

PRAYING
LIKE CRAZY HUSBAND
FOR YOUR H

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Every little girl dreams of the day. The white dress. The flowers. The walk down the aisle. The happily-ever-after.

As a teen she tests out her “married” name in the margins of her homework papers. Decides how many children she’ll have—and decides if they’ll be boys or girls or how many of each. (I wanted six. Three boys and three girls. What can I say? *The Brady Bunch* was one of the most popular shows on television at the time.)

She falls in love. Gets her heart broken. Falls in love again.

Then one day she meets “him.” The man of her dreams. They date. Talk. Laugh. He proposes. She says Yes. Then comes months of planning. Pouring over *Brides* magazines. Talking with friends. Trying on dresses. Bridal showers. Agonizing over the flowers and menu. Wanting it all just right.

The day of her dreams arrives. She looks and feels like a princess. Her “prince” smiles as she walks down the aisle. The music. The vows. The candles. The moment that has taken “forever” to get here is over quickly, and they are walking breathlessly down the aisle, husband and wife.

And so begins a marriage.

Much planning and intentionality goes into the wedding. Often, less thought goes into preparing and living the marriage. Yet that’s what it’s all about. Marriage is a huge commitment. And a huge opportunity.

Commitment

For better or worse. In sickness and in health. For richer or



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poorer. Marriage is a commitment we make to one another. We promise that through good times and bad times, we will honor this commitment and make it work. Basically, our marriage vows promise, "I will love you no matter what."

But marriage is more than just a commitment to each other. In Christian marriages, we also make a commitment to God. We promise God that we will love our spouses no matter what. Good or bad. Easy or hard. We will work at this relationship and remain committed to it. We will make Him a part of the marriage and trust Him to guide us, give us strength, and show us how to love each other through it all.

It's not always easy. Wedding vows are almost a warning. There will be "worse" times, as well as good times. There will be days when money is tight and then moments when we can breathe easier financially. We will experience both good health as well as colds, the flu, and worse. God has not promised that marriage will be easy. But He has asked us to commit to loving each other through it all.

Opportunity

God knows that marriage is an opportunity. Especially in those moments when we stick it out through tough times. Whether the trials come from things outside of the relationship (job loss, financial problems, cancer), or when we're just not getting along and possibly feel wounded by the other, or we wonder where the love went.

Marriage is an opportunity to learn to love unconditionally. God loves us unconditionally and desires for us to love others with His love. We typically spend more time with our husbands and know them better than anyone else. This knowledge includes the irritating things. The things that bug and annoy us. We see their faults and bad habits. And we can learn to love them even when we don't like them.

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Marriage is an opportunity to learn that love is more than a feeling. Feelings come and go. Love is an action. A verb. We *choose* to love. Sometimes it's easy to love. When he is nice, remembers to pick his clothes up off the floor, plays with the kids, or surprises us with flowers. Other times it's harder. He may be grouchy. Silent. Distant. He may work too much and not be around when we need him.

We can learn to *choose* to love in these moments too. And usually, when we love in action, the feelings follow. Learning to be loving when he's not grows us, causing us to let go of self and what we want, and to love unconditionally in the God who loves us. (This does not mean we need to remain in abusive relationships or that we should be doormats and not stick up for ourselves. If a relationship is abusive in any way—physically, emotionally, or mentally, seek help.)

One of the most loving actions we can do for our husbands is to pray like crazy for them.

We know them better than anyone else does. We know their gifts and talents, their struggles and sins. We know the things that challenge them and the areas in which the devil attacks them most frequently. We know their hopes and dreams—or whether they have none. We know their relationships, their work, their schedules. We also know their woundedness and the areas in which they most need healing. We know what they think is funny and who drives them crazy. We know how they like to waste their time off and what motivates them to work hard. No one else has the opportunity to know our husbands as intimately as we do.

We have committed before God to love this man, unconditionally, for always. Part of loving is praying. Prayer gives God permission to work. It deepens our love and commitment to our spouse. It allows us to partner with God for our spouse. To fight for him in spiritual warfare. To care about the things that he cares about, wrestles with, and dreams of.



