

## 4 Reasons I Love my Wife, even after St Valentine



In my recent perusal of some of the shows worthy of binging on I decided to pick up the show ‘The Sopranos’. Yes I know I have missed the boat on this hit show but I guess better late than never. As my wife and I were watching the first few episodes of season one, a predictable theme kept reoccurring in the arena of a good mafia show; the husband was continually unfaithful to his wife. While I was still able to enjoy the show for the cinematic proficiency and cultural success, I couldn’t help sitting there, every now and then glancing over at my wife thinking, ‘man, this guy (Tony Soprano) doesn’t know what he’s missing’. Sure, this might sound a bit cliché or perhaps worse, a gooey romanticism that causes my man card to sweat, but I can honestly say that I am beyond happy with my decision of a faithful marriage. Sure the path to holiness when walking with another contains some serious trials, but I must resound my discontent with the creation of this notion that a man cannot be happy with one woman for his entire life. I thought I might put forward a few reasons as to why I am so contented with the moving target of a lasting, loving relationship.

I must admit that my wife and I have had our ups and downs over the past seven and a half years. Whether financial, spiritual or simply the difficulty of having four children within six years, we haven’t necessarily found some magic formula that helps us push through. Instead it was a consistent, though sometimes muddied viewing of the ‘other’ in our relationship. My wife is a convert to Catholicism but her blood flows with that of good ole’ Irish Catholic family history and I see that devotion and acceptance of truth for truth’s sake.

With that, the first reason I love my wife is that she has become like a beacon for me. While I tend to have a mind for curiosity and high-mindedness which can often lead me away from reality, she brings me home and helps our focus stay firmly on the ever giving heart of Christ. While my faith is often found in knowledge, hers is found in trust and for this she helps me stay balanced.

A second reason why I am deeply in love with my wife is that she lets me be a man. Now, this doesn’t mean that she allows me to be a slob or never help with doing dishes or changing diapers. No, that’s a misconstrued notion of what being a man is. Instead, she expects me to want to help change diapers and clean dishes because this is what a real man does. She allows me to take firm interest in my

hobbies, she even cooks my plain chicken and ground turkey for me so that I can stay on my strict bodybuilding diet. She understands that as a man I need to be with other men on a somewhat regular basis. If I want to go have a cigar with the guys, she's perfectly fine with it so long as I shower when I get home. She lets me know that she takes pride in the thought that if our family were to come under attack, spiritually or physically, she feels protected. She unquestionably expects me to lead the family in prayer. While she isn't necessarily stepping aside so I can do what I want, it is her recognition of my desire and innate need to fulfill my masculinity in which she beautifully fulfills her role as ezer, or helpmate, by allowing me to take the lead in nearly every aspect of our marriage.

I come from a family of jokesters. We are the types that can't help but laugh or mess with each other every time we get together. It is part of how we show affection for one another. You trip in the middle of the hallway? You better believe we will get a good laugh out of it. You accidentally say something outrageously strange? Yep, you're going to hear about that later, possibly years later. This might seem odd to the many pious stoics out there but to me it makes sense and I love it. I'll never forget when my wife and I were dating this humorous side of her came out and she made me laugh as if I was with my family. To this day our affection is usually teathed with jokes at one another's expense but if that ever stopped we would wonder what might be wrong. So, the third reason I love my wife is that she makes the household one of laughter and frivolity. And trust me, when she reads this it will probably come with a loving joke about my soft side, something to the tune of 'I thought you had hair on your chest?', and I'm more than ok with that.

Lastly, my wife puts up with my dorkiness. While I'm yakking it up with my sons about the worlds of Narnia or Middle-earth, she might role her eyes every now and then but she knows that this is something that I need and my children want. (She even allowed me to put up a wall decal with a Tolkien poem about Aragorn.) I think the deeper virtue that my wife displays with this is her appreciation for me as I am. She doesn't try to judge me or change me; she simply allows me a platform to thrive as I am. Whether that comes in the form of bookshelves stacked with books from wall to wall or my random thoughts about the beauty of literature and culture, she is willing and able to love me and keep me grounded. For this I am truly grateful.

So while many other men might see a guy like Tony Soprano and have wishful thinking for such a life, I have to pose the opposite as a way to true peace. It's not that marriage is perfect. Nor do the good times always outlast the bad. But there is something to a devotion to one woman for the entirety of your life that overt sensuality or money hungriness can never fulfill or even come close to. I want a life of devotion, not of emotion. Properly understood, St. Paul had it right when he told wives to be submissive because on the other side of the coin lies the command for men to treat their wives as Christ did the Church. Christ died for His bride, and I will be thankful to the end of my days for having a bride worth dying for.

Jared Zimmerer