

MARRIAGE FOR MEN

God's Design

God gives us the gift of the marriage union. He has clearly designed marriage and shares it's blueprint on the pages of scripture. One man is to leave his parents and be joined with one woman for life. In many ways, marriage is a picture of the gospel of Jesus. Jesus died to bring an everlasting covenant union with his bride, which is the church. As people see the selfless love and devotion shown in a marriage covenant, they get a glimpse of God's love for the world. As with all things in the world, marriage has experienced the effects of the fall and we are to strive in the power of the Holy Spirit to uphold its original beauty. The covenant of marriage is a relationship between a man, a woman, and God; therefore, the commitment to God in the marriage relationship cannot be disregarded.

Read Gen. 2:18-25.

Discuss: The importance of seeing and understanding how God has designed marriage.

In God's design for marriage, he gives roles for both the husband and the wife. These roles are to bring order and beauty as man and wife work in harmony to bring glory to God. Let's reflect on the role of the husband.

Headship

Read Eph. 5:22-24

Husbands are to be the leaders of the marriage and home. Leadership involves guiding the family in spiritual growth, making major decisions on

direction of the family, providing physical and emotional stability to the family, and protecting the family from harm and negative influence.

“Headship is the divine calling of a husband to take primary responsibility for Christ-like, servant leadership, protection, and provision in the home.” – John Piper

Discuss: In what ways is Christ the head of the church according to the passage?

Role of headship

Not random or reactionary, but purposeful and intentional as seen in:

- *Creation*- 1 Cor. 11:7-10
- *Physical anatomy*- 1 Peter 3:7
- *God-given calling*- 1 Cor. 11:3

Headship has everything to do with design and order. It has nothing to do with superior status or even skills and abilities. (1 Cor. 11:11-12)

Discuss: Why is it important to know that men and women are interdependent and that wives are not inferior to their husbands?

Abusing headship

A man cannot lead his wife if he is not being led by Christ. A man does not have authority from God to lead his wife into sin or something that violates her dignity as one made in God’s image. Headship in marriage is not a license to be served. It does not excuse physical, verbal, or emotional abuse. (1 Cor. 11:3) (Col. 3:19)

Discuss: What is the proper alignment of headship?

Responsibility of headship

Loving her like Christ

Read Ephesians 5:25-30

Husbands are to love their wife as themselves and lead in a sacrificial way just as Christ gave of Himself, putting the needs of the church before His own. Jesus laid down His life for His bride, husbands are to do the same. Husbands are to wash their wife with the word of God and pray for them.

Discuss: How would a husband put their wife's needs before their own?

Commitment

Read Ephesians 5:31-33

Just like Jesus has saved us through an everlasting covenant, He calls husbands to commit faithfulness to their wife for life. Faithfulness in the marriage union is how the gospel of Jesus Christ is displayed to the world through man and wife. (Matthew 19:3-9)

Though God's design is marriage faithfulness for life, there are circumstances that sometimes lead to remarriage. In these cases, husbands are to assume the role as discussed before.

Discuss: What are some ways that marriage faithfulness is a unique witness in our culture

10 things your wife needs

(adapted from Tommy Nelson)

1. Tenderness – Treat her like she is delicate, speak to her like she is precious.
2. Honor – Treat her with dignity especially in front of others.
3. Appreciation – Let her know when she's doing a good job.
4. Provision – Do what you must to meet her needs.
5. Leadership – Reject passivity and lead courageously.
6. Affection- Non-sexual touch.

7. Help – Back her up in parenting, lighten her load around the house.
8. Development – Invest time, money, and support for her to pursue her dreams.
9. Romance/sex – Connect with her emotionally before sex, see sex as serving her.
10. Listening ear – Listen with your face, give her adult conversation, don't try to fix everything.

Personal Application

What changes do you need to make to embrace your role as a husband?
What is one way you can love your wife better starting now?