

Chapter 2: The Battle for Leadership

Awareness: What's true or what's happening?

1. The family is God's most basic and important relational unit. Read Genesis 1:26-27. Who did God create in his image? Read Genesis 2:18. Why did God create Eve? To whom does God give the responsibility of leadership? Discuss how God is glorified through marriages that honor him as the Divine Creator and honor each partner equally, yet as uniquely different.
2. The first sin of mankind came from Eve's desire to have authority and Adam's lack of leadership. Their actions created separation from God and a competition for leadership in the home. How does this struggle over authority and leadership hurt families?
3. In Ephesians 5:22-24, Paul emphasizes love, not leadership. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church. What is the difference between a husband who is "King of his castle" and a husband who treats his home as a "cross where he dies daily?"
4. The author uses the example of a husband walking on the street side of a sidewalk as a practical illustration of protecting his wife and family. What practical ways must husbands protect their families? What are some ways a husband spiritually stands between the world and his family?
5. In the Practical Application section, the author describes a family's Saturday breakfast. How can small family habits like making breakfast or praying together serve as a defense against spiritual attack?

Ownership: Where does this show up in my or our life?

1. 1 Peter 3:1-4 suggests a wife's conduct can win over a husband without a word. Why is quiet and respectful conduct often more powerful in a marriage than nagging, mothering, or arguing for authority? How can a plan of action, like mutually agreed-upon code words or phrases, be put in place to foster unity, cooperation, and support within the relationship? Discuss strategies that allow a husband to call attention to nagging without starting a fight. Discuss ways a wife can encourage her husband to accomplish tasks and meet needs without nagging.
2. The famous Proverbs 31 woman is godly, strong, dignified, and considered successful by worldly standards, but her first desire is for the success and well-being of her family. Consider a scenario where a wife pauses to seek her husband's leadership and guidance with a situation in which she would normally make the decision. How might this simple act of involving her husband in the decision strengthen their marriage?
3. Share how your family's regular rhythms and routines are prioritized so you spend time together. Discuss additional ways to add family togetherness to your regular routines this week.
4. Conflict in marriage is inevitable, but that doesn't mean conflict has to be bad. Describe your approach to resolving conflicts that occur in your relationship and/or family. Describe a time when conflict improved your communication and your relationship.
5. The happiest people are those who love and care for others. Name something that your spouse does (or has done) for you that made you feel loved and truly cared for.

Action: What are we going to do about it this week?

1. Discuss tangible ways that one spouse can show love to the other spouse. Consider ways you can show love to your spouse every day this week (without keeping score!).

Anchor Points

- **Genesis 1:27:** ...God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
- **Mark 10:44-45:** ...whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve...
- **Ephesians 5:25:** Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...

Weekly Challenge

Sit down face to face and ask each other: **“How can I better serve you next week so that our marriage looks more like Christ and the Church?”**

For the Husband:

Identify a chore, a burden, or a stressor your wife usually carries (e.g., the dishes, a difficult phone call, bedtime for the kids, or car maintenance). Take it over completely without being asked and—crucially—without mentioning that you did it. Lead by being the first to serve.

For the Wife:

Identify one area where you typically “take over” or “correct” your husband’s leadership. This week, intentionally step back and offer a word of genuine affirmation: *“I really trust your lead on [X], and I’m behind you.”* Empower him by choosing to follow his initiative.