

10 WAYS HUSBANDS DAMAGE THEIR MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

We talked earlier about concentrating on our weaknesses. New Life for Churches wants to do some things much better in three areas. We do not want you to emphasize just leading Bible Study Groups but rather discipleship. And we want you to disciple in three areas.

1. Disciple your wife.

God will rain blessings on you through a Godly wife. He has on me.

2. Disciple your church leaders.

All the church leaders that you are in contact with, wherever you are leading a conference, the new pastors and the church leader there that you are in contact with, disciple them. You see them every week, so give them good practical helps about a lesson or about God, or something like that and help them.

3. Disciple your students.

You must become their spiritual father. And you must know precisely how they are developing spiritually *individually*.

HOW HUSBANDS DAMAGE THE SPIRIT OF THEIR MARRIAGE

We are going to look at some of our mistakes as husbands and how they affect our wives.

When the spirit of the wife is wounded the spirit of marriage is damaged. And a damaged marriage will of course affect the psychological and physical aspects of the marriage. Many husbands who know that something is wrong in their marriage concentrate on physical elements rather than on spiritual ones. And instead of healing their marriage they create deeper wounds. Here's a warning from the book of 1 Peter 3:7 *"Likewise, you husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."*

When an offence has been committed there is a precise and predictable reaping of destruction in the marriage. Galatians 6:7 *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap."*

A. Failing To Love, Honor And Cherish His Wife More Than Every Other Woman, Job Or Hobby In His Life.

A wife knows when her husband delights to be with other women or gives his hobby priority. She knows that. And when she sees that his preoccupation is with other people or possessions, she doubts his love and becomes insecure. Ephesians 5:25 *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it."*

That's a requirement for you guys.

How to make your wife first place in your life.

1. **Establish a weekly date night.**

A night that you do something special with her. This is her evening. You take her someplace, you do something, whatever. This is one of the things that speaks to wives. She knows you are busy. She wants you to do spiritual work but she wants desperately to know, "Every Monday from 6:30 till 10:30, that is **my** time."

2. **Surprise appointments with her.**

You say, "When is your lunch break? Today I will come to your work and in your lunch break we'll have a little time together. We'll eat lunch together." And you should make a little surprise appointment at least once a month.



3. *Call her occasionally.*

Call her in the middle of the day, "Hi, honey, how are you?" Call her just to tell her how you love her. "Is the baby sleeping? I just wanted you to know that I'm thinking about you and I wanted to hear your voice." What do these things tell her?

- a) I have priority
- b) My husband wants to be with me
- c) My husband is thinking about me

Many of you men don't think about how difficult life is for your wife. She has three or four children, she has dirty diapers, and at eight o'clock in the morning you say, "Bye." And she thinks "That's it. Now he forgets about me." In the evening you come home, you open the door, "Supper isn't ready?" And she knows, "Oh, all day long he never thought about me." But now you phone and say, "Hello, I'm calling you because I want to hear your voice." And she knows that you have been thinking about her. That's important. That's the whole idea!

4. *Help with the dishes.*

Many of you men think, "Oh, I've been working all day long and my wife has just been sitting at home. The baby was sleeping. She probably was sleeping too, so let her work now a bit in the evening," But life isn't like that. You have been working all day and you are tired. She has been working all day and she is tired. But you don't know how to cook. You need a wife for that but you can clean up after the meal. She prepares the meal; you clean up afterwards. "I love you enough to help you." That's real love.

5. *Be enthusiastic and attentive to your wife and children.*

When I come home she says, "Hello." I respond, "Oh, you should hear about my troubles. Problems in this area! Problems in that area! How was your day?" She says, "Normal." "Oh, but you should listen to **my** problems." And I focus only on myself. Sometimes I do that and it's wrong. When you go home from work you should leave your work problems right there. Go home and concentrate on your wife and family. Next morning you will go back to work and your problems will still be there. Don't take them home; concentrate on your wife and family.

6. *Meet her deepest needs by providing times for intimate conversation.*

My wife has a bad habit. I say, "Honey how are you?" "OK." "It looks to me like you have a headache." "Yes, I do have a headache." "Why didn't you tell me you have a headache? I just asked you how are you." She doesn't want to tell me, because she doesn't want to give me problems. She loves me so much and that's why she doesn't want to give me her problems. But when she realizes that I am taking time when I sit down to listen, to have a cup of coffee, and to question, "Well, how are you really?" then she opens up. And that's why we are talking about disciplining your wife.

