

The Christian Husband: The Responsible Head

Colossians 3:19

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Joshua Koura

Camden Valley Baptist Church

www.cvbaptist.org.au

Colossians 3:19, the Word of God reads, "Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them."

Let's bow before the Lord in prayer and consider this text of scripture together.

Father, we come before You, Lord, realizing that You have given us Your Word to teach us and have given us Your Spirit to help us understand the things that are written therein. And so, we ask now that You would send Your Holy Spirit to open the eyes of our understanding, to draw our hearts into Your truth, to impart to us the learning, the teaching that we so desperately need, Lord, that we might live to the praise of Your holy name. And we ask it in Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

Well, we've been considering the Christian home for several weeks now, and we've dealt with the responsibility of the Christian wife in the last two sermons that we looked at. Her duty is to submit herself to her husband as to the Lord. And that is demonstrated in Ephesians 5, as to be demonstrated as in the relationship of the church to the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, the wives ought to be subject unto her husband just as the church is subject unto Christ.

But now we turn our attention to the Christian husband, and we do that soberly and we do that carefully. And that is because the analogy of Christ and the church sets the husband as head of the wife even as Christ is head of the church. And that raises the stakes for the husbands in many ways and helps us realize the awful and the awesome responsibility of being a husband of a wife.

And so, we're going to consider today the duties of the Christian husband, the Christian husband who is meant to lead in love.

Now, the Christian husband and the duties of the Christian husband are much more consequential than that of the wife. And it could be likened as to a captain of a ship who sits at the helm of the ship and steers the ship.

The responsibilities that fall to the head of the ship, to the captain, are vast. It encompasses the safety of the entire vessel and the management of all the crew, as it were, on board.

And therefore, if something goes awfully wrong, the issues that happen on the vessel are directly connected to him, and he bears the responsibility of those problems. And so it is also with the husband. The husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is head of the church. And therefore, the blood of his family, the Lord will require at his hand, and the fruits of his neglect in the home will be brought up in the final day, and he will give an account for the things that have been neglected in his home that he was called to give watch over and to manage.

So, we need to first realize that this is a grave responsibility. Headship is a grave responsibility that God has given to the husband to have. And therefore, we must understand what headship is not and then consider the nature of headship.

Firstly, what headship is not is very vital to understand. Headship is not an abstract authority, and that means it's not the power invested in a person that is disconnected from everyone else. It's not like that the sole power rests in the husband in such a way that he is not in relationship to his wife. It's actually a relational authority, which we'll look at more. Therefore, this is not tyrannical. This is not sitting in a high chair and commanding and demanding your wife to submit to your authority. This is not that idea, or it's not the idea of micromanaging or demanding responses from the family. That is not the idea of being a head of the home.

It's not the idea of sitting on the throne, as it were, and being served and having your feet washed. In fact, it's quite the opposite of that, as we will soon discover. It's not about the self-exaltation and the self-fulfillment of the husband himself. In fact, we will also see that it is quite other to that.

What we must realize first and foremost when we come to the issue of headship is that headship is primarily a responsibility, a responsibility. We don't like that word in an irresponsible age. We don't like to take responsibility for our own actions, let alone for the actions of others. We just like to say that it had nothing to do with me in any way, shape, or form. But headship is actually more of a responsibility than it is, as I said, just sitting and demanding things. It's the work of influence, not the work of demand and command.

What I mean by that is this: the husband is to seek to influence his wife. His leadership is one that is not rooted in the fact that he can ask whatever he wants and she must do it. This is not the idea of the biblical model. I

think if we remember back several weeks ago, the submission of the wife is to be voluntary, which means that she is to submit herself unto her husband as to the Lord. We looked at the fact that it is not the husband that was demanding the submission of the wife, but the passages themselves show that it is God that commands the submission of the wife. Therefore, her submission to her husband is ultimately affected in her relationship toward Jesus Christ.

What that means is that the commands of a wife's submission don't proceed from the husband to the wife; they come from God to the wife. Therefore, it's voluntary on the part of the wife, and the husband cannot demand the submission of the wife. He can remind her, but there's a vast difference between forceful demanding and commanding and reminding and putting her in mind regarding these things.

