

Prescription for a Superb MARRIAGE

You can have a superb marriage if you will follow a prescription, a practical course of action both uncomplicated and effective. You will be able to remember by B-E-S-T, an acronym representing the four positive elements that will transform any marriage. These are not steps to be tried one at a time, but four measures to be taken simultaneously and maintained consistently. If necessary, they can be implemented by either partner alone. One of you may have to make the first move without any promise of cooperation from the other. Give your partner the BEST:

Blessing
Edifying
Sharing
Touching

Blessing

The principle of blessing is a biblical one, and the Christian is commanded to practice it, most particularly in response to annoyance or provocation. Learning this will carry you through the difficult moments that occur in any marriage and will bring peace to the troubled waters of your relationship. It will put an end to the volley of sharp words that mars so many love affairs, and that is only the beginning of its benefits for you.

by Dr. Ed
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1. Blessing by Your Words

The first way of blessing your marriage partner is to speak well of him or her, and to respond with good words even when your partner's speech becomes harsh, critical, or insulting. The Lord Jesus gave us an example: when He was reviled, He did not revile in return, and when He suffered, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to His Father in Heaven. In the same way, Scripture says, we are to live as husbands and wives (1 Pet. 2:21-3:9). The wife described in Proverbs 31 receives praise because she opens her mouth in wisdom and the law of kindness is on her tongue. James warns us about the inconsistency of sending forth both blessing and cursing from our mouth as if we were a fountain pouring out a mixture of fresh and bitter water (James 3:10). And Peter tells us that if we love life and want to see "good days," we will keep our tongue from speaking evil, in any form (1 Pet. 3:10).

You have the power to bless your marriage by the words you speak to your partner. You can also bless by learning when to be silent.

2. Blessing by Your Kindness

You also bless one you love simply by doing kind things for that person. When is the last time you did something kind for your mate just to please, not as a duty, but as a gift of blessing? This should be a daily part of your marriage.

3. Blessing by Your Thankfulness

You also bless by showing thankfulness and appreciation. Whatever you can find to appreciate in your partner, make it known verbally. Thank your partner and thank God too.

Personal Evaluation for Husbands

<p>1. Commitment (Matt. 19:5,6) Yes No</p> <p>a. Am I committed to stay married, regardless of my feelings or other circumstances, until we are separated by death? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Does my wife know that I will never divorce her for any reason? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>2. Serving (Gal. 5:13)</p> <p>a. Do I put my wife's needs and desires ahead of my own? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do I offer to help my wife, especially when she is tired and under pressure? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>3. Yielding Rights (Phil. 2:5-8)</p> <p>a. Have I yielded to God my "right" to my own time and possessions? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do I respond humbly when I feel that my "rights" have been violated, rather than responding in anger or impatience? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>4. Forgiveness (Col. 3:13)</p> <p>a. Do I seek to resolve each conflict or misunderstanding as soon as possible? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Am I willing to "forgive and forget" my wife's past failures, and not hold them against her? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>5. Humility (Phil. 2:3)</p> <p>a. Am I quick to admit when I am wrong? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Am I content to not have the last word? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>c. Am I first to take steps to resolve a conflict, regardless of who is to blame? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>6. Patience (I Cor. 13:4)</p> <p>a. Do I take time to discuss various issues and decisions with my wife? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Am I patient with my wife when she is under emotional or physical pressure? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>c. Can my wife come to me with a problem, without being afraid of my reaction? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>7. Sensitivity (I Pet. 3:7)</p> <p>a. Do I sense when there is something on my wife's heart and encourage her to express it? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do I remember important days and special occasions? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>c. Do I <i>court</i> my wife like I did when we were dating? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>d. Before I speak, do I stop to think of how my words will affect my wife? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>8. Purity (Eph. 5:3,4)</p> <p>a. Am I physically self-controlled, keeping myself only for my wife? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do I keep my mind free from books, magazines, or entertainment that could stimulate fantasizing or thoughts that are not morally pure? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>c. Do I avoid suggestive humor, conversation, and behavior? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>9. Communication (Eph. 4:25,29) Yes No</p> <p>a. Is my wife my closest confidante? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do I always tell my wife the truth? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>c. Do I avoid sarcasm, hurtful remarks, and public criticism of my wife? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>d. Do I regularly compliment my wife and tell her that I love her? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>e. Do I listen attentively when my wife speaks to me? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>f. Do I value my wife's opinions? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>10. Kindness (Eph. 4:32)</p> <p>a. Am I well-mannered at home and in public? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do I sometimes give my wife unexpected gifts or "love notes"? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>11. Gratitude (Prov. 31:10,28)</p> <p>a. Do I notice and express appreciation for the time and effort my wife devotes to me, her physical appearance, to our home, and to our children? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do I praise my wife for spiritual, Christ-like qualities in her life? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>12. Loyalty (I Cor. 13:7)</p> <p>a. Do I speak well of my wife to others? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do my wife and I face difficult circumstances together, rather than as adversaries? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>13. Acceptance (Rom. 15:7)</p> <p>a. Do I love and accept my wife as she is? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do I make my wife feel that she is a woman of great value and worth to God, to me, and to our family? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>14. Availability (I Cor. 7:3-5)</p> <p>a. Does my wife know that she has access to me, whenever she needs me? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do I ensure that my wife and I have regular times alone together? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>15. Leadership (Eph. 5:23)</p> <p>a. Do I set goals and provide direction for the spiritual development of my wife and family? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>b. Do I take time to pray about needs and decisions that affect our family? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>c. Do I take initiative to discern and meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of my wife and children? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>d. Do I protect my wife from unnecessary pressures? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Personal Evaluation for Wives

