

“April Cassidy has written an excellent book! I endorse her heart and message. In fact, I asked my daughter-in-law to read it and she reported to me, ‘I am wholeheartedly encouraging you to endorse this book. She addresses the impact of the love and respect message from Ephesians 5:33. Also, she delves into submission and challenges her fellow women to rethink the word *submission* and what it should really look like in their lives. She is open and honest about how she thought she was a ‘good wife’ but realized, after reading the *Love and Respect* book that you wrote, what she had overlooked. April does an excellent job of placing a mirror in front of readers so that they may see the ways they have been disrespectful, but she also provides a comforting hug as she explains how the disrespect can end and a life of respecting one’s husband can move into place. She provides great insight into her own struggles and a wonderful chapter where her own husband gives his thoughts on her transformation. April challenges, encourages, and breathes hope for all wives. I feel like this is a companion book to *Love and Respect*. There is something about receiving advice from someone who has walked the same path as you, in the same high heels perhaps.”

—EMERSON EGGERICHS, author of *Love and Respect*

“April knows what it’s like to struggle in her marriage with frustration and anger toward her spouse. Her journey to becoming a peaceful wife will resonate with any reader who wants new peace in her own marriage. I love that this book walks each of us through the reality checks we need in order to have the marriage we want!”

—SHAUNTI FELDHAHN, social researcher and  
best-selling author of *For Women Only*

“*The Peaceful Wife* is a must-read for every bride who wants to arm her marriage in the spiritual battle! April Cassidy offers her own beautiful story of awakening to God’s design for marriage and calls us all to humbly embrace the help of His Holy Spirit. Her writing is well grounded in Scripture and filled with eye-opening wisdom, testimonies, and checklists to help me and every wife excel at honoring God by respecting our husbands.”

—JENNIFER O. WHITE, author of *Prayers for New Brides* and *Marriage Armor for the Praying Bride*



April Cassidy

# The Peaceful Wife

LIVING IN SUBMISSION TO  
Christ <sup>AS</sup> Lord

*The Peaceful Wife: Living in Submission to Christ as Lord*

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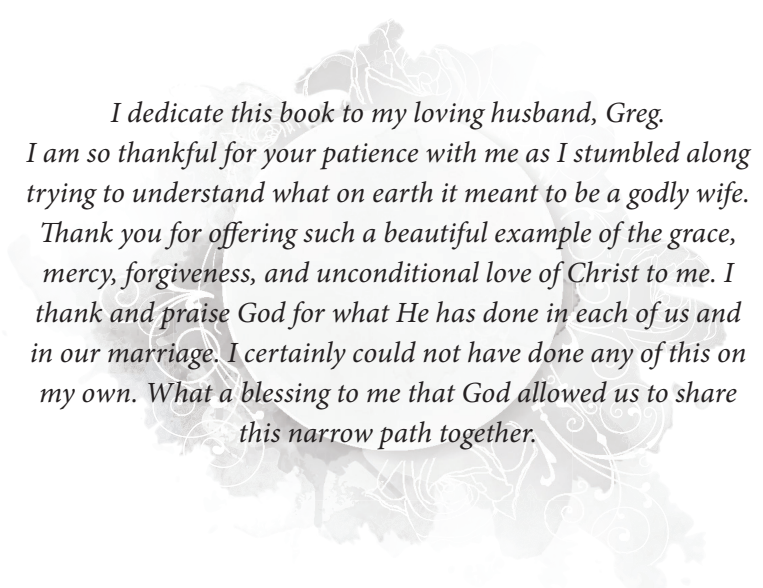
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*I dedicate this book to my loving husband, Greg.  
I am so thankful for your patience with me as I stumbled along  
trying to understand what on earth it meant to be a godly wife.  
Thank you for offering such a beautiful example of the grace,  
mercy, forgiveness, and unconditional love of Christ to me. I  
thank and praise God for what He has done in each of us and  
in our marriage. I certainly could not have done any of this on  
my own. What a blessing to me that God allowed us to share  
this narrow path together.*



