

## ***What a Woman Really Needs***

The Marriage Builder

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In Ephesians 5, Paul instructs husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church—sacrificially, by giving up His life. Men, you are to give up your life for your wife, just as Jesus gave His life for you. You love her more than you love yourself. You sacrifice yourself for her.

**A woman's greatest need is security.** She feels most secure in an environment where she is married to a sacrificial, sensitive man. Women feel most insecure when they're married to selfish, detached men.

A husband dedicated to meeting his wife's need for security will always put her first. He strives to meet her needs. She doesn't have to nag. She doesn't have to beg.

He communicates that nothing in his life is as important as her, and he will sacrifice an interest, hobby, friend, event, opportunity, or promotion in order to make sure her needs are met.

He showers her with romance. Romance is not about giving flowers, but about communicating that she is on your heart. To your wife, a lack of romance simply means "I don't think about you."

**A woman's number-two need is for soft, nonsexual affection.** Guys, she wants to be held. She wants you to be gentle. She wants you to hold her hand or put your arm around her—without you considering it a prelude to sex.

I once counseled a woman who said her husband only touched her during sex, but never showed any interest in affection outside the bedroom. Their marriage was filled with anger and frustration—and rightly so.

**A woman's third need is for open and honest communication.** When she asks you how your workday was, she's not asking for grunts and shrugs. She's not asking for vague, general answers. She's asking for you to open up to her. She wants feelings and opinions. Communication is how she connects to your world.

I used to feel ambushed when I came home and Karen would ask me questions. Growing up, my family was very reserved. Sharing like that felt unnatural to me. But when God convicted me of how I communicated with Karen, I made a conscious decision to open up. To talk patiently with her. To tell her how I felt.

Our marriage has never been the same. Talking to Karen is now one of my favorite things to do.

**A woman's final need is for leadership.** Don't take this the wrong way: Women don't want to be dominated. They deserve to be treated as equal partners. But they do want their husband to be the loving initiator in their home when it comes to romance, finances, the children, and spiritual matters.

Men with strong personalities sometimes need to ratchet their dominance down and lead with more gentleness. More passive men need to step up and initiate conversations. All husbands are called to lead sacrificially, just like Jesus.

As a husband, your job is not to meet your wife's needs based on your own needs or desires. Instead, meet her needs based on what she actually needs. Marriage is a commitment to do that the rest of your life. That's what it means to love her more than you love yourself.