

Free Your Spouse — Rock House Center

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By John Robin Murphy

God did not create Eve because there was something wrong or insufficient in His relationship with Adam. Adam's deepest, divinely implanted needs for trust, emotional intimacy, divine purpose, peace, provision and a lot more were all available to perfection from God. While Eve did bring an additional dimension and blessing to Adam's existence, his relationship with his Creator lacked nothing. It was never the intent of God to have Eve assume any aspect of His relationship with Adam. Nor is there any reason to think God needed Adam to intervene in His relationship with Eve.

Only a Relationship with Him can Satisfy

God has built himself into the deepest needs of our heart in such a way that only a relationship with Him can satisfy. Our challenge is the same as Adam's. We are inclined to choose the tangible offerings of the world for fulfillment. This includes expecting our spouse to satisfy needs that are the exclusive domain of God.

The fact that someone is a christian doesn't mean that they have figured out how to embrace the depth of relationship that is available with God. The tendency of our fallen nature is to find tangible, temporal substitutes for perfect, eternal fulfillment. No spouse or any other person can deliver on a divinely implanted need. this is why a client of mine who is in a good marriage, has a family and interacts with many people during a typical day can say, "I struggle with loneliness."

Relational Emptiness Causes Spouses to Blame

In marriages, relational emptiness usually causes spouses to blame each other for not delivering on some deep relational need that only God can fill. Where there is an expectation that a future spouse is going to fix all the things they deem wrong with themselves and their life, disappointment and blame are likely to follow.

Unconditional love is one foundational need every person must satisfy to be at peace. If we look to imperfect people, including our spouse, to provide unconditional love we will be disappointed. Putting this expectation on a spouse only degrades the basis of the marriage to a failed proposition from the start. To the degree that we put a divine expectation on our spouse, we have wedged her or him into the "God Socket" of our hearts.

Consider the Condition of Your Relationship with God

If we believe the lie that our spouse can fill the place of God in our hearts, it is a guarantee for marital distress. Should it become evident after the “honeymoon years” that there is still some relational piece missing, it is time to consider the condition of your relationship with God rather than blaming your spouse. If you have never gone to God to fulfill your need to totally trust and receive unconditional love, you can be sure your marriage and all your relationships will improve significantly when you do.

Make God the first, most cherished and primary relationship in your life. Your spouse will love you for it.

Turn a New Direction in All Your Relationships

Pray this prayer to turn a new direction in all your relationships by establishing your primary relationship with God

Heavenly Father, thank you for choosing to love me perfectly and unconditionally every day. Please forgive me for any way in which I have chosen the world and the lies of the world over you. Father, I also ask your forgiveness for having wrong expectations of my spouse and taking offense when he/she has not been able to satisfy the needs that only you can. Father I forgive my spouse for any way in which I have resented him/her for not filling the empty places in me that are reserved for you. Father I ask that you would heal (spouse's name) of any emotional wound I may have inflicted through my wrong expectations. Father I ask that (spouse's name)'s relationship with you would become completely fulfilling.

Father I declare that a relationship with you is the primary and most important relationship in my life. I declare the truth that is my pursuit of our relationship that will enable you to bless me through the other relationships you have allowed in my life. Father I ask for your grace to connect with you through my faith so that our relationship is strong, enduring and active in my life. Father please allow all my relationships to be based on the foundation of your unconditional love for me. I seek your grace for the strength to

remove any person or thing from the places in my heart that were designed for you to dwell.

I pray all these things in the name of Jesus.



John Robin Murphy is founder of Rock House Center in Brentwood, TN which provides a proprietary approach to biblical counseling that is highly effective in addressing emotional suffering such as anxiety, depression, anger and addictive, compulsive behaviors.
