30 Day Wife Encouragement Challenge

This challenge might take you down paths you haven’t been before. It will require contemplation, vulnerability, and action. Some steps along the way may be scary because you haven’t thought these thoughts or spoken these words in a long time, but the thoughts and feelings are there and both you and your wife need to hear and experience them.

For the next 30 days, these two ground rules will be the basis of your relationship with your wife (these are the same ground rules found at www.reviveourhearts.org for the 30 Day Husband Encouragement Challenge):

- You can’t say anything negative about your wife . . . to your wife . . . or to anyone else about your wife.
- Say something that you admire or appreciate about your wife . . . to your wife . . . or to someone else about your wife every day.

Keep track, mentally if not in written form, of the changes that you see take place in your wife, your marriage, and your home as you take part in this 30 Day Wife Encouragement Challenge.

Day One:

*The Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’* Genesis 2:18 (NIV)

As a Christian, you must know that men and women bring to the marriage different strengths, gifts, and outlooks on life and love. Think about some ways that your wife is “good for you,” ways in which she makes you and/or your life better.

Is she the one that brings color to your life by decorating the home and making it enjoyable to come home? Does she inspire you to try new things that you wouldn’t have tried otherwise? Do you still get that warm, gushy feeling when she looks at you and smiles to tell you that she is glad you chose her?

- Make a list of ways your life is better because of your wife
- Share the list with your wife and tell her how good it is that she is your helper and that you are not alone

These words, coming from the most important man in her life, will bring great joy and encouragement to your wife.
Day Two:

*A happy heart makes the face cheerful.* Proverbs 15:13 (NIV)

**We don’t stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing.**
George Bernard Shaw

How did you do with your list of things you admire about your wife? Did you start off slow and gain momentum? Did you find it hard to come up with even one thing to be thankful for? I certainly hope not!

As a husband and wife live together on a daily basis, taking care of the kids, the house, the pets, the bills, and everything else that goes into daily life, we tend to forget to have fun together – to play.

**Ask your wife to join you outside to play frisbee or go for a walk or look at the stars. Take her out for coffee and enjoy the drive. Do something together that you enjoyed while you were dating.**

I know you love your kids and you love spending time with them, but you need to take time to spend time with each other without the kids to remember what it feels like to be Bill and Nancy or Ted and Alice, not just Mom and Dad.

Sure the bills and the dishes and the tax forms all need your attention, but take time to enjoy being friends, not just husband and wife or Mom and Dad.

**Today’s assignment for encouraging your wife is to do something fun together today that will make you forget the cares of the world and make you feel like young lovers again.**

Day Three:

*And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.* Colossians 3:17 (NIV)

Ok, you’ve done some talking and you’ve done some playing, now it’s time to put your words into action.

What can you **do** to help your wife today? Do the dishes need washed? Does the laundry need folded and put away? Do the kids need baths? Can you cook?

Even just a few minutes of your time to help your wife complete the tasks before her will go a long way to encourage her and make her feel loved.

**Let your wife know how much you appreciate all that she does and ask her what she needs help with the most today – and do it as unto the Lord, giving thanks and without grumbling.**
Day Four:

*May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.* Psalm 19:14 (NIV)

How are you doing with your commitment to say only good things about your wife and to others about your wife? Did you catch yourself starting to say something negative and then stopping? Did you falter and let something slip? Did you have a thought about your wife’s actions or attitude that would not be pleasing to her or to God?

Recommit yourself to the ground rules of the 30 Day Challenge:

- You can't say anything negative about your wife . . . to your wife . . . or to anyone else about your wife.
- Say something that you admire or appreciate about your wife . . . to your wife . . . or to someone else about your wife every day.

In fact, let’s go one step beyond recommitting to the ground rules and intentionally say something positive about your wife to someone else while she is listening. I am not talking about mere flattery; I mean a real, honest compliment that will tell someone else and your wife how much you appreciate her.

You do not have to come up with something new that you’ve never thought of, although there's nothing wrong with that. You can choose one of the items from Day One or from the list of chores that your wife normally takes care of and tell someone how your wife makes your home and your life special when she can conveniently “overhear” what you are saying.

