

## EVERY HUSBAND FEELS LIKE A JERK

AND EVERY WIFE AGREES! **PART 2**

By Gordon Bals

Last quarter I suggested that a common lie couples deal with could be summarized as "Every husband feels like a jerk and every wife agrees." The Evil One uses this lie to undermine a husband's sense of calling and confidence. This quarter I want to suggest some ways couples can battle against this lie and experience freedom.

Initially, a husband must aim to grow the humility to let the wife feel and experience the disappointment of living with a man who has limitations. On my very best day, I fall far short of what my wife was made for, but it is hard to regularly give her permission to feel that. Often I push my wife away from the truth by defending my performance. What I am saying by default is that I want my wife to believe lies. Giving your wife permission to tell the truth about the limitations of your ability to care for her will only help the truth reign in your home (and in your wife's heart). When husbands cannot walk in humility, wives battle an inordinate amount of despair by having to pretend their husbands are more than just men.

As a husband grows the humility to listen to his wife's disappointment, he must then learn to hear God's voice of encouragement. Often in counseling, I help the husband to get moving first, and inevitably the wife has a hard time seeing the husband's change. This seems to be God's design because the husband has to feed on the Lord for encouragement to keep moving which is a better primary resource than his wife. This began to change in my own marriage after about 7 years. I was experi-

encing a sense of personal growth along with the Lord's encouragement which together gave me confidence to point out to my wife that words like "always" and "never" weren't as true about my behavior as they had been. As husbands, we must feed on God's support so *we are not owned by our wives' discontent.*

Finally, husbands are to grow the strength to speak to their wives' deception. Adam was with Eve as she was pulled into Satan's lies, and the Scriptures say, "It was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived..." (1 Timothy 2:14). Adam was not tricked by the serpent; he just lacked the courage to step in between his wife and the Evil One. I find that women are not open to their propensity to be deceived and men sit back and let it happen. When it says, "if you do not treat her (your wife) as you should, your prayers will not be heard," (1 Peter 3:7) it means that when husbands are not loving their wives well, evil has a field day in the life and heart of the wife. The thing that trips men up the most in regards to speaking into their wives' deception is that they are weighed down in guilt about their own sin. The more husbands are generous with their repentance, the freer they will be to speak to the deception in their wives' world with courage and passion.

To begin with, wives must aim to find safety in God's goodness so that they are not so owned by their husbands' inability to lead the family in a straight line. After the Israelites wandered the desert, the Lord essentially said to them, "Listen guys I don't get it.

