



Wife and Husband Can Ask for What

Carla and Woody had come for marriage counseling. (All characters are fictitious.) As I listened to the two of them, I concluded that the main problem was their lack of communication.

"He doesn't treat me like a husband should," Carla complained. But he told him how she wanted to be treated? "Not really," she admitted. "But he should know without my telling him."

"She doesn't do anything for me," Woody also complained. But he admitted that he really hadn't told her exactly what he wanted her to do for him. "Mom always just knew what to do for Dad," Woody grumbled. "Carla should know what a wife is supposed to do."

"If you don't ask for what you want," I told them, "the odds are that you won't get it. People only know what you want when you tell them."

"Asking is not the same as demanding," I cautioned. "You have no right to demand anything from a spouse. Asking means telling the other person what you want. And that's all. Then you must leave it up to your spouse whether he or she will do it or. He or she always has the right to say No."

Woody was not happy with this statement. "I think the Bible gives me the right as head of the household to demand that she be a wife to me," Woody argued. "When I tell her to do something, she is supposed to do it."

"And it is your privilege to hold that opinion, Woody," I told him. "I

can pretty well guarantee, though, if you hold on to that way of thinking, you are going to lose your wife. Would you rather be right or married?"

Woody was still not pleased, but he agreed to participate in the experiment I suggested. He and Carla would both write down what each wanted the other to do in the marriage. They were to bring these lists to the next counseling session, so that we could talk about them.

When we got together again a week later, they were both surprised at what they had written. Here are the lists they put together:

What Carla Wanted Woody To Do

1. Sit and listen to me when I talk
2. Treat my thoughts and feelings as important.
3. Spend time doing things with me.
4. Romance me like you did when we were dating.

What Woody Wanted Carla To Do

1. Stop trying to change me.
2. Understand me.
3. Show some interest in our physical relationship.
4. Don't try to tie me down to home.

Discuss these lists with your spouse and find out what he or she wants you to do.

I am teaching a seminar "Food, Fat and Addiction: Why We Can't Stop Eating" on Monday, August 26, at 7:30 p.m. at the Center for Rural Development in Somerset. You are invited. Call 679-4134 or 1-877-PASTOR-8 to register. The cost is \$20.

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Summary Financial Statement Rockcastle County Conservation District

For Fiscal Period July