

Blessed Transgressions™

THE ONLINE CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE

H A P P Y

2017

N E W Y E A R

JANUARY 1ST, 2017 | ISSUE SIX

Three Ways to Love Your Spouse During the Holidays



By Nicole Kauffman
couragehopelove.com

The holidays are busy. We rush around decorating, shopping and spending time with family. The activities and family time can be great things, but oftentimes it takes away from quality time in your marriage.

I know that when I get busy, the easiest thing to let slide is my intentional effort to make my husband feel loved. After all, he knows I love him, right?

Although your spouse may be confident that you love them, why not consider committing to these three ways of making them feel more loved during this busy time? They aren't difficult and they don't take too much time. Follow these three tips and your marriage will thank you.

Pray for Them

Prayer is powerful. I've only recently begun to pray for my husband every morning and I can already see the transformation. Praying for your spouse does many things.

First, it changes YOU. When I pray for our marriage and for my husband specifically, I see my heart transforming. I find more patience, more understanding and more energy and love to serve Him. And guess what? In doing this, my husband begins to transform as well.

Second, it sets your priorities in order. Praying for my husband reminds me daily that he is not mine to change. We all have things we'd like to see change in our spouses. It's totally natural when you're so close with someone! But by praying for these things, we are reminded that God is the one in control.

God is the one who does the changing. God comes first and we can live by that daily when we offer up our prayers to Him.

Third, it releases the need to control. Control is a hard thing to give up for many of us. We want to make changes and we want to do it now. But God doesn't call us to micro-

manage our marriages. He calls us to release them to Him and to allow Him to be the manager. Prayer allows you to voice your concerns, your wishes, your hopes for your spouse and then to let them go into God's control.

God doesn't call us to micromanage our marriages. He calls us to release them to Him! Will you take this step with me? Pray for your spouse every day. Be specific and dedicated in these prayers, truly offering your heart to God. And He will transform you and your marriage.

I highly recommend Stormie Omartin's *The Power of a Praying Wife* and *The Power of a Praying Husband*. These books go through specific areas of your marriage and of your spouse's needs and they have pre-written and in depth prayers for each day.

Speak Their Love Language

When we seek to make another feel loved, we often start with what makes us feel loved. I feel loved the most when he spends quality time with me and when he speaks affirming words. He feels loved the most when I serve him and when I speak affirming words to him.


By discovering how your spouse feels loved, it becomes a

lot easier to love them effectively. All languages are important, but there are usually one or two that mean the most to someone. (If you haven't already, I HIGHLY recommend reading Gary Chapman's The Five Love Languages).

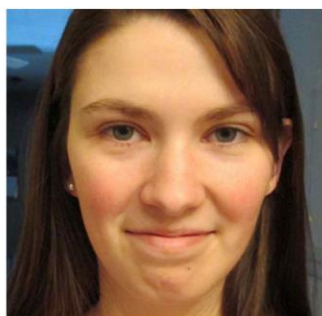
Surprise Them Before Christmas

We expect surprises and gifts on the holiday, but what about in the weeks leading up to it? Your spouse probably doesn't expect to be surprised in the busy and long weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Think about what they love most.

Is it a night away with you? A night to themselves for a long, undisturbed bubble bath and relaxation time? Plan a night where you can free up your spouse's time to do what they love most. This one isn't easy, but it can be a great way to show that you love your spouse and you care about their time and their desires. Find a sitter for the kids or plan to get them out of the house yourself.

Finding an evening of quiet during these few weeks can be difficult! So what a great way to show your love to your spouse. 

Is “It” Really What It Is?



By Bethany McIlrath

firstandsecondblog.wordpress.com

The phrase has been floating around for years. It came to my attention as friends of mine from different circles and walks of life spoke the words. I noticed the phrase on television and the radio. Then I saw it on decorative signs in a couple of stores.

So I tried it on for a while.

What I found was that “it is what it is” can be a euphemism or a platitude that keeps us from recognizing what “it” isn’t. There is nothing wrong with accepting reality—except that so often our sense of reality isn’t the same as the Lord’s.

The words “it is what it is” bear the sort of powerful finality and magnitude as God’s Words: I AM WHO I

AM. They suggest to us that our circumstance are sovereign and all that is to be done in response is to obey. If only we responded to the Lord's declaration of sovereignty with the obedience we give to this phrase.

When we speak that much loved phrase, we are often actually saying:

**So deal with it
Suck it up
Forget changing anything
Not my responsibility
Too much work to alter this reality
There's nothing to be done about this
If it is, that must be God's will and I'm stuck**

I struggle to find support for these attitudes -as enticing as they can be- in Scripture. And believe me, as one whose biggest pet-peeve is complaining about something you are unwilling to change, these words are tempting.

