



Vision: WE LEAD PEOPLE TO LIFE-CHANGE THAT IS ONLY POSSIBLE THROUGH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST! (2 Cor 5:17)

Mission: REACHING PEOPLE WITH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST TO ESTABLISH THEM IN THE BODY OF CHRIST AND EQUIP THEM TO BE WITNESSES FOR CHRIST, TO THE GLORY OF HIS NAME! (Col 1:28; Eph 4:11-16)

Philippians 1:21-22:

**“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.
If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me...”**

Biblical Counselling 101

26 July 2022

THE ROLE OF A HUSBAND

Thinking Biblically about the Role of a Husband in Marriage

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1. Introduction.

In this lesson of **Biblical Counselling 101** we will deal with the topic of *The Role of a Husband in Marriage*. This then is the first lesson that we will have in then starting to deal with marriage problems and counselling. As we then deal with marriages, we must remember that *a healthy church consists of healthy homes... and healthy homes consists of healthy marriages...!* Marriage is God's first institution that He has made and it forms the building block for healthy homes, churches and societies. A healthy marriage consists then of a *loving husband* and a *submissive wife*. Where these foundation stones are shifted, the home, the church, and the society becomes unstable! It cannot be over emphasized how important marriage is and how important it is to be a *loving husband* and a *submissive wife*.

It is further very important to understand and remember that God has designed men and women to have different *roles* in the marriage. This doesn't mean that there is a difference in *equality* between men and women, but a difference in *responsibility* and *function*. Men and women stand equal before God in that they were both created in the image of God (cf. **Gen 1:27**) In Christ they stand equal before God and both are saved by grace - **Gal 3:28** (cf. **1 Pet 3:7**). But they have different *roles* in marriage and these roles have been assigned to them *before* the fall - **Gen 2:18**. What the fall of mankind into sin did result in is that men and women are now bent away from fulfilling these roles and responsibilities and function and that they have to be *commanded* to fulfil these rolls and be *empowered* by the Holy Spirit to do them (cf. **Eph 5:18-21**). **A successful marriage then happens when these roles are understood and lived out and it is in the living out of these roles that both the man and the woman are free to become what God designed them to be and experience true fulfilment as a man and a woman!** Wayne Mack says it like this: *"When two people know, accept and fulfil their varying but complementary responsibilities, oneness in marriage is promoted"* and this is God's design for the marriage from the very beginning (cf. **Gen 2:24**). Much of the frustration, irritation, discontentment in marriages flows from *ignorance* of these roles, *rebellion* against these roles or then *ineffective implementation* of these roles. And so in this lesson, we will consider the role of the husband in marriage as defined and commanded by God in the Bible.

We start with the role of the husband because he is to be the head or leader of the home. For the sake of this lesson, we will only consider the *two key passages* regarding the role of the husband in marriage namely **Eph 5:23-33** and **1 Pet 3:7**. From these two passages we will then consider the role of the husband under three headings namely:

- 1) The husband must *lead* his wife (**Eph 5:23**);
- 2) The husband must *love* his wife (**Eph 5:25-33**);
- 3) The husband must *understand* and *honour* his wife (**1 Pet 3:7**).

2. The Husband must Lead his Wife.

The husband is to be the *head* of his wife as Christ is the Head of the Church (**Eph 5:23**). To be the head means to be in the place of *decision-making*, of *giving direction* and *impulses* to the rest of the body. He is to be the leader in the home. The husband gets his cue from looking to Jesus in how He is head and leader of the church and the husband must copy or exemplify the leadership that Jesus exemplified.

The style of leadership that the husband must seek to achieve must be in following the style of leadership that Jesus exercised while living on earth. As in all areas of life, the life of Jesus is our ultimate example and this is true also for the manner in which a husband is to be the leader of his wife namely according to the style of leadership that Jesus practised.

