

# When Your Husband's a Fool

March 21, 2012 · PM · <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/2012/when-your-husbands-a-fool/>

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“Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.”

I Samuel 25:25

“For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.”

I Peter 3:5-6

### Introduction:

- A. Having studied holiness earlier today, we should see that holy women are being considered here.
- B. This subject is very simple ... should a wife obey God or her husband in matters of sin? This is easy.
- C. The two difficulties are intimidated women and insecure men, but the Bible can correct both of them.
- D. All men are fools some times; and some men are fools all the time. What is a married woman to do?
- E. It can be wonderful married to a Christian man, but it can be a great trial of faith married to a fool.
- F. The confusion on this topic has been exacerbated by books like Elizabeth Rice's, “Me? Obey Him?”
- G. We want the very godliest marriages and families, but we measure by only one standard – the Bible!
- H. We want great women as our wives – those who fear and love God more than they do their husbands.

### Wives Are to Obey Husbands

- A. We believe, teach, and defend a husband's authority, for it is a clear matter of revelation from God for the benefit of man and profit of society (Gen 2:18; 3:16; I Cor 11:3; Titus 2:5).
- B. A man gets a helping companion; a wife gets a protector (Ec 4:9-12; I Tim 2:12-14; Ru 3:1).
- C. Christian wives submit “as unto the Lord” and “as it is fit in the Lord,” because they do it based on faith in Him and His command, which make it a proper thing (Eph 5:22; Col 3:18).
- D. We do not care that Diana Spencer might have eliminated “obey him” from her 1981 vows.
- E. We do not care that so-called Christians make marriage a partnership, neutering the husband.

### All Authority is Ruled by God

- A. Parents rule children, masters rule servants, kings rule citizens, husbands rule wives, and pastors rule churches by God's revelation. Man did not invent or determine any authority.

- B. The only absolute and unconditional authority is God Himself, who made all other authority relationships relative ... conditional ... subjective ... and temporal.
- C. There is no place for rationalization in this or other Bible subjects. We submit to revelation!
- D. Godly children disobeyed their parents in order to obey God (I Sam 19:11-17; I Kgs 15:13).
- E. Godly citizens disobey rulers in order to obey God (Exodus 1:15-21; Josh 2:1-7; Dan 1:5-8).
- F. The apostles provide the clearest example of disobeying authority (Acts 4:18-20; 5:27-29).
- G. No wife has faced greater fear than three Hebrew men, but consider their “careless” answer to the most powerful king in world history that had power over their lives (Dan 3:16)!
- H. Husbands are no more always right than rulers, masters, parents, or pastors are always right.

### **Wives Are Not to be Amazed (I Peter 3:1-6)**

- A. After civil and employment authority, Peter took up the duties of wives (I Peter 2:13-25).
- B. The nature of a wife submitting to a husband parallels the other two authorities (I Pet 3:1).
- C. For unbelieving husbands, a wife’s subjection, chastity, and fear might win him (I Pet 3:1-2).
- D. A Christian wife is to emphasize and exalt her inward spirit above her outward looks (3:3-4).
- E. Holy women in the Old Testament observed this very same role of marital subjection (3:5).
- F. Sarah, the wife of the Friend of God and mother of Israel, did so by “lord” (3:6; Gen 18:12).
- G. A woman can show herself a daughter of Sarah by doing well by the same subjection (3:6).
- H. However, she is not to be afraid with any amazement – terrifying fear rendering her helpless.
  1. Amazement. The condition of being mentally paralyzed; loss of presence of mind.
  2. Amazed. Driven stupid; stunned or stupefied, as by a blow, out of one’s wits. Bewildered, confounded, confused, perplexed. Struck with sudden terror; terror-stricken, terrified, alarmed. Lost in wonder or astonishment.
  3. Amazed. See Exodus 15:15; Judges 20:41; 32:15; Isaiah 13:8; Ezekiel 32:10; Matthew 19:25; Mark 6:51; 10:32; 16:8; Acts 2:12.
  4. The apostle used “afraid” here in the same sense as “fear” used earlier (3:6; 3:2; 2:18).
  5. A wife does well by obeying her husband, but cannot compromise through fear of him.
  6. Sarah obeyed Abraham well in a variety of circumstances (Gen 12:5,10-15; 18:6; etc.).
  7. However, she went against him in the matter of Ishmael and Hagar (Genesis 21:9-12).
  8. Peter was terrified and denied Jesus to a maid, who accused him of being a disciple.
  9. Remember the unbelieving husband in context, which could certainly complicate things.