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## Preface

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I am now a very happily married Christian mother of two, part-time pharmacist, and Christian marriage blogger. Sharing God's design for marriage with women is my greatest passion. In this book, I want to explore some things with you that I wish I had been exposed to before Greg and I ever got married. My prayer is that God might use my experiences to help you avoid some of my painful, self-defeating mistakes and find His life-giving, beautiful wisdom instead. I am not a professional counselor, psychologist, pastor, minister, psychiatrist, or seminary-trained "expert." I am a wife who loves God wholeheartedly and who wants to relate my personal, life-changing experience with Jesus Christ and the Bible.

I write from the perspective of a wife who was formerly strong willed, controlling, bossy, perfectionistic, people pleasing, overly responsible, overly "helpful," and dominating with a passive, unplugged husband. I must write from what I know, from my own story and experiences. In the process, I am excited to share some other wives' stories as well. God has allowed me the honor and privilege of watching Him transform hundreds of women and their marriages through my blog at [www.peacefulwife.com](http://www.peacefulwife.com). Although God's Word applies to all marriages and all situations, this book will probably be most helpful for wives whose marriage dynamics fall into this general category of a dominant wife married to a passive husband.

Wives who are rather timid, overly submissive, or passive may need to approach biblical concepts about being a godly wife from a different angle. They may need to learn to speak up more and to be bolder, for instance. We each have our own worldview, personality, and personal history that help to shape the way we filter what we read. I want to be up front about my particular slant so that my words might be most helpful to the greatest number of women.

I fervently desire to honor God with every word I write. I pray that each believer will carefully weigh what I write against Scripture. I am human and prone to error, after all. The Bible is the only source of absolute truth. Our job as followers of Christ is to love and obey Jesus; He handles the results.

One book doesn't begin to give me enough space to share all that there is to know about becoming a godly wife, but I am excited to get to share a bit with you. I pray that God might richly bless your walk with Him and your marriage as you prayerfully read through these pages. I pray that God might use me to point you toward Jesus as both Savior and Lord and toward the wisdom of His Word. I pray for you, my precious new friend, to experience the supernatural peace, joy, and abundant life God has prepared for you as a woman who seeks to honor and please Christ above everything else in this world. Jesus and the Holy Spirit are the keys here. I can't do the hard work for you, but I am thrilled to have the privilege of walking beside you on this exciting journey. I still have thousands of miles to go myself. None of us will reach total perfection until we are in heaven, face-to-face with Jesus our Lord. There are no guarantees of specific results in your marriage or in your husband's life as you seek to please God, but you are guaranteed that God will radically change *you* when you seek Him with all your heart and desire to walk in full obedience to Him.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and

a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the LORD. (Jer. 29:11–14)

“I am the LORD your God,  
who teaches you what is best for you,  
who directs you in the way you should go.  
If only you had paid attention to my commands,  
your peace would have been like a river,  
your well-being like the waves of the sea.” (Isa. 48:17–18)

*Note:* If you have very serious problems in your marriage—physical abuse, severe emotional or spiritual abuse, drug or alcohol addictions, uncontrolled mental health disorders, criminal activity, extreme control and manipulation, sexual infidelity, and so on—please find godly, experienced, appropriate help as soon as possible! If you are not safe, please try to get yourself and your children to safety. I do not ever condone abuse or sin against anyone. I don’t want wives to sin against husbands and I don’t want husbands to sin against wives. Severe marital issues go beyond the scope of this book. I am writing as an older wife, a friend and sister in the Lord, mentoring younger wives about godly marriage. Those with severe problems will need one-on-one help from godly, wise, mature, experienced, licensed professionals and resources geared to the specific issues they are facing.





