

30 THINGS WIVES WISHED THEIR HUSBANDS KNEW

The marriage institution is one in which we continue to learn. This is true because God has so designed marriage to be a coupling of two distinct individuals that are meant to compliment, not cancel out each other. He then installed within each man or woman a common longing for mutual comfort, companionship and fulfillment in the association. To achieve this goal, a man as well as his wife would need to understand the uniqueness, the mental and emotional make-up of the other partner.



Too many men, however, do not seem to understand the emotional needs of their wives. They live in a vastly different world, grappling with their own needs and frustrations. Either they are unable to put themselves in a woman's shoes, to see and feel what she experiences, or they are too preoccupied with their own work to listen to their wives. Women definitely have needs which men do not understand.

This reason prompted the *Christian Women Mirror* to go to town recently to find out the desires of women concerning their marriages, especially what they expect from their husbands. Below, is a summary of the feedback received through questionnaire. The following list, we believe, is largely a representation of the heart cry of most, if not all, women. Although some of our findings are not new (they are as old as the marriage institution itself), yet they make all the difference between the woman enjoying her marriage or her enduring the relationship, and between a man enduring his wife or that man getting the best out of his wife.

- (1) Communication is of priority to the wives. Women said when men talk about themselves, the wives give both verbal and non-verbal support. Women are interested and engrossed in what their husbands have to say. But, unfortunately, the husbands appear to listen with only one ear when their wives talk. When they listen, all they probably want is the facts alone. Meanwhile, their wives would want them to catch and identify with the feelings behind the story.
- (2) Wives want companionship from their husbands. After all, this is one of the major reasons for getting married. They want their men

to crave their company above all else, that no matter how busy, they should find time for moments of togetherness along with their wives.

- (3) Wives also wished that men would make provision for the family a priority. That they provide for the needs in the family reasonably and on time, too.
- (4) Wives wished they would be genuinely respected for their roles as wives and mothers. They want to have a feeling of personal worth for the duties they perform at home, and wished their husbands would appreciate them and say so. When men don't show this appreciation, it makes their wives feel inadequate, unappreciated and, sometimes, worthlessly enslaved.
- (5) A lot of women said they appreciate husbands that respect their views and opinions on issues. They feel loved when their men share their views with them and not put their opinions down as "women talk."
- (6) The task of raising kids can be stressful, tiring and frustrating, especially when they are small. Wives said they would cope without complaining, nagging or falling into depression if only their husbands would understand and commend them for doing an admirable job. Unfortunately, they complain that most men come in from work and ask their wives, "Darling, what did you do all day?" implying through such question that the women had been idle all day and had not done anything worthwhile.
- (7) Wives admire and are proud of their husbands when they are committed and devoted to a calling in God's vineyard. Those who are converted and have unbelieving husbands said their greatest desire is to see their husbands converted and serve God together with them.
- (8) Wives wished their husbands would be well-versed in the word of God so that they can take up their God-given position in the family as the priest of the home, directing things and taking decisions according to God's standard.
- (9) Women respect their husbands more when they can vouch for their fidelity.
- (10) Wives appreciate men who pay attention to the spiritual and moral upbringing of their children and the upliftment of their wives. They appreciate it when their husbands pray with them on family

issues. That way, the men gain their commitment and undying loyalty, they said.

- (11) Wives want men who are dependable and show they love their wives more than their in-laws, men who would stand by them and defend them before in-laws if the need arises.
- (12) Women do not appreciate it when they are compared with other women outside – believer or unbeliever. They expect their men to love them unconditionally.
- (13) Wives wish to be constantly affirmed by their husbands. The response of virtually all the women interviewed is that they wish their husbands would affirm them by telling them, “I love you” as many times as possible even in a day. They claim it is a statement that makes them want to overstretch themselves for their men without looking back. Someone said, “You’re nobody till somebody loves you.”
- (14) A lot of women wished their husbands would show their love by buying them surprise gifts and presents – Just to show the husbands are thinking of them when they are not together. The gifts do not have to be expensive.
- (15) Women said they are hurt when their husbands forget special dates that are important to the relationship, like, wedding anniversary date.
- (16) Self-esteem is only generated by what we see reflected about ourselves in the eyes of other people, especially our loved ones. Therefore, wives expect their husbands to understand their temperaments and appreciate them for who they are. They love men who would defend them publicly before others who may not have a knowledge of their persons. Wives crave their husbands’ acceptance.
- (17) Some women, especially Christian women respondents, said they wish to see their husbands rested in the confidence and trust that they would do them (husbands) good all their days.
- (18) Wives said they feel more inclined to respond to their husbands’ intimate fellowship later in the day when their men had been loving, considerate and romantic all day, (not just love at night). They claimed it is sour and unexciting submitting to men who treat them as dumb and ugly in the daytime; but request their bodies at night. When they submit, it is only to keep peace at home.

