

# How to Be A Good Wife

Madonna Tideman

Northfield, Illinois

Being a part of a successful Christian marriage relationship requires some advanced preparation and effort. The preparation is having our individual spiritual lives firmly established in the Word of God. The effort comes in with the practical application of becoming one flesh. Few couples have the luxury of being totally prepared prior to marriage, but it is never too late to work this into our lives.

We need to understand the love God has for each of us and how He has set Christ, His Son as the Head of the church of which we are members. Our membership in the Body of Christ is secure. We lovingly submit to his Lordship and he lovingly leads and nourishes us. God called us out before the foundation of the world to be His sons and joint heirs with Christ. A section of Scripture in Deuteronomy 32:10 speaks to how God found many of us,

*"...in a desert land and in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye." (all Scripture is from the NKJV)*

The apple of the eye is a figure of speech that refers to the pupil of our eye. And just as our body protects this delicate part of our eye, so God closely guards and protects His people from harm. In Matthew 10, Jesus tells us that our Father cares for us so deeply that "the very hairs of your head are all numbered." God's love is what helps us persevere and hang on through trials, pain and suffering. God's love for us does not change. In Deuteronomy 31, Moses says that God,

*"...is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed." (vs. 8)*

This is simply great encouragement when building a marriage! Our love relationship with God needs to be strong and established in order for us to have a successful relationship with our spouse. We, in our personal spiritual life, must be totally committed to God. Matthew 22:37 commands us saying:

*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."*

Our love is to be for God and our trust is in God, because he shall supply all of our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. God's love keeps filling us and strengthening us so we never run out of our capacity to give. We are encouraged by Abraham's believing, who not being weak in faith, wavered not at the promises of God, but was strengthened in his faith, giving glory to God! Abraham was convinced that what God had promised He was able to perform (Romans 4:19-21). God's love never fails.

Knowing that God loves us is the only thing that gives us our identity and our security in this life. Colossians 3:14, 15 says,

*But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.*

Romans 15:5 says,

*Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus.*

When we are totally committed to God, we can love freely and openly. With the comfort of God's love in us, we can love unconditionally.

Our goal as Christians is to have a marriage patterned after the relationship Christ has with the church. Ephesians 5 says for a husband to love his wife just as Christ also loved the church. It also says that just as the church is subject to Christ, let the wife be to her own husband in everything. How long are we to be committed to one another like this? In Matthew 28:20 Jesus says, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." This is the time frame for our marriage relationships – to the end of the age.

At a recent married couples fellowship in our church someone said that he looks at the word "husband" as a verb. He said that it makes him realize the active responsibilities of the role more clearly. The word "husband" can be used as either a noun or a verb by definition. The word "wife" is only a noun, but perhaps it would help us to think of it as a verb.

To try to describe the word "wife" you need a lot of verbs! There is a lot of "doing" going on. This is not a passive role. This is the effort I mentioned earlier. The basic domestic tasks alone are endless. Marriage, it has been said, just further complicates your life. Be prepared to make huge, sometimes unfairly huge contributions into the common pot of your marriage – freely, generously, joyously, continually and never measuring what your partner puts in. With that said, why does anyone ever get married? Marriage is a wonderful thing for those who have the will to make it work. Genesis 2:18 says,

*And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."*

Adam reviewed all the cattle, beasts of the field and birds of the air, and did not find a helper comparable to him (Praise the Lord!). God created woman so that man would not be alone. Eve was a helper "comparable" or suitable, or sufficient for Adam. She was to fill in the blank spots in his life. The relationship was meant to take two "ones" and make a new "one." Genesis 2:24 says,

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

Wow, this is a big commitment! God shows us in His Word how to achieve this commitment and one great key is prayer.

*Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, he hears us. And if we know that He hears*

*us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions we asked of Him (1 John 5:14, 15)*

We know God wants us to have great marriages. Praying for each other needs to be a part of our daily lives. Our confidence in our marriage comes from the promises of God. God will answer our petitions for a great marriage.

God made the wife to compliment her husband. In our role as a helper comparable to our husbands we need to be thinking through how best to compliment our husbands. We need to think through how to aid them to be their best as the head of the family.

Each marriage is unique, as each partner in the marriage is unique. God will provide us with all the ability, energy, patience and love to be our best if we simply trust and rely upon Him. Wives can lovingly serve and submit when they are confident of God's love, wisdom and power, and are sure that He will reward this behavior (Hebrews 6:10, 11).

[Madonna Tideman and her husband Jeff have two children: Samuel and Madeline. They are in business together in commercial real estate]

\*\*

## **Recommended books on Marriage**

Love Life For Every Married Couple, by Ed Wheat, M.D., Published by Zondervan

The Five Love Languages, by Gary Chapman, Published by Northfield Pub.

Different By Design, by John MacArthur, Jr. Published by Victor Books.