



# WHY DO WIVES REACT?

## CAUSE

- When a husband fails to be a spiritual leader...
- When a husband allows problems to continue and even get worse...
- When a husband does not support his wife in disciplining the children...
- When a husband spends extra money on things which he enjoys...
- When a husband does not accept himself...
- When a husband praises or admires other women...
- When a husband verbalizes love only when he wants a physical relationship with his wife...
- When a husband forgets anniversaries and other special occasions...
- When a husband does not praise his wife for specific things...
- When a husband does not spend time talking with his wife...
- When a husband fails to notice the little extra things his wife does for him...
- When a husband makes bad judgments and unwise business decisions...
- When a husband is not alert to dangers which his wife faces...
- When a husband neglects needed home repairs...
- When a husband does not have good manners or consistent manners...
- When a husband lusts after other women...
- When a husband loses his temper and does not ask for forgiveness...

## EFFECT

- His wife feels insecure.
- His wife feels helpless and finally takes matters into her own hands.
- His wife blames him for rebellious children.
- His wife resents the financial pressure under which they must live.
- His wife feels the same rejection from him.
- His wife feels inferior and jealous.
- His wife feels degraded and used and finds it hard to love him.
- His wife feels that she is unimportant and not cherished by him.
- His wife feels frustrated in not knowing how to please him.
- His wife finds others who will listen to her true feelings.
- His wife loses her creativity for her husband and their home and looks for outside interests.
- His wife resists his will in future decisions.
- His wife feels unprotected.
- His wife builds up resentment and impatience.
- His wife loses self-worth and feels isolated from her husband's real world.
- His wife feels inadequate in trying to meet her husband's physical needs.
- His wife reacts to his pride.

# ANOTHER REASON WHY WIVES REACT

## BEFORE ADAM AND EVE SINNED:

### 1. GOD ESTABLISHED THE HUSBAND'S HEADSHIP

God created man first and gave him tasks to perform; then God created the woman: "...I will make him an help meet for him."<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew word for "help" means "to aid" or "to assist."

If Eve was created "to aid" Adam, it is logically assumed that Adam was to have the leadership position. He had to provide direction, or his wife would not have known how to aid or assist him.

### 2. GOD ESTABLISHED THE WIFE'S SUBMISSION

Before Adam and Eve sinned, Eve was in submission to Adam. This is clearly indicated by Scripture. In order for Eve to have fulfilled her function as an aid or assistant, she would have had to be in submission to the one whom she was aiding. The purpose and submission of the woman in God's creation order is reaffirmed in I Corinthians 11:3-10.

## AFTER ADAM AND EVE SINNED:

### 1. THE WIFE'S WILLING SUBMISSION WAS CORRUPTED

God said to Eve, "...Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."<sup>2</sup> In the Hebrew, the two clauses in this sentence are in direct opposition. The first clause is in tension with the second clause. The literal meaning is, "Thy desire shall be to [control] thy husband..."

This same sentence structure is used in Genesis 4:7. God is telling Cain that sin shall "desire" to control him but he must "rule over" it.

The Fall marked the beginning of the conflict over the headship of the family. No longer does the husband rule easily. He must work to retain his headship. Thus, the New Testament commands the wife to submit to her husband.<sup>3</sup>

### 2. THE HUSBAND'S LOVING LEADERSHIP WAS CORRUPTED

As a result of the Fall, man has a corrupted desire for complete, unchallenged authority. This desire violates the purposes of love and destroys the marriage relationship. Thus, the New Testament commands the husband to love his wife as Christ loved the Church.<sup>4</sup>

### 3. GOD CONFIRMED THE HUSBAND'S HEADSHIP

God said to the woman, "...Thy desire shall be to [control] thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."<sup>2</sup> The husband is to exercise headship, but he is to do it with wisdom, patience, and love.<sup>5</sup>

1. Genesis 2:18.

2. Genesis 3:16.

3. See Ephesians 5:22; I Peter 3:1.

4. See Ephesians 5:25.

5. See I Corinthians 11:3; I Peter 3:7;

Ephesians 5:23.

## WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WOMAN'S "DESIRE" AFTER THE FALL?

God judged the woman by stating, "...Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."<sup>1</sup>

There are three common interpretations of this judgment:

1. She will desire her husband physically.

2. She will desire to please her husband.

3. She will desire to be protected by her husband.

These three desires do exist in varying degrees, but the actual text of Genesis 3:16 introduces a fourth desire which conflicts with these three desires.

4. She will desire to control her husband.

There are several textual considerations which support this interpretation:<sup>2</sup>

- The word for "desire" is used only three times in the Bible. Its proper etymology in Arabic would be "to urge, drive on, impel."<sup>3</sup>

- The same word "desire" is used in Genesis 4:7, where the understood meaning is "what sin desires is what Cain will carry out."<sup>3</sup> God told Cain to rule over sin, but Cain failed to do so.

- The two clauses of Genesis 3:16 are in contrast to each other: "Thy desire shall be to thy husband," and "he shall rule over thee." These are antithetical in the Hebrew sentence structure.<sup>5</sup> Thus, sin destroyed the marriage harmony.

- It is consistent with the conflict of desires which James points out as the cause of "wars and fightings among you."<sup>5</sup>

- It is in harmony with the need for the New Testament commands for the wife to submit to her husband and the husband to give loving leadership to his wife.<sup>7</sup>

1. Genesis 3:16.

2. Susan T. Foh, Westminster Theological Journal, Philadelphia, pp. 376-383.

3. Edward William Lane, An Arabic-English Lexicon, Bk. 1, Pt. 4, (London, William and Norgate, 1872), p. 1470.

4. E. J. Young, Genesis 3. A Devotional and Expository Study, (London, Banner of Truth Trust, 1966), p. 126-7.

5. F. I. Anderson, The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew, (The Hague, Mouton, 1974), p. 150.

6. See James 4:1.

7. See Ephesians 5:21-26.