



## INTRODUCTION

This nine-page document contains the results of two online surveys taken in September and October 2008. The first survey was strictly for wives and was available online from September 18 to October 3. One-hundred sixty (160) women took the survey in that time. The second survey was for husbands only. One-hundred and seven (107) men participated in that survey from September 22 to October 11.

I believe that a significant majority of respondents were Christians. News about the surveys was spread by email, brotherhood lists, and by word of mouth. Both surveys were completely anonymous.

## BACKGROUND and PURPOSE

I decided to do the surveys as part of a marriage class (taught at the Eastside church of Christ in Manchester, NY, in the last quarter of 2008) and for a series of sermons (to be presented at the church of Christ at Canastota, NY, in the Spring of 2009).

The surveys were *not* designed for the purpose of “determining truth by committee vote.” My intent was never to “substitute survey for Scripture.” This was *not* an attempt to “pry into the personal business” of any specific couples or to stealthily find out who is having marriage problems. Though I was accused of such things by a very small minority of people, most of the feedback was positive and supportive.

The purpose for each survey was clearly stated at the beginning. **The Survey for Wives** read: “*The information you provide will be used to educate husbands on how to honor their wives and understand their needs in compliance with 1 Peter 3:7.*” **The Survey for Husbands** began: “*The information you provide will be used to educate wives on how to love and respect their husbands in compliance with Titus 2:4 and Ephesians 5:33.*” My study on the Husband-Wife Relationship is based firmly on Scripture. The surveys serve only as a supplemental aid to help learn how better to apply the inspired word of God. (The surveys aren’t even referenced until Lesson 4 of my series.)

Without a doubt, men and women are made differently. Consequently, they (in general) also tend to think and communicate differently. I believe this to be well-documented. These surveys are intended to help us better understand the thoughts, needs, desires, and expectations of the opposite sex. We can’t possibly have the kind of home God designed for us if we aren’t proactive in learning more about our spouse and fulfilling our God-given role in the relationship.

## USAGE

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## RESULTS

The following pages contain the results of the survey. If a respondent skipped a question, or didn’t follow its directions properly, or misunderstood it (as evidenced by comments), that particular person’s response on that question was not included in the final results. A few survey questions allowed or asked for comments. Many of those comments are in this report.

My analysis of the results are not included in this document, however I do provide a few notes of interest and clarification when appropriate. Feedback and questions may be directed to: romans6four@yahoo.com.

May God bless you and your family.

**Online Survey for Husbands and Wives**

September - October 2008

by Tom Rainwater

**Question #1:**

Below are the results from Question 1. Numbers indicate the percentage of women who chose that particular response. Percentages are rounded. Highest percentage per line is in red.

**Survey for Wives:**

- Below is a list of ways that husbands might (intentionally or unintentionally) hurt their wives. As you read each one, please check the circle that best matches your response.

	<b>Without a doubt, this would be one of the things that would hurt and dishonor me the most.</b>	<b>This may not hurt me the most, but it would still make me sad, mad or upset.</b>	<b>This wouldn't hurt me that much. It'd be more of an inconvenience.</b>	<b>What? Are you kidding? This wouldn't bother me at all.</b>
He frequently criticizes you.	<b>57%</b>	<b>41%</b>	2%	0%
He analyzes your words instead of trying to understand your feelings.	<b>20%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>18%</b>	1%
He doesn't pay attention to what you say and disregards your input.	<b>49%</b>	<b>47%</b>	4%	0%
He doesn't show you much tenderness and affection.	<b>42%</b>	<b>46%</b>	9%	2%
He acts superior to you.	<b>24%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>23%</b>	5%
His activities take priority over your needs.	<b>26%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>16%</b>	2%
He shows preference to others (friends, brethren) over you.	<b>47%</b>	<b>44%</b>	7%	1%
He doesn't help you much around the house.	2%	<b>26%</b>	<b>63%</b>	9%
He doesn't help you much with the children.	7%	<b>51%</b>	<b>41%</b>	1%
He withholds sexual relations or doesn't desire it very often.	<b>24%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>24%</b>	4%
He won't work to provide for the family.	<b>77%</b>	<b>19%</b>	3%	1%