7. *Practice good manners.*

When you are visiting a brother you sit down nicely, you use your napkin, then you take the last little bit of soup with your spoon and you put it away. But at home, you take the soup and slurp it up. Who is more important to you, your wife or your brother's wife? You are with your wife every day but you are at your brother's home only twice a year. You had better be nice to your wife. Practice good manners.

B. Neglecting to provide spiritual leadership.

A wife wants her husband to have open, honest communication with God. She wants her husband to be able to pray intelligently from the bottom of his heart. She wants him to study the Bible. She wants him to meditate upon the Bible because it almost always leads him to become more Christlike and makes for better family life.

Spiritual leadership is not determent by where the husband is in his spiritual walk but where is he going.

God wants us to be in a continual attitude of seeking Him. 2nd. Chronicles 26:5 is about king Uzziah and it says here, **"As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper."** The most important way to demonstrate spiritual leadership to your wife is to stand up for Scriptural convictions. This is what the Bible says and that is what we want to do. Refuse to compromise Godly standards in personal life, in marriage, or in business. When a husband shows a lack of interest in being the spiritual leader then his wife leaves him spiritually and tries to find another spiritual leader--her pastor or somebody else.

C. Announcing changes and moves without giving adequate time to mentally prepare for them.

You come home. You are all excited. You open the door and you say, "Honey, guess what? I got a job in Poland and I'm going to go to Poland on Monday morning." Do you think she will really say "Ha-a-alleluia?" Instead she thinks, "I have to stay here with four children without a husband." Her world is her home and her family, and she finds her security and fulfillment in wisely managing them. Her home and her family, that's where a wife finds her security. And when a sudden change is announced she needs to think about. "How am I going to organize for my children and the food, and take care of this and take care of that?" She is shocked because her home life is suddenly changed. A wife needs to be part of the remodeling process for the home or building or buying new furniture or something; a wife needs to be a part of that process. When a husband does not give his wife enough time to think about the changes that need to be made she becomes insecure, apprehensive and bitter. She realizes that she just has no value to her husband.

D. Making unfavorable comparisons with other women.

Wives are extremely sensitive about what their husbands look at. Many wives have problems with self acceptance. That's about a wife, now about a husband. Most husbands are totally oblivious to the inward pain that comes to a wife when she sees her husband staring at another woman. Most men do not understand how deep a pain she has inside. God has given many warnings to men about controlling their eyes. Proverbs 4:23 -25, Pr. 5:18, 20-22. When a husband admires the appearance or abilities of another woman the wife is deeply hurt and becomes jealous. She begins to reject herself.

E. Lacking inner discipline to control anger and impure habits.

Listen to this Bible verse Pr. 25-28 *"He that has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls."* Anger damages the spirit of marriage and the relationship with the children. Anger is often the result of the husband's frustration that his wife does not understand his explanations. Effective communication is much more than words. Col. 3:19 *"Husbands love your wives and be not bitter against them."* Much of the anger is a result of impurity, some immoral impurity in the life of the husband. If you sow immorality, maybe it is mental immorality, you will reap emptiness. Pr. 22:8. When a husband lacks discipline over anger and displays moral weakness his wife's admiration and respect are greatly damaged.

F. Failing to recognize and praise little attempts to please him.

A wife has a basic need for praise just as a husband has a basic need for admiration. Women also tend to be more alert and more concerned about details. Therefore, many of these quote "little things" your wives are doing for you are maybe not just so little. Usually, a wife does the little things in a very special way to please her husband. When she makes the meals she may add a little bit of sugar, or add a little bit of salt, or do something else, because she thinks, "That's the way my husband likes it." And there he is just eating away and looking at his watch and she asks, "Does it taste good?" "Yes, it's OK." And no attention, no consideration is given for all the extra little things she was trying to put into that. She will be deeply disappointed. I know from experience, because right now in our home my daughter does an awful lot of the cooking. But she is not married, and she has no husband yet who ignores her. So she doesn't wait for a comment but asks, "So, how does it taste Daddy? Do you like it? Would you like seconds?" See, she is so young and innocent that she solicits the information she needs to feel satisfied. When a husband is insensitive to the special things his wife is doing to please him she will seek admiration and praise from somebody else. And she will lose her creativity.

G. Attempting to correct in public.

I've made this mistake terribly many times. And I am very guilty. This is probably the worst thing you can do to your wife.