That's important to realize as we move on; we don't want to get wrong views here of authority. What is the nature of this headship? It was John Stott who said this: "If headship means power in any sense, then it is power to care, not to crush; power to serve, not to dominate; power to facilitate self-fulfillment, not to frustrate or destroy it." And so, the idea of headship, if it contains the idea of power and authority, it is not, as it were, resting in the husband; it's to go out with a purpose, should I say. It has purpose. And that purpose is to facilitate and to meet the needs of the wife and to produce holiness in the Christian home, and that's the responsibility laid upon the husband.

I want us to turn to Ephesians 5, which so explains this to us. And we're actually going to remain in Ephesians 5 today, and next week we'll spend more time in Colossians. But Ephesians chapter 5 well illustrates the idea of the connection between this relationship and the responsibility. And that is seen in the analogy of Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:23 says, "For the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is the head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body." And verse 30 says, "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

And what we see here in these passages is the relationship that exists, the relationship. As I said before, this is a responsibility that flows from a relationship, a relationship. But not only that, the responsibilities are also seen in this passage, and they're seen in verses 25 through to verse number 29. Husbands are to love as Christ loved the church, and that is demonstrated in the next verses 26, 27, and 28.

So let's look at firstly the relationship of the husband and the wife, and then the responsibilities that are connected to that relationship. First and foremost, when you realize that God has joined you to your wife in a union and a relationship, then you understand the context rightly of what it means to lead, what it means to have authority. Your authority for our wives is not separate from our relationship toward them. In fact, headship is impossible without a body. This is what the illustration of this passage is basically saying here: that Christ is the head of the church, the savior of the body. And if husbands are head of their wives, that means that they are in a union with their wives.

Think about this: We all have heads on our shoulders here today, and we all realize that they are not detached from our bodies. The relationship between our head and our body is not a detached relationship; it is a relationship that is part of a vital union that we share together with our heads and with our bodies. And so it's important that the husband must realize, without a body, he is indeed not a head of anything, really.

And so this idea of a husband being this macho man that just demands and commands and disregards the relationship that exists between him and his wife is not the imagery placed here in the scripture. What is placed here in the scripture is a vital union that exists between the head and the body, and it is in that vital union that the head is to function in the role of guiding the body, of teaching the body, of instructing the body, of cherishing the body, of helping the body flourish as a body. And this is the way that the Bible presents this issue to us.

The Bible says it in 1 Corinthians 11: "Neither is the man independent of the woman, neither is the woman independent of the man." The body needs the head, and the head needs the body. And I think this is a very good place to start in terms of the responsibilities of a husband toward his wife.

It is very easy as husbands to forget. We think of the idea of what the wife has in her responsibility towards me: she must submit. And we forget this concept that this is a relational union that we share together. And this is not about me being detached and being distanced and commanding and demanding her submission. This is rather vitally different. This is about a union. This is about a relationship. And it's from the very relationship that I share with my wife, that you share with your spouse, that very relationship is where the leadership is to be cultivated and had in a relationship, not in a detached way.

Therefore, your wife is not your partner, as we would say, as we say to-

day, "my partner." Well, she's much more than a partner. She's your body. She is bone of your bones and flesh of your flesh. She's your other half, or you're better off saying your better half. That means she shares in your life. This is a powerful thing to understand: that God has so joined a husband and wife that they are sharers of the same life. This is not an abstract authority whereby, like I said, he's just commanding and demanding. This is a vital union. This is a relationship. And it is in that relationship that there is a sharing of the life, and there are those responsibilities given to each.

Therefore, she's not your servant. Therefore, she's not your colleague. She is not on staff, as it were. She is your wife. What that simply means is this: as bone of your bones and flesh of your flesh, detachment from your wife is inappropriate and unscriptural.

Headship is not like distance education, where you are not interacting face-to-face with the teachers or with the class or whatever it may be. It is closer than that. It is not about just lobbing things at your wife. It is more about a relationship. Expectations are had, but they're not had from a distance. You are there, present with your wife, helping her. You are there with her as head of the body.

A husband fails so often to lead at this point, and it's a problem. You see, the head and the body are in vital union. That means, as head of your home, you must be near your wife. If God has made you head of your home, that means you must be near her, not distant from her.