And so the question is: *What style of leadership did Jesus practise?* Jesus was a *servant leader* as we clearly see in these passages: **Matt 20:25-28; John 13:12-17; Phil 2:5-8**. A husband must therefore have a servant's heart that will enable him to act like a servant and react like a servant when he is treated like one! To lead with this style of leadership is to understand that he must be his wife's, and his family's, biggest servant! Everything he plans and does as a husband must be with her best interests at heart. Wayne Mack says it like this: *"You are to live for the sake of your wife...!"*

How does a husband do this? Jesus is his example so he needs to look at how He led His disciples. Jesus led His disciples through:

1) *Frequent and Regular Companionship.*

Jesus spent great amounts of *time* with His disciples. Everywhere where He went, they were either with Him or close by (cf. **Mark 1:17; 3:13-14**). When a husband asked his wife to marry him, that is what he asked of her in effect to do namely that she would be with him. Therefore Peter teaches that husbands are to “*live*” or “*dwelt*” with their wives – to reside together, be in one another’s company (cf. **1 Pet 3:7**). *A husband cannot lead his wife if he is not spending time with her!*

2) *Careful and Relevant Instruction or Teaching.*

Jesus led His disciples by *teaching* them. He did this in *formal* ways by the way of sermons like the sermon on the mount in **Matt 5-7** and the one lengthy discourse we read of in **John 13-16**. Other times He did it in *informal* ways by responding to their questions and situations as they occurred. God longs and expects husbands to lead and serve their wives by teaching them. Teaching them *what*? First and foremost what the Scripture says. Husbands must be the *spiritual leaders* of their wives. They are to take responsibility for the spiritual development of their wives. This is what Paul was instructing the Corinthian church in **1 Cor 14:35** and later on what he taught Timothy concerning how the church as the household of God should function in **1 Tim 2:8-12**. The implication being here that *men* and in the context of marriage, a *husband*, should teach his wife and she should learn from him. For this to happen, *a husband needs to make sure that he is growing spiritually!* He needs to have his wife’s best interest at heart and must realize that he one way of serving his wife is as he grows spiritually and then teach her what he has learned and thereby leading her to become more like Christ! A husband’s *first ministry* is towards his wife – he must be able to disciple her before he would be able to disciple anyone else! (cf. **1 Tim 3:4**)

3) *Being a Good Example.*

Jesus called His disciples to “*Follow Him...*” (cf. **Mark 1:17**) and Jesus also left them an *example* to follow (cf. **John 13:15**). This then precedes and follows the instruction and teaching that a husband is to give his wife namely that he needs to practise before her what he is preaching to her! The disciples saw how Jesus prayed, how He quoted and applied scripture, how He stood up for the truth, how He treated and loved the unlovable. Wives need to see the Gospel at work in their husbands lives; they need to see how they are being transformed by the Bible, how they are growing in the fruit of the Spirit. This is to serve as an example for their wives and to earn their respect and willingness to submit under their leadership and instruction! Wayne Mack again says it like this: “*Surely, the husband’s leadership means that he must strive to be an example, a model, a pattern of godliness, holiness, compassion, dedication and devotion to God.*” Now, the reality is that no man will be able to be a perfect example to his wife, because only *Jesus* is perfect. Every husband so very easily still stumble and fail to be what he ought to be. But even in their failures, they are to be an examples of how to treat their failures namely in asking forgiveness and making restitution; owning up to their shortcomings and not blaming other people, circumstances or their personality for it, and least of all our wives! Husbands need to lead our wives by being good examples in asking for forgiveness.

4) *Making Decisions and Delegating Responsibility.*

Jesus is the one who made the *decisions* of where He and disciples would go and what would be happening next and He also *delegated responsibility* to them to bring about what needs to happen, all the while never changing his style of leadership but remaining a servant leader. Consider these two examples: **Mark 1:35-39; 6:7-13**. There can only be *one* head in a marriage and that is to be the husband! (And no, the wife is not the neck to turn the head where she wants him to go...) The husband however needs to give great weight to the counsel and opinions of his wife. In decision making he is to gain and seek after her counsel, insight, perspective and knowledge giving great consideration to her needs, desires and fears, but in the end, there can only be one head who needs to make the decision and make sure that it happens! Many men are negating their decision-making responsibility to their wives and has become apathetic and passive in decision-making in their marriage where most if not all of the decisions are made by their wives. This is wrong! This is not to say that men cannot delegate certain decisions to their wives, especially in areas of their interest and desires and skills *but* husbands need to understand that God will not hold their wives accountable for the decisions regarding their marriage, but He will hold *them* accountable for them because He has appointed the man to be the *head*, the *leader* of his wife! If the Springboks lose, the coach get fired... if your marriage is testimony

