



## 30-Day Husband Encouragement Challenge

We're so glad you've decided to accept the 30-Day Husband Encouragement Challenge to encourage your husband! Your decision means that you truly want to be a blessing in your home. This challenge will also result in spiritual growth in your own life.

We'd like to encourage you to keep track of what God does in your marriage over this next month. We hope you'll take time to share what God does in your home as you bless and encourage your spouse.

**Your Challenge: For thirty days, don't say anything negative to or about your husband. Also, say something positive to and about your husband each day.**

### **Day One: Voice Your Gratitude**

*The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. —Proverbs 31:11–12*

To help you get started, have you ever thanked your husband for choosing you above all other women? He found you attractive as a person and appreciated you. Though many circumstances in your marriage may have changed, let your husband know that you are glad God brought you together and that you want to be a blessing to him for the rest of your marriage. Let him know that he can trust you to be in his corner.

#### **Action Step: Say it out loud.**

One of the best opportunities to express your gratitude is first thing in the morning. How do you greet your husband each morning? Is he confident in your love? Give him a wake-up call that he'll never forget—a big "I love you" and an "I'm so glad I'm your wife!"

#### **A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, I want to do good to my husband by encouraging him for the next thirty days. Soften my heart to the ways that he has chosen me. Show me how to voice my gratitude for him, and teach me how to be in his corner.

## **Day Two: Look for His Servant's Heart**

*Through love serve one another.* —Galatians 5:13

How did you do yesterday with your first day of blessing and encouraging your husband? Was it easy? Was it hard to hold your tongue when you wanted to say something negative? We hope you're off to a good start. (If you blew it, don't give up—start again today!) There are so many practical things you can praise, if you look for them.

Today, find some way that your husband is serving you or your family. Does he help around the house? Take care of the car? Fix things that are broken? If your budget allows, give him a new, small tool with a big bow attached. But make sure he doesn't think it's part of a "Honey Do" list!

### **Action Step: Praise his servant's heart.**

Maybe your husband's not a handyman, but does he run errands for you? Let you go first? Take care of you when you are sick? Help you make decisions? Praise him for his willingness to serve others. Let him know that you see his unique service as a great strength.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Jesus, You call us to lay down our lives in service to others. Show me the ways my husband serves others and You, and let me be quick to heap praise upon him for the ways he loves You by serving others. Empower him to respond to the needs he sees; give him a heart that puts others first.

## **Day Three: Cultivate Patience toward Your Husband**

*Love is patient and kind.* —1 Corinthians 13:4

Love indeed suffers long and is kind. As you consider your Encouragement Challenge, determine today that you will not say anything negative to or about your husband. Speak kindly to him with words of genuine encouragement.

If your husband is considerate of your needs, let him know that you have noticed. Thank him for his kindness and consideration. Thank the Lord that your husband knows how to be both tough and tender.

Sometimes it's difficult for a man to be gentle, kind, or tender—especially if he hasn't had role models in these areas. If he's not a considerate person, appeal to him for help without complaining. Let him know that it's hard for you to handle some things alone. Then, when he moves in to help, don't insist that he do it your way. Be glad that he is responding, and express your gratitude.

**Action Step: Adjust your expectations.**

Ultimately, you can't expect your husband to make you feel more secure, loved, protected, and so on. Remember that only God can meet the deepest needs of your heart.

**A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, You alone are my Shelter and Refuge, my Provider. Help me to lean into all that You promise to be for in Christ Jesus so that I do not place unreasonable expectations upon my husband. Forgive me for expecting my husband to read my mind and know my unspoken needs. Give me courage and humility to ask for the help I need and then voice gratitude for whatever assistance my husband offers.

**Day Four: Praise Your Husband's Work**

*Let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands.* —Ephesians 4:28

We are all accountable for the things we say, both the negative and the positive words. Have you embraced the challenge to speak only positive things to your husband and to others about him? Here's a suggestion that touches the core of your husband's world.

Some women take their husband's career for granted, and they show it in many ways. Do you dump on your husband at the end of the workday, or do you strengthen and encourage him with your words? A wise wife will make her husband feel that she values and appreciates his work. Let him know that you are glad he is a hard worker. Take opportunities to praise his diligence and resourcefulness to others.

**Action Step: Praise him for the work he does.**

If your husband is out of work, unable to work, or refuses to work, you'll need to be more creative. Praise him for a character quality that you see in him that would be a vital part of a successful career—such as persistence, decisiveness, strength, or determination . . . or having an analytical mind or organizational skills . . . or being good with people or a good listener.

**A Wife's Prayer**

Jesus, I thank You for the way you've shaped and gifted my husband for the work he is able to do. Help me to support his work and praise him specifically for what he does. Plant in him a vision for how his gifts will build Your Kingdom and serve others. Impress upon him the desire to be faithful with his gifts, using them fully. Protect him from discouragement, stress, dishonesty, and sluggishness so that all he does might bring praise to Your name.

