

GOD'S GLORY IN THE HUSBAND'S LEADERSHIP

(Part 1: Ephesians 5:25-33)

Since the glory of God in Christ is at stake in every marriage, we must honor the God-ordained role of the wife's submission and the husband's leadership. These roles are divinely assigned by God and are rooted in the distinctive roles of Christ and the church. The husband is called to be the leader of his wife patterned after Christ's headship over the church. The wife is called to submit to her husband patterned after the church's submission to Christ. We will not give God supreme glory and experience real and joyful oneness in our marriage unless we understand, embrace and fulfill these distinct but complementary roles in the marriage covenant. Reflecting on Ephesians 5:25-33, let's consider the features of God's glory in the husband's leadership.

1. God is glorified in the husband's _____.

When the Holy Spirit inspired and guided Paul to write the divine imperative to the men in the marriage covenant, the principal instruction to the husband is to love his wife (Ephesians 5:25,28,33). This command to the husbands to love their wives was a revolutionary and countercultural message to first-century Christians because it ran contrary to the domestic codes and practices of the Greco-Roman society. In a culture where marriage was undermined, where women were regarded as second-class citizens or even non-persons, where unfaithfulness and sexual perversion were the norm, God's Word commands the husbands to love their wives.

The husband's love for their wives is patterned after our Lord Jesus' servant-leadership over His church (Ephesians 5:25; John 13:13-17; Matthew 20:28). The glory and dignity of one's manhood is best seen when the husband leads his wife and family the way Jesus does – through selfless servant-leadership. When Christ teaches the husbands about their authority as the head of the wife, He points us not to His throne but to His Cross. The husband's servant-leadership means this: I bear upon my shoulder the primary responsibility for the spiritual, moral and economic well-being of my wife and my family. Leading my household entails being my family's foremost servant! (Ephesians 5:23,25; Genesis 3:9)

2. God is glorified in the husband's _____.

The command to love indicates continuous, ongoing and persevering action. Ephesians 5:25 could be translated this way: "*Husbands, keep on loving your wives.*" God demands and requires that the husband bears the responsibility to provide loving leadership in his family by continuously and committedly loving his wife until his final breath. This kind of love is patterned after Christ's unconditional love for underserving and unworthy sinners. This kind of steadfast love is never interrupted nor diminished by the imperfections, weaknesses, failures and unworthiness of the one being loved (Romans 5:8,10; Ephesians 5:25-27; Lamentations 3:21-23).
