



Date Night with Your Wife

This might be the most challenging assignment of the DM year. Plan an evening out for just the two of you. It is your responsibility to take care of all the arrangements (finding a babysitter, reservations, scheduling, etc.). Arrange a time and place to discuss the questions. Communicate the date in advance and prepare your wife for the evening's discussions. She needs to know you are not going to retaliate or attack when she shares her heart.

You aren't a perfect husband! Every husband falls short in loving his wife as Christ loves the church. Don't get angry or frustrated when your wife shares with you. Practice self-control and communicate clearly with her (with your words, actions, expressions, posture, sounds, etc.) that you are eager to love her the way she wants to be loved, and that you never want to offend her.

"Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry" –James 1:19

This will be a "make it or break it" night. If you humbly and lovingly listen to her, you will reap great benefits. If you crack and retaliate while she is sharing, you could break her confidence and damage her deeply. Remember, gently treat her with honor and respect.

DM Date Night is not a forum for debate. It is an opportunity for your wife to share some very difficult things to say in a safe environment where she will not be attacked or criticized. Your assignment is to listen and take notes. Take notes and ask questions as if you are talking about another man. Do not take her feedback personally, but realize you are imperfect and have work to do. This is not about what she needs to do—it is about you and what you need to do to be a better husband.

Note to DM veterans:

- "I have to endure this again?" Yes. Just as you weren't a perfect husband the first time, you're still not perfect...but reviewing these items with your wife will provide a check of your progress and a reminder of what your wife values most (maybe that's changed since your last DM Date Night!).

Date Night Instructions

Prior to your date night (allowing her sufficient time to review), give your wife each of the following:

1. **Ways We Offend Our Wives** - This is a handout with 122 ways that men offend their wives. Give this list to your wife and have her select 10 ways that you personally offend her. She will discuss these on your date night.
2. **125 Ways to Love Her** - Ask your wife to read through the list below, circle 10 that would make her feel loved, and discuss together. Your relationship will be greatly strengthened as you learn to love your wife her way.
3. **Questions for Your Wife** - On your Date Night, after your wife has discussed the ways you offend her and the ways you can best express love to her, use the questions below to further identify areas that need to be discussed:
 - Are we spending enough time together? How much is best? When?
 - What time of day is best for us to talk?
 - How do you want me to greet you at the end of the day?
 - What is meaningful communication to you?
 - Where do you rank our communication on a scale of 1-10? (10=best)
 - What are some things I could do to make our communication a "10" in the next year?
 - How am I doing with meaningful touch apart from sex? (1-10)
 - What do I do when it comes to touching, that you don't appreciate?
 - What could I do in a heated argument to draw us closer – not farther apart?
 - What would be a romantic evening for you?
 - What are some things I do that take the romance out of our relationship?
 - When you are hurting or discouraged, what is the best way I can help you?
 - Decision-making – do you feel excluded or overburdened? What can I do to improve this area and make our relationship stronger?
 - What do I do to make you fearful in some way?
 - Are there any things in my life that you feel are more important than you? What can I do to make you feel you are second only to God?
 - Is there anything else that I do or don't do that dishonors you, frustrates you, embarrasses you or hurts you?

Ways Men Offend Their Wives

Ask your wife to read through the list below, circle 10 that you are often guilty of, and discuss together.

- Ignoring her
- Not valuing her opinions
- Showing more attention to other people than her
- Not listening to her or not understanding what's important to her
- Closing her out by not talking or listening to her (the silent treatment)
- Being easily distracted when she's talking
- Not scheduling quality time with her
- Unwillingness to talk about things that you do not understand
- Unwillingness to talk about things that she does not understand
- Defending your family of origin even when they've hurt her
- Treating her like she's weak instead of honoring her as the "weaker vessel"
- Using words like "babysitting" when you're just being a dad
- Protecting your time to rest or recharge but not helping her get the same
- Minimizing her success to protect your own confidence
- Acting like her work (at home or outside the home) matters less because it earns less
- Treating her grief, anxiety, or physical struggles as something she should "just get over"
- Assuming romance or pursuit isn't needed anymore
- Failing to adapt with her in new seasons (parenting, empty nest, retirement, illness)
- Comparing her to your mother (even subtly)
- Expecting her to carry the emotional weight of the relationship
- Not noticing how mentally exhausting her days are
- Letting the kids disrespect her without stepping in
- Being passive in discipline or discipleship, leaving it all to her
- Not giving her a chance to voice her opinion on important decisions
- Giving her the "silent treatment"
- Making jokes about areas of her life
- Making sarcastic statements about her
- Insulting her in front of others
- Responding to her with quick retorts
- Giving harsh criticisms
- Using careless words before you think through how they will affect her
- Constantly nagging her
- Raising your voice at her
- Making unfair critical comments
- Swearing or using inappropriate language in her presence
- Correcting or criticizing her in public
- Gracelessly pointing out her weaknesses or blind spots
- Constantly saying "I told you so"
- Having a disgusted or judgmental attitude

