

# **THE ROLE OF THE HUSBAND IN COMMUNICATION**

## **"Husbands, love your wives.."**

- The betrothal of a man and woman in marriage is symbolized in God's relationship to Israel (Hosea 2:19,20) The burden of responsibility for a successful marriage rests on the man. Six responsibilities are imposed upon the husband; only one upon the wife. A woman by nature responds to sincere love. Peter re-emphasizes the responsibilities of the man after he defines the singular responsibility of the wife toward her husband in 1 Peter 3: 1 - 6.

## "The Husband's Role"

I Peter 3: 7-8

1. Value wife's opinion + insight.
2. Show deference
3. Fellowship with God is affected
4. Clarify ideals, Goals, + objectives
5. Empathy with her.
6. Bear her burdens - Be a good Listener.
7. Be compassionate. (Tenderhearted)
8. Be courteous, use good manners.
9. Keep thoughts + facial expressions pure
10. Never use abusive language
11. your life calling as a man is To Praise Her. Prov. 3

# THE HUSBAND'S ROLE IN COMMUNICATION

It is essential that the husband realize that his wife is the complement of his life. Failure to comprehend the strategic role she plays in God's purpose for the husband will result in a breakdown in communication and intimacy.

After a man and woman marry, their personal responsibility to God increases as they each grow spiritually. As they grow in "oneness" and continually make their priorities God's priorities, they will repeatedly yield their personal rights to one another. This is emphasized by the words of Paul, "submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of the Lord." Ephesians 5:21 The husband's responsibility to build effective communication and intimacy is emphasized by the following insights from 1 Peter 3:7-12 (Williams):

1. THE WOMAN'S OPINION IS AS VALUABLE AS THE MAN'S.

"You married men, in the same way, must live with your wives in an intelligent consideration of them."

It is the husband's responsibility to build self worth in his wife and communicate his gratefulness for God's workmanship in her life thus far. Failure to believe that her opinions are as important as his will breed seeds of resentment.

A woman's intuitiveness is oftentimes more accurate than a man's logic. This is clearly emphasized by her greater emotional sensitivity to the needs of the children. Failure to take the time to help her express what she "feels" may produce frustration and feelings of inadequacy within her.

2. THE HUSBAND'S ATTITUDE TOWARD HER "EVERY DAY" DECISIONS HAS A DIRECT EFFECT ON HER ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS "MAJOR" DECISIONS.

"You must show them deference, too, as the weaker sex . . ."

- In situations where the husband doesn't "have" to have his way, if he is sensitive to his wife and willing to decide in "her favor," it will be easier for her to submit to him when he makes decisions in which she has a differing opinion. This is showing deference on his part. Deference means "respectful yielding, to revere, to grant the wishes of another."

3. PERSONAL FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IS DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY THE DEGREE OF INTIMACY BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE.

"as they share with you the gracious gift of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered."

- When "walls" rise between a husband and a wife, the feeling, "He doesn't have my best interests at heart," develops. This affects their oneness of purpose.- one of the first things to disintegrate is their prayer life together. (Some couples don't ever pray together.)

The husband's personal prayer life becomes superficial and ineffective as well. Since the husband's priority is to meet the needs of his wife, a lack of oneness constitutes a divided loyalty. James 1: 8 (Phillips translation) states that "A man of divided loyalty will reveal instability at every turn."

Prayer is sharing one's innermost feelings with the Lord. Since the woman is a responder by nature, the husband's complaints about his wife will only result in the Lord searching the husband's heart to reveal what he did to cause her not to want to respond to him.

4. UNITY IS NECESSARY IN SHORT AND LONG RANGE GOALS, PLANS AND DECISIONS.

"Finally you must all live in harmony (be of one mind)."

- A successful marriage involves learning to look at life from your mate's point of view. To achieve effective communication, it is necessary to allow the wife the necessary times to "talk" so she feels that her husband understands her point of view before he draws a conclusion in a matter involving both husband and wife.
- See material on the Spirit of a Marriage.
- IT'S HARD WORK ! The degree to which a man is able to live in harmony with others is directly related to his ability to spiritually discern keen insights in directing the course of his marriage. "Follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall 'see'(comprehend something remarkable) the Lord." Hebrews 12:14
- Peace is "a harmonious relationship between one another." "Live together in harmony, live together in love, as though you had only one mind and one spirit between you." Philippians 2:2 (Phillips)

5. KNOW HOW TO EMPATHIZE WITH HER.

"Be sympathetic." (having compassion one of another). "

- The husband is to be moved inwardly with the same feelings of distress when the wife is ill or "down" emotionally. The emphasis here is to be sensitive to her needs, communicating a love and reverence for her.

The woman's cycles are oftentimes much more pronounced than a man's. The wise husband will plan to be sensitive to her "lows" and seek to avoid such common phrases as, "What's the matter with you now?"

6. LEARN TO BEAR HER BURDENS.

"Loving as brothers," (Love as brethren).

