Secrets to a Man’s Heart

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To all the women who strive to hear
the hearts of their men,
but sometimes their own heartbeats drown out
their men’s voices.
Acknowledgments

There are so many great men in my life, and I celebrate them all. You know who you are—the list would be far too long for this page. However, there are a few I must note:

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These men have impacted my life in ways far too profound to note here. Their lives have spoken far more than their words. They helped me know that great men of integrity really do exist, and there is hope for a woman like me to have lasting love with a man who truly knows and loves God.

I am grateful for you. Thank you.
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What Do Men Really Want?

The question is often asked, “What do men really want?” The answer has remained the same through the years even though situations and circumstances have changed. It’s fair to say that there is nothing new under the sun, and that when God created Adam He didn’t break the DNA mold. Men still have the same desires. Their hearts beat for the same things: love, honor, and women who have their backs against the odds.

And so it began in the beautiful Garden of Eden. Man and woman walking in divine harmony. Communing with God and with each another. No strife, no misunderstandings, no struggles. They were so in tune with one another they didn’t even notice one another’s nakedness.

[Enter stage left the serpent.]

After the fall, what was once as natural as breathing became hard labor. The apostle Paul, when comparing the love of a husband for his wife to the love Christ had for His bride (the church), called the union a mystery. Relationships, platonic or romantic, never seem to be free of drama at some point or another. They test the core of our humanity. They reveal what we are truly made of.
And yet these same relationships, when healthy and God-centered, reveal the heart of God toward us. We get an inkling of how He feels when we love and adore Him or ignore and reject Him. The difficulties we face in relationships can always be traced back to how closely we are walking with God. He wired us to reflect His nature, His emotions, and His character. But because our human capabilities fall far short, He uses relationships to shape and mature these qualities in us. Though the fall of mankind disrupted the original plan God had for our relationships, He is in the restoration business. Can utopia be achieved again? No, not until we are one with God in heaven. But I do believe we can experience greater joy in our earthly relationships...if we’re willing to do the work to achieve it.

God loves us, and He understands us. (And yes, He loves us even when we do things He doesn’t like.) This understanding gives Him the willingness to extend grace toward us. This is why God’s Word encourages us to get understanding over all things. Understanding enables us to give grace to the people in our lives and paves the way for deeper communication and harmony. That’s what this book is all about: gaining a better understanding of a man’s heart.

Men want the same things women want. To be loved. Treasured. Honored. However, they esteem these things using different expressions than we typically do. Yes, men and women are different. Our needs are different. Our strengths are different. Perhaps that is why God created Eve—to balance His creation of Adam. Men and women are different yet equally powerful when we come together according to God’s design. Together man and woman become a power couple when they wield their God-given gifts correctly. Relationships are not contests between the sexes, as much of the world has made them out to be. The original design was always about partnership, about experiencing the victories of life together.
An Intriguing Resource—Men of the Bible

I’ve often wondered how the men of the Bible felt about their relationships. Consider what transpired between David and Bathsheba, for instance. Or Samson and Delilah. How did these women win their men’s hearts? What made King Ahasuerus putty in Esther’s hands? Why did Pontius Pilate listen to his wife and wash his hands of condemning Jesus to crucifixion?

If we sat down to talk with these men, what would they tell us about their relationships? About the women in their lives? What would they like to say to women of today regarding love? What secrets and insights about men does God reveal to women through His Word? That is what we’re going to reveal together as we journey back in time and take a peek into the lives and loves of men of the Bible. We’ll discover how men feel…and how they share their hearts, their dreams, their stories, their cares.

Read, learn, and apply, my sister. Heed their stories…and then write your own.

Michelle
Since you aren’t dear to me, how shall I address you? At any rate, greetings are of no consequence. Instead I’ll simply share my tale. Though I’ve been called “the father of lies,” I will admit to one truth lest this letter to you be misconstrued. I hated them both—Adam and Eve, that is. But this they didn’t know. They were also naïve to my history.

You see, I was the exalted one. I was stunningly beautiful, and God considered me to be one of His greatest creations. He admired His handiwork when He looked at me. I was cherished.¹ That is, until I fell from His good graces. I refuse to admit the situation was my own fault or it was my own heart in which a root of iniquity was found.