*Note: A few respondents on both surveys misunderstood this question. I didn't ask if your spouse fits the descriptions. The question above states that this is a list of ways that husbands (plural) "might" hurt their wives. Women are asked what their response would be to such behavior. The results are to help husbands understand what actions women consider to be most hurtful and dishonoring to them (1 Peter 3:7). The responses on the next page will help wives understand what actions men consider to be most hurtful or disrespectful to them (Ephesians 5:33).*

**Online Survey for Husbands and Wives**

September - October 2008

by Tom Rainwater

**Question #1 (continued):**

Question 1 on the **Survey for Husbands** was similar. Here are the results:

**Survey for Husbands:**

- Below is a list of ways that wives might (intentionally or unintentionally) dishonor their husbands. As you read each one, please check the circle that best matches your response.

	<b>Without a doubt, this would be one of the things that would disrespect or hurt me the most.</b>	<b>This may not be the worst, but it'd still make me sad, mad or upset.</b>	<b>This wouldn't disrespect or hurt me that much. It'd be more of an inconvenience.</b>	<b>What? Are you kidding? This wouldn't bother me at all.</b>
She frequently criticizes you.	<b>31%</b>	<b>63%</b>	6%	0%
She reacts emotionally to what you say instead of thinking it through logically.	6%	<b>29%</b>	<b>64%</b>	1%
She doesn't pay attention to what you say and ignores your advice.	<b>30%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>16%</b>	1%
She doesn't show you much tenderness and affection.	<b>43%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>12%</b>	0%
She doesn't submit to you.	<b>56%</b>	<b>40%</b>	4%	0%
Her interests take priority over your needs.	<b>15%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>30%</b>	2%
She shows preference to others (friends, brethren, relatives) over you.	<b>38%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>12%</b>	1%
She doesn't help you much when you work or fix things around the house.	0%	8%	<b>43%</b>	<b>49%</b>
She doesn't discipline the children but waits on you to do it.	<b>13%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>34%</b>	8%
She withholds sexual relations or doesn't desire it very often.	<b>52%</b>	<b>35%</b>	10%	3%
She won't do house work.	<b>20%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>26%</b>	6%
She doesn't keep up her personal appearance.	<b>13%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>35%</b>	4%
She tries to lead the family.	<b>47%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>14%</b>	6%

*Note: Since the wives' survey was started online first, suggestions came in for what to include in the mens' survey. Some of those suggestions were used, hence, the men had more selections and questions in their survey than the women.*

## Online Survey for Husbands and Wives

September - October 2008

by Tom Rainwater

### Question #1 (continued):

To get the top answers for each sex, I assigned a numerical value to each answer. Each "this would hurt me the most" response became equal to 100. The other three possible responses were assigned lesser values (75,50, and 25 respectively). After adding everyone's answers for each action in the question, the higher totals produced these results:

Top 5 Actions that Hurt and Dishonor You the Most	
Wives	Husbands
1. He won't work to provide for the family. <b>77% + 19%</b>	1. She doesn't submit to you. <b>56% + 40%</b>
2. He frequently criticizes you. <b>57% + 41%</b>	2. She withholds sexual relations or relations or doesn't desire it very often. <b>52% + 35%</b>
3. He doesn't pay attention to what you say and disregards your input. <b>49% + 47%</b>	3. She doesn't show you much tenderness and affection. <b>43% + 45%</b>
4. He shows preference to others (friends, brethren) over you. <b>47% + 44%</b>	4. She frequently criticizes you. <b>31% + 63%</b>
5. He doesn't show you much tenderness and affection. <b>42% + 46%</b>	5. <b>TIE:</b> She shows preference to others....over you. <b>38% + 49%</b> She tries to lead the family. <b>47% + 33%</b>

