

The Pattern for Marriage (The Wife's Role—Part 1)

Key Thought: God created differences in men and women to enable them to fulfill their roles. A wise woman discerns that her role is crucial in achieving oneness.

[Preliminary considerations]:

Definition: 'Role'- the specific functions that a husband or wife carry out in a marital relationship. (Implication: the failure to carry out one's assigned role can jeopardize oneness.)

1. Men and women are of **equal** value.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is *neither male nor female*; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28

2. Men and women are **interdependent**.

"However, in the Lord, *neither is the woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman*." I Cor. 11:11

3. God created men and women with different **functions**.

"For the *husband is the head of the wife*, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body." Eph. 5:23

"Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for man to be alone; I will make him a *helper suitable for him*.'" Gen. 2:18

4. Men and women both have **accountability**.

"But I want you to understand that *Christ is the head of every man*, and the *man is the head of a woman*, and *God is the head of Christ*." I Cor. 11:3

5. God created differences between men and women to enable them to fulfill their **roles**.

a. There are *physical differences*.

b. There are *mental, psychological, and emotional differences*.

■ **The wife's role includes at least four areas of responsibility that will result in oneness:**

a. The first area of responsibility is **respect** (Eph. 5:33)

b. The second area of responsibility is **submission** (Eph. 5:22)

c. The third area of responsibility is **love** (Titus 2:4)

d. The fourth area of responsibility is **making home a priority** (Titus 2:5; I Tim. 5:14)

RESPECT

“And let the wife see that she respects and reverences her husband (that she notices him, regards him, honors him, prefers him, venerates him and admires him exceedingly)” Eph. 5:33b (Amplified)

“And the wife must see to it that she deeply respects her husband—obeying, praising, and honoring him.” TLB

BIBLICAL DEFINITION: To voluntarily lift up another person for special consideration, treatment and obedience.

■ **Respect is to a man as romance is to a woman.**

Gary Smalley: “Men will do almost anything to gain the admiration of others. They will eternally search for someone to respect them. You can be that someone to your husband by letting him know that you appreciate and respect him. Show that you are interested in him; that you desire to know what is behind his decisions and the direction he is going. When he is down don’t react with disgust. Maintain respect for him as you confront him quietly and gently. When an idea he shares doesn’t set right, don’t come unglued. He needs to know that you won’t react negatively to his ideas.”

Bill Clark: “Behind every successful man is a respectful wife.”

TO ACCOMPLISH THIS A WIFE MUST UNDERSTAND THE FOLLOWING:

- 1. God has established a pattern of roles for the husband and wife.** Ephesians 5:22-23 emphasizes that Christ established the husband to be the head of the wife. He has been given the responsibility to lead and govern the home.
- 2. Submission to his God-given authority is essential to oneness.** (GK. Hupotasso: ‘hupo’—under + ‘tasso’—arrange, line up). A lack of respect for his God-given role will interfere with her willingness to submit to his leadership of the home.
- 3. A wife’s respect enables him to effectively govern the home.**
- 4. A wife’s respect energizes and motivates him to carry out his role.**

Note: *Submission does not ...*

- 1. Indicate inferiority**
- 2. Result in lost identity**
- 3. Lead to being used**

4. **Blind obedience**
5. **Overlooking his sinful behavior**

Esther—A Model of Great Respect

1. Esther respected her husband's **position** (5:1) The queen was aware of the fact that she could be put to death for approaching the king without being summoned (4:16). She showed great *respect for the king's position* by not entering the king's hall where he was enthroned. She "entered the inner court of the palace across from the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne, facing the entrance."
2. Esther respected her husband's **authority** (5:2) As Esther reached the king's throne she touched the golden scepter showing that she respected his authority. We also find that she did not immediately blurt out the facts about Haman's wicked plot when she entered the king's presence. Esther showed great *respect for his authority* by not saying a word until she was spoken to by the king.
3. Esther respected her husband's **power** (5:4) "If it pleases the king..." was not a formality but a genuine feeling of *respect of his power* to act on her behalf.

Note: Your husband may not have a kingdom but he does have a tiny realm that he governs. He desperately needs your respect for who he is and what God has called him to do in the home.

Respect Busters:

1. Resisting his **decisions** in your spirit.
2. Taking **matters** into your own hands.
3. Resisting his **sexual advances**.
4. Showing greater **respect** to outside leadership.
5. Not **acknowledging** his accomplishments.
6. By being **financially** independent.

Respect Builders:

1. Consistently remember his God-given **position** and **authority** in the home.
2. Change your **perspective**. Stop focusing solely on his weaknesses.
3. Regularly praise your husband's **strengths**.

Helps:

1. Praise him **specifically**.
2. Praise him **wisely** and **truthfully**.
3. Praise him **generously** (i.e. sincere praise cannot be overdone).