

SLM Publications

P.O. Box 744 • Jupiter, FL 33468 • Voice: 561-624-8096 • Fax: 561-776-8980 • Email: slambert@slm.org

THE ENCOURAGING WIFE ©

By Steven Lambert, ThD

The following are DOs and DON'Ts of how a wife can be "encouraging" to her husband. They are by no means exhaustive or comprehensive, nor is there much background, explanation, or anecdotal application offered here. This writing was not intended to be a treatise on the matter, but rather these are merely a few basic points that occurred to me while addressing the topic casually in correspondence with a friend. They are, nevertheless, sound, Scriptural, and effectual. It was only after I read over what I had written that I felt it was something the Lord wanted me to pass along to others. I hope it helps. Now it is important to keep in mind that all of this is going to be most applicable to and effective in God-centered marriages in which both partners are Born-Again believers who are attempting to live for God and to allow Him to effect the lifelong process of sanctification in their heart, soul, and life. Wives whose marriages are experiencing disenfranchisement and relational breakdowns for whatever reasons, along with the hurts and negative effects that result, may find application of these principles and the desire to apply them challenging, but making an attempt to apply them as best as you can will not hurt anything and will go a long way in produce an ambience in which healing and restoration can more easily take place, with the ever-present help of the Holy Spirit. It is always needful in attempting to put such principles into practice, to keep in mind that there is no such a thing as a PERFECT person. We are all flawed and imperfect. And, because there are no perfect people, neither is there such a thing as a PERFECT relationship. Relationships CAN'T be perfect, because they consist of IMperfect people, who have flaws, faults, shortcomings, inadequacies, and weaknesses. But, Agape-love – the God kind of love – is UNCONDITIONAL love, which in effect says, "I'm not going to wait until you are perfect in my eyes or every little thing I want or think you ought to be, but rather I am going to totally accept and love you right now UNCONDITIONALLY." Remember, this God-kind-of-love WORKS, it must work, because it's the kind of Love God is loving you with, without judgment or condemnation. He says to us all, "Come unto Me...and I will in no wise cast you out (or reject you)." Because He loves us like that, it gives us the spiritual "atmosphere" and impetus we need to change and grow.

DO –

1. **LISTEN.** Always be willing to listen and really "hear" what he is saying – with both her head (mind) and her heart (emotions). Develop/exercise good listening skills, the first rule of which is to treat serious conversations like CB radio communication, which consists of strictly uni-directional transmissions and not bi-directional simultaneous transmissions - in other words, don't talk while you're listening! When he talks – focus on listening to him, be attentive, hear him out without interrupting, or talking over him, or assuming what he is going to say, and without thinking she has to think of a resolution to the matter he is talking about -- JUST LISTEN. Be willing to just be a sounding board -- this is all part of the multiple roles husbands need their wife to fulfill in their relationship – partner, confidante, companion, lover, and "fan."
2. **ALLOW.** Allow him to express himself to her freely and openly – showing his humanness, i.e., vulnerabilities, insecurities, shortcomings, needs, without any concerns of her judging, disrespecting, depreciating him, or condescending to him for opening up and sharing from his "inner sanctum." Mature understanding keeps in mind that there are times everyone experiences when they simply don't know what to do about a particular matter or course of action, don't have clear direction, and have struggles they have to pray and work through – this is normal life!
3. **ACCEPT.** Related to above, a wife must show her husband that she accepts him just the way he is without judging and condemning him, FROM THE HEART, entirely, unequivocally, unreservedly, unabashedly, unquestioningly, and SHOW HIM, over and over and over and over, continuously that she

does, that she not only loves him, but also likes him, and not be constantly trying to remake him in her own image or to be what she wants him to be.

4. ACKNOWLEDGE/RESPOND. During the course of conversations, it is very important when he is talking that she verbally communicate to him that she both comprehends what he is saying (intellect) and understands what he is feeling (emotion), yet without interrupting him or talking over him, and that she can certainly empathize with his mental perspective of the matter as well as the emotions or sentiments he is feeling as a result.
5. IDENTIFY. Because of the truths enumerated in #4, it is incumbent upon the wife to identify with the problem as if it were hers, because in reality, like it or not, and in one way or another, it IS her problem too – in one way or another, whatever affects him, affects her.
6. BEAR: Bear the burden. The Bible tell us we are to “bear one another’s burdens” (Gal. 6:2) There is no greater application of this than in the husband-wife relationship. The wife must show her husband that she does not consider anything he is facing to be HIS problem, but rather she fully embraces it as being THEIR (collective) problem. Both partners need to understand that one person’s problems/ difficulties in reality, like it or not, is BOTH their problem. Marriage is a joint venture, a concert. Spiritually, the two are “one” -- two parts of one whole – not two independent individuals doing their own thing and merely sharing living quarters. Neither partner should ever project an attitude of disenfranchisement, disassociation, disengagement, or withdrawal. The wife must constantly and consistently show her husband and CONTINUOUSLY reassure him that she is totally and completely on his side in this matter and all matters, forever, NO MATTER WHAT! They are a team! This is not an adversarial relationship. They are on the same side of the table, metaphorically speaking. They are in this together.
7. TRUST/HONOR/RESPECT. Trust and have faith in his judgment – do not second-guess his thinking, judgment, or rationale. This may be the most critical way a wife manifests her respect and honor of her husband. The wife must show her husband that she totally respects and honors him as the head/ leader of their family, and highly regards his leadership acumen and abilities, and therefore will follow his leadership without reservation or equivocation.
8. LOVE. Truly love him, from the heart, with all her heart, recklessly, without abandon, passionately, thoroughly, intensely, sowing into him all the seeds of love that she wants to receive an abundant harvest from. And, to do this, it is absolutely critical that she understand that love is not merely an emotion, but that according to God’s Word, love is deeds and attitudes, which are enumerated in 1 Cor. 13.
9. PRAY. Pray for him! Instead of engaging in the “DON’Ts” that follow, she should be so totally caught up in what her role IS as a faithful and godly wife, and in her total and complete trust in her husband’s Lord, Jesus, to take care of any shortcomings, flaws or faults in her husband’s life, that she doesn’t even look for any of those things.

