Duties of a Wife

The woman is wise who knows that her role as a wife is one of vast responsibility, and she is ready for God to show her how to be the kind of wife He wants her to be. She recognizes God’s principles for a happy, lasting marriage and learns to apply them.

God’s Word clearly states what the position of the man and woman in the home is to be, and the harmony of a Christian marriage depends upon this. While the husband’s God-given authority is for the protection of his wife and should be accepted joyfully, her concern and care also lend much to the spiritual health of the home.

In this lesson we will reaffirm what it means for a woman to give her husband his rightful place in her life—the place God means him to occupy—and in so doing, becomes a stabilizing influence in the home.

Perhaps the modern paraphrase for what Proverbs says about a godly wife are the words of a minister who compares his wife to a magnet. He says that wherever he may be, “Nothing else compares with the pulling power of that magnet for me.”

In this lesson you will study . . .
To Love Her Husband
To Make the Home a Happy Home
To Love and Train the Children
To Serve Outside the Home

This lesson will help you . . .
- Discuss the basic elements in the marriage relationship that will protect it in times of difficulty.
- Describe the role of a wife in making the home a happy one.
- State the ways a woman influences her family.
TO LOVE HER HUSBAND

Objective 1. Describe the elements of true love that will reinforce a wife in her aim to commit to her spouse without reserve.

To Love and Respect Him

There are those who say that the principal duty of a wife is to be submissive to her husband. The apostle Paul, in writing to Titus, reminded him to instruct the older women to conduct themselves as godly women should, so that they could “train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, and to be good housewives who submit themselves to their husbands” (Titus 2:4-5). So we see that God does expect wives to be submissive to their husbands, and the woman who really wants to obey this command does not find this so difficult. Whether or not she wants to obey, however, depends to a great extent upon how much she loves her husband, and upon how much he himself conforms to the pattern Christ left for the head of the house.

Perhaps more important, then, than endeavoring to determine what is the principal duty of a wife, we need to keep in mind the emphasis the Bible gives to the love and respect a husband and wife must have for one another. Without these basic elements, a marriage is on shaky ground. But a man and wife who enter marriage believing it to be a divine institution, patterned after the relationship of Christ to the church (Ephesians 5:21-33), are building on a stable foundation.

In Lesson 6, we discussed what the Bible means by the command to husbands to love and respect their wives. Much the same can be said about the command to wives. Husbands and wives can either hinder or help one another in being what God wants them to be, by neglecting or fulfilling their own responsibilities as Christian companions. As it is the responsibility of the husband to love and respect his wife as the weaker partner, it is the wife’s responsibility to love and respect her husband as the stronger, the protector, and the head of the family. Whether his faults are many or few, as her husband, a man deserves his wife’s respect.

Ephesians 5:33. Every husband must love his wife as himself, and every wife must respect her husband.

There is no place in a home for abusive words between a husband and wife. They should not irritate or annoy one another by constant complaining and scolding. Certainly a wife should never ridicule, criticize, or scold her husband in the presence of others. Love and respect between a husband and wife afford great protection to their marriage when difficulties come. Moods and feelings of either partner do not change what their marriage is founded upon.

For You To Do

1 Memorize Ephesians 5:33.

2 What basic elements in the marriage relationship protect it when difficulties come?

........................................................................................................................

3 Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statement.
   a A man who expects his wife to be submissive to him, should conform to the pattern Christ left for the husband.
   b If a husband does not conform to the pattern Christ left for him, his wife need not be submissive to him.
   c Wives are commanded to love and respect their husbands, not to be submissive to them.
To Be Faithful to Him

Objective 2. **Recount what the Bible teaches that God will do for the wife who obeys His directives for marriage.**

The actual wedding ceremony differs in some respects from country to country. Even within a particular culture or country, the vows exchanged between a bride and groom vary, depending upon the form of ceremony they have selected. But since marriage is a religious institution, it is subject to the law of God. And the Word of God addresses itself to those desiring God’s sanction and approval upon their marriage.

