

# GROWTHguide

Starting May 18, 2014

## “What Men Wish Women Knew About Men”



One out of two marriages fails. What does it take to really have a highly effective marriage? It is possible, but takes a lot of work and a deeper understanding of what is of most importance to one another. The Bible has a lot to say about marriage and how husbands and wives are to respect, honor, and love one another.

### Day 1: Read Ephesians 5:21-24 and 33

#### Reflection Questions:

- Take time to reflect on Paul’s words. Wives, what does it mean to submit? Remember, Paul does not say wives are to obey their husbands, nor that husbands are to be the boss of their wives, but that wives are to respect their husband in their leadership role. The husband’s role is to come alongside and shepherd.

In an interview article titled, *10 Things Guys Wish Women Knew About Men*, by The Christian Broadcasting Network, author Shaunti Feldhahn reveals insights she learned after interviewing more than a 1,000 men on this topic. A couple of these truths are that men want to feel respected, adequate and receive affirmation from their wives. To quote Feldhahn:

*“Husbands need to know that their wives respect them both privately and publicly. Men thrive when they know that their wives trust them, admire them and believe in them...When they receive regular and genuine affirmation from their wives (not flattery, by the way), they become much more secure and confident in all areas of their lives.”*

- Wives, take some time today to express to your husband how much he means to you, why you respect him and affirm him.

### Day 2: Read Ephesians 4:1-3 and Ephesians 4:32

Wives, have you ever had an argument with your husband about forgetting something you told him? Something you know you told him but he says you never did? What if I told you that men and women’s brains were created differently? As Pastor Mark Gungor hilariously describes it in his *Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage* seminar, women’s brains are generally made up like a ball of wires, and their thoughts are all connected. Gungor says this is why women are often better multi-taskers and remember more details. Men’s brains, however, are generally compartmentalized like a bunch of different boxes--which are each given different subjects (like sports, family, finances, etc) and are taken out one at a time. Gungor explains that because of these major differences, it can often cause some frustration when communicating. Sometimes vital information is shared with husbands when they are focused on a single “box” and need time to change it out for a different one. Instead of getting upset and accusing them of not caring or listening, gently communicate the details to them again, but wait until they are fully able to hear what you have to say. Remember that many men are not multi-taskers, they often prefer not to process a lot of vital information at once. Wives should offer forgiveness for their husband’s shortcomings and failures, and need to remind them that they are loved.

### Day 3: Read Philippians 2:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:24

#### Reflection Questions:

- Reflect on what it means to put your spouse’s needs or interests before your own. How do these passages challenge you?
- How often do you show love to one another without expecting anything in return?

- As mentioned in last week's Growth Guide, women often long for affection that is not foreplay or intended to lead to sex. For many men however, having fulfilling sex with their wives is a critical way to show that they are loved and desired. Often making time for intimacy is a challenge, especially if you have children; but wives, with this information in mind, how might your marriage be different if you were to allow more time for intimacy with your husband?

## Day 4: Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

According to author Gary Chapman in his book, *The 5 Love Languages*, we each have preferences when it comes to being shown love and affection. The five love languages are:

- Words of Affirmation
- Acts of Service
- Receiving Gifts
- Quality Time
- Physical Touch

Take time today to ask your spouse how they prefer to be shown love. If you each want to discover your love language(s), you can take a mini test on the website [www.5lovelanguages.com](http://www.5lovelanguages.com). Discuss your results with each other and determine how you can better speak your spouses' love language. Keep 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 in your mind as you discuss ways to further show your love for one another.

## Day 5: Read Proverbs 31:30 and Galatians 5:22

### Reflection Questions:

Consider how your relationship with the Lord affects how you treat your spouse. Remember that when you are growing toward the Lord, your marriage will stronger too.

- Are you practicing the fruits of the spirit in your marriage?
- Wives, what are some fruits of the spirit you could be better at showing your husband?

## Day 6: Review the feedback below, which was given by men, on how they feel loved by their wives. Through prayer and contemplation, reveal what your heart is saying to you.

Men feel loved when women...

- Make them feel admired and respected, both privately and publicly.
- Uplift and affirm them in their role as a husband, and in their work.
- Encourage and support them, as a provider.
- Desire them sexually.
- Appreciate their romantic efforts.

## Day 7

Today is your "Sabbath" and a time for reflection. How has God been speaking to you over the week? Use what the Lord has said to you to remold and reshape your life. If you are having trouble hearing God's voice, slow down or even stop what you are doing so that the busyness of life's demands do not squelch the whispers of God's language of love upon your heart.