

10 Ways to Show Godly Respect to Your Wife

A marriage without respect will not thrive. But sometimes it's hard to know how to show respect to your spouse.

Where respect falls in the hierarchy of needs and desires may differ somewhat between men and women, but it's a vital need for both sexes. Not demonstrating respect to your spouse will kill any real intimacy between you. Without respect you cannot be—and feel—connected to each other.

As a wife, you may feel as though your husband should earn your respect before you offer it. But if the situation were reversed, would you want him to demand you earn his love before he offers it to you? Showing respect for him should be a gift you voluntarily offer whenever possible.

As a husband, you may not realize how much the degree to which you show respect to your wife causes her spirit to either shrivel and die—or thrive and grow. If you want your wife to be a queen and display her beauty to you, treating her with respect will go a long way toward allowing her to do just that.

So here are some practical ways in which you can show respect to your spouse:

1. Listen—really listen—to them. Paying attention to and devoting real energy to understanding what your spouse is trying to communicate shows that you value what they have to say. Listening without interrupting or putting them down shows that their thoughts, ideas, opinions, and feelings are important to you.

2. Seek out their opinion. Don't wait for your spouse to always initiate conversation. Seek out ways and times when you

can ask for their input on what you are working on, struggling with or interested in. Doing so shows you think they have something of value to offer.

3. Celebrate their wins. When your spouse accomplishes something that was a challenge, reaches a milestone or takes an active step toward fulfilling a dream, celebrate with them. Make a big deal—in appropriate measure—over their win. Brag about their win to others, as appropriate. Be your spouse's biggest cheerleader.

4. Ditch the criticism. That doesn't mean you sweep problems or issues under the rug. It does mean you don't nag. Period. No condescending comments. Express the concerns you have clearly, privately and with the purpose of solving a problem or offering support, not tearing down your spouse.

5. Guard their reputation. There will be things your spouse does that you don't like, or that hurt you. Don't air their dirty laundry to your friends, on social media or otherwise in public. If there are some serious issues about which you need advice or support, seek out a counselor, pastor or older godly Christian to get input from—privately.

6. Speak well of them in public. This is the converse of No. 5, and it's one of the most powerful ways in which you can show respect. Speak well of your spouse in public or on social media. And it's great when your spouse can catch you doing this; it validates how much you respect him/her. And make your positive words real; no underhanded or qualified praise.

7. When you cause them pain, apologize. You don't want your spouse to dismiss your hurt feelings, so don't make that mistake with them. Your spouse feels how they feel; acknowledge that. Even if the pain you caused them was unintentional or seems unreasonable to you, apologize and make it right as much as you are able.

8. Be your best self. Take care of yourself in a way that your

spouse can be proud of you. You're not doing it because your spouse wants you to, but taking care of your health, your appearance and your attitudes/behavior shows you care enough about your relationship to bring your best self to it.

9. Study your spouse. You study things that really matter to you. Studying your spouse—becoming increasingly aware of their moods, fears, strengths and love language—shows that they are the most important thing in the world to you. You're paying attention; that demonstrates respect.

10. "If it's important to you, it's important to me." If your spouse cares about something, you must care about it too. You may not feel the same as your spouse does about sports, fashion or what a particular person says or does, but you can care about it because you care about your spouse and the impact that issue, person or situation has on them.

Few things demonstrate disrespect more than making your spouse an afterthought in your life. Taking the time and energy to learn how to show your spouse respect will pay big dividends. Respect will strengthen and fuel your marriage in powerful ways.

Does your spouse know that you respect him/her—by what you say and do? If you're not sure, ask. And then invest the time and energy in learning how to demonstrate respect to them in the ways that will mean the most to them.

Question: How well are you demonstrating respect to your spouse? Is there a way you could do that better? You can leave a comment below. {eoa}

Dr. Carol Peters-Tanksley is both a board certified OB-Gyn physician and an ordained doctor of ministry. As an author and speaker, she loves helping people discover the **Fully Alive** kind of life that Jesus came to bring us. Visit her website at .

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