# Introduction

## *Matthew and Jen*

One evening, Matthew decided to grill steaks on the deck for supper. There were lots of flies swarming near the grill, so he asked their teenage son, Jacob, to get the fly swatter. Jen laughed and said, “Son, don’t get the flyswatter. That’s just crazy. You’ll never kill all the flies in the woods with one little flyswatter.” Jacob obeyed his mom and went inside, ignoring Matthew’s request. Jen was surprised when Matthew suddenly shut down and stayed quiet for the rest of the day. Jen had no idea what her husband was so upset about.

## *John and Megan*

One morning, Megan was getting ready for work and making a special breakfast for John’s relatives who were staying at their house for a few days. John entered the kitchen and Megan said, “Honey, can you help me for a minute? I’m trying to finish getting a couple things ready, but I really need to get out the door.” John replied, “Don’t bother; it’s fine.” Megan got a bit defensive and said, “Well, I was trying to help you so you knew what you could offer your family for breakfast,” and her husband retorted, “They are not babies. They know what they will want to eat—and besides, they aren’t *your* family.”

Megan glared at John and shot back, “So, you are going to just let them fend for themselves when they wake up?” They continued to throw verbal jabs back and forth at each other for a while until

Megan became exasperated and said, “You are unbelievable!” After more tense interaction, John said harshly, “If you would just shut your mouth, we wouldn’t have any of these problems.” Megan left for work upset and bewildered about what had just happened. How could an innocent request for John’s help to be good hosts for his relatives lead to so much hurt? Why was John being so difficult? The whole day was ruined.

### *Greg and April*

April had to work late, as usual. When she got home, she was glad to smell that a delicious, hot supper was waiting for her. She walked into the kitchen and saw Greg smiling and getting the food on the table. Then she noticed the sink. It was overflowing with dirty pots and pans. Her heart sank. She knew it would be thirty minutes of work for her to hand wash all those dishes, not to mention the time it would take to clean up the grease that had splattered all over the stove and countertops. Greg saw April look at the dishes and said proudly, “Look, honey, I rinsed the pots and pans for you!” She sighed in exasperation and gave Greg a very sarcastic lecture. “Yeah. That’s just *great!* You get a C+. You still left me a bunch of dirty dishes to wash by hand. Why wouldn’t you have washed them yourself instead of leaving them for me to do?” The smile quickly left her husband’s face.

What could have been a fun, romantic, beautiful, intimate time ended up being a time of hurt feelings, bitterness, and silence. Greg spent the evening like he usually did—engrossed in the TV and not responding much to his wife. April felt the way she often did: ignored, exhausted, unappreciated, overwhelmed, lonely, resentful, and upset.

### *What Is Going On Here?*

Why is it so difficult to have a simple conversation with our husbands? Why is there so much tension between husbands and wives today? Why do men have to be so stubborn, aggravating, and complicated?

Why can't they just do what we tell them to do and focus on making us happy? Life would be so much easier, right?

It's like there is some huge missing piece of the puzzle in our marriage relationships in recent decades. We know things could be better. We try so hard to improve our marriages on our own. Maybe we even read lots of Christian marriage books and pray daily, but we just can't seem to get our husbands to cooperate. We give our husbands helpful suggestions and wise advice; share our opinions; tell them all the things we are thinking and feeling; and explain how disconnected, unloved, lonely, and hurt we feel in our marriages. We tell them all the things they could do to be better husbands and to make us feel more loved. We tell them they are not paying enough attention to us. We tell them they need to be more plugged in with our children and more romantic with us. We try to be loving and helpful, try to make time to talk and connect with our husbands, and yet many times we don't feel very loved in return. Or maybe we don't share how hurt we are; we just stay shut down, depressed, afraid, and lonely.

Let's get personal here. Are you feeling betrayed that marriage isn't living up to your expectations? Do you cry into your pillow over the lack of romance, connection, and vibrancy in your marriage? Perhaps you're following the Golden Rule—you try to talk with your husband and love him the way you want to be loved in return, but it doesn't seem to work. You are trying to be good a good Christian wife but it seems like your husband is just not holding up his end of the deal. You may be *deeply* hurting and wounded in your marriage. You're thinking that if only your husband would change and be more loving, kind, patient, verbal, attentive, romantic, and understanding, the problems in your marriage would all be solved . . .