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We can pray for our husbands in ways no one else can because we know them like no one else does. I believe that praying for them is not just an opportunity—but a responsibility. Samuel told the children of Israel, “Far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you” (1 Samuel 12:23, NIV). Samuel believed that it would be a sin for him to not pray for these people for whom God had given him responsibility. I believe God desires wives to pray with this same commitment for our spouses. Because we know them more intimately and can pray more specifically, I believe our prayers can have an incredible impact on our husbands’ lives.

Prayer changes things

In their book *Love and War*, John and Stasi Eldredge submit this challenge:

Without you, your spouse will not become the man or the woman that God intends him or her to be and the Kingdom of God will not advance as it is meant to advance. Your spouse plays the most vital role in your life. You play the most critical role in your spouse’s life. No one will have a greater impact on your spouse’s soul than you. No one has greater access to your spouse’s heart than you. This is an enormous honor. . . . You matter more than you thought. . . . We have been entrusted with the heart of another human being.¹

A wife’s prayers change things. They affect her husband. They impact his life. They give him courage, conviction, and strength. They help him to be the person God intended him to be. Husbands need our prayers. They need us to pray for them in ways they may not be praying for themselves,

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ways no one else will know how to. We can fight for them in prayer, helping them fight the battles they face each day.

Our prayers for our husbands also change us. They enable us to see the men who share our lives in different ways. As we pray specifically and like crazy, our love for them will grow and deepen.

Sometimes when I've been mad at Tim, yet prayed for him, my own heart softened, the anger lessened, and God was able to help me understand, forgive, and better talk with him about whatever had happened. I remember being really angry at Tim one time. I don't remember the reason, but I was mad. Very mad. Instead of confronting him in anger, I decided to mow the grass. It needed mowing. It was physical. It was something Tim typically did, so I decided to do it for him to show love even though I wasn't feeling love. I figured maybe I could work out some of the anger.

While I mowed, I vented to God. Told Him whatever it was that Tim had done that made me so upset. I'm sure God got an earful. I'm wondering if He was smiling at me, chuckling a bit at the sight. I find it a bit amusing as I think about it now. I can see myself pushing the mower back and forth across the front yard just steaming mad. Yet as I prayed and mowed and vented, I calmed down. Because I was opening my heart to God, even in venting and complaining, God was able to speak, to soften my heart, to give me understanding, probably convicting me of some of my own faults, and helped me to forgive. In the end, Tim had a great looking front yard and a wife who was able to talk to him calmly and rationally.

Prayer changes husbands, but it also changes wives.

Sometimes we just don't

As I've prayed through and worked on the ideas for



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this book, I've been convicted that I don't always pray for my husband as I should. Yes, I sometimes pray like crazy, but I'm afraid many of my prayers are like the one when I was mowing. Hurt, angry, venting to God, complaining about whatever. Many times I'm just asking God to change Tim into the man I want him to be, instead of asking God to make him the man *He* created him to be. Selfish prayers.

I've prayed for Tim in a lot of ways, for a lot of different areas of his life and for a lot of things. Not everything has been selfish or complaining. I have battled in prayer for him in areas important to him and in ways he may never know. And I've often thanked God for this man He brought into my life about thirty years ago. There's a lot for me to be thankful for!

Yet as I've prayed about this book, I've realized again that wives have the opportunity to pray like no one else does. We can be "princess warriors" fighting for our husbands in prayer. There's a battle out there. Our husbands need to know that someone is on their side. Someone believes in them. Some days the battle may feel lonely and overwhelming. They need us, even if they don't realize it. Even if we don't realize it. God created us to be one. A team. Fighting for each other.

As wives, we have the unique opportunity and responsibility to pray like crazy and see God work in amazing ways.

Pray for:

- God to help you pray like crazy for your husband;
- God to deepen your commitment to praying for your husband;
- God to help you believe that your prayers make a difference;

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- God to change you into the woman and wife He created you to be as you pray;
- God to help you pray specifically and intentionally for your husband;
- God to convict you of any ways your prayers may be selfish and not the way God desires you to pray for your husband.

Journal

- How would you characterize your prayers for your husband? Have you been praying like crazy? Praying for God to change him into who you want him to be? Are your prayers selfish?
- How much intentionality have you put in your prayers for your husband?
- How have you seen God work in your husband's life as a result of prayer?
- How would you like God to change your prayer life or your prayers for your husband?

1. John and Stasi Eldredge, *Love and War: Finding the Marriage You've Dreamed Of* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: Water-Brook, 2009), 38, 39.