

Unsolved Mysteries: Your Wife's Greatest Need

Marriage Series

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NOTE: This is a transcript and not a manuscript of Dr. Stewart's sermon. Since we speak differently than we write, a transcript will not be as smooth or as polished as a manuscript would be. This transcript has the style of an oral presentation not a written presentation. In order to reflect as much as possible the original presentation of this sermon, Dr. Stewart has chosen to retain the transcript format.

Well, last week I promised you that I would share with you what God said to me back some 25 year ago, now, when Teri and I were living in Phenix City and I was pastoring over at Central Baptist, 26, 27 years of age, first pastorate and just giving myself to it completely and neglecting her in the process. We had a new child, our first baby, very demanding baby, had colic for a year and a half, one of those. And so she was stressed out. And our marriage just really was going down the tubes. She was strong willed. I was strong willed and so we just did a lot of butting heads and we had a lot of hostility in our marriage, anger just abounded. We argued just almost all the time.

I remember one time we were sitting around the supper table. We were arguing. Our oldest daughter then was probably around two. And she was at the table with us and we were going at it and I remember looking at her and she had put her hands over her ears. Now that will strike you hard and deep. But that was just the condition our marriage had gotten into.

I told you I knew that since I was a pastor I didn't really see that divorce was an option because I wanted to stay in ministry. So I just decided to just endure the situation and some day maybe after I retired I would divorce her then. I knew the problem. I mean, I had been to seminary. I had studied the Bible. I knew the problem was Teri. She was not being the submissive wife that the Bible says she should be. And I told her that. I said, "Teri, the problem with this marriage is you. If you will start being that submissive wife that God has called you to be, then our marriage will be great. You are the problem."

And for some reason that didn't make her want to be submissive. It didn't seem to accomplish what I wanted to accomplish. So the hostilities just continued to grow and we were angry with each other, continually it seemed like. And then as I was telling you last week I was in my prayer time and Bible study time one morning, very burdened about

our marriage because I was beginning to really feel hypocritical standing in the pulpits on Sunday and preaching and yet my own marriage was in such a bad state.

And then God spoke very clearly to me, not audibly, but in my spirit he said, “You are the problem”

And that just blew me away. I could not fathom that I was the problem. I mean, really. I thought I was doing a pretty good job of trying to be the leader that God called me to be. But when he spoke I knew that it was true. He had spoken truth and I couldn’t argue with it.

And so I said, “Well, Lord. I don’t understand. What do you mean I am the problem?”

And he said to me, “You are not loving Teri in the right way and that is the problem in this marriage.”

And I thought on that for a moment and I said, “Well, Lord, how am I to love her?”

And it is like he said to me, “You are to love her as Christ loves the church.”

And so I began to do a study: How does Christ love the Church? If I could determine how Christ loved the Church, then I would know how to love Teri. And as I began to do my study God began to show me that the key to our marriage was my love for her just as the key to the church, a healthy church is Christ’s love for us.

Now why do we love Christ? Because he first loved us. He is the beginning of the Church. His love for us is the motivation that moves us to love him back. God made women to be basically responders. And if I would give her the right stimulus then she would respond in the right way. And the right stimulus was I was to love her as Christ loved the Church. I was to love her into submission, not demand her into submission.

And the kind of response I got from the demand, “You need to be submissive,” was what you can expect, ladies, and you know what it was, just the opposite response. Was that her fault? Mainly it was my fault because I was giving her the wrong stimulus. But when I began to love her as Christ loves the Church it is amazing. God began to work in her life and she began to become that submissive wife that God wanted her to be, not because I was saying, “You need to be submissive,” because I stopped saying that. And I began loving her as Christ loves the Church.

The Bible never tells a husband to command his wife to be submissive. You don’t read that anywhere. And it never even commands the wife to love the husband. The closest thing you get is over in Titus where it says for the older women to teach the younger women to love their husbands and their children.¹ But it never just comes out and says, “Wives, love your husbands.”

