

# Marriage Minute

August 2017

## **I Love You Just the Way You Are**

“Don’t go changing to try and please me....I love you just the way you are.” These lyrics from Billy Joel’s classic 1977 love song actually provide useful insight into God’s design for marriage. While Billy may not be a theologian, he is on to something powerful about loving your spouse. Psalm 139 teaches that God “wonderfully made” your spouse. Each person is a precious and unique creation in God’s image. God masterfully formed your spouse within the womb to bring his or her own special blending of traits and personality into this world. Take time to learn, know, and celebrate your spouse just the way the Lord made them. Thank God for their special qualities, even those qualities that may sometimes irritate you. Michael and Hayley DiMarco wrote an insightful book called “Cupidity: Where Love and Stupid Meet” that shares how women tend to spot the potential in a man and want him to change to become all he can be. That is, a woman may focus on loving who she wants her husband to become instead of who he is today. A man, on the other hand, tends to pick out a woman who he likes the way she is, marries her, and does not want her to change. That is, a man is likely to hope his wife will never change. Ha, what a wonderful dynamic for us. This is a set up! Yes, this is a set up for how God wants us to learn how to unconditionally love our spouse. While these are broad generalities, the truth is that all of us are called to love our spouse, period, in all circumstances, all the time, just as God loves us. Billy Joel got it just about right when he sang, “I said I love you and that’s forever; And this I promise from the heart, I could not love you any better, I love you just the way you are.”

**Challenge:** Take a few minutes to intentionally notice at least three specific qualities that you love and appreciate about your spouse and share it with him or her this week.