This phrase appears to relieve us of the need to stress out, to fight what we can't beat, and to fret over what we don't have control over. But so do these (much more powerful) words:

IT IS...All The Lord's:

"The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world,
and all who live in it" (Psalm 24:1)

IT IS...Up to the Lord:

"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom
belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons;
he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to
the wise and knowledge to those who have understand-
ing; he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is
in the darkness, and the light dwells with him." (Daniel
2:20-22)

IT IS...In the Care of the Lord:

"He is before all things, and in him all things hold
together." (Colossians 1:27)

IT IS...Present Before the Lord:

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situa-
tion, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present
your requests to God." (Philippians 4:6)


...Not only is “it,” but so are you and I.

As we read these statements, we are reminded that what “it is” is His. When we begin the phrase “it is,” there is more power in remembering that things can change.

That there is one in charge.

That He cares to hear our prayers and concerns.

That the war is won.

That when we need to live through difficult things, we need not live resigned—“it” can be well with our soul because He is I AM. 

For the One Who is Tired of Trying



By Ronja Oksanen

aboundinggraceblog.wordpress.com

“For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed,” says the Lord, who has mercy on you.” (Isaiah 54:10)

Oh precious one, I know you are trying so hard. Trying to shake off the weariness when you get out of bed in the morning. Trying to face the day and hold on to hope at the same time. Trying to bear the weight of hurt. Trying to be more while trying to be less. Trying to push aside the sadness, and find the beacons of light in the darkness.

I know you are tired. Tired of being disappointed — by yourself or by others. Tired of picking up the trail of broken pieces of your soul, of your heart. Tired of

waiting for a change. Tired of trying to fit in. Tired of fighting to believe you are enough as you are. Tired of carrying the weight of worry, of drowning in sorrow. Tired of being tired.

I hear you. I am there with you.

“For I have given rest to the weary and joy to the sorrowing.” (Jeremiah 31:25 NLT)

Know this, dear one — your Father in heaven, He is the God Who Sees. He sees your weariness, He feels the dull ache of your soul. He loves you with His everlasting, patient love. Nothing is ever wasted with God — no hurt, no suffering, no times of trials or times of waiting. He gives beauty for ashes; nothing will ever be wasted in His hands.

So today? Quiet down to hear His gentle whispers, that tell of His love for you. Still for a moment, to grasp the wonder of His grace. You were bought at a price; you were washed clean and sanctified. You have been redeemed; you have been set free.

You are a new creation, being renewed day by day. You are being transformed into His image; He calls you by your name. He calls you beloved; you are His.


There is no need to try so hard, to be perfect and to get it all right. The Lord is calling you to come to Him and find rest for your soul. Tell Him of your hurts and hardships, tell Him of your weakness and failures and difficult days.

He will never turn away; He will never reject you. He is here, willing to heal you and bind you up. He is here, waiting for you to let go of the weight of this life and turn to Him. He is here. He is love.

"Come, and let us return to the Lord; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up."

(Hosea 6:1)

I love these words of encouragement and hope by Charles H. Spurgeon:

"No stars gleam as brightly as those which glisten in the polar sky. No water tastes so sweet as that which springs amid the desert sand. And no faith is so precious as that which lives and triumphs through adversity. Tested faith brings experience. You would never have believed your own weakness had you not needed to pass through trials. And you would never have known God's strength had His strength not been needed to carry you through." 

Welcoming 2017!



By Erika DeWitt
blessedtransgressions.org

How many of you are excited for this new year? I know I am. Not only will I be stepping into a new venture as a website designer, but as wonderful as 2016 was, I am ready to blossom in new areas these next 364 days.

I am ready to grow Blessed Transgressions in more ways than I have ever been able to before. I am ready to see many dreams come true and truly seek God with my whole heart. I'm going to give it my best shot, and I hope you'll be joining me!

Set goals, determine what your prayer for the year will be, and make 2017 a year worth remembering. Never forget the blessings you have, and how many more God is waiting to heap upon you!

Goals for 2017



Goal #1: _____

Action Plan: _____

Goal #2: _____

Action Plan: _____

Goal #3: _____

Action Plan: _____

Goal #4: _____

Action Plan: _____

Blessed Transgressions™

THE ONLINE CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE

THIS DIGITAL MAGAZINE AND ALL ARTICLES IN IT BELONG TO BLESSED TRANSGRESSIONS AND THE ORIGINAL AUTHORS. NO PART OF IT, EXCEPT THE COVER, MAY BE USED WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADVERTISE HERE OR HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS, REACH US AT:
ADMIN@BLESSEDTRANSGRESSIONS.ORG

Thank you for reading!