¹ See Titus 2:4.

But he commands the husband to love his wife several times in the Scriptures. That tells me that the key to a healthy family is the husband loving the wife as Christ loves the Church. You see, if the family has problems, men, it is our responsibility. We cannot blame it on anybody else.

Who sinned first in the garden? Who first ate the forbidden fruit? Eve? Who got blamed for it? Do you ever read in Scripture, “As Eve sinned so sin entered into the human race”?

I don’t read that. What I read is, “As one man sinned...”² Adam got the blame although Eve was the first one to sin. That tells me, men, that God holds us responsible for our families and the wellbeing of our families, not only financially which we all can accept that, but emotionally and spiritually. And if our families are not healthy emotionally and spiritually we men are to blame. And if you really want to get to the heart of it, the reason that there are problems is because we are failing to love our wives as Christ loves the Church, because if we will love our wives as Christ loves the Church then our families will be strong and they will be healthy emotionally and spiritually.

So it is crucial that you and I learn how to love our wives as Christ loves the Church.

If you look at your outlines you will notice very simple, only three major points. That’s because I know men. K-I-S-S. Keep it simple, stupid. So I am keeping it real simple, guys. The key thing you need to remember is to love your wife as Christ loves the Church. Now I want to give you the three Cs.

The first C: **Commitment**. Over in Ephesians chapter five let me begin and read for you beginning in verse 23.

For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church.³

The first C is commitment. When you think of that word “commitment,” what comes to the forefront of your mind? Your mind, your will or your emotions? When you think of commitment, do you think of it being a matter of the mind, a matter of the will or a

² See Romans 5:12.

³ Ephesians 5:23-29.

matter of the emotions? Obviously all three are involved, but commitment is primarily a matter of the will. Jesus is committed to love us, the Church, no matter what.

The Church is not always lovable. We are not always lovely, but Jesus nevertheless is always and always loves us. It is not a performance based love at all. Jesus doesn't love you any less if you read your Bible tomorrow or if you do not. He does not love you any more if you spend an hour in prayer tomorrow or if you do not. He doesn't love you any less or any more if you come to church this following Sunday or Saturday or if you do not. You see, his love for you is not based on your performance. It is an unconditional love.

He is pleased when you read the Bible. He is pleased when you pray, but he doesn't love you any more or any less. It is an unconditional love because he is committed to love us no matter what. He has set his will to love the Church even when we don't please him and many times he looks in our lives and he is not pleased. He may even be disgusted with what he sees, but he always loves you. Even in his discipline he loves us.

As he says over in Revelation 3:19, "Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline."⁴ That tells me that as a husband I am to be committed to love my wife no matter what because Christ is committed to love me no matter what. If I am going to love her like he loves me, then that means I must be committed to loving her no matter what. It doesn't matter how she acts. It is to be an **unconditional love**.

Now, guys, we have a problem loving unconditionally. Men are score keepers.

I remember when we home schooled our boys when they were about six years old and we joined a homeschool baseball league. Somebody high up in the organization had a bright idea that the six year olds wouldn't keep score during the games. We would just go out and have fun.

As one of the coaches I didn't keep score. But now do you think my boys knew the score at the end of that game? I mean we didn't have a scoreboard. Nobody supposedly was keeping score, but let me tell you, they knew the score because men are just score keepers. We just keep score. That gets into our marriage, too.

You see, we have a secret invisible scoreboard in our heads and we give point values to different things. As men we also like everything to stay equal.

You wash the dishes, that's 100 points on your scoreboard. Your wife cooks supper, that's 100 points on her scoreboard. You vacuum the living room, man, you put 50 points on your scoreboard.

Well, we keep score and if we get ahead, say, by 300 points and she is only at 100 we think, well, everything needs to get evened out so we just kind of stop until she catches up, right?

⁴ Revelation 3:19.

