

3 Ways to Ensure Your Wife's Respect

Every human being on the planet yearns for respect, but especially men. For a man, respect is the lifeblood of our emotional stability, the air our lungs breathe, the milk on our Wheaties, the gas in our internal-combustion engines. In other words, it's what makes us go.

Respect is sometimes demanded, enforced and argued about. Gangs and countries have gone to war, and men have died for lack of it, but when freely given, it means the most to us. For a wife, respect is given as an order from the apostle Paul in Eph. 5:33, "let the wife see that she respects *her* husband." (Emphasis added.) In other words, it's not enough to love him, to coddle him, to baby him, although those things are kind of nice sometimes (I'm not going to lie!), but it's most important that she *respects* him.

Dr. Emerson Eggerichs wrote in *Love & Respect*, that respect is like the air a man breathes, and being disrespected is like pinching off a man's oxygen hose so that he slowly dies a suffocating death. However, it says the same about love to a woman. A wife being commanded through Scripture to respect her husband can be a difficult pill to swallow if the husband is mean, irritable, critical and unloving.

Here are the three P's of loving our wives well so that she can respect us easily and without feeling like a traitor to her own heart:

1. Praise her. Too often, we as men think something and fail to say it. We dig into a home-cooked meal, walk past a manicured garden, put on clean clothes, cash a second paycheck, all the while thinking this is nice, but never saying it. "Honey, thank you for working to help provide for

this family," "Honey, thank you for doing that yard work, the yard looks great," "Honey, this meal is fantastic. Thank you." Or how about "Girl! You are looking so fine, *YOU* make that dress look good!" Praise your wife ... daily. Praising her often is loving her well!

2. Promote her. Praising her is speaking well of her ... to her. Promoting her is speaking well of her to others. The first people to whom you should be speaking well of her, are your family. Your children should hear you speak lovingly and adoringly about your wife often. Your sons will learn how to treat their own wives from you. I know, scary thought, but true. Your daughters will learn how to be treated from you. Start early and praise her often. Proverbs 31 says that "her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her." If you want a Proverbs 31 virtuous wife, treat her like one. A man who promotes his wife in public earns respect. A man who discredits his wife in public earns contempt.

3. Protect her. We are human. There are going to be times when your wife sins or falls short. Cover her. Don't blab about her failure, and don't grind her failures in her face. Cover her. 1 Pet. 4:8 says this, "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins." To love your wife well means to cover her, just as your pastor is your spiritual covering of the local church, Jesus is our spiritual covering before the Father over the complete church, you husband, are the covering of your family.

As men, we sometimes feel that our wives will respect us for the things we respect other men for—accomplishments, money, occupation, the toys we own or cars we drive. The truth is, our wives respect us for how we treat them, so praise her, promote her and protect her, and she in turn will respect you. As always, may you love your wives well and be mighty men of valor who always chase after the heart of God. Amen.

Of the three P's listed, which one do you need to improve on or which one do you perform well in your marriage?

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