

Are You Keeping This Promise You Made to Your Spouse?

On your wedding day, you agreed to honor your spouse. The way I like to frame honoring your spouse is to “put them in a high place in your heart.”

What I mean by this is you not only consider them, but you prioritize them. My wife Lisa is absolutely amazing at honoring me. She will think through a problem whether it is business, personal or regarding our children. She’ll have mulled this issue for hours, days or even weeks and consider various options. Even on small issues, she’ll weigh her ideas and then present her ideas to me for a solution.

I’ve always felt honored by Lisa. She holds me high in her heart and considers and values me. Some might call this honoring or respect.

When you were dating your spouse, you were probably quite guilty of honoring them maybe even over-honoring them. In your 20s, when your then- girlfriend or boyfriend had a different idea or approach to an idea than your parents, you might’ve gone with the girlfriend’s or boyfriend’s idea even over the wisdom of your parents.

Back then, your spouse didn’t need to demand honor or respect from you. They didn’t need to quote Scripture to get honor from you. You freely gave honor to them because you highly valued them as a person, a soul.

You wanted to hear their thoughts, heart or opinion about issues you were experiencing. You leaned into their experience and ideas for solving problems. You respected their ideas even when you disagreed. You thought more as a practical team than just “me.” There was an “us” consciousness about decisions you made and how that could impact the other person.

You were probably not only guilty of overcommunicating your world to them, you were also guilty of over-listening about their feelings and concerns.

You didn't roll your eyes, act impatient, finish their sentence, put down their ideas, call them stupid or act like a 2-year-old when your ideas were challenged. You didn't withhold love when you didn't get your way. If you acted this disrespectfully toward them, and they still married you even though you already had a pattern of dishonoring them and overvaluing yourself, then they knew full well they were entering a lifetime of disrespect and dishonor.

However, if you changed from an honoring, considerate person to become a person who disrespects and undervalues the soul and heart of your spouse, you're not keeping the promise of honoring your spouse.

You might need to look at the path you took to become less respectful and honoring of your spouse. Don't use this opportunity to look to their sin to blame them for why you changed. You clearly knew you were marrying a sinner. That was your only choice since no one is perfect.

Who you became in the story of your marriage is 100% your responsibility. I've seen men and women address huge amounts of sin and betrayal, authority being stole from them, public humiliation and still remain respectful of the other person.

I've also seen self-absorbed children in marriage who are so disrespectful and dishonoring of their spouse I have to correct them like a parent in my office. I have to ask them to respect their spouse or leave my office.

Honor is a heart issue. When you honor, you say, "My heart respects the value of your heart." When you disrespect the heart of your spouse, you'll often act in many immature ways that makes it a challenge to honor you.

I'm always amazed at Bible-believing Christians who have heard hundreds of times about sowing and reaping then think they can sow seeds of disrespect in their marriage and think this will bring fruit of honor. So, if you've moved from a place of honoring your spouse to a place of dishonoring them, you'll treat them more like an object of disdain than a soul of immeasurable value. If this occurs, the very fuel for being a lover would leave you.

Marriage will become a "have to" instead of a "get to" to you. Keeping your promise to honor your spouse for a lifetime is fundamental if you're to be a lover-spouse.

Hear me as I say from my heart that honoring anyone for decades is a heart commitment. Such a commitment requires lots of hard work. To honor is to sometimes look past some emotional and spiritual immaturity of the moment and see the bigger picture of who this person really is. {eo}

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