“My Husband Wants to Engage in a Threesome”

My husband is a Christian and has a good understanding of the Bible. However he has a desire/fantasy to engage in a threesome. I asked him if he believes that is OK with God and he replied yes. He says that the Bible speaks of men being with other men as sinful, however in the days that the Bible was written the men had more than one wife and it is acceptable with God as long as it is acceptable to each person involved. I disagree, but I have no biblical reference to back up my belief. Is the Bible clear about this issue?

Yes, the Bible is clear in teaching against this practice. Your husband is mistaken in stating that the Bible either condones or at least does not prohibit a threesome of one man and two women because some of the leaders of Israel practiced polygamy.

Although the Bible does not have a specific verse that says do not engage in a threesome, there is a long list of Biblical principles that make it clear that such behavior is outside of God’s will for us as His children. The Bible clearly forbids a married man from having sex with a woman who is not his wife; i.e. adultery (Exodus 20:14, Matthew 5:27), and also forbids sex between two unmarried individuals, i.e. fornication (Acts 15:20, 1 Corinthians 6:18, 1 Thessalonians 4:3). Jesus’ teaching in the New Testament clearly shows that a man who is not rightfully divorced from his first wife and takes on another wife is also committing adultery (Matthew 19:3ff).

In the light of the Biblical prohibition against fornication and adultery, a threesome of one man and two women could consist of the following situations:

- None of them are married to each other—fornication (and

adultery if one or more of them is married to someone not involved in the threesome);

• The man is married to one of the women and not to the other—he is committing fornication with the other woman and adultery against his wife at the same time; or

• The man is married to both women—according to Jesus' teaching in the NT, he is committing adultery against his first wife.

In all of these cases, the two women are acting in a depraved, unnatural manner toward one another (Romans 1:26)

A sampling of the Biblical principles which apply to this subject are summarized below:

God's Intention for Marriage: When God created marriage, He stated the man shall cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh (Genesis 2:24). Note that He does not say the three or more shall become one flesh. God's purpose for marriage has always been a covenant relationship between one man and one woman. This is reaffirmed in Ephesians 5:31-33 where the marriage relationship is shown to be a picture of Christ's relationship with His one bride, the Church, and the passage from Genesis is quoted, "the two shall become one flesh." It goes on to say that each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself. Note that each individual has his own *wife* not his own *wives*.

God's Standard for Adultery: In interpreting the Bible, Jesus' instruction and interpretation of the Old Testament and any other topic should be our authoritative source. In Matthew 19:3-9, Jesus repeats this principle of becoming one flesh and adds, "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." He then goes on to say that the Law of Moses only allowed for divorce because of the hardness of their heart and that God's full standard is "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife,

except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery." Jesus' teaching on this matter overrides any attempts to use Jacob, David, Solomon, etc. as examples that God supports polygamy. God allowed it in those cases and in every reported case polygamy only led to trouble and heartache.

NT Standard for Maturity: The standard for spiritual leadership and maturity in the NT is the husband of one wife. (1 Timothy 3:2,12, Titus 1:6) We don't know if the first century church forced a polygamist who came to Christ to divorce all of his wives, but he could not be a leader in the church, and the objective for believers was clearly marriages of one man and one woman. For additional insight, consider the passage where Paul is discussing marriage in 1 Corinthians 7. In that passage, he notes that a couple is not to withhold sex from one another except for a mutually agreed period for prayer and fasting. Note that he makes no mention of how this should be handled in a polygamous situation, because polygamy was not part of God's plan for marriage.

Our Body Belongs to the Lord. In 1 Corinthians 6, the Scripture is very clear about what God thinks of a man engaging in sex with someone other than his wife even when that sexual act was encouraged by the society in which he lived.

> 1 Corinthians 6:15-20 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH." But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been

bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

Is this threesome going to glorify God? Is this something that Jesus wants to honor with His presence?

Depravity between Women. Clearly the threesome suggested by your husband includes sexual interaction between two women. Romans 1:26-27 clearly states that this degrading activity is the result of man's depravity and is not God's desire for his beloved children.

Victory over Sensuality. The purpose of sex in marriage is not to promote sensuality. The only purpose of a threesome is sensuality. The Bible is clear that sensuality is a deed of the flesh and not a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:19-23). In particular, Ephesians 4:17-24 says that we are no longer to walk in the futility of our mind, giving ourselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness, but we are to put on our new self that has been created in righteousness.

I could go on and on with other passages that clearly teach against such practices. The only way to argue that the Bible supports such activity is to deceive oneself as to the nature of the activity and the clear teaching of Scripture.

I would like to end by encouraging your husband to consider his fantasy in the light of the following verses:

1 Peter 3:7 You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered. How does introducing another woman into the special intimacy you share with your wife show her honor? How does it show that you are living with her in an understanding way? The suggestion that her intimacy is not enough dishonors and degrades her dignity as a fellow heir of God's grace as it would any other woman involved in such a relationship.

Romans 13:13-14 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. Seeking to go beyond the marriage relationship is making provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. Our lusts are great at tricking us into rationalizing foolish behavior that is going to damage ourselves and others. When we start making provision for them, we are moving ourselves outside of Christ's protection. We can be sure that Jesus Christ is intensely interested in your relationship with your wife and has NO interest in participating in a sexual threesome.

Even if the Bible was silent on the topic (which it clearly is not), 1 Corinthians 8 & 9 and Romans 14 would prevent you from pursuing it further in the light of your wife's feelings about the subject.

Understand that the reason God puts limits on our sensuality and promiscuity is not to deprive us of greater satisfaction in life. Just as we do with our own children, He puts those limits in place to protect us from harming ourselves and others. Please recognize this fantasy for what it is—a deceitful lust which needs to be taken captive in obedience to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). Don't feel ashamed for being under attack by lust (it is a common position to find ourselves in), and be sure and ask God for His way to escape from this deceit (1 Corinthians 10:13). Turning his back on this fantasy will lead to joy and satisfaction, whereas continuing to pursue it will lead to continual craving and heartache.

_____, if your husband is unwilling to consider the evidence presented above, you should seek competent, Christian counseling as a couple. In addition, I can recommend some good resource materials to better understand God's purpose for marriage and how you can grow as a couple. Here is a sampling

of resources:

• ***The Marriage Masterpiece*** by Al Jansenn—a comprehensive look at God's purposes for marriage

• ***Marriage Without Regrets***—a comprehensive inductive Bible study from Precept Ministries

• ***Sex According to God*** by Kay Arthur—what does the Bible teach about sex?

• ***A Lasting Promise: A Christian Guide to Fighting for Your Marriage*** by S. Stanley, et.al.—identifying and removing destructive behavior patterns

• ***When Bad Things Happen to Good Marriages***, Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott

I am praying that God will speak to you and your husband leading you into the joy of being one in Him.

Yours in Christ,

Steve Cable

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