

A few Thoughts On Wives
By: No One

After several decades of being faithfully married to the same woman, please allow me to pose a converse question. Does a woman have a right to have her way even it ruins the marriage to which she agreed, before God, until "death do us part"? (While we ask the same question of men, which is not the subject at hand.)

CONSEQUENCES

Paul's writings are fairly clear on two simple facts in marriage. Men should love their wives. Wives should obey their husbands. The implication is that they, like the men, should obey those who have the rule over them. History teaches that someone must have the final say or else most human relationships, including marriage, degenerate into bickering.

Moreover, whether in church or in the world, life is not without consequences. Some are natural. The man who does not love his wife will lose her. The woman who fails to respect her husband will ruin her marriage. Anyone who has lived in this world has seen examples of both. Everyone knows when a marriage fails. Other consequences were created as a warning to keep something worse from happening. Unlike divorce, these may be quite private. They may come as warning come in frank conversations. They may be spoken in prayer in the family circle. They may be expressed in counseling sessions with the pastor. Or, interspersed with admonitions, they may come in a series of sharp strokes to the bare bottom.

That a patient, yet firm, across the knees bare bottom spanking(hand or paddle)/whipping(switch or strap) is personal, humiliating, and painful is well known. "It's supposed to [hurt]." That is precisely why, if the practice is not abused, it can be a very effective consequence or discipline! As a few husbands have discovered, once he has thoroughly prevailed, even an implied threat of another may be sufficient to straighten out marital difficulties for some time to come.

At the same time, as many women who have experienced both will testify, getting the pants-down/off licking of one's life is not nearly as soul-wrenching, embarrassing, or agonizing as divorce. Because a timely trip across the husband's knees usually restores broken fellowship and breeds both love and respect in marriage, the long-term results certainly are not nearly as debilitating as divorce for most couples.

Husbands should remember that it is not nearly as important what the wife says when she is across her husband's knee as how she behaves afterwards.

OBSERVATIONS

The following are merely observations gleaned from time. They are all by no means original with me. Some comes from women, most of whom have now passed from this life, born in the nineteenth century (1800s Victorian Era). Then, although not as frequently as we might assume, neighbors might have heard through open windows a grown woman getting a well deserved "dose of birch tea" from a husband, father, or even a designated brother in order to sweeten her disposition. Here goes: No true prophet of God is going to issue a command for husbands to chastise their wives. This is a discovery for each man and woman to make as they move from dating, to marriage, to building a home and decide, step by step, what kind of lives they want to build for themselves under God. Those who sidestep the issue never build a true marriage. Unless the marriage is exceptional, eventually the couple is going to reach a point where something has to give. Things cannot go on as they are if the marriage is to survive. God has prepared men and women for the eventuality. Virtually all husbands wonder how their wives would react if spanked. Most wives, even if they have watched or heard their husbands spank their children, wonder how their husbands would take them in hand if sufficiently provoked

.Although she had been spanked with her husband's hand during their marriage, one wife went so far as to meddle while her husband was paddling their daughter in order to goad him into really paddling her. As she stood up afterwards, she let her husband know that she respected him for doing it. The wife later admitted that she wanted to let her husband know that the time had come to also paddle her when she needed it.

Before a man raises his hand against his wife, he should make sure that both of his hands are clean. A man who has not confessed his own sin(s) still has the beam in his eye. There is no law against a man asking his wife to punish him for his sins also. A man who sins and who cannot take what he dishes out has no business dishing it out. Technique is less important than love. While love is not necessary for a successful marriage, a Christian marriage without love is dead. Flogging a dead horse does not bring it back to life. Love means the Golden Rule - doing unto others as you would have them do to you. Love does not mean walking away or going soft. It does mean respect, privacy, and good judgment.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