That's what I used to think! Then, God dramatically opened my eyes. What I was missing is actually something that had been right in front of me in the Bible all of my life. It's just that God's design for marriage has been largely forgotten and so twisted by our culture that I didn't

even recognize what God was actually asking me to do as a wife. What He is still asking me to do. And what He asks of all wives.

In Ephesians 5, God gives very explicit commands to husbands and wives and explains His primary purpose and design for marriage. If you are like I was earlier in my marriage, you may have spent more time thinking about how your husband could do a better job obeying God's commands than thinking about what God may desire to change in you. In this book we will examine only what God commands us to do as wives and how that plays out every day in very practical ways that we may never have thought about before. I will not be focusing on what God tells husbands to do here, but that does not mean our husbands are off the hook. All of God's Word still applies to them, just like it does to us. They will answer to God for their own obedience to Him and for being the men He has called them to be. But right now, I would love for us to concentrate on just our relationship to God as women. We have so much power to breathe healing and blessing into our marriages when we choose to live in the center of God's will, His wisdom, His Word, and His Spirit's power. I pray that we might see with fresh eyes what God has to say to us in the Bible as women and wives today.

It is my prayer that in this book we might examine what it actually means to be a godly wife in today's culture. We will explore what disrespect looks like from a husband's perspective. We will look at our own controlling tendencies as daughters of Eve. We will dive into practicalities about how to genuinely respect our husbands, and we will dig into the widely misunderstood concept of biblical submission. We will talk about why God's design works—how it brings freedom, joy, and intimacy with God and our spouses. We will also discuss practical steps for us all to move toward becoming the women God desires us to be. Most of all, we will examine our own intimacy with Christ, our submission to Him as Lord, and our level of reverence for Him.



# 1

## Our Story

---

Greg and I met when I was fifteen and he was sixteen, and we dated for six years before getting married. He was my only boyfriend. I did break up with him once for three miserable weeks right before I started college in 1991. Other than that, we had practically zero conflict. We were talking about marriage by the end of my tenth-grade year in high school. I couldn't wait to get married to Greg. He was such a solid, responsible, trustworthy, handsome, intelligent, athletic, high achieving, thoughtful, loving, godly guy. He took all honors classes just like I did. He cared about my feelings and gave thoughtful gifts to my family members every Christmas. He took me out on a date once per week and allowed me to have long, deep discussions with him about all kinds of world problems and theological subjects every night during our hour-long phone conversations. My family loved him and I had my parents' blessing. My marriage to Greg was going to be the best thing ever! All my dreams would come true and we were going to live "happily ever after."

We both were raised in strong Christian homes, both accepted Christ when we were small children, and had parents who are still married (to their first and only spouses). All of our parents have college

degrees. They are all believers in Christ. They are all responsible with money. They love their spouses and children dearly. Greg's father is a minister and my father is a deacon. Our parents didn't have big fights. They were not perfect, of course, but there were no major problems, addictions, threats of divorce, affairs, or anything awful in our families of origin. We had pretty good examples of marriage and we were both dearly loved and well cared for as children.

In my mind, Greg and I were totally prepared for marriage. No, we didn't have premarital counseling, but why would we need it? I was going to be "Mrs. Gregory Cassidy." Sigh! I didn't pay much attention to the marriage books I read when they got to chapters on "conflict" because I *knew* we would not have conflict. We wouldn't be like all those other couples. We were going to do the whole marriage thing the *right* way and it wouldn't be difficult whatsoever. We had a storybook Christian romance . . . until we got married. We had done almost everything "right." No one should have been more prepared for marriage than we were, or so I pridefully thought.