Ladies, you wonder why he is real helpful one day and then a couple of days later he keeps sitting in that chair like a knot on a log and you think, where was that guy that was so helpful yesterday?

Well, you see, in his scoreboard you got ahead of him in the help category and so he had to do some things to catch up, but once he caught up and maybe got ahead, then he was going to wait and let you catch back up.

You are loving towards him, then, he guesses he will be nice toward you.

That is performance based love, guys. That is not what God has called us to do. Let me add something, guys. Your wives don't keep score the same way you do. She will give you about five points for washing the dishes. It's amazing. They don't keep score at all so it just keeps things in tension.

We should be loving toward our wives and act lovingly toward them no matter what. Christ doesn't keep score. He is always loving toward us and helping us. And I am not talking about an emotional soupy love, but a practical, agape love that is seen in actions.

That means you should always act lovingly toward your wife. That's right, even when she overdraws at the bank, even when she forgets to put that check in the check book and because of that you get overdrawn and they hit you with a penalty. Even when you come home from a meeting and she asks all those questions about the meeting. You should act lovingly toward her no matter what. Even when she gets her feelings hurt and you can't figure out why. You don't know what you did and she says, "Well, you just ought to know."

Ladies, we really don't have a clue, really, we don't have a clue. You have got to tell us.

You still act lovingly toward her.

Let me share with you a verse that it would have suited me absolutely fine if God had not put it in the Bible. And it would have suited me even... just as well if I had never read it. And you would think I would have had enough sense not to preach on it, wouldn't you? And at least not to preach on it when my wife was in the congregation. But I failed on all those accounts.

It is in Colossians 3:19. It was one of those verses that when I read it I said, "No, it can't mean that."

Have you ever done that? So you get all these different translations thinking you will find a translation that will get you out of the predicament, you can find a loophole.

Well, this is one of those the more translations I looked into the worse it got. Now listen to what it says, Colossians 3:19. “Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.”⁵

Now on your screen I have put the Amplified version. Now, you know the Amplified Bible realizes that generally one Greek word cannot be adequately translated into one English Word just like in any language that you have ever tried to translate from that language back into English it is hard to get a word for word equivalent. The Amplified Bible, realizing that, will kind of expand it and give you the full meaning of the words. So the text in its full meaning reads, “Husbands, love your wives, that is be affectionate and sympathetic with them and do not be harsh or bitter or resentful toward them.”

Guys, why do you think God tells you that? He never tells the wife not to be harsh toward her husband. Why does he say to you, “Men, don’t be harsh and don’t be irritated and bitter towards your wife”? That is a command. It is not a suggestion. It is in the imperative mood in the Greek New Testament. God said, “I command you.”

The reason is because what person in the entire world are you the quickest to be harsh towards, to be irritated with? Now that doesn’t make a bit of sense does it? I mean, the very person you have committed to live with until you die, that you have committed to become one flesh with, that you love more than anybody else in the world, but yet that very same person...

I will be at church on Sunday and somebody will come up to me and say, “Preacher, we just got a problem in our Sunday school class.”

I’ll say, “Oh?”

“Yeah, our teacher is just boring.”

I’ll say, “Well, I’ll see what I can do about it.”

Well, a few minutes later somebody comes up and says, “Preacher, it is too hot in our Sunday school class. We need to get it cooled down.”

I say, “Ok, I’ll see what I can do.”

A few minutes later somebody else come up and says, “Preacher, I can’t hear. The sound system is not any good in our worship center.”

I’ll say, “Ok, I’ll look into that and see what I can do about it.”

That goes on times and time again on Sunday and I am just as nice and calm and say, “Ok, we’ll look into it.” I am very cordial.

⁵ Colossians 3:19.

And then, I get home. I walk in the door and Teri can just say one thing. It doesn't have to be much, but just one thing and I mean that quick, that quick I am irritated. And I am acting harsh toward that very person I have committed to love until we die.

Men, you don't ever have that problem, do you?