You see, for many husbands, they rise up early, spend all day at work, come home late, put their head on the pillow, and repeat the cycle week in, week out. And as time goes on, they wonder what is wrong with their wives. "I can't get her to listen to me. For some reason, she doesn't love me anymore, and I don't know what's going on. I don't feel like she's being the woman that she needs to be."

Well, perhaps the absent-mindedness of the husband, perhaps the problem is the disinterested nature of the husband toward his wife. You living aloof from her and far away from her is really at the heart of that problem. You see, you wonder what's wrong with your wife, but the reality is you haven't spoken to her all week.

And it's important to realize that as head of your home, you are to be near your wife. I think this goes as a common-sense illustration, but it's the illustration of the Scripture nonetheless: the head and the body. None of us would last a day without visiting the doctors if our body did not communicate to the head and the head to the body.

I touch this pulpit, and I feel, and there's communication that's happening between my nervous system and my head and my mind and all that I'm interacting with right now. Same for you. It goes the same. But if you had a whole day or even just an hour where you were disconnected, your head was not in tune with your body, how would you feel? You'd be awfully worried, straightaway calling the emergency line and say, "Is there something wrong with me? There's something wrong with my body. I am not in touch with my body. I'm not feeling anything. I'm numb."

And the illustration would go the same: that it would be the same way that if a husband is so disconnected from his wife that he doesn't feel what she feels, he doesn't know what she is going through, he's not there, present with her to understand her. She can't call on him whenever she needs to because he's absent. He's gone. This is the cause of many problems in relationships, and I submit to you that it's a problem with the head. It's a problem with the head.

And many of the excuses that are given for the absence of a husband are inappropriate. "I'm working. I'm keeping in touch with my friends and the contacts and my social engagements." And the worst one, perhaps of them all, is that when people in the name of Christian ministry say, "I'm serving God." Martyn Lloyd-Jones calls these women that are married to such men "evangelical widows." The husband's out doing this and doing that and doing this and doing that, all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, yet not being the head to his wife and loving his wife and leading his wife. And he basically is saying that she's essentially a widow.

And that's the sad reality of many relationships and marriages today, and quite frankly, even in the Christian church. But these things ought not to be so. Husbands should recognize that they, and first and foremost, when we think of the word headship, yes, we are talking about authority. Yes, we are talking about leadership. But you must understand that the head is near to the body and in vital union with the body. Therefore, it is inappropriate to live a detached life.

First Peter 3:7 says this: "Husbands, dwell with your wives according to understanding, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, and being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered." It says it there in the text: dwell with them according to knowledge or according to understanding. This whole verse is packed with the reality of the husband being near his wife.

Firstly, the words "dwell with them" means you are to live together with her. You are not to live two separate lives. You are to dwell with her, and

you are to do so in accordance with knowledge, which means you must, therefore, know her, and you must get to know her if you don't know her. And then, having known her, you must also know how you should relate to her in relationship to what God has spelled out in His Word.

So you are to dwell with her, you are to dwell with her according to knowledge, and then you are to give honor unto her. Now, you cannot give honor unto someone by ignoring them. That is, in fact, the opposite. And therefore, this verse spells out the relationship very clearly between the head and the body: that the head must be engaged with the body so that it might not ignore the body but give honor to the body as the body has needs, to understand its body, and also to live in harmony with its body.

Therefore, don't live in isolation from your wife. We should pursue to get to know her and to be living up to that headship to which we are called. I don't know about you, but I think by this stage, you would realize that if there is this kind of relationship, then it only so follows that there is a grave responsibility associated with this relationship.

Here we're talking about a union, a closeness, a nearness. And for husbands here today, you're probably feeling already the sense just of that reality, like, "Whoa, this is serious. This is more than maybe what I bargained for when I was in my dating time." Well, you're in now, beloved. And the Word of God speaks to you. And God sets an example for us in His Son, the Lord Jesus. And we understand that headship is about engaging in our responsibilities, not avoiding them.

