

# LESSON 6 Duties of a Husband

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A happy young man hurried home to his parents to share with them the good news that his girl friend had promised to marry him. But the father, rather than responding as his son expected him to, asked, “Son, do you love this girl as she is *right now*, or do you love her for her potential—for what she *could* be?”

It was not until much later that, as a young husband learning to resolve disagreements in the home, this man came to appreciate the wisdom of his father’s words.

The husband’s role is compared in the Bible to Christ’s love and concern for the church—a self-sacrificing, protective role. Christ sees our potential and what He would like us to be, but He loves and accepts us as we are.

Every Christian husband has dreams and goals he hopes to see realized, finding fulfillment in a happy home. In this lesson you will recognize ways in which a man safeguards his home as he carries out His God-given roles

## The Plan

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- A. To Be the Head of the Home
- B. To Love His Wife and Family

## The Goals

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1. Identify the husband's role in the home.
2. Discuss how a man can protect his home by properly assuming his responsibilities as husband and father.

## A. TO BE THE HEAD OF THE HOME

**Goal 1.** Identify the husband's role in the home.

### Meaning of *Husband*

The English word *husband* comes from an old word which we might spell "house-band." The word *band* here means a strip of metal or a rope used to join or hold things together. Thus, a husband is one who holds a house together.

Today, we think of the word *husband* more as the male partner of a marriage but, to a great degree, the entire household depends on the man. We sometimes refer to Christ as the head of the home, which means that His teachings are in effect in a home. But the husband is the *immediate* head of the home and responsible to see that the principles of God's Word are practiced there.

The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is man. (1 Corinthians 11:3)

For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. (Ephesians 5:23)

## Application

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- 1 Where did the word husband come from?

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## God-given Responsibility

Ever since God created Eve to be a helper for Adam, man—as the immediate head of the family—has been responsible to God. He must care for his family and must answer to God for what happens in his home.

This does not mean that a husband may treat his wife as a slave. But he must stand up for what is right. Eve ate the forbidden fruit, offered it to Adam, and he ate of it. But it was Adam, as the authority of that home, that God questioned about it. Although Adam attempted to shift the blame to Eve, they were both punished. As head of the home, the husband is to be the example in overcoming temptation, and he must so lead and teach his family that they, too, will be able to overcome. No good is ever accomplished by trying to blame another for our own failures or sins.

## *Application*

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**2** To what does the Bible compare a husband's authority over his wife?

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## B. TO LOVE HIS WIFE AND FAMILY

**Goal 2.** Discuss how a man can protect his home by properly assuming his responsibilities as husband and father.

### To Have a Happy Life Together

The Bible says that he who finds a wife finds a good thing. A husband should think of his wife as a blessing from God, thank God for her, and be happy with her. A married man must take time to enjoy the love and companionship of his wife, rather than spend all of his time in outside activities.

Proverbs 5:18 gives good advice for husbands: “May you rejoice in the wife of your youth.” If a man wants to be happy with his wife, he needs to remember her good qualities and let her know that he appreciates them. A husband who is constantly reminding

his wife of her faults is treating her as he himself would not wish to be treated. It requires love and encouragement, of the one to the other, for a man and wife to overcome their faults.

## Application

**3** Name at least three ways in which a husband can help to make the relationship with his wife happy.

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## To Love Her Unselfishly

The Bible talks a great deal about love—God’s love for us, our love for God, and our love for one another. It teaches us that the love of a man for his wife is a very special love, different from any other. She is the one woman in all the world who is to be his companion until death separates them. He should love her as if she is a part of himself.

The best example of unselfish love is the love that Christ has for us, His church. He gave His life for us. Paul writes, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25).

In some places, men treat their wives as a piece of property. They take care of them because of the money they have spent on them. But the Bible teaches that a man should take care of his wife because he loves her.

Husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church. (Ephesians 5:28–29)

If a man loves his wife as much as he does himself, anything that hurts his wife will hurt him. He tries to protect her from harm and suffering and thinks of her welfare even more than he does his own.

A man can show this kind of love for his wife in many ways: by being courteous, kind, and considerate. Colossians 3:19 instructs, “Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with

them.” Providing for her needs, thinking of her likes and dislikes, trying to make her happy, are also ways for a husband to show love to his wife. If a man occasionally spends money on little things to please himself, he should allow his wife to do the same. He can let her know he loves and appreciates her by taking her a gift from time to time. But no gift can substitute for time itself.

