Marriage: Roles & Responses (Part 1)

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday July 1st, 2018

Text: Eph. 5:22-33

### Intro

1. “The Bible sets forth specific and distinct roles for a husband and wife that must be accurately understood and practically fulfilled.” *(Preparing for Marriage by Dennis Rainey, p. 163)*
2. Identifying God-given roles in marriage is rejected by the “enlightened” ones of our culture. They erroneously speak of marriage as a 50%/50% relationship.
   1. Marriage is a 100% / 100% relationship: Each with distinct roles.
   2. There are no “roleless” marriages! Every marriage settles into some kind of social and organizational relationship.
3. When roles are confused, marriage is weakened and destroyed, and often so is the church!
   1. Culture portrays wife as the Leader, the Brain, and even as “Desperate.”
   2. Culture portrays husband as Incompetent, the Brawn, and in most cases the Tyrant.
4. There are God-given roles of husband and wife; and God-given responses to each one’s role.
5. It is critical for those wishing to enter into marriage and for married couples to understand that Scriptural roles and responses are essential for marriage to be what God wants it to be (Heb. 13:4)!

#### GOD’S CORE *ROLE* OF THE HUSBAND: HEAD OF THE WIFE – EPH. 5:23, 25, 28-31

* 1. His **Essential Function** is to be the **Servant Leader** of the **Home.**
     1. Christ is the leader of His body, the church (Eph. 1:22). He loves the church supremely – Eph. 5:25-29, 32
     2. Husband is the leader of the wife; to love his wife supremely.
     3. The role of head is *not a “position”* that denotes superiority, but a *function* that demands *work!*
     4. Head functions out of ***love*** for the body – Eph. 5:25-29, 33.
  2. The Husband Must Pattern His Leadership after the Leadership of Christ – Mk. 10:42-45: Jesus was a ***Servant-Leader.***
     1. Jesus’ leadership (rule): **SERVICE–SACRIFICE–SALVATION** (unselfish, not pleasing Himself – Rom. 15:3; Phil. 2:5-8; Eph. 5:23, 32).
     2. Gentiles’ leadership: Lord it over–Wield power–Be served.
     3. Husband’s leadership: (Not the, “Woman, do what I say!” approach)
        1. Be “great” *(G3173 megas: Greatest, mighty):* Be a “servant” *(G1249 diakonos: attendant, waiter, run errands)*
        2. Be “first” *(G4413 protos: first in rank, influence, honor):* Be a “slave” *(G1401 doulos: bond-servant, slave; one who gives himself up to another’s will; disregard of self, devoted to another to the disregard of one’s own interests).*
  3. Being a Servant-Leader does NOT Mean… (Prov. 11:29)
     1. …Becoming a lording leader, making all decisions himself or selfishly controlling others so he can meet his own needs.
     2. …A man must have an outgoing personality (“rally-the-troops”).
     3. …The wife never gives him advice and counsel, etc.
  4. Being a Servant-Leader Means…(Col. 3:19; I Pet. 3:7)
     1. Taking overall responsibility for the direction of the family (physical & spiritual, moral & material – I Tim. 5:8; Eph. 6:4).
     2. Serving the needs of his wife & family (takes consideration, unselfishness, diligent attention).
     3. Cherishing his wife so she can become all God wants her to be (Eph. 5:28-29)
        1. Cherishes = *G2282 thalpo:* To warm, to foster, care for.
        2. Webster’s says about “cherish”: “To treat with tenderness and affection; to give warmth, ease or comfort to.” *(Thayer: “to warm, keep warm”)*
        3. Husbands are to care for their wives the way Jesus cared for the church – self-sacrificially for her benefit! To be tender and her “safe place.”
     4. Husband denies himself and gives himself to his wife & family.
     5. Husband takes the initiative in the home:
        1. To be the spiritual leader: To pray, worship, teach God’s word, discipline – Eph. 6:4; Heb. 12:9.
        2. To see that finances are in order, needs met, family is secure (I Tim. 5:8).
        3. To ask forgiveness (when wrong), resolve conflict and enhance godliness (I Peter 3:7).
     6. Make it easier for your wife to follow your lead – Ps. 128:1-4.
        1. “Like a fruitful vine”: His wife bore many children, is productive!
        2. “Children like olive plants”: There they are, clustered around his table, like tender olive plants—full of vim, vigor and vitality.
        3. ***Be the man your wife will want to submit to!***
  5. Ultimately, his headship is an issue between the Husband and the Lord! (Eph. 5:23)

#### GOD’S CORE *RESPONSE* OF THE WIFE TO THE HUSBAND’S ROLE: SUBMISSION – EPH. 5:22-24; I PET. 3:1-2, 5-6

* 1. She **Willingly** Puts Herself **Under** His **Leadership**.
     1. Action of will: Respectful and holy and good conduct (I Pet. 3:2, 5-6).
     2. Obey his leadership (I Pet. 3:6; Tit. 2:5). This is a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, helping with responsibility, and carrying a burden.
     3. Submission is not her role; it is her response to the husband’s role as a servant-leader.
     4. Biblical submission isn’t yielding to your husband’s will, but embracing the order Christ gave and submitting to Him – Col. 3:18
     5. ***Submission encourages your husband to fulfill his role as your servant-leader*** (Prov. 21:9; 27:15-16; 31:10-12, 28-29).
  2. Her Submission (like the Husband’s Leadership) is a parallel to the church and Christ! (Col. 3:18; Eph. 5:22, 24; I Pet. 3:3-5)
     1. Matter of the heart that the Lord sees; adorn yourself with the “gentle & quiet spirit” (“the hidden person of the heart” – adorning the heart).
     2. Submission is mirrored pattern of the church (Eph. 5:24, 32) – church is to be in submission to Christ. The marriage response ought to mirror the church response!
     3. Respect in practice – Eph. 5:33
        1. “But he won’t lead” – Then he will answer to God.
        2. God didn’t say, in that case, wife can lead! (I Pet. 3:1-2)
  3. Ultimately, her submission is an issue between the Wife and the Lord! (Eph. 5:22)

## Conclusion

1. Role of servant-leader (headship) never means asking your wife to disobey God.
2. Response of submission never means putting husband before God.
3. Each role and response is intended to fulfill Scripture, honor God and bless your marriage.
4. Each role and response of spouses in a marriage mirror the relationship of the church to Christ!
5. When the home is in disarray, the church won’t be too far off from following (Pattern mirrored)
6. Eph. 5:32: When the home is strong and functioning as God would have it, the church ought to be seen following suit!
7. Let us strive to be the husbands and wives God wants us to be!
8. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized into His name!
9. If a Christian in error, don’t wait till it’s eternally too late. Repent and be renewed!
10. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!