After she gets over the surprise, you will see a smile on her face you haven’t seen in a long time.

Day Five:

*Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry.* Ephesians 4:26 (NIV)

Even during these 30 days when you, and hopefully your wife, are both working to build up and encourage one other, you might find yourselves in a debate, a discussion, or an all-out battle that leaves one or both of you angry and upset.

Charles Schultz, the creator of the *Peanuts* cartoon, once said that “Love is never having to say you’re sorry.” That philosophy might work with puppies, but it certainly doesn’t work in marriage.

The inability to say you’re sorry often stems from pride, pride that keeps you from saying you were wrong and that you just might have to change your thoughts or actions in a particular area.

Think over the events of the day, the week, or even past weeks and honestly consider if there is something for which you need to say “I’m sorry.”

If you or your spouse are angry about something that happened today, do not go to sleep tonight until the issue has been put out in the open and discussed. You may not be able to resolve it all tonight, but neither
should you let the sun go down while you are angry in hopes of the issue resolving itself while you sleep.

*If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.* Romans 12:18 (NIV)

**Day Six:**

*Humility comes before honor.* Proverbs 15:33 (NIV)

This story is taken from *Night Light*, by Dr. James and Shirley Dobson (Multnomah Publishers, Sisters, OR, 2000).

Mr. Smith learned that his neighbor, Mr. Jones, had presented flowers and a gift to Mrs. Jones five nights in a row. He thought, *That must be what wins a woman’s heart.* So Smith went out and bought a big box of candy and a bouquet of his wife’s favorite flowers. Arriving home a little early that afternoon, he rang the doorbell. When Mrs. Smith appeared, he passionately embraced her. Suddenly she sagged and fell in a heap on the floor. “My goodness! What’s wrong?” he exclaimed.

When she regained consciousness, she explained. “Oh, this has been the worst day! Our son received a terrible report card; Mother was admitted to the hospital; the roast burned; the washing machine broke. Now to top it off, you come home drunk!”

Has it been a while since you brought home anything to your wife except for a special occasion? Would she think there was something wrong with you if you brought something home for her?

**Today’s encouragement challenge is to surprise your wife with something – flowers or something as simple as her favorite candy or the latest book from her favorite author. It doesn’t have to be big, it just has to say, “I was thinking of you. I love you. And I thought you would like this.”**

**Day Seven:**

*Let love and faithfulness never leave you.* Proverbs 3:3 (NIV)

Nothing gives encouragement to your wife like knowing that she is the only one for you.

**Tell your wife today that you are glad you married her, that you would marry her all over again, and that you will keep your vows made before God and man on your wedding day.**

When my husband and I got married, we wrote our own vows. In his wisdom, our pastor made a booklet for us that contains our entire ceremony, including our vows. If you can remember the vows you spoke on your wedding day, say them again to your spouse. If you do not remember them exactly, write new ones that tell your wife you would marry her all over again.
Day Eight:

*There is a time for everything ... a time to be silent and a time to speak.*  Ecclesiastes 3:1,7 (NIV)

How easy it is to speak before thinking, especially if that pattern has already been established in your marriage.

Do you or your wife have the habit of returning one hurtful jab for another or lashing out at the smallest provocation?

It is hard to be silent, especially when you feel hurt or angry or disrespected, but often, if you take a few minutes to gather your thoughts and think about what you might say in return, you will realize that the problem will only escalate if you say what immediately comes to mind.

**Your challenge today is to be silent when you could return insult for insult or when you could say, “I told you so.”** Remember that silence is a show of humility.

Allow your wife to vent if she needs to, and offer an ear to listen without rebuttal.

Day Nine:

*For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord.*

Genesis 18:19 (NIV)

Many Christian women long for their husband to be the spiritual leader in the home.

Too many men are busy with work, sports, and daily life to learn what it takes to be a spiritual leader to his wife and children.

The statistics of successful families versus families in crisis is astounding when the man is the spiritual leader.

What example do you set in your home?  Do you seek the Lord daily?  Do you pray with and for your wife?  Do your children see and hear your walk with the Lord?

