

“Understanding Women”

(Part 3)

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I. Introduction

A. Book by James Dobson

1. Published 35 years ago
2. *“What wives wish their husbands knew about women”*
3. Absolute blockbuster
4. The current struggle to understand women

B. The difference between men and women

1. A successful man is one who makes more money than his wife can spend.
 - a. And a successful woman is one who can find such a man.
2. Men wake up just as good-looking as they were when they went to bed.
 - a. Women somehow deteriorate during the night

C. Marital Counseling

1. Guys who have no idea
2. Let’s see if we can find some answers

II. Text

A. Understanding your wife

1. I Peter 3:7

Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered. (NKJV)

2. The power of this one verse
 - a. My marital counseling
 - b. The power to save marriages
 - c. The secret to making others more dynamic

B. The stakes are high

1. Hindered prayers....phone call to ...
 - a. His illness
 - b. God has not been answering his prayers
 - c. Strange...such a godly man
 - d. I brought up this verse and he broke down
 - e. Believes it's the reason his prayers have been hindered
 - f. Has not honored his wife properly
 - g. No one else saw it
2. Different ways to dishonor
 - a. Not just abuse
 - b. Disrespect for her role as the weaker vessel
 - c. Failure to lead as expected
 1. Women crying for him to lead
 - d. Indifferent towards her

D. The first step toward “honor” is “understanding”

1. My challenge to the women of the church

2. Please help us to understand you
3. Let me share “The List”

“The List”

Communication

To actually be listening when I talk, and respond with a real sentence, not just “uh huh!”

Talk to me when you get home. Tell me how your day went. Ask me about mine.

When I’m telling you about my day, don’t try to fix it, but do offer an “I’m sorry you had a bad day.”

When I explain about a problem and need to vent, I just need someone to listen and not necessarily to fix it.

When listening, I need your undivided attention so I’m sure you hear. Yes, the sports event should be off. Put down the remote.

Don’t tell me it’s not how your mom did it...or made it

Leadership

Please be the spiritual leader of the home....be the leader

Lead me...Lead us

Romance

Do and say the nice things you did back in the beginning of our relationship

Don’t lose your sense of romance and adventure

Flirt with me every now and then

Be romantic...and not just when you want sex

Initiate and take me out on dates

While on dates, hold hands and open doors

*Would still like to be pursued, not necessarily in a sexual way, but in a way that **shows me that I’m still your girl***

*This was probably the #1 thing that everyone really desired that their husband knew

Money

Understand money is just money; while important, it's not the most important thing to me

Family

Initiate family time

Tell your daughters how beautiful they are and demonstrate how they should be treated on daddy/daughter dates

Show your sons how to be good husbands and to be involved in their family and how to treat their lady

Don't forget to play with the kids

Be home for dinner whenever possible

Don't disagree with my parenting in front of others. Keep it for later.

Housework

Never ask what I did all day while looking around the house

Treat me as an equal, I may not work outside of the home, but I work hard at home caring for the house, groceries, and keeping the kids alive (some days the last one is harder than the others).

Understand that being a stay at home mom is a lot of work...the laundry just does not magically get done, dinner isn't made while the kids are playing quietly in the other room, and the house will never be clean as long as the kids are at home...at any age

Care enough to contribute...family chores, school work, kids' extra activities

Just like men need to feel respected and appreciated for what they do at work for their family, women also need to be recognized and appreciated for what they do around the house and with the kids. It's so easy to feel that, when we aren't earning a paycheck for all we do at home, that it goes unrecognized...especially when the laundry and dirty dish piles never seem to end.

Verbal appreciation is really important. Especially for those women who work outside of the home, they're still often the ones taking care of most of the homemaking responsibilities too.

Reassurance

I think even a woman with the toughest exterior, in her heart just wants her man to make her feel loved and protected and special. She wants him to wrap his arms around and envelop her.

I want reassurance from my husband that he still thinks I rock. That he loves to be with me. And that he's here for me 110%.

I think women are too often portrayed these days as the hard-core women's lib types. But I think all the women I know (including me) want our men to treat us like a princess. And I mean this in the most down-to-earth way possible. I think that's truly at the heart of most women.

E. The “Men’s List”

They figured their wives knew them better than they knew themselves, so why make a list. (They were pretty serious about this too, they meant it)

F. To understand is the key to honoring

1. I Peter 3:7

Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered. (NKJV)

2. Understanding what she wants

III. What she wants from you

1. Attention

a. Give her your undivided attention

1. Make her the center piece of your life
2. No woman can resist a man who gives her his absolute undivided attention
 - a. Who hangs on every word she says

b. Check her out

1. Notice her hair or clothes
 - a. Compliment her
 - b. Tell her “she’s beautiful”

1. Before someone else does
2. Wag your tail when she comes home
 - a. You versus the dog

c. Listen to her

1. Listen without distraction

- a. The importance of undistracted listening
 1. Without working the remote
- b. There is a difference between proximity and togetherness.
 1. Men think proximity is togetherness...not so women
 2. Togetherness has to do with focused attention
- c. Maintain eye contact when your spouse is talking
- d. Don't listen to your spouse and do something else at the same time
 1. Turn off the TV

2. Listen without fixing

- a. She wants your attention...not your solution
- b. Many men are trained to analyze problems and create solutions.
- c. Marriage is a ***relationship***, not a project to be completed or a problem to solve.

