



BARE MARRIAGE

HEALTHY, EVIDENCE-BASED, BIBLICAL ADVICE FOR SEX & MARRIAGE

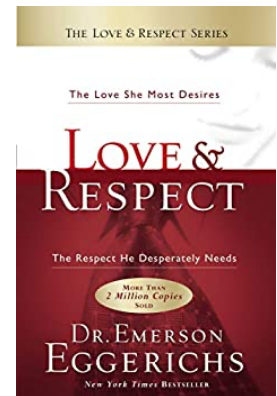
with Sheila Wray Gregoire

Love & Respect: The Love She Most Desires, The Respect He Desperately Needs

Emerson Eggerichs

SYNOPSIS

While most marriage books have focused on how to love one another, Love & Respect finds the missing piece: A woman's respect for her husband. The book calls for wives to respect and husbands to love so as to avoid the Crazy Cycle in marriage.



SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- Thesis isn't supported. The book is based on a survey by Shaunti Feldhahn that found that 74% of men would choose respect over love. However, she failed to ask women the same question before drawing comparisons. When other researchers did ask women, a virtually identical number also chose respect.
- Defines respect in a way that strips a wife of any agency, sexual or otherwise. Respect involves giving husbands sex, enforcing his authority and hierarchy over her, and listening to his insight rather than hers. Thus, she must provide sex on demand and acquiesce to his desires and plans, even if she feels God is saying something different (she can't trust herself since women can be deceived, p. 230).
- Creates lopsided marriage where the husband can label anything he doesn't like as disrespectful, and the wife must defer or she isn't showing respect (she is in the wrong for asking him to pick up wet towels off the bed, p. 242-243).
- Does not allow any healthy way for a wife to address issues in the marriage. In the only example given where a wife is told how to speak up, a woman married to a workaholic husband may say 2-3 sentences every 10-20 days, but other than that must stay silent (p. 316). Rather than a marriage functioning as iron sharpening iron, the husband gets to do what he wants, even leaving candy wrappers on the floor (p. 243), and the wife must accept it.
- Misuses Scripture to support his points. In the 208 Scripture references used, Jesus' words are conspicuously rare. Yet Eggerichs positively quotes the words of pagans from the book of Esther to justify men's need for respect (pp. 57-58). In another example (one of many), he deliberately omits multiple words in 1 Peter 2:17-18, claiming the verses tell women to show respect to harsh husbands, even though the word "harsh" only appears in regards to slave masters, not husbands (p. 43).

HOW LOVE & RESPECT ENABLES ABUSE

- Requires unconditional respect even in dangerous marriage situations. Says that a wife must give unconditional respect, which includes enforcing his hierarchical authority over her; deferring to his plans; and giving him sex on demand; even when a husband is drinking or straying (p. 88); is harsh (p. 43); has been physically abusive (p. 84); or has withering rage so that she wants to get away and hide (p. 283).
- Ignores the dangers of abuse. Eggerichs reports that his father strangled his mother. Yet instead of acknowledging this abuse and warning others in similar situations to get to safety, he praises his mother for "seeking creative solutions" rather than victimhood (p. 283). In another anecdote when a husband is jailed for physical abuse, Eggerichs seems surprised that he was required to take anger management classes, since the man had repented (p. 84). He also praises a woman who let her abusive husband back into the house after he repented, and talks about how she learned to show respect rather than arguing (p. 278). Though Eggerichs gives lip service to stopping abuse, the main takeaway in his anecdotes with abusive dynamics is for the wife to defer and submit.

HOW LOVE & RESPECT HANDLES SEX

- Assigns the blame for men's affairs mostly to women not giving enough sex (p. 253)
- Claims sex is about a husband's "physical release", warning that without release he will "come under satanic attack" (p. 252).
- Never mentions that women can and should feel pleasure, but instead says to women, "If your husband is typical, he has a need you don't have" (p. 258), and claims a benefit of sex for women is that sex doesn't take very long (p. 252).
- Paints sex as a male entitlement and a female obligation, while ignoring intimacy.

HEALTHY SEXUALITY RUBRIC SCORE: 0/48*
INFIDELITY & LUST: 0/16 | PLEASURE 0/16 | MUTUALITY 0/16
***FOR FULL RESULTS, VISIT [BAREMARRIAGE.COM/GSR-RUBRIC](https://baremarriage.com/gsr-rubric)**

WHAT WOMEN HAVE SAID

- "I can look back in my marriage and see that the abuse *greatly* escalated after the entrance of this book into my life, and its teaching trapped me in a vicious cycle where no matter how agreeable or even invisible I became, it was never enough."
- "At marriage counseling at our church, this book was used. I admitted to feeling sexually assaulted (not having my "no" listened to, painful things continued, having my head forcefully held, etc) and was reprimanded by the counsellor. The message that respect and sex must be never-ending from me, or infidelity and/or the end of the marriage would be entirely my fault, was loud and clear."
- "I, too, tried to respect a narcissistic, abusive man. The more I submitted, the happier he was, and I ended up being alone in a marriage. He didn't love ME. He loved himself, and he loved the way I served him. That book, "Love and Respect", did me great harm."
- "I read this book when I was struggling to know how to confront my husband. I stopped "nagging" and I became a doormat for him. It drove me deeper into my dark mental health struggles cause no matter how much "respect" I gave him, he never responded with more love, just more taking advantage of. Our relationship is a mess. I am always fearful of bringing up things that need to be addressed. I feel broken and brain washed."

SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS

While superficial peace can be attained by telling women to ignore their needs and do what their husbands want, real intimacy will never be found. Focusing on a husband's will rather than God's will does not bring about a Jesus-centered marriage, but can too easily create a dangerous one. Emerson Eggerichs shows no understanding of abuse dynamics or the very common tactic of love bombing, and thus we strongly recommended purging it from church resources and shelves.



INSTEAD OF LOVE & RESPECT, CHOOSE...

Created for Connection (Sue Johnson), Boundaries in Marriage (Cloud and Townsend), or The 7 Principles for Making Marriage Work (John Gottman, secular book)