

Angie's Marriage Column – 2008 - 2014

Low Self Esteem and NEEDING Husband's Attention

Question: It has been 3 months since I have emailed you about my marriage. Well, everything has been up and down, meaning it will feel better today and worse tomorrow. Our marriage is not getting any better I have prayed and read the Word and different books about marriage on how to make marriage work, but am finding it very difficult to cope with my husband the way he perceives about me. I am a born again Christian and I know mostly about marriage but my husband is not making it easy for example. I need my husband to make love to me, kiss me, touch me and also appreciate me -- maybe if I am getting all this love from him it will be easy for me to be more submissive which he always complained about. I don't want to separate or divorce him because I know that is not the solution. I want to make this work. I love him so much but he sees more negative than positive toward me. We had our 5year anniversary last month. My husband didn't even get me a simple card or take me out and I was very devastated and hurt. Does that mean he didn't value our marriage and me. PLEASE HELP ME!

Marriage Guidance: I am sorry to hear that your marriage has hit upon some rocky times. Let's see what we can do to make you feel better about yourself in the marriage. From your letter I feel that you are allowing yourself to become anxious over what your husband does or does not do, and about the way *you think he perceives you*. I hear great amounts of desperation in your plea for help.

We become desperate when we try to control or change the person we married and **expect** changes from them. But what happens is we get fearful and disappointed because NOTHING CHANGES in them. That's because it is not our place to change them or control them – they must want to change themselves. So then we must give up wanting to control others and give our negative feelings over to God and ask Him to give us the answers and guidance we need. Only God can give us the contentment and peace we need so we become less anxious over our marriage.

You say that you have read the bible. **Have you applied anything of what you read into your own life?** We can read the bible until we're blue in the

face, but if we are not applying scriptures into our life it will be of no value to us. For instance, I can plant several different varieties of flowering plants in my garden, but if I don't water the seeds they will never sprout and come alive. They will remain hidden under the dirt and be of no value to me or my family.

When you read the word you must drink from it and pray and ask God for *His will be done in your life*. The key here is to ask for HIS WILL to BE DONE in your life, not YOUR WILL.

God answers our prayers, but it will not be what YOU WANT. It will be answered WHEN God is ready to answer it and it will be answered according to His Principles for MARRIAGE.

This is how we sprout and grow spiritually with Him. **We must bring God's Word to life in our heart and mind, and then live it!** God communicates with us and lets us know what His will is for our lives through His Word. His Word becomes "who we can become". We must drink from the living water of life so we can sprout and *grow spiritually with Him*.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14)

If we are still toting around the same attitude and if we are still trying to be happy through others, and if we are still not applying The Word into our lives, then we are not really "born again" into God's family. To be born again we must put away the old person we were and become a totally new person in Christ. That means a total transformation in mind, body and Spirit. We are not living for self anymore, but we are living for Christ now. To be reborn in Christ is to follow Him with our heart, mind, and soul.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:2)

We cannot prove what is good, acceptable and perfect until our mind is renewed. If we still tote around the same attitude and mode of thinking, what is renewed? Absolutely nothing! This is why you said that you are reading

the Word but nothing is changing. Only God has the power to transform our minds and it is done through the His Son Jesus.

Give up trying to control your husband's behavior and how your husband feels about you.

You're basing your own feelings, thoughts, and actions on the actions and behaviors of your husband. Give "it" to God! Ask Jesus Christ to forgive you of any and all transgressions you may have made and live in Christ's forgiveness. The first thing you must understand is you cannot make your husband react to you the way you want – that is something out of your control. How other people perceive you or how other people behave towards you should not be of concern to you, unless you are doing something to provoke that behavior.

You should only be concerned with controlling your thoughts, actions and behaviors – be yourself "in the Lord".

Stop worrying about how your husband perceives you.