## **Day Five: What's on Your Tongue?**

*Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. —Ephesians 4:29*

Another way to describe the positive side of this 30-Day Husband Encouragement Challenge is by using the word *edify*, which means “to build up.” Negative comments only discourage and tear down. Positive comments encourage and build.

Do you edify your husband before others, adding to his value in their eyes? This is especially important to do with family members.

### **Action Step: Tell your family why you love your husband.**

Do you praise your husband to his relatives and yours? Does your husband's mother know how much you love him? How about your dad? Perhaps you can drop a word of praise into a conversation or letter. Be creative in letting your relatives know that you respect your husband, love him, and support him—in spite of whatever flaws and weaknesses he may have.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Jesus, I confess that I have spoken negative words about my husband. I ask for Your forgiveness; I ask for Your power to cut off the corrupting power of what I've said in the hearts and minds of those who heard me. Prompt me to speak praise and goodness about my husband, to build him up and plant grace about him in the hearts of others.

## **Day Six: Praise His Creative Efforts**

*Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. —1 Corinthians 10:31*

Is your husband the creative type? Does he have any artistic gifts? What is that special knack he has? Affirm him for his handiwork—a hobby, music, gardening, tinkering with cars, working with wood, and so on. Remember, even if he doesn't measure up to your standards, praise his efforts.

If you have a hard time finding his creative side, understand that men's creativity is sometimes related to their work. Find something he does exceptionally well to make his job run more smoothly or something he does that adds value to his work . . . and let him know that you have noticed. If your budget allows, buy him a book or magazine that will continue to encourage his special skill or talent.

### **Action Step: Praise his creativity.**

Do you recognize and appreciate your husband's creativity? Or do you criticize and demean his efforts? Instead of negativity, determine to be positive. Perhaps you can help your husband see that his efforts are an opportunity to glorify God. Make his day—praise his accomplishments in public, while he is listening.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, show me how You have wired my husband to reflect Your creative heart. Teach me to be an encouragement as he uses his gifts and talents to solve problems, serve others, and advance the Kingdom. Thank You for revealing Your creativity through my husband, for Your glory!

## **Day Seven: United on the Financial Front**

*Do not toil to acquire wealth; be discerning enough to desist. When your eyes light on it, it is gone, for suddenly it sprouts wings, flying like an eagle toward heaven.. —Proverbs 23:4–5*

*Granting an inheritance to those who love me, and filling their treasuries. —Proverbs 8:21*

Money is the root of much marital discord. Too often financial stress causes couples to abandon unity and see each other as the enemy. Scripture tells us that our battle is not against flesh and blood; we must fight to maintain a unified front. Does your husband handle finances wisely? Does he make good financial investments, based on biblical principles? Does he have a budget? Does he make wise decisions about purchases—checking many sources before he buys? Is he a good steward before the Lord?

If he longs to honor God by being a good steward, let him know how much you appreciate his strengths in financial matters. If this is an area of weakness for him, pray about how you can support his growth. Encourage any good decisions that he does make. Perhaps you can help him, if he's open to the idea, by organizing financial files or providing other practical assistance. Or if he wants you to handle the finances, ask for his input before you make decisions that will affect him.

### **Action Step: Strengthen Your Financial Front**

Whether your husband is strong or weak in financial matters, you can strengthen your financial front by encouraging what he does well and giving grace where he's weak. Ask yourself: *Am I being negative toward my husband in the area of finances?* Determine not to speak evil of your husband in this area. Discover ways to encourage and help him instead.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, help me to rest fully in You in the area of finances. Teach me to praise and encourage and help, rather than criticize and complain and hinder. Please strengthen our financial front and grant us unity in financial decisions. Bless my husband with a tender heart that longs to honor You with everything we own, and grant him wisdom to dedicate all resources for the Kingdom and the Gospel.

## **Day Eight: Planting Faithfulness**

*But a faithful man who can find? —Proverbs 20:6*

Faithfulness is a wonderful but rare quality today, especially in regard to marriage. Contemporary culture often entices men to be unfaithful to their wedding vows and spiritual commitments.

Consider the ways your husband displays faithfulness—how he is loyal to you, how he honors the Lord, how he continues on in his work and ministry. Begin to praise him for being faithful and praise God for helping him to remain true to his commitments.

This area will be difficult for you if your husband is prone to break his word or act unfaithfully toward you. Know that the Lord is near the brokenhearted, sustaining you in whatever pain you've experienced. Be sure to seek counsel from a mature, godly individual or couple who can help you respond biblically. Pray, speak the truth in love, remain faithful yourself, and discover ways to encourage faithfulness in your mate. The Bible says that husbands "may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives" (1 Pet. 3:1).

Whatever your circumstance, your challenge is to root out all negative speaking toward your husband and plant seeds of encouragement instead. You may be amazed at what will grow!