of bad and unwise decisions, you are the one accountable and to blame...not your wife! You can delegate certain decisions and responsibilities, *but you cannot delegate your role!*

5) Acting like a man!

Many of the pictures that people like to portray Jesus with portrays Him as a very soft, over friendly, always clean, slender, almost non-offensive and non-threatening person. Yet, we read that Jesus grew up as a carpenter, working wood with his hands that probably gave Him a few muscles and a manly presence – don't get me wrong, I'm not pressing for acting like men by blowing up some muscles, but pressing the fact that Jesus was a man in the fullest sense of the word. We find Jesus standing up against the people using the temple as a market place and overturning the tables... and no one was resisting Him. We find Him standing up against the Pharisees and confronting their wayward teachings in all manner of circumstances. Jesus acted like a man in the greatest sense that He was standing for the truth and not cowering back in fear of man! To be the *leader* of your wife means to act like a man and stand for what you believe and acting in line with it – *doing what needs to be done!* (cf. **1 Cor 16:13**) I have David in mind who wasn't a very big man physically but showed himself to be more a man than all his brothers, and even King Saul who stood out a heads length over all the other men, when David acted like a man and confronted Goliath and stood up for what he believed in! (David in this event acting as a foreshadowing of what Jesus would do...!) *Husbands need to stand up and act like men!* They need to take the leadership that God has given them and they need to lead their wives in such a way that they will see the power of God at work in them and that they will know that they can rest secure in their leadership because they will stand up for what they believe and know to be right and true! The Christian husband is a man who stands and live for what he believes in, a man who stand and live for Jesus Christ even when the rest of the culture won't do it!

This then is what it means to be your wives *head*, to be her *leader*. If you are a married man, **don't wait for someone to put you into leadership. You are a leader and you need to start acting like one by leading your wife and in so fulfil the role you have to fulfil as her servant leader!** If you're not a married man yet, know that this is what God will require of you and start practising doing these things in the friendships that you are cultivating.

3. The Husband must Love his Wife.

The second part of a husband role and responsibility is that ***he is to be his wife's lover!*** This doesn't stand apart from the first part but is *implied* and *assumed* by the first part so that we can actually sum up the husband's responsibility by saying that a husband is to be the *loving leader* of his wife. This section is then all about *love!* Jay Adams then remarks that, ***“Too many husbands think that, like lifeboats, love is for women and children.”*** That being said, we do however live in a culture that is “love” crazy! “Love songs” form the majority of the music market. You have songs about falling in love, being under the spell of love, loving love, hating love, falling out of love, seeking for love, remembering your first true love, crying over your first true love, declaring your love to someone, etc, etc. One would think with all these love songs going around that our society should be marked by loving relationships and loving marriages... and they are *if* you define “love” as all those songs define love.

Here is then the first fundamental issue when it comes to love: Most of our society have an *unbiblical understanding* of what love really is! I dare to say that there are even many Christians who have a *skewed* understanding of what true, Biblical love is. For many, when they say to someone they “love” them, they confuse *lust* with *love*. They have a physical craving for sexual relations and they then call it “love”. For many other people “love” is further a *feeling*. Love for them is when they have a liking or attraction to someone and that makes them feel good and happy. The whole idea of “*falling in love*” is just that – you see and meet someone that you are attracted to for various reasons and that makes you feel good and happy and all of a sudden, *you are in love!* This kind of love is based on a feeling and on some or other attribute of the person that someone is attracted to.

