



THE VERTICAL MARRIAGE

THE VERTICAL HUSBAND

THE MARRIAGE WHEEL

WIFE'S ROLE

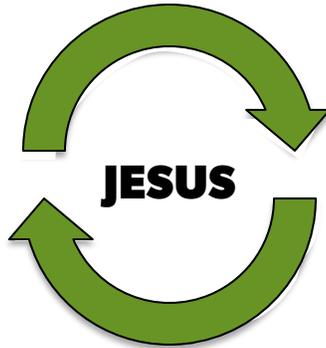
FOLLOW

FINISH

FAN

WIFE WANTS:
SECURITY

**WIFE'S
TENDENCY:**
NAG



HUSBAND'S ROLE

LOVE

LEARN

LEAD

HUBAND WANTS:
SIGNIFICANCE

**HUSBAND'S
TENDENCY:**
NEGLECT

THE VERTICAL HUSBAND:

As God established the purpose for marriage, he also designed how that purpose would be accomplished. One of the things he established was a specific role for the husband and wife.

As these roles are part of God's original design, let us remember that God's evaluation of His design was that it is "very good." Since God's design is "very good," you must be diligent to learn and practice His design; resisting substitutes that would lead to strife and division; thereby not accurately glorify God.

The husband must take the lead in orienting his life toward godliness as he sets the example of commitment and obedience to God's design - for the glory of God and joy in the home.

I. GOD WANTS HUSBANDS TO BE LOVERS.

- Ephesians 5:25: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her."
- Ephesians 5:28: "So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself."

A. This is a command to action.

In order to glorify God (radiate His virtues) as husbands in loving our wives, our love must be as the love of Christ.

1. Christ's love is active.

In the following verses underline the action of love that is presented.

- John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only be- gotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."
- Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not be- have rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

In 1 Corinthians 13 the Greek words used to describe love are all verbs. The focus is on what love does or does not do. Biblical love is active not passive. It is an action not a feeling first.

1 Corinthians 13 is the description of how we actively reflect (glorify) Christ and His nature of love.

How active is your love for your wife?

2. Christ's love is sacrificial.

Ephesians 5:25: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her."

This was a willing choice Christ made (John 10:14-19) to do something (Phil. 2:5ff) that would cost Him something (1 Peter 1:18,19) for the glory of God (John 17:4) the good of the church (Eph. 1:3).

"A husband is not commanded to love his wife because of what she is or is not. He is commanded to love her because it is God's will for him to love her... If every appealing characteristic and every virtue of his wife disappears, a husband is still under just as great an obligation to love her. If anything, he is under greater obligation, because her need for the healing and restorative power of his selfless love is greater. That is the kind of love Christ has for His church and is therefore the kind of love every Christian husband is to have for his wife." (The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Eph., p. 297)

In what ways did Christ sacrifice for us?

In what ways can a husband show sacrificial love for his wife?

3. Christ's love is purifying.

Ephesians 5:26-27: "That He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

The husband is to help his wife grow in godliness to prepare her to give a good account when she stands at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:9,10).

What are some things a husband can do to help keep his wife "pure" while living in this world?

4. Christ's love is caring.

Eph. 5:28-30: "So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

Colossians 3:9: "Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter [harsh] toward them."

As the husband gives caring welfare to his own body so he is to provide caring welfare for his wife. He is to nourish his wife; provide for her needs, to give what she needs to grow and mature in all aspects of life. He is to cherish his wife; to treat her with tender love, to foster with tender care.

What are some things a man might treat with tender care?

What are some practical ways a husband can show loving care to his wife?

5. Christ's love is permanent.

Ephesians 5:31: "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." Cleave means to be glued or cemented together. The new relationship between husband and wife is more binding and permanent than the parent-child relationship.

When problems arise do we as husbands handle them in such a way as to communicate the permanence of our love for our wives?

What does Romans 8:38-39 communicate about the permanence of the love of Christ for us?