### **Action Step: Plant Seeds of Faithfulness**

Plant seeds of faithfulness into your husband's heart by praising his integrity and loyal actions. Write him a note expressing how much it means to you that he has honored his marriage vow.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, cultivate within my husband a faithful heart, one that longs to beat with integrity and flow with sacrificial love. Show me how I can plant seeds of faithfulness through my actions and attitudes toward my husband, and help me to wait on Your harvest in his heart.

## **Day Nine: Take Time to Listen**

*Be quick to hear, slow to speak. —James 1:19*

We are often so busy speaking that we don't take time to listen. We are so quick to offer a comment—negative or positive—that we don't really hear our husband's heart. Remember, we have two ears and only one mouth. We need to listen more!

As you continue in your 30-day challenge, not speaking negatively and focusing on positive encouragement, hear the Lord's admonition today: "Be quick to hear."

If listening is a real problem for you, play a game with yourself. See if you can listen to your husband for one whole day, only speaking when asked a question. If your husband notices the difference, explain that you are learning to listen more—not only to God, but also to him.

**Action Step: Learn something new.**

One easy way to give focused attention to your husband is to ask a question about something he enjoys and then listen to his response. If it's an area of personal familiarity, keep asking questions until you learn something you didn't know, then tell him, "Wow, I didn't know that!"

**A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, open my ears to hear—truly hear—my husband. Teach me to patiently pursue his heart by asking probing questions. Awaken my curiosity for all the unspoken things hidden as treasure in his heart and soul. Help me to honor what he shares with me and never use it as ammunition against him.

**Day Ten: Remember: You Chose Him**

*Behold, you are beautiful, my beloved, truly delightful.* —Song of Songs 1:16

We all crave appreciation. We want to know that we are valued and loved, pursued and special. When's the last time you remembered everything you admire about your husband? Early love letters probably reflected that admiration! But if we're not careful to verbalize our admiration, our spouse will forget why we were drawn to him.

And when we spend time criticizing our husbands, we lose time that could be spent admiring and remembering why we chose that person in the first place! As you consider various ways to encourage your husband, ask, "How can I admire him?"

**Action Step: Count the ways you love him—then tell him.**

Does your husband know that you think he is attractive? What was one of the characteristics in your husband that first drew you to him? Was it a physical characteristic or something else? Was it his gentle, compassionate eyes? Kindness or concern for others? An easygoing confidence? A steadiness that comes from trusting in the Lord? Strength of character in a culture that lacks integrity? Do you see at least a glimpse of that characteristic in him today? Whatever it is, tell him! If you still have any of your old love letters, re-read them for clues to deepen your current level of appreciation for your spouse.

**A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, I confess that it is often easier to criticize than admire. Please forgive my critical spirit and free me to remember all the things that nudged me to choose my husband in the first place. Remind me of things I've forgotten, and even point out things I've been blind to. Loosen my tongue to speak words of admiration and renew in me a deep, passionate love for my husband.

## **Day Eleven: The Power of Respect**

*Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. —Ephesians 5:22*

Women who are constantly negative toward their husbands—especially by speaking evil of them to others—show great disrespect. Determine not to do that today (or ever!). This challenge to encourage is closely connected to submission.

Men respond to women who respect them. What do you respect about your husband? Is it his ability to plan, lead, show mercy, mediate peace, or delegate? Does he keep things organized or invest in others? If you feel there is nothing to respect, search harder . . . nearly every man has some core characteristic that can be nurtured and respected. In any case, you must still cultivate a submissive spirit to his position of leadership “as to the Lord.” Part of showing respect includes submission to his authority: “For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior” (Eph. 5:23).

### **Action Step: Demonstrate respect.**

Show your respect in public by listening to him and smiling at him when he speaks. Place your hand in his as you walk together. Seek his opinion on decisions you need to make or conversations you need to have with others. Tell him that you need his support, insight, care, and love.

### **A Wife’s Prayer**

Heavenly Father, I have had trouble in the past respecting my husband. Forgive me for the ways I have not honored the marriage structure you created. Help me, Lord, Jesus, to grow in respect and to practice showing respect so that our marriage is a vibrant picture of Your relationship with Your Bride, the Church.

## **Day Twelve: Heart Check**

*With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love. —Ephesians 4:2*

Part of the difficulty you may face as you continue in this 30-day challenge to encourage your husband is that you really are struggling to find positive things to praise. Perhaps the problem is not with your husband. Have you checked your own heart?

Sometimes we get disillusioned because of our own unreasonable or unrealistic expectations (Pro. 13:12). It may not be that our mates are doing something wrong; it’s simply that we expect too much in some areas.

Our expectations must be met in God alone, and then we will have the right perspective to ask God for the healing and grace we need to respond to others.

**Action Step: Release him from overly demanding expectations.**

Spend time in prayer, asking the Spirit to search you and know your heart for any unreasonable or unrealistic expectations you are holding over your husband. Today, try to look at your husband through eyes of grace. Verbally thank your husband for what he is already doing, and release him from any overly demanding expectations the Lord has shown you.

**A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, search my heart for any ways I've been expecting too much from my husband. Help me to come to You with my unmet needs; teach me to not hold my husband's failings against him. Soften my heart so that Your grace is at work.