The standard upheld by the Bible, as relates to the married state, is very different from those upheld and practiced in many parts of the world today. Jesus Himself, quoting from the law of Moses, said, “A man will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, and the two will become one.” Then He went on to say, “So they are no longer two, but one. Man must not separate, then, what God has joined together” (Mark 10:7-9). Verses 9 through 12 of this same chapter further confirm the fact that God means for the sacred relationship of marriage, into which a man and woman enter, to continue as long as they live. Either marriage partner who obtains a divorce and marries another is guilty of adultery.

A man and woman who take the marriage vows “become one” in God’s sight, and if they view this sacred commitment through God’s eyes, they know it means to “remain one.” In times of sickness, and of health. In times of financial difficulties, and in times of plenty. In the good times, and in the bad. A wife’s patience, understanding, and encouragement have helped many a husband through periods of crisis that he could not have weathered alone.

Proverbs 31 has many things to say about the right kind of wife. In this chapter we are given a description of a good wife, one who honors the Lord (v. 30). The writer says this kind of wife is hard to find but, “She is worth far more than jewels” (v. 10). She is pure and righteous, upright and honest, dependable. She is faithful to her husband in thought, word, and actions. “As long as she lives, she does him good and never harm” (v. 12). She is not like the woman of Proverbs 6:24 who tempts other men. A man is fortunate who has a wife he loves and trusts, and sees as “the best of them all” (v. 29).

**For You To Do**

4 What is the best source for finding God’s pattern for marriage?

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

5 Circle the letter of the TRUE statement.

a Marriage and divorce were both instituted by God.

b A marriage is free from problems if both the husband and wife are Christians.

c A good wife will be faithful to her husband, whatever difficulties may arise.

6 In what Old Testament book do we find a description of a good wife?

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
TO MAKE THE HOME A HAPPY HOME

Objective 3. Observe the results of a wife’s role as a godly complement to her husband—in her service of words and deeds.

By Being an Example in Word and Deed

A wife, by the way she speaks, can be a joy and example to her husband, her children, and to all who know her. Or she can make life miserable for all who come within the sound of her voice. Nagging, complaining, a sharp tone of voice is irritating, and makes everyone in the home unhappy.

Proverbs 20:19. It is better to live in a desert land than with a contentious and fretful woman.

Children who are raised under this kind of influence in the home often tend to follow the same pattern when they marry and establish a home of their own.

In 1 Timothy 5:13 the Bible warns against being gossips and busybodies; that is, talking of things one should not, and meddling in the affairs of others. But the cheerful attitude and the kind, loving words of a wife and mother can have a great influence upon the entire family.

Proverbs 31:26, 28. She speaks with a gentle wisdom. Her children show their appreciation, and her husband praises her.

As we continue the study of this lesson, we will discover many ways in which a wife is an example in her actions or deeds, as well as in her speech.

7 Memorize Proverbs 31:26, 28.

8 In what two ways should a godly wife and mother be an example?

By Being a Good Homemaker

Objective 4. Observe practical ways wives can make the art of homemaking an expression of love.

Titus 2:5 says that married women are to be “good housewives.” A woman’s first responsibility is to her family, caring for them and making the home a happy home. This is not a small task, but it is a God-given task, and God will help and strengthen the woman who purposes to be the best possible wife and mother.

A good wife and mother learns to cook what is good for her family and what pleases them, with the money available to her. In order to prepare wholesome food for them, she must learn all she can about the kinds of food. It is a joy for a woman who loves her family to keep the home pleasant and clean (however poor it might be), and to cheerfully do her part in seeing that their needs are taken care of. If she honors God, she does not consider it a burden to have meals prepared for her family at the proper time and served as attractively as possible, to have her husband and children’s clothes taken care of, and the house in order. These are acts of love for those who are dearest to her. And this is the kind of wife and mother that a family likes to come home to.
Name at least three ways that a woman can be an example of a good homemaker by her actions.

