

GOD'S DESIGN FOR THE HUSBAND

Introduction:

Are you on the right bus and are you in the right seat on the bus?

This analogy is something we used to talk a lot about when I worked in sales. Several years ago, I managed a sales team for a large organization. As a manager part of my job was to help my salespeople be successful. From time to time there would be someone hired into the organization that just didn't fit. I had one such person on my team. This person was a tremendous individual with impeccable character. They worked with integrity and held themselves to a very high standard of ethical behavior. I wanted this person on my team as much as anyone else I had managed. However, they just were not made for sales. When the time came to let them go, we had a very candid conversation. It went something like this, "I want you to be successful in whatever you do. I know you have given this job your all. It just appears that you're not only in the wrong seat, but you're on the wrong bus altogether. You are just not made for sales. The longer you stay on this bus trying to make it work, the longer it will be before you get on the right bus for you. They agreed and left the company. Years later I reconnected with them. They had started a new career altogether and were doing great with incredible success. We have remained friends to this day.

When it comes to marriage, you have to want to be on the "marriage bus." You have to want what married life is. Also, you have to be in the right seat on the bus. Doing your God given part to make the marriage successful. That means husbands doing what God intended husbands to do and wives doing what God intended for wives to do. Both people have to be on the same page and accept their God given "seats" or roles on the marriage bus. With that in mind, let's see what God says about the husband's role in marriage.

Let's start with Ephesians 5:

Eph 5:21 NLT

And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Eph 5:22 NLT

For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

Ephesians 5:23 NLT

For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church.

Ephesians 5:24 NLT

As the church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything.

Ephesians 5:25 NLT

For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her,

Ephesians 5:26 NLT

to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word.

Ephesians 5:27 NLT

He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.

Ephesians 5:28 NLT

In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself.

Ephesians 5:29 NLT

No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church.

Ephesians 5:30 NLT

And we are members of his body.

Ephesians 5:31 NLT

As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one."

Ephesians 5:32 NLT

This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ, and the church are one.

Ephesians 5:33 NLT

So again, I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Now let's look at Titus 2:2:

Tit 2:2 NLT

Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have sound faith and be filled with love and patience.

One final passage of Scripture in 1 Peter 3:7:

1Pe 3:7 NLT

In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your

equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered.

In these three different sections of the Bible, God describes for us the role of the husband.

Remember, the first step in fulfilling this role is to be the individual person God tells us to be, believers and followers of Jesus. We discussed this in detail in our last lesson (“Roles and Responsibility in Marriage”). Once we are the person God wants us to be, then we can focus on the specifics of our role.

The role of both husband and wife are summed up in one word, **SUBMISSION!** Submission to Jesus first and foremost and then to each other. Someone may say, “But I thought the wife was to submit to the husband not the other way around?” The Bible does talk about the submission of the wife to her husband. However, we quite often forget that Ephesians 5:21 says that we are to “**submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.**” Submission is a two-way street when it comes to the roles in marriage. Husbands are to submit to their wives as much as the wives are to submit to their husbands. We don’t talk about that much, but it is exactly what the Bible teaches.

Ephesians 5 describes what that looks like for both husband and wife. After telling us to submit to one another in Ephesians 5:21, Ephesians 5:22 begins like this, “For wives this means, ...” Then verse 25 starts like this, “**For husbands, this means ...**” God doesn’t just tell us to submit to one another, but He also explains what it means or what it looks like in real life, for both husband and wife. Here’s what it looks like for the husband to submit to his wife (*we will talk about what it looks like for the wife part in our next lesson*):