**Day Thirteen: Don't Settle for a Passionless Marriage**

*I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me.* —Song of Songs 7:10

If you were to describe your sexual relationship, would it you say it's passion/less or *passionate*? The health of your sexual relationship is one of those determining elements—along with money and children—that can make or break a marriage. Many women struggle with the sexual component in their marriage, settling for passionless. But God intended marital intimacy to be a vibrant and regular expression of love.

Let's get practical here. Is your husband a good lover? Have you told him so? Be specific. Let him know when he pleases you. Most husbands genuinely want to please their wives, especially in this important area of marriage. Realize that your husband wants intimacy with you . . . his desire is *toward* you.

There are many common areas of struggle that women face. For example, in moments of intimacy, do you find your mind wandering? This can change as you focus on something wonderful about your husband. Many women have exacerbated their sexual struggles through negative comments. Negativity destroys intimacy, but encouragement builds and strengthens the marriage bond. Wherever your marriage falls on the passion scale today, seek God's help for growing the passion in this all-important area.

**Action Step: Show some passion.**

Does this area of your marriage need some work? Remember that this is a sensitive area for men. Be sure to encourage his lovemaking and masculinity in positive ways. Demonstrate that your desire is for your husband and that you want to spend time with him.

PS: For some of you, the situation may be reversed—you are more interested in sex than your husband is. This is a difficult situation, and one that doesn't have an easy answer. First, pray. Then pray some more. Ask God to give you insight into the reason behind your husband's lack of interest and wisdom and sensitivity to know how to address it with him. Look for other ways to connect with him and how you can be an encouragement to him with your words and actions. Know that the situation will require patience and lots of love on your part. Things won't change overnight. But don't give up—there is hope!

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, no matter how I have struggled in the past, I don't want to settle for a passionless marriage. Make me healthy and whole in this area; free me from wrong thinking and release in me a great desire for my husband. Give me wisdom on how to be an encouragement to my husband in this area—and bring encouragement to my heart as well!

## **Day Fourteen: A Man of Integrity**

*The righteous man walks in his integrity. —Proverbs 20:7*

Every week there are news reports about men who gave in to temptations and compromised what they said they believed. We hear countless reports about dishonest business dealings, hidden infidelity, and hypocritical leaders. It's so easy to focus on these things and ignore those who are being honest, faithful, and genuine. As you continue in the 30-Day Husband Encouragement Challenge, determine to look for ways that your husband stands against the culture.

Is your spouse a man of integrity? Is he fair in his dealings with people? Does he understand the meaning of justice? Is he honest in business? Genuine in his faith? Consider all the ways a man can live in integrity, and praise your husband for one of them.

### **Action Step: Strengthen the hedges in his heart.**

Pray regularly for your husband's sense of integrity, that he would be sensitive to the Spirit in all his ways. As you have the opportunity—as it is appropriate—share examples of your husband's honesty and integrity with others. Your prayers and compliments will serve to strengthen the hedges of morality he has in his heart.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, would You make my husband's heart more sensitive to Your Spirit? Let him be aware of weak spots in the hedges around his heart. Show him how to walk in integrity by fortifying his resolve through prayer, accountability, and right choices. Protect him from evil. Show me how to praise him and encourage him to stay strong in his actions.

## **Day Fifteen: His Pursuit of God**

*Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. —2 Peter 3:18*

Sometimes we live so close to our spouse that we fail to see him as others do; we only see our husband's faults. Today, take a step back. Look for ways that he is pursuing God and living a life of faith. Perhaps he is growing spiritually in ways you have failed to appreciate!

How can you encourage his growth in a fresh, new way? Remember, your husband is accountable to God for his spiritual development. You are accountable to God to encourage and not hinder that growth.

**Action Step: Look for expressions of faith.**

Can you identify an area of spiritual strength in your husband? Does he pray or read his Bible regularly? Does he like to read about or discuss spiritual matters? Does he go to church with you? Is he a spiritual leader? What do others say about him? If you can identify a specific area, praise him for that.

If you can't find something to praise, pray earnestly that God will work in his heart, and watch for signs of spiritual growth in the future.

**A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, more than anything else I want my husband to have a fruitful and growing relationship with You. Give him a desire for knowing and honoring You in every area of life. Forgive me for ways I have criticized his faith walk instead of encouraging him to pursue You. Thank You for loving him more than I do and wanting to be in relationship with him.

**Day Sixteen: Your Life Companion**

*Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." —Genesis 2:18*

God says that it is not good for man to be alone. But the way some women criticize their mates, the husbands may long for solitude! Companionship and togetherness are foundational pieces to a healthy relationship.

God has made you a companion and helper for your husband, and part of being "one flesh" with him is the privilege of sharing and discussing personal needs and concerns. Thank God for that wonderful gift. Thank your husband for communicating with you and being your companion in this life.

