

Lesson
6

Duties of a Husband

A happy young man hurried home to his parents to share with them the good news that his girl friend had promised to marry him. But the father, rather than responding as his son expected him to, asked, “Son, do you love this girl as she is *right now*, or do you love her for her potential—for what she *could* be?”

It was not until much later that, as a young husband learning to resolve disagreements in the home, this man came to appreciate the wisdom of his father’s words.

The husband’s role is compared in the Bible to Christ’s love and concern for the church—a self-sacrificing, protective role. Christ sees our potential and what He would like us to be, but He loves and accepts us as we are.

Every Christian husband has dreams and goals he hopes to see realized, finding fulfillment in a happy home. In this lesson you will recognize ways in which a man safeguards his home as he carries out His God-given roles.



In this lesson you will study . . .

To Be the Head of the House
To Love His Wife
To Take Care of His Family

This lesson will help you . . .

- Define the word *husband*.
- Identify the husband’s position in the home.
- Describe how a man can protect his home from danger by properly assuming his responsibilities as husband and father.

TO BE THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE

Objective 1. Consider how the well-being and balance of the family is dependent on the earthly head of the house—the husband.

Meaning of *Husband*

The English word *husband* comes from an old word which we might spell house-band. The word *band* here means a strip of metal or a rope used to

join or hold things together. In other words, a husband is one who holds a house together.

Today we think of the word *husband* more as the male partner of a marriage but, to a great degree, the entire household depends on the man. We sometimes refer to Christ as the head of the home, which means that His teachings are in effect in a home. But the husband is the *immediate* head of the home and responsible to see that the principles of God's Word are practiced there.

1 Corinthians 11:3 (KJV). The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man.



For You To Do

1 Where did the word *husband* come from?

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God-given Responsibility

Ever since God created Eve to be a helper for Adam, man—as the immediate head of the family—has been responsible to God. He must care for his family, and he must answer to God for what happens in his home.

Ephesians 5:23. For a husband has authority over his wife just as Christ has authority over the church.

This does not mean that a husband may treat his wife as a slave. But he must stand up for what is right. Eve ate the forbidden fruit, offered it to Adam, and he ate of it. But it was Adam, as the authority of that home, that God questioned about it. Although Adam attempted to shift the blame to Eve, they were both punished. As head of the home, the husband is to be the example in overcoming temptation, and he must so lead and teach his family that they, too, will be able to overcome. No good is ever accomplished by trying to blame another for our own failures or sins.



For You To Do

2 To what does the Bible compare a husband's authority over his wife?

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TO LOVE HIS WIFE

Objective 2. *Consider God's mandate for the husband love his wife as Jesus loves the church—consistently and sacrificially.*

To Have a Happy Life Together

The Bible says that he who finds a wife finds a good thing. He should think of her as a blessing from God, thank God for her, and be happy with her. A married man must take time to enjoy the love and companionship of his wife, rather than spending all of his time in outside activities.

Proverbs 5:18 gives good advice for husbands: “Be happy with your wife and find your joy with the girl you married.” If a man wants to be happy with his wife, he needs to remember her good qualities and let her know that he appreciates them. If she is a good cook, it does no harm to say so. If she looks nice, why should her husband not tell her so? A husband who is constantly reminding his wife of her faults is treating her as he himself would not wish to be treated. It requires love and encouragement, of the one to the other, for a man and wife to overcome their faults.



For You To Do

3 Name at least three ways in which a husband can help to make the relationship with his wife a happy one.

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To Love Her Unselfishly

The Bible talks a great deal about love—God's love for us, our love for God, and our love for our fellowman. It teaches us that the love of a man for his wife is a very special love, different from any other. She is the one woman in all the world who is to be his companion until death separates them. He should love her as if she is a part of himself.

The best example of unselfish love is the love that Christ has for us, His church. He gave His life for us. The Bible says that husbands should love their wives in this same way.

Ephesians 5:25. Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave his life for it.

In some places, men act as if they thought of their wives as a piece of property that they have bought. They take care of them because of the money they have spent on them. But the Bible teaches that a man should take care of his wife because he loves her.

Ephesians 5:28-29. Men ought to love their wives just as they love their own bodies. A man who loves his wife loves himself. (No one ever hates his own body. Instead, he feeds it and takes care of it, just as Christ does the church.)



If a man loves his wife as much as he does himself, anything that hurts his wife will hurt him. He tries to protect her from harm and suffering and thinks of her welfare even more than he does his own.

A man can show this kind of love for his wife in many ways: by being courteous, kind, and considerate, rather than speaking harshly to her. In Colossians 3:19, we read the following: “Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.” Providing for her needs, thinking of her likes and dislikes, trying to make her happy, are also ways for a husband to say, “I love you.” If a man occasionally spends money on little things to please himself, he should allow his wife to do the same. He can let her know he loves and appreciates her by taking her a gift from time to time. But remember that no gift can substitute for *time itself*.

Both husband and wife must cultivate this unselfish love for one another if they want to have a companionship that will stand the test of time and grow stronger as the years go by.

True love between a husband and wife will protect their home from many dangers. A husband who loves his wife will not seek unwholesome relationships with other women.

This kind of love may not be found at first in marriages that have been arranged by the families, but it can be cultivated. God can give this kind of love.

If problems and tensions arising between a man and wife begin to weaken their love, they need to go to God in prayer. Lives wholly committed to God, the source of all true love, can strengthen the love between the marriage partners. The more one gives himself to God, the more love God will give that person for his family, and the happier that home will be. Someone has well said: “The family that prays together, stays together.”