1. *There is a place and a time for discussing changes.*

Changes in our attitude, in our language. There are many reasons -- conduct, money management or many other points. But this must not be done in public. And I've seen a lot of people do it. I have seen



husbands and wives pulling on money bills and one saying, "Yes," the other saying, "No." It often destroys communication in a marriage. When a husband publicly uses jokes or other cutting remarks to emphasize something that he wants to change in her life it will damage her and, worse, she will try to do something negatively publicly to her husband.

2. It is also unwise for a husband to complain about his wife to his parents.

He goes home and he says, "Oh, Mom, thank you for this delicious meal. You know my wife can't cook just the way you do." If you complain to your parents they will begin to take up an offence against her. And they will come to her in the guise of helping her but they will hurt her. "Guess what honey? I thought today I would come and clean the apartment a little bit for you. I know you find that difficult and I thought I'd just help." It's like slapping her in the face. Or "Hey, I brought this special food because I know that Tom likes this and you don't know quite how to make it yet. I thought it would be good for a nice meal together." He is now united to his wife and they should become one in all they do.

H. Rejecting her opinion as unimportant.

Many men have made disastrous decisions, because they did not listen to the warnings of their wives. In Matt.27:19 Pilate did not listen to the warnings of his wife. Most men fail to realize that God will often give a wife special inside information that He will not give to a husband. If a husband makes a decision contrary to his wife's cautions he will usually pay unnecessary consequences for his wrong decision. Before making a major business decision, explain the details to your wife. Maybe she doesn't understand all the details but very quickly she begins to develop a certain feeling or a certain attitude about it, which will make her positive towards it or make her afraid of it. Now, God's desire is that a husband and a wife will be one and if she feels different about it or negative you better not move ahead with it. If you go ahead with a decision and your wife is not in agreement you are losing twice.

Losing twice:

1. You will receive consequences for having made a wrong decision.
2. You lose by damaging your marriage; your wife and your children realize they are not important to you. You just do what you want to do.

When a husband does not listen to his wife she is hurt and hindered from sharing other cautions in the future.

I. Disciplining your children in anger or inconsistency.

God gives precise instructions to fathers about how to discipline your children. When you violate these instructions from God, the mother reacts and the children rebel. In Proverbs God divides discipline responsibilities for a father and a mother. The father is to give basic direction and basic commands. Pr.6:20a. The mother translates that direction and commandment into practical little steps of how to do it. Pr.6:20b. The rules of the mother should clarify and illustrate or illuminate the directions of the father. For instance, the father may say to the children, "I want you to keep your room clean." Now the mother will tell the children how to do that. "I want you to lay the clothes there and books there. Every day before you go to bed, I want you to do this or that..." She explains how. When the father tries to give directions that his wife is supposed to do, his wife will often react to his insensitivity. If a father gives a command and fails to back up with corresponding rules what his wife is trying to do, she feels betrayed and she will blame him if the children rebel.

J. Refusing to acknowledge failure and ask forgiveness of those who were offended.

What are the most often repeated complaints about husbands and fathers?

1. They lose their temper.
2. They seldom admit that they were wrong.

Wives and children often learn from the example of the husband and father in the home. His humility and sensitivity will greatly influence their response to him. It will greatly influence their response to each other. And mostly it will influence their response to God. Therefore in Eph.6:4 God gives a warning: "*Provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*" When a father does not

admit his failures and ask forgiveness for them, his wife and children will react to his pride and lose respect for him.

CLOSING

Just a couple comments at the end of our lecture.

I would like you to study these failures, these mistakes. And I will tell you something:

If you'll start doing these things correctly with your wife you will see that you can use the same things with your pastors, and with your church leaders, in discipling them.

If you'll make the same mistakes with your church leaders you will see that you will reap similar problems in your spiritual ministry as what you reap in your family. That's why we are saying: disciple your wife, disciple the church leaders, and disciple your students. Many of these principles you can use in all three areas.

Thank you very much for your attention. I trust it will be a blessing.

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by **New Life for Churches**. You have the privilege *upon completion of your practical assignment* to use this lecture with others.

Practical assignment

Completed

- Choose a different way to make your wife first in your life every week for at least four weeks. Keep a record of what you did to share at the next meeting.
- Choose one other way that you have damaged the spirit of your marriage and seek to correct it over the next month. Bring a brief written report to the next meeting.

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