If your spouse does not value you as his life companion as you wish he would, look for ways that he tries—smiling at you, asking questions, nodding his head when you speak, and so on—and then thank him for it. Perhaps he needs to be lovingly taught how to communicate. Women are often more naturally relational than men, so this may come easy for you. Be patient with him . . . and continue to pursue him as your life companion.

**Action Step: Be his life companion.**

Seek your husband as your life companion. Share the little things and the big news with him first. Make a point to plan time together, whether that's an outing or time alone together at

home. Affirm the ways that he is your best friend and how you are happy God has given him as your life companion.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, although my relational needs can only be met fully in You, I want my marriage to be all that it should be in this area. Would You grow us in companionship? Teach me how to value my husband as my closest friend and confidante. Thank You for my husband and the ways he does reach out to me.

## **Day Seventeen: The Home that Wisdom Builds**

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.*  
—Proverbs 9:10

Are you a wise woman? Do you open your mouth with wisdom, as Proverbs 31:26 suggests? As you continue in your 30-day challenge, remember that a wise woman encourages her husband.

Is your husband a wise man? Does he have a godly perspective that comes from knowing God and walking with Him in obedience? Does he have a sense of purpose for his life and vision for your home? Tell him how much this means to you. If your husband is not walking with God—or perhaps, does not know the Lord—you have the opportunity and responsibility to practice your faith and create a thirst for God. Thank God for giving your husband a place in his heart that only He can fill, and keep praying that he will turn to the Lord to fill that vacuum.

### **Action Step: Catch (or inspire!) the vision.**

If you are not sure about your husband's vision for your home, ask him, "Honey, what do you want to accomplish with our marriage and home in the years to come?" and "How can I help you accomplish that?" If he does not have a vision, your questions may inspire him to develop one!

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, I long for our home to be built by Your ways and Your wisdom. Please pour out Your heart upon our marriage, that we might be a force for Your Kingdom work in our family, neighborhood, and community. Make our home a place of refuge and life, a place that honors You in all Your ways.

## **Day Eighteen: Show Your Playful Side**

*A joyful heart is good medicine.* —Proverbs 17:22

Let me ask you a question: Do you have fun with your husband? Life is full of serious things—decisions to make, tasks to complete, work to do . . . and it can take all the joy out of our relationships. Are most conversations with your husband serious and task-centered? That's a sure recipe for concocting a negative and critical spirit toward him. Instead of speaking negatively to your husband today, enjoy him! Encourage him! As you experience fullness of joy with God, share some of that joy with your husband.

Does your husband have a playful side? A great sense of humor? Is there a “little boy” that wants to escape from time to time, reflecting the joy in his heart? This is a wonderful part of who he is and a great strength. Let him know that you appreciate his joyfulness and his playful spirit. Find opportunities to join him in positive play times.

If your husband can sometimes be overly serious, coax him out occasionally for some play times. It will help him relieve stress and relax.

No matter which one of you leans toward the serious side, fun is needed to infuse joy into your relationship.

**Action Step: Do something fun.**

Think of something lighthearted for you and your husband to do. Fly kite, go for a bike ride, do an art project, play charades, make silly faces—whatever you can think of to show your playful side!

**A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, so many times the pressure of life gets the better of me and I take everything so seriously. Help me to take joy in life, to be quick to laugh and find humor. Infuse Your eternal joy in our hearts and make our marriage a place where we have fun and laugh together.

**Day Nineteen: Fearfully and Wonderfully Made**

Read a wife's description of her beloved in Song of Songs 5:10–16.

When you look at your husband, what do you see? Strong arms? Hairy chest? Firm hands? Big feet? Rugged chin? Wide shoulders? Compassionate eyes? Broad smile? Whatever his physical size, shape, or characteristics may be, the way you see him has a profound affect. Almost nothing is as devastating to a man as the belief that his wife finds him repulsive. Sadly, many women unwisely criticize their husbands' bodies.

Have you ever considered how wonderfully God designed men and women? No matter how a man looks—by the standards of the world—a loving God designed them all, and they are all beautiful in His sight. Encourage your husband today by praising his uniqueness.

Criticism leaves scars, but encouragement can bring healing. Remember that today as you focus on your 30-Day Husband Encouragement Challenge.

**Action Step:**

As you look over your husband's body, from the tip of his toes to his bald or bushy head, thank God that your husband is "wonderfully made," then admire your husband verbally.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, today I praise You for the way You knit my husband together. You do all things well, so show me the beauty of my husband's physical form and teach me to be tender with the body You've housed him in. Forgive me for criticizing Your work and for aligning my expectations with our current cultural standard. Put in me a spirit of acceptance and love for the uniqueness of my husband.

## **Day Twenty: Time to Dig out Those Bitter Roots**

*Be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. — Ephesians 4:32*

It's time for some heart examination. At this point in the 30-day challenge, it's possible you've found some roots of bitterness that are contaminating your relationship with your husband.