- The husband owes his wife love as a human being before he ever imposes on her the additional responsibilities and expectations of a wife.

The idea of brethren denotes a warmth of relationship in which two people are free to share burdens and problems without rebuke or rejection.

- When the wife wants that listening ear, it is not the time to give her "solutions" to her frustrations. A husband and wife were never intended to counsel each other. To counsel, one has to concentrate on the negative traits of another. To do this communicates that the husband doesn't accept his wife as she is.

God's design is for the husband to draw attention to her strengths and qualities. Husbands and wives already know what their weaknesses are in their mate's eyes. When one compliments the strengths and achievements of the other, there is motivation to improve and please the other even more.

One project for developing this attitude is to practice visualizing the negative traits in one's mate as positive qualities misused. For example, the husband may become irritated when his wife is "too detailed" in her explanations. When the husband learns to appreciate her "thoroughness," it will motivate the wife to be more concise in what she says.

7. BE COMPASSIONATE.

"Tenderhearted." (pitiful)

- There is a tendency for many men to develop the idea that a "real man" is one who is dogmatic, authoritarian and headstrong. At best, these false ideas will get obedience, but they will fail to gain the wife's respect. There is no basis for a man to rationalize

that, because he is outgoing, he cannot develop a meek and sensitive spirit toward his wife. It is the husband's responsibility to both love and lead. To be willing to admit when he is wrong and to ask forgiveness are the first steps in gaining respect. "Before destruction, the heart of a man is haughty, and before honour is humility." Prov. 18:12

- It is imperative that the husband teach his lips to say what he means to say. "In the lips of him that hath understanding, wisdom is found." Prov. 10:13
- The husband needs to learn to deal with the "real" problem rather than verbally to attack his wife's character. If he reacts to what he "sees with his eyes or hears with his ears," he will invariably create a bigger problem. When his wife upsets him, his motivation should be to discern what caused her to do what she did, rather than to condemn her failures.

Example: The husband comes home from work and he observes the house in a mess. He blurts out, "Who have you been talking to on the phone today, honey?" The wife will immediately react to this kind of question, no matter how delicately the husband words it. He has, by the question, told her that she is undisciplined and could have better handled her time. He implies she is dumb because she'd old enough to know how much she has to do and can do when she really wants to. To confront the problem and communicate understanding, without producing a reaction to his words, he could say, "It looks like you've had a day like I've had, honey - full of interruptions."

The first response attacked her character and implied that she was irresponsible and purposely wasted time, while the latter gave her every benefit of the doubt that the situation was the result of circumstances beyond her immediate control.

## 8. LEARN TO USE GOOD MANNERS AT ALL TIMES.

"Humble" (courteous)

- The husband's manners toward his wife should have improved since his courting days. To be careless in this area communicates the idea that he takes her for granted and has a lower opinion of her.

A woman believes what she feels and experiences. If she cannot "feel" that special attention, she is not likely to believe her husband really "cares."

- The basic idea is to take on the attitude of a servant. The word means "lowly-minded, friendly with thoughtfulness."

9. KEEP YOUR THOUGHTS PURE. KEEP FACIAL EXPRESSIONS FROM COMMUNICATING DISGUST, CONTEMPT OR INTENT TO "GET EVEN."

"Never returning evil for evil."

- This is in direct reference to the husband's thoughts toward his wife as contrasted to some form of verbal or physical abuse.

We can communicate almost every thought through the facial expressions of our eyes and lips. There are varying "degrees of silence" that communicate the exact feelings of the husband toward his wife. This type of treatment is more destructive and brutal than words or physical abuse. This kind of wound is deep and hard to heal. As one wife expressed it, "My husband has never hit me. But if eyes could kill, I'd be dead."

10. NEVER USE ABUSIVE LANGUAGE.

"Nor abuse for abuse." (Blaspheme)

- This forbids the use of defamatory speech to strike back when the wife has "spouted off." Our responsibility is to return "good for evil."
- The words of Christ enforce these principles:

- When the husband feels he is treated like an enemy - LOVE her.
- If the wife curses her husband - PRAISE her.
- If she says she hates him - DO GOOD in return.
- When he feels he is being spitefully used - PRAY for HER.

Matthew 5: 44

II. YOUR LIFE CALLING AS A HUSBAND IS TO PRAISE HER ! !

"But contrariwise blessing, KNOWING THAT YE ARE THEREUNTO CALLED, that ye should inherit a blessing."

- The full impact of the word "blessing" means "to speak well of, to praise, to acknowledge her goodness with the motive to lift her up in the eyes of others."

The man who will allow the Holy Spirit to mold his spirit after the Lord will receive a blessing that is one of the very keys to "raising up the foundations of a new generation to pass the righteousness of the Lord to his great grandchildren." Ex. 20:5-6, Deut. 4:9-10

- It is imperative for the husband to realize that the above guidelines are not optional to the man who wants to have a truly successful marriage and receive all the benefits God desires to give him.