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Commitment (Matt. 19:5,6) | | | | | |
| a. Am I committed to stay married, regardless of my feelings or other circumstances, until we are separated by death? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Am I sensitive to my husband's occasional desire to be alone or undisturbed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Does my husband know that I will never divorce him for any reason? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Am I sensitive to the best times to tell my husband negative news or to offer suggestions or constructive criticism? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Next to my relationship with God, is my relationship with my husband the highest priority of my life? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Purity (Eph. 5:3,4) | | |
| d. Do I pray faithfully for my husband? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Do I keep my mind free from books, magazines, or entertainment that could stimulate fantasizing or thoughts that are not morally pure? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Serving (Gal. 5:13) | | | | | |
| a. Do I put my husband's needs and desires ahead of my own? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Do I dress modestly, drawing attention to the inner life of Christ, rather than to my physical appearance? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Do I look for creative ways to please my husband? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Communication (Eph. 4:25,29) | | |
| c. Am I content to serve, even when my husband doesn't seem to notice or appreciate my efforts? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Do I always tell my husband the truth? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Yielding Rights (Phil. 2:5-8) | | | | | |
| a. Have I yielded all my expectations concerning my husband to God? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Do I avoid sarcasm, hurtful remarks, and public criticism of my husband? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Do I trust God alone to meet all of my physical, emotional, and spiritual needs? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | c. Do I speak words of encouragement and admiration to my husband? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Have I yielded to God my "right" to my own time and independence? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | d. Do I discipline myself not to interrupt or contradict when my husband is talking? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Submission (Eph. 5:22-24) | | | | | |
| a. Do I willingly yield to my husband's authority in all things? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. Kindness (Eph. 4:32) | | |
| b. Do I communicate an <i>attitude</i> of submission, as well as submissive <i>actions</i> ? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Do I treat my husband as graciously as I would a guest? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Do I seek my husband's counsel, rather than acting independently? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Do I go out of my way to perform special acts of kindness for my husband? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Am I teaching our children, by my example and words, to honor and obey their father? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. Gratitude (Prov. 31:26) | | |
| 5. Forgiveness (Col. 3:13) | | | | | |
| a. Do I seek to resolve each conflict or misunderstanding as soon as possible? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Do I regularly express appreciation for the sacrifices my husband makes to provide for our family? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Am I quick to forgive my husband for his failures, offenses, or insensitivities? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Do I praise my husband for spiritual, Christ-like qualities in his life? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Do I refuse to bring up the past or to hold past failures against my husband? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. Loyalty (I Cor. 13:7) | | |
| 6. Humility (Phil. 2:3) | | | | | |
| a. Am I quick to admit when I am wrong? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Do I speak positively of my husband to others? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Am I content to not have the last word? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Do I focus on my husband's successes and positive traits, rather than his weaknesses and failures? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Am I willing to relinquish my "right" to be understood or to prove my point? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | c. Do I hold in confidence personal matters that my husband shares with me? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Patience (I Cor. 13:4) | | | | | |
| a. Do I respond graciously to interruptions and irritations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. Acceptance (Rom. 15:7) | | |
| b. Am I willing to overlook obvious imperfections in my husband? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | a. Do I love, accept, and admire my husband as he is? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Sensitivity (Tit. 2:5) | | | | | |
| 15. Availability (I Cor. 7:3-5) | | | | | |
| a. Am I willing to adjust my schedule to meet my husband's desires? | | | | | |
| b. Am I willing to offer physical love to my husband, regardless of my personal feelings or desires? | | | | | |

MARRIAGE COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Proverbs 18:21; 25:11; Job 19:2, James 3:8-10; I Peter 3:10

Be a ready listener and do not answer until the other person has finished talking.
Proverbs 18:13; James 1:13

Be slow to speak. Think first. Don't be hasty in your words. Speak in such a way that the other person can understand and accept what you say.
Proverbs 15:23,28; 21:23, 29:20; James 1:19

Speak the truth always but do it in love. Do not exaggerate.
Ephesians 4:15,25; Colossians 3:9

Do not use silence to frustrate the other person. Explain why you are hesitant to talk at this time.

Do not become involved in quarrels. It is possible to disagree without quarreling.
Proverbs 17:14; 20:3; Romans 13:13; Ephesians 4:31

Do not respond in anger. Use a soft and kind response.
Proverbs 14:29; 15:1; 25:15; 29:11; Ephesians 4:26,31

When you are in the wrong, admit it and ask for forgiveness. *James 5:16*

When someone confesses to you, tell them you forgive them. Be sure it is *forgotten* and not brought up again.
Proverbs 17:9; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13; I Peter 4:8

Avoid nagging. *Proverbs 10:19; 17:9; 20:5*

Do not blame or criticize the other but restore them, encourage them, and edify them.
Romans 14:3; Galatians 6:1; I Thessalonians 5:11

If someone verbally attacks, criticizes or blames you, do not respond in the same manner.
Romans 12:17,21; I Peter 2:23, 3:9

Try to understand the other person's opinion. Make allowances for differences. Be concerned about their interests.
Philippians 2:1-4; Ephesians 4:2