*Note: This arrangement of the results for Question 1 works well for presentation purposes. Only the percentages for the two most severe responses are shown in the chart (though all were used in the computation). There was a statistical tie for 5th place in the husbands' answers.*

### Comments:

Both surveys allowed for comments in different places. This was optional. Though I neither asked for nor desired comments regarding personal marital problems, a few husbands and wives wrote anonymously about their own experiences for the sake of educating whoever would read them. You may find the comment sections to be a valuable part of this material as men and women speak freely from the heart. I include only the most helpful comments for your consideration so you may learn from them how you might improve your own marriage relationship.

### COMMENTS FROM WIVES (Question #1):

(The number in parentheses indicates the number of women who gave the same or a similar response.)

#### Other ways (in addition to Question #1) that husbands hurt or dishonor their wives:

- "By not being the spiritual leader." (8); "It does hurt because in a way he's saying that your soul is not very important."; "By not leading the family and letting that job fall to the wife."
- "Pornography" (3); "Lust issues"; "A wondering eye"; "When he talks about other women in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable or not loved as much."
- "By being dishonest!" (2)
- "Not noticing things I have done and only criticizing me without any praise." (2); "By mocking me when I try to discuss things that are important to me."; "He seems to enjoy disagreeing with whatever I say."
- "Belittling their wives to others" (2); "By saying critical or mean-spirited things in front of others and making it seem like a joke."; "By talking down to you when you don't understand something." (2)

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- "I feel most hurt by my husband when I am needing time with him to share my feelings or to just have him hold me and he is busy."
- "By not asking about me how I am doing or feeling. Remembering there was something wrong the day before and asking 'How is your headache today?' or whatever it was that was wrong."
- "By working too much and then coming home to TV, then bed, and back to work again."; "When he relinquishes responsibilities as a husband because he feels his only job is to work to provide financially for the family."
- "I realize that when he gets home from work, he is tired from working a job to provide for our family. But sometimes he doesn't realize the wife is tired, too, and her job doesn't have a quitting time. A homemaker's job is her family and doing the job right (raising children to follow God and taking care of their physical needs) is hard, challenging at times, and tiring. Sometimes she needs 5 minutes to go to the bathroom by herself without someone watching and/or waiting for her."
- "By putting his birth family first."; "By always criticizing the wife's family."; "By putting self over the children."
- "When he does not back up his wife on discipline issues with the children. That is a form of dishonor. It tears down her authority and standing in the family."
- "My husband can't tell other people 'no' when it comes to work, school, etc. So in a roundabout way he is telling me and the children 'no' instead. We often feel forgotten and neglected because of it."
- "By treating the wife as a child in need of being scolded, corrected, and 'preached to' as though she is stupid."
- "I really, really hate the philosophy of 'if you'd just do what I say, tell you, etc., everything would be fine.' It relegates the relationship to parent/child instead of adults."
- "By siding with those whom you are having some type of conflict."
- "I once heard the statement, 'Keep them how you won them.' I know this would make a huge change in our relationship."; "Remember important dates (birthdays, anniversaries), not that there has to a gift; just remember."

### COMMENTS FROM HUSBANDS (Question #1):

(The number in parentheses indicates the number of men who gave the same or a similar response.)