### OUR LAUNCH INTO WEDDED BLISS

I was bursting with happiness on that hot, sunny, summer South Carolina afternoon when we left our wedding reception. The fragrance of warm pine needles was thick in the air and the three stately magnolia trees were in full bloom in the churchyard. My long, thick, wavy brown hair stuck to my neck and back even inside the church. The air conditioning could hardly keep up with all three-hundred-plus people in the building. My cheeks were sore from smiling so much. Everything went perfectly during the ceremony and reception. Finally, we were husband and wife! Greg and I ran together down the concrete front steps of our church as our guests and family pummeled us with birdseed. Then we got in the car to drive away as husband and wife. Happily-ever-after was totally in the bag! We stayed in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, for our honeymoon in an adorable little condo with our own kitchen. I was ecstatic.

I loved every second of being with my new husband. This is what I had waited for all those six long years and it was glorious! I was excited about everything—going grocery shopping together, watching Greg shave in the mornings, talking for hours on end, and constantly being alone together. I loved the intimacy we shared and was so thankful we had waited to consummate our union on our wedding night. This was heaven. *This* is what I had always dreamed marriage would be. I had never felt so loved, fulfilled, safe, and happy in my life. Everything was absolutely perfect . . . for three short days. Then we came home from our honeymoon, and the challenges and problems began.

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*“This is what I had always dreamed marriage would be. . . . Everything was absolutely perfect . . . for three short days.”*

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### MY SHORT LIST OF UNSPOKEN EXPECTATIONS

While I couldn't have verbalized my expectations at the time, and in retrospect the list was much longer than this, I fully expected:

- Us to spend four to five hours per night together talking, laughing, having a great time connecting, enjoying each other, being alone together, and cuddling\*
- Greg's undivided attention just about any time I wanted it
- Daily physical intimacy
- Us to have our own place that was just ours, like “real adults”
- Us to make our decisions completely on our own
- Greg to get a wonderful engineering job immediately
- Us to be totally financially independent

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\*Those of you who are married are probably laughing already.

- Greg to initiate prayer and read the Bible with me daily (even though we hadn't done that when we were dating)
- Us to both be relatively healthy for a long time
- Us to both be happy just about every moment of every day, especially the first few years of our marriage
- Greg to verbally gush loving words over me on a daily basis
- Greg to make me happy and to make me feel loved and cherished
- Greg to feel happy, loved, and cherished by me
- Greg to agree with me and to do basically anything I wanted him to do because we would always agree—his thinking and priorities would always line up with mine
- To never have to forgive anything very significant
- To not have to suffer
- Greg to think, feel, and act exactly like me

### MY ABRUPT CLASH WITH REALITY

For the first three months of our marriage, Greg and his dad worked feverishly—six days per week until way after midnight every night, after they worked their full-time day jobs—fixing up an old house for us. One week into our marriage, I severely sprained my lower back as I bent down to paint shelves. (I should have bent from the knees!) Suddenly, I couldn't get out of bed by myself, couldn't put on my own shoes, couldn't help with fixing up the house, sometimes couldn't even walk because my back would often go out. Intimacy became almost impossible for many months. I was consumed by fear, doubt, loneliness, and depression like I had never experienced in all of my twenty-one years. I didn't want to tell my friends or my sister how miserable I was. I did call my mom every day, crying. Other than that, I just stayed in a room by myself in bed alone—in constant and severe physical, emotional, and spiritual pain. I was so afraid I might not ever recover from my back injury. I thought Greg didn't love me because he was spending all his time working or fixing up the house. He seemed to ignore



me. He just fell into bed exhausted every night and turned his back to me without a word and without even a kiss while I cried and tried to tell him what I needed. No response. One issue piled on another, and another. I felt unloved, neglected, abandoned, rejected, and ignored. I believed everything my feelings told me without even questioning that there might be another way to look at the situation.