The flame of rebellion stirred within me. I rose up to ascend to the throne of God. I’d grown weary of collecting praises to deliver to Him. Since I was so splendid, why not keep the praise and worship for myself? I was the one in charge of worship. I led the heavenly choir.² I was respected, and honored, and put in charge.
Why do you find it so surprising that I decided I could be like God? That I thought I could establish my own throne? I had a good following among the angels. Many were loyal to me. They would follow me to the ends of the earth, I was sure. And so I led them in war. I never conceived I wouldn’t win. A third of the heavenly host rallied to my cause!

But we came face-to-face with Him—with Jesus. Under His watch I was overthrown. I fell like lightning from the heavens. Away from God’s grace, from my heavenly estate, from my position as the most-beautiful, most-cherished specimen God had created.

My new form in comparison to those new creations—male and female humans—was insulting. God was so enthralled with the man, Adam, that He actually came down from heaven to speak with him often. He’d never desired that with me. I always had to request an audience with Him. And now He was adding insult to injury by coming down to visit a creation He made a little lower than Himself but higher than me after He pronounced my fate. And they are finite beings! Yessssss, I hated them.

I hated God even more for exalting these creatures over me. For replacing me with subjects created to give Him the worship I wanted, I craved. These human beings were fragile. I would prove how less divine they were by ruining them. I would steal their desire to worship God. I would hurt God by destroying what meant so much to Him. But how? I watched and waited for a way to bring them down—and an opportune time to carry out my plan.

I remember when God first created Adam. Heaven literally held its breath. This creation He crafted with such love. As if throwing pottery on a wheel, He formed this man from the earth. And then God did something I’d never seen Him do. He folded Himself up from beyond the expanse of heaven and, confining Himself within the universe that was once within Him, He submitted Himself to
a more limited space so He could enter the earthly realm and be within the reach of this man creature.

This was downright ungodlike behavior! Then He did something that made all of us heavenly beings stand still. He bent down from heaven and seemed to kiss the man. He breathed into Adam, and Adam (and all humans to follow) became a living soul. A living, breathing soul.⁵

God then placed this man into a garden in Eden. The very name “Eden” means “pleasure” or “delight.”⁶ It was pure utopia for him, I’m sure. You would’ve called it magical, but it was actually divine. A reflection of heaven in its perfection—yet not quite. All the creatures lived in harmony. The vegetation was lush, and the weather perfect. Mists watered the earth, and peace and beauty prevailed.⁷ It was beyond anything that you could ever imagine, and it hasn’t existed since. (I’ll get to how all of that changed soon.)

In spite of all the beauty God had created around the man, Adam only had eyes for God. I couldn’t find an entry to distract him away from his awe-filled worship. And, I admit, God surprised me. He thought it not disdainful to descend to earth in order to converse with Adam. This perplexed all us angels. What was man that God would consider him so? Why the strong attachment? God and Adam walked and talked in the cool of the day in the Garden like they were old friends. God sharing His heart; Adam listening intently.⁸

And then one day it happened. The opportunity I’d been looking for.

After a time, God decided that Adam should no longer be without someone of his own kind. In fact, he couldn’t remain alone if he was to fulfill the command God would soon give: be fruitful and multiply. Something...someone...was missing. Every creature in creation had a complementary partner except for Adam. Every creature had a mate for reproduction and to facilitate fruitfulness.
Even most trees and plants had seeds that, when pollinated, would grow and produce fruit. But not Adam. He was alone. Well, not really alone because creation was all around him and God visited often. But Adam didn’t have someone to complement him.

And so God created woman. I watched as He gently put Adam to sleep. He opened the side of man, took from his ribs, and fashioned a woman.\(^9\) I must admit she was beautiful. Almost as beautiful as me. I understood why she became Adam’s weakness. Once joined to her, why would he want to be separated? I could see it in his eyes, in his demeanor.

Don’t get me wrong. Adam still worshipped God, but the man was enthralled with the woman. And she with him. As I watched, I sensed they would worship each other if God was out of the way. The more I pondered this, the clearer my plan became. Obedience to God was the highest form of worship, so any worship diverted from Him would please me.

