

How to Deal With a Verbally Abusive Spouse

It is distressing to be on the receiving end of very cutting and abrupt comments that wound one's spirit.

Some people, for reasons known only to themselves, often speak to others in this manner. Sometimes a harsh and insensitive attitude shields a person who himself has been wounded by the remarks of others. In any case, we can understand the problems you are having. Remember that God loves you, and you are important in His sight. He loves you so much that He sent Christ to die for your sins.

As you focus on the fact that God loves you and considers you precious to Him, there will be a real difference in your life. Your sense of self-worth does not need to depend on the opinion of others.

Be sure you do not act toward your husband in the way he acts toward you. It is easy in a situation like yours to do just that. But that does not solve the problem—it only makes it worse. The Bible tells us, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1). It also says, "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life" (Proverbs 15:4). Affirm and support your loved one in your conversations. Your example may help him to learn to do the same for you. Read also Ephesians 4:29-32.

We would encourage you to find a time when you can speak frankly (and yet lovingly) with your husband. Perhaps he is not even aware you are hurt by the things he says, and although he may not be intentionally hurting you, he needs to be aware of your feelings.

Communication is important in a good marriage, and you and your husband need to learn to share your concerns (as well as

your joys) with each other. Read 1 Corinthians, chapter 13, and Ephesians 5:28-29. Many couples have found the counsel of a Gospel-teaching pastor or Christian marriage counselor to be helpful in strengthening relationships and improving communication skills.

We would urge both you and your husband to examine your relationship with Christ. Have you committed your lives to Christ? Are you seeking to follow Him? If not, make that commitment now, and learn the joy of having Christ at the center of your marriage.

When a husband and wife are truly seeking to honor Christ, they will not want to hurt each other—quite the opposite, they will want to encourage each other. As you pray and learn from God's Word together, God will help both of you become the loving partners He wants you to be.

Let Jesus bring peace to your marriage—and your soul.