

# Affirmation

## Emotional support or encouragement



We live in a very negative world today - everywhere we turn, we see negativity. Too often it is prevalent in our homes. We are quick to point out the flaws and offences of our spouse. But do we point out the good things about our spouse? Do we, as author Terri Orbuch writes, 'offer words, gestures or acts that show your spouse that he or she is noticed, appreciated, respected, loved or desired'? Affirmation has everything to do with who a person is, while praise has to do with what they do. Our spouse is a child of God, he or she is wonderfully made, chosen, holy and dearly loved by their Heavenly Father. We are admonished to "encourage one another and build each other up." (1Thessalonians 5:11) We should encourage and build our spouse up.

Marriage researcher John Gottman states that people need 5 positives for every negative feeling or interaction. Healthy relationships *require* more positive interactions and feelings than negative. This is a enormous problem in society today and should not be a problem in the Body of Christ, yet is as big a problem, if not bigger in Christian homes as it is in the world. James wrote; "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be." (James 3:10)

Friends, we (and I mean *we* - I am challenged by this thought also) need to change our interaction with our spouses! Yes, we need to address poor behavior and hurtful actions or words, *but* we must be purposeful about *affirming* our spouse - about encouraging them and building them up for *who they are*. Affirmation is about identity, who a person is and as such to affirm others, we must *really* know that person. Affirmation must be true, accurate, correct. We must spend the time to truly know our spouse so that we can build them up according to who they are as a person, as the Child of God they are. It essentially saying to your spouse; *I see who you are and I love you*.

Be purposeful about affirming your spouse on a daily basis; point out the strengths and abilities they have, notice the things they do out of their gifts and talents. What are you thankful for about your spouse? Let him or her know! There is so much you can do to affirm your spouse, but it requires a change in focus; looking for the good in your spouse, rather than jumping on every mistake they make. It requires a Christ-like attitude - humbling ourselves and looking more to others, than ourselves.

**Helpful Resources:** *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* [www.fortifiedmarriages.com](http://www.fortifiedmarriages.com)

Articles to check out: *The Power of Positive Affirmation in Marriage* - Marriage After God.com

*Honest Affirmation Can Make Your Marriage Great* by Erin Smalley

[www.focusonthefamily.com](http://www.focusonthefamily.com)