There was only one way to make that happen—to separate these people from God. I would have to leverage something to get Adam and Eve to do the unmentionable—to disobey God. I decided I would divide and conquer. The woman was new to the game. She seemed a lot more innocent and, thankfully, naïve. She was more moved by feelings and instinct than Adam, which made her more susceptible to being swayed. Adam was more rigid, more bottom line. He knew what God had said, and he would stick to it. But Eve...

I had the feeling I could engage her and get her to see things my way. Once I had Eve eating out of my hand, Adam would be sure to follow. Her influence on him was already evident. It was the perfect plan. I would get to Eve, and then, through her, I’d get to Adam. She was his weakness. And through them I’d get to God.

I waited...watching for the perfect moment. And then it came. It was far easier than I’d imagined. The woman, Eve, welcomed
conversing with me. She liked to talk. And sometimes the thing you master turns out to be what causes your downfall. I relied on that in this instance. All it took was one question for the floodgates to open. I asked one question that caused Eve to be suspicious of God. I simply pointed out that He was withholding something from her...something desirable. Did God feel threatened by them? That they might become like Him by partaking of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the Garden?

At first Eve defended God, saying He was just protecting them from hurting themselves or even dying. But her defense of His protection paled in comparison to what I pointed out to her. “Perhaps God is trying to deny you of the same thing He denied me of?” I murmured. I counted on the fact that at the end of the day everyone wants to be their own god. Who wants to serve and be dependent on someone or something who might not put them first or have their best interest at heart?

Never mind that Eve was already like God. If she didn’t know that, I certainly wasn’t going to tell her. God didn’t want them to learn of evil through personal experience, only by knowledge of His word and what He shared with them. The whole withholding angle wasn’t exactly a lie. More like a half-truth.

And Eve went for it—hook, line, and sinker. My first fish! By the time I was finished beguiling her, she’d forgotten the generosity of God. All she could see was what He was denying her. So she took and ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And just as I’d counted on her doing, she gave some to Adam and he also ate. After all, they were one.

Unfortunately my victory was cut short by God Himself. After eating the fruit, immediately Adam and Eve’s eyes were opened, and they gazed on their nakedness with horror. They made coverings out of leaves. When they heard the Lord coming, they ran to hide but it
was too late. The damage had been done. Their eyes were open. Suddenly they realized they weren’t so beautiful. Their perfection was marred and could not be restored. They were ashamed. Disgraced. They’d chosen independence and moved from under the umbrella of God’s grace. Yes, they were dis-graced. Yet they were the ones who had willingly disdissed the grace of God.

While God waited, giving them a chance to confess, the consequences of their sin set in. Their denial and need to point blame elsewhere disappointed God. I could see that. Trust was broken. Their friendship was shattered. This single act of disobedience that couldn’t be undone would lead to another and another. Success!

Until that woman blamed me, and God, of course, knew she was right. The punishment He rendered was more than I could bear. To be sent to a lower state than all those previously beneath me was the final straw. I fell into an abyss of bitterness fueled by my hatred.

My war was no longer just against God. It was now also against mankind—against you and all women and their offspring. I would bruise you in a place of vulnerability. The place in your heart that could affect your walk with God. Reprisal seemed the only course of action I had against the sentence leveled at me. I decided I would take as many humans down with me as I could.

You know what really galls me? When I sinned, my punishment was eternal. But when Adam and Eve sinned, God sought a solution to redeem them. What kind of love did God have for those creatures? I couldn’t comprehend it. I knew I didn’t possess it. Envy set in, and I made it my mission to set men and women against each other and against God. To make them sin and fall far short of His glory.

But enough of that. I’d rather dwell on my success. I did such a great job! Every time humans sin, they’re choosing my way...they’re putting me first, in essence. They’re helping me pierce the heart of
God with one of my arrows. They willingly become tools in my hands. Not only do they hurt God, but their actions separate them from Him even more. Ha! Their lot becomes the same as mine. Utter darkness that never satisfies their hunger for light.

