

How You Can Help Your Spouse Reach Their Potential in Christ

Serving your spouse spiritually involves giving him or her the fruits of the Spirit. Remember to stay intentional and have goals for yourselves. Then you will see the benefits in your servant marriage.

The soul of your spouse has been given to you to serve, bless and support. You are to be part of their healing and growth, stand by as they take risks and watch them discover their own amazingness.

In Scripture, the soul is described as the mind, will and emotions. Understanding how and why your spouse thinks is a lifelong journey of listening and understanding them. As a servant to your spouse, your ability to serve will be expanded or limited by how well you understand your spouse.

The will alone, however, is not complicated to understand. The will is simply the ability or choice to persist in a matter. The will can be amazingly strong in persisting through an issue over long periods of time.

But that is the easy part of the will. The complicated part of the will is who is actually driving it. When the Spirit of God drives the will, it can be a powerful and beautiful thing to watch. However, the mind might also drive the will. This can be good or bad. If the mind believes a lie, the will can be utilized to drive behavior that confirms the lie. If the will is driven by the truth, the results will be aligned with truth.

Emotions can drive the will as well. In fact, this is by far the most volatile driver of the will. When emotions drive the

will, facts and truth can be close at hand or far away, regardless of which gender you are.

As a servant to your spouse, you want to do your best to know who is driving the will before you engage it. If you engage the will before having a clear understanding of who is driving at various speeds, you might be more likely to be engaged in a hit-and-run accident.

Another aspect of the will that is important is to encourage the will when it is operating properly or growing. If your spouse is utilizing their will to learn more, go to school, expand a talent, address difficult issues, build positive relationships or just get their body back in shape, you want to be their cheerleader.

Your encouragement and praise of them as their spouse can help them believe in themselves. Your praise can also help your spouse take that next step toward reaching the goal they have set. Your voice can strengthen or weaken the will of your spouse, depending on whether you serve with praise or by being critical. As a servant toward your spouse, you would do well to strengthen and encourage your spouse to use his or her will to glorify God, the Creator.

Just about every day for the last couple decades or so, Lisa and I have looked each other in the eye (that is important), and told each other two things we appreciate, value or love most about one another. This makes our marriage a warm place for our hearts to be.

As a servant of your spouse, you will want to learn from him or her how he or she takes course correction in regard to his or her will. Does he or she do it primarily with the Lord, friends of the same gender, through reading more information, by researching his or her family, pastor or other person of influence? Once you learn this, encourage him or her in the process that works best for him or her.

Lisa is a good example here. She learned early on that I was more internally motivated, so telling me something was not productive at all. She learned to ask me questions to get me to use my brain against myself in a healthy way and encouraged me to talk to my spiritual male friend when making big decisions.

Some women are injured and offended when their husbands do not hear them. In my counseling of thousands of men, I have learned that “men make men.” Having a man talk to another man can be a healthy way to respectfully nurture his will. I have also seen something similar with women as well. Talking to a woman, she might hear something “new” her husband has been saying for years.

Having a servant marriage is a lifelong journey with your spouse. This is your calling to serve them, grow toward them, understand them and behold God in every phase of marriage.

Your service toward your spouse is given to you by God and empowered by His Spirit. He created marriage for you to become Christlike and smile as you begin to look like Him and talk like Him to your spouse.

Marriage is a multidimensional journey featuring endless learning about yourself and your spouse. Your trinity together is the ornament God created, from which children grow and are nourished. We are all on one journey to hear one thing about our marriage from God: “Well done, you good and faithful servant” (Matt. 25:21, 23). {eoa}

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