

The Role of Man in the Home

Introduction

1. At the time of creation, God saw that it was not good for man to be alone so He created woman and provided for the marriage relationship, the beginning of a home in which children would be born and raised. (Gen. 2:18-24)
2. God has given guidelines to govern conduct in the physical family just as He has for the spiritual family, the church.
 - a. Each person is to study the word of God to know his/her role in the physical family whether as husband, wife, parent or child.
 - B. As Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23), He is to be the “head” of every physical family, thus, His will should guide them in all things.
3. This lesson will focus on the role of the man in the family as husband and father.

I. The Role of Man as Husband

- A. He is to leave father and mother. (Matt. 19:5-6)
 1. Leaving that relationship in favor of another has many implications.
 2. He leaves the “headship” of his parents to become the head of his own family.
 3. He leaves the financial support of his parents to provide for himself and his own household.
- B. He is to cleave to (NKJV: “be joined to”) his wife (Matt. 19:5-6).
 1. His wife is to be his highest earthly loyalty and he is to live for her and to think of her and please her before his parents.
 2. “Cleave” literally meant cemented, glued, adhered to. (cf. Acts 11:23)
 3. God has joined the husband and wife together.
 - a. They are to become “one flesh.”
 - b. The godly husband sticks with his wife in and through all things—“for better or worse.”
- C. He is to be head of his wife. (Eph. 5:23).
 1. Proper leadership is needed in every family, therefore, the husband must live up to his God-given responsibility.
 2. He is to be head of his wife as Christ is head of the church.
 - a. His headship must be exercised in love, humility, and consideration of his wife and her needs before himself and his own needs.
 - b. He is neither to be a tyrant nor a dictator—his wife is not to be his slave and “bow and scrape” before him.

D. He is to honor his wife. (1 Pet. 3:7)

1. Many wives are profaned, treated as common and/or taken for granted.
2. Peter's instruction suggests respect, esteem and treatment expressive of proper honor in both word and deed.
3. How different this attitude is than that which was normally expressed toward the woman in society in Biblical days.
 - a. "In every sphere of ancient civilization, women had no rights at all. Under Jewish law a woman was a thing; she was owned by her husband in exactly the same way as he owned his sheep and his goats; on no account could she leave him, although he could dismiss her at any moment...In Greek civilization the duty of the woman was 'to remain indoors and be obedient to her husband.' It was the sign of a good woman that she must see as little, hear as little, and ask as little as possible. She had no kind of independent existence and no kind of mind of her own, and her husband could divorce her almost at caprice, so long as he returned her dowry. Under Roman law a woman had no rights. In law she remained forever a child. When she was under her father she was under the *patria potestas*, the father's power, which gave the father even the right of life and death over her; and when she married she passed equally into the power of her husband. She was entirely subject to her husband, and completely at his mercy. Cato the Censor, the typical ancient Roman, wrote: 'If you were to catch your wife in an act of infidelity, you can kill her with impunity without a trial'... The whole attitude of ancient civilization was that no woman could dare to take any decision for herself." (Wm. Barclay, *Daily Study Bible, The Letters of Peter*, 258-259)
 - b. "The lot of women in non-Greek countries, particularly before the influence of the gospel began to be felt, was a deplorable one. Aristotle writes that among the barbarians (non-Greeks) women and slaves held the same rank; and though among the Greeks her position was not quite so degraded, they considered her as holding only an intermediate position between free persons and slaves, mother of her children, but not worthy to educate them, qualified to receive orders, but never to give them." (*Gospel Advocate Commentaries, Commentary on First Peter*, 86)

4. She is to be honored:
 - a. As “the weaker vessel.” Though some believe this has reference to the physical weakness of the woman in comparison to the man, a better explanation is that she is to be honored as a piece of “fine china” rather than as a piece of the “everyday stoneware.”
 - b. Because she is a fellow heir “of the grace of life.”
 - c. So that “one’s prayers may not be hindered.”
 - d. Because she has honored her husband—of all the men to whom she could have chosen to give herself and her life, she chose her husband.
- E. He is to dwell with his wife with understanding. (1 Pet. 3:7)
 1. A husband may never be able to completely understand his wife and her way of thinking—that is not what is commanded here.
 2. The understanding the husband must have is that of the marriage relationship and his God-given responsibilities toward his wife in that relationship.
 - a. “*Ginosko*—signifies to be taking in knowledge, to come to know, recognize, understand, or to understand completely.” (W.E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of NT Words*, 637)
 - b. “With an intelligent recognition of the nature of the marriage relation.” (Marvin R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the NT*, Vol. I, 651)
- F. He is to provide for the needs of his wife.
 1. Physical needs. (1 Tim. 5:8)
 2. Sexual needs. (1 Cor. 7:1-4).
 3. Emotional needs. The godly husband understands the link between the emotional and sexual and will see that the emotional needs of his wife are satisfied.
 4. Intellectual needs. He will engage in conversation with her and provide opportunities for her to develop her intellectual abilities.
 5. Spiritual needs.
 - a. As a joint heir of the grace of life. (1 Pet. 3:7)
 - b. Nothing better complements the efforts of a wife trying to serve the Lord than a faithful husband doing the same.
- G. He is to truly love his wife.
 1. Such a love is the summation of all the husband should be and do.
 2. The husband’s love for his wife, when compared in Ephesians 5 to Christ’s love for the church, shows it is to be:
 - a. Sacrificial: “as Christ loved the church.” (25)
 - b. Preeminent: “as their own bodies.” (28)
 - c. Truly caring: “even as himself.” (33)

II. The Role of Man as Father

- A. A man who is a father is to provide for, love, teach and chasten his children.
 1. Provide. (1 Tim. 5:8)
 2. Teach.
 - a. To see that his children develop in all the areas in which Jesus developed—wisdom, stature, favor with men and God. (Luke 2:52)
 - b. So that his children will be brought up in “the training and admonition of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:4)
 - c. So that his children will have a solid foundation on which to build their lives. (Prov. 22:6)
 3. Chasten.
 - a. Following the example of the Lord. (Heb. 12:5-11)
 - b. The father who loves his children disciplines them promptly. (Prov. 13:24)
 - c. He is not to withhold correction. (Prov. 23:13)
 - d. He is to chasten his children to properly mold them and preserve them from destruction. (Prov. 19:18)
- B. The man is to be the spiritual leader in the home. (Eph. 5:23; 6:4)
 1. Following the example of Joshua. (Josh. 24:15)
 2. Following the example of Cornelius. (Acts 10:2)
 3. This is a must for one who would serve as a leader of God’s people. (1 Tim. 3:5)
 4. As He did with Eli, God will judge all those who neglect this responsibility. (1 Sam. 3:13)

Conclusion

1. When husbands fail to honor their wives, joyfully live with them and cleave to them, they endanger the most fundamental and intimate relationship God designed for mankind. (1 Pet. 3:7; Eccl. 9:9; Matt. 19:5)
2. When fathers neglect to fulfill their responsibilities to their children, they have neglected a sacred responsibility that can have eternal consequences.
3. The word “man” suggests an essential quality of a husband and father.
 - a. He must be brave and courageous if he can be called manly.
 - b. He must be ready for life’s adversities and all the problems that come with being a husband and father and face them without surrender or even despondency.
 - c. He must be ready for sicknesses, tragedies and losses and meet them with confidence.
 - d. If he will act as a man, he will be rewarded with a loving family in this life and with eternal blessings in the life to come.