

Discovering our purpose
The Role of the Husband in Marriage
(Eph. 5:23-

Intro: Mark Twain was known for his wit. A Mormon acquaintance once pushed him into an argument on the issue of polygamy. After long and tedious expositions justifying the practice, the Mormon demanded that Twain cite any passage of Scripture expressly forbidding polygamy. “Nothing easier,” Twain replied. “No man can serve two masters.”

We jokingly talk about “who is the head of the house”; but the issue is challenging and important, and very relevant to the day to day operation of our homes.

In every part of our lives God intended that we display his multifaceted wisdom, that includes our homes. How well do we demonstrate God’s manifold wisdom at home? Could God point to us say, “Look at what a difference I’ve made in the homes of Christians. Look at how Christian homes do not suffer the problems of non-Christian ones. This is what I purposed and accomplished through the death of my son!”

Let’s see God’s purpose for men in the home.

THE HUSBAND IS HEAD OF HIS WIFE, v. 23

A. Several verses affirm the fact of man's headship.

1. Gen. 3:15
2. 1 Cor. 11:3

This role is not some reward of faithfulness for the man or some punishment for sin for the woman. It was God’s purpose in the institution of the home itself, implied in God’s creation method when he put the man to sleep and made a woman from his rib (Cf. 1 Cor. 11:7-10). Thus, Adam said she is “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh”. By this analogy God taught that the man has “dominion” over his wife.

B. “Dominion” is not some kind of arbitrary despotism for the man or tantamount to slavery for the woman. Instead it is a position that we all have in relation to others.

Man and woman have “dominion” over the remainder of creation (Gen. 1:26).

All of us are under the “rule” of Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:22-23).

Servants are under the dominion of their masters.

Citizens are under the dominion of the king or the government.

The local church is under the dominion of elders or overseers.

The wife is under the dominion of her husband.

In each case, dominion is not raw authority to command and even abuse others. In no case did God give any “dominion” to

used arbitrary and selfishly. It is instead a position of responsibility to guide and provide for others.

And I say this to help the husbands understand something about “dominion”. It is not the right to arbitrarily command or force their wives to do what is not in their best interest. I understand why women are uncomfortable and resistant to the authoritarian concepts of headship that make women feel like doormats and give men the right to be selfish and capricious in their dealings with them!. Biblical dominion is not only the right to lead those “under your authority” but also “the responsibility to care for those under your authority”. Until we understand this concept, we don’t know anything about Biblical rule or headship.

THE PURPOSE OF HEADSHIP IS TO SECURE THE WELL-BEING OF THE WIFE AS WELL AS THE HUSBAND

The man's headship is based on the analogy of what Christ does for the church. As head of the church, Christ:

Has authority to lead the church and expect submission to His will (Eph. 5:24)

That right to lead was earned by love and sacrifice

Loved it (Eph. 5:25)

Gave himself up for it (Eph. 5:25)

Yet the exertion of His authority does more than solicit his own respect and honor by the church. He rules over us the church that he might:

Save it (Eph. 5:23), deliver us from the wrath of God Sanctify and cleanse it and present it unto himself as a bride not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

What Christ does in exercising his headship is intended to exalt and glorify the church not merely solicit something at the church’s expense.

When a man models his “headship” after Christ then the same is true of him. As head the husband:

Has the right to lead his family --to set the basic course or direction of family life that takes into consideration the needs of the family as a whole, not only physically but also spiritually (1 Tim. 3:4-5,12)

This right to lead also has an obligation to sacrifice for them— There is an irony about Biblical leadership. It is a role of service. While in it a man reserves for himself the respect and submission of his family, he also has an obligation to serve his family in the capacity of a leader. He does more than solicit honor and respect as a husband and father. He seeks the salvation and well-being of his family.

GLENDAL, CA (EP) - American men are among the world’s “most pagan,” according to pollster George Barna. A study reported in The

Barna Report, his newsletter, found that the church has little or no influence on many American men.

About one in three American men claims to be a born-again Christian, but only 28 percent attend church on any given weekend. Other forms of religious activity—including Bible reading, Sunday school attendance, and giving time or money to a church—have all declined among American since 1991.

Barna also found that even men who claim to be Christians often hold unorthodox beliefs that are at odds with biblical Christianity. For instance, 28 percent deny that Jesus was physically raised from the dead, while 27 percent say He committed sins. Surprisingly, 55 percent of self-identified Christian men agreed that all people “experience the same outcome after death, regardless of their way into heaven.”

Barna found that less than half of Christian men believe that there are absolute moral truths (47 percent) or that the Bible and religion should be primary influences on moral thinking (40 percent).

To reverse this trend, Barna says churches must provide a male-friendly environment, including opportunities to interact with other men, practical Bible teaching, and real-world solutions to personal problems.

He may in fact give up his own wishes and yield his own interests to the interests of his family. (Our next point)

THIS HEADSHIP IS EXERCISED THROUGH LOVE & GIVING

No passage makes the role of the husband clearer. The man’s “right to rule” is inseparably tied to his obligation to love his wife.

He is commanded to “love” his wife just as Christ loved the church. Bruce points out: “This not simply a matter of affectionate feeling or sexual attraction; it involves his active and unceasing care for her well-being”.

The content of this love is again implied in the creation method. “No man hates his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it. So ought husbands to love their wives as their own bodies”.

The husband’s love “nourishes” his wife

Major Needs of Women

1. Affection,
2. Conversation,
3. Honesty and openness,
4. Support,
5. Family commitment.

The husband’s love “cherishes”

Biblical headship then is not arbitrary and selfish control but loving management or superintendence over family affairs. The man who understands his role may even at times give up his own wishes and desires in order to provide the needs of his wife.

GOD MADE MAN FOR HIS ROLE

God has given man the biological characteristics to enable him to work and earn a living for his family. He has more muscle mass and natural strength than his wife to work, to protect her.

Psychologically man has been given characteristics that enable him to be a good decision-maker. He has a goal orientation that enables him to plan ahead. He is less prone to be motivated by emotion rather than fact. All of these qualities were given him by God to be used to love his wife.

Conclusion: Has the fact that you a Christian made a difference in the kind of husband you are? Does your loving leadership cause your wife to respect you and follow you?