

DAVID'S MEN

SEEKING THE HEART OF GOD



Marriage

Single DMs: What does this month's topic have to do with you?

- *Your book for this month provides a helpful construct not only for marriage, but also for many other relationships. There are a lot of practical helps for you.*
- *Since God designed marriage as a picture of our relationship with Jesus, there are spiritual benefits for you as we focus on marriage.*
- *Perhaps God will bless you (or bless you again) with a wife one day. He can use this month's focus to help prepare you to bless your future wife and strengthen your marriage!*

We desire not only to be the men God wants us to be, but to be the husbands God *commands* us to be and our wives *need* us to be. Many marriages struggle because of poor communication and misalignment of each spouse's expectations and perceptions. This month's book and assignment will strengthen alignment with your wife in these areas.

One of the most difficult things for a man to do is treat his wife tenderly. We are aggressive by nature and spend most of our day in competitive environments. But when it comes to your wife, handle with care! She is God's gift to you. Don't do something nice for her in order to get something in return. Serve your wife without selfishness. Practice being tender, loving, kind, gentle, respectful, and patient. Love her as Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13:

*Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. **1 Corinthians 13: 4-7***

God designed marriage as a picture of our relationship with Jesus. Just as Christ sacrificed all for the church, we must put the needs of our wives ahead of ourselves. Unconditional love relinquishes all rights of self. Love your wife as Christ loves the church.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.
Ephesians 5:25

Current Month Assignments

- Read *The 5 Love Languages: Men's Edition* (married DMs) or *The 5 Love Languages* (single DMs) by Gary Chapman. Prepare a book summary to share with your group.
- Pray FOR your wife throughout this month. Review and print the prayer guide listed in the Resources section. *The more you pray for your wife, the more your heart will bend toward her!*
Single DMs: Your prayer this month can focus on your future wife, your son's wife or future wife, or another person God brings to your mind.
- DM Date Night With Your Wife: Review the related information in this month's materials. You and your wife need to complete assignments prior to date night.
- This is a big scripture memory month. Memorize the verses attached. Be prepared to quote each verse and reference. Review the verses from previous months so they become deeply rooted!
- Man-date: When you meet, discuss *how it is going with praying for your wife, the day of your date with your wife*, and your verses.

Resources:

- Prayer guide for praying for your wife: <http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/10-things-to-pray-for-your-wife> (includes a link for you to download and print a helpful guide to praying for your wife)
- *DM Date Night With Your Wife* (see following instructions)
- Great post about how we can hurt our wives without realizing it: <http://ronedmondson.com/2014/01/7-ways-a-husband-injures-a-wife-without-even-knowing-it.html>

Memory Verses

Love Like Jesus

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 - Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.

John 13:34-35 - A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

1 John 3:18 - Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

Serve Like Jesus

Mark 10:45 - For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

2 Corinthians 4:5 - For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.

+ 1 (for DM veterans)

Colossians 3:19 - Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them.

DM Date Night with Your Wife

Plan a romantic evening out on the town for just the two of you. It is your responsibility to take care of all the arrangements (scheduling, reservations, babysitter, etc.). Communicate the date in advance and prepare your wife for the evening's discussions (**see "Prior to Your Date Night" and "Date Night" instructions below**).

DM Date Night is not a forum for debate. It is an opportunity for the two of you to discuss important (and perhaps difficult) things in a safe environment. As she shares, your assignment is to listen, take notes, and ask questions as needed for understanding. You aren't a perfect husband and have work to do to improve (just like all husbands!). We all fall short in loving our wives as Christ loves the church. Don't get angry or frustrated when your wife shares with you. Try to separate yourself from your emotions and communicate to her (with your words, actions, expressions, posture, sounds, etc.) you are eager to love her the way she wants to be loved and you never want to offend her.

*Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. **James 1:19***

Notes for DMs who are single:

- If you are dating a woman you could possibly marry one day (NOTE: If she's not, why are you dating her?), identifying and discussing each other's love languages could be very beneficial to your relationship. Many married DMs wish we'd started our marriages better able to communicate with, listen to, and understand our wives. Get a head start! (Unless you just started dating...in which case we'd recommend you carefully consider whether your relationship is ready for this activity or not.)
- If you aren't dating anyone seriously, learning about your love language will still be helpful. In addition, identify someone with whom your relationship needs improvement, and use the assessment to try to identify his/her love language. Then reflect on how this knowledge can help you more effectively relate to him/her.

Prior to your date night (allow sufficient time for completion of these items):

- You should:
 - Complete the 5 Love Languages Assessment (available in back of book OR online via the link in the book) to identify your primary love language(s). Do not reveal the results to your wife until date night.
 - Complete the assessment again, this time responding to each question as you think your wife would respond. This will help you guess your wife's primary love language. Again, don't reveal the results until date night.
- Your wife should:
 - Complete the 5 Love Languages Assessment (available in back of book OR online via the link in the book) to identify her primary love language(s). She should not reveal the results to you until date night.

- Complete the assessment again, this time responding to each question as she thinks you would respond. This will help her guess your primary love language. Again, don't reveal the results until date night.

Date night:

- Pray that your date night discussions will be God-honoring, full of understanding and love, and free of selfishness, pride, and defensiveness.
- *Remember: Lovingly and humbly listen and don't argue when your wife shares her heart. If you crack and retaliate while she is sharing, you could break her confidence and hurt her deeply. Gently treat her with honor and respect.*
- Compare the results from your assessments.
- Were each of you right in identifying your spouse's primary love language(s)? If so, great! If not...GREAT! You have learned something new and important about each other. Either way, review each assessment question one by one, discussing the actual responses to the predicted responses. Discuss (involves speaking and listening) any discrepancies that exist.
- Now, aware of each other's primary love language(s), talk through the questions below. Take your time, and remember to honor your wife by listening, seeking to understand, and affirming her.
 - Are we spending enough time together? How much is best? When?
 - What time of day is best for us to talk?
 - How do you want me to greet you at the end of the day?
 - What is meaningful communication to you?
 - Where do you rank our communication on a scale of 1-10? (10=best) What are some things I could do to make our communication a "10" in the next year?
 - How am I doing with meaningful touch apart from sex? (1-10)
 - What do I do when it comes to touching that you don't appreciate?
 - What could I do in a heated argument to draw us closer – not farther apart?
 - What would be a romantic evening for you?
 - What are some things I do that take the romance out of our relationship?
 - When you are hurting or discouraged, what is the best way I can help you?
 - Decision-making – do you feel excluded or overburdened? What can I do to improve this area and make our relationship stronger?
 - What do I do to make you fearful in some way?
 - Are there any things in my life that you feel are more important than you? What can I do to make you feel you are second only to God?
 - Is there anything else that I do or don't do that you feel dishonors you, frustrates you, embarrasses you, or hurts you? Remember that it is my goal to be a better husband – please share honestly.