And so, I want you to look now at the responsibilities in verses 25 to 29. We won't be able to tackle them all today, but just a few of them, and we'll consider some more next week. Now, the nature of this relationship demands responsibility, and the head is responsible for the body. Now, when you think of responsibility, I'm simply saying this: that the problems of your wife are your problems. The problems of the body are the problems of the head. If you share in the life, therefore, you share in the problems. You don't only share in the joys; you share in the sorrows. You don't only share in the times of satisfaction, but you share in times of despair. You are going through. You weep with those that weep; you rejoice with those that rejoice because we are partakers together and heirs together of the grace of life, and we live as the head does to the body.

And so, the Bible is clear that this is fraught with responsibilities, and those responsibilities are important to uphold. Therefore, if you say things like, "My wife doesn't listen to me, and she doesn't trust me, or she doesn't care for me," being the responsible head of your home, you should immediately follow up those questions within your own heart with these questions:

Have I been caring for her? Have I been communicating to her? Have I been making time for her? Have I been expressing affection and love to her?

A responsible head doesn't just consider the problems of the other but understands that he has a relationship to those problems, and a lot of the times, in fact, most of the times, a lot of those problems can be resolved or at least become less as the husband bears the burden and responsibility of his wife's problems. You know, the last thing husbands usually ask is, "Where am I going wrong here?" You know, there's this explosion in the house; there's chaos. You come home, you know, your wife and mother is all over the place; she's frantic. What's going on? And you just walk in, coming back from work, thinking, "What's wrong with you guys? Man, like, what's wrong with you? Get it together."

Well, that's not the right way to look at this thing. You should come in, realizing that her problems are my problems. Therefore, as I enter into this tense environment, I am not to stand aloof and far from that environment and say, "Hey, you sort it out. I was at work all day; you deal with it." I am to come into that, realizing that the problem of the children are my problems, and the frustrations of my wife are also mine, and I share in that and must have a major part to play in helping resolve those issues. That's part of what it means to be head.

You have the power of influence and persuasion by love to help motivate and help your wife be the woman that she ought to be. And therefore, you are to take responsibility for the weaknesses of your wife. Your husband, just to say to her wife, "Just go pray about it," or, "You know, don't bother me with this," is not appropriate. You are the head. Being head, the relationship between the body, the problems that exist in your wife's life, are also yours.

I think for a lot of men, especially young men that get married, they feel that the day they marry, they're going to marry someone like their mom. Your mom is, what, like 50, 60 years old? Your wife is not 50, 60 years old. Your mom has life experiences that your wife doesn't have. She's been through the troubles and hardships of marriage. She's fought the fight of trying to uphold the marriage in a good Christian home, that would be the case. And for a husband to come into marriage thinking that my wife automatically is going to be this mature wife that knows how to handle every situation that comes her way, you are living in a dream world, my friend. That is not how the Bible presents it.

You are, you're going to see now, you are to be the one that sanctifies her also. She is growing. She needs to mature, and you are to be part of that maturing process. You are to be the one who helps her mature, not to sim-

ply say, "Well, I'm walking with God. Why aren't you walking with God? Get your act together." You are to help her walk with God as head of your wife.

So, what are some of the responsibilities of the head? Well, look at Ephesians 5:23 and 5:25. It says, "For the husband is head of the wife as Christ also is the head of the church, and He is the savior of the body." And verse 25 says, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her." These are probably the most solemn words in all the scripture: that Christ laid down His life for His bride, for His church. The responsibility of the head toward his wife is one of self-denial, one of self-surrender. It is one in which the husband lays down his life for his bride, for his wife.

Go to Mark 10:37-45 with me. Here, we have two disciples of Jesus having a wrong conception of what it means to be in position and authority – a good little illustration for many husbands also. Verse 35: "Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, 'Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask.' And He said to them, 'What do you want Me to do for you?' They said to Him, 'Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.' But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?' They said to Him, 'We are able.' So Jesus said to them, 'You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with, you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared.'"

When the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

And here, Jesus says that the leadership and the role of being a leader and one who follows in His steps is not the position of sitting in authority with a rod and demanding and commanding. It is not the image of a rod; it is the image of a towel. He's saying to His disciples, "If you want to follow in the way that I have led you, you want to follow in the way that leadership exists in My kingdom, here's the word for you, John; here is the word for you, James: We don't rule like the Gentiles rule. We don't sit in thrones and demand and command men to do things against their will. We take

up the towel; we become slaves of all. We serve men and so impact men by our lives that it's transformative in its power."

