

CULTIVATING FEMININITY

Steps to cultivating our femininity

1. Put on the outward appearance of femininity.

Yes, I know what 1 Peter 3 says, and I'm not even remotely suggesting we look to our outer appearance and neglect our inner selves. I'm simply suggesting that the outward appearance is one of the easiest steps to take in our journey, therefore a good first step toward developing our femininity.

So go ahead and celebrate your girlhood! Put on a pair of pretty dangling earrings, buy that dainty peasant blouse, paint your toenails a delicate shell pink.

Wear more dresses.

I have found that nothing goes further to remind me of my God-given role as a woman than a soft skirt flowing around my ankles as I go about my daily chores.

If none of these suggestions fit your personality, then find out what does make you feel feminine and do it. Better yet, find out how your husband would like you to dress and do that. There's nothing like a little submission to make you feel soft and pretty inside.

2. Show your husband your softer side.

This gets a little more difficult. After all, we were raised to be strong, independent women. It's embarrassing to admit that we have a soft core at our centers. Yet this is the side of us that our husbands need to see—the side he can cherish, the side that makes him feel like our hero.

Start with the small things. I blushed as I brought one of those stubborn jars to my husband and asked in an awkward voice if he could please open it for me as I was unable. Trust me, this gets easier as you practice it. I soon learned to allow him to open doors for me and to carry the heaviest of the groceries. I took it a step further when I let him know that I was afraid of storms and of the dark. When I realized he was my spiritual covering, I asked him to pray with me when I felt oppressed or unsettled, and I admitted to him that I felt safer, both physically and spiritually, when he slept beside me (and conversely, felt less secure when he was out of town on business).

3. Develop a meek and quiet spirit.

According to 1 Peter 3, this in itself is true beauty and appealing to a husband. However, of everything discussed so far, this is the most difficult as it affects

not only your actions within your marriage but your behavior as a whole.

This was difficult for me, the (former) queen of road rage. I found it was not something I could "decide" to do and accomplish that same day, but something that was a process attainable only through much prayer and practice.

The place to begin this undertaking is in the home. Begin to watch your tone when you speak to your husband. Is it respectful or is it demanding? Does it lift up or tear down? Try not to yell through the house. Instead, go to where that person to whom you are addressing is located and speak softly to them. Think twice before voicing an opinion. Does it reflect a meek and quiet spirit?

All this practice, coupled with prayer, seems to build and spill over to calm the rest of our lives, leaving us with less road rage and more patience for the hapless waitress who has messed up on our order.

Most importantly, the cultivation of a meek and quiet spirit will help us to meet our husband's occasional rebuke with humility and a submissive attitude, allowing us to apologize and correct the wrong rather than becoming angry and compounding the problem.