



Understanding – third letter in the COUPLE principle

Closeness – Gen 2:24 – leave and cleave; Deut 24:5 – spend 1st year at home

“Dwell” with her – find her heart; face to face time=heart to heart time

Openness – Song of Sol – “open the door for her” figuratively – “bring her along” with you; share your day. compartmentalized vs integrated. She needs you to be open to her to keep all her circuits on

1PET 3:7

You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an *understanding way*,

as with someone *weaker* since she is a woman;

and show her honor as a *fellow heir of the grace of life*, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

Understanding – KJV says: dwell with them according to knowledge—know your wife, her weakness, desires, her uniqueness as a woman and individual. Knowledge can also be the knowledge as the leader in the home caring for her; subordinate our own selfish desires to the benefit and blessing of our wives

Weaker – weakness may be physical, or vulnerability to the husband in the marriage relationship. Some read “weaker vessel”. Porcelain vs steel bowl – different uses but need to be cared for differently

Heir of grace of life – don’t dishonor her as she is an equal in God’s eyes from eternal perspective.

1PET 3:7

You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an *understanding* way, as with someone *weaker*, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a *fellow heir of the grace of life*, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

Our key here is understanding but there is a lot meat in this verse for us as husbands in how to treat our wives.

C-O-U-P-L-E

- COUPLE principles are interconnected
 - Closeness/Openness are similar, inter-related and play off each other
 - She will sense you Understand - or are trying to.

As you draw close to her and become more open she is going to sense you are trying to understand and this is going to fulfill a need for her in your ability to LOVE her.

Ways to show closeness: 1) holding hands, hugs; 2) face to face talking alone; 3) getting her insights into a problem or her opinion of something; 4) affectionate without sexual intentions

Ways to show openness: 1) sharing your feelings; 2) relaxed body language and good eye contact; 3) pray with her; 4) sharing your ideas or plans for future

Husband:Christ ——— Wife:Church

- Church places burdens on Christ
 - Husband is the “burden bearer”

When wife comes to you for understanding, don't shut her out, close her down or don't seem to hear or care what she is saying – it breaks her spirit – like the porcelain bowl

JAM 1:19

... But everyone must be quick to listen and slow to speak...

This you know my beloved brethren... ... slow to anger. Key here is hearing, or listening. James is speaking to Christian behavior but it is important in the marriage relationship as well.

We were given two ears and one tongue. The ears are out in the open and the tongue is fastened behind a wall of teeth. Think why God made us this way and use them in proportion especially when speaking with your wife.

UNDERSTAND WHY SHE IS COMING TO YOU

- “Do you want me to listen... or to “fix” something?”
- He wants to fix it and she may not want that - understand why she is coming to you

Men go to each other to correct problems or get assistance with an issue.

Women come to you most often for you to listen – when you try to fix the problem and she doesn't want that you feel disrespected because fixing is what you were built for. Don't shut down – that is the opposite of what she needs.

Your job is to UNDERSTAND why she is coming to you.

CONVERSING IS KEY TO UNDERSTANDING

- Wives love to talk to release their emotions
 - Men can keep things stuffed away and not have to talk about them - compartmentalized
 - Women have to share things that happened throughout the day - integrated, “let off steam”
 - Talking helps to process her feelings - this leads to sense of being understood

Note the word conversing... not talking. Conversing requires listening and not interjecting. “small talk” may seem unimportant to you but it is imperative for her.

Much like a tea kettle builds up pressure, your wife collects things over the course of the day that have happened to her and she needs to release some of those feelings and it usually can't wait until tomorrow or the next day.

Women need to talk to realize their feelings sometimes.

UNDERSTANDING TAKES SCHEDULED TIME

- Set aside time to talk
 - who cares about the Blazer game?
- Send a card to thank her for all she does
- Text her in the middle of the day

When talking, be sure to listen and every now and then repeat what she has said so she knows you are listening; don't be thinking about what you have to do tomorrow or the problem you had at work

Thank her for small and large things she does around the house
Texts let her know you are thinking of her

SHE FEELS YOU UNDERSTAND HER WHEN...

- ... you never dismiss her feelings even if illogical to you
- ... you express appreciation for all she does: “Honey, I could never do your job.”
- ... you listen and can repeat back what she said
- ... you don't interrupt her when she's trying to tell you how she feels
- ... you pray with her and for her