

Lysa TerKeurst
Leading Women in the Adventure of Faith



The Love Quiz

Whether it is because of changes in our bodies, sleep deprivation, time constraints, financial pressures, or a myriad of other things, marriage changes after kids. But it doesn't have to be for the worse. We must still make our marriage a priority and watch it grow stronger through the kid years. After all, one of the greatest gifts parents can give their children is the security of a solid love relationship between Mom and Dad.

Realizing this greatest gift, I wanted to see what the Bible says the love in a marriage is supposed to look like by using 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 as a guide. This passage of Scripture clearly lays out God's design for love and the legacy that can be built when these characteristics define a marriage:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It is protective, it trusts, it hopes, it perseveres. Love never fails.

As I read these verses, I am challenged. If I'm really honest with myself, this does not describe the love I have for my husband. What I'm reminded of is that this type of love does not just happen when you say "I do." This is not a passive, descriptive kind of love you inherit on your wedding day. This is an active love. This is me deciding to make my love characterized by these qualities and choosing to do whatever I can to make it true for my relationship.

Art and I decided to take an honest assessment of our marriage using this definition of love. Then we had an honest talk about what our strengths and weaknesses are. After identifying places that needed to be worked on, we wrote out Scripture verses to pray for each other's weak spots. Here is what we wrote:

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 Assessment

Am I patient with my spouse? (I am flexible and understanding.) EPHESIANS 4:2-3

Am I kind to my spouse? (I am kind in thought, words, and actions toward them.)
EPHESIANS 4:31-32

Am I supportive (not envious) with my spouse? (I do not keep score when I feel I do

more.) JAMES 3:16-18

Am I encouraging (not boastful) to my spouse? (I do not brag about my accomplishment while downplaying theirs.) HEBREWS 3:13

Am I humble (not proud) with my spouse? (I do not think my agenda is more important than my spouse's agenda.) 1 PETER 5:6

Am I gracious (not rude) to my spouse? (I build up my spouse with my words spoken in private and public.) EPHESIANS 4:29

Am I selfless (not self-seeking) with my spouse? (I focus on my spouse's needs and wants and balance them with my own.) PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4

Am I self-controlled (not easily angered) with my spouse? (I do not have a short fuse or quick temper.) PROVERBS 15:1

Am I able to forgive and let go (keeping no record of wrongs) with my spouse's shortcomings? (I do not use my spouse's past shortcomings as ammunition in today's disagreements or allow these things to taint our communication today.) COLOSSIANS 3:12-14

Do I delight in being faithful to God (not delighting in evil)? (I seek to live a pure life and choose not to flirt with sin.) EPHESIANS 4:1

Do I rejoice with the truth? (I actively pursue God's truth over Satan's lies.) JOHN 8:31-32

Do I seek to protect my spouse? (I fill in the gaps where they feel weak and vulnerable.) 1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

Do I trust my spouse? (I give my spouse the benefit of the doubt.) 1 PETER 3:8

Do I keep hope alive in my marriage? (I trust God with "our" future, not "my" future.) JEREMIAH 29:11

Do I persevere in my marriage? (I look for solutions to problems rather than look for a way out.) MATTHEW 5:33

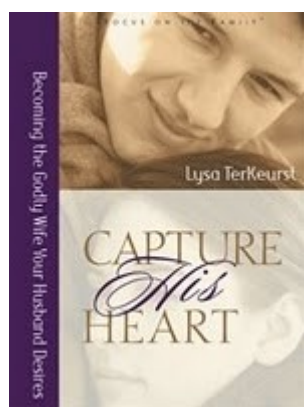
Am I devoted to the permanence of our marriage? (I believe that divorce is not an option for us.) MALACHI 2:16

In the scramble of handling all the details of a life full of little people, romance and love can sometimes take a backseat. We have to not only be intentional with our active love, but also be intentional about keeping our love fresh, exciting, and fun. You can't compare your circumstances and relationship with others; that will only serve to drain and discourage you. Keep your focus on making your marriage the best it can be. It is what you put into your marriage that you'll be able to pull out of your marriage. The grass isn't greener on the other side; it is greener where you water and fertilize it.

Water and fertilize the love in your marriage by making priority investments:

- Take the 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 assessment.
- Go out on regularly scheduled date nights.

- Share prayer requests with each other.
- Pray for your family together.
- Set some goals for your relationship.
- Make a habit to write each other love notes.
- Attend a marriage conference or read a marriage book together.
- Decide on a dream vacation for the two of you and start saving money to make it happen.
- Become a student of your spouse and keep a journal of what you learn about them.
- Add to this list specific things that are special in your relationship.



For more information on this topic, read Lysa's books, *Capture His Heart and Capture Her Heart*.

Lysa TerKeurst helps everyday women live an adventure of faith through following Jesus Christ. As president of Proverbs 31 Ministries, Lysa has led thousands to make their walk with God an invigorating journey. For more information, visit www.LysaTerKeurst.com

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