I didn't know how much I misunderstood my loving, young, inexperienced husband that summer and what a difficult time he was having on his end of our marriage. He was trying so hard to make me happy and to provide well for me by fixing up the house. He and his dad were killing themselves trying to get things done on that old house as quickly as possible in the time they had after work. Greg was also having many trials of his own that I didn't appreciate. Of course, now I know that my understanding of his motives toward me was grossly inaccurate, but I didn't know any other way to look at things at the time. I had zero understanding that men and women see the world very, very differently and that the real issue was my misunderstanding, not that Greg didn't love me.

Now I know that my reactions to Greg and to our circumstances made things infinitely more difficult than they already were. Greg did not think, feel, or act like me. He was trying to show his love for me by working on the house to make a beautiful place for me to live with him and by going to work to provide for me. He was trying to find a good job so he could provide more adequately for me. He was trying to be considerate of my fragile back by not touching me so that he didn't hurt me. He was completely exhausted from working forty hours per week at his job, sending out dozens of résumés each week, receiving constant rejection letters from potential employers, and then working forty more hours per week on the house we were going to live in. He didn't know what to do with me and had never seen me so upset. He thought if he respectfully left me alone, I would get better. I didn't get better. He began to shut down. He didn't tell me that the things I did

and said hurt him. Instead of me being grateful for all that Greg and his parents were doing for me, appreciating their incredible generosity for helping us with a house, I lashed out at them all in anger and resentment. I had never experienced not having my way before and I did not handle things well at all. It turns out that I was a lot more spoiled and selfish than I ever realized before I got married.

Thankfully, things did get better after those first three months. Eventually, the renovations on the house were finished and, after about eight months, my back got a bit stronger. We had more time together again. Unfortunately, I embraced some toxic lies that first summer, and we set a few very unhealthy patterns in our relationship that impacted our marriage for many years to come.

### MY ATTEMPTS TO FIX THINGS

Even after those first extremely painful three months, it seemed to me that Greg “wouldn’t lead” in our marriage. I mean, I would ask him about something and wait for ten to thirty seconds. Sometimes, on my really patient days, I might wait for a few minutes (sighing and rolling my eyes and tapping my fingers impatiently after a minute, of course). When my husband wouldn’t make a decision by then, I would just take over and make the decisions myself because I clearly “had to.” I thought Greg just wouldn’t tell me what he wanted to do. I had no clue that he didn’t know what he wanted right away or that he needed more time to make decisions, that this was just part of his personality. Sometimes Greg did make decisions or say what he wanted eventually, but if I didn’t agree with him, I made sure to argue for what I thought was right and filibuster my solution until he would agree to do things my way. Greg pulled away more and more and let me make many decisions without any input from him.

I began to think that I was so much more spiritually mature than Greg was. I read my Bible practically every day. I never saw him read his Bible or pray. I prayed for four hours a day sometimes—surely that

made me very holy! I prayed and prayed that God would change Greg and make him be the man I thought God wanted him to be. I told God to make Greg be a strong, godly leader and a loving, attentive, affectionate husband. Greg needed to love me like Christ loved the church! Greg needed to stop wasting time on worldly things like TV and focus on the important things in life: God and me. Well, especially *me*. I was convinced that Greg was the problem in our marriage. He became increasingly quiet, passive, and unplugged. He hardly seemed to have opinions anymore. He mostly just watched TV all the time or worked on house projects. Greg had a lot of initiative when we were dating and engaged. Why did he turn into a totally different person after we got married? Funny, he never seemed to appreciate all my helpful suggestions and attention.

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“I was convinced that Greg was  
the problem in our marriage.”