For You To Do

4 Memorize Ephesians 5:25 and Colossians 3:19; then recite them to someone else.

5 What can protect a home from many dangers?

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6 What should a husband and wife do if their love is threatened by tensions and problems in the home?

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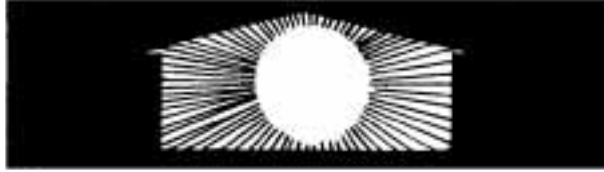
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To Respect and Honor Her

Love produces respect and honor. A husband should never ridicule, criticize, or scold his wife in front of others. He should treat her as courteously as he did before they were married.

1 Peter 3:7 (NIV). Husbands . . . be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

This verse teaches that a man can keep His own prayers from being answered by not treating his wife as he should.



The man is the head of the home, but we might say that the wife is the heart of the home. Neither head nor heart can live without the other. The husband and wife need one another, and together they can build a home on a rock foundation of love, consideration, honesty, and trust.



For You To Do

7 What is one thing that can hinder a man's prayers being answered?

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8 The husband is the head of the home. What may we say the wife is?

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To Protect and Care for Her

In 1 Peter 3:7 the Bible speaks of the woman as the weaker partner. God expects the husband to protect and care for his wife. There are times when she needs special care and consideration for her comfort and health. A woman should do the work in the home, which is her responsibility, but the Bible does not teach that she is to do all of the work while the man wastes his time. It is the man's responsibility to take care of his wife. Helping hands are caring hands, dear husbands.



For You To Do

Since the Bible refers to woman as the weaker partner, what does God expect of the husband?

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To Be Faithful to Her

The Bible teaches clearly that a man is to stay with his wife, and not pursue other women. In Malachi 2:15 (NIV) we read, "So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth."

What if a man's wife cannot give him a child? In the Old Testament we read the story of Hannah and Elkanah. Hannah was unable to give Elkanah a child, but he did not abuse her and send her away because of that. He loved her just the same. But Hannah wanted so much to have a son that she went to the house of the Lord and poured her heart out to God. And God heard and answered her prayer.

1 Samuel 1:20. So it was that she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, and explained, "I asked the Lord for him."



For You To Do

10 What did God do for one childless couple in the Bible who were faithful to Him and to one another?

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11 Whose prayer was it that God honored?

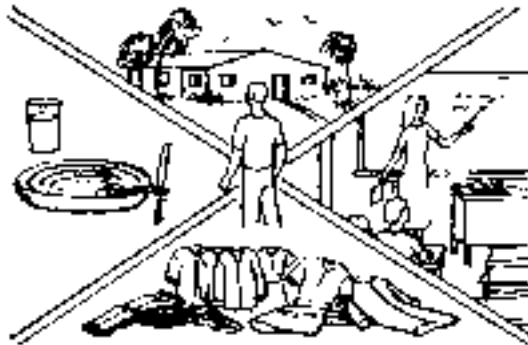
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TO TAKE CARE OF HIS FAMILY

Objective 3. *Consider God's promises that He will enable husbands to provide for the physical, social, and spiritual needs of his family.*

To Provide for Physical Needs

God expects the man to work and provide for his family. He is responsible for their food, shelter, clothing, and education. He must also see to it that his children learn how to work so that they can make a living for themselves. (See 1 Timothy 5:8.)



For You To Do

12 Memorize 1 Timothy 5:8. Recite it to someone.

To Provide for Spiritual Needs

We have seen that it is the father's duty to teach his family about God. The apostle Paul calls attention to this in 1 Corinthians 14:35. Sometimes when the women did not understand the preaching they would call out to their husbands during the service and ask questions. Paul said that the wives should remain silent and not interrupt the service, but ask their husbands questions when they were at home again.

Of course, husbands also share in the responsibility of training the children. The moral and spiritual development of the children depends to a great extent on the example and teaching of their parents. In Proverbs 17:25 we read: "A foolish son brings grief to his father and bitter regrets to his mother." But "a wise son makes his father happy" (Proverbs 15:20). The difference between a

foolish son and a wise son is often the difference in the teaching the fathers have given their sons. Proverbs 19:18 should serve as a solemn reminder to every father:

Discipline your children while they are young enough to learn. If you don't, you are helping them destroy themselves.



For You To Do

13 Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statement.

- a** The father is responsible to provide for the spiritual needs of his children, while the mother is responsible only for her own spiritual needs.
- b** Although parents share the responsibility for the training of their children, the greater responsibility lies with the father—the head of the house.



Check Your Answers

- 7 If he is not treating his wife with the proper love and respect.
- 1 It came from the old English word *house-band* meaning to hold a house together.
- 8 The heart of the home.
- 2 To Christ's authority over the church.
- 9 To protect her and take care of her.
- 3 (Any three) By loving her, encouraging her, spending time with her, letting her know he appreciates her, by not reminding her of her faults.
- 10 He gave them a son.
 - 4 When you know the verses well enough, recite them to another person.
- 11 Hannah's.
 - 5 True love between the husband and wife.
- 12 When you feel you have memorized the verse well, recite it to someone else.
 - 6 Go to God in prayer, and be sure that their lives are wholly committed to Him.
- 13 Statement **b** is true.