

Spiritual Intimacy a Marriage 'Game Changer'

A dramatic conversation led Sam and Vicki Ingrassia to a new way of praying that's re-energized their marriage.

This Valentine's Day when the world is emphasizing romance, they're asking couples to see if they can't improve their spiritual relationship.

Sam Ingrassia told CBN News if husbands will take his advice, it will increase their passion for both God and their wife.

'You Have Failed Me'

In his quick-to-read book, *Just Say the Word* Ingrassia talks about when he and Vicki hit a real rough patch in their 39-year marriage.

Vicki had been praying her way through a couple of family crises and felt she wasn't getting much spiritual support from Sam.

As the Plano, Texas-based couple were talking it out, Vicki said something that hit Sam like a blow.

Sam quoted her blunt remark: "You know what, Sam, part of what I'm really struggling with is this: I've just come to the realization that you have failed me."

Vicki said she felt led of the Lord to say what she did.

"I knew that it was probably the Holy Spirit doing it. That day I just really had a compulsion to use the word *failed* with my husband," she said.

"Those four words—it was like an incoming rocket to my heart: 'You have failed me,'" Sam recalled.

Vicki said that rocket “spoke his language differently than ever before. And he was basically arrested at that moment.”

Spiritual Lone Ranger

The huge trials they had just been through involved two of their three adult daughters, but Vicki and Sam rarely prayed together about them.

Vicki had felt like a spiritual lone ranger.

“She was just basically saying, ‘I can’t do this anymore like this. I’m getting tired and worn out: ministry, family, all these issues,’” Sam said of his wife.

“And then she said, ‘Furthermore, besides the girls, you know what, Sam? I need to connect more with you spiritually.’”

Sam heard Vicki loud and clear and vowed to correct the problem.

“I raised two hands, saying ‘guilty!’ Tearfully, guilty,” Sam recalled.

“But then it’s like I raised one hand and said, ‘Vicki, I vow—I promise—we’re going to pray together,’” he said.

Prayers on the Bullseye

And at that moment, Sam said God gave him a revelation.

“The Holy Spirit just spoke to me in a very specific way,” Sam remembered. “The revelation was, God gave me a path. And the path was simply this. He said, ‘Pray with her using My Word as your guide.’”

Sam then took the message to Vicki.

“And that’s what we began to do,” he said.

As Sam laid this out to her, Vicki said she was excited.

"When he started laying those tracks, and said, 'This is what we're going to do, and how we're going to do it,' I felt, 'Well, this is really different,'" Vicki recalled. "'This might really take.'"

They've done this about three years. They read a few Scriptures most every day to guide their prayers together.

Sam and Vicki said it's tremendously improved their spiritual life and brought God right into the center of their communication.

"I feel like we're praying on the target, the bullseye, the moving targets of life," Sam said. "The Spirit of God is showing us what to pray. Now the prayers are as fresh as the flow of the Word of God itself."

Tragic Answers

Sam is in a ministry that involves him preparing and helping Americans go on short-term missions trips overseas. This leads him to interacting with hundreds of Christian leaders.

He began telling them his story and asking them if they felt they were praying enough with their wife.

All felt they were falling short.

"The answers are tragic," he said. "They're like 'never, rarely, occasionally, hardly ever, when needed, not enough.'"

Sam said he's helped lead many of these men to new levels of spiritual intimacy with God and their wife in both his book *Just Say the Word* and on the website .

He revealed that the same men who confessed they rarely prayed with their wife also admitted she'd most likely be overjoyed to hear her husband dedicate himself to regular prayer with her.

“‘She’d say, ‘Hallelujah.’ She’d say, ‘When do we start? She’d start crying’” are some of the answers Sam said men have shared with him.

‘Show Me the Tracks’

At the website , an amusing two-minute cartoon Sam narrated sums this up.

“We know that our wife desires this spiritual intimacy,” the video says.

“Men often need a path to follow: Show me the tracks. That’s the purpose of ‘Just Say the Word.’ It’s a journey of intentional spiritual intimacy in marriage. With marriage under attack and families falling apart, it’s time to wake up and *Just Say the Word*.”

Sam recommends couples anxious to enjoy this spiritual intimacy should head to the New Testament.

“If you take this 30-day plan: pray with your wife through the Book of Philippians, I’m telling you you’re going to catch a model; you’re going to catch the tracks,” Sam promised.

Increased Passion

Sam and Vicki said their prayer time together has improved both their relationship and their romance.

It’s the reason Sam subtitled his book, “A Simple Way to Increase Your Passion for God and Your Wife.”

Vicki said the whole process has given her tremendous peace, and she knows for certain her husband is really in the game with her for the prayer burden for their family and ministry.

“We really are one with this. It isn’t me carrying the burden and him kind of abdicating the burden, but we’re joining together as one,” Vicki said.

Sam added, "I tell you, it became a game-changer."