

Angie's Marriage Column – July 10, 2008

Do You Keep Forgiving a Continual Cheater?

Marriage Question: After reading your thoughts on forgiveness, I was wondering if you're supposed to keep forgiving if they cheat again? Is there ever a time that you just say that's enough? I was also wondering what your advice is when the wife is the one wanting sex all the time and the husband rejects her?

Marriage Guidance: Regarding the first question: Yes, even if they continue to cheat we are to forgive them of their trespasses against us. This principle is found in scripture. *Forgive us our trespasses **as we forgive those who trespass against us.*** Understand that forgiveness is not necessarily for them but for you and your own spiritual well-being. Yes, it's true that forgiveness helps them in their recovery but Jesus wants us to forgive so we won't hold grudges and bitterness that unforgiveness feeds the heart with.

If they are repentant it is our duty as fellow believers to forgive him or her, no matter what sin they have committed. And even if they aren't repentant we still need to forgive them. Forgiveness is a principled action of love, it won't always feel good to forgive but in the long run it will feel better spiritually and mentally. Christ also wants us to forgive others so we will be forgiven for our sins.

["For when you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you". \(Matthew 6:14\)](#)

Forgiveness frees us from the hold it has on us, and it frees us spiritually so we can love without conditions. This is a phenomenon that God blesses us with to help make us Christ-like as much as humanly possible. Only the Christians who make use of the Holy Spirit within them are capable of actually forgiving. Forgiveness is found through our faith in Jesus Christ. Once we have found repentance, forgiveness and faith through Christ we will be given the ability to forgive.

“Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins they are forgiven, if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven”. (John 20:23)

If your husband is not repentant, obviously he is not, since he continues to cheat, than you must pray about it and ask Christ to give you the ability to detach from his behavior and not cause it to harm your own spiritual well-being.

Obviously there is an underlying problem within the emotional and spiritual wellness of your husband and he definitely needs to seek Christ for repentance and forgiveness. But that is out of your hands – he must be willing to turn his life around and stop sinning on his own terms, meaning we cannot “save” people or make people “believe” a certain way. All we can do is our part in the marriage and continue being faithful to our loving Father.

“If it is at all possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath”. (Romans 12:18-19)

Second Question: It is wrong that your husband is rejecting your affection and I’m not sure as to the reasons why he is doing this, except that you mentioned he is cheating on you, so I would have to think it has something to do with that. It actually could be several things going on with him that have not been opened up because of lack of communication between you. This usually happens when intimacy has been damaged between couples.

- It could be that he is feeling so ashamed and guilt ridden that he thinks he does not deserve you.
- It could be that he has contacted a genital disease.
- It could be that he is still committing a sexual liaison.
- It could be that you two have grown so far apart because of the damage that infidelity can do to a marriage that he doesn’t feel affectionate.

- It is up to you to come together in prayer and find out what the problem is so you can start working on the solution, asap!

“The wife’s body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way the husband’s body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. *Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may **devote yourselves to prayer***. Then come together again so satan will not tempt you because of lack of self control”. (1 Corinthians 7:4,5)

The above scripture tells couples to *come together in prayer* and then properly communicate the problems within the marriage. God needs to be in the forefront of this procedure for accountability purposes. Your husband needs to repent and ask for forgiveness so you can move on and trust him again. Married couples have the responsibility to care for each other’s needs, sexually and even emotionally. When those needs are not met the tendency to stray from the marriage can be more tempting.

Sexual sin by an individual can be overcome through faith in God. It is a mindset and discipline Christians take when they understand “what their position” in the Lord is? Are you a child of God? Then “be” that person. Are you a child of the world? Not sure? If your husband is still thinking the grass is greener somewhere else, than the culture of this society has deceived him – he is lost.

Your husband might see Christ through you and how you interact with him – be the Light of Christ - through your faith and belief in God, and how you handle your part in the marriage. You can’t make your husband do his part but you can still do your part in hopes that your husband will come to know what his part is.

“God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son, purifies us from all sin”. (1 John 1:5-7)

As hard and difficult as it may seem to do, you must try and encourage your husband and help him to overcome sexual sin. Cheating multiple times is an addiction, just like all addictions it is a selfish and self-seeking way to find temporary happiness and or feel good emotionally.

Addictions can be eradicated completely from someone's life when they are forgiven, encouraged, and given the opportunity to be the person God created for them to be without the need to prove themselves and abilities to people. This is something spiritual that can only be found through God—the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ within a person's being.

Pray and ask God – He will provide if you ask in faith.

“At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived, and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hurting one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy (forgiveness). He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit”. (Titus 3:3-5)

Take care and God bless!
Angie and Frank
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Article Resources:

To Forgive or Not

<http://www.heavenministries.com/HeavenMin/Articles/toforgiveornot.htm>

The Intimately Satisfied Marriage

<http://www.heavenministries.com/HeavenMin/Articles/intimatelysatisfiedmarriage.htm>

Book Resources:

Adultery Pandemic – Heal the wounds! If you want to restore your marriage from the demoralizing effects of adultery, then look no further - this is the book for you! Your Marriage Can Be Restored! A treasure book filled with effective guidance for your marriage from forgiveness and trust to recommitting your lives to each other again. Practical and easy-to-read, this book combines the solutions and remedies your marriage needs towards recovery. Order your copy today! <http://www.lulu.com/AngieLewis/>
Or download right now onto your computer!

Adultery Pandemic - Review by Dee

Adultery Pandemic opened my eyes to the answers that I so desperately needed. The author, Angie Lewis, gave me insight and encouragement to work on my marriage not only to save it but, to make it better than it was before. She is so straightforward it all just makes sense and the book is grounded in scriptures, which I loved. I definitely recommend this book to anyone or couples who need healing after the devastating emotions of infidelity. This book is a God Send and gives me hope knowing that marriages can be restored and so can I.

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