Do you understand that as long as you are unwilling to forgive your husband—by God's grace and in His power—you will not be able to encourage him? Your own resentment will keep getting in the way. Now is the time to deal with any unforgiving attitudes you've stored up against him. Forgive him, even as God has forgiven you.

Is your husband a forgiving man? Does he keep short accounts of your problems? Express your thankfulness for such a man. Does your husband seem to harbor grudges against you? If so, could there be things you need to change? Do you possibly need to ask forgiveness for an offense?

No matter how your husband handles his heart, you are called to freedom from bitter roots. Take time today to dig them out and remove what's contaminating your relationship with your husband and with the Lord.

### **Action Step: Start digging.**

Spend time in prayer, asking the Lord to show you the roots of bitterness in your heart. Make a list of them, asking God to forgive you for your resentment. Then choose to forgive your husband and recommit to encouraging him for the remainder of the challenge with a clean heart.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, I have sinned against You in my judgment and resentment against my husband. Forgive me for taking Your place and refusing to love. Fill me with love and compassion for my husband. I choose to walk by Your Spirit for the remainder of this challenge—please help me to be the wife You long for me to be.

## **Day Twenty-one: Living for the Kingdom**

*But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.* —Matthew 6:33

If we are living in light of eternity, everything we think, do, or say is seen from an eternal perspective. Only two things will go into eternity—the Word of God and people. Be sure that you are focusing on the right things.

Does your husband have an eternal perspective that allows him to reject materialism and temporal values? Express your gratefulness for his value system, and praise him for putting eternal things before riches and other things of this world.

If this is a problem area for him, consider how you might alter your own value system and live for eternity in front of him, encouraging him to do the same. We will someday give an account for our failure to speak words of love and encouragement. Determine today that your words will be sweet and helpful, encouraging your husband to live for God's Kingdom.

### **Action Step: Put your treasure in heaven.**

Assess any habits or patterns in your life that are not placing a priority on God's Word and people. Make adjustments so that God is honored and your home is more focused on the Kingdom.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, I want to be a wise steward, investing in eternal things. Help me to adjust my thinking and priorities so that our home is centered on Your Kingdom values. I want to live in such a way that my husband is encouraged to seek You and Your Kingdom even more.

## **Day Twenty-two: Season Your Speech with Grace**

*Let your speech always be gracious.* —Colossians 4:6

Do you talk positively about your husband to others . . . or do you complain and criticize? Here's a way to find out—ask yourself: *If all my family and friends knew about my husband came from a filter of what I've said about him, what would they think of him?*

Your speech should reflect 1 Corinthians 13 love. Your words should be kind and should never "rejoice at wrongdoing" (v. 6). Refrain from listing your husband's faults to others. Satan likes to trick us in this area. Be wary of sharing barbed "prayer requests." Some of what you say may come back to him—and you want your words to be sweet, building him up and never tearing him down. Don't forget, you are always criticizing—or encouraging—before an audience. God hears your conversations when you are alone with your husband in your own home. May your speech be always seasoned with grace. Focus today on how you represent your husband in your home, your church, and your community.

**Action Step: Give a good word about him to others.**

Remember, “love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Pet. 4:8). Present your husband before others today in a strong, positive manner. Slip in a good word for your spouse. Resist the urge to correct or belittle him in front of others.

**A Wife’s Prayer**

Lord Jesus, forgive me for being quick to slip in a jab about my husband to others. This reveals sin in my heart even as I try to reveal his. Teach me how to praise his strengths; help to cover over his sin by refusing to betray his weaknesses to others, even as I trust You to deal with him in those areas.

**Day Twenty-three: Appreciating His Strengths**

*Showing yourself in all respects to be a model of good works. —Titus 2:7*

God has wired us with different personalities. And often He will draw together two people with opposite strengths and weaknesses, on purpose, in order to refine us and help us. Sometimes the very strengths we love at first become points of contention later.

Is your husband organized? Is he diligent? Is he persistent? These are all related to a pattern of personal disciplines that are worthy of your praise—even when his bent for order and discipline comes against your bent for whimsy. Affirm him for these traits and how this helps your marriage function. .

Some men are naturally more spontaneous. They may be fun loving or people-focused. These are all related to a creative spirit that is also worthy of your praise—even when his bent for spontaneity comes against your bent for planning.

**Action Step: Serve your husband with your strengths.**

If you are more naturally spontaneous and fun loving, perhaps God called you together to help him loosen up. Serve your husband with your ability to enjoy the twists and turns of life.

If you are more naturally disciplined, perhaps God has called you together to help him stay focused—but this does not include nagging. Serve your husband with your multitasking and organizational skills.

**A Wife’s Prayer**

Heavenly Father, when I see the differences between my husband and me, sometimes I am grateful . . . but sometimes it is so difficult. Let me serve my husband, in love, with the gifts You’ve given me. Help me learn from my husband and lean on his strengths. Fill me today with an appreciation for how You’ve wired him and let me be quick to praise him for being the balance I need in life.

