

Biblical Headship in the Home

Ephesians 5:21-25—“Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”

Four Enemies of Biblical Headship

1. Feminism

I heard someone say recently that we “breath feminist air.” Feminism promotes a spirit of independence in women that drives our culture away from headship in the home. The doctrine of feminism promotes the following ideas:

- a) Liberal feminism asserts the equality of men and women through political and legal reform.
- b) Radical feminists feel that the male-based authority and power structure are responsible for oppression and inequality.

2. Christian egalitarianism

The Christian egalitarian view holds that the Bible teaches the fundamental equality of men and women of all racial and ethnic groups, all economic classes, and all age groups, based on the teachings and example of Jesus Christ and the overarching principles of Scripture as articulated in Galatians 3:28. While Bible passages are subject to various interpretations, Christian egalitarians believe that:

- ❑ there should be no gender distinction in roles of men and women in the function or leadership of the church (to include ordination of women), or in society in general.
- ❑ in marriage, the wife and husband are not only created equal as female and male, but there is no biblically-prescribed hierarchy giving the husband any authority over the wife.

3. Abusive authority

The husband is angry, controlling, domineering, demeaning, manipulative, and uses guilt and fear to motivate.

4. Passive Male Syndrome

The husband is.....

Fearful—He is influenced by the fear of man. He does not want to rock the boat or get anyone upset at him.

Ignorant—He just does not know what to do. He has never been taught what to do or shown how to do it.

Insecure—He is only interested in what makes him feel better about himself or what is safe.

Unsure—He does not think he really has anything to offer.

What Does Biblical Headship Look Like?

“Woman in her greatest perfection was made to serve and obey man, not to rule and command him: as Saint Paul does reason in these words, “Man is not of woman, but woman of the man.” And man was not created for the cause of woman, but the woman for the cause of man, and therefore ought the woman to have power upon her head (that is a coverture in sign of subjection). Of which words it is plain that the Apostle meaneth, that woman in her greatest perfection should have known, that man was Lord above her: and therefore she should never have pretended any kind of superiority above him, no more then do the angels above God the creator or above Christ Jesus their head.”

—John Knox, *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (London: University College, 1878) p. 15.

- Headship = Christ.
- Biblical headship in the home promotes an atmosphere of safety emotionally, physically, and spiritually.
- The head of the home should demonstrate the fruit of the spirit.
Galatians 5:22-24—*“But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control**; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”*
- Principles of headship
Numbers 30:1-16—*“Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the people of Israel, saying, “This is what the LORD has commanded. If a man vows a vow to the LORD, or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth. **If a woman vows a vow to the LORD and binds herself by a pledge, while within her father’s house in her youth, and her father hears of her vow and of her pledge by which she has bound herself and says nothing to her, then all her vows shall stand, and every pledge by which she has bound herself shall stand. But if her father opposes her on the day that he hears of it, no vow of hers, no pledge by which she has bound herself shall stand. And the LORD will forgive her, because her father opposed her. If she marries a husband, while under her vows or any thoughtless utterance of her lips by which she has bound herself, and her husband hears of it and says nothing to her on the day that he hears, then her vows shall stand, and her pledges by which she has bound herself shall stand. But if, on the day that her husband comes to hear of it, he opposes her, then he makes void her vow that was on her, and the thoughtless utterance of her lips by which she bound herself. And the LORD will forgive her. (But any vow of a widow or of a divorced woman, anything by which she has bound herself, shall stand***

against her.) And if she vowed in her husband's house or bound herself by a pledge with an oath, and her husband heard of it and said nothing to her and did not oppose her, then all her vows shall stand, and every pledge by which she bound herself shall stand. But if her husband makes them null and void on the day that he hears them, then whatever proceeds out of her lips concerning her vows or concerning her pledge of herself shall not stand. Her husband has made them void, and¹ the LORD will forgive her. Any vow and any binding oath to afflict herself, her husband may establish, or her husband may make void. But if her husband says nothing to her from day to day, then he establishes all her vows or all her pledges that are upon her. He has established them, because he said nothing to her on the day that he heard of them. But if he makes them null and void after he has heard of them, then he shall bear her iniquity. These are the statutes that the LORD commanded Moses about a man and his wife and about a father and his daughter while she is in her youth within her father's house."

- ❑ Husbands/fathers must be men of their word.
- ❑ A husband's/father's authority is God-given.
- ❑ A man must rule quickly.
- ❑ A father's authority overrides a daughter's vow.
- ❑ God gives fathers to help children make better decisions.
- ❑ A father's authority is transferred to the husband of his daughter.
- ❑ A husband has authority over his wife's vow.

Satan's goal:

To get the father's heart focused on something else so he will abdicate his responsibilities in the family and marriage

Biblical Headship in the Home

1 Timothy 3:2-4, 12—*"Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He **must manage his own household well**, with all dignity keeping his children submissive... Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, **managing their children and their own households well.**"*

- ❑ Manager
- ❑ Respectful
- ❑ Mature
- ❑ Right priorities
- ❑ Faith
- ❑ Good relationship with wife
- ❑ Disciplined
- ❑ Committed to family
- ❑ Good example

1. **Decision maker**—He takes action and leads the family. He makes decisions that move him out of passivity.

- Have regular meetings with your wife.
- Have daily check-ups on how your wife is doing. *How are the kids doing? How is school going?*

2. **Leader in family worship**—He is the spiritual leader who feeds the flock.

The father must be the one to take the initiative and charge for family worship, even if he occasionally cannot be present. Family worship.....

- reminds the father of his dependency on God.
- is a time in which the family can be together.
- is part of a father's responsibility in leading his family to God.
- promotes piety in the father's life.
- purifies the wife.
- preserves family leadership.
- reinforces the truth being taught.
- promotes sound doctrine.
- has the potential for creating a big impact in children's lives.

3. **Financial manager**—He bears the main responsibility of providing for the home.

4. **Visionary**—He is a vigorous man with ideas and passion; he communicates vision. He also needs to be the emotionally strong one.

Psalm 112:1-10—*"Praise the LORD! Blessed is the man who fears the LORD who greatly delights in his commandments! His offspring will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever. Light dawns in the darkness for the upright; he is gracious, merciful, and righteous. It is well with the man who deals generously and lends; who conducts his affairs with justice. For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever. He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD. His heart is steady; he will not be afraid, until he looks in triumph on his adversaries. He has distributed freely; he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever ;his horn is exalted in honor. The wicked man sees it and is angry; he gnashes his teeth and melts away; the desire of the wicked will perish!"*

5. **Protector of his family from evil influences**—He beats off the wolves.

Psalm 101:1-8—*"I will sing of steadfast love and justice; to you, O LORD, I will make music. I will ponder the way that is blameless. Oh when will you come to me? I will walk with integrity of heart within my house; I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me. A perverse heart shall be far from me; I will know nothing of evil. Whoever slanders his neighbor secretly I will destroy. Whoever has a haughty look and an arrogant heart he will not endure. I will look with favor on the faithful in the land that they may dwell with me; he who walks in the way that is blameless shall minister to me. No one who practices deceit shall dwell in my house; no one who utters lies shall continue before my eyes. Morning by morning I will destroy all the wicked in the land, cutting off all the evildoers from the city of the LORD."*

Personal Evaluation Questions

1. Have the enemies of Biblical headship hindered your ability to function as the head of your home?
2. Do you have feelings of inadequacy in being the head of your home? Do you look to Christ for help?
3. How has your headship been an example of Christ?
4. Do you see any roadblocks in your life that keep you from growing as a leader?
5. Do you have a regular time of family worship in your home?

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