Needless to say that what the *Bible* calls love is quite the contrary to what most people would understand as love. Love is *not* a feeling, but an *act of our will*. It is a decision that one make and then hold to! The puritan, Henry Smith, said it like this: ***“First man chooses his love, and then he must love his choice.”*** One of the greatest passages that defines Biblical love for us, is **1 Cor 13:4-7**. This kind of love is not something that we must fall into, but rather something that we should *walk in!* (cf. **Eph 5:1-2**) If a man is not

married yet, mustn't wait for Mrs "right" before he start loving. As a Christian he is to *walk in love* in every single friendship that he is in. If he can't do it to his friends, he won't be able to do it to his wife all of a sudden one day!

In **Eph 5:25-33**, husbands are *commanded* to love their wives. Twice in this passage husbands are commanded to love their wives as they love ourselves (**v28, 33**), and the ultimate command we find in this passage is that husbands must love their wives as Christ loved the Church (**verse 25**). Now, immediately some men would say, "but you don't know my wife...she isn't very loveable." The first logic and human response would be, *then why did you marry her?* But the correct and Biblical response would be that the love that God demands from husbands towards their wives doesn't depend on whether their wives are loveable or deserve it, but it is based on the love that God showed them through Christ, which has gotten a hold of their heart, their whole being, and which they are compelled to reflect towards others and it starts with being obedient, by deciding and committing, to loving their wives as Christ loved the church! To understand how husbands are to love, we again need to understand how Jesus loved as it is revealed to us through this passage.

Joel James makes the following observations about the command in **Eph 5:25-33** that husbands are to love their wives:

- 1) A husband's love is a *choice*. (**v25**) The verb *agapao* (to love) emphasises choice, making this love stronger and more enduring than mere infatuation. It embraces feelings, but is not dependent on them.
- 2) A husband's love is *continuous*. (**v25**) The command for a husband to love his wife is, in the original, a continuous tense imperative.
- 3) A husband's love is *exclusive*. (**v25**) Although a Christian man is called to love all people, clearly he is to love his wife as no other.
- 4) A husband's love is *spouse-focused*, not self-focused. (**v28-32**) For a husband, self-preoccupation is replaced by spouse-preoccupation. He is to treat his wife in the same way (or even better than) he treats himself.

What does this love look like? How does it manifest itself? Remember, love is a *verb* and it needs to show! It is easy for a husband to tell his wife that he loves her, but the real question is whether or not she sees and experiences that he loves her. He needs to live and prove his love for her, just as Jesus proved and manifested His love for the Church (cf. **Eph 5:25; Rom 5:6-8**). Biblical love then manifests itself then as:

3.1 Sacrificial Love (Eph 5:25)

The love Jesus has for the church is first proven by Jesus *giving himself up* for the church (cf. **1 Joh 3:16**) In **Rom 5:8** we further see Him showing us His love while we were totally undeserving of His love. The sacrificial love as manifested by Jesus is therefore also *unconditional* love. It is for a husband then to love his wife not for what she can do for him, *but for what he can do for her!* Marriage is about what a husband *gives*, not about what he *gets*. It is not a love that is based on *fairness* where a husband is willing to "sacrifice" as a bargaining strategy – giving something up or doing something so that his wife might return the favour. It is to sacrifice in the truest sense of the word, namely without expecting anything in return, because he loves her and that is what love does! Don't get this wrong: *Jesus sacrificed Himself for us BECAUSE HE WANTED TO! It was His joy because He loved us!* It should be the joy of a husband to sacrifice himself for the sake of his wife because he loves her!

Implied in sacrificing themselves then is that husbands are to sacrifice their:

- 1) **Time**... spending time with their wives; putting things on hold when she needs them. It is frustrating when people speak and imply as if husbands don't want to spend time with their wives!
- 2) **Interests**... letting go of that hobby, sport, activity that is all about the husband for the sake of investing in his wife's interests.
- 3) **Money**... showing by the use of their money where their treasure is. Denying to buy what they want and even need maybe to buy what his wife needs and wants.

