
Words of Truth

Head Of The House Or Source Of Failure?

By: Brian A. Yeager

A Christian man is to be the head of the wife (Ephesians 5:23 and I Corinthians 11:3-15). A Christian man is to love his wife as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 5:25). That love is to be had without bitterness (Colossians 3:19). A Christian man is to love his wife as his own body (Ephesians 5:28). The point behind such is this: *“For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church”* (Ephesians 5:29).

Real men are hard to find these days. The feminist movement has created women who act like men and men whom are afraid to walk as men. Men, when behaving as they are created to be, are strong and act like men are supposed to act. The statement “act like a man” didn’t originate with the world (I Samuel 4:9 and I Corinthians 16:13).

Sometimes men want to act like men and it is just that – an act. The strength a woman should be looking for in a man is the kind of strength that can endure adversity (Proverbs 24:10). Can he carry a load? Yet, the men of our age are often found to be the ones who are the first out of the back door at times of adversity.

How can a man be the head of the wife if he cannot lead at all? The ability to lead needs to be seen in a man’s home life. Notice this statement in regard to the qualifications of being an elder: *“One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil”* (I Timothy 3:4-6).

It is easy to read these Scriptures and just make a man the decision maker in the home. Yet, sometimes a person who is put in a leadership role is not fit to have that role. Taking on the responsibilities of being a man is not the same as being a man. Women take on the role of leading in the home and that does not make them men. The same is true of males who think just being a male makes them the head of the house.

Think of an illustration for a moment. If I were to purchase a fireman’s outfit, helmet, a badge, and put them on. Now that I am dressed I march my way to the firehouse that is in my neighborhood. As I arrive they are gearing up to head out to a fire. I figure that since I am in uniform I should hop on the truck. Does that make me a fireman? What do you think will happen if I am called out on that trip to actually act like a fireman? What if I am asked to raise some ladder on the truck and fire up the hose? We all know the people counting on me to be a fireman are going to be in trouble. Brethren, the same is true of men whom put on the act of being the head of the household but have no idea how to properly lead that household. Being a man, wearing clothing, sitting at the head of the table, etc. makes a man no more qualified to lead than my fireman’s outfit made me to fight a fire.

Can That Man Actually Fill The Role He Is Dressed Up To Fill?

One of my mother's many failed relationships included a man named Bob. Bob had the idea that if he brought home the paycheck that made him the head of our household. Now, we all know that if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel (I Timothy 5:8). I am not denying that providing for one's family is a responsibility men ought to own (Matthew 7:8-11). Yet, putting food on the table, a roof overhead, and clothing on a man's family still doesn't make him the leader in that home. Bob was as little of a man, in the areas that matter in leadership, as you can find.

Some men think that being a man in the home is about being macho. These types of men think that if they can strike fear into the members of their family that such a status makes them the head of the household. How does that mindset fit this inspired statement: "*As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children*" (I Thessalonians 2:11)?

A man should fill more roles than a checkbook and a disciplinarian. Both are certainly necessary, but they do not make the man a leader in the home. A good man will do much more than provide physically. A good man will take on the role of leadership that includes instructing his family (Proverbs 4:1-7:27). If you read the aforementioned reference, you will read statements such as "Hear, O my son", "My son, attend to my wisdom", and "My son, keep my words." A real man is teaching in his home. Notice: "*And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*" (Ephesians 6:4).

In addition to being a provider, disciplinarian, and a teacher; a man who is a real leader in his home will simply be able to get his family to faithfully follow him (Genesis 6:8-9; 7:13 and Hebrews 11:8-19). This type of man will have gained the confidence of his wife and children. They will be able to see the fruit of his life (Matthew 7:20) and know he can be trusted to lead. This kind of man will be able to make statements such as this: "*Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*" (Joshua 24:14-15). This ability to lead requires more than just keeping appearances.

At some point, a man who is not a capable of leading will be exposed as such. Time often reveals frauds (Luke 6:43-46 and Titus 1:16). Therefore, those men whom are not leaders need not be fake about it. Thanks be to God that men can be taught to lead amongst other things (Titus 2:6-8). Those men whom are not capable of leading need to acknowledge such and get the help of brethren, who are tried and proven, to help them learn to be leaders.

Conclusion

Regardless of a man's ability or inability to lead, women still need to submit to their husbands (I Peter 3:1-7). Ladies, choose your man wisely. Men, be humble enough to recognize any shortcomings you may have. Your failures to lead will cause others to fall (Matthew 15:14). Be the head of your home, not the source of your family's failure.