

# Mishandling Marriage

## *and the sin of Uzzah*

By Gary Johnson

Divorce, domestic violence, school shootings, living together, gay lifestyle, affairs, sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies, and the list goes on...

The family is definitely under attack. As a result, the last decade and a half has seen the rise of the pro-family Christian message. Pastors, churches, books, Bible studies, and even whole movements are, with the purest of intentions, working feverishly to strengthen the family. Seeking to motivate apathetic husbands and indifferent dads, some Christian ministries have anointed men “Prophet, Priest, and King,” “Point Man,” and “High Priest of the Home.” The only problem is, these labels aren’t scriptural.

This reaction reminds me of Uzzah. The infamous fall of this well-intentioned Levite is described in 2 Samuel 6. The Ark of the Covenant, which represented the very presence of God, was being taken back to Jerusalem. David led the way with shouting, singing, and dancing as all of Israel celebrated.

But when the oxen pulling the Ark reached the flat threshing floor of Nachon, what should have been smooth sailing turned very ugly very fast. The oxen stumbled, nearly overturned the Ark, and — only wanting to help — Uzzah reached out to lend a hand. But before anyone could say, “Don’t do it!” this man lay dead on the ground.

What did Uzzah do that was so bad? How could this man of good intentions — who was merely reacting naturally — have met with such punishment and wrath? What *exactly* was the sin of Uzzah?

To understand, we first have to acknowledge that God and His Word are irretrievably entwined. In other words, when we disobey the Word we are opposing God, regardless of our good intentions. And this is what Uzzah did — while seeking to help God and steady His presence — he actually *opposed* God and disobeyed His commands by touching the Ark of the Covenant (Num. 4:15).

And just like Uzzah, many of these well-intentioned messages have ended up *opposing* God because their teachings about family order are unscriptural, forcing husbands to become 24-hour “Supermen” and completely benching the wives.

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The heart of God has always been the “restoration of all things” (Acts 3:21), and Jesus has restored Christian marriage to its former glorious state of equality and mutual submission. As Christians it is vital that we understand this, accept it, and operate accordingly. The Bible tells us

plainly that before the Fall, both husband and wife were made in the image of God and both were given dominion (Gen. 1:26–28). In fact, this first man and wife were so completely “one flesh” (Matt. 19:6) they even shared the same name!

“He created them male and female, and He blessed them and *named them Adam* in the day when they were created” (Gen. 5:2; my emphasis).

Without a doubt, the fact that you and I have never known anything but a fallen world makes it difficult for us to grasp the depths to which our species has fallen. What was perfect and incorrupt in the Garden of Eden became twisted and marred as fallen men and women struggled to walk out their days on this earth.

Even good men, righteous men, treated



women like they weren't much better than cattle. Just look at "righteous" Lot (2 Pet. 2:8). When God sent two angels to visit Sodom before destroying it, Lot thought they were ordinary men and insisted they stay the night at his house. The men of Sodom, filled with perverse lust, cried out for Lot to throw the two angels out to them. And what did Lot do? Demonstrate the self-sacrificing character of Christ and say, "Leave them alone. Take me instead!?" No, he says, "Here, take my daughters!"

Two girls that had kept their virginity in the midst of a depraved and wicked city were being offered to a bunch of sexual perverts by their father. "Let me bring them out to you and do to them whatever you like," Lot shouted (Gen. 19:8). What?! It was okay with Lot if this crowd raped and sodomized his *daughters*, just so long as they didn't touch his *guests*!?

There was definitely nothing righteous about this treatment of women — a fallen mindset which had taken deep root in the cursed ground of Earth. But in the "fullness of time" (Gal. 4:4) God sent forth His Son, born under the Law to redeem us from the curse of the Law. And, in Christ, the curse of Genesis 3:16 is now broken and women are once again restored to their rightful position of equality with men.

Growing up in the Arkansas Delta, hunting, fishing, football, and fighting were as natural to me as breathing. And if Christianity were a natural fight—and whipping the devil as easy as chasing down some little fella with a pitchfork and pointy tail who likes dressing in red suits — well then, you could just stick me and my buddies on the frontline and we'd take care of it all.

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But this is not a *natural* fight. Ours is a *spiritual* battle, a to-the-death struggle "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:2). And in this battle the baddest warrior on the line often weighs no more 100 pounds, dresses in high heels and gets her hair done every Thursday!

The testosterone-driven Gospel of today is very appealing to the carnal, fleshly nature. But it is an *unscriptural* Gospel in many ways, and one that would have benched legendary Christian soldiers such as Corrie Ten Boom and Mother Theresa simply because they were women.

We men may have been taught growing up, "you never hit girls," but this is not a

principle the devil abides by. He launches as many vicious attacks against our daughters, our wives, and our sisters as he does against us. And if we've insisted they live out some fairy tale existence — forever in the tower awaiting their knight in shining armor — they're gonna get slaughtered. These women of God have to arm themselves with the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and take up the sword of the Spirit as they fight the battle beside us.

Yes, the family is under attack. And yes, restoration is critical. But the desire of some so-called "pro-family" advocates to turn back the clock 60 years to *Father Knows Best* and *Ozzy and Harriet* is not the answer, because it is not biblical. We need to go back alright...but we have to go back much further than just 60 years! Back to the Garden of Eden, back before the Fall — it is here that we discover the perfect will of God for Christian marriage: equality, respect, and mutual submission.



Gary Johnson and his wife, Leslie, have been in Christian ministry for two decades and are the authors of *Does God Really Prefer Men?* Gary invites you to visit them on the web at [www.doesgodreallyprefermen.com](http://www.doesgodreallyprefermen.com)

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