One writer says: "*Marital love is like death – it wants all of us... it claims everything... Marriage is a call to die, and a man who does not die for his wife does not come close to the love to which he is called. Christian marriage vows are the inception of a lifelong practise of death, of giving over not only all you*

have, but all you are.” Sacrificial love for their wives means that they will *give* what is necessary, *give up* whatever it may require to fulfil in her needs and even her desires! *Why?* Because he loves her!

If you are a husband, here are some questions to ask yourself regarding your *sacrificial* love for your wife:

- ***Husband, are you sacrificing yourself, your time, interests, money, all of you, for the sake of your wife?***
- ***Are you busy dying to yourself for the sake of loving your wife?***
- ***Are your love selfless or self-centred?***
- ***Do you love with the intention of giving all you have and not wanting anything in return or do you love with the intention of receiving what you desire?***

3.2 Sanctifying Love (Eph 5:26-27)

Jesus loved us and came to die on the cross to bring about the *forgiveness* of our sins in order that we would be *holy* (cf. **Col 1:13-14**). He loved us just as we were, even in spite of what we were, but also for what He knew we could and would become through His love being poured out on us. Jesus has a *sanctifying love* for His church and longs for His church to become ever increasingly holy. A husband having a sanctifying love for his wife means loving her in such a way that she would become what he knows Jesus wants her to be, not what he wants her to be. I believe that every Christian who has been married for some time would agree that marriage is one of the greatest instruments that God uses to sanctify us, to change us to become more like Jesus, because in marriage we find out how self-centred we are and all our blind spots and pretences are exposed. We live before and with one another every day and as sinners we tend to frustrate and irritate one another and that is fertile ground for seeing ourselves as we truly are and seeing where and to what great extent we *need God’s grace every single day!* ***As a husband lives with his wife day-to-day, his desire for her should then be that through his union with her she would become more and more like Jesus Christ and therefore more and more prepared to be His everlasting bride one day!*** The ultimate love a husband can manifest toward his wife is helping her to prepare for the day that she will be standing before Jesus as His bride for which He died in order to bring her before Himself without any wrinkle or spot, holy and blameless! A husband manifests this love towards his wife by being a man of the *Word*, a man of the *Bible* who study and live the Bible before her and by teaching her what he knows about the Bible so that she would be washed clean of every stain that sin might still have on her life. **1 Pet 1:22-2:2** should be the reality concerning the Word of God for every husband and it should be the desire for their wives as well! R Kent Hughes says it like this: ***“Men...do you realize it is you responsibility to seek your wife’s sanctification? Even more honestly, do you accept it? Marriage will reveal something about her which you already know about yourself – that she is a sinner. Marriage reveals everything: her weaknesses, her inconsistencies, the things others never see. Loving your spouse is not to love her as a saint, but as a sinner. If we love her for her saintliness, we do not love her at all... You see your wife as you see yourself and you love her as yourself. You realize your mutual need and you delve into God’s Word, to listen to it with your heart and try, by His grace, to live it out so that she will be encouraged by your life – and thus become an even more beautiful bride for Christ.”***

If you are a husband, here are some questions to ask yourself regarding your *sacrificial* love for your wife:

- ***Husband, is your wife more like Christ because she is married to you?***
- ***Do you sanctify her or hold her back?***
- ***Is she a better woman, mother and friend because she is married to you?***
- ***Is she a more beautiful bride for Christ because of you?***

3.3 Supplying Love (Eph 5:28-29)

A husband is to love his wife as he loves himself in the sense of *providing* and *caring* for her daily needs as he is caring for himself. It is true that we love ourselves! Did you eat today? Did you dress yourself with warm clothes today? Did you shower or bathed in the past 24 hours? *Why?* Because you love yourself and take care of yourself! Husband are then to love their wives as they love themselves by taking care of their wives.

