

## Getting Out of Control Mode: Trusting God With Your Husband's Life (and Also Your Own)

A complimentary resource for *Blessing Your Husband* by Debra Evans

Do you believe God is productively and perfectly working for the good of your marriage, for your husband, and for you? Do you daily trust God to shape and design your husband's life—and also your own?

I don't know about you, but when I experience frustration or anger regarding my husband's attitudes or actions, I usually slip into Control Mode. I tend to cope with both big and small concerns about my spouse by subtly (or not so subtly) attempting to redirect, reorganize, and redecorate him. When things start getting messy, I want to straighten up my husband's life.

For example, when David drives too fast, I have a certain tendency to sigh loudly, raise my eyebrows in disapproval, and point out the obvious speed limit signs. Even though it is crystal clear to me that my habits fail to ever-so-wonderfully transform his driving, I would like to spare both of us the embarrassment and expense of a traffic citation. It's hard for me not to say anything to my husband, even though I realize that one well-timed speeding ticket would have a far greater affect on David's driving than all my sighs, eyebrow raising, and finger pointing combined. As you can imagine, this same principle applies to any number of areas of our life together.

I realize my behavior seems fairly ridiculous. After all, what educated woman treats her husband as if he were a continuing interior design challenge? I can't help but think that if Eve had been completely content with Adam, God, and herself, she might never have presumed to eat the forbidden fruit, nor would she have offered "just a tiny bite" to her husband.

Perhaps you, too, see the problem. This age-old behavior pattern concerning husband-improvement is, I suspect, something I share with many women, including my famous foremother from Eden's Garden.

Regardless of how much we love our husband, there will be things about him we dislike, and vice versa. If we lay down our desire to control, however, and open our heart to see our husband as he really is rather than focusing on who we want him to be, our ability to love and forgive and bless him will grow. When we accept the responsibility of understanding and appreciating our husband's uniqueness—the sum total of his singular spiritual, physical, psychological, and social attributes—our focus remains where it belongs: on God's unchanging purposes and promises for our marriage, our husband, and ourselves.

## Blessings for Today

—Open your heart to seeing your husband as he is in his Father’s eyes rather than thinking about who you want him to be.

—Nurture emotional as well as physical intimacy. Touch your husband gently while silently praying for his physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.

—Admit it when you realize you’re wrong: “Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed” (James 5:16, MSG).

—Go for a day without thinking about your husband’s faults or shortcomings. Focus instead on God’s unchanging promises and purposes and for him.

—Try to understand your husband’s opinion during a disagreement or dispute. Aim to make allowances for the differences between you.

—Extend grace in place of negative criticism: Identify one thing about your husband that really bugs you and decide from this day forward you will avoid trying to change this particular behavior.

—Encourage your partner to play: Ask him what he would like to do with his evening, then help protect his time by taking phone calls, limiting interruptions, etc.

—Avoid taking your husband for granted today. Express your appreciation for your beloved by putting your love into action on his behalf in some noticeable, new way.

—Slow down. Savor a quiet moment together behind closed doors.

—Boldly go where no woman has gone before: Invite your husband to imagine a future with you in which you picture growing old together. Talk about your hopes, dreams, and fears about turning 30 . . . 40 . . . 50 . . . 60 . . . 70 and beyond.

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