

THE BIBLICAL ROLE OF THE HUSBAND

KEY WORDS: Authority, Accountability

KEY VERSES:

Ephesians 5:23 - "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body".

Ephesians 5:25 - "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;"

I Peter 3:7 - "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

INTRODUCTION:

Someone once wrote the following advice for husbands (from Salem/Kirban):

If you'd lead a happy life
Never argue with your wife.
Often call her "Dear" and "Honey"
Always give her all the money,
Often Praise her bonnet new,
Let her run your business too;
Say the cooking was divine,
That the socks were mended fine,
And that angels in the skies
Never had such hair and eyes;
Stay right in the house each night,
Say her mother was all right;
Meekly creep around the house
Like some quiet little mouse --
And if this wisdom you should doubt,
Disobey, and you'll find out!

We often joke about the husband/wife relationship and certainly it can be an amusing topic. Yet, at the same time, it is critical to a marriage that husbands and wives be what God intended.

TRANS. SENTENCE:

In this lesson, we shall concentrate on the husband and see what God has to say about what the normal Christian husband is to be in God's institution of marriage.

I. THE ROLE OF THE HUSBAND

In order for us to correctly understand what a Christian husband ought to be, we must learn the God-intended role of the husband.

A. Authority

1. God told Eve, as part of her punishment for eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil,
 - a. **"thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" - Genesis 3:16.**
 - b. **Ephesians 5:23** says, **"the husband is the head of the wife".**
 - (1) one of the qualifications for a bishop was to be - **"one that ruleth well his own house" - I Timothy 3:4.**
 - (2) God complemented Abraham in - **Genesis 18:19** saying, **"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him".**
 - (3) Joshua is often quoted when he said, - **"as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD", Joshua 24:15.**
 - c. This is just a portion of the verses that very clearly show that God has appointed the husband to be the authority in the home.
 - d. God has given to the husband the power and right in the home to:
 - (1) give commands,
 - (2) enforce obedience,
 - (3) take actions,
 - (4) and make the final decisions.

2. This authority does not mean that the husband is the master and all those in the home are slaves, any more than it would for government to be considered the master and the citizens to be slaves.
 - a. Lack of government is known as anarchy, and the home could not function in that state.
 - b. There must be a leader in the home and God chose the husband for that role.
 - c. As the leader, the man ought to govern wisely making full use of the talents and strengths of his wife and children.
 - d. Thus it would be wrong for the husband to abuse his authority.
 - (1) he must rule in righteousness.
 - (2) clearly this makes it critically important for the husband to be a strong Christian and to know his Bible well in order to rule well.

3. As the authority, the husband ought to be a strong leader and not a weakling.
 - a. Job did not accept his wife's foolish counsel, but reproved her and did that which was right - **Job 2:9-10.**
 - b. A husband's authority is not dependent upon the wife's submission.
 - (1) the husband must stand to his duty and in obedience to God he must be the authority in the family.
 - (2) America is full of weak men who have pushed their role off on the wife and lapsed from their responsibility.
 - (3) the duty of the husband is not a choice but rather a command.

B. Accountability

1. Many a husband enjoys the self proclaiming of their authority over the home, but they should stop and consider that such authority comes with a price - accountability.
 - a. When a man fully realizes all that God expects from him, it can be frightening.
 - (1) when Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, it was Adam that God sought when it came time to answer for their sin - **Genesis 3:9-11.**
 - (2) though Adam listened to his wife and tried to lay the blame on both God and Eve, God held him responsible.
 - b. A man that listens to bad counsel from his wife is nevertheless at fault for whatever sin that results.
 - (1) Eli was held accountable to God for having raised wicked sons - **I Samuel 2:27-36.**
 - (2) Consider also the accountability for vows that God holds the husband responsible for in **Numbers 30:13-15.**
 - c. It is the husband God holds responsible if his children don't turn out right.
2. If a home is not Biblically all that it is supposed to be, it is not the fault of the wife or children.
 - a. It will be the husband that will be blamed and held accountable by God.
 - (1) the husband will be held responsible for not teaching his family in spiritual matters.
 - (2) every husband will have to give an account for how he ruled his home.
 - (a) like any steward or manager, the husband will be responsible for how successful his home was.
 - (b) he will have to stand before the Lord Jesus and explain if his home was not as fruitful as it could have been or if he wasted the talents and abilities of his wife and children.
 - b. Being the husband is a serious position and not something that should be taken on lightly.

C. Pattern

1. The husband is to be the perfect example of Christianity in his home.
 - a. The husband cannot teach "Do as I say and not as I do".
 - b. Any man who sets one standard for himself and another for his wife and children is a hypocrite.
 - c. No, it must be "Follow my example". As Joshua said, "I am going to serve the Lord and my house is going to do likewise."
2. John R. Rice once said while preaching, "Any man who leaves it to his wife to return thanks at the table, leaves it to his wife to read the Bible to the children, leaves it to his wife to teach them to pray, leaves it to his wife to take the children to Sunday school and church, to set a godly example before them and try to win them to Christ, is a slacker, a shirker, a parasite! He is not fit to be a husband of a good wife nor the father of a family!"

II. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HUSBAND

Having looked at the role of the husband, let us now look at some of his responsibilities to his wife:

A. Love - *Ephesians 5:25-33*

It is of great significant that Paul takes more time and gives more space to his instructions for husbands than for any other family member.

Christ's love for the church is the pattern for the husband's love of the wife.

Paul highlights FOUR ASPECTS of this love.

1. It is a Sacrificial Love.
 - a. The husband's love for the wife is not supposed to be a domineering kind of love. It is the love of self-sacrifice.
 - b. ***Ephesians 5:25 - "Gave Himself for her"***
Note: ***Acts 20:28***
 - c. Many men like to wave - ***Ephesians 5:22 - "submit to your husbands"***. Yet how many of those same men are willing to fulfill all that is demanded of them in ***verses 25-33***.
2. It Is a Purifying Love - The love husbands are commanded to have for their wives is also a love that seeks and protects the purity of its object. ***Ephesians 5:25-27***.
 - a. This suggests that Christ's love for the church is something that drives Him to make her pure and keep her pure.
 - b. It speaks of pure spotless beauty that He communicates to her.
 - c. When a man truly loves his wife, her purity should be his supreme concern. No one would ever want to defile a person whom he really loves. (Love not Lust)
3. It is a Caring Love - ***Ephesians 5:28-30***
 - a. What does it mean to love your wife as your own body?
 - (1) it is actually a simple concept.
 - (2) you take care of your own body.
 - (a) if you get sick, you put it to bed so it can get better.
 - (b) if it's hungry, you feed it.
 - (c) if it's thirsty, you give it something to drink.
 - (d) if it's dirty, you clean it.
 - (e) you take care of it constantly.
 - b. That is the very essence of the love you ought to show your wife. You are to be preoccupied with meeting her needs. ***Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31***
4. It is an enduring love
 - a. The husband's love must also be an unbreakable love.
 - b. It is to persevere despite all trials and obstacles.

- c. God Himself has designed marriage this way. **Ephesians 5:31**
Christ emphasized the permanence of this union. **Matthew 19:6**

B. Honor

1. Without actually using the word **"love"** Peter describes the husband's love for his wife. **I Peter 3:7**, THREE WORDS sum up the sacrificial nature of the husband's love with three words.
 - a. Consideration - **"dwell with them according to knowledge"**
- another way to say it - "live with your wives in an understanding way,"
 - (1) considerate - opposite of the idea of independent, proud, self-absorbed, "he-man", many think presents true maleness.
 - (2) it calls for understanding, sensitivity, and meeting your wife's needs.
 - (3) it requires sincere effort to understand her feelings, fears, anxieties, concern, goals, dreams, and desires.
 - b. Chivalry - The wife is - **"the weaker vessel"**
 - (1) Weaker primarily refers to the physical realm.
 - (a) the husband is to treat his wife with gentle courage.
 - (b) open doors, moving furniture and doing heavy work around the house.
 - (2) **I Peter 3:7** - suggests that God designed women to be under the protection of a man, benefiting from his strength.
 - c. Communion - We're to regard our wives - **"as being heirs together of grace of life."** - Men and women may be unequal physically, but they are equal spiritually.
 - (1) treat your wife as a spiritual equal.
 - (2) both are utterly dependent on divine grace, and you are heirs together of that grace.
 - (3) **Song of Solomon 5:16** - **"This is my beloved, and this is my friend."** NOTE: That relationship has been cultivated so that he is - **"glad to call her his friend."**
2. God condemned the Jews who had **"dealt treacherously"** with their wives.
 - a. In contrast:
 - (1) **Proverbs 5:18** - admonishes the husband to **"rejoice with the wife of thy youth",**
 - (2) and Solomon says - **"Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun"** **Ecclesiastes 9:9.**
 - b. The husband is to be faithful to his wife as long as they live, treating her the same as when he first married her.

III. THE REALM OF THE HUSBAND

As a final study on the normal Christian husband, let us look at the realm man entered after Adam and Eve sinned.

A. Burdened Worker

1. God's curse upon Adam, the example husband, is given in - **Genesis 3:17-19**.
 - a. In short, God cursed the ground, thereby making man's work difficult and sorrowful.
 - b. It is interesting how man has been trying since that time to ease the burden of his labor through better technology.
2. Yet, no matter how hard he has tried, he still has to work.
 - a. Even with the current advances in technology, we still have weeds and it still takes work to grow things in the earth.
 - b. How do you think God feels about those who try to "get rich quick" through gambling or other means?

B. Bread Winner

1. It is clear from God's curse upon man that He intended the husband to be the breadwinner for the family.
2. It is the husband that would be responsible for providing food for the family.