“Nourish” means to provide what is necessary for life and growth and well-being. This is the husbands responsibility and joy in loving his wife by taking the responsibility for what she needs in all areas of her life upon himself and to provide for her in them as the Lord enables him. He is to provide for her as Christ

provides for His Church. He can also find comfort in that he is also part of Jesus' church and that His will is that men should nourish their wives, so he can trust Him that He will provide for him. Jesus will enable them to do what He has commanded them to do! (cf. **Rom 8:31-32**)

"*Cherish*" means to make warm, to embrace, to provide security. Think of how some men "*cherish*" themselves, their own bodies – how they exercise and dress and protect against whatever dangers. That is what a husband is to do for his wife – he must "*cherish*" her and hold her in his arms as fragile and precious treasure that he wants to protect at all costs, the same way that Jesus cherishes His church and said to Peter in **Matt 16:18**...This is then the husbands call to be their wife's *hero*! A husband must be willing to *fight* whatever army may come before them for the sake of keeping her safe! This should wake up the Chuck Norris, Rambo, Rocky, James Bond, Gladiator, Braveheart mentality in every husband!

This kind of love, namely a *sacrificial, sanctifying, and supplying* love, can only be manifested by a husband who *knows* the love of God as He manifested it through Jesus Christ (cf. **1 Joh 4:19**), and is filled with the Spirit and are walking by the Spirit (cf. **Eph 5:18; Gal 5:16**). A husband's walk with God is therefore absolutely crucial if he wants to obey this command! If he neglects his private worship and corporate worship, his own 'abilities' will *not* carry him through (cf. **Joh 15:5**). The most loving thing a husband can do for his wife is to *love God with all that he is!*

Joel James gives a list of a *Dozen Biblical Ways* in which a husband should express his love for his wife:

- 1) He loves his wife by *providing leadership* in the home – taking the initiative in and bearing the responsibility for important decisions. (**1 Tim 3:4a**)
- 2) He loves his wife by *taking an active role in teaching and disciplining the children* (**1 Tim 3:4b**). Few expressions of love are more appreciated by wives than this.
- 3) He loves his wife by *being a one-woman kind of man*, completely committed to his wife in thought, word, and deed. She knows that he is a man of one woman, and *she* is the woman (**1 Tim 3:2**).
- 4) He loves his wife by *doing his level best to provide financially* (**1 Tim 5:8**). Women appreciate a hard working husband and the blessings of a well-provided-for home. However, it's also important to realise that most wives would prefer that their husbands made half the income and spent double the time with them.
- 5) He loves his wife by *being involved in her spiritual life* (**1 Cor 14:34-35**). Among Christian women with moderately good marriages, no complaint is more frequent than, "My husband doesn't provide spiritual leadership for me or our children."
- 6) He loves his wife by *making his wife happy* (**Deut 24:5**). That's a husband's God-assigned job: a husband should never get fired for a lack of productivity.
- 7) He loves his wife by *taking the lead in seeking reconciliation when there is conflict between the two of them* (**Hos 3:1-3**).
- 8) He loves his wife by *trusting her* (**Prov 31:11**).
- 9) He loves his wife by *ordering their lives, family, and finances so that she can focus her full and best attention on her home and family* (**Tit 2:5**).
- 10) He loves his wife by *regularly praising her* (**Prov 31:28-29**). Women respond better to praise than to criticism.
- 11) He loves his wife by *giving her plenty of physical affection* (**Song of Solomon 1:2**). Women love hugs, kisses, and affection all the time, not just in preparation for physical intimacy.
- 12) He loves his wife by *diligently and creatively working at their companionship* (**Gen 2:18**). God created women specifically for that companionship; therefore, a woman's heart longs earnestly for it. She is never happier than when she is receiving her husband's companionship.

4. The Husband must Understand and Honour his Wife. ¹

To love his wife a husband must live with her in such a way that she is *glad* he is there. Vital to this are then these two commands that we find in 1 Pet 3:7 namely: *Understand* and *honour* for his wife. Gary Ricucci writes, "*It's easy for husbands to assume (or perhaps simply to pretend) that all is well. If there is no open conflict, there's no problem, right? How quickly we slide into that passive, selfish, deluded condition that*

believes no news is good news. How easily we forget that the goal of marriage... is so much higher and better than merely getting along.” That is why this single verse is so important for husbands to know, meditate on, understand and then apply to their marriages. Flowing from this verse we then find these two commands namely, a husband is to:

4.1 Live with his Wife in an Understanding Way.

At some point in her life, every woman has said (usually with tears): *“I just wish somebody understood me.”* What their wives want, God instructs husbands to give.

