

How To Be Your Spouse's Biggest Cheerleader

By America's Family Coaches

What would it mean to you to face each day knowing there is someone cheering you on no matter what happens? How would you feel knowing that someone is 100 percent committed to encouraging you, supporting you, and helping you reach your goals? What would it do to your heart to experience this kind of love and loyalty?

In a marriage, each spouse has the opportunity and privilege to be the other's enthusiastic cheerleader and loyal supporter. When you are convinced that your spouse is always on your side, you can endure almost anything. Such loyalty, emotional support, and practical help keeps the flames of renewing love burning brightly.

How can you become your spouse's cheerleader? One excellent place to start is by applying the "one another" passages of the New Testament to your marriage relationship. Throughout the Gospels and Epistles, Christians are instructed in specific, practical ways on how to love, encourage, and support one another. Since your spouse is the number one "other" in your life, he or she should be the first recipient of your loving care.

Here are several "one another" and "each other" passages and suggestions on what they could look like in your "cheerleading" at home.

"Don't condemn each other" (Romans 14:13);

"Live in harmony with each other" (Romans 12:16). Don't be a source of constant criticism and nagging in your relationship. It will wear your spouse down instead of cheering him or her on.

"Accept each other just as Christ has accepted you" (Romans 15:7);

"Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults" (Ephesians 4:2). A good cheerleader is enthusiastic and supportive whether the team is winning or losing. Focus your encouragement on your spouse's strengths and accomplishments while cutting plenty of slack for mistakes and imperfection. Be a constant source of genuine compliments, encouraging words, spoken appreciation, helpful advice, and cheery positivism.

"Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another" (Ephesians 4:32);

"Forgive the person who offends you" (Colossians 3:13). When your spouse wrongs you, don't punish him or her with an icy stare, a blazing reprimand, punishment, or payback. Be quick to let it go and be an instrument of restoring harmony.

"Serve one another in love" (Galatians 5:13);

"Serve each other in humility" (1Peter 5:5). Constantly look for ways to ease your spouse's burdens in life by helping with chores and sharing responsibilities. Take delight in doing the dirty work without being asked or begged to do it.

"Build each other up" (1Thessalonians 5:11). Don't always insist on your way of doing things or treat your spouse as second class in any respect. Celebrate and defer to your spouse's strengths. Treat him or her as an equal who is just as gifted and competent as you are in many areas.

"I command you to love each other in the same way that I love you" (John 15:12). Whenever you are in doubt about how to encourage and support your spouse, turn to the master cheerleader: Jesus. Pattern your love after his sacrificial, constant, accepting love for you.