## **Day Twenty-four: A Father at Heart**

*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. —Ephesians 6:4*

Here's a newsflash: *Men and women parent differently*. That means how you approach parenting will be different from how your husband approaches parenting. And that is a good thing. A wise wife will support her husband's parenting style and leadership in the home as much as possible and will praise him for his fathering skills. A foolish wife will criticize. Negativity makes a man feel like a failure and may make him to want to give up.

If you have children, does your husband discipline them wisely? Does he show them love and encourage them? Does he take an interest in their activities and dreams? Does he spend time with them? Does he take part in developing their character? Praise him for these important life skills.

If you don't have children, is your husband positive and encouraging around other people's children? Let him know that you have noticed and believe he has what it takes to be a great dad.

If your husband does not experience positive relationships with children (either your own or those you know), try to figure out why. Perhaps he had negative experiences as a child with his own parents and needs to find healing and growth. Perhaps you can lovingly and patiently show him how to parent or be a nurturing adult to a child.

### **Action Step: Encourage his fathering skills.**

Watch for positive deposits your husband makes in children, and praise him for doing it well. Ask him to share his fears about being a dad and encourage his parenting style even if it is different from yours.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, although You alone are the perfect Father, too often I expect my husband to measure up to Your perfection. Forgive my critical spirit and help me to see the good things he does as a father (or father figure). Please show him where his own wounds are preventing him from being the man and father figure You want him to be. Let me love him and encourage him in his own journey even as he walks out this fathering role along the way.

## **Day Twenty-five: Making Peace a Priority**

*Seek peace and pursue it. —Psalm 34:14*

*You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. —Isaiah 26:3*

Does your home flourish under an atmosphere of peace? According to God's Word, peace is something that must be sought, pursued, and focused upon. The way you live your life and relate to your husband and family will set the tone for your home.

Likewise, you can encourage your husband to pursue peace. Praise him for his gentle spirit or his ability to diffuse conflict. Lovingly remind him of the power of his words and how much good can come from a wise comment. Thank him for being mindful to protect your family from negative entertainment options.

**Action Step: Pursue peace.**

Consider these check-up questions to see how well you are pursuing peace:

- Is your mind set to maintain peace through the words you speak or the attitudes you bear?
- Are you quick to criticize or be impatient or arrogant?
- Do you allow regular entertainment (books, shows, music, etc.) that is negative?
- Is the pace of your life too fast?

Take time before the Lord to confess any sinful habits these questions exposed. And make the pursuit of peace a priority in your marriage and home to be an encouragement to your husband.

**A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, You are the Prince of Peace and I invite You to reign and rule in my heart, in my marriage, and in my home. Guard my tongue and my mind from sinful habits. Help me to make peace a priority so that You a magnified.

**Day Twenty-six: Strike a Balance**

*And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. —Luke 2:52*

If you have faithfully encouraged your husband, you will no doubt have seen some changes in his life . . . and your own life, as well. Encouragement is a wonderful habit that we hope you will continue for the rest of your life.

The important thing is to keep growing in Christ and obeying the Word of God as you respond to your husband. As you consider today how to bless your husband and not tear him down, think of ways that you can encourage balance in your home.

Jesus led a balanced life. He grew mentally, physically, spiritually, and socially. As you see your husband branching out in these areas, is there a pattern of growth? Is your husband striving for balance in his life? If so, let him know you have noticed, and ask how you can further encourage him.

If your husband is out of balance—focusing on one area to the exclusion of the others—consider whether there are things you can do to help restore or create balance in his life. Can you encourage times for sports or exercise? Keep the children quiet for a study time? Invite friends over for dinner? Stimulate his mind?

Be sure you are working toward balance in your own life, as well. Be an example!

**Action Step: Be a stabilizing force.**

Take time to consider how you can be a stabilizing force in your husband's life. If he's fairly steady, verbalize to him what a great job he does in this area. If he's out of balance, ask him if there is any way you can serve him to bring stability. Be ready to make changes and adjustments to bring balance.

**A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, would you help us find the right balance in life? There are so many good things to do—but You have called us to seek first Your Kingdom and Your righteousness. Teach us to balance our lives according to Your will. Help me to be willing to change for the good of my marriage and home and for Your Kingdom.

## **Day Twenty-seven: Acknowledge His Courage**

*Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the LORD! —Psalm 31:24*

You have almost completed the 30-Day Husband Encouragement Challenge. Perhaps it has taken you a tremendous amount of courage to speak words of encouragement consistently to your husband. Courage comes as we place our trust in God. Have faith that God will continue to work long after your encouraging words have been shared.

There are lots of “tough guys” in the world, but true courage comes from the Lord. Does your husband exhibit the courage to take an unpopular stand, perhaps even to stand alone against evil? Is he courageous in his faith? Does he work hard to change injustice? Is he a stickler for the truth? Does he protect you or your family from the attacks of the enemy?

Psalm 27:14 says this kind of courage comes from “waiting” on the Lord for His strength. Such spiritual courage is a gift and blessing to you—thank the Lord of it and praise your husband for the covering he supplies.