3. Listen for feelings

- a. Ask yourself, "What emotions is my wife experiencing?"
- b. Observe her body language
- c. Try to pick up hints

4. Listen without interrupting

Recent research has indicated that the average individual listens for only 17 seconds before interrupting and interjecting his own ideas.

d. Perform random acts of kindness

Cooking a meal, setting a table, washing dishes, vacuuming, cleaning a toilet, getting hair out of the sink, removing the spots from the mirror, scraping the bugs off her windshield, taking out the garbage, changing the baby's diaper, painting a bedroom, dusting the bookcases, washing or vacuuming her car, changing the cat's litter box, dusting the blinds, etc.

e. Learn the art of the tender touch

1. Tender...but not sexual
2. Touching her shoulder or her arm

f. Make time to be alone with her

1. Without the kids
2. Preparing for when all the kids are gone
 - a. Who is this person I'm living with?

g. Develop memories to last a lifetime

1. Topics of future conversation
2. Intentional memories

h. Remember those special days

1. Why it's so important
2. The importance of your focus

2. Affection

- a. Ephesians 5:25 & 31

(25) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her

(33) However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband

b. Fill her life with romance

1. Romance is different than love and sex
2. When a man makes a woman the undivided center of his attention
 - a. Showers her with acts of kindness
3. Check out all the paperback **“Romance Novels”**
 - a. Yesterday at Target
 - b. They’re all the same story with different names
 - c. And many women can’t resist them
4. Some one said that romance novels are to women what porn is to men
 - a. Romance novels
 1. 100 pages of lead up
 2. 10 pages of action
 3. 200 pages of consequences
 - b. Porn
 1. 1 page of lead up
 2. 30 pages of pictures
 3. No pages talking about the consequences
5. Are you “romancing your girl?”

c. Continue to court her

1. What she was attracted to
 - a. When you fell in love
 1. Dating

2. Always looked your best
 - a. Quite the stud
 3. Brought gifts
 4. Time alone
 5. Out three nights per week
 - b. Then you get married!
 1. No more dates
 2. Guys on Saturday
 - a. “Why shave?”
 - b. “Nobody important”
 3. No gifts
 4. Time together—in front of TV
 5. Gained 40 lbs.
 6. Bad breath and B. O.
 - c. The romance is gone
2. David and Bathsheba
 - a. Bathsheba in a hot tub vs. Abigail in hair curlers
 - b. Next week... “The Dreaded Affair”
 3. Your wife—
 - a. Cleaning up after a sick baby vs.
 - b. Secretary in high heels and nylons
 4. Begin courting again
 - a. Or the romance dies

- b. The sizzle leaves
- 5. Unless someone else brings it!
- 6. Affection takes—
 - a. Time together
 - 1. The getaway
 - 2. Relaxed vacation
 - b. Talking together
 - 1. Serious talks
 - 2. Intimate subjects
 - c. Control over arguments
 - 1. Don't let the sun go down
 - 2. Don't cause scars
 - a. Unkind words that linger
 - d. Leaving your problems at work
 - 1. When guys come home
 - a. Either angry and loud
 - b. Or sulking

3. Acceptance

a. Accept each other "as is"

- 1. Premarital counseling
 - a. "He's not perfect but I can change him"
 - b. Think again, sweetheart!
 - c. Flaws tend to grow

d. What you see is what you get

2. Can only change yourself

b. Don't compare her to others

1. Quit comparing her to Beyonce, Jennifer Lopez or Betty Crocker

2. Let her know you're proud of her

c. Prepare to grow old together

1. As the kids leave the house

2. Your world was centered around them

3. How quickly they are gone

4. Appreciation

a. Acknowledge all she does for you

1. Some guys I know would be nothing without her

2. She runs home

a. Finances

b. Kids

c. Repairs

b. Tell her how much you appreciate her

c. Brag about her

d. Don't make jokes at her expense

e. Compliment her

1. Mark Twain

"I can live for two months on a good compliment"

2. Solomon

“An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.”

f. Treat her like a princess

5. Authority

a. God appointed you to lead

1. Genesis 3:16

Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you

b. When husbands fail to lead

c. The request on “The List”

1. *“Please be the spiritual leader of the home”*

2. *“Lead me...Lead us!”*