

Men, Are You Failing Your Wives?

An epidemic afflicts our generation! Many—dare I say most—Christian men live with the burden lurking in their hearts and minds that they are failing to provide spiritual leadership for their wives. This is even true among godly Christian men who are helping others pursue **God**.

We are not initiating regular and intentional spiritual connection with our wives. Sure, we share spiritual life from time to time, but not on a regular and intentional basis. What am I talking about? Simply this: **praying** together.

Be honest. Beyond dinner prayers, bedtime prayers with children or praying at church, in a typical week, how often do you and your wife pray together? Just the two of you, I mean.

A candid answer is likely not a comfortable one. I know that because of the answers from my own life. I have also posed this question, eyeball to eyeball, with a host of Christian brothers. And I know how their answers fare.

I know you don't need any additional guilt today. Nor do I desire to load you further. It is important to recognize how we have failed because the admission can give way to the repentance of mind and heart, which can open us to viable and lasting changes. But mourning the past, or even the present, will not provide lasting motivation and change.

We need to see something ahead. And that something is an opportunity. I tell you: The opportunity is ripe for us to step into our role and see God show up in very real ways.

My hope is to share a model and call you to a challenge that is not only biblical, but also simple to embrace. It will lead you and your wife to a fresh dimension in your spiritual walk

together. You will be bolstered in the storms of life. You will be equipped to provide and protect your marriage and family with confidence. It will impact your children and grandchildren. In fact, it will touch every dimension of your life.

God has brought this matter to the forefront of attention in my own life. And I thank Him for doing so. My wife thanks Him for it as well! I want to share my story so that with me, you can welcome your role with hope and resolve.

Vicki and I have been together in life for almost four decades, and sometimes it feels as if I have no idea where all those years have gone. We came to personal faith in Jesus Christ at the same time during our college days. Since then, we have journeyed the Christian life together. We desire and seek to have a Christ-centered marriage. Yet the “under construction” aspect of marriage means it is an ongoing and on-growing relationship in progress.

And so, Vicki and I ran into a bit of rough patch. A number of issues bubbled around, churning up stress and tension. When all of that ripples over into multiple areas of life, things can get pretty confusing.

I enjoy fishing and, like most fishermen, I suppose, have discovered that sometimes a poor cast will “backlash” and create a bird’s nest of tangled fishing line. If that happens, you are through fishing for a while! Untangling the wadded-up mass of line can be a time-consuming chore—and very frustrating. So one afternoon, Vicki and I realized our line had backlashed. We sat in our living room and attempted to work our way through this difficult season. We were trying to figure out just what was going on.

As we talked, something emerged from Vicki’s heart, which she realized was a key part of what was unsettling for her. “You know what, Sam?” she told me. “Part of what is going on here

is that ... you have failed me.”

The words were far from normal for my wife to say! She got my attention. “You have failed me” was the last thing I wanted to hear from the woman I have loved for more than 40 years.

Her words did not arise from long-standing bitterness but from a realization that finally came to light for her. She went on to say that I had failed her when our oldest daughter, Christina, had wandered from the Lord into what the Bible calls the “broad way leading to destruction.”

“You did not pray with me to consistently fight for her soul over those years,” Vicki said. “I largely felt like I had to do it on my own.”

This does not mean we never prayed together for our daughter. But it did mean that I had not provided the spiritual leadership and initiative to consistently pray with Vicki for our wayward daughter. I had neglected to intentionally and regularly lead us together with the weapon of prayer to fight for our daughter’s soul. Vicki was dead right!

At the core of the rough patch was the painful reality that our girls were facing a number of serious issues in their lives. Vicki was burdened that, as their parents, she and I needed to be praying together about those matters. Reflecting upon my lack of spiritual leadership in prayer, she continued, “I am emotionally tired and worn out. I just cannot do this alone again.”

But even that wasn’t all. “Sam,” she pleaded, “beyond praying for our daughters, the fact is I need to connect with you spiritually.”

I knew immediately she was right. We needed to be sharing spiritual life together. Sure, to a degree we were. But I would have to describe our spiritual lives as haphazardly “touching together spiritually.” We sort of “bumped along” in

occasional spiritual connectedness. We would go to church regularly, pray at meals, talk about a sermon we heard, share spiritual insights and so on. But it definitely lacked intentionality and regular initiative from me. The missing piece was the consistent, intentional connection of praying together.

*This article was adapted from Just Say the Word: A Simple Way to Increase Your Passion for God and Your Wife by **Sam Ingrassia**. For more information about creating spiritual intimacy by praying with your wife, please visit .*