Disciplining the wife when the marriage is in trouble may not be fair. In her eyes it may not even be right. But ask her whether in her soul God has told her that submitting to her husband's hand, even in this, is against His will and the honest wife will admit defeat before the struggle begins. She knows very well what works. God has not hidden this from her. After presenting her with the ultimatum, the husband should give his wife time to reflect. She may need time alone. If the marriage has come to this, in most cases, a few more minutes, hours, or even days is not going to matter. Weeks, months, and years are a different story altogether. Whether before or after the event, apologies only antagonize an already difficult situation. Even amidst all the talk about domestic violence and women's liberation, most wives know when they need it. Most husbands know when they need to give it. There is a normal arrangement and flow of events. Trying to adhere to a rigid agenda only complicates matters. In the privacy of her own home, while she may demur, a wife made sufficiently aware of her sin(s) over time will seldom refuse to present herself to the long-suffering husband confronting her with switch in hand and a determination to straighten things out. Unless she has been abused at his hand, a woman expects her man to take charge when the need arises and will despise him more for shirking that responsibility than for his chastening and chastising.

CLIMBING THE MOUNTAIN

Women nag, men spank. Women have shape tongues, and equally sharp minds, which they can use with great effect. Men have upper body strength. For good or for evil, but use what God gave them. The strong-willed wife will try to outlast her husband's hand on a bare bottom. She will protest to both him and others about some perceived abuse at his hand even when none exists and the punishment was well deserved. However, the wife who has had a significant disciplinary experience from the top of her buttocks to the upper third of her thighs (down to what women of a few generations ago used to call the "stocking line") will keep the matter to herself. She will bring no further embarrassment upon her house. To the surprise of many, the deserving wife caught compromised across her husband's knees will ask for privacy so he may continue with the task at hand. She will apologize more for her indiscretions than for her husband's punishing her for them. If one's children find out, it is not end of the world. Most children understand more than adults give the credit. In particular, children understand spanking far more than they understand bitterness and divorce. A child who grows up aware that mother submits to father's discipline may be less likely to engage in frivolous and dangerous behavior as they grow older. Even if she has grown children and has remained unpunished since her own childhood, the woman who is ruining her marriage knows she is not "too old". She knows that vanity, pride in saying "he [her husband] wouldn't dare" is a poor substitute for a loving marriage in which he does, even more frequently than she would wish.

When the husband announces, "It's time"; a wife expects four things that she will vow never to tell her husband. One is to lose her pants early to prove he means business. She expects it "to hurt" sufficiently to make her cry in repentance. She knows that it must get through to her so that there is no doubt in her mind or that of her husband that he is in control. Finally, she expects to feel better after it is over. These she expects her husband to know well enough to act on this knowledge without her telling him.

To see whether her husband is serious about her and their marriage, women will frequently roll out three sets of stumbling blocks. Each increases in intensity. The first are the preliminary protests. The second are the promises and pleadings when he begins. The third are, although the language may be more blunt, rages of anger at being "treated this way" as he continues. For the husband who conquers all three, there is the promise of peace beyond. Domestic tranquility will be restored.

There are some parallels turning one's wife over one's knees and casting out devils. One lesson in both is that, as Jesus pointed out in the story of the man among the tombs, if the husband does not fill the spiritual void created in his wife with something positive, then something worse may take its place. There is an information highway created which runs from a woman's bottom to her mind as the evil spews from her mouth. It is the husband's responsibility to fill with love and assurance. Otherwise, he has simply engaged in an act of torture.

There are three basic ways to control a wife. One is to ignore her. Another is to burden her with chores, responsibilities, and work. The final way is to, in a no nonsense fashion, discipline her personally, privately, and memorably. The first method ruins the marriage. The second makes her old. In responsible hands, the third can work miracles.

Long and happy marriages generally mean that the couple crossed the discipline bridge when they came to it rather than go their separate ways. Adjectives such as "good" when used to describe her husband or his behavior toward her frequently mean he has taken charge of her more than once or twice during their marriage.

CONCLUSION

The question posed is "Does a man have the right to spank his wife?" I believe the question to be in error. A better question is should a man, a man to whom God has given talents and responsibilities, let his marriage crumble around him without raising a hand to stop it? My answer is simply no. A man does not have a right to spank his wife. However, he has an obligation to protect his marriage and his sanity even if it means wearing out the woman he loves! When she stands before her husband and asks "why" if he cannot look her in the eyes and honestly say "because I love you more than I love myself" he has no business taking his intentions any further. He is simply playing games with his wife, himself, and God. That is probably not the smartest move he can make.