

UNDERSTANDING THE GENDER GAP PART 1

HELP! MY WIFE'S AN ALIEN!

By "Yo" Snyder



It's more common than you'd think: A guy falls in love, gets married, and then he discovers...his wife is an alien! Oh, he knew men and women were different, but not like from-different-planets different! There were a few little hints when they were dating, but it wasn't until marriage that the full truth was revealed.

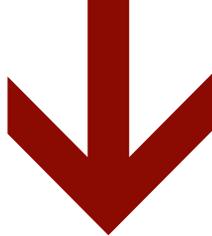
If this is you, don't panic! Those differences can make life fun and exciting, while encouraging maturity and growth that will strengthen your marriage. Here are a few examples of how we can learn from our spouses and appreciate our differences.

- **Women Think Differently:** It could be said that men's brains are like waffles, and women's are like spaghetti. Men tend to focus on one thing at a time while women are able to consider many unrelated topics simultaneously. This difference shows up in areas like scheduling: Typically, when a guy is asked if he can do something on a given day and nothing immediately comes to mind, he'll assume his schedule is clear. A woman, on the other hand, instantly considers all the other activities happening on that day: household chores, kids' music lessons or soccer practice, and getting the car in for a repair. In other words, she thinks on several different levels and balances all those elements that make for an organized schedule and life.



- **Women Solve Problems Differently:** Men are fixers. Women, however, aren't always looking to fix a problem. This is about as alien as it gets to a man. Sometimes a wife doesn't want step-by-step instructions for fixing something; instead, she wants us to listen, understand her feelings, and let her know we have confidence that she can handle it. This is a tough one to grasp, but offering a consoling shoulder instead of a heavy hand can produce a strong and vibrant marriage.
- **Women Worship Differently:** Women tend to be emotionally engaged in their worship, while men are inclined toward analysis, fact checking, and practical application. A woman often *feels* her connection with God and seems to have an intuitive ability to enjoy Him. If a husband learns to appreciate those qualities and incorporate some of them, his own worship can be greatly enhanced.

Truth be told, the traits in women that seem a bit alien may be a needed catalyst for men to grow. There are benefits in learning how to multi-task, or listen without trying to fix every problem, or discover that we can engage both heart and mind in our own worship of God. Our differences bring a richness that would otherwise be lacking in our life. God made woman very different from man. And it is good.



UNDERSTANDING THE GENDER GAP

PART 2

HELP! MY HUSBAND'S
A CAVEMAN!

By Kay Snyder



Have you ever wondered if your husband is from the era when men communicated in grunts and snorts and sat in their caves pounding a stone into a wheel? If you do, you are not alone. While your husband is not really a caveman, he is a unique and special gift whom God made very different from you. If you're feeling like you married a Neanderthal, recognizing a few man-needs may help you understand your twenty-first century guy:

- 1. Men need space.** While women tend to immediately vent about their stressful days, sometimes men need to wind down gradually in their "caves." Whether that means taking a bike ride, reading a book, or playing a video game, your husband may need a little quiet time to himself after a long day. This doesn't mean he's upset with you or that he finds you unattractive. Rather than forcing him into conversation with a barrage of words and questions, use his wind-down time to do something for yourself. After a while, your husband will emerge from his cave, ready to relate to you.
- 2. Men want to fix things.** God created men to be natural "fixers." So when it comes to relational difficulties, it's important to remember that when you



share your problems with your husband, his natural response is to want to “fix it.” Sometimes his advice may be exactly what you need. At other times, tell him you just need him to listen and let you lean on his comforting shoulder.

- 3. Men need focus.** Have you ever gotten a distracted grunt from your husband when you’re trying to tell him about an upcoming event or activity? He may not be purposely ignoring you. He may just be focused on something else at that moment. God made men’s brains different from women’s. While women often multi-task (you can make cupcakes, plan a meeting, and consider redecorating the kitchen simultaneously), men are single-minded, tending to focus on one thing at a time. The next time you have something to discuss with your husband, try asking him for his undivided attention. Tell him what you have to say, and then give him time to process the information. You’ll be sure to hear fewer grunts in return.

With his cave-time, fix-it tendencies, and one syllable responses, it may seem like your husband is practically prehistoric. But with a little understanding of his needs, you can begin to see your husband more as a gift from God—and less like a Neanderthal.