

PROGRAM 88 TEASER

I call it the second greatest miracle after being born again spiritually and experiencing the alive-forevermore Jesus Christ. This second miracle is marriage. When God is in it, you really win it. Commitment. Loyalty. Sexual ecstasy springing from spiritual oneness in God's love. But don't take this miracle of marriage for granted. We've talked to men—now your turn, ladies. How can you build a bridge of love to your husband? How can you be healed of the disease called familiarity and experience the cure called wonder? Two husbands are about to give all you ladies a plan that works. You'll see! Just keep listening—to More Than Talk.

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THE DISEASE CALLED “FAMILIARITY”—THE CURE CALLED “WONDER” (ACT 4) Marriage: A Miracle You Can Touch

PAGE 1 “Listen Up, Wives!”

In a world where marriages—including Christian marriages—are ending in failure and divorce, it is possible to have a marriage that not only passes the test of time but serves as a winning example for others. Today's husbands and wives know pressure exerted against their marriages as never before. Before Christ returns, Scripture says that things will get worse—not better. Will the world finally ridicule faithfulness in marriage? Will it abolish the marriage contract altogether? No one knows these answers but you *can* know how your marriage will turn out.

We want to give you some practical advice for not only falling in love but staying in love. As men, we have a good idea of what men desire in marriage. we not only experience these desires but have listened to many men pouring out their sins, frailties, hopes and dreams concerning their marriages. Whether your marriage is great, not so great, or yet in the future, we hope our thoughts will inspire you to cooperate with the Lord in making your marriage everything God wants it to be.

TWO KEY WORDS

There are two key words if husband and wife are to build an effective bridge of love between themselves. The key word for the husband is “love.” I am to love my wife as if I am Jesus and she is “Mrs. Church”. What compassion, concern and gentleness I will give her! How careful I will be to allow her to develop as a total person! How willing I will be to let her share her inner heart and feelings without fear of being rejected.

The key word for the wife is “submission”. That’s a dangerous word to use in these days of growing feminist liberation movements. However, God knew the complimentary role that husband and wife would enjoy together. It would be king and queen—the husband ruling, the wife reigning.

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER

Study this beautiful verse written to Christian women (and they did not even have the privilege of having husbands who loved the Lord—if you have a believing husband, thank God.) “...married women, be submissive to your own husbands—subordinate yourselves as being secondary to and dependent on them, and adapt yourselves to them, so that even if any do not obey the Word of God, they may be won over not by discussion, but by the godly lives of their wives.” (I Peter 3:1 Amplified)

This verse shows how a Christian wife with an unsaved husband can win him over to the Lord’s side without having to use a library of words. Since actions speak louder than words, she can influence him by her godly character and loving ways.

Again in Ephesians 5:22 we read, “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord.” It is easy to submit to the leadership of some men—but it must be very difficult for women who have rude or obnoxious husbands. A great help for such a woman is to inwardly submit to her husband by doing it as to the Lord Jesus. This does not suggest that a woman should accept beatings, vile language abuse, a husband’s adulterous affairs, etc., without giving an ultimatum. Most Christian women have caring husbands and marriages that are worth effort at making them better. Here are some practical points for wives.

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PAGE 2 Put the Lord First!

Proverbs 31:30

1. PUT THE LORD FIRST

First, establish a beautiful bridge of love between the Lord and you. Take time each day to be alone with God. Let Him speak through His Word. Then apply those truths to your life. Take time for daily prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to fill you with His love for your husband.

2. PAUSE TO REFLECT

Reflect often on what you saw in your husband that first captured your attention prior to your marriage. Those qualities are still there, even if buried through carelessness, neglect or forgetfulness. Determine that with God’s guidance you can help your husband re-discover those qualities again, not by criticizing him but through your loving attitudes, words and actions.

3. LONG LIVE THE KING

Make up your mind that regardless of your husband’s spiritual condition you will regard him as your very special king. We all long to be accepted for who we are—rather than for what people wish we were. Your husband is no exception.

4. HONEYMOON WORDS

Put those honeymoon words, “I love you” back into your daily vocabulary. Affectionate words and actions make any man feel important and needed.

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PAGE 3 “Hey, Good Lookin’, Whatcha Got Cookin’?”

5. BREAKING BAD HABITS

If your husband has bad habits or vices, don't insult him or use emotional pressures like crying, pouting, etc., to get your way. Tell him you would like to have a heart-to-heart talk together because you love him. Share with him the areas in his life that please you and gently bring up the things that turn you off.

For example, some men get careless after marriage even to the point of poor personal hygiene. A wife with heaven's wisdom will share that fault in such a way that her husband will want to change for a wife who thinks he is the greatest and wants to be enveloped in his arms.

6. NEVER COMPARE

Never compare your husband negatively to other men. No person wants to be compared to another, for fear they won't measure up, and every married partner wants to believe that he or she is the most attractive person in the world to a mate.

