

E-Series

What's Love Got to Do with It? (Part 3)



"However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband." —Ephesians 5:33

Share your thoughts on this and other e-series messages at www.michaelaturner.net.

A Wightman member shared the following message with me this week. This is written by Tracie Miles and comes courtesy of [Proverbs 31 Ministries](#). While it is written to wives, it certainly applies to husbands as well.

When I married my wonderful husband twenty years ago, I fully intended to unconditionally love, respect and admire him. I had great intentions of being the perfect wife, with sweet words, a romantic kiss and dinner on the table every evening. But then careers took off, bills increased, children were born, laundry piles grew, and life got chaotic. Along the way I subconsciously created a measuring stick of expectations for whether my husband actually deserved my love and respect.

When marriage doesn't meet the unrealistic expectations we imagine before the wedding, and real life kicks in, women can inadvertently get lured into tearing down their husbands, and their marriages as well.

In fact, the longer couples are together, the easier it becomes to not only see each other's flaws, but to mercilessly criticize them. This eventually leads to low tolerances, short tempers, minimal patience, and a woeful lack of marital bliss. As a result, those gifts of unconditional love, respect and admiration that were once offered so freely become gifts that we are not so willing to offer at all.

*A few months ago I picked up *The Man Whisperer*, written by my friend and author Rick Johnson. The title intrigued me, as I was anxious to rekindle some passion in my own marriage. Little did I know that God would use the truths shared in this book to step on my toes and cause me to take an inward look.*

Many relationship topics are covered, but as I read, God convicted my heart about things I had said to my husband just days earlier. As I recalled some of the critical comments that had rolled off my tongue so easily, I became overwhelmed with regret and disappointment. I had fallen into a bad habit of tearing down my man with my words, not fully realizing the toll it was taking on him. Most importantly, I began to realize the powerful influence I have on my husband and marriage by simply choosing words that encourage, instead of discourage.

As women, we have the power to build up or tear down our husbands every day, merely by the respect we give and the amount of faith we let him know we have in him. Respect and admiration are two of the most powerful tools a woman has to influence her husband. I realized I had fallen short lately in giving those two precious gifts to my man.

I prayed, asking God to help me control my tongue and fill my heart and mouth with words that

would make my husband feel appreciated, admired, respected and loved, regardless of whether I felt he deserved it. I prayed that God would convict my heart when critical thoughts crept into my mind, and help me avoid the temptation to say them out loud.

Within just a few weeks, I saw a change - in me, in my husband's demeanor, and in our relationship: a change that rekindled that unconditional love, respect and admiration that I set out to give him all along, and that I also wanted in return.

Through a wife's gifts of unconditional love, respect, and admiration, we can help our husbands become the great men that God created them to be, and in turn, create the marriages we always dreamed of.

Dear Lord, help me to tame my tongue and focus on building up my man. Help me break free of the habit to criticize, even when warranted. Open my eyes to the positive, not the negative. Draw us closer, and help us both nurture a strong and loving marriage. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Pastor Michael