**Action Step: Give him a Courage Award.**

As your budget allows, award your husband with a medal, trophy, framed picture of a brave knight, or some other token that represents his courage as a man of God. Openly praise evidences of your husband's courage in protecting you, your marriage, your family, or your home.

**A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, I thank you for the way my husband shows care and covering. Help me to rest under his care, to not fight against it. Show me how to encourage him in faith and to continue to fight the battle on our behalf.

## **Day Twenty-eight: The Beauty of Humility**

*The fear of the LORD is the instruction in wisdom, and humility comes before honor.* —Proverbs 15:33

As part of your Encouragement Challenge today, pray that you will respond to the Lord in faith and humility before you react to your husband. Sometimes when we just know we are right and our husbands are wrong, it takes great humility to honor them. It is difficult to speak well of our husbands when our own hearts are puffed up with pride. Speak wisely and well, and leave the results to God.

The humility that comes from a right relationship with God—the humility that comes when a man is willing to listen to God and be taught from His Word—is indeed a beautiful quality. Jesus was an example of this kind of humility when He was willing to submit to His Father’s will (John 6:38; Matt. 26:39).

Does your husband have that kind of humility? Is he willing to learn from and submit to direction from the Lord? Let your husband know how precious this is to your marriage relationship.

### **Action Step: Ask for a humble heart.**

The humble heart is convicted of its need for grace and mercy. Ask God to grant you humility to see how you have acted in pride toward your husband. Seek his forgiveness and practice humility in the days to come.

### **A Wife’s Prayer**

Heavenly Father, search my heart and show me areas of pride hidden in my heart. I confess them to You and ask You to give me courage to confess to my husband in order to make amends. Lord Jesus, grant us Your mind and heart to walk in humility with one another.

## **Day Twenty-nine: Standing for Righteousness**

*The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it.* —Proverbs 27:12

As you near the end of your Encouragement Challenge, take time to think about your husband’s responses to the wickedness of the culture, the media, and the world. Does your

husband recognize and avoid evil? Does he regularly turn his back on pornography, sexual temptations, and the urge to lie and cheat?

This is a valuable character trait. Like Joseph in the Old Testament, who fled from the wicked advances of Potiphar's wife, this takes an understanding that these kinds of sins are first and foremost sins against God (Gen. 39:9).

**Action Step: Praise him for righteous choices.**

Praise your husband when he recognizes and turns his back on wickedness. If you can think of a circumstance where your husband stood for righteousness, remind him of that today—and express your gratitude.

**A Wife's Prayer**

Heavenly Father, would You strengthen my husband's resolve to stand strong against the world, the flesh, and the devil? Protect him from evil and remind him of his need for Your help. Keep him hungry for You so that nothing else satisfies. Help me to praise his choices that honor You and promote the Kingdom.

**Day Thirty: Love in Word and Deed**

*This is my beloved and this is my friend.* —Song of Songs 5:16

Friendship is something that is cultivated through the good times and the bad. Friends can share their hearts, but they don't step on each other's hearts. Friends can be completely honest with each other, but friendships are strained when truth is not spoken in love.

How are you speaking to your beloved? Are you so used to him that you don't appreciate the wonder of his friendship? That is your challenge today, to make sure your husband knows he is your sweetheart and best friend. Does he know this? Have you told him, or do you assume he just knows?

Don't assume. Everyone loves to hear that they are special. Take time to appreciate your husband by demonstrating it to him. Tell him with your kind words; show him with your kind acts.

**Action Step: Love is an action word.**

The way to have and be a good friend is to cultivate and celebrate the relationship. As you end this 30-Day Husband Encouragement Challenge, celebrate your friendship with your husband. Get alone, and reflect on your beloved friend. Write him a letter, listing the qualities you admire and appreciate about him. If you are creative with words, write and frame a poem about him.

Perhaps you can prepare a special meal, just for the two of you, and read the letter or poem to him. Ask if you can pray for him—if he is willing, thank God for your love and friendship, asking

for His blessing on your home. Encouragement, as you have seen these past thirty days, is a synonym for love in action.

### **A Wife's Prayer**

Lord Jesus, You have loved us with Your words as well as with Your deeds. Thank You for making it clear and help me to follow in Your footsteps so that the fullness of my love for my husband is clear. Let me continue to speak words of love and to show deeds of love in the days to come. Thank You for my husband, and thank You for growing me into an encouraging wife.

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How has this challenge changed your heart and life, dear friend? Did God encourage you as you planned ways to encourage your husband? Were there difficult days where you simply needed to trust that God was working? Days when it was hard to leave the results to God? Remember that God is faithful, and He will bless you for your willingness to obey Him. His ways are not our ways, and perhaps He will honor you in ways you do not expect. But one thing is sure—you will never be the same because of your commitment to be more like Christ!

What kinds of victories have you experienced in your home since you started the 30-Day Husband Encouragement Challenge? Would you take a moment to [share these victories with us?](#)