

## **FOR A GREAT MARRIAGE (PART III) HUSBANDS, MEET YOUR WIFE’S NEED FOR UNCONDITIONAL LOVE**

BACKGROUND: “It’s not about changing your spouse. It’s about understanding her.  
*Instruction for these pages: Husbands, in each of her needs briefly state how you could meet it with unconditional love. Wives, give your husbands helpful insights on each of his answers. (Note: The list of needs in this section were taken from the Love and Respect (Workbook) by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs, pp. 83-85.)*

**FOR CLOSENESS.** She wants to feel close to you. Wives like to be hugged! My wife, Bettye, has told me that she likes holding hands and hugging without an “agenda.” A must for closeness: Pray for each other briefly at bedtime. (**Ephesians 5:31, Song of Solomon 3:4**)

**Husband:**

**Wife:**

**FOR OPENNESS.** Your wife wants you to “open up” to her. When she believes there is a problem or when she feels hurt, lonely, or rejected, you need to “talk it through” with gentleness. You cannot be disengaged. Your openness and conversation with her is “...spelling love to her to her in big letters...and she is being energized beyond words by (your) transparent talk.” Dr. Emerson Eggerichs, Love and Respect (Large Print). pp. 224, 225. “She wants to keep thing up-to-date. She’s moving toward you because she loves you—you matter to her.” Love and Respect, p. 228. (**Colossians 3:19, I Samuel 25:17, Proverbs 31:11, 12, Malachi 2:15**)

**Husband:**

**Wife:**

**FOR UNDERSTANDING.** Husbands, don't try to fix her problems. Just listen to her. "Remember, the husband is the Christ; the woman is the church figure; and as a church places its burden on Christ, a wife wants to place her burdens on her husband. Even if she can't articulate it ... your wife thinks of you as that burden bearer—as having those big shoulders. When she comes to you for understanding, it is a compliment. This is a big part of what love is all about. But when you shut her out, close her down, or don't seem to hear what she is trying to say, it devastates her spirit.... The most powerful weapons you have are your ears. Just listen to your wife, and she is much more likely to feel understood." Love and Respect, pp. 239, 240. (**I Peter 3:7, ESV, Ephesians 5:25, James 1:19**)

**Husband:**

**Wife:**

**FOR PEACEMAKING.** She wants you to say, "I'm sorry." "God intended for some conflict to exist in a marriage. (See **I Corinthians 7:28**). Even secular research showed that the best marriage relationships have some conflict." Love and Respect, p. 254. "Women are wired for 'equality'. For example, she doesn't like feeling inferior or in the wrong, but neither does she want you to feel inferior or in the wrong. After you confess, my prediction is that she will say, 'It's not all your fault. Actually, it's me too... In fact, it may be more me.' She will meet you halfway almost every time. This is peacemaking in a woman's world." Love and Respect, pp. 264, 265. (**I Peter 5:6, Matthew 5:9, Romans 12:18, James 5:16**)

**Husband:**

**Wife:**

**FOR LOYALTY.** She needs to know you're committed. "Personal character is crucial to commitment. When a person is not controlled by integrity, commitments are not kept and promises never fulfilled. You can make a vow to your husband or wife and say all the right words, but apart from moral character the vow is usually broken." David and Carole Hocking, Romantic Lovers, p. 180. "When your wife becomes a bit insecure and moves toward you with questions about how much you love her or why you love her or if you will ever leave her, you might feel it's some kind of trap. You may think you're being set up so she can condemn you and show you disrespect if you hesitate with your answer. But that's not it at all. She moves toward you in that fashion because she is loyal to you and needs reassurance of you're loyalty to her." Love and Respect, p. 278. "Adultery is to marriage what a knife is to a back." H. Norman Wright, Communication: Key To Your Marriage, p. 11. (**Matthew 5:27, 28, fn 5:27, 28, Malachi 2:15, 16, fn 2:15, 16, Proverbs 5:15, fn 5:15, Hebrews 13:4**)

**Husband:**

**Wife:**

**FOR ESTEEM.** She wants you to honor and cherish her. "...she does want to be first in importance to you. This is what Peter means by 'show her honor' (I Peter 3:7). Your wife wants to know that you have her on your mind and heart *first and foremost*. This is what I mean by 'esteem'; when it's there, your wife will feel treasured as if she's the most loved woman on earth. Also, she will want to respect you in a similar way that the church reverences Christ. Remember that your love motivates her respect, and her respect motivates your love! Love and Respect, pp. 284, 285. (**Ephesians 5:29 ESV, I Peter 3:7, Proverbs 31:28, 29, Song of Solomon 7:6**)

**Husband:**

**Wife:**

*Pray briefly with your spouse for each other at bedtime!*