- Pressuring her when she is already feeling low or offended
- Lecturing her when she's seeking comforted and encouragement
- Not keeping your word
- Comparing her to other women
- Being disrespectful to her family
- Coercing her into an argument
- Punishing her for something that's not he fault
- Not celebrating her for something she did well, even if she did it for you
- Treating her like a child
- Being rude to her or to other people in public places
- Being unaware of her needs
- Being ungrateful
- Not trusting her
- Not approving of what she does or how she does it
- Not being interested in her own personal growth
- Being inconsistent or having double standards (doing things you won't allow her to do)
- Not giving her advice when she's seeking it
- Not telling her that you love her
- Having a generally prideful or arrogant attitude
- Not giving consistent encouragement
- Failing to include her in a conversation when you are with other people
- Constantly needing to prove you're right
- Ignoring her around the house
- Not being present or available at home
- Ignoring her at social gatherings
- Not attending or prioritizing church
- Failure to express honestly what you think her innermost feelings are
- Showing more excitement for work and other activities than for her
- Being impolite at mealtimes
- Lacking manners at home or in public
- Not prioritizing quality time/dates with her
- Not helping her with your children
- Failing to do household chores
- Making her feel stupid for her purchases
- Failing to take initiative as a Father
- Not showing public affection for her that she appreciates
- Not sharing your life with her (Your ideas, feelings, work, etc.)
- Failing to be a spiritual leader at home
- Demanding that she submit to you
- Demanding sex
- Being unwilling to admit you were wrong
- Unwillingness to accept criticism

- Being too busy with work and activities
- Not showing compassion and understanding for her or your children
- Not planning for the future
- Being stingy with money
- Criticizing her income
- Wanting to do things that embarrass her sexually
- Viewing Pornography
- Forcing her to make many of the decisions she's uncomfortable with
- Forcing her to all family finances
- Failing to show gentleness with her
- Lecturing her every time she fails
- Refusing to let her be a woman
- Seeing sensitivity as a weakness
- Unwisely spending money
- Unwillingness to use humor or light-heartedness
- Not telling her how important she is to you
- Not expressing love enough (letters, verbal communication, etc.)
- Forgetting important dates (anniversaries, birthdays, etc.)
- Failure to defend her when she's being mistreated by others
- Not praising her to others
- Being dishonest
- Discouraging her for trying to better herself (education, physical fitness, etc.)
- Continuing distasteful or harmful habits (abusing alcohol, drug use, etc.)
- Ignoring her relatives and others who are important to her
- Not valuing her contributions/Taking her for granted
- Failing to discuss plans with her until the last minute
- Never doing little unexpected things for her
- Not treating her as an equal
- Looking at her as a weaker individual
- Being preoccupied with your own goals and needs
- Holding past mistakes against her
- Criticizing her behind her back
- Blaming her for your own failures
- Treating her like "one of the guys"
- Losing patience with her
- Acting like you're a martyr if you go along with her ideas
- Having too many hobbies/Outside interests
- Failing or procrastinating repairs around the house
- Consuming too much media (TV, Social Media, Video Games, etc.)
- Humiliating her with words and actions
- Not respecting her sexual needs and boundaries
- Failing to be generous with those in need

- Avoiding or canceling family activities
- Taking vacations/doing activities that are primarily for your enjoyment and not hers
- Failing to create space and time for her to spend time with her friends
- Being unwilling to join her in the things she enjoys more than you
- Failing to appreciate the small sacrifices she makes

125 Ways to Love Her – Her Way

Ask your wife to read through the list below, circle 10 that would make her feel loved, and discuss together.

