

## Couples In Bloom – Special Needs Spouse

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Does your spouse have special needs? This could vary from minor to major disability including physical, mental, emotional, or many combinations thereof. These needs might have started after you were married, unexpectedly redefining your marriage relationship. Responses to such tragedies range from dedication to divorce. No succinct answers exist and what works for you may not work for me; but issues of our heart are **most** important.

Focus typically goes to the one disabled: their problems and their subsequent life. In marriage, the caregiving spouse and any children have equally important needs. How the caregiving spouse functions is the focus of this article because it reveals the spiritual and mental **foundation of any good marriage**, regardless of whether any special needs exist.

The very existence of special needs implies special giving to meet those special needs. Special giving implies: **1) having** the ability to give, and **2) more giving** than getting back. Spouses *without* special needs who own some of these two characteristics have a strength that blesses their relationship now plus has the ability to overcome special needs, if they occur one day. This provides security *every* spouse should be interested in having.

“**Who cares?!**” you may ask, “I will deal with it then, *if* I have to.” The answer to this question is, “Your spouse cares, and so should you.” The root of love is servanthood; we all need to be loved. Specifically, this means being ministered to without earning it. This originated with God, the author of love. He requires us to love like this ⇨ 1 John 4:7-11. He says loving His way proves we know Him, and is required for our eternal salvation.

Having the motivation issue settled brings us to: **1) having** the ability to give this kind of love. We cannot give what we do not have; we need firsthand revelation and reception of God’s love. This means we undoubtedly experience the undeserved, overwhelming and excellent love of God ourselves on a continuing and increasing basis. We will not be able to continuously serve a special needs spouse without this kind of input to pass along.

**TIME OUT!** Does this seem unrealistic? It is unrealistic with humans, but is realistic with God. God’s love is every bit of the previous description, and is available to everyone who accepts it ⇨ Joel 2:32; Mark 8:34; Acts 2:21; Revelation 22:17. **God** offers it but never forces it because **love** offers servanthood and never demands anything. Seek God and you will find this love; then you will be blessed and be able to move on to step **2)**...

**Giving** more than you receive comes next, but actually changes once it starts. This is a gift God hides inside obeying His Word: The Bible says, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” ⇨ Acts 20:35 **and proves it right here:** **having** the ability to give + **giving** more than is returned **blesses** you even more than that. **How? GOD!** This is so reliably true that even cancer patients who do this receive blessings... but **only doing so proves it**.

**Does all this seem overwhelming?** If so, it confirms your need to return to step **1)**... you need to undoubtedly experience the undeserved, overwhelming and excellent love of God yourself on a continuing and increasing basis, **again!** This is Christianity: receiving God’s love and overflowing it to others, no matter the cost because it is always worth it.

As the Bride of Christ, **have** and **give the love of God** to the needy. ❤ Loren Falzone