And He's saying to His disciples, "This is how things work; this is how it works." And He gives the illustration that Ephesians 5 gives. He says, "For even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve." How does He serve? He gives His life a ransom for many. Here is the Son of God laying down His life for His bride, serving her in His life, serving her in His death. And He wants us to also realize that as husbands, the role and duty that we have is one of self-sacrifice and one of service. That is what it means to be a leader of your home.

The Bible is full of this language in relationship to what Jesus has accomplished for us. The Bible says that He bore our sins, it says that He carried our sorrows, it says that the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. You know what the Bible is trying to tell us here? It is by Jesus laying down His life for us that we are benefited by His sacrificial life, by the death of the cross.

And this is the picture given to the husbands in how we ought to love our wives. It is a love that is laying down his life for her, that she might receive the benefit of his sacrifice. This is what Jesus has done for us. The goal of Jesus Christ was to serve His bride in His life and in His death. And therefore, the husband is called, as Ephesians 5 says, to be the savior of the body.

Christ gave His life for the church, and He has become the savior of the body. Now, I'm not talking about that we save our wives from sin, death, and hell by our service toward them. The image is not that. But the idea is this: that it is through the work of Jesus Christ that you and I have been preserved from the wrath of God, that you and I have been released from our bondage, you and I have been set free from the slavery of sin. It is through the work of Jesus Christ that He has saved us from Satan's power, from the fear of death, from the fear of sin, from the wrath of Almighty God.

And therefore, the husband is to be to his wife a deliverer, one who also preserves her from fears, one who also seeks to preserve her from her sorrows, to preserve her from her sin. It was Henry Smith, the Puritan, who said, "When Adam was away, Eve was made a prey." He was to be her savior and to deliver her from the clutches of the satanic attack, yet he did not.

And so, therefore, you, although you cannot save your wife in the same way that Christ saved the church, we are to pattern our lives after that and see ourselves as one who is there to counsel her, there to pray for her, there to warn her against potential dangers, there to affirm God's promises

to her when she's struggling with understanding the mind of God and understanding why things are happening in your lives. You are to be there to speak the truth of the Word of God into her heart, to shepherd her through the valley of the shadow of death, to be along her side.

But for many husbands, as the difficulties that come in the home and they see the wife encumbered about with much fear and worry and anxiety, they say, "I can't handle you," or they discourage her, "I just wish you were like somebody else." The Bible says you are to bear with her, lay down your life for her, demonstrate your love for her as Christ demonstrated His love for the church.

How did He do that? "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her. You are to be the savior of your body in that way.

And lastly, what we see here in this passage is that the husband is not only to be one who lays down his life for his wife, but verse 26 shows that Jesus laid down His life for the church, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the Word. First, we see here that Christ is set upon the sanctification of His bride. It is by His death that He has set her apart unto God, that she now belongs to the Lord. He has washed her in regeneration from her sin; He has washed her from her spots; He has washed her and cleansed her from her wrinkles and blemishes and has removed those stains from her garments.

Yet, as you and I both well know, the work of sanctification begins at conversion, but it does not end until glory. And Jesus is set on the continuing of the sanctifying work for His bride. His goal is that His bride will be glorious. Look at verse number 27: "that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, without having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish."

Christ is set upon the beautification of His bride, and He is not lazy in His duty to help her grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. He, by the means of the Word of God, is sanctifying her. He, by the means of the Word of God, is cleansing her, washing her, helping her, shaping her, making her into this bride that will be presented to Himself in glory, in splendor, and in beauty. His work is a work of washing; His work is a work of cleansing; His love is a purifying love.

In our failures, He remains faithful. He does not forsake her for her spots; He does not forsake her for her blemishes; He does not turn His face against her because she is not as she ought to be. Rather, Jesus is interested in the sanctification of His bride. He draws near to her through the Word, and He woos her by love, and He shows her His wounded hands and His scarred feet, and He reminds her of love, and He demonstrates love toward her so that she continues to hear and obey the Word of her Savior.

