your theory into practice as with a weaker vessel or better put, a vessel under construction, as we all are), as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you are called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing."* God puts a little added emphasis on husbands, explaining to them that if they don't live with their wives in an understanding way, He isn't going to answer their prayers. We hinder our own prayers by not being understanding, especially to our wives.

Ephesians 4:29-32, *"Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as*

is good for edification (building one another up) according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor (complaining) and slander be put away from you, along with all malice (ill intent). And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”

Ephesians 5:1-2, *“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave himself up for you, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”* Again, what needs to be done is for each one of us to read these words and think about them and to let the Holy Spirit apply them to our lives.

Colossians 3:19, *“Husbands, love your wives, and do not be embittered (angry, harsh, indignant) against them.”* Here we are commanded in what not to do. It is a choice we make each day.

Closing Comments

As we have been taught by the brethren, when we made those wedding vows at our marriage, we were making those vows before God. The vows were made first, to God, second, to the marriage union, and third to our spouse. I have felt very strongly over the years that I, as the head of my household, will bear the greater responsibility before God for the success and well-being of my marriage, and for the spiritual success of my children. Meet the challenge directly, and do what you know to be right. Be the best husband and father that God has given you the ability to be. Be quick to hear the Holy Spirit’s guiding voice. Be quick to forgive. Don’t hold grudges. Walk humbly before God as a husband and father.

1 Corinthians 16:13-14 says, *“Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.”* Be the man, husband, and father that God wants you to be.

The Holy Spirit is still in the process of changing us into the likeness of Christ, so we all need to be patient with one another. Husbands, we need to fulfill the headship role that God has ordained for us. We need to be the fathers and the husbands that God wants us to be. We need to act like men and be the men He wants us to be. A real man takes care of his wife and his children above himself. He puts God’s Word into practice by being a servant to them. As mentioned above, I believe we, as husbands, will be held responsible before God for every word we speak and every action we take regarding our families. Each of us will stand before God and give an account for all that we have done. Let’s try to do the best we can.

Oh Lord, give us ears to hear and hearts to understand how You want us to choose to live, care for, and love our wives. May we honor You by our lives.✝

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Headquarters:
802 Airport Road
North Battleford, SK S9A 2Z3 Canada

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 934
North Battleford, SK S9A 2Z3 Canada

Telephone:
(306) 445-2733

Email:
info@globalmissionsinc.org

Online:
www.globalmissionsinc.org

Traveling Ministry Contact List:
www.globalmissionsinc.org/about

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