True love between a husband and wife will protect their home from many dangers. A husband who loves his wife will not seek unwholesome relationships with other women. This kind of love may not be found at first in marriages that have been arranged by the families, but it can be cultivated. God can give this kind of love.

If problems and tensions between a man and wife begin to weaken their love, they need to go to God in prayer. Lives wholly committed to God, the source of all true love, can strengthen the love between the marriage partners. The more one gives oneself to God, the more love God will give that person, and the happier that home will be. True is the adage that the family who prays together stays together.

## ***Application***

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**4** Memorize Ephesians 5:25 and Colossians 3:19; then recite them to someone else.

**5** What can protect a home from many dangers?

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**6** What should a husband and wife do if their love is threatened by tensions and problems in the home?

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## **To Respect and Honor Her**

Love produces respect and honor. A husband should never ridicule, criticize, or scold his wife in front of others. He should treat her as courteously and respectfully.

Husbands, . . . be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. (1 Peter 3:7)

This verse teaches that a man can hinder his own prayers from being answered by not treating his wife as he should.

The man is the head of the home, but we might say that the wife is the heart of the home. Neither head nor heart can live without the other. The husband and wife need each other, and together they can build a home on the foundation of love, consideration, honesty, and trust.

### ***Application***

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**7** What is one thing that can hinder a man's prayers being answered?

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**8** The husband is the head of the home. What may we say the wife is?

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### **To Protect and Care for Her**

In 1 Peter 3:7, the Bible speaks of the woman as the weaker partner. And God expects the husband to protect and care for his wife. There are times when she needs special care and consideration for her comfort and health. A woman should do the work in the home, which is her responsibility, but the Bible does not teach that she is to do all of the work while the man wastes his time. It is the man's responsibility to take care of his wife. Helping hands are caring hands, dear husbands.

## ***Application***

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**9** Since the Bible refers to woman as the weaker partner, what does God expect of the husband?

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## **To Be Faithful to Her**

The Bible teaches clearly that a man is to stay with his wife, and not pursue other women. Malachi 2:15 warns, “Guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.”

What if a man’s wife cannot give him a child? In the Old Testament is the story of Hannah and Elkanah. Hannah was unable to give Elkanah a child, but he did not abuse her and send her away. He loved her just the same. But Hannah wanted so much to have a son that she went to the house of the Lord and poured her heart out to God. God heard and answered her prayer.

So in the course of time Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, “Because I asked the LORD for him.” (1 Samuel 1:20)

## ***Application***

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**10** What did God do for one childless couple in the Bible who were faithful to Him and to one another?

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## **To Take Care of His Family**


God expects the man to work and provide for his family. He is responsible for their food, shelter, clothing, and education. He must also see to it that his children learn how to work so that they can make a living for themselves.

## Application

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**11** Memorize 1 Timothy 5:8 and recite it to someone.

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## To Provide for Spiritual Needs


We have seen that it is the father's duty to teach his family about God. The apostle Paul calls attention to this in 1 Corinthians 14:35. Sometimes when the women did not understand the preaching they would call out to their husbands during the service and ask questions. Paul said that the wives should remain silent and not interrupt the service, but ask their husbands questions when they were at home.

Of course, husbands also share in the responsibility of training the children. The moral and spiritual development of the children depends to a great extent on the example and teaching of their parents. Proverbs 17:25 says, "A foolish son brings grief to his father and bitterness to the one who bore him." But "a wise son brings joy to his father" (Proverbs 15:20). The difference between a foolish son and a wise son is often the difference in the teaching the fathers have given their sons. Proverbs 19:18 should serve as a solemn reminder to every father: "Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death."

## Application

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**12** Circle the letter in front of the TRUE statement.

- a) The father is responsible to provide for the spiritual needs of his children, while the mother is responsible only for her own spiritual needs.
  - b) Although parents share the responsibility for the training of their children, the greater responsibility lies with the father—the head of the house.
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## Check Your Answers

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- 7** If he is not treating his wife with the proper love and respect
- 1** It came from the old English word *house-band*, meaning to hold a house together.
- 8** The heart of the home
- 2** To Christ's authority over the church
- 9** To protect her and take care of her
- 3** (Any three) By loving her, encouraging her, spending time with her, letting her know he appreciates her, by not reminding her of her faults
- 10** He gave them a son.
- 4** When you know the verses well enough, recite them to another person.
- 5** True love between the husband and wife
- 11** When you feel you have memorized the verse well, recite it to someone else.
- 6** Go to God in prayer, and be sure that their lives are wholly committed to Him
- 12** Statement **b)** is true