The husband's job, also, we can learn from this, is to beautify his wife by his priestly duties as head of his home: to take the Word of God and to teach his wife and his family. He ought to do this by way of family worship, gathering the family together to open up the Word of God and explain to them, through perhaps a book of the Bible or some of the gems and the truths of the Word of God.

To do this and pray with her is to be one who prays with her, and when he prays with her, to not just do the task but to, in prayer, pray for specific issues that she may be struggling with or that he may be struggling with, to show that we need God in this marriage. We need God to help us in our relationship. We can't do this apart from Him, so love, let's get together and let's pray, even if it's small or we're going to go into someone's house and we want to be a blessing to that person. Let's sit in the car and just pray for a minute and ask God to help us. He's to show her that we need God in this relationship and that we can't do this alone, to pray with her.

He is to be mindful of whether or not she is having enough time to spend with God. In sad reality today, many women have a lot on their plates, a lot of children, a lot of things going on, and it's very hard to just get a moment of quiet just to open up the Word of God and to read the Word of God and to pray. A husband should know, as head of his home, how his wife's walk with the Lord is, and they should be discussing these things: what did you read today or last week or the other day, and sharing with one another the truths of God, cultivating the Word of God right throughout the home.

And you say, "Well, my wife doesn't walk with God." Well, maybe you come home and say to the wife, "Darling, give me the children for an hour, give me the children for half an hour. I want you to go, just take some time, even if it's 15 minutes, just take some time. Open the Bible, go down the backyard, go out the front, go for a walk down the park. Let me look after things because I'm concerned about your sanctification. I'm concerned about your walk with the Lord."

Free her up to gather with God's people, that she might be under the Word of God. Speak to her the Word of God appropriately, not just using verses that would corner her, but speaking to her in a way that would encourage

her, to help her know the faithfulness of God when she fails or when she sins, to remind her of the balm of healing that is found in the blood of Jesus Christ. Not to just put her down and say, "Well, this is a verse that shows that you weren't holy today," but when she falls and fails, you remind her of the grace of God.

And perhaps when she's not so much beating up herself for the wrong that she has done, then that may be an appropriate time to instruct her more clearly on how she can grow in her responses to the things that you expect from her in the relationship. You are to help purify her blemishes. You are to help iron out, as it were, the wrinkles. You are to be the one who leads her to that blessed fountain where she finds peace, which is Christ through the Word.

Memorize scripture together if need be. Perhaps what you've been learning from the Word, as I said before, but take this and understand this, husband: that as head of your home, you are to promote the sanctification of your wife. It is your duty. It is your responsibility. Your holiness is her business, and her holiness is your business. And as the head of the home, you are responsible to love her and beautify her by taking to her the Word of God and living as an example that shows the example of Christ before her.

And so, next time you think to yourself, "Well, I'm not happy with my wife," quit complaining and get to work, because every complaint that you have against your wife is one more thing and one more responsibility that you need to be engaged in. None of this, "I'm running away and leaving it behind," or "We're going to live two separate lives until she grows."

There was something said, and I'll close with this. I don't think anyone knows who made the quote, but he said, "When a general gets too far ahead of his troops, the troops count him for an enemy." When the battlefield has the general and the troops are here, and the general runs all the way ahead and they're firing a line, they're going to shoot him, thinking he's an enemy. I think it's the case in many marriages.

The husband is going on and talking about the Lord, and "Oh yes, God this and God that," and he's doing this, and "I'm walking and I'm growing and I'm memorizing," and all this, and his poor wife doesn't have a moment to spend with Jesus. His poor wife isn't even in the Word of God. His poor wife isn't being instructed and loved by the husband.

And as I said before of the wives, I say of the husbands that your walk with God is hindered when you do not give honor unto your wife as unto the weaker vessel and being heirs together of the grace of life. Notice the last part of that verse: that your prayers be not hindered. Go on and let

our words rise to heaven, but the ceiling is iron, the sky is iron, and closed to the husband that does not honor, love, consider, and dwell with his wife according to knowledge.

So remember, headship is a grave responsibility, but it is one that is wonderful because as you put your hand to the plow and love your wife as Christ loved the church, you see her grow in grace and glory, and the family strengthened. So let's see to it that we take up our responsibilities as heads of our homes. Let's pray.