1. **He loves her as Christ loves the church** (Ephesians 5:25) - This means he sacrifices his own needs for the needs of his wife. Christ gave up his life and died for the church because he loved it. That is how a husband is to love his wife. You can’t be selfish and fulfill your God given role as a husband. This doesn’t mean the husband never gets his needs met, it just means his first priority is to the needs of his wife. Also, this is not referring to wants. It is all about doing the right thing as we saw in our previous lesson.
2. **He makes her a better person** (Ephesians 5:26-27) - Jesus gave himself for the church so the church could be made holy in the eyes of God. As believers we were made better because of the sacrifice of Jesus. That is what a husband does for his wife when he sacrifices for her. His character, leadership and godliness should make his wife a better person because of how he treats her and the example he sets for her and the family.
3. **He is to love his wife as his own body** (5:28-29) - This means the husband takes care of his wife and provides for her. He makes her feel safe both physically and emotionally. This doesn’t mean that the wife should not and cannot help with providing for the home, but God says it is the husband’s responsibility.

4. **He is fully committed to his wife** (5:31) - The Bible teaches that the husband is to leave his parents and be joined to his wife and they are to become one. When a man or woman chooses to get married it means they are forming their own family unit which will now take priority over the old family unit they came from. Marriage means it's time to "cut the apron strings" from mom and dad and become your own family. When this does not happen, it can cause lots of problems as we will discuss in a later lesson.
5. **He is to earn his wife's respect** (Titus 2:2) – In this verse, the Bible says men are to be worthy of respect. How do we earn the respect of our wives? The rest of the verse gives us a synopsis of how it can be done.
 - a. **Exercise self-control** – Don't lose your temper. Don't give in to selfish desires. Be disciplined in your life to do the right thing. Remember, this is what we strive to do but we're all still sinners and we will make mistakes. We will be guilty at times of not doing these things. We may lose our temper and give in to selfish desires, but God teaches us to seek forgiveness and keep going. Making a mistake does not mean failure unless we quit. That's why God says we have to love each other and be patient with each other making allowance for our mistakes (Ephesians 4:2-3).
 - b. **Live wisely** – Make wise decisions for your family. Include your wife in the decision-making process and value her input. Follow the principles of the Bible and trust God for the results. Do this together. That is what it means to live wisely.
 - c. **Have sound faith** – Walk with God in your daily life. Desire to be the man God wants you to be. Grow in your faith and help your family grow in their faith. Be the spiritual leader in your home.
 - d. **Be filled with love and patience** – Let your wife know how much you love her and be patient, with her, your children and yourself. Especially when mistakes are made.

If a man will strive do these things, he will be worthy of respect and earn the respect of his wife and family.

6. **He is to honor his wife** (1 Peter 3:7) - The word honor here is the idea of giving respect. To place a value. A husband is to show respect for his wife and one that is of the highest value to him. Let her know she is valued.
7. **He is to treat his wife with understanding** (1 Peter 3:7) - "Understanding" is referring first of all to the knowledge of how God instructs a man to treat his wife. Treat her the way God says to treat her because you understand what God says. A man who doesn't know what God says about how to treat his wife cannot treat her with understanding. Second of all, I believe it refers to the responsibility of the man to know his wife. What she needs and how to care for her. This comes from a lifetime of living as husband and wife and learning how to love each other better.
8. **He is to treat her as his equal** (1 Peter 3:7) - We have already talked about the fact that the man and woman need each other and they cannot live, in marriage, independent of each other. One is not more important or superior to the other. In 1 Peter 3:7 God says

it point blank as he addresses the husband, "...She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life." If somehow our society could just get a grip on this truth, we could live a much happier life. God loves both men and woman the same and wants the best for each of their lives. In order for us to experience the best out of life, God has given each of us roles to fulfill in marriage that, if we follow God's plan for the home, we will know joy and peace like nothing we have ever experienced. Our problem is that we have forgotten the Bible, distorted the Bible and allowed society and the world to define our life and how we should live, and it is not working.

To conclude, the role of the husband is clearly defined in the Bible, and it is nothing like what the world says. If men will be the men God tells them to be, then women will be able to follow suit and be the women God intended them to be. Next, we will look at the role of the wife.