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- (19) Women wished their men would buy clothes for them as they buy for themselves. They claim most men hide under the guise of “I need it for my office image” to buy only for self. Women too need to look presentable and neat. They wished their men would be selfless and generous, especially with attires. They should not wait for their wives to ask.
- (20) Most wives want the same gifts and financial care extended to the men’s family to be extended to theirs too. It promotes love.
- (21) Women expect that their husbands would plan the family’s finances with them, take crucial decisions with them and stick to joint decisions taken. They said some men allow too much external interference and, sometimes, change a joint-decision taken between them and their wives. The result is that women are hurt and do not feel committed to whatever is the final consequence of their men’s independent actions.
- (22) Women want their men to be men of integrity. They expect them to be men good at their work and honest in all their dealings at home. It does not matter if they are doctors or dock-workers, just men who are hard-working, just men they can be proud of and who the children can look up to.
- (23) Wives said, “they appreciate husbands who are patient with their shortcomings, who either correct them in love or overlook their mistakes.” None of the wives love men who flare up because the food was late, or the cooking was bad.
- (24) Women respect men who resist undue external influence from friends and relations, either from their own family or their wives’ family.
- (25) Women wish and love it when their husbands are involved in their wives’ jobs and career. They said they feel happy and fortunate to have men who offer useful counsels and suggestions to move their career forward.
- (26) Women thrive on compliments, especially when it is coming from the men they love. Wives want to receive compliments when the cooking is good, when the care of the children and even their devotion to their husbands are proper and when they dress well.
- (27) Wives also wished their husbands would continue to court or woo them, understanding the need to take them on outings once in a while. They want to go out with their husbands alone, at least to

break the monotony of home chores and . . . do something just for fun.

- (28) It is said that a family that prays together stays together. Wives love it when they are married to godly and prayerful men. They crave and look forward to the times shared together in prayer with their husbands. They know the immense blessings involved for the family. They know too that prayer knits the hearts of couples together.
- (29) The men who set time apart to spend with the children are a pride to their wives. Women wished their husbands would not be too preoccupied with their jobs and church involvements to the detriment of the children's upbringing. Knowing that children see their fathers as their heroes, wives wished they will deliberately make time available to impart godly virtues into their children and discipline them. When men complement their wives' efforts this way, they are able to give well-rounded young adults to the world. A pride for the family!
- (30) Wives said they love and respect men who have goals, who have a direction. They love men who plan and prayerfully project for the family's future. It is a fearful thing to follow plan-less, visionless and goalless men. Men that plan and carry along their wives with their plans most often realize such goals.

A successful husband and wife relationship begins with the attitude of the man; he has been ordained by God as the head of the family and the responsibility for its stability rests squarely upon his shoulders. He leads and the wife follows. There is no substitute for the Biblical prescription for marriage as found in Ephesians 5:25,28,29,31,33: The wisdom in it can never be replaced. It says: ***"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; . . . So, ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: . . . For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh . . . Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."***

The husband has the mandate of a loving leader for his family. He must recognize his wife's feelings and hurts and take steps to end the pain. He must empathize and sympathize with his wife. What she wants, he wants and satisfies her needs. The wife too in response to his love, deeply

respects, praises and obeys her husband. If and when this scriptural standard is applied in the family, all the yearnings above would be desires accomplished. There would in essence be no need for broken hearts, shattered lives and ruined homes. Let us make our homes what God intends them to be, striving to live by God's instructions and we would be the happier for it. May the Lord grant us His grace to be obedient in Jesus name.

(Culled from Christian Women Mirror June 2006)