Sometimes all we have to do is stop focusing all of our attention on the other person and look at ourselves for a change. We need to examine our own behavior. We need to take the log out of our own eye and then we can help our spouse to get the sliver out of their eye. Do you see where I am going with this? I'm not saying that you are to blame for how your husband reacts and behaves towards you, but nothing is going to get resolved in your marriage as long as you make yourself out to be a victim.

You say that you have a hard time submitting because your husband does not kiss you, hug you, or give you affection. What about him? Have you thought about his feelings?

Maybe your husband has a hard time giving his wife affection because she is bossy and domineering? I am not saying that this is what's going on in your situation either, but everyone has their reasons why they behave the way they do. Of course this does not give anyone justification for treating each other wrongly either, but you see, marriage works both ways.

This is precisely why I ask couples to only "work on themselves" and not "on each other". You want to change your husband's behavior towards you and he wants to change your behavior towards him. But this is not going to

work! Do you want to know why? It is your responsibility to work on you, and it is your husband's responsibility to work on himself. That's why.

Both of you need to stop focusing on the faults and weaknesses of each other and start focusing on your own faults and weaknesses. This is what will help your marriage the most. I can see that you want to submit to your husband but you won't be able to do that until you give up what you are trying to control – his behavior and how he perceives you. You are trying to control how your husband feels about you and by doing that you are harming your relationship with your husband and with God. You are making your relationship with your feelings about your husband and what he thinks about you more important than your relationship with God.

Here are my suggestions:

1. Go back to God's Word and read it – start with Romans. It has a lot of excellent teachings for Christians. Take your time and study it. If you do not understand a certain scripture, then pray about it. God will explain it to you. Ask God how you can apply certain scriptures into your own life and marriage. You need to humbly accept the Word and begin applying it into your life. You must take care of YOU before your marriage will get better.

“But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straight away forgetteth what manner of man he was”. (James 1:22-24)

2. Bring God out of the bible and into your living room, kitchen, bedroom, everywhere you go! Right now you are not becoming one with God and allowing Him to go to work in your marriage. I believe it is because you are not “giving up control”. Most of the time we want to control everything and every outcome to our advantage, but we do not realize that in doing so, we are actually not allowing God to do His job!

God is not just some words in a book, He is a living breathing Spirit – bring Him alive in your marriage by asking Him into it! God wants you to be happy in your marriage, and that is why He designed marriage for couples in the way He designed it, but if we don't abide by God's design we certainly will be unhappy in our marriage and with ourselves.

2. Stop focusing on your husband. You are spending too much of your time and energy worrying about him and what he is doing. Start focusing on “your part” and “your responsibility” in the marriage.

3. Go back to the Heaven Ministries “Wives” section and read through the articles on the left. <http://www.heavenministries.com/MarriageWives.htm/> Study them, and look up any scripture references – if you have any questions or need encouragement email me. ☺

4. DO let your husband know that you are going to begin to “take care of yourself” because you do not like what the marriage is becoming and you realize that “part” of the responsibility for the marriage is yours. Let him know that you want to put God first in the marriage and that you are going to try to be the wife that God wants you to be. Tell him that you are just now learning about what God wants for you and that you may accidentally error sometimes and he may need to get you back on track from time to time. In other words, he should not expect a changed woman over night. And you should not expect a changed man over night either!

5. Go to your bookstore and browse through the women’s devotionals. You should have a devotional with uplifting teaching scriptures for whenever you need to remind yourself of “who you are” in the Lord and what your responsibility and position is in marriage.

We read the Word because it brings us closer to God, and everyday through the reading and doing of The Word we grow more into the loving wife God wants us to be. But it is a never-ending journey – it is a spiritual journey that we stay on for the rest of our human lives. Enjoy it!

Newsletter Resources:

On The Roads Less Traveled --

<http://www.heavenministries.com/newsletters/Sept04.htm>

Am I A Christian? --

<http://www.heavenministries.com/newsletters/Jan04.htm>

Until next Wednesday, May God bless each and every one of you for His
glory in His kingdom!
-- Angie

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