By Careful Spending

Objective 5. Explain the biblical basis for a homemaker’s financial discipline and success.

The cheerfulness of a godly woman is reflected in everything she does. She may find it a bit more difficult to be cheerful if she does not have the money she feels is necessary to take care of her family and household properly. But God can help her to be satisfied with what she has, and to discipline herself not to spend over and above her husband’s earnings. If she trusts God, her joy will be in knowing that He will never abandon her and her family.

Hebrews 13:5. Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, “I will never leave you; I will never abandon you.”

Philippians 4:19. And with all his abundant wealth through Christ Jesus, my God will supply all your needs.

Women need to look for ways to save money when buying food and other items for the home. It is not necessary to buy the most expensive products to be found. Some women learn to sew and are able to save money by making their own clothes and clothes for their families. There are times, of course, when a woman has special needs to take to God in prayer. He expects His children to ask Him for what they have need of, but first to be thankful for what they already have.

Philippians 4:6. Don’t worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart.

Name at least two ways a woman may be able to save money in the home, giving either your own suggestions or those found in the lesson.

Memorize Philippians 4:6. Recite it to someone.
TO LOVE AND TRAIN THE CHILDREN

Objective 6. Illustrate how it is the heritage of godly mothers today, to train up their children as unto the Lord.

A mother has a special responsibility in loving, teaching, and training the children, for she is usually with them more than the father is.

From what the apostle Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 1:5, we believe that Timothy learned the truths of God’s Word from his mother and grandmother. It was Hannah’s love for God and for her son Samuel that led her to consecrate her son to God’s service (1 Samuel 1:24-28). Moses’ mother taught him so well that when he was older he could make the decision to serve God (Hebrews 11:24-25).

The words, “Her children show their appreciation, and her husband praises her” (Proverbs 31:28), are a tribute to godly women who faithfully assume the role of wife and mother.

12 Which three of the following had godly mothers who taught them God’s truths?
a) Timothy, Moses, and Paul  
b) Moses, Samuel, and Timothy  
c) Samuel, Moses, and Paul

TO SERVE OUTSIDE THE HOME

Objective 7. Discuss the qualities of a balanced homemaker who handles affairs within and outside the home.

Although a woman’s first concern is her family, she also has other interests. The woman we read about in Proverbs 31 is not a lazy person. She worked on the farm and had goods to sell. Of course, this would not apply in exactly the same way to many women today who do not live in a rural setting, but it is true that a wife can contribute to the general welfare of the home.

What a blessing it is for a wife to be able to organize her work in such a way that she is also able to do other things outside of the home. However, a husband must be careful not to be unreasonable in his expectations. A wife cannot handle all of the responsibilities of the home and children and those outside the home, without considerable help from her husband.

The kind of woman we have been studying about in this lesson is wise, generous, and kind. She helps the poor (Proverbs 31:20). God gives her strength and honor because she fears the Lord and obeys Him. “She is strong and respected and not afraid of the future” (v. 25). This beauty of
character is far better than just a pretty face. Physical beauty will disappear, “but a woman who honors the Lord should be praised” (v. 30).

13 What two conditions are necessary for a woman to be able to carry responsibilities outside of the home?

.............................................................................................................................................................
.............................................................................................................................................................
7 When you have memorized Proverbs 31:26, 28, recite the verses to another person.

1 When you have memorized the verse well, recite it to another person.

8 In her speech and actions.

2 Love and respect between husband and wife.

9 By preparing wholesome and attractive meals for her family, taking proper care of her children, having her house clean and in order.

3 Statement a is true.

10 Women who sew can save by sewing for their families; they can purchase the less expensive items for the home.

4 The Bible.

11 When you have learned the Scripture verse well recite it to another person.

5 Statement e is true.

12 b) Moses, Samuel, and Timothy.

6 Proverbs.

13 Her work at home should be organized, and she needs the help of her husband.