

These Core Beliefs Can Bring Healthy Respect to Your Marriage

We are equal. A respecer comes into marriage with an idea that their spouse is totally equal in value. Their spouse can reason and have different perspective, but there is still equality. The value of a respecer isn't based on gender, success or education; it's based on the blood of Jesus Christ. This core of equality allows the respecer to hear their spouse fully because they might miss something valuable.

Hearts are valuable. The respecer not only wants to know the mind of their spouse, they want to know how they feel. The respecer is focused on connecting heart to heart. They would consider someone who would rule over another's heart in order to get to a goal or just to be right very gross and immature. Staying in a connected relationship is more valuable to the respecer than closing the deal. The respecer values the person over outcomes.

Truth is a journey. The respecer truly knows and believes in his or her heart that he or she does not know all truth at all times. They know that God distributes truth. They know their spouse has some pieces of truth and that together they may or may not have all the truth they need to move through an issue. There is humility in the heart of a respecer to seek truth and not presume they know truth.

No emotion justifies rudeness. A respecer is not perfect. They have emotions as well. They can dislike others, become hurt or get mad like the rest of us can. They just don't! The bottom-line is that it's not right to be rude or unkind. For them it would hurt them more to act like a disrespecer than to just be quiet and try to be gracious.

We are allowed to be different. Being different, seeing things differently, and even having different outcomes is normal for the respecer. What would you expect from any two people who have different life experiences, priorities and education, not to mention genders?

To expect these two people to agree on everything or think that one would have to be right is absolutely insane to the respecer. That's just crazy to believe in sameness when God intentionally and expertly made us entirely different from one another. For the respecer, it's totally acceptable if we disagree; we will do that throughout our entire life anyway. Navigating differences respectfully is expected, but to assume agreement isn't even in the psyche of a respecer.

Your spouse is by far the most important person in your life. You can evaluate yourself by now. Are you more at the core a disrespecter or a respecer? Take a moment and really think about this.

Most of you know at a core level that it's best for you to regularly treat your spouse with respect. That it's best that you honor your spouse with your words as well as your actions.

You also know it takes some effort not to demean, ridicule or embarrass your spouse. We are all human, and growing in respect for our spouse is part of growing up as a person.

As Christians you should know that respecting someone else as God respects us is to encourage his or her strengths. You need to focus on what gifts they have and things you appreciate about them.

Yes, you can see their weaknesses, but respect comes alongside of a weakness in a supportive manner as that spouse matures. As parents, many of us see the weaknesses of our children. They may take after our spouse or us or have their own unique weakness. Hopefully we don't come along and demean or criticize them. Rather we respect them and offer to help them

grow out of this weakness.

You see, if we respect our spouses in their weakness like we do our children, we most likely would become more respectful toward them. You may say, "but my spouse is an adult." I would argue that at 100 years of age, they still haven't even reached one percent of their age if they are going to live in eternity.

The truth is we are all infants, and we are all still so different. I encourage you to enjoy each other's differences. Respect allows the independent and different developments of a spouse's interest and gifts. A disrespector wants to control and stifle their spouse. Let's give some respectful space for our spouses to grow and become who they are in the image of Christ.

Respect and disrespect can happen in a moment. I know that I can tell instantly if I disrespect Lisa. I didn't let her finish her sentence or thought. I discounted what she had to say without support of how she came to her conclusions. I'll tell her why she's doing this and go to a weakness or bring up history to one-up.

You see I am human too. Respect, like all the love agreements, is a growth in changing our current behavior. So hopefully you want to embrace growing in respect for your spouse. Your spouse is a child of the Most High God and is worthy of your respect.

Look at it this way; respect is something we give away. You'll know when you're giving it away. So keep on practicing giving respect. Let it flow from God, through you and ultimately arriving into your spouse's heart. {eo}

Doug Weiss, Ph.D., is a nationally known author, speaker and licensed psychologist. He is the executive director of Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and the author of several books including, *The 7 Love Agreements*.

You may contact Dr. Weiss via his website, or on his Facebook, by phone at 719-278-3708 or through email at heart2heart@.