Men, God knows you all too well. He knows the very person you will act irritated with the quickest and be harsh to the quickest is your wife. And therefore he commands us, "Husbands..." And what he is saying is—listen, men—what he is saying is that it is never ever a circumstance in which you are justified in being harsh, mean-spirited or irritated with your wife. Wow! Amen or oh me?

I put that on the screen because I just knew you wouldn't believe it if you didn't see it in writing. Never, ever... I mean I don't care what your wife does. You are never justified in the sight of God being irritated with her or acting harsh and mean spirited to her, never, never.

Now that is tough and I preached it with my wife sitting there. Do I always carry this off? No. In fact, last night, I mean last night I blew it. I mean she said something and I got irritated. I not only got irritated, I acted irritated. I mean I can come in and act like the devil sometimes. Isn't that awful, a preacher acting that way? I'm just being honest. I tell you. I have learned in the school of hard knocks, guys, and I have come in and I mean it won't be much at all, just a little something.

And, you know, when you think back on it, it is embarrassing how small some of the things are, but, they just fly all over you and next thing you know you are just acting like the devil to the one you love the most.

Well, you know what the Bible says you have to do when you sin. And you know it is no way to get around it. It is sin. Men, when we act irritated and harsh and mean spirited toward our wives it is sin. What I have had to add to this sermon since I have originally preached it, is those looks we give our wives that say "I could kill you." I have gotten so I can hold my tongue sometimes, but those looks. I have got to work on those looks. You know, you can just feel the steam.

And it hurts our wives. It really does. Guys, you... you don't realize the power of your words to hurt. Guys can just kind of go at each other and brush it off. But when you as a husband speak a harsh bitter word towards your wife or your children it cuts. And it cuts them deeply.

I have known marriages that have fallen apart and the main reason is because the man was a very aggressive personality and he was very verbal and he would get angry and he would just blow up and then he would be over it. But his wife wouldn't be over it, because she would be the recipient of his verbal barrage. And she just wilted under it.

After 10 years of this she finally said, “I can’t take it anymore. It is killing me.” And though she did not have any biblical grounds, I could not talk her into staying in that marriage. But she says, “I’ll die if I stay in it” because that harsh word cuts our wives. It cuts our children.

Is Jesus ever harsh and mean spirited to you? No. Never. That is why I know it is never right for us to be that way to our wives because he is never is. I don’t care what you do, he will never be harsh and mean spirited with you even when he has to discipline you he will do so in love.

So the first word is **commitment**. You must be committed to act lovingly toward your wife no matter what. And we are talking about that 1 Corinthians 13 love, that willingness to put her first. “Love is patient, love is kind. Love is longsuffering. Love does not remember a wrong done against it.”⁶ Read 1 Corinthians 13. It wouldn’t hurt to read it every day.

But when you do sin, what do you have to do? You confess it to God. You say, “God I have sinned. I was irritated.” And then you need to go confess to your wife. Now, that’s a lot harder than confessing to God. But you need to go to her and say, “Honey, I sinned. I acted irritated with you. I acted harsh and I sinned and I have asked God to forgive me and he has. Now I want to ask you to forgive me.”

Man, there is something about doing that, humbling yourself to have to go to your wife and ask her to forgive you that helps you not to do it, helps you to catch that tongue a little bit.

So the first word is commitment. The second word is **cherish**. Verse 29 in Ephesians five says, “For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it.”⁷

Husbands, we are to **cherish** our wives.

Now, most men don’t even know what cherish means, much less how to do it. Well, Webster defines “cherish” as to treat with tenderness and affection, to hold dear, to embrace with affection.”

To cherish your wife is to see great value in her as a person that you want to praise to others. One of the greatest things you can do for you wife is to praise her in front of other people. Now, she will say, “Oh, that embarrasses me,” but she loves it. She loves it.

Now one of the worst things you can do is to praise another woman in your wife’s presence when you haven’t praised her.