#### Other ways (in addition to Question #1) that wives hurt or disrespect their husbands:

- "By criticizing or mocking me in front of others." (4); "A wife should never ridicule her husband in public. Save any comments until you are back at the house. This also applies to the husband."; "When she speaks to him in front of people, especially members of the church, like this, 'I told you to do....' with a mandatory tone."
- "By discussing his faults or weaknesses to others in his presence." (3); "Talking behind my back or discussing our marriage problems with friends or family rather than with me." (2).
- "Failing to acknowledge your good attributes."; "Not giving praise when deserved."; "Negative comparisons to other men."; "When she makes him feel inadequate for what he has provided."; "When she doesn't say 'thank you,' or express appreciation for his sacrifices for the family or her."
- "By talking over him in public conversation."; "By letting the children interrupt Daddy."; "By constantly correcting unimportant details in a story he's trying to tell."; "Quick rebuttals without hearing me out."
- "Wives screaming and yelling at their husbands in epidemic proportions."; "Being insulting towards her in-laws."
- "The way your wife speaks to you in front of your children can cause children often to mimic the same behavior. If your wife is not respectful of how she addresses you in front of your children, the children will often not be very respectful either."
- "By acting like the children are more important to her than I am." (3). "By putting their needs over mine."
- "By demeaning my attempts to be involved with the family."; "Saying one thing to the children when the father has already said something else."; "By not reinforcing the discipline of the father, but coddling the children."
- "By putting too much emphasis on the children. Wives/mothers often tend to get their affection from their children and thus don't feel a need for it from their husband. If this is not worked on, it can lead to estrangement that really surfaces when the children begin to leave the nest and become independent."
- "When she holds too tightly to the 'mothering' of adult children who have been encouraged/taught to be independent and live their own lives."
- "By nagging." (2); "When the wife is too controlling and bossy over the household and the husband."; "Not letting me be myself." (2); "By not trying to understand MY emotions." (2).
- "By failing to PLAINLY, verbally communicate what she might want, think, expect, etc. from our relationship."
- "From a financial standpoint, her failing to plan and spend responsibly would be a serious problem."; "When she does not honor financial guidelines." (2); "When she puts constant financial pressure on him."
- "By failing to simply greet me when I arrive home from work."
- "By not supporting your husband in his spiritual quests (in preaching the gospel, etc.)."

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**Question #2 (Wives):**

Below are the results from Question 2 for the wives. Numbers indicate the percentage of women who chose that particular response. Percentages are rounded. Highest percentage per line is in red. Boxes with numbers over ten percent are highlighted.

**Survey for Wives:**

2. To the best of your ability, rate in order from greatest (#1) to least (#11) which is most important to you in your marriage.

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11
Tender affection.	3%	9%	15%	13%	25%	15%	9%	8%	2%	2%	0%
Sexual fulfillment.	0%	1%	1%	7%	6%	11%	16%	12%	19%	20%	7%
Healthy conversation.	1%	3%	20%	17%	13%	19%	10%	9%	4%	4%	0%
Honesty and openness in the relationship	8%	44%	20%	8%	7%	4%	4%	1%	2%	2%	0%
Financial stability	0%	4%	10%	13%	6%	14%	24%	14%	6%	6%	3%
A spiritual foundation.	83%	8%	1%	1%	3%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%
An attractive-looking spouse.	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	3%	5%	10%	15%	64%
That my spouse thinks I've attractive.	0%	1%	1%	0%	4%	7%	13%	21%	21%	29%	3%
Commitment in raising the children.	1%	17%	23%	16%	12%	11%	8%	5%	3%	2%	2%
That my spouse admires and respects me.	4%	13%	9%	21%	21%	12%	7%	7%	4%	2%	0%
Recreational companionship with your spouse.	0%	1%	1%	4%	2%	6%	6%	15%	29%	17%	19%

*Note: A few respondents on the women's survey misunderstood and/or incorrectly completed this question. This question asked that you attempt to list in order of importance the things you value most in marriage. In other words, whatever is most important to you would be selected as your #1. What is second-most important to you would be selected as your #2, and so on, all the way to #11. At the time of the women's survey, the website inadvertently allowed multiple responses for each column, and unfortunately, a few women did exactly that, making several items be their #1. (This technical issue was corrected by the time the men's survey began.) Incorrect or incomplete responses could not be included in the tabulation.*

*This question proved to be a difficult exercise for both husbands and wives as some, by their comments, said they considered several items of equal or overlapping importance. I agree. Regardless, the point of the question was to see if men and women would answer differently. Many popular marriage books (like "His Needs, Her Needs," etc.) affirm that the sexes value many of these things differently. This question was designed to test that premise. Are the stereotypical images of men and women in these books true? We're different, but are we that much different?*

**Online Survey for Husbands and Wives**

September - October 2008

by Tom Rainwater

**Question #4 (Husbands):**

Question 4 for the husbands was the same as Question 2 for the wives. Below are the results for the men. Numbers indicate the percentage of women who chose that particular response. Percentages are rounded. Highest percentage per line is in red. Boxes with numbers over ten percent are highlighted.