Many of your troubles aren’t really issues with your man. They’re because of my handiwork. The results of the fall make loving someone difficult. The fight for lordship rages through almost every human relationship on the face of the earth. Such sweet success. As women everywhere desire to take charge and be in charge, the peace God originally designed for couples is shattered. This delights me! Women can never be at true peace with men if they aren’t at peace with God.

I must say, I do my work well. I like it when you’re oblivious to my influence and ignorant of my devices. The better to deceive you...

Perhaps I’ve shared too much, but take heed. If you want advice on more than just getting what you want from your man, you shouldn’t converse with snakes.

Your partner in crime,

Satan

Man to Woman

A woman who doesn’t know her power is destined to misuse it. The world has seized Satan’s strategy to distract women from the truth of their significance. The world tells us we’re powerless. Not in control. Without honor. Underappreciated. Unrecognized. All attributes that point to “being God” as opposed to partnering with Him in the pursuit of building His kingdom rather than our own. God is ultimately in control and deserves all the honor. To try to
take away from this puts us in the same mindset that got Satan in trouble.

This train of thinking has fueled the division between men and women. Each party has retreated to their own corners, utilizing their own tools to manipulate one another to get their own way. This has exacerbated the lack of trust that often exists between the sexes. This frame of mind hinders oneness with God, which is the foundation for fruitfulness to occur. By our own determination we decide if we will buy the lies of the enemy of our souls or embrace the truths that God freely gives.

The truth of the matter is that God created us to be powerful. Take a look around you. Every person on the face of the earth arrived through the womb of a woman. Even Jesus did! God created women to assist men in furthering God’s kingdom agenda. Without women, men live a one-dimensional life that hinders their ability to be fruitful. In God’s economy, partnership is essential to get anything done. Individuals and couples partner with God to accomplish what He calls us to achieve. There is power in more than one.

We all have our assignments to keep God’s plans moving forward. God designed us as interdependent beings so that no one can accomplish their God-given assignments alone. We need one another for encouragement and help as we use our God-given gifts to accomplish His will.

When a couple is operating as one, as they’re called to do by God, they become a wonderful depiction of the kingdom of God. It makes God look good because we see love in action the way God ordained it. This doesn’t apply just to married couples either. It applies to our interactions with men on every level—family, business, church. This healthy interaction makes the people around us hunger and thirst to become part of God’s kingdom. This is why Satan works overtime on women. He hates unity. He knows that
when a man and a woman are in perfect alignment with each other and with God, moving as one together, they can accomplish anything. If the devil can separate us from God, he can separate us from our men and wreak havoc with our relationships.

The trouble begins when we engage in conversation with the serpent. When we don't keep our emotions and desires submitted to God and keep the lines of communication open with Him, with our significant other, and with the people we have quality relationships with, the door is open for strife and misunderstanding. We are all susceptible; therefore, it is important to know God and His Word regarding you and your situation. Then you can successfully combat the questions of the serpent with declarations of what God has taught you. When Jesus was confronted by Satan in the wilderness, He stood firm in His convictions and proclaimed, “It is written...” A woman submitted to God can, with Jesus’ help, resist the devil and make him flee.

The Truth of the Matter

We all make mistakes. We all have struggled in relationships at some point in time. It’s easy to listen to the voice of condemnation that proclaims we’ve messed up and our situation or relationship seems beyond fixing. But God is always simply waiting for us to invite Him into our conversations and decisions on any given matter.

You are not alone. God promises never to leave you or forsake you. He will be in the midst of your relationships if you invite Him to be. Remember, a three-strand cord is not easily broken. Your willingness to be transparent with your partner, ask the needed questions, seek the Lord’s wisdom, and voice your innermost thoughts will bond you together and make you fruitful. As a team united with
Christ, you can carry out God’s commission to “take dominion” and subdue evil in your personal lives and in your community. When you acknowledge and focus on your power in your man’s life and remain submitted to God, you’ll experience the joy of harmonious relationships and communion with God. That is the essence of kingdom living.

Matters of the Heart

1. What causes you to question your value as a woman?

2. What examples can you give of a woman making a difference in a man’s life?

3. What do you think God wants you to know first and foremost? Why would the serpent not want you to discover this?