

No, you can't change anyone, not even yourself. But God can and wants to! Here's how to help and not hinder in the process.

## *The Problem*

Both of our parents had the same problem; the wife wore the pants, meaning she was the boss, and the husband was the weak and quiet one. We hadn't been married a month, and I was trying to run our relationship just like my mother did. My husband T.A. reacted to me just like he had to his mom -- ignoring her. I preached to him, I nagged him, I told him what to do. I left little notes around that did more of the same. I would shut off the T.V. while he was watching it and tell him he should be doing something that would help him spiritually, like read edifying stuff, listen to a teaching tape or video, anything but watch that T.V.! But he grew quieter and communicated to me less and less. I began to cry a lot in private. This was not what I wanted our marriage to be like!

## *Hands off!*

A girl friend from high school invited to me a women's weekend seminar that was held at her church. I accepted and through that, God showed me what was wrong with our marriage. The speaker read Eph. 5:33 out of the King James Version of the Bible. It says, "Nevertheless, let every one of you in

particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

Then she read that last line from the Amplified Version. It reads, "... and let the wife see that she respects and reverences her husband, that she notices him, regards him, honors him, prefers him, venerates and esteems him, and that she defers to him, praises him, and loves and admires him exceedingly."

## *Oh God, Help!*

That's what I said. I hadn't ever known anyone who treated her husband that way! I told God to please help me because there was no one else I could go to for help. He did. Over the next few weeks and months, I noticed that I was being quieter and leaving him alone. In a group I restrained myself and gave him a chance to talk. I diligently searched for things I could compliment him on, and I even asked him questions, what he thought. And I would take care to treat his thoughts as valuable. He began to open up and talk to me, and be more loving. I was thrilled to see things changing!

Thirty years down the road, I still had to catch myself sometimes. I would fall into the old pattern somewhat, slip and say something intended to teach, and then have to ask his forgiveness, and then ask God to help me again. I find that our marriage is so much better when I can

build him up instead of belittling him by the things I say. Honoring him always works wonders.

## *A wayward teen*

Because I had been through what I had with my husband, it was easier to leave my son in God's hands. He was pursuing the world's way and seemingly had forsaken God. He was listening to music I knew was bad, he had a girlfriend and would be gone out late many nights with her, and he was like a shadow in the house, hardly ever communicating more than was absolutely necessary.

There was a short period of time when T.A. was discouraged with his walk with God, and quit praying or reading in the Bible. This was the opening that Satan needed to get to our son. One night in prayer, T.A. was crying out to God for help. Where had we gone wrong? God gave him a vision. T.A. saw how he had yelled at him. It was so real, T.A. told me he cried and cried. He asked the son's forgiveness and said that he intended to make it up to him.

This son became a little bit more happy and enjoyable around the family, but I am sure he was waiting to see if his dad was going to carry through with what he'd said. It took several months. T.A. told me that there were many times that he wanted to get angry with this son, but God helped him to be quiet and respond with love.

Then one day this son and T.A. were riding in the car and our son said, “You know, I think you are the best dad a guy could have!” Wow! They still have their rough moments, but God always helps T.A. to ask his forgiveness or to say the right thing in love (that is, with respect and honor).

## How to pray

It is more important that you talk to God about the unsaved or wayward one, than to talk to them about God! You seek God with all your heart by spending time with Him in the Word and in prayer every day! And be sure you obey what you read there. Then God will give you the power to stay sweet and loving and have wisdom no matter what happens. No one is too old for this to work. No one is beyond hope.

I wrote a brochure called *How do I get my prayers answered?* That one may help you further. Here are conditions from that one on seeing God answer our prayers.

1. Make sure you're saved.
2. Have no un-confessed sin. (That's holiness, a clear conscience, and the fear of God.)
3. Be a God-seeker, daily in the Word and in private prayer.
4. Pray God's will which is in His Word.
5. Pray with faith.

Here is an example of prayer for your loved ones ~ how to pray in faith.

“Father God, I trust You because You love me, and therefore I have no fear. I place (\_\_\_\_\_) in Your hands. I praise

you by faith that he is a powerful man of God, mightily filled with Your Spirit, walking in holiness, humility, and in the fear of God. He is blessed ~ anointed, healthy and wealthy. And as long as it takes, I'm standing firm in trust and confidence in You! He is not too difficult for You!”

## What stops God

Fear will undo your prayers of faith. Worrying and being nervous is fear. Get my brochure, *How to Use Your Sword and Shield* to learn how to control your thoughts and emotions. Doing this is also casting your cares upon the Lord (I Pet.5:7) and leaving them there.

Another thing is getting back in the old habit of trying to change him yourself. I had to keep telling myself that I am not his Holy Spirit! As long as I kept my hands off, and stayed in faith and love, then God could work.

Un-confessed sin stops God's ears. Isa. 59:2, “Your iniquities have separated you from your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He will not hear.” You need to confess to God first, and then to the one you've wronged. Say, “I was wrong, will you forgive me?”

Anything that's not love, God's kind, (I Cor.13:4-8) is sin, (Jn.13:34). Just as sin stops prayers, an unloving act or word will stop your prayers for your loved one.

# Can I Change My Family?



Testimonies  
By Cheryl Boone