

The Ideal Home—No. 3

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When a man and a woman come together and pledge their futures and fortunes to each other in marriage, they assume an awesome responsibility. In the act of getting married, they begin a new home to which they are equally responsible for its happiness and strength. An ideal home can never become a reality without a **spiritual foundation**. This requires that both husband and wife do their best to live according to the teachings of God's Word. The ideal home must have **loyalty** to bind it together and make it strong. When one marries, one's spouse must come first before self, parents, friends, job, recreation, or any other earthly concern.

A home can never be the ideal entity God intended it to be without the faithful expression of **mutual admiration**, especially between the husband and wife. The practice of the "golden rule" is needed in every relationship, but in none more than the husband-wife relationship. If every husband would learn to treat his wife like he wants her to treat him and if every wife would try to behave toward her husband like she wants to be treated, it would cure most of the sick marriages and prevent thousands of divorces. Instead, however, we often treat our spouse with less kindness, courtesy, and respect than we would extend to a rank stranger.

A husband and wife should build each other up instead of tearing each other down. A wife is not very smart (or mature) who belittles her husband in front of others. One who unfavorably compares her husband to other men (whether in cooking, landscaping, mechanical ability appearance, etc.) in public is asking for trouble. He may valiantly hide it, but the man is not human who does not feel resentment of such verbal cruelty. The same is true of a man toward his wife. It may seem a small thing to compare one's wife unfavorably with someone else and it may even be done with attempted humor. However, it is a tragic mistake which destroys feelings of tenderness that are so necessary to a happy home.

One should never take his or her mate for granted. A wise husband will brag on his wife's cooking, sewing, appearance, etc. And a prudent wife will express her admiration of her husband's skills, good traits, etc. Remember how thoughtful you were of each other while you were courting and keep up the courtship with little surprises that say, "I love you." Such a marriage will never grow dull but will grow sweeter and better with time.

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