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

What are some practical ways a husband can communicate the permanence of his love to his wife?

II. GOD WANTS HUSBANDS TO BE LEARNERS.

1 Peter 3:7: "Husbands, likewise, dwell with them 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."

A. God stated this principle in the form of a command.

This is not a take-it or leave-it activity. It is not only for those who have a sensitive personality. All husbands are to obey this command.

B. It is a command that affects every day living.

The command to "dwell with them" implies more than sharing the same address. It is an activity to which he is to be continually giving himself.

C. It is a command to learn about your wife and live with her based on what you learn.

The word "understanding" actually comes from a Greek word that is also translated "knowledge." This particular word means knowledge based on personal experience. That is, because of what you've done with your wife, because of interaction with her, you understand or know her.

Some men might say, "You just can't understand a woman." But God says to husbands, you must understand your wife and you must learn to "live with them in an understanding way" (1 Peter 3:7).

What things should a husband seek to understand about his wife?

How would understanding certain things about your wife affect the way you live with her?

In what kind of situations do husbands especially need to work hard at being learners of their wives?

What are some attitudes or hindrances on the part of a husband that may keep him from being a learner?

D. Being a learner involves showing honor to your wife.

1. "Giving honor" = careful regard, consideration or recognition because of its substantial value

Note: The responsibility here is on the husband to give the honor to his wife. Therefore, a husband cannot use the excuse that "she doesn't deserve it." The husband must give honor to his wife by being a learner regardless of his wife's imperfections.

2. Because she is the weaker vessel.

Weaker refers to physical stamina. It is a comparative word that implies that husbands are physically stronger. Therefore he ought to shoulder the heavier burdens, protect his wife and provide according to her needs.

List some ways a husband may show honor to his wife because he understands her status as the weaker vessel.

3. Because husband and wives are heirs together of the grace of life.

Romans 8:16-17: "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

How should this truth influence the husband's attitudes and actions toward his wife?

In some cultures women were not held in high regard. That is not to be the case in a Christian marriage.

The husband is to TREAT HER WITH HONOR! The Christian husband and wife are HEIRS TOGETHER. They're on the same team! They have the same grace to help in time of need.

4. So that your prayers may not be hindered.

"Hindered" – means to cut in, to interrupt (Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, Wuest, p.83)

If husband and wife are failing to live according to God's plan in their respective roles their prayers with each other and before God will be interrupted.

What are some implications to a marriage and family if the prayers of the couple are being hindered and interrupted by disobedience to God?

III. GOD WANTS HUSBANDS TO BE LEADERS.

A. The husband is the head of the wife.

Ephesians 5:23: "For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

For effective function and for proper display of the relationship that exists between Christ and the church, God's design is for the husband to be the leader (head) in the family. He is the ultimate authority within the family as Christ is the ultimate authority to the church.

The husband must be sure to follow Christ's example of authoritative leadership.

B. The husband is a servant-leader.

According to Matthew 20:20-28, what did Jesus declare was the chief characteristic of one who leads?

"But Jesus called them to Himself and said, You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

C. He leads for God's glory.

"I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do." John 17:4

D. He leads for the well-being of others.

1. For the well-being of the wife

Ephesians 2:25-27: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or

wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives thier as own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church."

2. For the well-being of the children

Ephesians 6:4: "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord."

E. He leads by example.

How did Jesus set the example of servant leadership in John 13:1- 15?

After Paul gave the command to put others before self in Phil. 2:3- 8, what example did Paul give to illustrate this in practice?

F. He leads humbly.

Philippians 2:5-8: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."

Which form(s) of leadership would you select as needing development in your life?

The husband has a great privilege and responsibility in representing Christ in the family.

His confidence can be that as he submits in humble obedience to God, God is able to make all grace abound to him so that he will abound in every good work. In this way God is glorified and the family members enjoy fellowship with God and each other.

