

FAQ: When a Husband is Angry

As my husband travels up and down this country preaching the gospel, wives have come to me with questions. One recently asked me, “Amy, what do I do when my husband gets angry?” One great temptation for most every male is anger. Men are God-created with a drive to succeed and conquer (Gen. 1:26, 28), and sin's presence can easily warp that into anger. Most wives have at some time or another been faced with an angry man, and some wives live with a man who often lapses into anger. How is a wife to deal with that?

First of all, realize that just like yourself **your husband is a human with faults** and he is growing as are you. Job, in speaking to his wife, told her that she was speaking “as one of the foolish women” - Job 2:10. His wife was not necessarily a foolish woman, she was just talking that way at that moment. And your husband is not necessarily the bad guy for a moment of failure. Take glory in “covering” and “passing over” your husband's transgression. (Proverbs 17:9; 19:11) Give him grace for forgiveness and space to grow and mature.

Also, check to see how much you're contributing to the problem. This is not excusing his sin. It is claiming responsibility for your part in the partnership. A couple of ways you may accidentally be making the problem worse are:

1. Putting your personal self-worth into the picture or taking things personally. Prov 13:10 says, “Only by pride cometh contention.” You can greatly reduce strife in your home by getting at least one person's pride out of the way. And the one person you have control over is you. So, choose not to take personal offense the next time anger is present.

2. Fueling the flames. You must realize that an angry person is acting foolishly. Proverbs 12:16 explains that a person who is making their anger immediately known is acting the part of a fool. “A fool's wrath is presently known.” With that in mind, Proverbs 26:4-5 sets out a conundrum: “**Answer not a fool** according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. **Answer a fool** according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.” So there's no good way to answer a fool or a man temporarily acting like a fool. What is a wife then to do? Well, remember, “It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.” (Proverbs 20:3) **Don't play the part of a fool yourself** by picking and meddling and fanning the flames. Don't feed fuel to the fire. You'll get burnt that way. Instead, follow the answer found in Romans 12:19 “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath.” To 'give place to wrath' means give them space. Let them have their say without argument or defense. Verbally recognize and acknowledge any element of truth in the words. Or if they prefer, let them go off to cool off. Don't insist that things must be dealt with now. Postpone your side of the discussion until they've been able to cool off and have a reasonable conversation.

Beyond that, some positive things you can do to enable your husband to overcome his anger are:

-**Build him up.** That drive to succeed is greatly frustrated when a husband has no respect in his own home. Proverbs 14:1 states, “Every wise woman buildeth her house, but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.” You would be wise to build him and in doing so build your entire household. Tearing him down is tearing your home down around your own head.

-**Never strive.** In II Tim 2:24 we are told that “the servant of the Lord must not strive.” It is not a child of God's place to instigate or perpetuate strife.

-**Keep your place.** Cultivate the “meek and quiet spirit” of II Pet 3:4. Don't step out of your place and into God's. A wise older pastor's wife once told us young women in Bible College, “**The best thing you can do when God is swinging for your husband is DUCK! If you don't, the wallop might miss your husband and get you instead.**”

-Pray. I Tim 2:2 encourages you to pray for your authority, your husband, so that you may live a quiet and peaceable life.

-Be personally just, merciful to your husband, and humble before God. (Micah 6:8) Continue (or start) to do right regardless of circumstance, show much mercy to your husband, and realize humbly before God how short you yourself fall (as do we all) of His perfection.

-Invest yourself. Constant rough patches can greatly wear on a wife's affections for her husband. To combat this, Matthew 6:21 and Luke 12:34 teach us to put your treasure (your finances, time, thought, etc.) where you want your heart. Invest yourself in the man.

As you do these things, you are creating a fertile environment for the seed of the Word of God to root, sprout, and bear fruit in your husband's life. Be patient, follow God's Word, and trust God for the results.

Note: In any situation where things have moved past anger to evil and criminal actions, then it is completely appropriate to get God-ordained (Rom. 13:1, 3-4) civil authorities involved.