**If you feel that you are the spiritual leader in your home, humbly ask your wife what you could do better to guide, teach, and direct your family in the ways of the Lord.**

**If you have not taken on the role of the spiritual leader in your home, tell your wife that you desire to be a spiritual leader and find another man in your church who can help you in this endeavor.**

Do not put this off.  You – and your family – cannot afford to let the world take on this role.  You must be a witness for Christ in your home.

Written and distributed by Claudia J. Pate, www.theanniversaryshop.wordpress.com; www.theanniversaryshop.com
Day Ten:

It has been a while since we checked in. How are you doing with the basics?

- You can’t say anything negative about your wife . . . to your wife . . . or to anyone else about your wife.
- Say something that you admire or appreciate about your wife . . . to your wife . . . or to someone else about your wife every day.

Are you finding it is getting easier or getting harder to stick to the basic premise of the challenge?

Call a male friend today and talk about how you are doing with the challenge. Tell him your struggles and your successes. If your friend is taking on the challenge too, ask how he is doing and encourage one another.

Husbands, love your wives. Colossians 3:19 (NIV)

Today’s task is simple, but oh so important. Tell your wife that you love her.

Do you realize how important it is for your wife to know that you love her? It is nearly as important to her as oxygen. She needs to hear it often, and preferably accompanied by a hug and a kiss.

Day Eleven:

Each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself. Ephesians 5:33 (NIV)

Hopefully yesterday wasn’t the first time in 10 days that you’ve told your wife you love her. If it was, or even if it wasn’t, do you realize that hearing “I love you” is extremely important, but it might not be the most effective way to show your love to your wife?

Today’s challenge is to learn a new language – your wife’s love language.

Many of you have heard of The Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman (Northfield Publishing, Chicago, 1992). While it may take only a few minutes to learn your wife’s love language, it will take practice to perfect it and speak it fluently.

You see, we are often most prone to give love in the same way in which we ourselves like to receive it; that is, we speak the same love language that we like to hear. If I speak words of affirmation because it is my own love language but not my husband’s, he might know that I love him, but he is not fulfilled as much by my words as he would be by expressions of love in his own love language, such as physical touch or just spending together.

To find out your wife’s primary love language, ask her these five questions:

- Do you feel most loved when someone expresses appreciation for you or for what you have done, no matter how simple the act? (words of affirmation)
- Do you feel most loved when you are given attention and feel that someone wants to spend time with you? (quality time)
- Do you feel most loved when someone brings you gifts or some tangible item, no matter how small or inexpensive? (gifts)
- Do you feel most loved when someone does things for you, taking out the garbage, washing clothes, running errands, etc.? (acts of service)
- Do you feel most loved when you are receiving physical touch? (surprise! physical touch)
  Note: Be careful here not to confuse physical touch with sex. Think of nonsexual touch: holding hands, sitting close when watching a movie, getting a neck and shoulder rub. Sexual fulfillment is not the same as physical touch as a primary love language.

After you have discovered which of these languages speaks most clearly to your wife, ask her what you can do within her language to show her your love. Trust me, she will have ideas.

**Day Twelve:**

*Turn your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding.* Proverbs 2:2 (NIV)

Now that you’ve learned your wife’s love language and have gotten a few ideas about how to put it into practice, do not let any grass grow under your feet. The sooner you begin to speak her language, the more quickly she will respond and the more quickly you will be able to speak her language fluently.

What ideas did you get from your wife? What ideas can you come up with on your own?

This may be difficult for you, especially if your love language is not the same as your wife’s. You may wonder how anybody could feel loved by even the smallest act of service or a heartfelt hug while washing dishes, but if it’s your wife’s love language, she will get the message loud and clear.

**Today’s challenge is to get more comfortable speaking your wife’s love language by speaking it to her today.**


**Day Thirteen:**

*They should always pray and not give up.* Luke 18:1 (NIV)

There is special joy in a woman’s heart when she hears her husband pray for her.

Do you pray for your wife regularly? Do you pray with your wife regularly?