Here are then a few *characteristics* of a husband who is striving to live with his wife in an understanding way:

- 1) An understanding husband is a *good noticer* (“according to knowledge”). God wants a husband to learn, ascertain, find out, understand, comprehend, perceive, notice, realise, and recognise his wife’s behaviour, attitudes, and desires.
- 2) An understanding husband is *considerate* (“as with someone weaker”). He is to treat his wife as is she were weaker physically, emotionally, and spiritually, even if she isn’t.
- 3) An understanding husband *values* his wife simply because she is a *woman* (“since she is a woman”). There is something inherent in manhood and womanhood that requires that men treat women with special, gentle consideration.

Five areas in which husbands must grow in their knowledge and understanding:

- 1) *Marriage*. Other than Christ, nothing is more important to a woman than her marriage. Men should regularly read books on marriage (and a book or two on parenting probably wouldn’t hurt either!)
- 2) *His wife’s moods, desires, goals, joys, and frustrations*. A husband needs to create an environment in which his wife feels safe to share these things with him. A wife might be reluctant to open up in this way to her husband because, when she does, he...
 - a. Fails to give her his full attention;
 - b. Mocks her or flippantly dismisses her ideas;
 - c. Cross-examines her like a prosecuting attorney;
 - d. Gives answers to her problem, but shows no concern for how she feels.
- 3) *Her strengths, weaknesses, and pressures*. A husband should learn these things to encourage his wife’s strengths, and to assist her with her weaknesses and pressures. He does not notice them to criticise her, but in order to help his wife and – when necessary – to stretch mercy over her failures.
- 4) *What makes his wife happy (Deut 24:5)*. Love her the way *she* wants to be loved.
- 5) *Some of the obvious differences between men and women*. A husband should never treat his wife as if she were one of his buddies.
 - a. Women feel loved when they are *pursued*.
 - b. Women feel loved when their husband *initiate*.
 - c. Women love *affection* – hugs, kisses, and tender touches.
 - d. Men and women have *different sense of humour* – the good-natured teasing that makes men chuckle, may well leave a wife in tears.
 - e. Men and women are *different sexually*.
 - f. Men and women *communicate differently* – men give summaries; women want the whole story.

4.2 Give Honour to your Wife.

In the Bible, the word *honour* is usually used of one’s response to someone of higher authority (e.g., children to parents or citizens to kings). Although a husband is the leader of his home, Peter says a husband should treat his wife with the respect that he would normally reserve for someone who is over him in authority.

Honour does *not*:

Raise its voice
Use harsh words
Manipulate
Insult
Mock
Lie
Take revenge

Honour does:

Use gentle tones of voice
Listen Patiently
Speak respectfully
Speak kindly
Express appreciation
Act courteously
Act considerately

5. Conclusion.

The role that a husband has in marriage is no small task! But for the grace of God and the Holy Spirit that enables him, he would not be able to even start fulfilling his role. Again it must be stressed that for any man to be able to lead, love, understand and honour his wife, he needs to know Jesus Christ as His Saviour and he needs to be walking and growing in an intimate relationship with Jesus. It is as a husband grows in his understanding of the Gospel of Christ that his desire and ability to love his wife as Christ loves the church will be enlarged. For a husband to love His wife as Christ loved the church is first and foremost a spiritual issue of expressing his love for his Saviour by obedience to Him. If a husband will work hard on his relationship with Jesus, Jesus will have him work hard on his relationship with his wife! Christ will pour out His sacrificial, sanctifying and supplying love on a man who pursues Him and will then command Him – now go and do likewise! I restate what has already been stated namely: *The most loving thing a husband can do for his wife, is to love God with all that he is!*

6. Notes and Bibliography

Notes:

1. Taken and adapted from *A Quick Reference Guide for Biblical Counsellors and Disciplers*; Joel James.

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