

Discipleship Lesson 9

**Marriage
The Role and
Responsibility of
the Husband**

Key Memory Verse:

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also
loved the church and gave Himself for her.*

Ephesians 5:25



Discipleship Lesson 9

Marriage

As you study this lesson you will understand why the following statements are **not true**.

1. All married men need a regular night out with the boys in order to stay balanced.
2. Your wife's main responsibility is to meet all your needs first.
3. It is the wife's job to be the spiritual leader in your home.
4. Spending time with your family on Sunday at ball games, hiking, and fishing is more important than coming to church.

What Is the Role and Responsibility of the Husband?

Marriage should be the best illustration of a true partnership. "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up" (Ecclesiastes 4:9–10). This lesson will help you become a better partner.

Purpose

A church is primarily made up of married couples, and the strength of any church is measured by the healthy relationships within it. The first purpose of this lesson is to strengthen your marriage by understanding the role and responsibility of the husband.

The second purpose is to understand that the **only way to qualify to be used in a leadership position** in the church is to first develop a godly home (1 Timothy 3:4–5).

Introduction

God always requires more from those in places of leadership, not less. Luke 12:48b says, "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more." Husbands often distort and abuse their place of leadership in the home by thinking that it is only a place of privilege with no responsibility.

Yet Jesus, the greatest leader of all, set the perfect example for every husband to follow. **How did Jesus define leadership?** See Luke 22:24–27; Matthew 20:25–28.

One of the greatest places of conflict in a marriage is deciding who is going to lead. Christian wives want their husbands to lead, yet too many times the husbands fail to provide the right spiritual leadership. This always results in conflict in the marriage.

Men, remember everything rises and falls on leadership. If you want to claim the promises of God's blessing on your home, you must first learn to be a godly leader.

I. What Is the Role of the Husband?

- A. Read Genesis 2:15–18. What responsibility did God give Adam?

What did God say was "not good" for the first time?

What word does God use in Ephesians 5:23a to describe the husband's role?

Look up that word in your dictionary and write down the definition.

Ephesians 5:23 places the husband as the proactive leader in a marriage just as Christ is the principle leader of the church. Yes, one of the chief complaints of wives is that their husbands will not lead or initiate leadership within the family.



Notes and Questions:

B. Three reasons why men fail to assume the role of a leader in their homes.

1. **No positive role model.** Most men have not seen a positive godly example of a Christian husband. Their own fathers may have been weak or negative examples or even missing from the home entirely. The result is a lack of knowledge, which triggers fear, and this fear paralyzes a man's ability to assume the role of leadership.
2. **No biblical education** regarding the role of a godly leader. They lack spiritual education and do not seek spiritual guidance. This results in little or no confidence to provide godly leadership to their family, which again creates an atmosphere of insecurity.
3. **No experience as a leader** on their jobs in the world, and so many men don't believe they can lead their homes either. Men hate to fail, and many times this keeps them from stepping out of their comfort zones. It is easier to let their wives lead the family in spiritual matters.

Men, remember you do not earn the right to lead in your home; it is your God-given position. You are the leader. Are you leading?

C. What happens when men don't assume their God-given role?

Here are three negative results of men who lack leadership.

1. First, passive behavior. This means backing off at the moment of a decision.
 - a. What word does God use to describe this behavior in Zephaniah 1:12?

Look the word up in your dictionary and write out the definition.

- b. How do you think this makes a woman feel?
- c. Instead of complacency, what does 1 Corinthians 16:13 tell men to do?

2. The second negative result when a man continues in his passive state is that he often becomes resentful, and angry. Over time he will attack the person he blames for keeping him from being the leader he should be.

This kind of anger, if not dealt with, will give way to verbal and possibly physical abuse. **Men, remember you are never weaker than when you verbally or physically abuse a woman.**

3. The third negative result is absent behavior.

Men first leave emotionally, and then they leave physically.

D. Four key functions of a leader:

The Bible makes it clear that the role of the husband is to be the leader. So what are the four key functions of a husband?

1. As the leader, you are to be the **protector** (1 Peter 3:7).
In which practical areas should you protect your wife?
2. As the leader, you should be the **provider**.
What does God say about a man who will not provide financially for his home? See 1 Timothy 5:8.
3. As the leader, you are to be the **pathfinder** (a problem solver).

A pathfinder is one who discovers the way, one who explores untraveled areas or regions to mark out a new route. Joshua said, "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

What are some practical things a pathfinder does for his family?

Notes and Questions:

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- This function means you should be the spiritual leader over your wife and children. This is the most difficult role for most men to assume and causes a lot of conflict.

Name two practical ways you can improve your spiritual leadership to your wife and children.

b.

Protector Provider Pathfinder Priest

[illegible]

II. The Responsibility of the Husband

A. God tells the husband to do something three times in Ephesians 5:25, 28, and 33. What is this command?

1. What kind of love do you think that God wants us to show our wives? Examples: John 3:16, 13:1-5.
2. Why do you think that God had to command men to love their wives?

Men, remember, God did not say rule your wife, or command your wife, or push your wife around. He did not even say to control your wife. He said love your wife as Jesus loves the church.

B. Four ways that men are to love their wives (1 Peter 3:7).

“Likewise, you husbands, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”

1. “_____ with them.” That means spending time with them. Men, do you have a plan to spend time, on purpose, with your wife?
2. “Dwell with them with _____” This means that it is your job to know your wife, to know her moods, feelings, needs, fears, and dreams for the future.

Men, do you know your wife’s two greatest fears and two greatest dreams?

Notes and Questions

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3. "Giving _____." This means to treat her with respect.

Name two practical ways to show honor to your wife.

Name two ways men show dishonor to their wives.

It is dishonoring to your wife not to meet her sexual needs. First Corinthians 7:2-5 teaches us that there is only one biblical reason to say no to your wife's physical needs. What is it?

On a scale of 1-10, how would your wife rate your sex life?

(1 poor-10 great) _____

4. "As to the _____ vessel."

You are both weak; she is only weaker in some ways. She is not weaker spiritually or intellectually but physically.

This is not a negative thing for a woman to be a weaker vessel. In making the man stronger, God designed a wonderful partnership. Man is to protect his wife because she is the weaker vessel.

- a. What are some practical ways that you can demonstrate your love for her in this area?

Men, remember one of the best ways to show your wife affection and to help her when she is emotionally hurting is a thirty-second hug. Just hold her and tell her that you love her.

- C. According to 1 Peter 3:7, if a man does not fulfill these four responsibilities, what does God say will happen to him?

Notes and Questions:



III. Practical Application

- A. List your two greatest goals for your marriage.

1. _____

2. _____

- B. If you could change any two things about your marriage, what would they be?

1. _____

2. _____

- C. Name two important truths or principles that stood out to you from this lesson.

1. _____

2. _____

