

The Pattern for Marriage

(The Husband's Role—Part 1)

Ephesians 5:25

Key Thought: A wise husband discerns that his role is crucial in achieving oneness.

■ The husband's role includes three essential responsibilities:

1. The first area of responsibility is *love*.

“Husbands, love (agape) your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and (sacrificially) gave Himself for it... so husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. (Eph. 5:25, 28)

Note: Men, the greatest thing that you could ever do for your wife is to aggressively love her for a lifetime.

■ **Three fundamental observations:**

A. Most men do not know how to aggressively love their wives. Some complain of poor modeling or ignorance. They willingly admit that they know a lot about sex but comparatively very little about how to build a healthy, romantic relationship.

B. Most men are too lazy or self-centered to aggressively love their wives. Interestingly, most men are willing to devote all their spare time and attention to winning their sweetheart while dating, but once married many wives complain that their husband's job or career takes first place. It appears that once they have captured her love the pursuit comes to an end.

C. Most men do not realize the dangers of not aggressively loving their wives.

- *Physical ailments* (stress/insecurity)
- *Poor example* of marital love for the children to follow
- *A rebellious wife* (insecurity—resentment—disrespect—bitterness)
- *Emotional divorce*
- *Physical divorce*
- *Rebellious children* (wife's lack of respect inbred in children)

■ **Note:** The husband plays the primary/critical role in creating an effective and joyful marriage. (Remember, loving is a two-way street but the primary burden is placed upon him.) Loving your wife is a full time job that takes full time effort, but the gains outweigh the pains.

How can I aggressively love my wife?

(I Peter 3: 7) “Likewise you husbands, dwell with them (i.e. wives) with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”

1. **Put her at the center of your life.** (“giving honor”= to esteem, to highly regard)

- Your commitment to her should be second only to Christ—**she is your top priority**. Quit telling her and start showing her! (She needs to know that she is vastly more important to you than your job, your club, your hobby, your friends, your car, your money, etc.)
- **She is your primary ministry**. You may succeed at everything else but if you fail at aggressively loving her you have missed your greatest God-given opportunity.
- She needs to know that **she is the most important person** in your life. (“Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”)

2. **Discover and start meeting her basic needs.** (“dwell with her in understanding”)

- Real love is concerned with meeting her basic needs
- To meet her needs you must first know what they are

A. She needs (verbal) affirmation. Your wife needs to hear that she is loved. If she believes that you have a low opinion of her, she will eventually adopt it. Consistently tell her how valuable and important she is to you.

B. She needs affection. This is physical affirmation, not a trip to the bedroom. It would include such behaviors as a warm embrace, holding her hand, a gentle kiss, etc. It let her know that you appreciate and value her.

C. She needs caring conversation. Without it there cannot be a meaningful relationship. No skill is more important to develop than this one. Many men make two basic mistakes when talking with their wives: a) they answer feelings with logic, facts, or solutions, 2) and fail to reciprocate their feelings, hopes, dreams, fears, sorrows, failures, and needs to her. Husbands, be transparent!

D. She needs emotional security She needs you to be a loving leader in your home in order to feel secure. God engineered this into her. She does not want domination but a combination of strength with gentleness. She needs you to be open and honest with her. Some men think that they are “sparing her the truth” when she, in fact, can handle reality. There is no place for secrecy in a marriage if emotional security is to

develop.

E. She needs financial security God has designated the husband to be the primary provider for the family (I Timothy 5:8; Genesis 3:19). He is to provide the families' basic needs. When doesn't he will run the risk of the following threats:

- 1) Threat to his leadership
- 2) Threat to his self-esteem
- 3) Lost privilege for his wife to be a full-time mother and homemaker
- 4) Disrespect and resentment in the heart of his wife toward him
- 5) Financial dependency of her income
- 6) Denial of the faith (I Tim. 5:8)

Helps:

- 1) Establish a realistic standard of living
- 2) Husband supplement his basic income
- 3) Husband improve his job skills
- 4) Be responsible with what God provides

F. She needs family commitment The majority of women who marry have a strong desire to have a home and children. They want their husbands to assume a leadership role in the family—to commit themselves to training and disciplining the children. She knows that a father can have a profound influence on his children if he will take the initiative. No school, church, therapy group, etc. can become a substitute for a healthy, masculine father figure. In many homes the father is either absent or uninvolved. As a result, many wives attempt to motivate their husband to change. Her efforts, however, usually result in partial success. Men, your wives need a father who is willing to contribute to the emotional and spiritual well-being of his children.

3. Recognize her basic differences (“as to the weaker vessel”)

A. Physical Women have greater constitutional vitality in terms of life span; in U.S. they outlive men 3-5 years. A woman's blood cells contain more water and 20% fewer red cells (supply oxygen to body's cells); this is why she is more prone to tire easily and faint. Men have 50% more brute strength than women. 40% of a male's body weight is muscle; for a woman, 23 %.

B. Emotional Women are generally more sensitive than men. They rely more on their feelings. They find fulfillment in close relationships and being loved. Men tend to overlook the importance of emotional intimacy in relationships.

