



LOVE & RESPECT

QUESTIONS

The Crazy Cycle: A Bad Marriage?

All couples will experience the Crazy Cycle to some degree. This does not mean you have a bad marriage. Every marriage has some conflict and trouble. In fact, 1 Corinthians 7:28 states that when two people marry they “will face many troubles in this life” (NIV)

1. Can you identify with the Crazy Cycle? How?
2. How do you react to this statement by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:28?
3. Think of a time when you and your spouse got on the Crazy Cycle. What happened? Did you keep spinning?

The Unconditional

Unconditional respect, like unconditional love, is all about how one sounds (tone of voice and word choice) and appears (facial expressions and physical actions). A husband may not deserve respect because he has not earned respect, but a wife’s disrespect for him is ineffective long-term – and not biblical.

On the wife’s side, her greatest value is love. One of her greatest fears is that, if she shows her husband respect, he will treat her like a doormat, abuse her, or worse. Feminist voices have trumpeted this idea for years, but I don’t buy it. The man with basic goodwill wants to serve his wife, and he would even die for her. Another key passage full of Love and Respect truth is 1 Peter 3:1-7.

1. In our love-saturated culture, everyone understands and expects unconditional love. On the other hand, what is your reaction to the phrase “unconditional respect”?
2. What does unconditional respect NOT mean?
3. Wives, you may have fears associated with giving your husband unconditional respect. If so, what are some of your fears?
4. In Hosea, the Lord reveals that unconditional love qualifies as the best way to influence a wife to change her heart. Do you believe this is an effective way to pursue your wife?
5. Husbands, do you have any concerns about giving your wife unconditional love? If so, what are some of your concerns?

The Energizing Cycle

If you and your spouse can make a commitment to meet each other’s deepest needs – unconditional love for her and unconditional respect for him – you can control the Crazy Cycle. However, even the happiest of couples can’t stay off the Crazy Cycle. We’re all human! To keep the crazy Cycle in its cage, we need to get on the Energizing Cycle:

***HIS LOVE MOTIVATES HER RESPECT.
HER RESPECT MOTIVATES HIS LOVE.***

When applying this to communication we say: His loving words motivate her respectful words. Her respectful words motivate his loving words.

1. Wives, in light of the power of respectful words to influence the heart of a husband, why do you think some wives overlook God’s method for motivating a husband?
2. Husbands, in light of the power of loving words to touch a wife’s soul, why do you think some husbands overlook the power God has given them to motivate their wives?

Love = C-O-U-P-L-E (Husband to Wife)

To show their love, husbands live out the principles summed up in the acronym C-O-U-P-L-E, which provides six ways to spell love for a wife:

- C** – Closeness: I am close--and not just when I want sex.
- O** – Openness: I am open to her, to talk and share, not acting angry or disinterested.
- U** – Understanding: I don't try to "fix" her but just listen – trying to be considerate when she's really upset.
- P** – Peacemaking: I practice and know the power in saying, "Honey, I'm really sorry."
- L** – Loyalty: I often assure her of my love and commitment.
- E** – Esteem: I honor and cherish her as first in importance.

1. Husbands, do an honest self-assessment on how you show love to your wife. What grade would you give yourself?
2. What grade do you think your wife would give you? Why? (Don't ask her at this point)

Respect = C-H-A-I-R-S (Wife to Husband)

To show their respect, wives live out the principles summed up in the acronym C-H-A-I-R-S, which offers six biblical ways to spell respect for a husband's deepest desires:

- C** – Conquest: I recognize and thank him for his desire to work.
- H** – Hierarchy: I thank him for his motivation to protect and provide for me.
- A** – Authority: I acknowledge his desire to lead – and don't subvert his leadership.
- I** – Insight: I listen appreciatively to his ideas and the advice he wishes to offer.
- R** – Relationship: I value his desire for me to be his friend and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with him.
- S** – Sexuality: I respond to his need sexually; I don't deprive him

1. Wives, do an honest self-assessment on how well you show respect to your husband. What grade would you give yourself?
2. What grade do you think your husband would give you? Why? (Don't ask him at this time)

Motivating Another

The key to motivating another person is meeting that person's deepest need.

1. Do you agree with the above statement? Why or why not?
2. Write down one of the principles from C-H-A-I-R-S or C-O-U-P-L-E that you believe most motivates your spouse. Think about something simple but specific you can do that will energize your mate. Make a mental note or put a reminder on your calendar to act on this.

The Rewarded Cycle

Sometimes a wife will not show unconditional respect for her husband no matter how hard he tries to show her love. Sometimes a husband will not show love for his wife no matter how hard she tries to unconditionally respect him. These couples live in some of the most difficult situations. The Rewarded Cycle gives us hope!

***HIS LOVE BLESSES REGARDLESS OF HER RESPECT.
HER RESPECT BLESSES REGARDLESS OF HIS LOVE.***

The Rewarded cycle means that God blesses a husband who loves his wife regardless of her level of respect for him, and God blesses a wife who respects her husband regardless of his level of love for her. These blessings are the rewards God gives to those who love or respect a mate because of their own love and reverence for Christ. Christ Himself becomes the motivation for such action.

1. Write out your honest thoughts as you read this description of the Rewarded Cycle. Does it sound too lofty – or does it give you hope?
2. How fully do you believe that God will bless you if you love and respect in the midst of your difficulties?