7. STAY ATTRACTIVE

Look beautiful. Many men see beautiful women all through the working day. What was it that drew your husband to you before you were married. Obviously, he saw you at your best—looking beautiful. That can't always be the case—there's time to wash windows and vacuum the house and you don't wear a pretty dress for such an occasion. However, wearing a clean dress, having your hair neatly combed and even some of his favorite perfume on when he returns from the job would be an exciting lift to any husband.

Also, don't immediately tell him the children's misbehavior the moment he comes through the door. He may have had troubles enough at the office. Instead, be cheerful and talk about some of the good things that happened. When you are both relaxed, there will be sufficient time for the more difficult things.

8. PREPARE AN OCCASIONAL ROMANTIC MEAL

There is some truth to the saying "The way to a man's heart is through his stomach." Cook his favorite dish once in a while and with a romantic setting of candlelight and soft music. You may see a sparkle in his eye that tells you how he feels in his heart.

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PAGE 4 Passion with a Purpose

1 Corinthians 7:3-5 Don't use sex as a club!

Hebrews 13:4 Beautiful sexual intimacy!

9. SHARED INTERESTS

Enjoy togetherness but don't always insist on having to be together. Cultivate interest in at least one of your husband's major hobbies and enjoy that activity with him. He will appreciate your caring.

10. INTIMACY IS A MINISTRY

It has been said that women give sex to gain love and men give love to gain sex. A woman has a powerful ministry at her disposal that can build, bless and cause her husband to burst with feeling that he is God's gift to his wife. Enjoy warm, intimate closeness and don't ever refuse sexual contact from your husband as a means of punishment or getting your own way.

11. DEVOTIONAL PARTNERS

If you are not having an evening devotional together, suggest this to your husband. Tell him that you are looking to him for spiritual leadership and would appreciate reading the Bible and praying together. If he is forgetful or the kind who starts but does not finish a project, lovingly remind him each night and have a Bible by your bedside. Little by little, the habit of reading the Word of God and praying for each other before falling asleep will become a fixed habit in your lives. I can't think of a single more important discipline that will cause two people to fall more in love with the Lord and, consequently, with each other, than a daily time together in Scripture and prayer. Besides, since Jesus said “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,” (Matthew 18:20) the husband and wife prayer relationship constitutes a great unit of power.

12.MARRIAGE IS A MOUNTAIN

Discipline yourself to the realities of marriage. Marriage is like climbing a mountain with both ups and downs. Stay far from the Hollywood Soap Opera images of fantasyland that run from the real world of reality (the end of such fantasy is the reality of divorce). And don't start crying when things go wrong with "You don't love me!" That frightens a husband and makes him think that his wife is measuring his love for her by her exacting standards for behavior. This can grow both tiring and frustrating.

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PAGE 5 Take the High Road

Malachi 2:14-16 A lifetime contract—not a 30 day option!

13. TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

Don't ever take the low road of threatening a divorce. One woman had the habit of saying things like "The way things are going, I don't think our marriage is going to last." Or "If this continues, I'm going to leave you." Or "I can see why it's better for some people to get a divorce." This became such a common occurrence that one day her husband, feeling his wife would someday leave him anyway, insisted on a divorce and left her with a broken heart. Since the Bible says that God hates divorce (Malachi 2:16), a wife who is going God's way will hate it too.

14. THE MIRACLE OF TOUCH

Whether or not your husband is a "romantic Romeo," he needs frequent demonstrations of affection. Here I am not merely referring to the highest demonstration of physical affection which is marital intimacy. Instead, I'm talking about those moments when you spontaneously take his hand, give him a great big hug, sit down on his lap, give him a kiss, place your hand on his shoulder or arm and leave it there, etc.

Those involved in bringing spiritual and psychological healing to people have discovered the miracle of touch. We even see on bumper stickers "Have you hugged your kid today?" Let's add to that "Have you hugged your husband today?" A little card or a love note for no special occasion can work miracles to build the confidence of a husband and make him feel like a king.

Since any king wants a queen to reign with him, you may find his own level of noticing and caring for you rising proportionately.

15. CATCH THE SIGNAL

Make each meal a happy time of communication. Avoid negative subjects while eating and when you know that he is extremely tired or discouraged. Scripture says, “Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord.” (Proverbs 18:22). The Bible also says “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” (Proverbs 25:11). Every wife has the privilege of catching the Holy Spirit’s signals on a word or action that, given at the right moment, will both bless and build her husband.

16. COMMUNICATE DIFFERENCES IN A POSITIVE WAY

Remember that “submitting” is not “submerging”. You are not to lose your identity or individualism and bury your own needs. When you know things aren’t going right—or could go better—let your husband know that you need to have an open talk with him. Don’t communicate in a combative way that leaves him threatened but in a manner that makes him want to adjust because of a wife who believes in him.

CONCLUSION

The thoughts we have shared are simple, basic and practical. That’s why they work. Marriage between two people is the closest relationship on earth and is compared to Christ’s love for us. When referring to the union between husband and wife, the Bible says” This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” (Ephesians 5:32).

The important thing to remember is that your Heavenly Father has all the materials of loving attitudes, words and actions necessary for you to build a stronger bridge of love to your husband. The joy you’ll find in the Lord and the fulfillment you can experience in your marriage will make any effort to build that bridge of love worth it all!