### **Abigail Disobeyed Nabal (I Sam 25:10-19)**

- A. Abigail was a beautiful and wise woman, but married to a fool (25:2-3). Beware fathers!
- B. Nabal’s wishes regarding David were well known, but Abigail disregarded them (25:19).
- C. God blessed her disrespect and rebellion by giving her in marriage to David (25:25,37,39).
- D. This is the classic illustration of a wife disregarding her husband in order to obey God.

- E. What would wise Abigail have done, if she had dumbled herself down to “Me? Obey Him?”

### **Are There Any other Examples?**

- A. Zipporah rebuked her husband and circumcised her son to save Moses’ life (Ex 4:24-26).
- B. The great woman of Shunem asked her husband for a room for the prophet (II Kings 4:8-10).
- C. Manoah’s wife, the mother of Samson, corrected him for foolish thinking (Judges 13:22-23).
- D. Eunice taught Timothy about God in spite of her pagan husband (II Tim 1:5; Acts 16:1-2).
- E. Rebekah tricked Isaac into giving the right son the blessing of the Lord (Gen 27:1-17,46).

### **When Should a Wife Disobey?**

- A. If a husband orders his wife to sign a tax return that has a lie in it, she should refuse to do so.
- B. If a husband orders his wife to steal something for him, she should refuse to do so.
- C. If a husband orders his wife to watch a porn flick with him, she should refuse to do so.
- D. A wife must obey God over her husband in those things He has plainly revealed in the Bible.
- E. God commands spiritual things e.g. baptism and church attendance, which a husband cannot overthrow, for God’s commands are far above his (Acts 10:48; Heb 10:23-25; 12:28-29).
- F. A wife does not have the right to matters of liberty any more than a child, for Moses taught that husbands could disallow vows of wives, and fathers those of daughters (Num 30:1-16).
  - 1. The religious matters in this chapter are not commands, but freewill vows or offerings.
  - 2. First, consider that this passage teaches the independence of a female before the Lord.
  - 3. Second, a husband had to have disallowed the vow when he heard it, not any later.
  - 4. Matters of liberty are to be followed by those under authority in each of the five spheres.
  - 5. But God’s commandments are not matters of liberty, nor are they answered by Num 30.

### **How Should a Wife Disobey?**

- A. If possible, she should approach the matter very carefully, cautiously, and soberly in prayer.
- B. She should then approach her husband in the most discreet and respectful way possible to express her concern that a matter of sin is at stake against the word of God.
- C. If possible, she should hear his answers and examine them by the word of God and prayer.
- D. Consider the practical wisdom of writing a letter rather than having a verbal confrontation.
- E. Every other wifely duty should be increased and perfected to show all good fidelity and faith.
- F. Before defiance, if possible, a wife should proceed with questions, exhortation, and warning.
- G. A wife should never explode, threaten, separate, or any other such thing over these matters.
- H. A wife should make perfectly clear that all other aspects of the marriage will be upheld.

### **What If It Breaks Up a Marriage?**

- A. As in all matters of faith, it is only God’s revelation that counts, not human sentimentality.

- B. God has called the believing spouse in a mixed marriage to peace, which is their duty.
- C. The Christian woman here does everything to save her marriage, even to an unbeliever.
- D. If her husband is still so obnoxious in spite of her perfect life, he deserves Nabal's fate.
- E. If the unbeliever rejects the perfect conduct of a wife for her religion, then so be it, but the entire onus of breaking the marriage is on the head of the perverse husband (I Cor 7:12-16).
- F. The martyrs gave up marriage and a whole lot more – their own lives! – for Jesus Christ.
- G. Jesus Christ prophesied that families would be broken (Matthew 10:34-37; Luke 14:25-33).

## **What Is a Real Man?**

- A. A real man fears God and accepts admonition even from his wife rather than sin against God.
- B. A real man gives his wife the liberty to meekly and reverently question, admonish, or warn.

## **Conclusion:**

- A. Let every father protect his daughters from ever marrying a fool and being trapped like dear Abigail.
- B. Let every wife maintain her faith, fear, and love of God as the most important relationship in life.
- C. Let every husband cultivate this relationship with God in his wife and allow her liberty for godliness.

## **For Further Study:**

- A. Commentary on [I Samuel 25 and Abigail's letter](#).
- B. Sermon Outline: [Ordinance of Authority](#).
- C. Sermon Outline: [A Marriage Covenant](#).
- D. Sermon Outline: [God Hates Compromise](#).
- E. Sermon Outline: [The Fear of the Lord](#).