**Survey for Husbands:**

4. To the best of your ability, rate in order from greatest (#1) to least (#11) which is most important to you in your marriage.

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11
Tender affection.	3%	9%	12%	16%	19%	11%	17%	4%	5%	3%	1%
Sexual fulfillment.	3%	13%	14%	12%	11%	15%	13%	11%	4%	4%	1%
Healthy conversation.	2%	0%	9%	12%	23%	17%	16%	10%	2%	4%	5%
Honesty and openness in the relationship	4%	36%	26%	18%	3%	0%	4%	4%	3%	0%	1%
Financial stability	0%	1%	3%	7%	5%	16%	4%	15%	17%	16%	15%
A spiritual foundation.	82%	8%	2%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
An attractive-looking spouse.	0%	4%	0%	0%	5%	5%	11%	13%	31%	16%	15%
That my spouse thinks I've attractive.	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	4%	8%	12%	18%	33%	23%
Commitment in raising the children.	0%	17%	14%	18%	16%	13%	7%	3%	2%	4%	5%
That my spouse admires and respects me.	7%	13%	19%	10%	8%	13%	13%	12%	3%	2%	1%
Recreational companionship with your spouse.	0%	0%	1%	2%	7%	5%	6%	15%	13%	18%	32%

*Note: After the first 20 men had taken the survey, it was suggested that men might answer this question differently depending on their age. At that point I added an optional question (#7) to the men's survey: "What is your age?" Eighty-eight (88) men indicated their age:*

Under 20 years old:	0%	Age 50-59:	30%
Age 21-29:	5%	Age 60-69:	17%
Age 30-39:	18%	Age 70-79:	6%
Age 40-49:	24%	Age 80 or over:	1%

*I didn't notice any real difference in men's answers based on age. However, I would have liked to had more responses from the youngest ages.*

*Note: A couple of men indicated that they would have answered "Commitment in raising children" higher had their children still been living at home.*

## Online Survey for Husbands and Wives

September - October 2008

by Tom Rainwater

Here is how the husbands and wives compare on this question:

<b>What is Most Important to You in Your Marriage?</b>	
<b>Husbands</b>	<b>Wives</b>
1. A spiritual foundation.	1. A spiritual foundation.
2. Honesty & openness in the relationship.	2. Honesty & openness in the relationship.
3. That my spouse admires & respects me.	3. Commitment in raising the children.
4. Commitment in raising the children.	4. That my spouse admires & respects me.
5. Tender affection.	5. Tender affection.
6. Sexual fulfillment.	6. Healthy conversation.
7. Healthy conversation.	7. Financial stability.
8. Financial stability.	8. Sexual fulfillment.
9. An attractive-looking spouse.	9. That my spouse thinks I'm attractive.
10. Recreational companionship with my spouse.	10. Recreational companionship with My spouse.
11. That my spouse thinks I'm attractive.	11. An attractive-looking spouse.

