

**ADMIRATION**

God instructs a wife to respect her husband: “.....*let the wife see to it that she respects her husband*” (Ephesians 5:33b NKJV). A wife is commanded to respect her husband. With a little reflection it becomes clear that her admiration can have a major impact in his inspiration and motivation to confidently carry out his role as a husband and father. Her genuine appreciation enables her husband to see himself as capable of handling life’s responsibilities.

A wife must regularly “stroke her man’s ego”. In the world, stroking an ego carries a negative connotation, however, let’s break down the phrase to discover what it really means. To “stroke”, by definition is to gently rub. An “ego” is one’s self-esteem or how one feels about himself. When you stroke your husband’s ego, you in fact are rubbing and caressing him with respect, admiration, and words of encouragement, gently, taking care not to over inflate his pride. You stroke his ego, because you genuinely love and adore your husband —there are no hidden agendas and no motives for gifts and/or gestures in return. In essence you are making him feel better about himself.

A man is beaten up by the pressures of society almost daily. He doesn’t want to come home to be criticize, humiliated, degraded, insulted and/or belittled by his wife. A husband needs a wife to build him up without focusing on his failures but highlighting his successes. If the only thing he does well is open a jar of mayonnaise, lovingly tell him:

Baby, that was so very impressive the way you opened that jar of mayo. I’ve never seen anyone work a jar the way you do. And when you put your strength into turning and forcing the jar open, your biceps seem to stand up at attention---I get so turned on. Can’t nobody open a mayo jar like you do!

Okay, that maybe a bit extreme, but you should get the idea. In a marriage, a wife must remember why you married your husband, and then never let him forget it. Focus on what you love about your man.

A husband wants to feel like he is the most important person in your life;

- More important than your mother
- More important than your friends
- More important than your children
- More important than your job
- More important than your Pastor
- More important than your pets

Admiration also rewards the husband’s existing achievements. A woman needs to appreciate her husband for what he already is, not for what he could become, if he lived up to her standards.

Criticism deflates and wounds a man’s spirit, causing him to become defensive—admiration energizes and motivates him. A man expects and needs his wife to be his cheerleader and number one fan.

Shulamith met Solomon's need for admiration and respect with a catalogue of praise in 5:10-16. Here she praises both his appearance and character. Taken from The Message Bible:

*My dear lover glows with health—  
red-blooded, radiant!  
He's one in a million.  
There's no one quite like him!  
My golden one, pure and untarnished,  
with raven black curls tumbling across his shoulders.  
His eyes are like doves, soft and bright,  
but deep-set, brimming with meaning, like wells of water.  
His face is rugged, his beard smells like sage,  
His voice, his words, warm and reassuring.  
Fine muscles ripple beneath his skin,  
quiet and beautiful.  
His torso is the work of a sculptor,  
hard and smooth as ivory.  
He stands tall, like a cedar,  
strong and deep-rooted,  
A rugged mountain of a man,  
aromatic with wood and stone.  
His words are kisses, his kisses words.  
Everything about him delights me, thrills me  
through and through!*

*That's my lover, that's my man,  
dear Jerusalem sisters.*

Moving downward from the top of his head to his legs, Shulamith tells him he is handsome and valuable inwardly and outwardly, in appearance and character. He is the man with whom she has chosen to share and spend her life, and there are no regrets.

A word of caution—never fake respect. God's commands are not to be used selfishly as a gimmick. Flattering your husband will only do harm; "A flattering mouth works ruin." (Proverbs 26:28) For your admiration to be of any real value, it must genuinely reflect your attitude.

A woman is crucial to the success and well being of a man. It is indeed the case that a great woman can take a mediocre man and raise him to the level of good. But a not so great woman can take a great man and pull him down to the level of mediocrity. Her admiration and respect is often the key and the difference. A woman who want to be treated like a queen must treat her husbands like a king.

Remember DIVAS, men thrive on appreciation. Honestly evaluate your relationship with your husband in light of God's Word. If you are practicing respect, praise God! If there is room for improvement, be truthful with God, yourself, and your husband. Ask Him for the grace to be the kind of wife He desires you to be.