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### MY PROBLEM

I was the dominant twin with my sister as we were growing up, so that talkative leadership role just felt normal to me. It was all I knew. I shared *all* my thoughts and feelings with Greg, holding nothing back, just like I had with my sister. When Greg didn't object to what I said, I assumed he agreed with me, just like I had always assumed my sister agreed with me. Turns out that silence doesn't always mean agreement—for sisters or husbands. Sure wish I had learned that a long time ago! Then I became a pharmacist, which probably only increased my tendencies to take over and handle things myself in our marriage, too. Pharmacy also encouraged my obsessive-compulsive and perfectionistic personality traits. When you are a pharmacist, getting things right ninety-nine percent of the time is not good enough. I expected total perfection from myself, from Greg, from everyone. I also didn't realize

I needed to turn off my “patient counseling” mode when I got home. I was used to telling my technicians and patients what to do at the pharmacy. I also told my husband what to do a lot at home. I knew what I wanted and how I was going to get it. I worked hard in school and expected to make all As. I was super-critical of myself and overly responsible, and had little grace for myself or anyone else. Really, I treated Greg pretty much the same way I had always treated myself, only I was probably harder on myself.

I thought I knew best about almost everything: for other people, for my husband, and for myself. Deep down in my soul, I thought I knew better than God, even though I would never have consciously admitted that. I thought people needed my wonderful advice, wisdom, and “help.” I was rewarded for all my efforts and my Type A personality in school and in pharmacy with great grades, full scholarships, the praise of all of my teachers, lots of good friends, and customer service awards at work. Why didn’t my winning approach work with my husband?

There were so many things about femininity, masculinity, marriage, and the roles of husbands and wives that I just accepted “as is” from our culture and never really questioned. I thought I *was* being a godly wife. I had read God’s instructions about marriage many times. I read, “the wife must respect her husband” (Eph. 5:33) and thought, “Check! I do that.” I mean, I didn’t throw things—well, except for that one time that I threw a pair of panties at Greg that first summer we were married. They didn’t even come close to hitting him, and they were clean, so that definitely didn’t count as disrespect on my part. I didn’t scream, cuss, threaten divorce, hit him, or leave him. I never called him names like “idiot,” or, “jerk,” or “stupid.” I never even used the phrase “shut up.” Yes, that first summer, I really *wanted* to hurt Greg physically because I was hurting more than I ever had emotionally and felt very unloved. But I didn’t actually hit him. And I was tempted to leave at times, but I didn’t actually leave. So, that didn’t count as disrespect either. Yes, I raised my voice sometimes but that was only because Greg seemed to

ignore me. He had never ignored me before. Surely he would hear and care about my feelings if I upped the volume and demanded that he give me the love, attention, and affection he used to give me so easily before we were married. I was being totally respectful, in my mind. I treated my husband a lot better than many other women treated theirs.

I knew about God's command for wives to "submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord" (Eph. 5:22). When my husband would (very rarely) insist on something, I would eventually concede to him, knowing he was supposed to be the leader in our marriage. But my "submission" was only after a lot of me arguing my case, trying to get him to change, explaining how I was right, telling him how my way was much better and more biblical than his, and sharing with him how wrong he was. I was not a cheerful follower. I would grumble, argue, stew, and complain.

I didn't realize what I was doing at the time, but I tried to force Greg to "submit" to me. Truthfully, I expected everyone to not just submit to me, but to agree with me and do things my way. I mean, I was "right." That was obvious. So it was my duty and responsibility to try to change Greg's mind so that he could see things in proper perspective like I did. What could be more important than being right on an issue?

I would try to get Greg to lead sometimes, but only in the way I thought he should. I didn't realize there was any other way to think than my way. I left no room or grace for him to be masculine and to think, feel, and process like a man, or to be himself with his own unique personality. I often felt so lonely in our marriage—stressed, anxious, overwhelmed, and worried. Our marriage was not horrible. It was probably better than most. But, I knew there could be so much more intimacy on every level. I constantly tried to figure out how to make things happen the way I thought they should. I carried the weight of the marriage on my shoulders and felt spiritually, emotionally, and financially responsible for all of the decisions. I never had peace. I didn't realize that if I disrespected my husband's God-given authority over me, trusted

myself instead of God, and cherished bitterness and pride in my heart, my prayers weren't going to be heard. My sin poisoned my relationships with God and with Greg. The problem was, I didn't see my sin at all.