“Boy, momma is the best cook in the world.”

⁶ See 1 Corinthians 13:3-7.

⁷ Ephesians 5:29.

“Boy, that secretary I got is the best secretary. Man, she is so efficient.”

Don't you praise another woman until you have praised her. You want to get in the dog house, that is quick way to do it.

Cherish means to delight in your wife for more than what she does, more than just because she cooks and washes clothes and cleans the house. She needs to know what you cherish in her, those characteristics that made you want to marry her to start off with. Maybe it was her loyalty, maybe it was her trustworthiness. She needs you to rehearse those qualities to her. She needs to hear you speak those words to her. That is cherishing her. Men, your wife needs to be bathed in your words.

Verse 26 says, “He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.”⁸ Christ cleanses us by washing us with the Word. Your wife needs to be washed with your words, men, your words of praise, your words of tenderness, your words of affection.

Now this is difficult for most men to do because we men are what I call headliners and the women are fine printers. We just want the headlines. Just give me the main facts. But she wants everything. She is not content with just the main facts. God made her that way.

Now we men are capable of being fine printers if we are really interested in something. My boys have the batting averages of most of the professional baseball players memorized. I mean we can be detailed if we want to be, but generally speaking we don't want that much.

Now I will give you a good example that shows it. You and your wife have a friend that has just had a baby. You find out about it and so you come home and you say to her, “You know, I just found out so and so had a baby.”

Now, you will only ask two questions, men: Was it a boy or girl and what did they name it? That's all you really care about. And you may just say, “Was it a boy or a girl?” Now, if you are really interested you will say, “What did they name it?”

Do you think your wife is satisfied with just knowing those two things? She wants to know how much it weighed. How long was it? Was it a hard labor or was it an easy labor? How long was the labor? Does it have hair on its head? What color is the hair on its head? Right?

And, see, we just want to know the things that won't change, you know, what sex it was and what its name was. That's enough for us. The other stuff will change anyway. But they want to know all the details. And that's because they need words.

⁸ Ephesians 5:26.

And so when you go up to your wife if you want to cherish her, it is not enough just to say, “Well, you know, honey, you know, I appreciate your loyalty.” She is not going to feel cherished. You got to get into it. You may have to spend time thinking about this. You may even have to write it down, guys, especially if you are a man of few words. But you need to say, “You know, honey, I just want you to know, I appreciate your loyalty. I know when you take a responsibility at church that you are going to fill that responsibility. I never have to worry about being embarrassed because you have taken on a responsibility and you have fallen short of doing it. You know, you are loyal, you are conscientious and I really appreciate that about you. You know, that was one of the things that attracted me to you to start off with. That’s one of the qualities that I am so happy you are instilling in our children.”

Bathe her in your words. **Cherish** her.

The third C—the first one was **commitment**, second one was **cherish**—the third one is **caring**. Verse 28 says, “So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies.”⁹

Now does the man love his body? First of all, by **caring** for its needs. I look after my body. I feed it. I clothe it. I wash it sometimes, probably less than that I exercise it, but, yeah, I call myself taking care of it. I am aware of my body’s needs. When I am hungry I eat. When I am thirsty, I get something to drink. When I am tired I rest. I am aware of my body’s needs.

If I am going to love my wife the way I love my body, that means I need to be aware of her needs.

Don’t be like the Norwegian farmer who had been married for 45 years. Every morning he would get up before sunrise, go out a milk the cows, and come home to a warm breakfast on the table that his wife has prepared for him. Well, this one morning he came home after 45 years of the same routine every day and he got home from milking the cows and there was no breakfast on the table. He was totally shocked.

Instead of breakfast being on the table, his wife was in the kitchen crying. And he went in and he said, “What’s wrong?”

She said, “You don’t tell me you love me.”

He said, “I told you the day we got married I loved you. And if anything changes I will let you know.”

That is not recognizing the needs of your wife.