Is she struggling with something she doesn’t know how to handle? Are pressures at work getting to her? Does she take care of you and the kids along with her parents or your parents?
What joys has she celebrated recently? What answers to prayer has she seen?

Today, pray with your wife and say a special prayer for her – for her struggles as well as her joys. Let her hear you thank the Father for her presence in your life.

Day Fourteen:

*How beautiful you are and how pleasing, O love, with your delights.* Song of Songs 7:6 (NIV)

Too often we get caught up in the routine of marriage and forget to notice the beauty that is before our eyes. Look at your wife with fresh eyes. See how she has changed since you first met. How has the life that you share made her even more beautiful to you? What is it that attracts you to her? What do you love about her body?

The Lover in the Song of Songs did not spare many details when he wrote of the beauty of his Beloved. From the tips of her toes to the fragrance of her breath, he spared no detail in describing how he saw her body (Song of Songs 7:1-9).

Is your wife self-conscious about her body? Does she feel beautiful? Does she feel that she is beautiful to you?

Tell your wife today what makes her beautiful to you. Spare no detail – right down to the blush of her cheeks when she hears these words.

Day Fifteen:

*Let my lover come into his garden and taste its choice fruits.* Song of Songs 4:16 (NIV)

If you have been married for any length of time, you know that men and women often view sex in vastly different ways. For a woman, physical intimacy often requires much planning, preparation, and time. She might need flowers, a back rub, and a restful attitude before “feeling ready.” All of the events of the day might need to be resolved and put to bed (no pun intended) before she can give in to her sexual desires.

For a man, all that is required is “to show up naked and bring food.”

Even though you know that spontaneity is more difficult for your wife than it is for you, it is sometimes difficult not to be hurt by her seeming lack of interest.

If waiting until bedtime to spring the idea of making love on your wife isn’t working, let her know your intentions early in the day. Ask her what you can do to help set the mood for the evening.

Are you willing to watch the kids while she takes a bath and unwinds? Do the dishes need to be washed and put away before your wife can call it a night? Sometimes a woman is just too tired from all she has to do to think about making love, even though she may want to.

Remember that differences in sexual desire were created by God, and learn how you can work with these differences instead of railing against them in your marriage.

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**Day Sixteen:**

*And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.* Philippians 4:19 (NIV)

There are many, many pressures on a husband to live up to the standards of this world. The company wants you to work 60 hours or more a week, while your wife and kids want you to spend as much time with them as you can.

While it is true that men often gain self-worth from their work, and God has created them this way, consider whether the hours spent at the office go beyond the basic needs that you and your family have financially.

You may think that you are working long hours to provide for your family, but do you have more than enough already and are working only to have more and more to keep up with the Joneses?

**Sit down with your wife and kids and ask them how you can better spend your time with them. Take time to have fun with your wife and kids, not just working to provide more and more in a household that already has enough.**

Let God be the supplier of your needs. Your wife and family do need the financial security that you provide, but not if they have to sacrifice your presence with them.

**Day Seventeen:**

*Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.* Colossians 3:19 (NIV)

*Let your conversation be always full of grace.* Colossians 4:6 (NIV)

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, how are you doing with the ground rules? While each of the daily challenges is important, it is more important to grasp these ground rules and use them as the basis for your entire marriage, not just these 30 days.

It is these ground rules that will keep a healthy marriage strong or will help to warm the heart of a wife who is teetering on the edge.

Long after the 30 days are over, these basic guidelines will keep peace and harmony in a home and in a marriage.

- You can't say anything negative about your wife . . . to your wife . . . or to anyone else about your wife.
- Say something that you admire or appreciate about your wife . . . to your wife . . . or to someone else about your wife every day.

You’ve worked hard these past 16 days and the end of the 30 days is in sight, but the hope is that these ideas and practices will be written on your heart so that you make your wife the priority that she should be and that a good marriage will be strengthened, a stagnant marriage revived, or a marriage in crisis brought back from the brink.
For today’s challenge you get a mulligan – not a stew, a do-over. Choose one of the challenges from the previous 16 days and do it again. You might choose one that gave particular encouragement to your wife or one that you don’t feel was given your best effort. The choice is up to you, but don’t let the day pass by without doing something to encourage your wife and put a smile on her face.

