

Representing Christ Well: Fulfilling My Roles and Responsibilities and Encouraging My Spouse to Fulfill Theirs

Headship is a responsibility to love like Christ by leading, protecting and providing for your wife and family. Christ-like leadership isn't primarily about a right or a privilege. Your role is to *fulfill Scripture* in your marriage. It's a heavy responsibility so take the initiative and don't neglect this!

His Primary Roles and Responsibilities

Included in your biblical role as a husband is:

- 1) Growing in your commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord of your life and as the One to whom you are accountable.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 2) Practicing the spiritual disciplines (Bible study, prayer, worship, confession, repentance, etc.) so that your walk with Christ is strong, and you are fully able to be led by the Holy Spirit.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 3) Providing moral (Genesis 3:9) and spiritual leadership (Ephesians 5:26-27, 29) to your family, teaching them God's Word, helping to cultivate their maturity in Christ, and setting the example for your family through your devotion to Christ.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 4) Living righteously so that your family will benefit from your prayers (1 Peter 3:12). Demonstrating integrity in everything, purity in heart, mind, speech and conduct, and accepting responsibility.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 5) Guarding your heart from any type of inappropriate attachment with other women. (Proverbs 2:16-19, 5:1-8, 6:23-29, 7:25-27, 22:14)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 6) Protecting your wife and family from Satan and spiritual attack and leading them in a God-glorifying direction to serve His purposes, not your own.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 7) Developing a clear, biblical vision of mature femininity and a deep respect towards it by honoring and treating your wife as a co-heir with Christ (Romans 8:17, 1Peter 3:7) and partner in life (Genesis 1:27) while recognizing that you each have equal spiritual worth. (Galatians 3:28, Luke 13:16)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 8) Preparing your bride for Christ. You are called to act *like* Christ in her life and also *for* Christ in her life.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 9) Accepting the overall responsibility for the management of your family (1 Timothy 3:4-5), supporting the instruction of your children and not provoking them to anger. (Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 10) Having a willingness to lay down your life for your wife and family in any way necessary, putting their needs (physical, spiritual and emotional) ahead of your own (Ephesians 5:25-27) with enduring love. (Titus 2:2)
 Difficult Neutral Easy

- 11) Taking responsibility for establishing an environment of active listening and careful consideration of ideas, and not lording your authority over your wife. (2 Corinthians 1:24) You are to do this in a way that honors your wife while leveraging your collective wisdom.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 12) Taking the initiative, having the strength, and making the sacrifice to provide for the good of your wife and children. (Luke 22:26, Ephesians 5:23, 25, 1 Timothy 5:8) As the leader, you are the one who serves. A Christian husband is to follow the example of Jesus by being willing to suffer for his wife, not make her suffer for him.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 13) Interacting with your wife with a tender and sensitive heart, respectfully honoring her as the weaker (physical, emotional and/or in authority) partner (1 Peter 3:7, Colossians 3:19), while exhibiting self control in these areas. (Titus 2:2)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 14) Continually learning about and being alert to the deep needs of your wife (emotional, physical, and/or spiritual), and ministering to her with a combination of strength and tenderness.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 15) Conquering pride, fear, laziness, self-pity, and confusion while rejecting passivity in your responsibilities and family activities. Planning ahead in order to shepherd your family through trials that come along.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 16) Accepting the burden of responsibility for making the final decision when there are disagreements.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 17) Leading in the discipline of your children when both he and his wife are present (Titus 1:6).
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 18) Utilizing your spiritual gifts to lead and serve the Body of Christ and others.
 Difficult Neutral Easy

Reflection

Jesus didn't use his power to oppress us but rather he sacrificed everything in order to bring us into fellowship with God. (Ephesians 5:25-30) We are to act the same way in our relationship with our wife. Before you act, ask yourself, "Would Christ do that to his Church?"

Part 2:

How can you encourage your wife as she seeks to fulfill the roles and responsibilities that God has given her?

Individually, draft your "Family Statement & Commitment on Roles & Responsibilities" for *your* role in marriage.

Then, during the next few days, compare and discuss your ideas while seeking to develop an integrated approach to fulfilling your roles and responsibilities together.

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Submission isn't about being a slave, cowering or being coerced. That isn't how Jesus calls the church to respond to his leadership, protection and provision. He wants the church's submission to be freely and willingly given in response to his love. As you live out your roles and responsibilities, be sure not to dishonor the Lord by how you relate to your husband, your children and younger women as a role model. (Titus 2:3-5)

Her Primary Roles and Responsibilities

Included in your biblical role as a wife is:

- 1) A growing commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord of your life and your ultimate designer and protector.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 2) Developing and encouraging a clear, biblical vision of mature masculinity in your husband and a deep respect for him. (Ephesians 5:33)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 3) Affirming the complementary role of submission in your husband-wife relationship (1 Peter 3:1, Ephesians 5:24, Colossians 3:18, Titus 2:5) that God designed from the beginning. (Genesis 3:16)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 4) Embracing (a matter of action and attitude) your role as a "suitable helper" for your husband, using your gifts to support his leadership within the bounds of obedience to Christ, helping him fulfill his divine calling, and bringing glory to God. (Genesis 2:18, Proverbs 12:4, Ephesians 5:25-29)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 5) Using a non-directive approach to influencing and guiding your husband. (An example of this approach to influence is found in 1 Samuel 25:23-35, where we see Abigail respectfully appealing to David to get him to change his mind.)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 6) Having a winsome and affirming spirit towards your husband and recognizing that through your own weakness, your husband's strength is highlighted. This should be characterized by a "gentle and quiet spirit which is of great worth in God's sight." (1 Peter 3:4) so as to not push him towards passivity or anger.
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 7) Utilizing your spiritual gifts to serve the Body of Christ, teaching younger women (Titus 2:3-5), and serving others. (Acts 18:26, Romans 16:1)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 8) Having a disposition to yield to your husband's guidance and a desire to follow his leadership out of reverence to Christ (Ephesians 5:21, Titus 2:5), "as fitting in the Lord" (Colossians 3:18), "with respect" (Ephesians 5:33), and "in everything." (Ephesians 5:24)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 9) Managing your household well. (Proverbs 31, Titus 2:5, 1 Timothy 5:14)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 10) Faithfully loving your husband and children. (Titus 2:4-5)
 Difficult Neutral Easy
- 11) Providing for the needs of your family in various ways within and outside the home. Being faithful to your primary calling of caring for your family (Titus 2:4-5) while also being able to utilize your gifts and talents outside the home during the different stages of your married life. (Proverbs 31)
 Difficult Neutral Easy

12) Having a willingness to wait for the rewards of your labor that may become more evident in the lives of your children as they grow older, and from the Lord in eternity.

Difficult Neutral Easy

Reflection

Honor and affirm your husband’s call to lead, and help him carry it through according to your giftedness. If you want your husband to lead more, encourage him; don’t demand it because that won’t feel like leading to him. (1Peter 3:4) Have the disposition and inclination to follow your husband’s lead.

Part 2:

How can you encourage your husband as he seeks to fulfill the roles and responsibilities that God has given him?

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The _____ Family Statement & Commitment on Roles & Responsibilities

What I/We Believe About Roles & Responsibilities in Marriage (Include Scripture references that support *why* you feel that way.)

I/We believe...

How Our Beliefs will Be Lived Out in Our Marriage (Make this practical and specific.)

In order to fulfill our responsibilities before God and each other, we will...

Signature _____

Date _____

Signature _____

Date _____