DON’T –

1. BLAME. A wife should not be constantly blaming her husband for all their difficulties. The Bible indicates in numerous places that even as Born Again, Spirit-filled, Spirit- baptized followers of Christ, in this world system we are going to face many trials, troubles, temptations, tests, tribulations, and persecutions. Becoming a Christian does not exempt us from such difficulties. Experiencing such struggles is not a sign of weakness or that “something is wrong,” but rather it is a guaranteed part of all of our lives and walk with the Lord. Like it or not, we have an adversary – the devil, who is waging an all out, life or death, WAR against us. Like the 9-11-2001 attacks on America, we didn’t choose to be attacked by a vicious, wicked, crazed, enemy, rather the enemy chose to attack us and engage us in war, and we have no choice but to resist the enemy and engage the battle. The wife needs to constantly remind herself of these things, and that her husband is not the adversary; the devil is; and the two of them must stand united against the real enemy and wage spiritual war, utilizing “the weapons of OUR warfare (which is a spiritual war)” against the true enemy. Wars are not for wimps! But WARRIORS!

2. **CORRECT/REPROVE.** Understand it simply is not the role or responsibility of the wife to correct or reprove the husband. Men never react positively to such attempts anyway, for the very reason that they see them as an undermining of their role and place in the family and a direct assault on their manhood. (In no way, however, is this saying that a wife should just ignore improper or immoral behavior, but that is a different matter entirely.)
 3. **LEAD/GUIDE/DIRECT.** A wife should never try to lead, guide, or direct her husband regarding decisions and the course of the collective life of the family. The Bible clearly and unequivocally states that the husband is the head of the wife (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23), and the family. He is responsible and accountable to God for the governing of his family. Moreover, it also states in the same verses Christ himself is the Head of the husband, not the wife, so it is a total violation of the order of God for the wife to attempt to govern the husband or family.
 4. **JUDGE, CRITIQUE, CRITICIZE.** A wife must resist the tendency to judge, critique, criticize, analyze her husband, looking for and focusing on his shortcomings, flaws, or faults. Engaging in such is simply not her place or role. Moreover, it is SIN and totally ungodly. God's Word admonishes, "Judge NOT, lest you also be judged." The Law of Reciprocity governing this world provides that we always reap what we sow. If we judge others, we will likewise be judged. It's a law! There's no way to avoid or circumvent it. The so-called "Golden Rule" is predicated on this Law -- "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." This Law is especially effectual in the marriage -- it only produces strife and resentment. If a wife is constantly judging and criticizing her husband, that is what she is going to reap in return. She should fervently pray to the Lord, asking Him to change her heart and mind in this respect.
-

[Steven Lambert, ThD](#) is an ordained minister, an apostolic-prophet, author of numerous books and teaching publications, editor/publisher of two newsletters, [The Real Truth Digest](#) and [Prophetic Perspective Bulletin](#), as well as the Executive Director of [Vision International Ministerial Association](#). Insight and teaching concerning Church government/order, the coming restoration of the apostolic-prophetic foundation and restructuring of the Church Jesus is building, and problematic ministry issues are the hallmark of his ministry. Dr. Lambert may be contacted at SLM, Inc, P.O. Box 744, Jupiter, FL 33468-0744; (561) 624-8096; or by E-mail at: slambert@slm.org.

© 2002 SLM, Inc. January 7, 2002. All rights reserved. This publication may not be republished in any form, including electronic, without the permission of SLM, Inc. Direct all inquiries to the SLM Publications at: SLM, Inc, P.O. Box 744, Jupiter, FL 33468-0744, or E-mail: staff@slm.org. This is one of many articles posted on the SLM Publications Internet site at: <http://www.slm.org>.