**Day Eighteen:**

*Let the wise listen and add to their learning.* Proverbs 1:5 (NIV)

How well do you listen to your wife?

When your wife is talking to you, do you give her your full attention or do you have one ear turned in her direction with your eyes focused on the TV or the computer? While multitasking might be necessary at work, it is seldom a good idea at home – especially when it comes to communicating with your wife.

Your wife has a deep need to connect with you in conversation. She wants to know your thoughts and your needs, and she wants you to know hers. She wants you to listen with an open heart, one that tells her you care and that you want to know her even better than you already do.

Sadly, communication in marriage often disintegrates into conversations that complete strangers might have – the weather, the problems with the car, who needs to get which child to the next event.

Who you are as husband and wife, man and woman, lovers and friends often gets lost in the day-to-day activities of life.

**Today’s challenge is to truly listen to your wife. When you are together, do not turn on the TV or the computer, get out of the house together if you must, but give your full attention to your wife and what she has to say.**

This might be awkward at first, for both you and your wife, but you stand to learn a great deal about the woman that you chose as your wife. How has she grown since you got married? What dreams does she have for the future? How can you pray for her?

**Day Nineteen:**

*Simply, let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes.’* Matthew 5:37 (NIV)

**Today’s challenge is to say “yes” to your wife more times than you say “no.”**

It is easy to get bogged down in the “I don’t want to’s” of life. With so many demands at work, in committees, and even at church, it is easy to think when you get home that “this is my time to do what I want.”

Has your wife been asking you take a walk or go for a bike ride? Say “yes.”
Has she been asking you to fix that leaky faucet? Say “yes.”

Does she want you to go with her to meet the new neighbors? Say “yes.”

Is she waiting for you to tell her if you will go to the office party next week? Say “yes.”

Does she want a new car? Well, you’ll have to decide for yourself on that one (and see Day 22).

What simple thing(s) has your wife asked you to do but you have denied her because “it’s my time to do what I want”?

**Day Twenty:**

*You have stolen by heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes.* Song of Songs 4:9

The eye is the window to the soul. A great deal can be conveyed with just your eyes: joy, sadness, hurt, disgust, confusion, love, playfulness, even desire.

A wink is usually meant only for the recipient, no one else. Across the dinner table or in a crowded room, a wink can say, “I’m over here talking to these people, but I’d rather be with you,” or it can convey romantic desire or say, “Honey, I’m glad you’re mine.”

Across a crowded room or at the dinner table, preferably when you might get caught by someone else but trying not to, wink at your wife and watch her reaction. Then, when you are alone together, tell her in words what you were conveying in a wink.

**Day Twenty-one:**

*Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.*

I Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV)

God’s word makes it clear that we are to encourage one another and build each other up daily. Encouragement keeps us from being hardened by sin’s deceitfulness (Hebrews 3:14) and prepares us for the day of Christ’s return (Hebrews 10:26).

In our modern-day language, the word encourage means to “inspire with courage, spirit, or confidence; to stimulate by assistance or approval.”

As Christians, there is nothing that encourages us more than the promises found in God’s word.

Today’s challenge is to share with your wife a Bible passage or verse that encourages you the most. Tell her why this passage “gives you courage,” keeps you from sin’s deceitfulness, and/or prepares you for the day of His return.
Day Twenty-two:

I haven’t reminded you in a while, so here are the basic guidelines you should be following. If you do nothing else during these 30 days, not that I recommend that, commit to not saying anything negative about your wife to her or to anyone else and do say something that you admire or appreciate about your wife to her and/or to someone else about her every day.

*Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone.* Proverbs 23:5 (NIV)

According to many, the root of most of the arguments in marriage is money. How much you make, how much you spend, how to spend it, who should decide how to spend it, who has spent too much, how can we afford what we want, etc.

By and large, financial decisions fall to the husband. He may not be the one that writes the checks or balances the checkbook, but he is usually the one who makes investment decisions and takes care of long-term financial issues such as life insurance and retirement planning.