I promise you. **The unsolved mystery was to reveal to you your wife’s greatest need. All right, here it comes.**

⁹ Ephesians 5:28.

There was a couple that went around the United States doing marriage seminars and at each seminar they would give out a survey. And on the survey to the women it said, "I wish my husband would love me more by..." And they asked the ladies to fill out.

Men, you won't have a clue of what the overwhelming number one response was. Here it is--I wish my husband would love me more by **communicating** with me.

This situation multiplies itself many times over in offices of pastors and marriage counselors every week. The couple comes in and they sit down before the pastor. Almost always the women will speak first. The counselor will say something like, "Well, what seems to be the problem?"

And she will say, "He doesn't love me anymore."

And when she says that the husband gets this shocked, I can't believe it, look on his face. And he says, "What do you mean I don't love you anymore? I work these fingers to the bone for you. What about that new car I got you? What about this new house we just bought? What about those new clothes that I provide for you? What do you mean I don't love you anymore?"

And she says, "But you don't ever talk to me anymore."

He was saying, "I love you," by the things he provided.

She was saying, "If you love me, spend time with me, talking to me, communicating with me."

Guys, that is your wife's number one need, for you to just talk to her, for you to communicate with her, for you to spend time with her.

Think about it. That is what you need as a Christian.

You know, the richest, most wonderful times I have as a Christian are when God speaks to me in the Word. Have you had that experience? You will be in your Bible study or maybe you will be listening to a sermon, but God will just take that Scripture and it is just like it comes off the page and it just comes alive and God ministers to you. And it is like God has just spoken to you, like he has come out of heaven and that everything else in the universe has faded in the background and it is just you and God and he is speaking to you.

Now that is the greatest joy in my Christian life is for God to speak to me and I know he spoke.

Well, now if that is my greatest joy, men, and I am to love my wife as Christ loves me, doesn't it make sense your wife's greatest joy in your marriage will be for you to spend

time with her really sharing and communicating with her, letting her know how important she is to you because you want to spend time with her? You make a point to have time where you can be alone together and just talk. Just you listen and you talk and share.

The next thing: I am sensitive to the hurts of my body. If I have a headache, I know it. If my back hurts, I know it. Well, if I am going to love my wife like I love my body, then I need to be sensitive to her needs and her hurts, men. That means when I come in from work I can't just go plop in front of the TV set and turn on ESPN1 or ESPN2 or ESPN Classic or turn on the Sports South or many of the other myriad sports channels that are out there now. I can't just sit home and plop down in the chair and pull up the newspaper. That means if I am going to be aware of her needs, when I get home I need to search her out and I need to say, "Honey, what is going on? How was your day?" And then actively listen as she shares.

Men, she has a need to know about what is going on in your life. That means you need to talk.

You know, somebody has said the average woman talks 20,000 words a day. The average man talks 10,000 words a day. The problem is he gets home from work, he has already spoken his 10,000 and she has got 10,000 more to go, right?

Men, that means we have to work at this. The truth is we men can relate to objects. That's the truth of it. We can relate to objects. Women need human beings to relate to. A man can just sit down in front of a television set and watch a ball game and believe it or not, ladies, he can get up from that television time and he feels fulfilled. He is ready to go to bed and get up and go to work next time. He has had a sense of fulfillment. He has related to that TV.

Men, your wives don't relate to things. They need people. She needs you to relate to, she needs an honest conversation.

Now let me share something with you. This will be worth the price of admission if you will grab a hold of this, men. Now, this came as a revelation to me. When your wife shares a problem with you, **she doesn't want a solution.**

Now does that make sense to you guys? No. Men, we don't share a problem unless we want some help in solving it. In fact, usually we will just mull over the situation until we have got a grip on it. Then we may go to a man and say, "Well, what do you think about this?" But we want him to help us with it. We would never just think of telling them the problem to be telling it.

But, guys, you won't believe this either, but your wife gets help just talking about the problem. I mean she doesn't have to have a solution, just talking about it makes her feel better.

