

Need Versus Want

Donal Graeme | 24 September, 2014 | by Donal Graeme

Reader and commenter DJ recently left the following [comment](#) in my [Questions and Suggestions](#) page:

Iâve been reading and interacting for a while on your blog and one thing I realized isnât clear in your posts. It often seems like you and others on this page would rather have a wife because they need you ~~you~~ [as] a meal ticket as opposed to they want to be with you. Bear with me on this[,] often there is talk about the good old days when women had limited options, at the same time there is complaining about a lack of sexual enthusiasm in women [with] âduty sexâ and how that is hurtful. So I would like your take on this seeming inconsistency.

I have a small amount of free time with which to respond to his inquiry, so here is my hastily written reply. As always, I begin with by noting that I can only speak for myself. Other men around these parts will likely have different opinions on the matter.

From what I can tell, the main question that DJ is asking me is this:

Would you prefer your wife to feel like she needs you, out of material necessity, or would you prefer a wife who wants to be with you, out of sexual desire?

Now, if I had to chose between the two, and could only choose one of the two, then I would definitely choose the latter. If I was to marry, I would want my wife to *want* me- that is, to be sexually attracted to me.Â As a number of bloggers have explained for years, especially Rollo, the female “attraction” (not my use of the term) for a man’s resources is no guarantee that a woman will want him sexually. Marrying a woman who fits the former category is risky- there is no guarantee that she won’t freeze me out, and then what? In the present environment I would have no recourse for a frigid wife. In fact, since she would be a net resource drain on me, I would be worse for marrying her.

Ideally, if I had to choose one thing that I was certain would bind a wife to me, it would be Christian marriage vows and all they encompass. If I could be assured of that, then I (and I suspect many other men) would feel far more secure. Sexual desire, after all, can be a fleeting thing. And as I just mentioned, material necessity is no guarantee of sexual desire.

[Ok, so I sort of lied before. I will claim to speak for others besides myself.]

When men around these parts talk about limiting female options, it is important to understand that we are not talking about some alternative system or method of getting women to desire us. It doesn’t work that way, and we know it. Rather, what we are discussing are possible methods to keep wives bound to their husbands. It is all about ties, really. And no, not the kind you wear.

If a woman feels like she needs a man’s material resources (meal ticket), then that need ties her to that man. If a woman feels sexually drawn to a man, and wants to sleep with him, that ties her to that man. If a woman is married to a man, and the law says she cannot simply leave him for another, that ties her to that man.

What we are advocating is a system where as many different social conventions, laws and other means tie wives to their husbands, as is possible. The more that binds a woman to her husband, the more secure the marriage is likely to be. This won’t necessarily affect her sexual desire for her husband, but it will protect him from divorce or abandonment. All things considered, this is better than nothing. Coupled with a restoration of “standing consent” to the legal system, and men will be much more secure in their marriages. Of course that means more “duty sex”, but from what I hear from many husbands duty sex is

better than none at all. And many times what starts as duty sex will morph into enjoyment on her part. So again, its not like we want one of these things over the others. We want both, and more besides. Women are moral agents, but they, like men, respond to incentives. And the more that is in place which encourages them to stay with their husbands, and to act as proper wives, the better. Of course, the same logic would apply to husbands as well. The overall goal is to incentive marriage, and incentive staying in marriage and upholding your vows, and to discourage the opposite.

Update: A few points of clarification.

- 1) I wouldn't want a woman to be my wife only because she needs me to survive. I would want her to want to be with me. I suspect that neither of us would enjoy a marriage based only on material need. Nor would I even deserve a wife if I could only have one by forcing her to choose that path to survival
- 2) I am not looking for a wife simply to have an outlet for my sex drive. I want a great deal more, and am looking for a great deal more, in any woman I consider as a potential wife. Ideally, I would like someone I could have deep conversations with. Someone that I could relate to. Someone whose company I enjoy throughout the day, not simply when we are alone in the bedroom.
- 3) Lastly, I wanted to address this comment left by DJ:

It was more because I got the sense that the general feeling is if they don't need me they will leave.

This sentiment is sparked by the fear that many men have that they will be abandoned by their wives. That they will be divorced, have their assets seized, their children taken from them and their lives ruined. Given the hideously high divorce rate right now, as well as the fact that women initiate most divorces, this is not an unfounded fear. It shouldn't come as a surprise, then, that they would grasp for any means available to protect themselves from that fate. Since things like "wanting to be with someone" are ephemeral- you can always change your opinion about someone, after all- it only makes sense for them to support means that would work irrespective of what a woman might feel at one particular point in time.

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