Even if you know that your financial future is secure, at least as far as any of us can know, convey that to your wife. A woman looks to her husband for security, and she needs to know that you are aware of the needs for the future, whether they are concerns for house payments, college, or even next week’s groceries.

If your finances are in disarray because of overspending or hard economic times, sit down with your wife and work out a plan together to get back on track. Ask God how you should spend your money and how to get out of debt. Find a Christian man to help you with budgeting if needed.

*Make sure that God is in your financial decisions, but don’t neglect your wife. She needs to know that your financial future is as secure as it can be.*

Day Twenty-three:

*Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy.* Psalm 126:2 (NIV)

If a woman is honest, she will likely tell you that it was her husband’s sense of humor that won her over. Sure you have lots of wonderful, endearing qualities, but your sense of humor probably played a major role in winning your wife’s heart.

Joanne Woodward, wife of actor Paul Newman, said *Sexiness wears thin after a while and beauty fades, but to be married to a man who makes you laugh every day, ah, now that’s a real treat.*

When was the last time you and your wife laughed, really laughed together? Hopefully, it was yesterday or earlier today, but chances are good you haven’t heard a real good belly laugh from your wife in a long while.

**Today’s challenge is to make your wife’s heart cheerful by making her laugh.**

*A cheerful heart is good medicine.* Proverbs 17:22
Did something funny happen to you that you haven’t shared with her? Does she have a favorite comedian or funny show that makes her laugh? Is there something that you do or say that makes her laugh every time you do it? Make your wife laugh today, whatever it takes.

**Day Twenty-four:**

*Take me away with you – let us hurry!* Song of Songs 1:4 (NIV)

Before a man and woman are married, a great deal of time and energy is spent planning for time together. Often plans for the next date are made in the midst of the current date.

After marriage, however, a husband and wife seldom plan time to be together – they just *are* together, for better or for worse, and dinner out is more a necessity than a romantic date.

*Today’s challenge is to go on a date with your wife.* Call her, email her, send a text message, or slip a note in her purse to set it up. Whatever you do, make it clear that this is a date, not just a chance to get out of cooking.

Take her someplace new or someplace that you both really love. Dress up, open doors for her, look at her when she talks; remember what it was like to be dating and how you couldn’t wait to be alone together again.

While you’re out, plan a longer getaway just for the two of you. If finances are tight, plan a one-day outing and ask someone to watch your kids in exchange for watching theirs another day.

If you can, plan an overnight trip or a weekend getaway. It sometimes takes more than just a couple of hours together to put the cares of the world behind you and begin to focus on other another.

**Day Twenty-five:**

*If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.* 1 John 4:12 (NIV)

It’s time for a little self-examination. You’ve come a long way, and the end of the 30 days is in sight. What changes have you seen in your wife? What changes have you seen in yourself? Is your home a little quieter and peace more abundant? Do your wife and children seem more at ease and loving?

*Today, think of how you can show love to your wife through the pattern of love in I Corinthians 13:1-8a.*

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.*

Choose one characteristic that you want to make abundant in your wife’s life today and ask God to help you follow through.
Read the I Corinthians passage again. Underline those characteristics of love that you do pretty well and circle those that need some work. Don’t be too hard on yourself; none of us will get a perfect score.

This exercise is not meant to point out where you’ve failed or need more work, but to point out where you have succeeded and how your demonstration of love to your wife has changed over the past 24 days.

There is still room for improvement, there always is, but you are well on your way to living out I Corinthians 13 every day.

**Day Twenty-six:**

_A friend loves at all times._ Proverbs 17:17 (NIV)

I once heard someone say that a friend is someone who knows all about you and loves you anyway.

Does this describe your relationship with your wife? Does she know all about you? What are you holding back from her for fear that she will not love you?

Most women know when a man is holding out on her: there is an emotional barrier that never seems to come down even if the ax is swung close to the root.

Vulnerability is hard and trust is risky, but it might be time to trust in your friend, the wife of your youth (Proverbs 5:18).

Pray about an issue that you are holding back from your wife. Seek Godly counsel and wait for an answer from the Lord. As your marriage grows stronger and you learn that you can and want to trust your wife with who you are as a man, you will know when the time is right to let that barrier down.

_Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work ... But pity the man who falls down and has no one to help him up!_ Ecclesiastes 4:9,10 (NIV)

**Day Twenty-seven:**

_As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another._ Proverbs 27:17 (NIV)

For reasons that women often find hard to understand, very few men have close friends – especially friends that will hold them accountable and help them grow in the Lord.

Pray that God will bring such a man into your life and that you can be that kind of man to someone else.

Reach out to a godly man and ask him to be your accountability partner. Meet together regularly to encourage one another in your walk with Christ, your marriage, and the many other responsibilities that you have.

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You will glorify God and gain spiritual, emotional, and even physical strength by meeting together with another godly man regularly.

**Day Twenty-eight:**

The Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’ Genesis 2:18 (NIV)

Some men and women have a very narrow view of what a “helper” is. A helper can be someone who cooks meals and washes the dishes, or someone who takes care of the children. A helper can be someone who stands by to hand over tools when they are needed to complete a project. A helper can be someone who stands by to take care of anything that might have been left undone.

A helper can also be someone who has strengths in areas in which you have weaknesses. She can be an extrovert to your introvert; she can have a sense of color and style to your T-shirt and blue jeans; she can make lists and carry out tasks while you see the big picture and are already looking past this project to the next one.

Sometimes husbands and wives get annoyed by their differences, but quite often God brings together two people who are very different so they can work together to be whole, to be one (Genesis 2:24).

In what ways does your helper, your wife, “complete” you? How do your strengths and weaknesses work together to make an unbeatable team?

**Rejoice in the differences that make your marriage work.** Ask your wife how she sees the strengths and weaknesses that you each have working together. Talk about how you and your marriage are stronger because she is your helper who completes you.

**Day Twenty-nine:**

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Proverbs 31:30 (NIV)

Just as your marriage has undergone changes since your wedding day, you and your wife will continue to change physically, spiritually, and emotionally as the years bring new joys and new challenges.

As you age, the beauty and vigor of youth will be replaced by grace and strength of character unknown to younger generations. Do not be deceived by the beauty and charm of youth; there is no fountain of youth except for the renewal that only God can give (Isaiah 40:31).

Just as Moses’ face glowed when he met with God face to face (Exodus 34:35), your wife’s countenance will take on a new glow as she walks with God, feels your love in new ways, and trusts you as the spiritual leader of your home. Your love will take on new dimensions and praise will pour forth from your lips without working at it.
Commit to the ground rules of this 30 day challenge for the rest of your life. Let nothing and no one deceive you and cause you to doubt the vows of marriage that you have spoken. The road may be long and it may be hard at times, but the prize is a life of no regrets and a love that knows no end.

You’ve had some serious days recently. It’s time again to have some fun and make playing together an integral part of your marriage. Get outside, ride a bike, go out for ice cream, put together a puzzle, play a game. Find something that both you and your wife enjoy doing and take time to do it together.

If this time of play takes away from other things your wife wants/needs to get done, help her complete her tasks either before or after your play so she can feel more relaxed and enjoy your time together.

**Day Thirty:**

_I was filled with delight day after day._ (Proverbs 8:30)

Today is the final day of the challenge! How did it go? Was it harder than you expected or easier? Did you see fruit for your labor? I certainly hope so.

Now that you’ve completed the 30 days, don’t stop there. Take what you have learned and apply it to the next 30 days and the 30 days after that and the 30 days after that until you have applied it for 10 or 20 or 50 years.

*Use the knowledge and insight you have gained to keep your marriage fresh. The vows you made to your wife before God are too valuable to let crumble without doing everything in your power to keep it together.*

*Pray without ceasing that God will continue to show you how to encourage your wife. Look at your wife with fresh eyes every day. See who she is and who she is becoming. Notice how your love and affection toward her are returned to you tenfold.*

*Find joy in each day that you have together.* When you start to falter in your commitment, pick up this challenge and work through it again. You have the blueprint; it is up to you to build the house.

*Your challenge for today and forever: Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love. Ecclesiastes 9:9 (NIV)*

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