*Note: For the men, "Tender affection" was only very slightly ahead of "Sexual fulfillment" when the responses were averaged.*

### **Question #3 (Wives) and Question #5 (Husbands):**

The same question was asked both sexes: "Which way best describes the method by which you would evaluate your marriage?" Multiple answers were allowed, and many picked more than one. The results are below:

1. Our marriage is really the best when I work on improving myself.  
**Husbands: 70%. Wives: 66%.**
2. If things are peaceful, then our marriage is in good shape.  
**Husbands: 20%. Wives: 20%.**
3. We go by the 50/50 system, I do my part and he/she does his/hers, then we see if we measure up.  
**Husbands: 18%. Wives: 17%.**
4. Our marriage would be much better if he/she would just change some things.  
**Husbands: 11%. Wives: 15%.**
5. The main way I would evaluate our marriage is by how I feel about it at the time.  
**Husbands: 7%. Wives: 10%.**
6. Why evaluate our marriage? It's not really necessary until something serious happens.  
**Husbands: 2%. Wives: 2%.**
7. If she would simply do as I say, everything would be fine.  
**Husbands: 2%.**

*Note: I've heard people say these things in the past about their marriage and I wanted to see how prevalent these ideas were. (I evaluate these viewpoints in my lesson series.) Because of a comment, an extra choice (the last one) was added to the men's survey.*



## Online Survey for Husbands and Wives

September - October 2008

by Tom Rainwater

### Question #4 (Wives) and Question #6 (Husbands):

The same question was asked both sexes: "Which better reflects your opinion about your spouse?" The results:

1. I accept him/her just the way he/she is, warts and all.  
**Husbands: 93%. Wives: 91%.**
2. If he/she was more like me, our marriage would be so much better.  
**Husbands: 7%. Wives: 9%.**

*Note: A few people didn't understand the expression "warts and all." It means "everything including the less attractive parts." Acceptance of our mate in spite of his/her faults is important. This, of course, doesn't imply that you must ignore sin and the need for repentance.*

### Extra Questions for the Husbands (#2 and #3):

As stated earlier, the women's survey was online before the men's, which gave the women opportunity to suggest questions for the men. Questions #2 and 3 came from that, and I worded them from the husband's viewpoint. Typing was required to answer these. These were optional, and 62% of husbands chose to respond. The questions were:

2. Since wives are provided to their husbands by God as helpers (Gen.2:18), how can our wives best help us? What do we need the most help with?
3. What's the best way wives can motivate their husbands to be their best and to be loving leaders?

Since the answers to these questions tended to overlap, I include below all the ones that best expressed the thoughts of the husbands.

(The number in parentheses indicates the number of men who gave a similar response.)

- "We need insight from a female point-of-view to get the whole picture." (4); My wife "aids me most by providing a different perspective that often smooths/softens my approach/interaction with others."
- Help us "by being humble and prayerful. We husbands need the feedback of such a wife."
- Help by "understanding the pressures of being the head of the family."
- By "listening and supporting us and helping us feel appreciated" (22); "We need lots of encouragement" (24).
- By "showing respect and not challenging our headship." (7); "Love me for who I am." (13).
- "Wives should be an aid/help in physical needs (keeping the home, etc.), but the most important aid a wife can provide is in the spiritual realm. She should do all she can to encourage him spiritually." (14).
- "By displaying that gentle, quiet spirit that Peter talks about, which helps the husband tone himself down and be more gentle and loving." (3).
- "By being a soul-mate and helping us get to heaven. The strait and narrow is difficult to travel alone or with a constant antagonist." (4).
- "Sometimes I feel ashamed to admit it, but I know the truth that the male ego is very fragile. A wife can best help her husband (and their marriage) by making him feel that she is proud of him, that she respects his decisions even if in her heart she disagrees. The biblical concept of submission handles the male ego problem, and the godly man who is made to feel like a King will respond with the proper love and honor for his Queen."
- "Constructive suggestions made in love mean more to me than anything. Love me when I fail, be proud of me when I succeed, but always be loyal regardless." (5)
- "My wife's undying confidence in and loyalty to me is my greatest earthly strength."
- "We need the most help with understanding her needs." (2)
- "We need the most help in maintaining a truly spiritual orientation rather than a material one." ; "We need help focusing... [on the fact] that work, though important, is not the 'be all - end all.'"
- I need help so I can "become an elder of God's people one day."; Help me to want "to preach the gospel."; Help me "reach my goals." (2); "Help me remain spiritually focused through your godly actions."

-- End of Report --