

## "Should I Go With My Husband?"

by Walter Lewis Wilson, M.D.

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AS I SAT in my study one day, a knock at the door aroused me from my meditations, and I hurried to answer the call. A lady was there who seemed to be under great distress of heart and mind. She asked if she might talk with me about a very important matter. I invited her in and urged her to feel quite at home and at ease, as she told me all the sorrow of her heart.

She began her story by asking, "Should I go with my husband to picture shows and to taverns? He says that I should. He says that my religion is breaking up our home, because I will not go where he loves to go, and therefore I force him to find other companions. Now, Doctor, I do not want to break up my home, for my husband is a good husband in most all of our relationships, and until I was saved recently and gave my whole heart and life to the Lord, we went everywhere together. Of course, I do not want to go with the crowds that we once ran with. I want to be among the Christians and hear the teaching of the Word of God."

This was not a new story to me. I had heard it from perplexed husbands who had been saved by grace and delivered from "this present evil world," but who had unsaved wives. I had heard from wives a story quite similar to this one. I had heard it from children regarding their parents who were opposed to Christian things, and I had heard it from parents whose children wanted them to go where Christians do not go. It was the old problem of the believer wanting to go on the narrow path to glory, and the unbeliever wanting to travel the broad, downward path to his doom.

My reply was in the form of a question or a series of questions which would reveal her attitude. The first question was this: "Do you love your husband and do you want to win him for Christ?" She replied without hesitation, "Indeed, I do. That is my whole desire. I do so much want to see him saved, but he seems determined to stay away from everything that is Christian."

I then asked, "Will he think more of Christianity or less, if you do not go with him into the places where he knows Christians should not be?" She gave a wise answer to this and said, "I believe he would think more of my Christianity, but would think less of me. He wants me as his companion everywhere he goes, and has told me plainly that if he

cannot have me along, he will find someone else that will go with him. Only this morning he said that he did not intend to let my religious foolishness wreck his life and spoil his pleasure."

The problem presented by this woman caused deep exercise of heart, and I quietly prayed that the Spirit would give wisdom and judgment in answering. Then I said to her, "Let me make a suggestion that you try for a few days, and then give me a report before I leave the city. I would like so much to know how your actions will affect him. In the first place, I want you to be the most wonderful wife in the home that he could ever want. Fix up the table beautifully. Use some of the fancy dishes that you have on the plate rail. Sing his favorite songs as you play the piano. Have his fresh, clean clothes arranged nicely as an ensemble, with the brown sox and the brown tie, the brown cuff links with the brown suit, etc. Let him see that you are interested in making him as attractive as possible and as happy as you can. Greet him with exceptional devotion when he comes home in the evening. Make his morning hour very happy and interesting before he goes to work. Keep yourself dressed up as if you were going to a wedding, even though it may soil some of your nicer clothes. Let him see that you want to be an attractive queen to him."

I suggested also that she pursue a somewhat different attitude toward him in regard to his evenings. I said, "After supper, you say to him kindly, "Lover, I know you wish to go down town with those who do not know my Lord but it would make me quite miserable if I should associate with them again, and so I desire to go down to the church and mingle with those who know and love the Lord as I do. We shall only be separated from each other for a little while, and I'll hurry back when the church service is over, and you can hurry home, and then we will have a happy, sweet time together the rest of the evening. I know you do not want to go among the Lord's people and I certainly do not want to ask you to do it. I do not want to be among Satan's people, and I know you will not ask me to do that either. Let each one of us go among those we love for a brief time, and then we will be back together again."

She seemed surprised at this procedure, but said that she would try it and see what effect it would have upon his behavior. As she left my office, I made this further suggestion that she should not ask him to become a Christian, but rather say to him, "I do not want to bother you in any way. I know you do not want to be a Christian, and I certainly shall not force it on you, nor even talk about it. You want to follow your wishes, and so while I seek to walk with God myself, I shall not

try to bring God into your life in any way. I want to add to your happiness and not to your sorrow." She gave her assent and left. Husbands are generally won to Christ by the gentleness and submissiveness of their wives.

Toward the end of my series of meetings, this lady came again to see me. She said that the effect had been wonderful on her husband. It had not won him for Christ, but it had caused him to change his attitude toward her. The last suggestion had been unusually profitable. He had agreed that it would be all right for her to go to church while he was down town. Her wonderful kindness to him and the lovely things she was doing for him each day made him feel, as he said, "This Christianity certainly has made a wonderful woman out of you, and no one could treat me better than you do. I am sure I shall not be hunting for anyone else, because no one could be better to me than you are." Of course, my friend was quite grieved that her husband was still unsaved and would not come to any of the meetings, but she decided to continue the experiment for a while longer. About three weeks after this, I received a letter from this fine Christian saying that her prayers had been answered. The husband's opposition had been broken down, and one Sunday night of his own volition, he said, "If you do not mind, I will go with you to the service tonight. I want to see what it is you are hearing that has made you such a wonderful woman to me in spite of my opposition." He received a gracious welcome in the church. The pastor spoke wisely to him and all of this touched his heart, for his own conscience condemned him because of his opposition. A few days later the pastor came to the house and this husband was led to trust in the Lord Jesus. What a time of rejoicing was in that home! The faithfulness of the wife and her devotion to the husband and to the Lord had accomplished the desired results.

Let me urge all others who may be in a divided home to take this path. God will honor it and the heart will melt under it.

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