

## Solving Marriage Problems: When Husbands Won't Lead

### I. Introduction. Pr. 18:17

### II. Why don't husbands lead? I Th. 5:14

- A. Our feminist culture demeans patriarchy: emasculating men. Rom. 12:1-2
- B. Some husbands are non-Christians and are incapable of leading in a Christlike way.  
I Pet. 3:1f I Co. 7:12f
- C. Some Christian men are very immature or backslidden.
- D. Some men are very laid back by nature and abdicate leadership to their wives.
- E. Some men in mid-life become depressed, losing their idealism and drive. Ga. 6:9
- F. Some men are very selfish, living in their own world. II Tim. 3:2
- G. Some men are workaholics who neglect their families. I Tim. 6:9-10
- H. Some wives take over, refusing to be led. Gen. 3:16 4:7
- I. Some men are spiritually proud and sinfully domineering. I Pe. 3:1 2:18f

### III. How can you help a husband who won't lead?

- A. He needs to be taught about his role as a Christlike servant-leader in the home. Eph. 5:25ff  
John 13:1ff
- B. He needs an example. Phil. 3:17 John 13:15 Heb. 13:7 I Co. 11:1
- C. He needs discipleship and accountability in specific areas.
- D. He needs the support of his wife. Gen. 2:18

### IV. How can you help a wife whose husband won't lead?

- A. Offer hope. I Co. 10:13 Rom. 8:28 Gen. 50:20 I Pet. 3:5 Jer. 17:5-8 Phil. 4:4ff
- B. Build your personal relationship with God. Mt. 6:33 Psalm 1 42:1f Jer. 17:5-8
- C. Face up to your own sin and seek forgiveness. Mt. 7:1-5 Pr. 21:9 25:24 I Pe. 3:1-2
- D. Don't let your desire for a perfect marriage become idolatrous. Js. 4:1f
- E. Encourage any positive effort he makes in leading, and don't compare your husband to other men. I Co. 1:4f
- F. Resist bitterness by maintaining a constant attitude of grace and forgiveness. Eph. 4:32  
Mt. 18:21f Heb. 12:15 Pr. 26:4 Ro. 12:17
- G. Strive to be his helper in every possible legitimate way. Gen. 2:18
- H. Treat him better than his sins deserve, overcoming evil with good. Ps. 103:10  
Rom. 12:21 5:8-10 Mt. 5:38f Luke 6:35 Phil. 4:13 Isa. 40:28-31

**I. Seek help from the church.**

1. You can join a church, even if your husband won't. Heb. 13:17 10:25 Acts 5:29
2. Seek counsel from a godly older woman. Titus 2:3-5
3. You may appeal to the Elders, even if your husband doesn't want you to.  
Mt. 18:15f I Pe. 3:7

**V. Counseling in specific situations.**

**A. How can you help a woman with a passive or neglectful husband?**

1. You need to understand the challenges she faces.
2. Don't let her give in to bitterness. Heb. 12:15-17 I Co. 13:5 Eph. 4:31-32  
I Pe 3:9 Js. 1:19-20
3. Teach her how to help a husband who is passive. I Pe. 3:1f
4. Teach her to appeal to him lovingly, specifically, and biblically.
5. If necessary, help her to go to church leaders. Mt. 18:16
6. Teach her to look to God to overcome loneliness. Ps. 42:1f Isa. 55:1-2  
Mt. 26:37f II Tim. 4:14

**B. How can you help a woman who has a non-Christian husband?**

1. Understand how hard her life is.
2. Did she sinfully marry an unbeliever?
3. Teach her to deal wisely with conflicting standards.
4. Encourage her to strive to make the marriage work. I Co. 7:12-17
5. She must realize only God can change her husband. John 6:44 I Co. 7:16

**C. How can you help a woman with a sinfully domineering husband?**

1. Try to understand what her life is like. Rom. 12:15
2. Help her to overcome sinful fear. II Tim. 1:7 Pr. 29:25 3:5-6 Jer. 17:5-8
3. Help her to overcome his evil with God's good. Rom. 12:21 I Pe. 3:1f Pr. 15:1
4. Help her to confront the husband biblically. Mt. 18:15f Gal. 6:1
5. Be prepared to step in to protect the woman. Rom. 13:1 Pr. 27:12

**VI. Some tough questions.**

- A. When can/should a woman go to the church leaders?
- B. What if the husband and wife can't agree on where to go to church?
- C. What if the husband asks the wife to sign financial documents with which she disagrees?
- D. What should the wife do about the spiritual training of the children?
- E. When is divorce an option? I Cor. 7:15 Mt. 19:9

**VII. Conclusion.**

**A. The amazing example of Abigail. I Sam. 25**

**B. Recommended resources**

1. Women Helping Women, edited by Elyse Fitzpatrick and Carol Cornish
2. The Excellent Wife, by Martha Peace
3. Helper by Design, by Elyse Fitzpatrick
4. The Complete Husband, by Lou Priolo