Men are usually just the opposite. Talking about it makes us feel worse, so we don't want to talk about it until we get it worked out, right?

That's why she said, "Oh, come on, don't you want to talk about it? You look like something is bothering you."

You are, "No. I don't want to talk about it." So we go in our cave.

But, now it helps your wife to talk about her problem. You are helping her by just listening to her. But you need to learn how to listen. You need to learn to resonate with her. You see, when she starts telling you a problem and you immediately start figuring out how to fix it, sometimes you even jump in before she is finished and say, "Wait a minute, I know how to fix this."

She hadn't even finished telling you the problem, but you got it worked out, see. And you want to hurry up and tell her so you can fix it. That gets her frustrated.

She says, "You just don't understand. You don't understand me."

And you are thinking, "I understand perfectly." This is what you need to do.

All she wants is for you to listen and resonate.

You know if you take two pianos... and if both of these pianos were perfectly tuned and we hit middle C on one piano and we went over to the other piano and felt the chord of middle C, it would be vibrating. That is called resonance. She needs you to resonate with her.

When she tells you a problem, she just needs you to listen. And she just needs you to feed back. "Yeah, I can understand it. I can see it."

You see, when you say, "You shouldn't feel that way," you know what that does to her? That says, "Your feelings are not valid." You are invalidating her as a person. You are rejecting her. Even if you are thinking, "You know, you shouldn't feel that way," don't say it. Just say something like, "Yeah, you know, I can see where that would make you mad. I can see where that would upset you."

For instance, Teri might come to me on Sunday afternoon. She might say, "You know, I saw so and so in the hall today at church and they didn't even speak."

You know what I am thinking. They probably didn't see you. Well, they probably had something on their mind. I am guilty of doing it. That's what I am thinking. But now that I know a little more I don't say that.

I'll say, "Well, you know, I can see where that would upset you, you know, somebody walked right by and not speak, I could see where that would hurt your feelings."

Now, see, she feels like I am resonating, all right? She feels validated. Ok I can understand. I can see where that would upset you. I can see where that would hurt your feelings. I can see where that would bother you.

That is all she wants. That is all she wants, guys. She doesn't me to try to explain to her, don't worry about it. That person probably didn't even see her. She doesn't want that. She doesn't want me to say, "Don't get your feelings hurt. That's ridiculous. You shouldn't have your feelings on your shoulders. She doesn't want to hear that." She wants me just to say, "Ok, I can see where that would make you feel bad."

I am just telling you if you respond back to her like that she feels better. You have helped her.

Now, a couple of days later I may go back and say, "You know, Teri, we were talking the other day about so and so not speaking to you in the hall."

And she'll say, "Yeah."

I'll say, "You know, have you thought about maybe... you know, maybe she just didn't see you. You know, maybe she was... had her mind on something else."

Well, then she is a little more open to a solution like that, right?

She'll be, "You know, I was thinking about that and that might just... that might be exactly what it was."

So just listen, guys. You don't have to solve every problem. Just listen. That takes a lot of pressure off you. Just listen and resonate and then you can come back in a couple of days and deal with it. You can bring it back up and say, "You know, would you like me to give you some input on this?"

And she will probably say, "Yeah, I would like to know what you think."

But at the time she is first telling you, she just wants somebody to understand what she is going through, to feel what she is feeling.

Resonate with her. Know her pain. Know her hurts. That is being caring.

Be **committed** to love her no matter what. **Cherish** her. And be **carrying**. If you will put these into practice, I guarantee you, men, you wife will be a happier wife. She will be a more contented wife. She will be a more satisfied wife. And you will be loving her as Christ loves the Church.

Let's pray.

Father, I do thank you that we can just look into your Word and just see how we can love our wives as you love us, Lord Jesus. May we always act lovingly toward them, may we cherish them, may we care for them deeply in Jesus' name. Amen.