- Communicate with her; never close her out
- Regard her as important
- Do everything you can to understand her feelings
- Be interested in her friends
- Ask her opinion frequently
- Value what she says
- Let her feel your approval and affection
- Protect her on a daily basis
- Be gentle and tender with her
- Develop more of a sense of humor
- Avoid sudden major changes without discussion
- Learn to respond openly and verbally when she wants to communicate
- Comfort her when she is down emotionally.
- Be interested in what is important to her
- Address issues with gentleness and respect
- Be more teachable from her
- Make special time available to her and your family
- Be trustworthy
- Compliment her often
- Be creative when you express your love, either in words or actions.
- Have specific family goals for each year
- Let her buy things she considers important
- Be quick to forgive when she offends you
- Show her you need her
- Accept her the way she is; discover her uniqueness as special
- Admit your mistakes; don't be afraid to humble yourself
- Lead your family in their spiritual relationship with God
- Allow your wife to fail; discuss what went wrong, after you have comforted her
- Rub her feet or neck after a hard day
- Take time for the two of you to sit and talk
- Go on romantic outings
- Write her a occasional letters

- Surprise her with a card or flowers
- Express how much you appreciate her
- Tell her how proud you are of her
- Give advice in a loving way when she asks for it
- Defend her to others
- Prefer her over others
- Do not expect her to do activities she's not comfortable with
- Pray for her daily
- Take time to notice what she has done for you and your family
- Brag about her to other people behind her back
- Share your thoughts and feelings with her
- Tell her about your work
- Take time to see how she spends her day, at work or at home
- Learn to enjoy what she enjoys
- Cook for her
- Help with household chores
- Recognize the difficulty of being a mother
- Discipline your children in love and not in anger
- Help her finish her goals (hobbies, education, etc.)
- Get rid of bad habits
- Be gentle and thoughtful to her relatives
- Do not compare her relatives with yours in a negative way
- Thank her for things she has done without expecting anything in return
- Do not seek affirmation for basic household tasks
- Make sure she is in the loop on plans
- Do little things for her (make her coffee, gifts, etc.)
- Treat her as an intellectual equal
- Discover her fears in life
- See what you can do to eliminate her fears
- Discover her sexual needs
- Discuss how you can better meet her sexual needs
- Find out what makes her feel insecure
- Plan your future together
- Practice common courtesies (holding the door, saying please and thank you, etc.)
- Ask if she is jealous of anyone
- See if she is uncomfortable about the way money is spent
- Take her on regular dates
- Hold her hand in public
- Put your arm around her in public
- Tell her you love her regularly
- Celebrate anniversaries, birthdays, and other special occasions
- Learn to enjoy what she enjoys

- Bring her in to your hobbies and interests
- Give her gifts
- Share more responsibilities around the house
- Do not belittle her femininity
- Let her express herself freely, without fear critique
- Carefully choose your words, especially when angry
- Do not criticize her in front of others
- Do not objectify other women
- Respect the time, energy, and skill she pours into her work
- Help her transition between work and home
- Guard her boundaries so she can rest—especially when others (kids, work, extended family) expect more
- Never minimize her calling—whether it pays financially or not
- Be a safe place for her to process fear, anger, or sadness
- Show her you care more about her heart than about being right
- Let her be vulnerable without trying to fix her
- Step in at home without waiting for her to ask
- Notice when she's overwhelmed before she has to say it
- Keep your promises, especially the small ones
- Choose words that build her up when she's most self-conscious
- Be playful with her—laughter builds connection
- Make her feel like you'd pick her all over again
- Handle hard conversations with her family when needed, so she doesn't always have to
- Take initiative with parenting and discipline—don't wait to be told what's needed
- Be the first to apologize
- Offer to handle details she usually manages (meals, appointments, school tasks) just to give her a mental break
- Ask her what's been weighing on her mind lately—and then help lift it
- Build your own family culture together, not just a continuation of your upbringing
- Check in after extended family time to ask how she felt about it
- Make it clear—through your words and actions—that she comes before your family of origin.
- Help your parents see you and your wife as a unified team—not just you as their son
- Gently correct your family if they treat her like an outsider or less important
- Refuse to participate in extended family dynamics that play favorites or create division
- Ask her how she feels most loved—and be willing to change.
- Tell her often that you're thankful to be married to her.
- Ask her if there are dreams she's laid down—and help her pick them back up. Be sensitive to other people
- Let your family know you want to spend special time with them
- Care for her when she is sick
- Call her when you are going to be late
- Do not disagree with her in front of the children

- Take her on weekend getaways
- Do the little things she needs from time to time
- Give her time to be alone
- Give her more time to be with her friends
- Buy her what she considers an intimate gift
- Read a book she recommends to you
- Give her an engraved plaque
- Write her a poem
- Prioritize church as a family
- Pray with her and over her
- Read the bible with her
- Discuss how God is working in your life
- Make her coffee or tea regularly