

I DON'T FEEL LOVED

A Bible Study for Women

Relationships grow when rooted in the love of Christ. Christ's love was shown in the doing of a hard thing. What "hard thing" was Jesus Christ called to do? **Read Luke 22:40-42; 24:45-46.**

Christ's love was sacrificial. We don't have to sacrifice for our salvation. Jesus Christ did that on the Cross for us. It's done... once and for all. Believing that, how are we called to live? **Read Ephesians 4:31 – 5:2 and Colossians 3:12-13.** We are forgiven people. Forgiven people are called by the One who forgave us to forgive others.

In a working marriage, husband and wife are constantly forgiving each other. A particular "need" or "want" may be sacrificed for the sake of the relationship. Such sacrifice cannot be measured, but is a fragrant offering to God.

Modern women have been told they have the right to have their "needs" met. A "good" husband is expected to meet those needs. But, what if he doesn't?

"I thought I could change him."

*A friend wasted so many years trying to "fix" her husband. She pushed, prodded, and regularly reminded him of his failures. In time, she realized that her techniques never worked. Instead of trying to change him, she asked God for a changed attitude. Little by little, she learned that it was her job to love her husband and God's job to change him. **What does God's Word tell us in 1 Peter 3:1-5? If an unbelieving husband can be won for Christ by the respectful and pure conduct of his wife, how might the behavior of a believing husband change?***

"He doesn't make me happy."

*A friend admitted that she was very dependent on her husband for her happiness. She married him because he seemed strong, stable, and confident. She expected him to take care of her like a good dad would take care of his daughter. So focused on her own insecurities, she didn't see that he, too, was sometimes fearful, unsure, and struggling. One day, she adjusted her prayers. "Please, dear God, help me be a better wife." She welcomed him at the door with a smile. She asked him about his day. She left cheerful and encouraging notes on his mirror, by his plate, and inside his boots. It sounds rather magical, but in choosing her words with care and thinking of little ways to make husband happy, this wife became more content. She had a purpose. She was serving God and He was surprising her with joy. **What is joy? Read Galatians 5:22. Are our human desires in harmony with the Holy Spirit (v. 17)?** When we strive to focus on God's Word for our lives, on His commandments and promises, we are more and more led by His Spirit. **What does this help us to do (vv. 25-26)?***

"I feel more worthless with him than I think I would without him."

*A woman does not get her identity from her husband. Treasured or abused, our value does not come from man. Nor does our identity change with the circumstances of life. Our identity – our value – is sure and certain because of what Jesus Christ did for us. **Read Galatians 4:4-7; 1 John 3:1.***

“He’s such a disappointment.”

*For many years, the wife mourned her marriage. She was sure that God had made a mistake. We’re too different, she thought. This will never work. Quite unexpectedly, the woman realized she really wasn’t fighting her husband, she was fighting God. Focusing on her disappointments, she was paralyzed to think or do good. Over time, she began to zero in on her husband’s strengths and minimize his weaknesses. Every time he acted in an annoying way, she chose to think about his positive attributes. She stopped criticizing him to her friends and started speaking well of him. **With the help of the Holy Spirit, what do people of light do? Read 1 Thessalonians 4:5, 11.***

“He doesn’t seem to care about meeting my needs.”

*No matter what the modern feminists told us, men and women aren’t the same. Equal, yes. But, not the same. So, first of all, men can’t know all of our needs because they don’t think, feel, or communicate like we do. They don’t see or hear like we do. Second of all, shame on us for idolizing ourselves! Are we called to be served, or to serve? Honestly, who really knows our needs: us... or the One who made us? A wife of many years put it this way, “I’ve learned that my husband is meeting my greatest needs. His faithfulness is my security. His labor provides financial covering and numerous freedoms. Our shared faith makes us companions even when times are hard. Does he love me? Yes. It is shown in his perseverance.” **What is your definition of love? How does it compare to God’s definition in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7?***

“I don’t feel loved.”

*Maybe we have the wrong definition of love. If it’s an emotion, sometimes we’ll feel it and sometimes we won’t. Love is better defined as the willingness to act for the benefit of another. **Re-read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. In what ways does this love contrast with the world’s love?** A wife of 35 years acknowledged, “I have found that love is when a husband and wife, in spite of differences, want to be a team.” **Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-11. What does this say to you?** This is a world made hard by sin. Our sinful nature makes us easy prey for the enemy of our lives. **Read Ephesians 6:10-12. Who is our enemy?** When the enemy of our life stands at the door ready to devour us, “feelings” and “emotions” will provide little defense. But, real love evidenced by selfless partnership will overpower evil. **What significance do you find in Ecclesiastes 4:12? What would you say is the “threefold cord” in a marriage?***

“Every day, he grows more distant.”

*A woman has great power. She can help break or help make a man. She can crush a man’s spirit – with a look or a word – or she can help his spirit soar. When she emasculates him, brashly or subtly, her dagger slices deep to his masculine core to attack his very personhood. **God’s Word in Proverbs has much to say about a certain kind of wife. Read Proverbs 21:9, 19; 25:24; 27:15. What does Proverbs 14:1 say to you?***

When we remember whose we are, what we are called to do, and where we're going when we die, our behavior will be affected. **Who created us (Genesis 1:27)? We come from the very heart and mind of God! What is a woman called to do (Genesis 2:18)? How do we best "help" our husbands? In Christ, can we become more loveable (Titus 2:11-14)?**

Marriage, it has been said, is a hard dance. This isn't surprising when we remember that we are sinful people living in a sin-filled world. This isn't surprising when we acknowledge that men and women are equal, but different. This isn't surprising when we consider our uniqueness as persons. For these reasons, we need the Word of God as our music. Only then does the dance begin to change.

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Adapted from a post on www.ezerwoman.wordpress.com